

Washington and Lee University

The Responsible Hero:

The Evolution of the Greek Hero
from the Epic to the Tragic and
Historic

An Honors Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of Classics

By

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Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori – caelo Musa beat.¹

The hero who is worthy of her praise the Muse will not let die – the Muse
makes happy in heaven

Perhaps while looking down from the heavens upon a world of unimpressive, savage humans, Zeus had the fanciful idea of introducing a new race to the earth, a race of beings who could, just briefly, break the chain of common, mortal people. Perhaps Zeus allowed the gods to do what he himself had done so many times before, that is to say, follow his example and couple with the sons and daughters of mortal men. “It was a brief and dangerous attraction, out of which history was borne. It was the age of the heroes.”²

From these encounters between mortals and gods, men of superhuman strength, courage and ability were created. Heroes now walked the earth, and these men “were infused in infancy with a divine grace.”³ The heroes possessed incredible *menos*, a heightened divine energy, which entitled them to a special kind of quasi-existence which is both less and more than the ordinary existence of human beings – less because they were entrusted to a fleeting, brief appearance on the earth which usually ended in abrupt death, and more because this brief life was remarkable, irreplaceable, and resplendent. “The glory of the divine, which falls on the figure of the hero, is strangely combined with the shadow of mortality.”⁴

Indeed, these beings were intermediaries between gods and humans, and by their very status as demi-gods, these men transcended normal human existence, while still experiencing the realities of human mortality. Yet the intermediate status of the heroes was the essential element in their nature, as they were able to walk the earth amongst mortals and stand out as extraordinary, thus enabling the heroes of ancient Greece to become immortal through epic poetry. From epic proportions and near immortal dimensions, these heroes are reduced in stature, however, altered by time as Greek civilization began shifting super-human weight from the heroic figures' shoulders and putting an increasingly logic-based amount of weight upon the evolving *polis*.

This shift, I believe, arose from a movement to focus more on mortal achievement. I believe this movement arose from both the natural, societal evolution of the Athenian state, as well as from a large faction of Athenian citizens who wished to move from under the enormous shadow of the Homeric heroes. Certainly, however, the concept of the Homeric hero and the role the gods played upon humanity would face a dramatic transformation in 5th century Athens, due mainly to the efforts of the Tragic poets and the upstart historians.

To illustrate the history and evolution of personal responsibility in the Greek world, and the Athenian *polis* in particular, and the impact this concept of responsibility had on the definition of a "hero," I shall concentrate on three distinct literary genres: the epic, the tragic, and the

historic. Focusing on both the moral and political dimensions of responsibility, I shall examine prominent Greek figures from each literary genre, who I believe illustrate the evolution of the Greek hero from the semi-divine, unconstrained warrior, to the civic minded, dutiful leader.

In this introduction it is significant to note that the appearance of the heroes covers a very brief period in Greek history. The Heroic age, the time in which these heroes lived, can be easily defined; it was "a period in the distant past, two or three generations only, the age of the Theban and Trojan wars, ending around the fateful date of about 1200 B.C., ...the moment when purely human history began."⁵ In fact, the age of the heroes was brief, overcrowded, and cruel. The myth of the heroes, however, would remain firmly entrenched in the Greek psyche and would become the defining age for generations of later Greeks.

However ephemeral the Heroic age might have been, it was to become the defining age for generations of later Greeks. The intensity of the Heroic age, which resulted from the frivolous unions between gods and mortals, would serve to lay the foundations for Greek religion, morality and history, and one poet would create Greek ideology through myth and imagination. A code of ideals and values began to take form as a common thread between common peoples, and these ideals and values became intrinsic to the Greek people. It has been argued by many scholars that Homer created Greek ideology, and it has also been argued that Homer's work simply reflected the ideology of the time. What is

agreed upon, however, is that Homer did indeed fix the heroic ethic for the classical age.

The heroic ethic defined by Homer grew not only from the myths and legends within his epics, but also, more importantly, through Greek fascination with these myths and half-truths. The Greeks were deeply attached to their past, but it was the distant past which attracted them and which they never tired of learning about from Homer. "To say that these heroes lived in the Heroic age implies more than simply that they lived long ago; they were not merely people who happened to have lived in the distant past."⁶ Indeed, these ancient heroes were very much alive in men's consciousness.

The myths and legends contained within the "oral" pages of the *Iliad* would survive mainly due to the city of Athens. As the only Greek city to resist the "Dorian invasion," a gradual hostile infiltration by a Greek-speaking people from the northwest which claimed Mycenae around 1100 B.C., Athens became the preeminent Greek city. "With most of Greece under barbarian domination, the Athenians could regard themselves as the heirs of the Mycenaean past, and here the epic of Troy would have been sung on."⁷ Indeed Athens became the "home" of the *Iliad* and the messages and lessons contained within the *Iliad* would shape Athenian thought and culture for centuries.

Over the centuries, however, Greek civilization, and the Athenian State in particular, grew to sharply contrast the civilization depicted in

the *Iliad*. Solon, the legendary political genius, first created the concept of the impersonal state at Athens, as opposed to the personal and arbitrary leadership of a handful of nobles.⁸ The city of Athens entered the fifth century, the century of her true greatness, in the form of a democracy in which all final decisions concerning the state were made by an assembly where all male citizens could speak and vote.⁹

The city of Athens, by its performance in the Persian war, had won the means to political and economic domination of other Greek states, a role the Athenians accepted and interpreted with vigor for three-quarters of a century. The Athenians earned this leadership; Athenian fortitude saved the rest of Greece from the Persian invasion in 480 B.C. Without a doubt, the inspiration of victory over the barbarians helped to arouse a generation of genius: the immortal tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the statesmanship of Pericles, the implacable historical logic of Thucydides, and the vision of a whole people expressed in an orgy of public buildings, of which the Parthenon is only the crowning example.¹⁰ Indeed, the success necessary for the Athenian *polis* to thrive was achieved through a "cooperative excellence," stressing shared responsibility among citizens, rather than the competitive mentality between heroes found within the pages of Homer.

Embraced by his heroes, Homer's philosophy of "being the best and better than others," had been replaced by a new philosophy which extolled the virtues of living a civic, cooperative existence. Personal

responsibility and accountability, both morally and politically, were concepts somewhat foreign to the Homeric heroes who placed such responsibility in the hands of the gods, but these now became standards for living a good life.

Fifth Century Athens became a hotbed of cultural, scientific, political, and philosophical activity. Never before, at least in Western civilization, had there been a society in which ordinary, mortal men, lacking either inherited or divine authority, openly debated and decided on such vital matters as war and peace, public finance, or crime and punishment. "Political activity had become accepted not only as a legitimate activity but even as the highest form of social activity. Free men organized their lives under the rule of law."¹¹

Even in the epics, which were the manuals for ancient temperament and culture, there is the occasional suggestion that Zeus favored justice and the rule of law. Thus far, however, the responsibility for enforcing earthly justice was in the hands of Zeus and the other gods; there was not yet any idea that mortal men, through their own actions, could restore, secure, and enforce justice within a community. "By the time of Solon, Greek thought had advanced to such a stage that asserted human beings had such an influence; evil events in the state, the Athenian reformer preached, were the product of ignorance by the common citizen."¹²

The Athenians were perhaps growing out of the mythology that had defined them as a people for centuries, and thenceforth Athenian public life came more and more to be based upon the assumption that citizens had duties, rights, and privileges which were safeguarded and protected by secular sanctions, rather than by divine protection.

Skeptics and rationalists became dissatisfied with the moral teachings contained within the epics. They neither believed in the philandering Zeus and the savage jealousies of Hera, nor did they approve of a moral code with so unreliable a foundation. Indeed, beginning in the sixth century with Thales and Anaximander, a considerable line of philosophers began to challenge the morals of the heroes, the beliefs about the gods, the universe as a whole, and man.¹³ They dared to challenge the mythical structure of the world, and they began to create a more developed and advanced system of ethics based upon a rational and logical basis. These pioneers saw the flaws of the Homeric heroes. They began to realize that these heroes, who supposedly possessed powers superior to those of ordinary men, and who supposedly displayed them courageously at the risk of their own lives, did not necessarily do so to the advantage and benefit of others. As Plutarch remarks in his *Life of Theseus*:

It appears that at that time there were men who, for deftness of hand, speed of legs, and strength of muscles, transcended normal human nature, and were tireless. They never used their physical capacities to do good or to help

others, but reveled in their own brutal arrogance and enjoyed exploiting their strength to commit savage, ferocious deeds, conquering, ill-treating, and murdering whosoever fell into their hands. For them, respect, justice, fairness, and magnanimity were virtues prized only by such as lacked the courage to do harm and were afraid of suffering it themselves; for those who had the strength to impose themselves, such qualities could have no meaning.

Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 6, 4.

As Greek society evolved, so too did its outlook on the Heroic age. Perhaps the 5th century Athenians became uneasy with the message conveyed throughout the *Iliad*, that mortal life could never have anything great about it except through divine intervention, the *menos* described earlier. Only through this divine intervention could true greatness occur, and if a mortal is the agent of some action, then that action is mediocre; “as soon as there is a hint of greatness, of whatever kind, be it shameful or virtuous, it is no longer that person acting.”¹⁴

Responsibility for one’s actions, then, lay in the hands of others, namely, the gods. This concept went against everything that the Athenian *polis* stood for; the *polis* brought accountability and responsibility to the forefront of public life. The Athenian *polis* had evolved to such a form that it required its citizens to become actively involved in the everyday affairs and duties of the state. Indeed, the most influential Greek citizen had to have been the farmer, the tireless landowner who defended the city in times of war. The Greek farmer was a

loyal and stubborn patriot. Townspeople may have voted for war in the assembly, but the farmer was the one who went out to fight. Thus the Greek farmers, through their unflagging and unquestioning loyalty to the state, made it possible for Athens to endure invasion, allowing the *polis* to evolve and endure. As Aristotle writes in his *Poetics*:

The first and best kind of populace is one of farmers; and there is thus no difficulty in constructing a democracy where the bulk of the people live by arable or pastoral farming.

Aristotle, *The Politics*, from book VI, 1318b¹⁵

The growing demands of the *polis* required responsible behavior; in order for the Athenian state to function properly, citizens were bound to vote, work, and fight when called upon to do so - a sharp contrast the Homeric code of values which justified Achilles' refusal to participate in the Trojan war. Borne from necessity, a new, civic code of values began to take form; the idea of personal responsibility evolved out of the growing needs of the *polis*.

The idea of a "hero" began to evolve as well. According to the *O.E.D.* the term hero has these three basic meanings:

1. *antiq.* A name given ...to men of superhuman strength, courage or ability ... regarded as intermediate between gods and men, and immortal; ...
2. A man distinguished by extraordinary valour and martial achievement; ... an illustrious warrior...

3. A man who exhibits extraordinary bravery, firmness, fortitude, or greatness of soul, in any course of action ... [and is] admired and venerated for his achievements and noble qualities.¹⁶

We can see the evolution of the hero in the progression of the *O.E.D.*'s definition. The hero had evolved through history and tragedy from the semi-divine superhero of Homer into the Creon, the Solon, even the semi-tyrannical Pericles - the noble, mortal leaders of men, whose achievements were more civic than individual. The historians and tragedians began to place personal responsibility into the hands of their heroes. There was a written rebellion against old preconceptions that men only become great through divine intervention, and once the gods do interfere, any great action that occurs is solely attributed to them. No longer did being a hero require a divine parent. The Athenians began to realize and appreciate the magnitude of their accomplishments, and the wonders of their *polis*. Perhaps the Athenians began to realize that the true Homeric hero, the lone superhuman warrior who traveled the world without any real responsibility or obligations, seeking only personal honor and glory, could no longer exist in the world of the *polis*.

Although wary of committing the cardinal sin of *hubris*, perhaps the Athenians also wanted credit for their achievements. However, this credit would never come while gods controlled people's lives, and while the shadow of the Homeric hero loomed over the people as a reminder of unattainable glory and greatness. The Athenians could never feel

empowered while the gods and heroes played such a prominent role in society. Understandably, the Athenians could never completely do away with their myths and legends; they were entrenched in their culture, history, and ideology, but their movement to focus more upon mortal achievement will be shown as evident.

The Epic Hero

**Quem di diligunt adulescens moritur,
dum valet sentit sapit.¹⁷**

He whom the gods love dies young, while he has strength and sense and wits.

How was the myth of the Greek hero first created? In a time of hopelessness, strife, uncertainty, and constant warring, heroes emerged through the imagination of a poet. Long before Homer sang of it, the mythology about Troy and the various Greek and Trojan heroes of the war took shape; many generations of oral poets had sung of these heroes before Homer. However, Homer gave a definite form to these myths and legends, emphasizing the achievements of great warriors who were of mixed divine and human heritage, but who were nonetheless mortal. However great their deeds, these heroes could not transcend death, the limit of the human condition, except through celebration in song by poets, who thus conferred on them undying glory, and who thus acknowledged their godlike, though not divine, status.¹⁸

Spoken or chanted recitation carried Homer deep into the consciousness of the early Greeks, and professional reciters brought the Homeric poems from city to city, singing or chanting to their own

accompaniment on the lyre, just as the blind bard Demodocus did at the Phaeacian court in the *Odyssey*. The battle at Troy, its eventual fall, which occurred at the end of the Mycenaean period, and the adventures of the Greek hero Achilles, were all incorporated into this tradition of sung heroic poetry. Thus, the *Iliad* began its long journey throughout the centuries, “an end product of a poetic tradition that may have been as much as a thousand years old.”¹⁹

Indeed, the *Iliad* is first and foremost about heroism. The “heroic code,” facing danger bravely, dedication and devotion to the task at hand, and loyalty to friends, is powerfully evoked throughout the epic, and the reader is able to truly feel the exhilaration of the heroic life through powerful images:

As a skilled equestrian harnesses up
 a team of four superlative horses
 to drive them thundering toward a city
 along a straight highway, while passersby
 stare amazed as he leaps unerringly
 from horse to horse and they gallop onward –
 thus giant Aias moved from deck to deck
 with mighty strides, voice rising to the sky
 as he roared horribly for his warriors
 to save their ships.

(15.679-688)

Throughout the *Iliad* Achilles is the hero personified; he is an epic figure distinguished by birth from a divine parent. Achilles toppled city

walls, slaughtered defending champions, drove off fat cattle, seized gold and silver, and carried away prisoners for ransom and maidens for pleasure. He fights and kills more brilliantly and more effectively than any other warrior. He is preeminent in beauty, swiftness, strength, and all-around fighting ability.²⁰ Achilles is radically different from others fighting around him in the war, especially in his relationship with the divine. This relationship goes far beyond his blood tie to the gods through his mother, the sea goddess Thetis. As Calasso states:

Of all men, Achilles was the closest to being a god. Compressed into the piercing fraction of a mortal life span, he comes the closest to having the qualities the Olympians lived and breathed: Intensity and facility. His furious temper, which sets the *Iliad* moving is more intense than that of any other warrior, and the fleetness of his foot is that of one who cleaves the air without meeting resistance.²¹

Achilles' semi-divinity is established from the first word of the poem when he is said to be full of μῆνις, "wrath," which Achilles feels first against Agamemnon, and, later, after the death of Patroklos, against Hector and the Trojans. Elsewhere in the *Iliad* and in archaic Greek poetry generally, μῆνις is used specifically for wrath felt by a god, usually toward humans, who fear and avoid it. *Menis* suggests something sacral, a vengeful anger with deadly consequences. Achilles is the only mortal in the poem of whom this word is used. The force and intensity of his

anger are more than human, and his daemonic power sets him apart from all other mortals.²²

The object of contention that triggers Achilles' rage, and thus the poem, is the girl Briseis; Agamemnon wanted to substitute her for Chryseis, the daughter of Apollo's priest, whom the Greeks had carried off and given to Agamemnon. Chryseis' father came to beg for her release, but Agamemnon would not release her. According to myth, the priest then prayed to the god whom he served, Apollo; unfortunately for the Greeks, his prayers were heard. From his sun chariot Apollo shot fiery arrows down upon the Greek army, and the soldiers became sick and many died; funeral pyres for the fallen Greeks burned constantly.

Finally, in an attempt to appease Apollo, Achilles called an assembly of the Greek chieftains. The prophet Calchas declared that, in order for the curse to be lifted, Chryseis had to be returned to her father. Angry at the loss of his war prize, Agamemnon demanded Briseis, Achilles' prize of honor. *Ate*, divine temptation or infatuation, led Agamemnon to compensate himself for the loss of his own mistress by robbing Achilles of his. Achilles became enraged at such a dishonor, and swore before gods and men that Agamemnon would pay dearly for his actions.

In Greek only two letters in their names distinguish the two girls. "These two women, each with lovely cheeks, are almost indistinguishable, like coins from the same mint."²³ Thus the epic was

founded on a play of words, the substitution of a couple of letters in a name. Indeed, the entire plot of the *Iliad* centers upon the injured feelings of one man due to a peevish, childish quarrel. Perhaps Agamemnon, the “king of men,” knew this exchange would injure the “brilliant” Achilles’ pride. “Achilles is kingship without a kingdom. He carries his grace within himself and does not need a hierarchical order to sustain it. It is in his grace, not his power, which Achilles is more kingly than others. And that is precisely why Agamemnon is so determined to show him who is really king.”²⁴

Homeric heroes such as Achilles lived by the standard of honor, with shame being its polar opposite. Thus, when a Homeric warrior incurs shame, a sudden and complete disintegration of personality ensues.²⁵ The reader can understand his response to this situation, but the extent to which he carries out his revenge causes the great tragedy of the epic.

Achilles refusal to fight was done in great anger and spite befitting of a Homeric hero:

I swear
someday your men will long for Achilles
every one of them, while you stand helpless
to stop that fierce Hector from murdering
many. Then you’ll eat your heart out with grief
you insulted your most glorious warrior.

(1.239-244)

However, Achilles did not merely sit out of the war; he actually persuaded his mother to go to Olympus and entreat Zeus:

Kneel before him
and beg him to help those Trojan armies
till they pen our people by the ships' sterns
with awful slaughter. Then they'll love their king,
and Atreus' son Agamemnon may learn
he was mad to insult his best warrior.

(1.406-412)

To a modern reader Achilles would seem little more than a crude superman, a hero in the purely physical sense. He might seem to be a brutish warlord who broke other people's heads, destroyed cities, and in general crashed through life with the greatest inconvenience to others.²⁶ To a modern reader a hero would never actually pray for the mass destruction of his own people. Achilles' rage, as Homer describes it,

... cost the Greeks
Incalculable pain, pitched countless souls
Of heroes into Hades' dark,
And left their bodies to rot as feasts
For dogs and birds, as Zeus' will was done.

(1.2-6)

To the ancient Greek audience, however, Achilles' desire for such excessive revenge is easily understood. Indeed, Achilles asks for the destruction of his own community, the Greek army, but his selfishness is not simply antisocial. Achilles' dispute with Agamemnon turns on his sense that he has been robbed of the honor he has earned:

The son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon,
dishonored me; for he took away my special gift of honor
and is keeping it, having robbed me himself.

(1.355-356)

In robbing him, Agamemnon has violated the normal social "code" to which everyone in the poem would uphold, that is, a code in which bravery and excellence in battle win wealth, honor, and glory, and thus endow life with meaning.²⁷ Achilles' refusal to fight and even his request that Zeus aid the Trojans are socially validated, if extreme, responses to Agamemnon's selfish breach of decorum. Achilles does not fight with his Greek comrades because they have done him any injury; rather, he is attempting to regain slighted honor from Agamemnon.

For Achilles, Agamemnon's decision meant public humiliation, and it insultingly disregarded Achilles' hard-won status as the best of the Greeks. Achilles' sense of unfair deprivation and his frustration with Agamemnon express themselves in an instinctive response that has far-reaching and unforeseeable consequences, as he turns his back on the whole community of Greeks, seeking confirmation of his value as a

warrior in the triumph of Hector and the Trojans. Achilles rejects the Greek chain of command; he assumes that Agamemnon has no authority over him, while Agamemnon sees himself as the chief of the Greek forces, the lord of men. This miscommunication and misunderstanding between the two men proves to be the catalyst for the epic and tragic events of the *Iliad*.

What motivation could Achilles possibly have for asking that Trojans be victorious, and that his own comrades be killed at the ships? Perhaps the answer lies in the shadows of his own mortality. His mother, Thetis, clearly foresaw her son's fate, that he could not with impunity overthrow Hector, the bulwark of the city which Apollo protected; she knew that if he was to kill Hector, the leader of the Trojan forces, he would be fated to die.

Achilles, the most beautiful of the heroes who gathered before Troy, and a hero born for such a short time, must above all others be called the mortal hero, maintaining his heroism in the face of death, and taking death upon himself.²⁸ Achilles' special closeness to the gods heightens our appreciation of his mortal limits; occasionally the gods assist Achilles on the field of battle, speaking to him directly, rescuing him, and aiding his victory. The very deities who aid him will do so, as Hera says, "today, but later he will suffer whatever his portion/spun for him when he was born, when his mother gave birth to him" (20.127-28).

In the long run, however, for Homer to preserve Achilles or any other warrior from death would be to deny him heroic life, that is, immortality through celebrations in heroic poetry.²⁹ For the hero, in the technical sense, must die. It is as much a paradox to speak of a brave warrior during his lifetime as a hero as it is to speak of a good man during his lifetime as a saint; "hero denotes supernatural potency of some sort associated with a dead man."³⁰

An accepted belief among the Greek warriors fighting on the front lines was that all men were allotted a certain path in life, a path that could lead to good fortune or terminate abruptly in disaster.³¹ The horror and pathos of death are stressed, as when Achilles drags Hector's body behind his chariot after the duel that culminates the *Iliad*:

Hector was dragged in a dust cloud, his dark
hair streaming wildly, his head – once so fair-
smeared with dust, now Zeus had abandoned him
to humiliation in his own homeland.

(22.401-404)

The Greeks fighting on the front lines knew death to be an unavoidable nemesis; the *Iliad* sees the end of life as unmitigated disaster. There is no consolation or reward for the dead, the afterlife being only a shadow of earthly existence, worth less than the most

miserable day among the living, as Achilles declares when he meets Odysseus in Hades:

Odysseus, don't embellish death for me.
I'd rather be another's hired hand,
Working for some poor man who owns no land
But pays his rent from what scant gains he gets,
Than to rule over all whom death has crushed.

(11.490-494)

The hero now appears as just one among the many shadows of exhausted mortals; all that seems left for Achilles in the underworld is a long weariness. In the light of death's overwhelming catastrophe, glory in battle becomes the only consolation. Achilles knew that in order to live on past death through glory won during life, he needed to "always be the best, and better than others." It was therefore all the more important for Achilles to achieve his glory and honor in the brief time he was allotted. Achilles, more than any other Greek or Trojan warrior, felt the need to be honored fully and fittingly for his achievements because, as he tells his mother, "you bore me to be short lived" (1.352). Also, when Thetis speaks to Zeus later in book one, she refers to Achilles as "most swiftly-doomed beyond other men" (1.505).

By fighting in the war, Achilles has chosen a brief, heroic life at Troy with imperishable glory in preference to a long life at home with no future reputation. Therefore, Achilles has, from the beginning of the *Iliad*

to its end, a more acute and highly developed sense of his own mortality and worth than any other warrior; hence Achilles is more touchy and sensitive to Agamemnon's revoking of his honor.³²

Realizing the impending doom that faces the Greek forces without Achilles, Agamemnon realizes the importance Achilles has on the outcome of the war – “worth many/men is the man whom Zeus loves in his heart,/as he now has honored this man and conquered the army of the Achaians” (9.116-18). In an attempt to persuade Achilles to rejoin the army, Agamemnon names Odysseus, Ajax, and Achilles' old foster father Phoinix as ambassadors to convey Agamemnon's offer, the return of Briseis, in addition to a hefty ransom. Achilles refuses, however, telling the ambassadors that he will not yield until Agamemnon has “paid in full for all my grief” (9.400). Achilles considers Agamemnon to be worthless, and vehemently rejects the offer to return to battle.

Agamemnon makes a final plea to Achilles in book 19:

Of course our people had often told me
and scolded me too, though I'm not to blame
but Zeus and fate and murky Erinys,
who put this wild *ate* in my heart
the day I stole the spoils of Achilles
what Could I do? A god made it happen.

(19.85-90)

Interpreted by impatient modern readers, these words of Agamemnon's have sometimes been construed as a weak excuse or as an

evasion of responsibility.³³ However, his words are not at all a complete evasion of responsibility, for at the end of his speech Agamemnon offers reparation precisely on this ground:

“But since I was blinded by *ate* and Zeus took away my understanding, I am willing to make my peace and give abundant compensation.”

(9.119-20)

“Had he acted of his own volition, he could not so easily admit himself in the wrong; as it is, he will pay for his acts.”³⁴ Indeed, Agamemnon is not dishonestly inventing a moral alibi; for Achilles, the victim of his actions, takes the same position as Agamemnon:

Oh, father Zeus, what fools you make of men!
I should never have been in such a rage
At Atreus' son, he wouldn't have taken
That girl so cruelly, if Zeus had not planned
To devastate our Achaean people.

(19.270-274)

The *ate* described by both Achilles and Agamemnon is a state of mind, a temporary clouding or bewildering of the normal consciousness. It is, in fact, a partial and temporary insanity; and, like all insanity, it is ascribed not to physiological or psychological causes, but to an external, “daemoniac” agency.³⁵ Thus, personal liability or responsibility could never be fully attributed to the Homeric heroes; in fact, the cumbersome word “responsibility” was foreign to them. The Homeric heroes knew nothing of the word, nor would they have believed in it if they had. For

them, it was as if every crime was committed in a state of mental infirmity, the "rage" we see in Achilles. But such infirmity meant that a god was present and at work. What we view as infirmity, the Homeric heroes saw as divine inspiration.³⁶

With his fellow Greek warriors fighting and dying on the fields of Troy, Achilles refused to take part in the war. Achilles felt his pride and honor had been slighted and disregarded, and his maniac rage and his thirst for terrible revenge prevented him from taking part in the fighting along side his own people. His desire for glory and honor outweighed any sense of duty to his community. Only the death of his beloved comrade, Patroclus, could lure Achilles to the fields of battle.

Patroclus, a compassionate and gentle noble warrior, reenters the war out of pity for the many Greeks who are dying because of Achilles' absence. When he rejoins the battle, Patroclus does so as Achilles' surrogate, literally impersonating him by wearing his armor. Patroclus becomes consumed with the kind of rage for combat associated with Achilles, and he fights with risky brilliance, achieving glorious success by killing Sarpedon, but also exposing himself to death at the hands of Hector.³⁷ Achilles supplants his rage felt toward Agamemnon, now focusing his wrath on Hector. Achilles, in his fighting, now seems as a force of nature, completely single-minded in his pursuit for revenge.

A sharp contrast to the seemingly self-indulgent and egocentric Achilles, Hector proves himself to be a community hero throughout the

Iliad. He fights around and for his own city, battling for the survival of his home and family, rather than for the glory obtainable in a foreign expedition. While Hector does value his reputation, he is portrayed as torn between the claims of his role as a warrior, learned since childhood,

...to be brave
 always and to fight in the front ranks of the Trojans,
 trying to win great glory for my father and my own glory,
 (6.444-46)

and his tender feelings for Andromache and Astyanax.

Hector is not fighting for merely for the praise, but rather for his people; he fights for Troy, and not for himself. Hector defines himself as a warrior not on the basis of some innate attraction to warfare but because of his obligation to his people. Hector involves a different idea of heroism from Achilles – he is a civil hero, one whose duty, a trait similar to Aeneas' *pietas*, had forced him to fight. He has no divine parentage, only his courage and commitment to his people and his family; indeed his primary responsibility is to his family, not his overweening pride.

Facing the pleas of his wife, Andromache, who is dearer to him than any other person, he still refuses to stay with her in Troy; he is forced to go against his own feelings as well as hers. Andromache has their young child, Astyanax, with her, and Hector's cherished son is terrified by his father's war helmet and shrinks from him until Hector takes it off and puts it on the ground; the possibility of lingering in the

city with his family is presented as a dangerous temptation. Hector's loyalties are divided: as a traditional man and hero, he belongs on the front lines with the other fighting men; as a husband and father, his care is for his wife and child. Hector faces a conflicting combination of familial and heroic loyalties.

Hector realizes that the war will lead to the destruction of his city and the enslavement of his family, and he realizes that his "position," (*moira*) is on the battlefield. Hector, the defender of the city, cannot escape the consequences of a heroic way of life that necessarily involves both his own destruction and the abandonment and destruction of the family he loves more than the city and more than the entire world.³⁸

When Achilles rushes over the plain toward the city, the image of intense Sirius is invoked:

As a star comes among the other stars in the dark of night
 the Evening Star, which stands as the most beautiful star in the
 heaven,
 so was the shining from the sharp spear which Achilles
 shook in his right hand, intending evil toward the brilliant
 Hector,
 Looking over his beautiful flesh to see where it would most give
 Way.

(22.317-21)

As Hector sees fierce Achilles approach, charging to kill him, Achilles is

the equal of the lord of battles, Enealios of the shining helmet,
 shaking above his right shoulder the Pelian ash spear
 which was so terrifying; the bronze shone around him like
 the glare
 of blazing fire or of the rising sun.

(22.132-35)

When Hector finally does meet Achilles, he does so as someone who has always stayed within the framework of heroic values, but, when he first sees Achilles in all of his force and passion, Hector's first instinct is to run.

This deadly shining of bronze so terrifies Hector that he can no longer await Achilles, and he thus flees before him; nothing could express how incomparably fearsome and powerful Achilles is at the height of his wrath than the ominous brightness that even Hector cannot endure. Achilles chases Hector three times around the city, until Athena disguises herself as Hector's brother Deiphobus and tricks him into stopping and facing Achilles by promising to support him. Hector does finally face Achilles, but, when he loses his spear and turns for Deiphobus' help, he finds no one there.³⁹

Realizing at once that he is alone and doomed, he continues to fight, voicing the essential heroic determination to make something out of an inevitable death: "I will not perish without some great deed/that future generations will remember" (22.332-33).

Achilles' intense anger and rage is most pointed and explicit at the moment when he finally encounters the object of his fury, Hector. Before the battle between the two begins, Hector proposes a bargain whereby the winner of their combat will return the loser's body to his family for the loving and ceremonious burial with which people attempt to cure the insult of violent death, but Achilles has no interest in bargaining with his enemy. Achilles' wrath makes him pitiless and inhuman:

Hector, you whose deeds I can never forget, don't talk to me of agreements:

as there are no trustworthy oaths between men and lions,
but they always and unceasingly intend evil to one another,
so it is not possible that you and I have solidarity
with one another, and for us two
there will be no oaths at all, before one of us, at least, falls,
and gluts Ares, the warrior who is steady under the shield,
with his blood.

(22.261-67)

Achilles isolates himself further from all other members of the human community, rightly comparing himself to the most savage animal. He seemingly has lost control of his emotions and rational thinking, and after the duel he refuses his dying enemy's final plea to ransom his body for burial with a climactic outburst of savagery that is as extreme as anything I have read in Homer:

Dog, don't supplicate me by my knees or my parents;
 I wish that my spirit and anger would impel me
 to cut off your meat and eat it raw myself, for what you have
 done to me,
 just as there is no one who can keep the dogs away from your
 head....

(22.345-48)

The final combat between Hector and Achilles is the defining event in the epic, the event toward which the poem has been moving since the death of Patroclus at the hands of Hector. The killing of Hector fulfills any expectations raised since the beginning of the poem that Achilles would do something tremendous to justify his reputation as far and away the greatest warrior in either army.⁴⁰ By killing Hector and thus, in effect, conquering Troy and winning the war, Achilles satisfies these expectations. Furthermore, the terror he inspires in Hector, the utter inhumanity with which he responds to Hector's suggestion that they agree in advance to return for burial the body of whoever is killed, and the savage hatred that leads him both to spurn the dying Hector's final plea for burial and to treat his corpse so foully after the battle, form a fitting climax to the fury that has marked his words and actions since his reentry into battle.⁴¹ Although he is motivated to fight by his love for Patroclus, Achilles by no means expresses normal, human feelings. Still set apart by his godlike knowledge of fate, made all the clearer by Thetis when she tells him, as he decides to return to battle, that "Hector's death means yours" (18.101)], Achilles fights unhampered by any hope of

survival; Achilles fights with nothing to lose. Achilles fights as a warrior without equal, and for Hector there is no possibility of victory.

Hector, a hero of social obligations and responsibility, whose mortality is defined against Achilles' semi-divinity, dies for his community and family. Hector is represented as quintessentially social and human, while Achilles is inhumanly isolated and demoniac in his greatness. Also, Achilles' closeness to the gods contributes to his isolation from fellow humans; Hector's family is part of what makes him human. For Achilles, the main purpose of life is winning honor and glory. For Hector, a familial and social hero, whose sense of shame and duty are his main heroic virtues, everything he does is led by his deep desire for a reunion with his family. The two contrasting heroes, one bent on individual vengeance and the other defending not only himself, but also his community and its way of life, take part in an action which results in both of their deaths.

For Hector, however, death does not come as willingly; he has much more to lose. On Hector's brave shoulders rests the fate of Troy; he is fighting not merely for the satisfaction of revenge, he is fighting for the survival of his people. Hector takes the responsibility of Troy's safety upon himself, and in doing so dramatically separates himself from Achilles. Hector, while still heroic, could never have been as great as the divine Achilles. His fate was to die a brutal, somewhat disgraceful death

at the hands of a demi-god. His mortality could never compete with Achilles' divinity; he has *pietas*, not *ατῆ*.

Achilles is set aflame by the gods, and, as Agamemnon does when he apologizes to Achilles, he placed the responsibility of his actions in the hands of the gods. For the Homeric heroes, losing oneself through the will of the gods was the only way to become heroic, proving that, in Homer, mortal life can never have anything great about it except through the gods and divine intervention.

We can now return to 5th century Athens, the home of the *Iliad* for generations. Perhaps the *Iliad*, the constant reminder of the "good old days" caused serious introspection on the part of the more modern Greek reader. The *Iliad* represents an unattainable perfection, a society whose greatness could never be matched. Indeed it would be difficult to live up to the standards set by the epic. As Calasso states:

In Homer whatever is good and beautiful is also dazzling. Breastplates shine from afar, bodies from close up... Every notion of progress is refuted by the existence of the *Iliad*. The perfection of the first step makes any idea of progressive ascension ridiculous.⁴²

Not only does the *Iliad* refute any notion of progress, which is unsettling at best, but the *Iliad* also rejects any conception of an afterlife. Indeed, this apathy, which comes across in any lack of reward or punishment, is the most terrifying feature of the Homeric afterlife. Why

would anyone choose to live a just life, to distinguish between virtue and vice, if everyone in the afterlife is to partake of the same hopelessness and helplessness? There was no concept of salvation; the most these heroes could ever hope for was to avoid death for as long as possible. The terrifying prospect of a lifeless and lethargic afterlife was indeed cruel; all the more irresistible then must one's brief duration on the earth have appeared. "Such a vision could not last long in an age that was no longer that of the heroes but of the poets who told the stories of heroes past."⁴³

Too depressing, perhaps, was the concept of such a hopeless existence, one in which deeds done on the earth mattered little in the grand scheme of things. Death was an unavoidable nemesis, something to be feared, and the only way to cheat the grave was through fame that could only be won on the battlefield. Perhaps, however, it was impossible for the average, mortal Greek man to achieve said fame while Homeric heroes such as Achilles acted as the standards for heroism; the measuring stick for greatness was too difficult to reach. How could any culture live up to the immense model of heroism and civilization placed upon them by Homer?

In Homer, men achieve greatness only through the gods, and these gods are completely responsible for anything of greatness or importance done by men. The Olympians' intervention on earth gave men's activities heightened significance in terms of the divine, while at the same time

humbling them, showing mortals helpless before the gods' power. In Homer, warriors were braver, civilization was more beautiful, war was more important, whatever was good was also dazzling – life was better. In Homer, there is no significant afterlife; there is no reason to act one way or the other, since there is no final reward or punishment. There is no consolation or reward for the dead, the afterlife being only a shadow existence. In Homer, military glory for mortals is mere illusion; warriors were really pawns for the gods, utterly subject to fate.

As oppressive as Homer may seem to modern readers, the Greeks could not simply ignore or forget Homer; they were deeply connected to their past. However, perhaps an inner confidence was born, and a written rebellion began. While there were extremists, such as Plato and Socrates, who theorized an after-life which contained an ultimate reward for living a just life, or an ultimate punishment for an unjust life,⁴⁴ the Tragic poets were more subtle in their written rebellion.

In the Tragedies of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus, gods were still an essential and omnipresent factor in the lives of men. However, in these tragedies, mortal men and women began to question divine authority, and step outside of the mortal boundaries established by the gods; in doing so, they became heroic. The Tragic poets began to write of mortal men and women who dared to tempt their mortal boundaries, boundaries set by the all-powerful gods. These tragic heroes endeavored to break free of the limits and confines of an existence dictated by petty,

vindictive landlords. The tragic heroes would attempt to test and defy the limits of human existence and experience; they would attempt to defy the basic laws of life, laws drafted from the heavens. These tragic figures would fail because they tested unwritten, ever changing, and unclear laws; however, they would become heroic in the process.

The tragic hero throws aside his pain pots and his words of sorrow and says that his sorrows should go home to the agonizing heart.

The tragic heroes were not simply concerned with glory, revenge, or war, as was the epitome of the Homeric hero Achilles. Rather, these tragic heroes were first and foremost, that is, they all believed they acted with the best intentions of the world. The extreme punishment these heroes received was the result of their actions, just reward to the gods and the universe. The tragic hero's quest for glory, revenge, or war was not the result of a mortal's ambition, but the result of a mortal's desire to be a god. The tragic hero's quest for glory, revenge, or war was not the result of a mortal's ambition, but the result of a mortal's desire to be a god.

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The Tragic Hero

**Proicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba si curat cor
spectantis tetigisse querella.⁴⁵**

The Tragic hero throws aside his paint pots and his words a foot and a half long, if he cares that his sorrows should go home to the spectator's heart.

The tragic heroes were not simply concerned with glory, revenge, and war, as was the epitome of the Homeric hero, Achilles. Rather, these tragic heroes were civil minded; that is, they all believed they acted with the best interests of the state in mind. The extreme punishment these tragic figures encountered as a result of their actions also served to demonstrate the staggering unfairness and severity the gods displayed in handing down justice. We see the gods through the eyes of a mortal, and we see our mortality as defined against the divine; what it is to be a human is defined against what it is **not** to be a god.

Perhaps there is an "us against them" mentality prevalent in the tragedies, as certain mortals attempted to shine as remarkable either through following courses of action while ignoring divine guidance and omens, as Creon does in the *Antigone*, or by ignoring a god altogether, and dismissing what he or she stands for, as Pentheus does in the

Bacchae. However, as is seen throughout the tragedies, the gods care little for the lives of innocent mortals who stand in the way of their revenge; Aphrodite clearly demonstrates this point at the beginning of the *Hippolytos*:

That Phaidra dies
I regret, but not so much that I
Would relinquish this great chance
To strike my enemy,
Punishing him, satisfying me.⁴⁶

Truly, the gods did not require that mortals behave one way or another. They were as ready to ignore the unjust actions of a favorite as to condemn the just actions of one they disliked. Indeed, what the Greek gods wanted of men was left unclear. The Tragedies of 5th century Athens served to depict extreme examples of the sometimes unfair, the sometimes indecisive, but the always-brutal relationship between the gods and men. However, these tragic figures began to take responsibility for their lives, a responsibility that was, up to that point, solely in the hands of the gods. The Tragic heroes opted to tempt fate, and rewrite the definition of a hero.

In describing the perfect tragic plot, Aristotle states that the plot would have to consist of a change in the protagonist's fortunes from happiness to misery, and that the cause of it must lie in some grave error on his part, his *hamartia*.⁴⁷ The tragic hero attempts to defy the limits of

human experience and existence, to go beyond the “natural boundaries,” and, in so doing, the tragic hero undergoes a self-destructive fall from grace. The tragic hero encounters something awful, something unavoidable, something wrong in society; the tragic hero will attempt to solve the problem in his own way, usually acting as a scapegoat, taking the sins of a society and placing them upon himself. The tragic hero will do this fully believing his actions to be best for his family or his community; they attempted to act as freethinking, independent, empowered mortals. However, “in a tragic perspective man and human action are seen, not as things that can be defined or described, but as problems. They are presented as riddles whose double meanings can never be pinned down or exhausted.”⁴⁸ For their attempt at independence, they suffer, and they fail, yet they become heroic in the process.

To the 5th Century Athenian audience, the tragic heroes might have been seen as daredevils, acting in ways the common citizen wouldn't for fear of retribution and punishment. It would be difficult for the audience to envy the tragic heroes, for their suffering and punishment is as great as any in literature. Their efforts were appreciated, however; they became martyrs, saints – they became heroic.

Sophocles' tragic saga of the cursed household of Oedipus culminates in the *Antigone*, a play that deals mainly with the political and familial turmoil created from the struggle between an individual's

conscience and the central law of the state. It deals with the eternal conflict between private conscience and public authority.

Indeed the *Antigone* is the epitome of Greek tragedy in that the issues dealt with are too complicated and too convoluted for the characters involved to manage correctly; there are no easy answers for the main tragic figures in the play, Antigone and Creon. There are no obvious right or clear-cut courses of action for the characters to take. This duality of right and wrong connected with the possible decisions of the main tragic characters when faced with extreme cases creates interesting moral issues, and these moral issues are at the heart of Greek tragedy.

The questions raised in Greek tragedy are more important than the answers. In the case of Antigone, she is confronted with an extreme moral decision: whether or not she should go against the edict set out by her Uncle, Creon, that Polyneices, her brother, would not receive a state funeral or burial due to his attempted coup. Creon is confronted with an extreme moral decision as well: he wishes to maintain the welfare of the state at all costs, since history has proven that on many occasions funerals can spark off insurrection. On the other hand, Creon is faced with the possibility of disregarding the natural law requiring that the dead must be buried. In fact, we see that arguments can be made in favor of any position that Creon and Antigone would choose to take. Thus we have reached the central point of Greek tragedy, the reason for

its creation: Sophocles wanted the audience to sit back and witness a disastrous “train wreck” occur on the stage before their eyes, forcing them to contemplate and wonder how they would react if they were placed in a situation remotely similar to the extreme situations faced by the characters on the stage.

But perhaps the essential feature that defines it is that the drama brought to the stage unfolds both at the level of everyday existence, in a human, opaque time made up of successive and limited present moments, and also beyond this earthly life, in a divine, omnipresent time that at every instant encompasses the totality of events, sometimes to conceal them and sometimes to make them plain but always so that nothing escapes it or is lost in oblivion. Through this constant union and confrontation between the time of men and the time of the gods, throughout the drama, the play startlingly reveals that the divine intervenes even in the course of human actions.⁴⁹

Athenians had the capacity for intense self-examination; they had the ability to be very hard-headed about themselves. They continually questioned their actions, and for this reason, the *Antigone* worked; it was a very successful play for its time. Because the play is located in the “anti-Athens” of Thebes, the audience would have had a very negative initial reaction to the characters and situations on the stage, perhaps thinking that only in such a backwards and uncivilized place such as Thebes could these events occur. However, placing the action in such a place as Thebes could create real unease for the audience when they

begin to realize that life isn't that different in Athens from life in Thebes. Even now, this unease that is created is a crucial element for the plays success.

Jean-Pierre Vernant addresses the difficulty an Athenian audience, as well as a modern audience, could have interpreting the puzzling and disturbing questions raised by such tragedy:

What is the relationship of this man to the actions upon which we see him deliberate on the stage and for which he takes the initiative and responsibility but whose real meaning is beyond him and escapes him so that it is not so much the agent who explains the action but rather the action that, revealing its true significance after the event, recoils upon the agent and discloses what he is and what he has really, unwittingly, done? Finally, what is this man's place in a world that is at once social, natural, divine, and ambiguous, rent by contradictions, in which no rule appears definitely established, one god fights against another, one law against another and in which, even in the course of the play's action, justice itself shifts, twists, and is transformed into its contrary?⁵⁰

Sophocles intended the audience to ask such questions and feel uncomfortable when confronted with the character of Creon. He has made a decision that is disobeyed and questioned by his subjects; Antigone directly disobeys by performing the burial ceremony for her brother herself, not merely lamenting, as custom dictates. He has a crucial encounter with the blind prophet Teiresias, who warns him that

the forces of religion are against him; Teiresias make it perfectly clear that Creon is wrong, that he should obey the unwritten laws of nature and bury the body of Polyneices. Creon scoffs at these divine omens, charging that the prophet has been suborned. However, after abusing the old prophet, Creon is overcome both with fear of the impending loss of his own authority as well as fearing the divine authority Teiresias possesses. He then attempts to undo his mistake. Creon thus proves himself to be erratic: having decided that Ismene is as guilty as Antigone, he then changes his mind about her. He vacillates wildly about Antigone's fate: the original edict decreed death by stoning, but at one point he decides to have her executed publicly in front of Haemon; finally he opts for entombing her alive, but eventually revokes even this decision. He epitomizes the tragic character Aristotle describes as "consistently inconsistent" (*Poetics*, ch.15). It is not so much that Creon vacillates that makes him wrong, however, but his initial decisions are consistently rash and erroneous.

Creon may have justification in *Antigone* for the measures by which he attempts to deter possible traitors to his city, but the play reveals that human reasoning faculties are not sufficient means by which to apprehend an inexplicable universe.⁵¹ *Antigone* explores the difficult path any head-of-state must tread between clear leadership and despotism. "Indeed, of all Sophocles' tragedies *Antigone* is the most

overtly political, in that it directly confronts problems involved in running a *polis*, a city-state."⁵²

It has sometimes been argued that Creon's law was defensible, given the divisive nature of the civil war which had blighted Thebes and the urgent need for a firm hand on the rudder of government. Funerals can spark off insurrection, after all, and Creon was attempting to establish control of a state in disarray. The very first law which Creon passes, that the body of the traitor Polyneices is to be refused burial, is in direct contradiction with the "Unwritten Rule" protecting the rights of the dead; it precipitates, moreover, not only the death of his disobedient niece Antigone, who buries the corpse, but also the suicides of his own son, Haemon, and of Creon's wife, Eurydice.

In the new, evolving *polis*, the laws of men and the laws of the heavens are confusingly intertwined, and from this, conflict inevitably arises. As Vernant states, tragedy arises from the "conflicts that exist between legal values and a more ancient religious tradition, the beginnings of a system of moral thought already distinct from the law although the boundaries between their respective domains are not yet clearly drawn."⁵³ Creon, wishing to make sense of such a confusing situation, attempts to avoid serious misinterpretation of these laws by choosing the welfare of the state over the welfare of his family. He decides to avoid a serious conflict of values by choosing the well-being of the city as the single, intrinsic good. Perhaps Creon believed that if he

structured his life and commitments according to the welfare of the State, he would be able to stay clear of serious conflict.

Any audience, however, would expect to find Creon in an extremely painful conflict between his role as ruler and that as a member of a family. However, as Martha Nussbaum illustrates:

What, to their surprise, they would see is a complete absence of tension or conflicts, secured by a "healthy" rearrangement of evaluations. For if we examine Creon's use of the central ethical terms, what we discover is that he has shifted them around, wrenched them away from their ordinary use, so that they apply to things and persons simply in virtue of their connection to the well-being of the city, which Creon has established as the single intrinsic good.⁵⁴

How ironic, then, that Creon, in attempting to avoid such disastrous conflict, only brings conflict upon himself. Creon's public religion, in which the tutelary gods of the city eventually become confused with the supreme values of the state, comes into great conflict with Antigone's family religion, which is purely private, confined to a small circle of close relatives, and centered around the domestic hearth and the cult of the dead; between these two domains of religious life there is a constant tension that can only lead to insoluble conflict.⁵⁵

"Neither of the two religious attitudes set in conflict in the *Antigone* can by itself be the right one unless it grants to the other the place that is its due, unless it recognizes the very thing that limits and competes with it."⁵⁶

Creon is unwilling to accept or even consider Antigone's position. On the contrary, he sees Antigone's attack on his civil values as a sign of mental incapacity. For Creon, the healthy mind is the mind wholly devoted to civic safety and civic well being.⁵⁷ He completely replaces blood ties with the bonds of civic duty, and in so doing, he fails to realize his familial duties.

Creon felt a heavy political obligation and responsibility to his *polis*. He therefore acted according to his best judgement. Unfortunately, however, Creon was trapped in a paradox of duty: his duty to his family and the gods, and his duty to his city. As the Theban *polis* became more complicated and developed, it required Creon to be an active leader. He attempted to defend his city, enacting laws and enforcing those laws when they were broken. In the process, Creon empowered himself to make decisions based upon what he thought were the best needs of the State. He scoffed at divine omens, believing that human judgement is sufficient means for deciding important matters. In the Tragedies, however,

Human action is not, of itself, strong enough to do without the power of the gods, not autonomous enough to be fully conceived without them. Without their presence and their support it is nothing – either abortive or producing results quite other than those initially envisaged. So it is a kind of wager – on the future, on fate and on oneself, ultimately a wager on the gods for whose support one hopes.⁵⁸

The Historical Hero

Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in illustri postea monumento intueri.⁵⁹

This above all makes history useful and desirable: it unfolds before our eyes a glorious record of exemplary actions.

In an attempt to relate the great and marvelous deeds of the Greeks and barbarians, 5th Century Athenians began inquiring into the past. Fifty years after the Persian war, a comprehensive history appeared, *The Histories*, combining geography and myth. Herodotus created the first true history, including virtually the entire civilized world.

Herodotus did not differentiate between myth and history; for Herodotus, myth and history were two methods of categorizing and explaining the past. Indeed, the mythical, fabulous elements of Herodotus' work are one of the foremost features that distinguishes it from later histories.⁶⁰ While the heroes do play a prominent role in Herodotus, their role has evolved; no longer are the heroes the only beings capable of remarkable deeds, no longer are the heroes looked

upon as denizens of an age whose greatness surpasses any other throughout history. Herodotus uses the heroes and references to the heroes in an attempt to explain the origins of specific cities and groups of peoples in terms of mythic history, that is, within the recognized framework of accepted ancient history.⁶¹ "The origin myths linking cities to the heroes of tradition conferred political identity on cities, just as heroic ancestors conferred dignity on a family."⁶²

When Herodotus set himself to write the Histories, he was undertaking a new kind of writing, one that radically broke with the works of his predecessors. Herodotus, however, could not simply discard all of the conventions of earlier writers; he drew upon modes of explanation with which he, no less than his audience, was already familiar. These conventions included the citation of heroes in a wide variety of contexts and for several different purposes. The heroes were the founders of cities and the eponyms of families, whose stories could provide explanations for later customs or charters for courses of action. They also served as chronological reference points, by which Herodotus could fix other events, both before and after the Heroic age.

Heroes were beings on the cusp between myth and history, and as has been stated, they lived in a specific Heroic age, but the heroes were also considered the actual ancestors of families living generations later. Although these heroes were products of unions between gods and mortals, and although the stories associated with them contained

supernatural and fabulous elements, the heroes were accepted as actual ancestors, and in this way were connected with the time of ordinary human history. "Thus their nature is neither entirely mythological nor historical; they are different both from the gods and from ordinary human beings."⁶³

Even in death, the Homeric heroes lived a paradoxical existence; they were considered to be demi-gods, superhuman warriors who lived and breathed the heroic ideal. At the same time, they were used as fixed chronological and reference points, through which latter-day Greeks could establish themselves as members of important households. As Finley states,

The myths and half-truths still performed necessary functions within the state: they selected important bits out of the enormous, unintelligible mass of past happenings and fixed them; they gave the Greeks a feeling of continuity from time immemorial to their own day; they strengthened the sense of nationhood; they were a source of religious and moral teachings.⁶⁴

One of Herodotus' most important inventions is his use of chronology; he does not start at the beginning of time. Instead, he limits everything he recounts to that which he knows from first hand sources, creating a more realistic and authentic history. In addition, Herodotus seems to include anything of interest in his inquiry; he compiled more than impersonal facts and dates. In his quest to relate the "great and

marvelous" deeds of the Greeks and barbarians, Herodotus extended his view of history beyond the Greek world to the lives, ways, and beliefs of the people with whom the Greeks and the Persians came into contact.

Herodotus is an effective lecturer and a storyteller. Indeed, Homer and his epics serve as the foundations for the Histories; as in Homer, travel is fundamental to wisdom, enlightened storytelling, and to fame and glory (*kleos*): how men will speak of you in the future, is of the utmost importance. This desire for future recognition serves to inspire people to act in a more honorable manner. Unlike Homer, however, Herodotus aims to preserve human achievements, thereby distinguishing himself from Homer by placing less emphasis on the role of the gods and more on mortal independence. He wished to invest with fame the great and marvelous deeds of **mortal** men, thereby empowering men and depicting them as much more than mere pawns for the gods.

Herodotus establishes the gods as parental figures; they simply wait for the mortals to act. If a particular mortal has made a poor decision, the gods will allow fate to intervene. Thus, the gods definitely play a large role in the Histories, but their role has changed, allowing mortal men the free will to act as they choose. Throughout the Histories the gods act as the bearers of inevitability; they assure that fate will perform its rightful duties. The gods seek retribution and vengeance from those who dare to step outside the normal boundaries of mortality, assuring that any action of insolence or overweening pride does not go

unpunished. Gods in Herodotus' inquiry are prevalent, but they lurk only in the shadows of punishment.

The arrogance of going outside the normal boundaries of human existence, or *hubris*, is a theme that pervades the Histories from start to finish. *Hubris* is a type of pride, a pride of comparing oneself to a god. In Herodotus, Xerxes represents the extreme case of a hubristic character. He is the quintessential Asian threat to Greece, whose campaign is actually the greatest threat that Greece has ever known. *Hubris*, however, is the fundamental element in his character. According to Evans,

The character of Xerxes had already taken shape in Greek literature by the time Herodotus wrote. He was a feckless prince, in sharp contrast to his father, and an archetypal Oriental despot ... unable to recognize the limits of his power.⁶⁵

Book seven of the Histories depicts the debate concerning whether or not Xerxes should invade Greece. Xerxes is presented here as indecisive, wavering from one decision to the next. He asks his personal aids for advice concerning the matter. Mardonius states that the Greeks always seem to be bickering, and that they are ripe for invasion; his analysis of the situation is wrong, because he overestimates the powerlessness of the Greek forces. Nevertheless, Xerxes is satisfied with this analysis, and decides to attack.

Artabanus, however, is fated to play the tragic advisor, the one whose opinion, however correct it may be, will not be heard. He is alert to past mistakes, and is therefore placed in a Nestor-like role. He is aware of Xerxes' *hubris*, so he attempts to tactfully warn his king of possible failure; he saves his harsh criticism for Mardonius, while still flattering the king. He speaks in proverbs as well:

'No man of sense, my lord,' Artabanus answered, 'could find any fault with the size of your army or the number of your ships. If you increase your forces, the two powers that I have in mind will be even worse enemies to you than they are now. I will tell you what they are – land and sea.

(VII.49)⁶⁶

Artabanus realizes that with such a large army, it is extremely difficult to feed and transport them, and he clearly sees Xerxes' actions as an attempt to transform the land and sea.

Although Artabanus presented his advice in a tactful, roundabout manner, Xerxes became enraged at this suggestion and reacts most violently. For fear of incurring the king's wrath, the royal advisors are discouraged from speaking directly, except in the most obscure ways.

Xerxes does finally decide to invade Greece, but it was the misinterpretation of a dream that convinced him; again, we cannot omit the influence of the gods from the Histories. Herodotus has thus far

placed this episode in very human terms, but he makes us see that the gods are truly involved.

Xerxes' dream convinces him that he must attack, for fear of failure if he does not. In his dream he sees that people have commented on his indecision, and he realizes the danger in being perceived as erratic and fickle. The dream allows him to see that many people consider him weak if he did not invade Greece; many followers wish their king to wield power and expand the empire. Xerxes believes that people would doubt the leader who holds no true conviction, so he comes to the conclusion that expanding the empire is the best course of action to take for his people, and primarily for himself.

By invading Greece, Xerxes attempted to impose his own will upon nature; Xerxes dared to yoke the Hellespont, to physically join Europe and Asia, continents which the gods have separated, in an attempt to conquer Greece and expand his empire – this hubris could not have gone unpunished by the gods.

Xerxes' hubris is apparent from the fact that his is the greatest of all armies ever sent by Asia against Greece; he has assembled all of Asia together in one great assault upon Europe. But Asia has never proven victorious against Europe, at Troy or in later encounters; Xerxes' own father was soundly beaten at Marathon only ten years previously. Surely it is folly and arrogance on Xerxes' part to think that his campaign against Greece would succeed.⁶⁷

The character of Xerxes serves throughout the Histories as a paradigm of Oriental arrogance and hubris; indeed, his greatness prevented him from exercising moderation in anything. Xerxes refused to recognize his proper limitations in any sphere whatsoever. He sees everything as beneath him – his army, foreign nations, even the Hellespont. He is the despot whose character displays the dangers of tyranny, and so demonstrates the importance of the freedom for which the Greeks fought. Xerxes not only dishonors various individuals by treating them without respect, but he does not respect natural boundaries, boundaries established by the gods.

The character of Xerxes embodies a tremendous threat to the Greek way of life, especially the free, independent *polis*. Xerxes represents those aspects of Persian culture, political and moral, that were the essence of the threat to Greece and the antithesis of all that the Greeks fought to preserve. As Hignett states:

Herodotus has given noble expression to the Greek political idea of a number of independent city states, uniting in a free association to defend their culture and their way of life ... The Persians too had their ideals ... but their political system was the rigid absolutism of all oriental monarchs under which the king alone was supreme and all his subjects, even the noblest of his own Persians, were no more than his slaves.⁶⁸

The heroes of the Histories are now the brave Greeks who defend their way of life against the *hubristic* Persian invaders, the men who take

responsibility for protecting their way of life against invasion. Indeed, the causes of the Persian war are more noble than the causes of the Trojan war depicted in the *Iliad* – the Greeks are not fighting over the slighted honor of an abducted women, they are now fighting to preserve the *polis*. The Homeric hero could no longer exist in the world of the city-state, where citizens felt a heavy obligation and responsibility to defend their way of life, not simply their honor.

Granted, the Homeric heroes still exist in Herodotus. In fact, Herodotus does not seem concerned with trying to prove that the gods or heroes even existed or that they were the ancestors of modern families and the founders of modern cities; rather, he takes both these points as givens. However, perhaps Herodotus' use of the heroes as fixed chronological and reference points illustrates his attempt to advance and promote mortal achievements, rather than focussing on the greatness of the heroes.

This movement to preserve and relate the great deeds of mortals is obvious in Herodotus. We will see the full realization of this movement, however, in Thucydides: "it remained for Thucydides to sever the threads that connected Greek prose records to the labyrinthine heroic and mythic past, and to make a rigorous attempt to explain human actions on the basis of *to anthropinon*."⁶⁹ He completely removed his history from the gods and heroes, choosing rather to invest his time in researching mortals and mortal heroes. Thucydides attempted to exclude the

fabulous elements and to explain even the earliest stories in terms of rational fact, by assuming that the heroes of the legends were no different than the people of his own day. He placed his history in strictly human terms, and completely disassociated himself from the world of the mythical and fabulous.

Of course, it is obvious to modern scholars that many of the "facts" which Thucydides discusses, especially in the first fifteen chapters of Book I, are actually historicized myths.⁷⁰ As Finley states, Thucydides here

Stripped the traditional accounts of irrational elements and contradictions, but [he] ... neither doubted the remaining hard core nor tried to extend it by research ... What Thucydides did was to take the common Greek traditions, divest them of what he considered to be their fake trappings, and reformulate them in a brilliantly coherent picture by thinking hard about them, using as his sole tools what he knew about the world of his own day, its institutions and its psychology.⁷¹

Thucydides did attempt, however unsuccessfully, to exclude fabulous elements and to explain even the earliest stories in terms of rational fact, by assuming that the heroes of the legends were no different than the people of his own day.

Thucydides focused on the Peloponnesian War for his History; he believed the Peloponnesian War to be the greatest of all wars in terms of people involved and the destruction wrought. He emphasizes

the war's destructive force, and in describing the immense scope of the war Homer is immediately called to mind:

The Peloponnesian War not only lasted for a long time, but throughout its course brought with it unprecedented suffering for Hellas. Never before had so many cities been captured and then devastated, whether by foreign armies or by the Hellenic powers themselves; never had there been so many exiles; never such a loss of life – both in actual warfare and in internal revolutions.

(I.23)

Truly history is born from the epic; Homer served to lay the foundations for early Greek history. Yet we see that in Thucydides there are no heroes of the scope and of the magnitude of the epic. There are no men with the same divine qualities as there are in ancient Greek literature. In Thucydides, the gods do not serve to create or elevate heroes; men are no longer “touched” by the gods, and men are now accountable and responsible for their actions. The Homeric hero could no longer exist, for, in historical writings, there was no place for them. Of course, Thucydides presents vivid accounts of great men, men celebrated through their actions in ruling or protecting the *polis*, but these men were in no way divine; gods no longer walk among them.

Thucydides, for example, omits the gods almost completely from his Histories. Gods, oracles, and omens, of the utmost importance in Herodotus, play no significant role for Thucydides; history was “in the most fundamental sense a strictly human affair,”⁷² able to be understood

and analyzed in terms of human behavior without the aid of the supernatural. Men in history are thus made either tragic or heroic through mortal accomplishment, not divine intervention.

Pericles, the greatest mortal hero in Thucydides, is depicted as an interesting blend between tyranny and democracy:

it is impossible to deny that he destroyed a form of government under which his city attained to the height of her prosperity and that he plunged her into a hopeless and demoralizing war. These are not the achievements of a great statesman. And so far as legislation goes, the Age of Pericles is a blank in the history of Athens. In what, then, did his greatness lie? The answer is, that it lay in the ideals which he cherished. He saw what a city might do for its citizens; and what its citizens might do for their city. In the years of peace his dreams took shape, and the result is before us in the Parthenon and the great Funeral Speech.⁷³

After the first year of the terrible war with the Spartans, in which Pericles involved his city, many citizens began to question what had been gained by such a sacrifice. The custom of Athenian burial furnished Pericles the opportunity to address those questions, as well as the opportunity to state at length his view of the issues which were really at stake. "In accordance with this custom, Pericles was chosen to speak over those who were first buried in the war; and Thucydides has availed himself of the opportunity to put into his mouth a sketch of Athenian life and institutions, which the world accepts as the ideal description of democratic government."⁷⁴

I declare that our city is an education to Greece, and I declare that in my opinion each single one of our citizens is able to show himself the rightful lord and owner of his own person, and do this, moreover, with exceptional grace and exceptional versatility. And to show that this is no empty boasting for the present occasion, but real tangible fact, you have only to consider the power which our city possesses and which has been won by those very qualities which I have mentioned. Athens, alone of the states we know, comes to her testing time in a greatness that surpasses what was imagined for her ... We do not need the praises of a Homer, or of anyone else whose words may delight us for the moment, but whose estimation of facts will fall short of what is really true.

(II.41)

Pericles, by virtue of his funeral oration, becomes a heroic figure.

Though he would later become hated by much of Greece, and the Athenians would speak of him with mixed feelings, he nevertheless became heroic through his political aims:

“the wish to give every citizen in and through the state, not only the blessings of peace and prosperity, but still the greater blessing of unimpeded action in all noble aspirations; to awaken in citizens such a devotion to their state as shall prove an unerring guide in conduct; to develop an equal balance between the individual and the citizen; to make duty a delight, and service an honour; to remove the sting from poverty and the charm from wealth; and to recognize benefits to the community as the only ground of civic distinction.⁷⁵

Conclusion

Divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes.⁷⁶

Divine nature gave us the country, human art built our cities.

We have seen the evolution of personal responsibility to one's state evolve from competitive individuals to a cooperative society: In the *Iliad*, Achilles was bound by no moral or social obligation to his people. He felt no heavy burden to protect and fight along side his comrades in the Trojan War. He was totally committed to achieving and preserving personal honor and glory. The shame culture in which the Homeric heroes lived dictated that fame and a good reputation mattered more than civic obedience and loyalty, and a brave and honorable soldier who exemplified this Homeric Ideology could cheat the grave through everlasting fame. A Homeric hero could be guaranteed that his story would never die, for the song of his deeds would be handed down to posterity through a centuries' old tradition.

However, even when the Homeric heroes achieved such a remarkable standing, they placed the responsibility for their actions upon the gods:

Whenever their lives were set aflame, through desire or suffering, or even reflection, the Homeric heroes knew that a god was at work. Thus dispossessed of their emotion, their shame, and their glory too, they were more cautious than anybody when it came to attributing to themselves the origin of their actions.⁷⁷

Through *ate* and *menos*, the Homeric heroes were controlled by the gods, and the true responsibility for any great achievements credited to them. Gods and semi-divine heroes physically walked the earth with mortal men, leaving little room for stories of mortal achievement to be told.

The appearance of the Homeric heroes covers a very brief period in Greek history, as they wiped one another out beneath the walls of Troy. The last of those ten disastrous years of war served, above all else, to lighten the earth by wiping out the entire race of heroes, the end products of frivolous unions between gods and men.

From under the shadow of the Homeric heroes, and from under the rule of kings and nobles, the *polis* arose, a city-state in which active participation from common citizens was the essential element for its survival. The Athenian *polis* did not simply survive, indeed, it rose to heights few empires have ever reached. Developments in technology, science, philosophy, and politics led to a cultural and societal evolution, in which the citizens were willing to break away from past, Homeric

preconceptions. There was a trend in Athenian society to de-mythologize the past, focusing more and more upon mortal achievement, rather than the divine shadow which loomed over history as a reminder of unattainable glory.

The literature of the period had also evolved from depicting the Homeric hero as someone who walks among men, a model for boldness and courage, to someone who lived only in the distant past, a relic of a long dead time in which men could only become great through the aid of the gods.

The Tragedies, performed for public entertainment, arose from the tension created when old heroic stories began to be looked upon in a political light, and through the cultural lens of the *polis*. The Tragic heroes, in attempting to take responsibility for their actions, either disregarded or dismissed completely the role gods play over the lives of men. These tragic figures, such as Creon, aspired to use their human faculties and reasoning to govern a fledgling *polis*, usually overstepping divine boundaries in the process. The difficulty of ruling or taking personal responsibility for one's actions, while the gods still played a prominent role in society, is made explicit in the tragedies. The evolving *polis* could not function successfully while the gods still interfered in the lives of men.

Finally, in an attempt to focus on strictly mortal achievements, history began to take form. The Gods and the Homeric heroes became

simply regarded as chronological and reference points. Thucydides takes this evolution a step further, by completely omitting gods and heroes from his history. Mortal men could now become heroic through service to the state.

The Athenian *polis* had evolved, and it had grown out of the Homeric heroes. Worship to the gods was now considered to be more of a social burden, rather than a moral obligation. While the fifth century Athenians would never tire of hearing the entertaining stories of heroes past, they clearly understood that these stories were simply myths and legends, and that true heroism could be only achieved through service to the their *polis*.

Notes

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- ¹ Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Carmina*, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York, 1966), 171.
- ² Roberto Callaso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. (New York, 1993), 337.
- ³ Mircera Eliade, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. (New York, London, 1987), vol. 6, 302.
- ⁴ C. Kerényi, *The Heroes of the Greeks*. (London, 1959), 3.
- ⁵ Paul Veyne, *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination*. Trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago, London, 1988), 76.
- ⁶ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p. 19.
- ⁷ Michael Reck, *An Introduction to the Iliad*. (New York, 1994), 3.
- ⁸ Frost, *Greek Society*, p. 47.
- ⁹ Frost, *Greek Society*, p.48.
- ¹⁰ Frank J. Frost, *Greek Society*. (New York, 1971), 35.
- ¹¹ M. I. Finley, ed., *The Greek Historians: The Essence of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius*. Viking Portable Library (Harmondsworth, England, 1978), 14.
- ¹² Chester G. Starr, *The Aristocratic Temper of Greek Civilization*. (Oxford, 1992), 65.
- ¹³ Edward Hussey, *The Presocratics*. (Cambridge, 1972), 15.
- ¹⁴ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p. 89.
- ¹⁵ Ernest Barker, ed. and trans., *The Politics of Aristotle*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Galaxy Books, 1962).
- ¹⁶ *The Oxford English Dictionary. Compact edition*. (Oxford, 1971), vol. 1, p. 1296.
- ¹⁷ Titus Maccius Plautus, *Bacchides*, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York, 1966), 10.
- ¹⁸ Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 17.
- ¹⁹ Seth L. Schein, *The Mortal Hero*. (Los Angeles, 1984), 1.

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- ²⁰ Frost, *Greek Society*, p. 5.
- ²¹ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p.105.
- ²² Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 91.
- ²³ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p. 91.
- ²⁴ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p. 115.
- ²⁵ John Jones, *On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy*. (Stanford, 1962), 179.
- ²⁶ Frost, *Greek Society*, P. 15.
- ²⁷ Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 100.
- ²⁸ Kerényi, *the Heroes of the Greeks*, p. 346.
- ²⁹ Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 96.
- ³⁰ Moses Hadas and Morton Smith. *Heroes and Gods: Spiritual Biographies in Antiquity*. Religious Perspectives 13 (New York, 1965), 10.
- ³¹ Frost, *Greek Society*, p. 122.
- ³² Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 101.
- ³³ E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*. (Los Angeles, 1951), 3.
- ³⁴ Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, p.3.
- ³⁵ Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, p.5.
- ³⁶ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p.94.
- ³⁷ Sheila Murnaghan, *Introduction to the Iliad*. (Cambridge, 1997), xxxiv.
- ³⁸ Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p. 177.
- ³⁹ Murnaghan, *Introduction to the Iliad*, p. xxxvii.
- ⁴⁰ E. T. Owen, *The Story of the Iliad*. (Ann Arbor, 1966), 223.
- ⁴¹ Schein, *The Mortal Hero*, p.150.

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- ⁴² Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, pp. 102-103.
- ⁴³ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p. 273.
- ⁴⁴ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey. (Princeton, 1961), p. 575-845.
- ⁴⁵ Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Carmina*, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York, 1966), 188.
- ⁴⁶ Euripides, *Hippolytos*, trans. Robert Bagg (New York, 1973), 19.
- ⁴⁷ Aristotle, *The Poetics*, trans. Ingram Bywater, ed. Richard McKeon. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 687.
- ⁴⁸ Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. (New York, 1988), 38.
- ⁴⁹ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, 44.
- ⁵⁰ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, 32.
- ⁵¹ Edith Hall, introduction, *Antigone*. (New York, 1994), xv.
- ⁵² Hall, introduction, *Antigone*, p. xvi.
- ⁵³ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p. 38
- ⁵⁴ Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*. (Cambridge, 1986), 55.
- ⁵⁵ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p.41.
- ⁵⁶ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p.41.
- ⁵⁷ Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, p.54.
- ⁵⁸ Vernant, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p. 44.
- ⁵⁹ Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe condita, Praefatio*, trans. Norbert Guterman. (New York, 1966), 195.
- ⁶⁰ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p. 13.
- ⁶¹ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, pp. 233-234.
- ⁶² Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p. 58.
- ⁶³ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p. 26
- ⁶⁴ Finley, *The Greek Historians*, p. 13.

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- ⁶⁵ J.A.S. Evans, *Herodotus*. (Boston, 1982), 99.
- ⁶⁶ Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey De Selincourt. (New York, 1954).
- ⁶⁷ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p.209.
- ⁶⁸ C. Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1952.), pp. 93-94.
- ⁶⁹ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p. 238
- ⁷⁰ Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus*, p.3.
- ⁷¹ M.I. Finley, ed., *The Greek Historians: The Essence of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius*. Viking Portable Library (Harmondsworth, England, 1978), 3.
- ⁷² M.I. Finley, introduction, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, by Thucydides. (New York, 1972), 20.
- ⁷³ Evelyn Abbott, *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens*. (New York, 1895), pp. v-vi.
- ⁷⁴ Evelyn Abbott, *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens*, p.229.
- ⁷⁵ Evelyn Abbott, *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens*, pp. 364-365.
- ⁷⁶ Varro, *De Re Rustica*, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York, 1966), 46.
- ⁷⁷ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, p. 93.

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