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AGAMEMNON'S TEST OF THE ARMY IN *ILIAD* BOOK 2 AND THE FUNCTION OF HOMERIC *AKHOS*

ERWIN F. COOK



Abstract. I offer a reading of the *Diapeira* episode based on the semantics and thematics of *akhos*. My findings resolve a *crux* at 2.171, where Homer identifies *akhos* as the reason Odysseus is not launching his ship. Homer clearly signposts the nature of Odysseus' *akhos* as grief over loss of *timē* in Athene's subsequent speech to him, but the reference is proleptic and has consequently eluded the commentators.

THE *DIAPEIRA* EPISODE FROM *ILIAD* BOOK 2 in which Agamemnon tests his men is remarkable in many respects, not the least of them being the sheer number of interpretive *cruces* found within it.¹ In what follows I offer an integrated reading of the episode based on the semantics and thematics of *akhos* ("grief") in Homer.² I begin by distinguishing between

¹ The principal *cruces* are rehearsed by Katzung 1960, esp. 8–15. For ease of reference I follow the text of Allen's *editio minor* unless otherwise noted. Underlinings are not used to mark formulae but words and verse groups central to the discussion. All translations are my own.

² The IE etymology of *akhos* is unclear and of little help to us here: cf. Chantraine 1968–80 and Frisk 1954–73, both *s.v.*, and below, n. 67. There are some sixty-three examples of the noun form in Homer, and for the most part the situations to which they are applied fall into a few simple categories. In slightly over half its occurrences, *akhos* describes an emotional response to loss, in particular the death of *philoī* on the battlefield. At least once it describes fearful anguish over one's own safety (*Il.* 20.282; cf. 13.86, 417, *Od.* 12.250, 22.188). On at least four other occasions, it is applied to pain felt over absent friends and loved ones (*Od.* 4.100, 108, 15.358, 24.315; cf. *Il.* 1.240–41, *Od.* 11.195–96, 19.124–36). Once it is used of nostalgia for one's paternal land (*Od.* 19.167).

two complementary types of *akhos* and go on to show that the episode is organized by intersecting versions of a thematic pattern that I reconstruct from the *comparanda*, chiefly Books 1, 8, 9, and 15 of the *Iliad*.³ The first type of *akhos* is caused by extrinsic loss, most commonly of *philoî* ("family and friends") who may be dead or simply absent. Responses to such loss vary from yearning to lamentation and even flight for home. The second type of *akhos* is caused by loss of *timē* ("honor and status") either by an individual or the group to which he belongs. Those who experience it often respond by retaliating or continuing to fight. These semantic categories are by no means exclusive: this is most apparent on the battlefield, where loss of life constitutes a loss of *timē* that retaliation by the victim's *philoî* is meant to recover.

The seeds of both types of *akhos* are to be found in Agamemnon's speech. Specifically, Agamemnon appeals to the army's *akhos* in order to persuade them to flee for home in the expectation that the *gerontes* ("senior advisers") will use his own words to transform their *akhos* into grief over loss of *timē*. When the flight begins, however, it is a *gerōn*, Odysseus, who feels *akhos* over the suddenly real prospect of losing *timē* before he recovers his composure and restrains the troops as Agamemnon had hoped.

My larger findings help resolve an ancient *crux* at 2.171, where Homer apparently feels compelled to explain why Odysseus is not attempting to launch his ship and then identifies *akhos* as the reason for his inaction. Homer clearly signposts the nature of Odysseus' *akhos* as grief over loss of *timē* in Athene's speech to him, but the reference is proleptic and has consequently eluded the commentators. The nature of his *akhos* also shows that verse 179 of Athene's speech should be written as $\mu\eta\delta'$

On at least seven occasions, *akhos* reflects a sense of pained outrage (*Od.* 11.279, 16.87, 18.274, 18.348, 19.129, 20.286, 21.299). Thrice it refers to humiliation at being proven inferior to someone else (*Il.* 6.336, *Od.* 21.249–50, 412). Such *akhos* is caused by a loss of *timē*. Corresponding to this are cases in which *akhos* refers to pained indignation over losing *timē* (see below). Conversely, Odysseus the beggar declares that one does not feel *akhos* if he is struck while fighting over his own possessions (*Od.* 17.470). In such cases, indignation is unjustified.

³ For the purposes of this study I follow Lord 1960, 68, in defining theme as "groups of ideas regularly used in telling a tale in the formulaic manner of traditional song." The most detailed study of the thematics of *akhos* in Homer is that of Nagy 1979, esp. 78–102. In what follows, I lay particular stress on *akhos* caused by a loss of *timē*. On intersecting themes in oral narrative, cf. e.g., Arend 1933, Lord 1960, esp. 68–98, Sowa 1984, Lowenstam 1993, Wilson 2002a, esp. 31–33, 40–53, and 165–74, and for the types of thematic transformations uncovered in my analysis, cf. Muellner 1996, 94–132, esp. 94 (on the delay of the "term for a central theme . . . until after the theme itself has been deployed") and 128–29.

ἔτ' ἐρώει and not as μηδέ τ' ἐρώει, so that Odysseus is described as feeling the urge to fight from the time he begins to experience *akhos* over lost *timē*. I also argue that the behavior of the *gerontes* present at the council in which Agamemnon announces his plan to test the troops is to be distinguished from the behavior of the *basileis* and *exokhoi andres* ("kings and leaders") Odysseus addresses at 2.190–97. As a consequence, verse 194 should be punctuated as a statement and not as a question. Finally, my results help elucidate the remark that the troops are *akhnumenoi* at 2.270 and that Agamemnon is feeling *akhos* at 9.9.⁴

I

The *Diapheira* begins on the first day of battle in the *Iliad*. During the previous night, Zeus had sent Agamemnon a false dream promising victory to the Greek forces. Agamemnon orders the heralds to assemble the troops, but before addressing them he convenes the *gerontes* to whom he relates the dream.⁵ He also reveals that he means to test his men by urging them "to flee" (*pheugein*) in their ships. The *gerontes* for their part are to "restrain [the troops] with words" (*erētuein epeessin*: 2.73–75).

Agamemnon has every reason to assume that the troops will need restraining.⁶ They have been thoroughly demoralized by a plague, which he himself caused when he dishonored the priest Khruses. They also watched Agamemnon compound his error by dishonoring Akhilleus, who retaliated by withdrawing from battle along with a contingent of 2,500 men (2.683–85). Agamemnon is thus responsible for significantly weakening his own forces through disease and infighting, and he knows they resent him for it.⁷ He is not entirely certain that the army will even arm for battle (2.72; cf. 2.83).⁸

⁴ Throughout, I use "Homer" to refer to the authorial voice. I take no position here on the origins of the poems or the manuscript traditions.

⁵ On the number of *gerontes* and its importance for interpreting the episode, cf. Leaf 1900–1902, ad 2.193. They are traditionally identified based on *Il.* 2.404 as Agamemnon and Menelaos, the two Aiantes, Akhilleus, Diomedes, Idomeneus, Nestor, and Odysseus.

⁶ Point is thus given to the verbal echo of ἐρητεύειν at 2.99. Note that the verb is repeated seven times during the episode (2.75, 97, 99, 164, 180, 189, 211).

⁷ Cf. 2.235–40, 375–78 (with Kirk 1985, ad 2.233–34 and 377–78), 9.103–13, 13.107–14, 14.49–51, 19.85–86a.

⁸ Katzung 1960, 48: "... eine gewisse Unlust des Heeres nach Achills öffentlicher Kampfabgabe und Drohung und nachdem er die ihm widerfahrene schlechte Behandlung und den ihm widerfahrenen Undank verallgemeinert hatte (in 158ff. und 229f.), ist sogar Konsequent."

Agamemnon's strategy in the assembly is to test the troops by demoralizing them still further. He wisely avoids calling attention to his own mistakes and, as he will elsewhere do, attempts to shift the responsibility onto Zeus for his own failure to capture Troy after nine years of fighting.⁹

- 110 ὦ φίλοι ἥρωες Δαναοί, θεράποντες Ἄρης,
 Ζεὺς με μέγα Κρονίδης ἄτη ἐνέδησε βαρεῖη,
σχέτλιος, ὃς πρὶν μὲν μοι ὑπέσχετο καὶ κατένευσεν¹⁰
Ἴλιον ἐκπέρσαντ' εὐτείχεον ἀπονέεσθαι
 νῦν δὲ κακὴν ἀπάτην βουλευσάτο, καί με κελεύει
 115 δυσκλέα Ἄργος ἰκέσθαι, ἐπεὶ πολὺν ὤλεσα λαόν.
 οὔτω που Διὶ μέλλει ὑπερμενέει φίλον εἶναι,
 ὃς δὴ πολλῶν πολιῶν κατέλυσε κάρηνα
 ἡδ' ἔτι καὶ λύσει· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον.¹¹
αἰσχρὸν γὰρ τόδε γ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι,
 120 μὰψ οὔτω τοιόνδε τοσόνδε τε λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν
 ἄπρηκτον πόλεμον πολεμίζειν ἡδὲ μάχεσθαι
 ἀνδράσι παυροτέροισι, τέλος δ' οὐ πῶ τι πέφανται

 ἐννέα δὲ βεβάσσι Διὸς μεγάλου ἐνιαυτοί,
 135 καὶ δὴ δοῦρα σέσηπε νεῶν καὶ σπάρτα λέλυνται·
 αἰ δέ που ἡμέτεραί τ' ἄλοχοι καὶ νήπια τέκνα
 ἦατ' ἐνὶ μεγάροις ποτιδέγμεναι· ἄμμι δὲ ἔργον
 αὐτῶς ἀκράαντον, οὐ εἵνεκα δεῦρ' ἰκόμεσθα.
 ἀλλ' ἄγεθ', ὥς ἂν ἐγὼ εἴπω, πειθώμεθα πάντες·
 140 φεύγωμεν σὺν νηυσὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν·
 οὐ γὰρ ἔτι Τροίην αἰρήσομεν εὐρυάγυιαν. (2.110–41)
- 110 Friends, Danaan heroes, servants of Ares,
 Great Zeus, son of Kronos, has bound me in heavy deception,
the wretch, he promised me once and nodded his head to it,
that I would return home after sacking Ilion with its sturdy walls.
 But as it is he planned evil deceit, and he orders me

⁹ *Il.* 19.86b–139; cf. Edwards 1991, ad 19.86–87.

¹⁰ *Il.* 2.350, 353 (cf. 1.528–30) shows Agamemnon means quite literally that Zeus nodded his head in assent; cf. Wilamowitz 1920, 268, and von der Mühl 1952, 47. At the very least, this suggests that Nestor's subsequent reference to the nod and thunder of Zeus is not an ad hoc invention of the poet. It seems likely that Agamemnon and Nestor are referring to an event known to the audience from a variant, otherwise unattested tradition.

¹¹ Agamemnon's reference to the *kratos* of Zeus may be pointed. Nagy 1979, 81–82, calls attention to how the Akhaioi experience *akhos* whenever the Trojans have *kratos* on the battlefield. In the present case, the *kratos* of Zeus directly manifests itself in the *kratos* of the Trojans and is thus a source of *akhos* for the Akhaioi.

- 115 *to go back home in shame* (dusklea), *since I lost a great host*.
 It must be how Zeus wants it, he of surpassing might,
 who has already destroyed the heads of many cities,
 and in the future will destroy still more, *for his power is greatest*.
But this is shameful (aiskhron), *even for future generations to hear*
about,
- 120 *that an Akhaian force so great and so grand vainly warred*
 an indecisive war like this, and battled fewer men with no end in
 sight.
-
- 135 Already nine years of great Zeus have gone by,
 and the planks of our ships are rotten, their ropes unraveled,
 and I suppose our wives and little children
 sit around at home waiting for us, while our business
 remains unfinished, on account of which we came.
 But come on, let us all do as I say:
- 140 *let us flee* (pheugōmen) *with our ships to the beloved land of our*
fathers,
 for there is no longer any hope of conquering Troy with its wide
 roads.

In a single stroke Agamemnon rouses the army's sense of betrayal by the gods, their frustration and despondency over the war effort, longing for their homeland, concern that if they don't return soon they never will, and anxiety over the state of their households, in particular, their wives and children. Agamemnon's rhetoric is so effective that it requires an act of divine intervention to prevent them from sailing for home on the spot: "he disturbed the spirit in their breasts" (τοῖσι δὲ θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσιν ὄρινε), whereupon they raced to the shore and "started shouting to each other to lay hold of their ships and drag them into the shining sea" (τοὶ δ' ἀλλήλοισι κέλευον / ἄπτεσθαι νηῶν ἢ δ' ἐλκόμεν εἰς ἄλα δῖαν: 142, 151b–52).

An ever-vigilant Here notices that the army is about to return home "contrary to fate" and reformulates Agamemnon's command to flee as an indignant question to Athene: "are the Argives *going to flee* homeward just like that, *to the beloved land of their fathers*?" (οὕτω δὴ οἰκόνδε φίλῃν ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν / Ἀργεῖοι φεύξονται; 158–59a).¹² She continues with a pointed restatement of Agamemnon's claim that Zeus is

¹² I here depart from Allen's text (1902–12) and punctuate Here's sentence as a question, following Leaf 1900–1902, Mazon 1961–65, Willcock 1978–84, and Ameis, Hentze, and Cauer 1905–32. On the relationship between Agamemnon's command to the *gerontes* and Athene's to Odysseus, cf. Lesky 1961, 28.

ordering him to return home “infamous . . . since I lost a great host” and that doing so is “shameful . . . even for future generations to hear about” (115, 119). “The Argives,” she declares, “would leave behind a *boast* for Priam and the Trojans / Argive Helen, on account of whom *many Akhaioi died at Troy*” (καὶ δὲ κεν εὐχολήν Πριάμῳ καὶ Τρωσὶ λίποιεν / Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην, ἧς εἵνεκα πολλοὶ Ἀχαιῶν / ἐν Τροίῃ ἀπόλοντο: 160–62a). And she concludes by asking Athene to do precisely what Agamemnon asked the *gerontes* to do in the council: “*try to restrain each warrior with your gentle words*” (σοῖς ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρήτυε φῶτα ἕκαστον: 164).

When Athene arrives at the Greek camp, however, the narrative takes a surprising turn and introduces an interpretive *crux* that has important implications for our understanding of the entire episode. Despite their knowledge of Agamemnon’s plan and Agamemnon’s explicit orders to do so, at first none of the *gerontes* is described as attempting to restrain the troops from sailing for home. Still more surprising, when she comes upon Odysseus, he seems to be restraining *himself* from doing so:

εὔρεν ἔπειτ’ Ὀδυσῆα, Διὶ μῆτιν ἀτάλαντον,
 ἐσταότ’· οὐδ’ ὅ γε νηὶς εὐστέλμοιο μελαίνης
 ἄπτετ’, ἐπεὶ μιν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἵκανε
(2.169–71)

She found Odysseus then, the equal of Zeus in intelligence,
*standing around, but he at least was not laying hold of his well-benched,
 black ship, since akhos kept coming on him, heart and spirit.*

On this passage, Geoffrey Kirk remarks (1985, 2.170–71):

Odysseus, unlike the others, had not laid hand on his ship in readiness to launch it “since great grief was coming upon his heart and spirit” (171). That he should be upset by the turn of events is understandable, but surely there was no question of him (or any of the others who had attended the council) joining in the active preparations for the flight, knowing as he did Agamemnon’s by now obviously mistaken purpose in proposing it? bT tried to reduce the anomaly by taking οὐδ’ ὅ γε to imply “nor did he (or any other of the chieftains) . . .”; but the real problem lies in the causal clause which follows: “he (or they) did not do so *because of great grief*”—the only logical reason for holding back being his knowledge that Agamemnon’s proposal of flight was a trick. An even less likely suggestion is recorded in Eustathius, 197.4 (Erbse I, 218), that not touching his ship was a sign to the others to desist.

As Kirk observes, the problem had already exercised the Scholiasts. It is not modern.¹³ Nevertheless, I suggest that the problem lies not, as Kirk proposes, with causal *epei*, but rather with *akhos*. To arrive at the correct meaning of the term, however, it will be necessary to consider the narrative context of these verses in some detail. In doing so, I hope to establish four basic points: that Agamemnon has clear reasons for testing not only the troops, but also the *gerontes*; that the most plausible interpretation of how the *gerontes* respond to the army's flight is not only compatible but identical with that of Odysseus; that *akhos* accurately represents the emotions that drive the army to their ships and that at verse 2.270 Homer in fact does so when he says they are *akhnumenoi*; and finally that the *akhos* of Odysseus at verse 171 cannot refer to this panic or to his being "upset by the turn of events."

II

Let us back up and consider the motivations and behavior of the principal actors, beginning with Agamemnon's test of the army and his hoped for outcome. Heiden asserts that "the precise motives of this plan remain somewhat obscure despite much scholarly discussion."¹⁴ Kirk, who finds the test weakly motivated, is even more disparaging:

the proposal to 'test them with words', which turns out to mean ordering their immediate return home, is introduced quite unexpectedly. It is not

¹³ The passage from Eustathius to which Kirk refers indicates a lively debate in antiquity (p. 197; cf. also Σ2.144, 170): "Ὅτι τοσοῦτον ἀμηχανεῖ ὁ πολυμήχανος Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ οὕτως αὐτοῦ τὴν κραδίαν ἄχος περιήλθεν ὥστε οὐδ' ἦπτετο τῆς ἑαυτοῦ νηὸς καθελκομένης ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτοῦ θεραπόντων εἰς θάλασσαν. ἄλλοι δὲ τὸ «οὐδ' ὅ γε νηὸς εὐστέλμοιο μελαίνης ἠπτετο» ἄλλως νοοῦσι λέγοντες, ὅτι κἂν οἱ ἄλλοι τῶν οἰκείων ἦπτοντο νηῶν, ἀλλ' Ὀδυσσεὺς οὐκ ἐποίει οὕτω, ἀλλ' ἴστατο ἔργῳ διδάσκων, ὅτι οὐ δεῖ οὕτω ποιεῖν. εἰ γὰρ ἔδει νηῶν ἅπτεσθαι, ἐποίει ἂν οὕτω καὶ αὐτός. διὰ τί δὲ τοῦτο ἐποίει; (ν.171) «(ἐπεὶ)» φησίν, «(ἄχος καρδίαν καὶ θυμὸν ἵκανε)», τουτέστιν ἐμπράκτως ἐδήλου, ὅπερ ἐβούλετο, οἷα λαλεῖν οὐκ ἔχων ὑπὸ ἀμηχανίας. ἄχος γὰρ κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς ἡ ἄφρωνος ἀνία παρὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ στερητικὸν μόριον καὶ τὸ χαίνειν. τινὲς δὲ ὑπερβατῶς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον νοήσαντες οὕτως εἶπον· εὗρε τὸν Ὀδυσσεύα ἐστῶτα, ἐπεὶ μιν ἄχος καρδίαν καὶ θυμὸν ἵκανε· οὐδὲ ἦπτετο τῆς οἰκείας νηός.

¹⁴ Heiden 1991, 4; cf. Dodds 1954, 16, Beye 1966, 123, and 1993, 117–18, Willcock 1976, ad 2.73–74, Whitman 1982, 73, and the Analysts cited below at n. 15. For a historical survey of scholarship on the passage, again see Katzung 1960 and Knox and Russo 1989. Debate has typically focused on why Agamemnon does not inform the troops of the dream, although the reasons for this seem obvious enough: if, as in fact happens, the Greeks fail to capture Troy, Agamemnon would be exposed as lacking divine support.

suggested by the Dream, nor is it a regular device for getting the troops into action; in fact there is nothing really similar anywhere else in the *Iliad*. . . . Agamemnon's addition of the phrase ἡ θέμις ἐστί, 'which is customary (or lawful)', seems designed to counter any feeling of surprise or sense of the unusual by the council-members. . . . It is possible that the poet also found them useful as a means of disguising an awkward sequence of ideas or conjunction of themes.¹⁵

It is true, of course, that Agamemnon nowhere else tests his men, though one might fairly ask whether and where another "testing" scene would be welcome, especially after this one.¹⁶ Kirk also claims that the army's flight to the ships proves he was "mistaken" in doing so. On the contrary, their flight shows Agamemnon had very good reasons for testing his men. He understands they are demoralized and attempts to apply a bit of reverse psychology on them in the expectation that his speech will be rebutted by the *gerontes*, who are to prevent their flight "with words." The problem lies not with the plan, but its execution, and above all with the subsequent failure of the *gerontes* to restrain the army. Moreover, the plan is, in the end, completely successful: once Odysseus reconvenes the assembly, he, Nestor, and Agamemnon deliver speeches that have the army shouting their enthusiastic approval of the war effort. Agamemnon thus ultimately elicits both of the responses he hoped for—an initial

¹⁵ Kirk 1985, ad 2.73–75; for the Analytic basis of his arguments, see esp. Leaf 1900–1902, 46–47, and ad 2.73, Cauer 1923, 633, and von der Mühl 1952, 35, and the survey by Katzung 1960, esp. 8–10, 32, 50–51. It will be observed that I offer a somewhat more charitable assessment of Agamemnon's leadership abilities than is currently fashionable among Homerists, and some would argue that the subtle and complex strategies I attribute to him have no place in oral poetry. Yet my interpretation is fully in keeping with his behavior elsewhere in the poem, above all in Book 9 where his devious offer of gifts provokes an exasperated Akhilleus to declare that he "hates like the gates of Hades the man who hides one thing in his mind and says another" (9.312–13; cf. Owen 1947, 21; Katzung 1960, 51 n. 47). In that scene, his manipulation of social convention in offering gifts that would affirm the subordinate status of their recipient assumes a high degree of sophistication, not only on the part of Agamemnon, but also of an audience able to recognize hidden motives and to assess Akhilleus' response accordingly. On the scene, see Wilson (1999 and 2002a, 71–108) with extensive further biblio., and for the basis of such behavior in the dynamics of Homeric society, cf. most succinctly Beidelman 1989.

¹⁶ Kirk 1985, ad 2.225–42, suggests that Thersites infers from the opposition of Odysseus and the other generals that Agamemnon has no intention of returning home and has therefore merely been testing his men. Of course one could also argue that Thersites' response assumes such testing is indeed *themis* and was recognized as such by the army. Note that no one, *not even Thersites*, complains that they were only doing what Agamemnon told them to do (cf. Wilamowitz 1920, 265).

impulse to flee and subsequent restraint by the *gerontes*—but his rhetoric proves too effective in the first instance and not effective enough in the second. Agamemnon's test is thus a relatively straightforward attempt to motivate the troops to arm themselves for battle and as such can be fairly described as *themis*.¹⁷

But this is not all that is accomplished by testing the troops. After Agamemnon narrates his dream to the *gerontes*, Nestor hints at his suspicion that it may not be trustworthy (2.79–83). Homer, to be sure, denies that Agamemnon has such doubts before he summons the *gerontes* (2.37): Agamemnon's desire to motivate them to arm for battle should therefore be seen as the primary reason for his test. Nevertheless, as Sheppard observed long ago, by ordering the generals to restrain their men, Agamemnon effectively shifts responsibility for failure to capture Troy onto the *gerontes*,¹⁸ and he does so in a manner that will still allow him to take credit for their success. Such motives need not be viewed as entirely self-serving, as the war effort directly depends on his ability to maintain his authority over the army. Nestor thus fully supports Agamemnon's strategy. Still more significant is that, in demanding a public demonstration of loyalty and support, Agamemnon can also be seen as testing the *gerontes* themselves.¹⁹ This would be both natural and appropriate in the aftermath of the public rebellion of Akhilleus, himself a *gerōn*.

The army's mood and Agamemnon's aims and strategy in testing them are thus tolerably clear, but the subsequent behavior of the *gerontes* is not. Homer says explicitly that Agamemnon "disturbed the heart in their chests, of everyone in the crowd, as many as did not hear the council" (τοῖσι δὲ θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ὄρινε / πᾶσι μετὰ πληθύν, ὅσοι οὐ βουλῆς ἐπάκουσαν: 2.142–43). Homer thus seems to exclude the *gerontes* present at the council from succumbing to these feelings. Nevertheless, once the panic begins, only Odysseus is described as opposing the flight of the troops and then only after Athene intervenes. Not only the troops but the *gerontes* as well fail Agamemnon's test.

¹⁷ Wilamowitz 1920, 269–71; Katzung 1960, 50–51, citing D. H. *Opuscula* 320 (Usener-Rademacher). We can thus link Agamemnon's test to Nestor's subsequent advice at 2.360–68. I do not consider the explanation offered here to be incompatible with that of Knox and Russo 1989 who draw an analogy to the Holy Wars of Ancient Israel in which it becomes necessary after a divine call to battle to expel cowards from the army.

¹⁸ Sheppard 1922, 27; cf. Owen 1947, 21, Whitman 1958, 158 n. 13, Katzung 1960, 50–51, Haft 1990b, 41, and Heiden 1991, 4–5; Donlan 1979, 60 gives this interpretation a basis in the anthropology of Homeric society.

¹⁹ Again, see Donlan 1979, 60.

Moreover, the behavior of Odysseus himself is peculiar. What is most surprising is that Homer should offer an explanation for why Odysseus is not attempting to launch his ship or that the reason he was not doing so is his *akhos*. What we might fairly expect to have explained under the circumstances is why he is not restraining his men. Like the other *gerontes*, he even has reason to believe Troy will fall, if not that very day, then at least in the not too distant future. For the latter possibility, Odysseus has the evidence, not only of Agamemnon's dream but also the prophecy of Kalkhas, of which he himself presently reminds the army, and an omen sent by Zeus to which Agamemnon alludes (2.111–13) and which Nestor explicitly mentions (2.348–53).

The word order and language of verses 170–71 are significant in this context: the emphatic, verse-initial position of *hestaota* contrasts Odysseus' present inactivity with the rapid movements of the troops.²⁰ The particle *ge* furthers and sharpens this same contrast by restricting the force of demonstrative *ho* to mean "he at least." Athene thus finds Odysseus standing around inactive, but he at least was not, as the others were, laying hold of his ship.²¹ Point is thus given to the verbal echo between verse 152, in which the soldiers were fleeing to the beach and shouting to one another to "lay hold of their ships" (*haptesthai nēōn*), and verses 170–71, in which Odysseus "was not laying hold of his" (*oud'*

²⁰ In his entry on ἵστημι, O'Sullivan (1955–present) locates ἑσταότ[α] at verse 170 under heading 2d of the perfect stem: "stand inactive, idle (w. notion of culpability)." In the perfect, the idea of prior motion is sometimes present (e.g., *Od.* 18.343–44), but more often it is so distant as to cease to be felt (e.g., *Od.* 11.583). The perfect is contrasted with a verb of motion at *Il.* 12.367–68 and specifically contrasted with flight at 11.408–10. It describes standing around inactive while grieving, *Il.* 23.283–84; cp. 17.434–39, 445, the most striking example being Menelaos' rebuke to his galloping horses, at *Il.* 23.443: μή μοι ἐρύκεσθον μηδ' ἑστατον ἀχνυμένω κῆρ. At *Il.* 2.320 it describes cessation of motion. Our closest parallel to 2.170 comes from *Il.* 5.485–86, where Sarpedon accuses Hektor of standing around inactive (Athene finds Odysseus standing at his ship) and not urging the rest of the army to stand firm (Odysseus is not restraining the army's flight "with words"). Hektor thereupon ranges through the battlefield brandishing two spears (Odysseus grabs the *skēptron*) and successfully rallies the troops (Odysseus rallies the troops in the assembly).

²¹ I assume a narrative ellipse so that Odysseus is to be imagined as running from the *agora* (2.85–87) to his ship on the seashore (2.170–71 and 14.27–36 with 1.308–11) and back again to retrieve the *skēptron* (2.183–87). The alternative is that Homer has not given the matter much thought, so that when he shifts scenes from the assembly to the ships along the shore, he nonchalantly locates Odysseus beside his own ship for the sake of the contrasts one finds at verses 170–71 and 179–80. Homer's visualization of the camp is sufficiently vivid that neither he nor the audience could well imagine Odysseus and his men as being on the shore during the assembly from where it would have been impossible to hear Agamemnon's speech.

ho ge *nēos* . . . / *hapteto*).²² Nevertheless, Odysseus is also described as making no effort to prevent the army's flight, and when Athene arrives, she repeats Here's words to her almost verbatim: "*are you (pl.) going to flee / homeward to your dear paternal land just like that? . . . Rather go now down throughout the army of the Akhaioi, hold back no longer / but try to restrain each warrior with your gentle words*" (179–80; cf. 174–75). Odysseus does not protest his innocence but instead sets out to restrain the troops.

Ideally, any interpretation of the scene will take into account Odysseus' knowledge of the test, dream, and prophecies; Athene's accusatory "*are you going to flee?*"; and above all the behavior of the troops and the other *gerontes*. The most plausible interpretation of Odysseus' own actions is that he has not himself participated in the flight but that he is momentarily paralyzed by the tumultuous charge of the army. A similar response is implied for Agamemnon, who is still in the assembly when Odysseus later retrieves the scepter (on the significance of which cf. Palaima, 1995). The participle *hestaota*, which describes Odysseus as "*standing around inactive*" at verse 170, would thus convey his response to the army's flight, and there is no further change in his behavior until Athene arrives. When Athene presently accuses him and the other Achaeans of intending to flee, she does so in order to spur him to action, as the Scholiasts observe.²³

But how then are we to imagine the other *gerontes* as behaving in this scene? We have already seen that verse 143 describes them collectively as remaining unaffected by Agamemnon's speech. The verse is easily reconciled with the proposed interpretation of Odysseus' own behavior, and one might assume a similar response on the part of his fellow *gerontes*, but the issue is complicated by the punctuation of verse 194, which has implications for the behavior of them both. After Athene's epiphany and *parainesis*, Odysseus sets about restraining the kings and other leaders "*with words,*" that is, in the manner in which Agamemnon had instructed the *gerontes* to restrain *the troops*:

"Ὅν τινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἔξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη,
τὸν δ' ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς·
190 δαιμόνι', οὗ σε ἔοικε κακὸν ὥς δειδίσσεσθαι,

²² Note the verse-initial position of both verbs. On the contrast, cf. de Jong 1987, 63, 108–9 with n. 26, and 111–12 with n. 36, where she includes 2.171 among examples of double focalization in which the Narrator "shares" the conviction of the internal character.

²³ Σ2.175: εὐ τὸ καὶ τὸν Οδυσσεῖα συμπεριλαβεῖν τῇ φυγῇ· παρῶξυνε γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸ τοὺς ἄλλους ἐμπέχειν, ἐπαγαγοῦσα τῷ ἥρωι δειλίας ἐγκλημα.

ἀλλ' αὐτός τε κάθησο καὶ ἄλλους ἴδρνε λαούς·
 οὐ γάρ πω σάφα οἶσθ' οἷος νόος Ἀτρείωνος·
 νῦν μὲν πειρᾶται, τάχα δ' ἵψεται υἱᾶς Ἀχαιῶν.²⁴
 ἐν βουλῇ δ' οὐ πάντες ἀκούσαμεν οἶον ἔειπε (:) (2.188–94)

- Whatever king (basileus) or leader (exokhos anēr) he came upon that man he stood beside and sought to restrain with gentle words:*
 190 Strange man, it is unseemly for me to frighten you like a coward;
 rather, sit yourself down, and make your men be seated.
 For you do not yet have clear knowledge of what Agamemnon
 intends:
 now he tests, but soon he shall strike, the sons of the Akhaioi.
Did we not all hear what he said in the council?
 [or: *we did not all hear what he said in the council*]

The majority of modern editors punctuate the verse as a question, an obvious reason being the first person verb *akousamen* (“we heard”).²⁵ As the Scholiasts observe, however, the verb form can be interpreted as a sign of tact: “[Odysseus] says ‘we heard’ so as not to shame the others,” i.e., those who did not attend the council. It is true that the most efficient means of restraining an army of sixty thousand before they have time to launch their ships would be to enlist the leaders of the largest armies, that is precisely those comprising the *gerontes*. Yet, it is only the punctuation of 194 as a question that prevents us from interpreting Athene’s epiphany and Odysseus’ subsequent restraint of the troops as a *pars pro toto* construction, so that Odysseus’ experience stands for that of all the *gerontes*. This can be seen as a natural extension of Homer’s decision to dramatize the scene through the experiences of a single character.²⁶ Such

²⁴ Curiously, the verb ἵπτομαι only recurs twice, where it refers to a god (Apollo, 1.454 and Zeus, 16.237) striking the army in response to prayers by Khruses and Akhilleus for revenge over a loss of *timē* inflicted by Agamemnon. In the present case, Agamemnon will strike the army himself for actions that would cause *him* to lose *timē*.

²⁵ The Scholiasts interpret verse 194 as a statement, although they record that some prefer to see it as a question (Σ2.194; Eustathius p. 200). The former view has its adherents, especially among German Analytic scholars: e.g., Wilamowitz 1920, 264, and von der Mühl 1952, 41; cf. Katzung 1960, 39, 56, 61; Lohmann 1970, 140 n. 70. It is printed as a question in the editions of Leaf 1900–1902, Allen 1902–12, Ameis, Hentze, and Cauer 1905–32, Murray 1924–25, Willcock 1978–84, and van Thiel 1995. Mazon 1961–65 and West 1998 punctuate as a statement.

²⁶ As one of the readers of this paper for *AJP* observes, this sort of metonymy is a common feature of Homeric battle narrative, most notably in the form of an *aristeia*, and it recurs in this same passage when Odysseus restrains “whichever” king or leader he meets, represented collectively by 2.190–97. The opening scene of Book 10, on which see Hainsworth 1993 ad 10.130, provides a good parallel for what I am suggesting here.

an interpretation would also go some way toward reconciling the scene with Here's earlier request that Athene "restrain each warrior."

This brings us to the identity of the leaders being addressed, and for this the punctuation of verse 194 is again crucial. If the verse is a question, then *basilēa kai exokhon andra* is a hendiadys used to designate the *gerontes*. For this, the collocation *hēgētores ēde medontes* (*Il.* 2.79) could be offered as a parallel, but in the latter case the equivalency between groups is more or less exact, while characters such as Patroklos and Teuker are clearly *exokhoi*, but not *basileis*, and arguably not every *basileus* is *exokhos*. Moreover, the apparent randomness implied by the relative *hon tina* might at least give the *impression* that both terms represent broader categories than *gerōn* and that the number of those addressed exceeds his fellow *gerontes* who are presumably but six in number.²⁷

The *basileis* and *exokhoi andres* Odysseus encounters clearly need to be restrained from *something*. If Odysseus is addressing his fellow *gerontes*, then their behavior seems to contradict the clear implications of verse 143 in which the poet, speaking in *propria persona*, excludes them from the effect described by *thumon . . . orine* (more on that effect below). The problem could be resolved by adopting Aristarkhos' excision of verse 143, but Homer excludes the possibility that Odysseus is addressing the *gerontes* for a second time at 2.192–93 when he has Odysseus declare "you do not yet know clearly what Agamemnon has in mind" and goes on to inform his auditors that Agamemnon is testing the Akhaioi. As applied to those present at the council, this would be incorrect at the very least with regard to the one point that matters: none of those present could fail to understand that the proposal to flee was a test of the army's willingness to arm themselves and fight.²⁸

Verse 2.194 is therefore best interpreted as a statement rather than as a question. Odysseus is thus described as restraining the lesser officers in the manner that Agamemnon requested (the troops, however, require

²⁷ For obvious reasons I exclude Agamemnon and Akhilleus. Wilamowitz (1920, 264) treats *exokhos* as a more restricted group than *basileus* but still finds that they are not coextensive and are not *gerontes*. Leaf 1900–1902, ad 2.193, identifies 193–94 as interpolated but observes that the number of the *gerontes* "is clearly too small . . . to be expressed by line 188"; cf. Katzung 1960, 39.

²⁸ It can be argued that verse 190 excludes the *gerontes* for a third time: nowhere else in Homer does a *basileus* contemplate "frightening" his fellow *basileis*, who under normal circumstances would surely take such a remark as a challenge to fight. While it is extraordinary that Odysseus should address a *basileus* in this manner, it is much harder to imagine him doing so to a fellow *gerōn* such as Aias or Nestor or to imagine them as engaging in behavior that would require such language.

sterner measures). In that case, Homer has nothing whatever to say about the *gerontes* other than Odysseus from the time they leave the council until the time that Nestor rises to address the assembly. On the other hand, punctuating the verse as a statement allows us to understand Athene's epiphany to Odysseus as representative of their collective experience. Accordingly, it would also be natural to assume that their experience is similar to his from the moment that panic breaks out until the troops are reassembled. This can only be reconciled with verse 143, however, on the further assumption that Odysseus himself has not participated in the flight.

To sum up briefly before proceeding: thus far I have argued that Agamemnon tests the troops because he knows they are demoralized. His strategy is to exacerbate their grief in the expectation that the *gerontes* will use the opportunity to deliver the sort of rallying cry that Odysseus and Nestor eventually do provide. He can equally be seen as testing the *gerontes* by commanding a public display of loyalty to counterbalance Akhilleus' equally public rebellion. When Athene comes upon Odysseus, he is standing inactive at his ship because he is momentarily paralyzed by the tumult of sixty thousand stampeding troops. He feels the urge to sail for home along with his men but is prevented from doing so by his *akhos*. The *basileis* and *exokhoi andres* he subsequently restrains are not the *gerontes* present at the council, and what the other *gerontes* are doing is nowhere explicitly described, though Odysseus can be seen as representing them collectively. I will now seek to show that the mood of the army, even before Agamemnon calls them to assembly, can be fairly described as *akhos*. These findings, in turn, bear directly on how we are to interpret the *akhos* of Odysseus at verse 171.

III

The emotions to which Agamemnon appeals in his address to the troops are all securely situated within the semantic field of Homeric *akhos*.²⁹

²⁹ See above, n. 2. Grief over the army's defeat is associated with flight for a third time when the Trojans breach the wall surrounding the Akhaian camp (*Il.* 13.85–90). In this example, flight can be understood both figuratively and literally, while Poseidon's appearance and rallying cry concretely represent the troops' own desperate resolve to stand and fight. Thus, in order to rally the troops, Poseidon appeals to their "shame and indignation" (*aidōs* and *nemesis*: 13.95, 122), feelings naturally provoked by the Trojan breach of the wall and which overlap the semantic field of *akhos*. The effect of Poseidon's speech is to transform their response to *akhos* from panicked flight to an indignant resolve to fight.

Direct confirmation of this is provided by the parallel scene from Book 9 in which Agamemnon is feeling *akhos* as he repeats his speech in Book 2 (9.18–28 = 2.111–18, 139–41).³⁰ The implication is that he truly does feel betrayed by the gods, frustrated and despondent that the Achaeans will ever conquer Troy, and perhaps even a little anxious over and nostalgic for home, although now that he is speaking in earnest he neglects just this part of his earlier speech.³¹ The intervening losses suffered by the army add fear of imminent defeat to his *akhos*, while the phrase “since I lost a great host” takes on added force and urgency. What is important for our purposes, however, is that Homer refers to the same complex of emotions that drive the army to the ships collectively as *akhos*.

The statement that Agamemnon “disturbed the spirit” of the troops (*thumon . . . orine*) lends further support to this interpretation. When the verb *orinō* is accompanied by motion, it regularly describes disorderly and even panicked rout or flight.³² Homer reinforces and develops this imagery with a simile in which the army’s rush to the ships in *Iliad* Book 2 is compared to storms on land and sea (144–48). The imagery continues as Athene accuses Odysseus of fleeing along with the army: “will you *fall on your many benched ships and flee?*” (φεύξεσθ’ ἐν νήεσσι πολυκλήισι πεσόντες; 175).³³ The negative emotions expressed by *akhos* and *thumon orine* can thus both lead to the same physical response of flight.

The *comparanda* also show that *akhos* and *thumon orine* can be applied to grief over a victor’s boast.³⁴ Thus, when Deiphobos strikes Hypsenor in the liver and boasts over the corpse, Homer remarks:

³⁰ Note the shift of address from the troops to the leaders and the return of the storm simile, together with the tagged words *orinō* and *thumos* (and on the significance of the latter term as the seat of passion and source of impulsive action, cf. below, n. 66). On the parallels between the two scenes, cf. Lohmann 1970, 216–17, and Whitman 1982, 73.

³¹ It is important to observe in this context that Agamemnon also omits verse 119 when he repeats his speech in earnest in Book 9. This helps confirm that we are to understand the internal character “Agamemnon” as attempting to supply the grounds for a rebuttal to his speech and that he sees this reference to public shame as crucial in that regard.

³² *Il.* 11.521, 525, 14.14, 59, 15.7, 16.377, *Od.* 22.23, 24.448; cp. *Il.* 9.243, 16.280, 18.223. Once it also refers to the confused dashing about of a pursuer (*Od.* 22.360).

³³ On πεσόντες cf. 22.175, followed by Leaf 1900–1902 and Ameis, Hentze, and Cauer 1905–32; *Il.* 15.63 supplies a good parallel.

³⁴ Cf. *Il.* 12.390–92 where Glaukos secretly withdraws after being wounded, so that the Akhaioi would not boast, whereupon Sarpedon feels *akhos*. Conversely, Glaukos feels *akhos* when he hears the voice of the dying Sarpedon who cautions him that “I shall be your constant disgrace (κατηφείη) and reproach (ὄνειδος) continuously in the future” if the Akhaioi despoil his corpse (16.498–99, 508). With this, compare *dusklea* and *aiskhron . . . kai essomenoisi puthesthai* in Agamemnon’s speech.

“Ὡς ἔφατ’, Ἀργείοισι δ’ ἄχος γένετ’ εὐξαμένοιο,
 Ἀντιλόχῳ δὲ μάλιστα δαίφρονι θυμὸν ὄρινεν·
 ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ἀχνύμενός περ ἑοῦ ἀμέλησεν ἑταίρου,
 ἀλλὰ θεῶν περιβῆ καὶ οἱ σάκος ἀμφεκάλυψε.” (13.417–20)

He said this, and his boasting grieved the Argives;
 and most of all *he disturbed the heart* of the warrior Antilokhos,
 But, *grieved as he was*, he did not neglect his companion,
 but racing to him he straddled the corpse and covered it with his shield.

The collocation recurs when Pouludamas kills Prothoenor and when Akamas kills Promakhos, although the participial expression *akhnumenos per* is not repeated (*Il.* 14.458–61, 14.486–88).³⁵ In all three passages, then, *akhos* is used interchangeably with *thumon orine* and is accompanied by violent physical action. Thus, in Book 1 Agamemnon’s insults and threatened seizure of Briseis cause Akhilleus to feel *akhos* and to deliberate physically retaliating (188), while in Book 19 Akhilleus himself says that Agamemnon had “disturbed [my] spirit” (*thumon . . . / . . . ὄrine*: 271–72; further on the scene from Book 1 below).

The foregoing helps elucidate verse 2.270. After Odysseus reconvenes the assembly and beats the upstart Thersites, Homer says that the troops, “even grieving as they were, laughed at him sweetly” (οἱ δὲ καὶ ἀχνύμενοί περ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἡδὺ γέλασαν). On this passage Kirk again asks (1985, ad 2.270):

Why are the troops ‘grieved’, ἀχνύμενοι? Presumably because of all the recent confusion as well as the bad taste left by Thersites’ harangue . . . not because of his present sufferings, which they find amusing.

It is true that Thersites contributes to their *akhos* in the sense that he reminds them of Agamemnon’s earlier behavior and its consequences for their own well-being—in fact, he rehearses each of the grounds for grievance that, I have argued, lead Agamemnon to test his men. The “recent confusion” may also contribute to their grief if this is understood to mean their subsequent restraint by Odysseus. But as we have seen, in his own speech Agamemnon merely stirs up an *akhos* from under which the army has long been suffering and which their restraint would have only further inflamed.³⁶ This can be confirmed by observing that, in order

³⁵ On the linguistics of *akhnumenos per*, cf. Bakker 1988, 5, and 121–24, with ref. to *Il.* 2.270.

³⁶ Haft 1990b, 44: “Odysseus has twice succeeded in overriding their own inclination to leave: first by reassembling them (207–11; cf. 142–55), then by making them laugh

to rally the troops, Odysseus responds to Agamemnon's speech at every major point in an effort to neutralize, and even reverse, its impact.³⁷ He does so, moreover, by exploiting hints that Agamemnon had provided at the beginning of his own speech on the sort of "words" he expected the *gerontes* to use in restraining the troops.

Formally, Odysseus' speech is divided into two parts: an address to Agamemnon (2.284–98) followed by an address to the troops (299–332).³⁸ He begins by claiming that it is the Akhaioi, as opposed to Zeus, who are responsible for betraying their promise to return after sacking Troy (*huposkhesin*: 2.286; *hupeskheto*: 2.112; cf. 2.349). Consequently, it is they who are responsible for any potential loss of face on Agamemnon's part, who he asserts will not be simply "ill reputed" (*dusklea*: 2.115) but "the most dishonored man on earth" (*pasin elengkhiston*: 2.285). Odysseus then partially excuses their behavior by evoking the same feelings that had earlier caused their flight. In doing so, he characterizes their current mood with two verbs: *oduromai* and *askhalaō*. The verb *oduromai* partially overlaps the semantic field of *akhos* and adds the physical gestures of "wailing" and "lamentation" to which *akhos* sometimes leads. It is thus deployed in conjunction with the verb *akheuō* in the formula *oduromenos kai akheuōn* (*Il.* 9.612, 24.128; *Od.* 4.100, 14.40) and with the noun form, *akhos*, to denote complementary aspects of the same emotional experience. The verb *askhalaō* is somewhat opaque, but usage shows that it refers to an impatient chafing over something longed for, in this case wife and home, just as *akhos* can refer to the grief of longing for distant *philoī* and for one's own paternal land (see above, note 2).

After explaining that the army's mood is understandable, Odysseus goes on to repeat Agamemnon's earlier claim that it would nevertheless

'despite their grieving' for their desired return (270)." Her gloss, "for their desired return," though not in the text, echoes the explanation of the Σ ad loc: ἀχνόμενοι δὲ διὰ τὸν τῶν οἴκοι ἔργον (cf. also Eustathius, pp. 216, 218). Note that Haft implicitly distinguishes between the *akhos* of Odysseus and the troops in terms of grief over returning and not returning.

³⁷ Whereas Agamemnon subtly transfers the longing of the soldiers onto their families, Odysseus compares them directly to widows and orphans wailing to return to their homes (2.289–90). He even echoes the poet's simile comparing the flight of the army to a storm at sea by comparing the army's yearning with that of a sailor kept from his home by winter winds. The comparison also makes a bow to traditions of Odysseus' own delayed return and repeated shipwreck, as does his exhortation to "endure" (*tlēte*) being away from their families (which also echoes, and can be seen as providing a gloss on, his epithet *polutlas*).

³⁸ The structure of the speech mirrors that of Thersites and is in turn mirrored by that of Nestor (on the latter, cf. Lohmann 1970, 55).

be “shameful” (*aiskhron*) to return home empty handed (2.119–22, 2.298). Thus, whatever opprobrium should attach to Agamemnon for his failure to capture Troy will be shared equally by the entire army.³⁹ He concludes by returning to the subject of betrayal with a lengthy account of the omen at Aulis and the prophecy of Kalkhas that Troy would fall in the tenth year. He thus avoids explicitly contradicting Agamemnon but suggests rather that it is still too early to know whether Zeus will fulfill his promise and that, if they remain, the army will not have long to wait to find out.⁴⁰

I thus suggest that *thumon orine*, *akhnumenoi*, *odurontai*, and *askhalaan*, as applied to the army in Book 2, and *akhos*, as applied to Agamemnon in Book 9, all point to the complex of emotions that Agamemnon evokes in his repeated speech. Odysseus’ address to the troops helps verify that feelings of betrayal, despondency, and, above all, anxious longing for family and home are what drive the flight to the ships. By putting a stop to their flight, Odysseus only exacerbates a grief which the army had been feeling long before the assembly in Book 2 and which Agamemnon had done his best to inflame. It is to this compounded *akhos* that *akhnumenoi* refers. Note that it is unimportant for our larger purposes, and in particular for our understanding of the *akhos* of Odysseus at verse 171, whether the audience or even the narrator consciously identifies their emotions as *akhos* before verse 270. What does matter is that it is completely natural to do so and that he uses closely related language to characterize those emotions throughout the episode.

IV

I have also suggested that Odysseus is subject to the grief that sends the army fleeing to the ships, but that he nevertheless manages to restrain his own impulse to join them. This would account for the developed contrast between his behavior and that of his men. It would also account for the narrator’s efforts to explain Odysseus’ restraint with an *epei*-clause at verse 171. This only partially resolves the *crux*, however, for the explanation itself needs explaining. The Greek plainly says that *akhos* prevents Odysseus from laying hold of his ship. What, then, is the source and nature of his *akhos*?

³⁹ Haubold 2000, 52–59, sees a subtle attempt by Agamemnon himself to shift responsibility onto the army *qua* group of “interested single agents.”

⁴⁰ Σ *ad loc*, Wilamowitz 1920, 269, and von der Mühl 1952, 41.

One obvious candidate is that *akhos* refers to the negative emotions that Agamemnon rouses to such effect in his speech. At verse 142 Homer says that Agamemnon “disturbed the spirit” (*thumon orine*) of the troops and at verse 171 that *akhos* is coming upon the “heart and spirit” (*kradiēn kai thumon*) of Odysseus. Not only can these expressions be used interchangeably, but the same spiritual organ, the *thumos*, is affected. Nevertheless, the immediate source of Odysseus’ *akhos* cannot be the same one that causes the flight to the ships since it would then be inhibiting the very activity that it set in motion. The narrator would thus be making the illogical statement that Odysseus does not flee for home because, among other things, he is yearning for home and feeling anxious over the state of his household. At the same time, without clear verbal markers explaining the nature of his own *akhos*, the verse would invite confusion between it and the emotions attributed to the army, emotions that are elsewhere described as *akhos* and to which Odysseus has seemingly also been subject. In other words, the audience should be able to retrieve the source of the *akhos* that restrains Odysseus directly from the narrative so as to avoid confusing it with a raft of competing emotions that produce unrestrained behavior in everyone else.

What, then, are the other possibilities? Kirk ventures that the *akhos* of Odysseus may represent “his upset over the turn of events.” E.-M. Voigt apparently concurs. In her entry on *akhos* in the *Frühgriechisches Lexicon*, she remarks simply: “B 171 (Gr. machen Schiffe zur Flucht fertig) οὐδ’ ὅ γε (*Od.*) νηὸς . . . ἄπτει, ἐπεὶ μιν -ος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἴκανε, etwa *Trauer u. Verdruss* (ähnl. πένθος I 3, A 254 = H 124).”⁴¹ A similar explanation is offered by Haft, although her formulation is more pointed: “Book 2.171 specifically names Odysseus, alone among all the Greeks in the *Iliad*, as experiencing *akhos*, ‘grief,’ *not* over the loss of a friend or prestige, but because of the army’s near abandonment of Troy.”⁴² This interpretation is untenable, as Kirk himself observes, and the cause of Odysseus’ *akhos* is in no respect unique, as Haft claims. Whatever else it does or does not do, the Greek says that *akhos* prevents Odysseus from doing what the troops were doing. The statement on this interpretation would be simultaneously circular and illogical: circular in the sense that Odysseus’ grief over the army’s near abandonment of Troy is what prevents him from abandoning Troy himself; illogical in that the narrator describes Odysseus as responding to their behavior negatively, but then

⁴¹ Voigt 1955–present, s.v. ἄχος, col. 1776; cf. also Katzung 1960, 59.

⁴² Haft 1990b, 41; cf. her similar remarks in 1990a, 97–100.

uses this negative response to explain why he is not himself launching his own ship rather than restraining his men from doing so.

Another variant of Kirk's interpretation would be that Odysseus is so overwhelmed by the general pandemonium that he fails to restrain his men. This is one of the explanations recorded by the ancient Scholiasts, and it has found support among modern scholars.⁴³ There are no good Homeric parallels in which *akhos* has this effect on a character, but even assuming that it can, this is not what his *akhos* is made to explain.⁴⁴ In other words, the *epei*-clause would be explaining the participle *hestaota* and not *oud' ho ge hapteto*. Again, according to the Scholiasts, there were those who identified the sequence of clauses as a hyperbaton so that *epei* attaches directly to the participle. This is highly implausible: *oud' ho ge* begins a new sentence with a new subject, while *epei* follows directly on enjambed *hapteto*, which is also the main verb. Its force *might* be able to extend to the participle, but it should also, and primarily, serve to explain the intervening statement. Finally, all such interpretations run aground on the objection voiced above that there are no verbal markers that would allow the audience to distinguish Odysseus' "upset over the turn of events" from the upset that produces the turn of events. In short, neither grief over "the army's near abandonment of Troy" nor paralysis over the general pandemonium provides a satisfactory explanation for why Odysseus is not himself contributing to the pandemonium and abandoning Troy. This is not to say that either explanation is impossible, only that we are justified in searching for one that satisfies the demands of rudimentary logic.

What then prevents Odysseus from sailing for home? I suggest that

⁴³ One of the interpretations recorded by Eustathius, p. 197, cited above at n. 13. Cf. Wilamowitz 1920, 263, and von der Mühl 1952, 39.

⁴⁴ In only one passage does *akhos* provide a motivation for not acting or for cessation of an action. In Book 6 of the *Iliad*, Paris responds to Hektor's upbraiding with the claim: "I wasn't sitting idly in my chamber out of anger or indignation at the Trojans, but I wanted to give myself over to my *akhos*" (6.335–36). In this case, grief over losing to Menelaos in a duel does not leave Paris unable to act, but rather he is willfully inactive so that he can indulge it. Arguably, nowhere does *akhos* leave someone feeling powerless to act. On at least one occasion, the participial phrase "grieving as he was" (*oud' akhnumenos per, Il.* 13.419; cf. 17.459) could be understood as leaving this possibility open while denying that it actually occurs. In this case, however, the phrase refers to grief over the immediate loss of a *philos*, and the person experiencing *akhos* is torn between alternative courses of action: "grieving" or retaliation. Akhilleus, on the other hand, says that he will neither eat nor bathe on account of his *akhos* over Patroklos, but these are represented as conscious and voluntary decisions, and, as Martinez notes (1995), such abstinence is a form of overt action (19.307, 23.47; cf. *Il.* 23.284).

the *akhos* of Odysseus refers to a sense of indignant humiliation at admitting defeat by an inferior force (i.e., the Trojans) if the Greek army should sail for home. Agamemnon, in fact, attempts to model just such a response of indignant outrage from the *gerontes* in his test of the army.⁴⁵ Thus, in verses 2.115–22, Agamemnon declares that he would be “infamous” (*dusklea*), and it would be “shameful even for future generations to hear about” (*aiskhron . . . kai essomenoisi puthesthai*) if the Argives fail to conquer Troy despite their superior numbers and ability. Odysseus uses these references to public shame to rouse the army so that one type of *akhos* becomes the antidote for another. A useful parallel is supplied by the scene from *Iliad* Book 13 in which the army experiences *akhos* as the Trojans breach the wall protecting the camp. Poseidon then appeals to their “shame and indignation” (*aidōs* and *nemesis*) in order to redirect their response to *akhos* from flight to counterattack (*Il.* 13.85–90; see above, n. 29).

The proposed interpretation of verses 169–71 is consistent with the semantics of Homeric *akhos*, is easily reconciled with the larger narrative, and produces a reading of the verses themselves that is internally coherent. Nevertheless, the “infamy” and “shame” to which Agamemnon refers in his own speech cannot be a source of *akhos* for anyone who knew the speech was a test—that is to say, Odysseus and the other *gerontes*—until the troops begin their panicked flight to the ships. Thus, for the sake of emphasis and clarity, Homer repeats the idea with explicit mention of the victor’s boast in Athene’s question to Odysseus:

καὶ δὲ κεν εὐχολήν Πριάμω καὶ Τρωσὶ λίποιτε
 Ἀργείην Ἑλένην, ἥς εἵνεκα πολλοὶ Ἀχαιῶν
 ἐν Τροίῃ ἀπόλοντο, φίλης ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἵης; (2.176–78)

Would you leave behind a boast for Priam and the Trojans,
 Argive Helen, on whose account many Akhaioi
 have died at Troy far from their dear paternal land?

⁴⁵ Already recognized by the ancient Scholiasts; cf. Wilamowitz 1920, 269, Cauer 1923, 534, 633, Katzung 1960, 53–56, Lohmann 1970, 49–51, and Knox and Russo 1989, 355. Heiden (1991, 6–7) argues that “it would seem that the poets of the *Iliad* depicted Agamemnon as hoping his listeners (either the other princes, the Achaian troops, or both) will dismantle his speech, taking the elements of his exhortation to persevere *out of their immediate context*, and with them construct an argument for remaining and fighting on” (his emphasis). I suggest that not only does Agamemnon hope for a counterargument but Odysseus in fact provides it, and I also suggest that Agamemnon’s command that the *gerontes* restrain the troops with “words” precludes his expectation that the troops would construct such an argument themselves even as it identifies the *gerontes* as the ones expected to do so.

By the principle of double motivation, Athene's epiphany and *parainesis* can be seen as reflecting Odysseus' own thought processes:⁴⁶ a ready parallel, to which we will shortly return, is supplied by Athene's earlier appearance to Akhilleus to counsel restraint just as Akhilleus is deliberating whether to kill Agamemnon or restrain himself.⁴⁷ The *akhos* of Odysseus thus makes a proleptic reference to Athene's speech, which reflects his own indignation over the future boasting of the Trojans, over the countless lives that had been lost, and at the prospect of beating an ignominious retreat for home.⁴⁸ *Eukhōlē*, in turn, marks Odysseus' recognition of what is implied by Agamemnon's own references to public speech, *dusklea* and *kai essomenoisi puthesthai*, in his address to the troops.⁴⁹ Such prolepses are a natural by-product of double motivation, and to audiences accustomed to having a character's actions explained in terms of both personal and divine agency, it would have made very easy sense indeed.⁵⁰

V

This interpretation can be supported by turning from the semantics to the thematics of *akhos* in Homer. As we have seen, *akhos* often refers to

⁴⁶ For "double motivation" in Homer, Lesky 1961 remains the *locus classicus*; and for a recent critique of approaches to Homeric psychology based on post-Cartesian suppositions, cf. Gill 1996, 29–41. That Athene here repeats Here's instructions to her does not prevent us from interpreting the scene in terms of double motivation (note that an identical scenario involving Here can be imagined for Athene's earlier appearance to Akhilleus). From a different perspective, however, it is legitimate to speak of triple—or even quadruple—motivation, as Odysseus is obeying the commands of Agamemnon and Athene (and, indirectly, Here) as well as following his own inclination.

⁴⁷ The parallel continues as far as 2.446–52 where Athene is described rousing the troops to battle, just as Odysseus had done in the assembly.

⁴⁸ Adkins (1969, 18–19) succinctly explains why a Homeric hero would rather risk his life than leave a prospective boast unanswered: "[Homeric man is] judged in terms of his successes and failures: further, the sanction is overtly 'what people will say', and over this he has no control, and cannot set his own consciousness of his self and his value against the estimation of his fellows, since his self has only the value which they put upon it. . . . [I]n such a society to hear another speaking magniloquently, magnifying himself, is to hear oneself by implication depreciated at least relatively." Foley 2001, 248, observes that this system of values remained in place on into the Classical period.

⁴⁹ On the importance of public speech, cf. in this context Adkins 1969, 18–19.

⁵⁰ Again, see Lesky 1961. An analogy can also be drawn to Zielinski's law (1899–1901), according to which Homer narrates simultaneous events *seriatim*. A further analogy can be found in Homer's regular practice of following potentially obscure terms with expegetical glosses.

feelings of outrage and indignation over a loss of *timē*.⁵¹ Athene's own reference to the prospective boasting of the Trojans is designed to elicit just such feelings and to provoke a corresponding response. As it happens, the noun *eukhōlē* is directly echoed by the participle *euxamenoio* in the passages cited above where *akhos* and *thumon orine* are used interchangeably (*Il.* 13.417–20, 14.458–61, 14.486–88). On each occasion, Trojan boasting causes the Greeks to feel *akhos*, whereupon a *philos* attempts to avenge the victim and preserve or recover lost *timē*. His response is thus impulsive but is nevertheless culturally sanctioned. Homeric characters may also experience *akhos* over another's successful assertion of superiority over them. The character feeling *akhos* often considers the assertion to be unjustified, and he seeks to recover his own *timē* whether by retaliating or continuing to fight. In such cases his response is again impulsive but is regularly viewed as misguided or even foolhardy, and he must be restrained by another character who persuades him to withdraw.⁵²

The scene from *Iliad* Book 8 in which Zeus turns the course of battle in favor of the Trojans provides an especially close parallel to the scene from Book 2 since it combines *akhos* over the prospect of a victor's boast with the motifs of flight and an externalized "voice of reason." When Diomedes kills Hektor's charioteer Eniopeus, Hektor feels *akhos* but does not attempt to avenge him and instead goes off searching for a replacement (124–26). With Hektor thus temporarily out of the way, Diomedes begins to drive the Trojans in flight to Ilion, but Zeus imposes retreat by hurling a thunderbolt before his chariot. Now it is Diomedes who feels *akhos* though of a very different kind. Nestor urges him to flee (*phobonde*) with the observation that Zeus is clearly granting victory to Hektor (139). To this, Diomedes responds that Nestor is right but that "dread grief comes on my heart and spirit" (147) as he thinks about how Hektor will boast (*apeilēsei*) that he fled (*phobeumenos*) to the ships (149–50; see Adkins 1969, 11). As Odysseus does in Book 2, Diomedes resists the impulse to flee because of *akhos* over prospective boasting by a Trojan victor. The formula used to describe Diomedes' *akhos*, moreover, is identical to 2.171 after the third trochee⁵³ except for a change of tense from the narrative imperfect, *hikanen*, to the present, *hikanei*.

An analogous situation occurs in *Iliad* Book 15 when Zeus sends

⁵¹ See above, n. 2. On the centrality of *timē* as a structuring principle in Homeric society, see Beidelman 1989, van Wees 1992, and Wilson 2002a, esp. 36–38, 123–26.

⁵² Dickson 1995, 101–56, treats a larger class of mediation scenes in which assistance, usually in the form of advice, is offered by an intercessor in moments of crisis.

⁵³ Or position 3½, following O'Neill's notation (1942).

Iris to the Greek army bearing the command that Poseidon is to withdraw from battle. Poseidon initially refuses with the claim that his *timē* is equal to that of Zeus (*homotimon*: 186) and that they hold earth and Olympos in common. When Iris observes that the Furies always support the elder born, Poseidon relents, but not before repeating Diomedes' declaration to Nestor that *akhos* makes this difficult to do (15.208 = 8.146~2.171). He does not feel indignant over a prospective boast but over the command itself, which he finds demeaning and considers inappropriate: "but this dread grief (*ainon akhos*) comes on my heart and spirit, whenever someone is willing to insult another who has an equal lot (*isomoron*) and is allotted an identical portion (*homē aisē*)" (15.208–10).⁵⁴

In Books 8 and 15, then, indignation over a real or imagined loss of *timē* leads a character to resist withdrawing from battle. Diomedes and Poseidon, moreover, are both restrained by a counselor-figure. If Odysseus is resisting the urge to sail for home at verse 2.171, then his alternatives, humiliating withdrawal or an indignant resolve to remain and fight, are similar to those faced by Diomedes and Poseidon. For Odysseus, however, it is flight that is seen to be impulsive and foolhardy while the proper course of action is to remain at Troy and continue to fight.⁵⁵

The *comparanda* help elucidate the scene from *Iliad* Book 9 in which *akhos* leads Agamemnon to propose flight (9.9, 27). Missing is any specific mention of a victor's boast, but, as we have seen, the seeds of this are present in the statement that he will be "infamous" *dusklea* (9.22 = 2.115). It is a characteristic irony of the *Iliad* that Diomedes now stands up unbidden to deliver the rallying cry that Agamemnon had demanded of the *gerontes* in Book 2. As important is that Diomedes rebukes Agamemnon, who Diomedes declares is acting foolishly (*aphradeonti*: 32) and is thus in need of restraint, just as he himself had been in Book 8. Diomedes then goes on to remind the troops that they will conquer Troy "since we came here with divine help" (49). His speech thus corresponds to Athene's earlier rebuke of Odysseus and equally to Odysseus'

⁵⁴ Adkins 1969, 8–9, 21; Lowenstam 1993, 75–76; Muellner 1996, 28–31.

⁵⁵ A thematic as well as verbal parallel can be drawn to the Odyssean scene in which Eurymakhos fails to string Odysseus' bow and feels *akhos* over being proven inferior to him in *biē*. This, he remarks, "is an object of reproach even for men of future generations to learn about" (*Od.* 21.249, 255; cp. *Il.* 2.119, with which it shares a half line formula). On the Odyssean passage, see Adkins 1969, 15.

speech before the assembly, in which he rallies the troops with appeal to omens guaranteeing their eventual success.⁵⁶

The scene from Book 9 differs from those in Books 8 and 15 in one fundamental respect: whereas *akhos* causes Agamemnon to propose flight, in the other two cases *akhos* inhibits it. This points to a subtle distinction in the nature of Agamemnon's *akhos*: for Diomedes, as for Poseidon, the prospect of losing *timē* is an inducement to fight rather than withdraw from battle, but for Agamemnon this same loss only serves to heighten his sense of betrayal by the gods and his frustration that after ten years and countless deaths their prospects of capturing Troy seem as elusive as ever. Thus, the *akhos* that causes Diomedes to resist fleeing in Book 8 returns in Book 9 as he rebukes Agamemnon for proposing flight.

The *akhos* of Diomedes and of Poseidon thus corresponds to that of Odysseus, while the grief that sends the army fleeing to their ships corresponds to Agamemnon's *akhos* in Book 9. Diomedes' *akhos* offers an especially close analogy to that of Odysseus since they are both overtly motivated by the prospect of a victor's boast. Within these scenes, one also observes analogous contrasts between the types of *akhos* we have been considering: in Book 8, Hektor experiences *akhos* over the loss of a *philos* and Diomedes over the prospective boasting of a Trojan at his flight; in Book 2, the Greek army experiences *akhos* over lost and absent *philoī* and Odysseus over the boasting of all Trojans for all time. In the case of Diomedes, as also of Poseidon, *akhos* impels him to remain and fight, and, I suggest, it has an analogous effect on Odysseus in Book 2. Odysseus' own *akhos*, however, not only prevents him from fleeing, but also causes him to restrain the troops from doing so.

Since Odysseus is described as feeling *akhos* when Athene arrives, the behavior of Diomedes and Poseidon would lead one to expect that he is also feeling the urge to remain and fight. The *comparanda* thus lend support to the reading of Allen, Mazon, van Thiel, and West at 2.179, so that Athene commands Odysseus μηδ' ἔτ' ἐρώει ("and hold yourself back no longer"), as opposed to μηδέ τ' ἐρώει ("and in no way hold

⁵⁶ The parallel continues as Nestor insists that Diomedes has only given a partial response and then proceeds to offer advice to Agamemnon, which the latter readily accepts. Nestor's speech in Bk. 9 thus corresponds to his earlier speech in Bk. 2, so that in either episode Agamemnon's proposal of flight is met by competing voices of restraint. In both cases the first speech turns the army's mood, and a second speech by Nestor constitutes tactical advice to Agamemnon.

back”) the reading favored by Leaf, Willcock, and Ameis, Hentze, and Cauer.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Odysseus’ *akhos* differs from that of Diomedes, Poseidon, and Agamemnon in its congruence between an impulsive response motivated by *akhos* and the subsequent advice provided by a counselor-figure. This congruence seems especially appropriate to the character of Odysseus in Homer—and it distinguishes him fundamentally from the other characters involved in this theme.

Our final, and in certain respects, most informative *comparandum* to the scene from Book 2 is Athene’s earlier epiphany to Akhilleus. Formally, the scenes are closely parallel (cf. Lohmann 1970, 173–78) and are, moreover, located so near one another in the narrative that audience and poet alike would have naturally been reminded of the earlier scene as this one unfolds. In both cases, the hero faces a crisis brought on by Agamemnon’s behavior in the public assembly and an ensuing quarrel. When Kalkhas announces that Apollo will not end the plague visiting the Greek camp until Khruseis is restored to her father, Agamemnon experiences “indignant grief” (*akhnumenos*: 1.103) and responds by taking Briseis from Akhilleus despite Nestor’s advice to the contrary. We thus have a unique example of the pattern in which the counselor-figure is unable to restrain the behavior of a character experiencing *akhos*.

Agamemnon announces to Akhilleus that he means to take Briseis “so you will know full well / how much more powerful I am than you, and another will shrink / from saying he is my equal, and set himself up as my like” (185–87: *ison emoi phasthai kai homoiōthemenai antēn*).⁵⁸ Now it is Akhilleus who feels *akhos* over the loss of a mistress and with her his *timē*.⁵⁹

- “Ὡς φάτο Πηλείωνι δ’ ἄχος γένετ’, ἐν δέ οἱ ἦτορ
στήθεσσιν λασίοισι διάνδιχα μερμήριξεν,
190 ἦ ὅ γε φάσανον ὄξυ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ
τοὺς μὲν ἀναστήσειεν, ὁ δ’ Ἀτρεΐδην ἐναρίζοι,
ἦε χόλον παύσειεν ἐρητύσειε τε θυμόν.
ἦος ὁ ταῦθ’ ὥρμαινε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν,
ἔλκετο δ’ ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος, ἦλθε δ’ Ἀθήνη . . . (1.188–94)

⁵⁷ In this context, cf. *Il.* 22.185. Ruijgh 1971, 707, para. 577 reaches the same conclusions on linguistic grounds.

⁵⁸ Note that Agamemnon correctly interprets Akhilleus’ intent at verse 163.

⁵⁹ Note that as Akhilleus’ *geras*, Briseis is *timē*, although Akhilleus attempts to raise the stakes by relocating her from the sphere of prestige goods to that of wife (*Il.* 9.336, 340). On loss of *timē* as the cause of Akhilleus’ *akhos*, cf. in particular Nagy 1979, 94, and on Akhilleus’ strategy of relocation, cf. Wilson 1999 and 2002a, 71–108.

And grief fell upon the son of Peleus, and the heart
 in his hairy chest pondered two courses of action
 190 whether he should draw the sharp sword from beside his thigh
 dissolve the assembly and kill Agamemnon
 or check his anger and restrain his spirit.
 And as he was deliberating these things in his mind and spirit,
 he began to draw the great sword from its scabbard, but Athene
 came . . .

As we have already seen, Athene's advice corresponds to Akhilleus' own realization that he could best attain satisfaction through means other than violence.⁶⁰ By the principle of double motivation, Homer represents this same realization as the conclusion of a deliberative process sometimes referred to as a "*mermerizein*-scene" in which the hero regularly chooses the second of two courses of action.⁶¹ In the present case, the choices consist of impulsive action and reasoned self-restraint, the same pairing one finds in Books 8, 9, and 15.

It is important to note that reason does not supplant Akhilleus' *akhos* but represents an alternative means of addressing it. Thus, in Book 16 Akhilleus uses *akhos* over Agamemnon's behavior to explain his continued withdrawal from battle (52, 55). In offering this explanation, Akhilleus repeats the full line formula shared by 8.147 and 15.208 and with it the formula that all three verses have in common with 2.171: "but this dread grief keeps coming upon my heart and spirit" (16.52).⁶² As important, he continues with an unmistakable echo of Poseidon's words to Iris in the parallel scene from the previous Book: "whenever a man wishes to rob his equal (*homoios*), / and to take back his prize of honor since he exceeds him in power" (*Il.* 16.53–54; cp. 15.209–10).⁶³ Agamemnon's

⁶⁰ E.g. by Kirk 1985, ad 1.193–94: "In a way, Athene may be said to represent, or embody, his ultimate decision to go no further." More precisely, Gill (see below, n. 61) shows that she embodies the rational side of the internal dialogue represented by the *mermerizein* scene.

⁶¹ Arend 1933, 105–15, Pucci 1987, 66–75, Schmitt 1990, 15, 76–81, 195–98, and for the deliberative process generally, cf. Gill 1996, esp. 41–60 and 175–204.

⁶² The formula recurs once in the *Od.* (18.274), where it describes Penelope's reaction to the *hubris* of the suitors. On the parallels and divergences between the two scenes, see Muellner 1996, esp. 109–16.

⁶³ Akhilleus concedes the difference in power that Poseidon denies. Akhilleus' behavior throughout the poem is thus motivated by *akhos*, first as grief over a loss of *timē*, and then over loss of a *philos*. Directly linked to this change in the source and nature of his *akhos* is a redirection of his *mēnis* from Agamemnon onto Hektor. The link between grief and hatred is also central to Odyssean thematics and is a defining feature of Greek heroism generally. See Nagy 1979, 79–81, and Cook 1999.

earlier denial (*isos*, *homoioō*), echoed by Nestor (*homoīē timē*), that Akhilleus' *timē* equals his own thus also implicitly denies the legitimacy of his *akhos* (1.185–87, 277–79).

The scene of Athene's epiphany to Akhilleus in Book 1 helps confirm that boasting belongs to a larger thematic pattern in which a character experiences *akhos* over a loss of *timē*. In the *comparanda* from Books 8, 9, and 15, the hero must choose between alternative courses of action, fighting or withdrawal, a choice that takes the form of a *mermerizein*-scene in Book 1. Just before Athene appears to Akhilleus, he has threatened to sail for home and Agamemnon has responded by urging him to "flee" (*pheuge*: 1.173). The goddess then arrives to find Akhilleus deliberating whether to kill Agamemnon or to "check his anger and restrain his spirit" (192: *erētuseie te thumon*). Athene persuades him to pursue the latter course of action, and as a consequence he withdraws from battle along with his army. Whereas Akhilleus is already drawing his sword, Odysseus is already restraining himself from sailing for home when Athene appears to them. Akhilleus' inclination to retaliate in response to a loss of *timē* thus stands in pointed contrast to Odysseus' inclination to restrain his longing for home. This contrast, in turn, can be seen as reflecting the *Iliad*'s awareness of and polemical engagement with the *Odyssey*, in that it reproduces a fundamental opposition in their thematics.⁶⁴ From this perspective, the contrast is not simply pointed but programmatic.

The *Diapaira* is thus informed by and informs the closely parallel accounts involving Akhilleus in Book 1 and Agamemnon in Book 9. The episode itself interweaves a scene in which *akhos* produces an impulse to flee with another scene in which *akhos* produces an impulse to fight. The impulse to flee in the first theme thus becomes what the impulse to fight opposes in the second. The story line is thus: Agamemnon tests the army by initiating an *akhos*-theme in the expectation that the *gerontes* will complete it by assuming the role of counselor and restraining their men "with words." The army's *akhos*, however, is so powerful and their response to it so overwhelming that the *gerontes* are unable to perform their intended function and complete the theme. Odysseus experiences this same *akhos* but recognizes that if the army sails for home, the entire war will become a Trojan boast at Greek expense—a Trojan *Iliad* that will be sung for generations to come. This same realization, suggested to him by Agamemnon's speech and directly represented by divine epiphany

⁶⁴ Nagy 1979, esp. 42–58, Edwards 1985, Pucci 1987, Cook 1995, Wilson 2002a, esp. 61 and 140–41.

and *parainesis*, initiates a new *akhos*-theme over loss of *timē* that prevents Odysseus from laying hold of his own ship and allows him to complete the first theme by restraining the army's flight.

Odysseus then delivers another speech before the public assembly in which he successfully redirects the army's response to *akhos* from flight to a resolve to continue fighting. He thus performs the same role for the army as Athene had performed for him and which Diomedes and Poseidon will later perform in Books 9 and 13. In the assembly, Odysseus addresses Agamemnon, just as Akhilleus had done in Book 1, but he does so in conciliatory terms and, moreover, verbally and physically abuses Thersites for making a speech that closely mirrors Akhilleus' own speech to Agamemnon in Book 1.⁶⁵ Indeed, the parallels between the episodes are so developed as to help account for the erasure of the other *gerontes* in Book 2 until Nestor stands up to offer Agamemnon advice, as he also does in the structurally parallel scenes from Books 1 and 9.

Although some of the parallels between Books 1, 2, and 9 can thus be explained in intratextual terms, the underlying narrative pattern that they have in common recurs elsewhere, most notably in Books 8 and 13, and can be usefully classified as a theme. In this theme, an opponent typically gains the advantage in a struggle. He may then seal his advantage with a boast, or his adversary may imagine him as doing so. The injured party, or a *philos*, experiences *akhos* over a loss of *timē*, which he may also consider to be unjustified. His *akhos* thus excites his *thumos*, which causes him to respond impulsively whether by retaliating or by continuing to fight. In cases where the individual is attempting to preserve his own *timē*, this impulsive response is viewed as foolhardy, and he must be restrained and persuaded to follow a reasoned course of action. Reason is embodied in the person of a wise counselor, whose advice can be seen at some level as reflecting the internal thought processes of the character experiencing *akhos*. The character invariably faces a choice between fighting and withdrawing, although which of these choices is viewed as correct may vary. All of these scenes are structured by an opposition between intelligence and force (*mētis* and *biē*) that also informs the plot of both Homeric epics and their relationship to each other.⁶⁶ The programmatic contrast noted above between the responses

⁶⁵ Lohmann 1970, 175–77, with further biblio.

⁶⁶ The seminal discussion of *mētis* and *biē* in Homer is by Nagy 1979, 42–49. I here build on my earlier argument (Cook 1995, esp. 59–65) that self-restraint is aligned with *mētis* and serves as an index of the thematic opposition between *mētis* and *biē*: unrestrained behavior is thus aligned with *biē*, and the impulse to exercise *biē* is motivated by *thumos*,

of Akhilleus and Odysseus to *akhos* belongs to this larger pattern. It is also worth noting that with the exception of Agamemnon's behavior in Book 1, *mētis* is invariably privileged over *biē*.

The episode from Book 2 that begins with Agamemnon's test of the army is informed by a thematic pattern that guided the poet and audience alike in the production and reception of the narrative. Homer is making the statement that *akhos* over a (unjustified) boast prevents the Trojan War from coming to a premature and unsuccessful end. In so doing, he dramatizes, as he repeatedly does, the centrality of the struggle over *timē* as a defining feature of Homeric society, a central objective of its characters, and the engine of the *Iliad's* plot. As a direct consequence of that struggle, Akhilleus makes his fateful request that the army suffer defeat at the hands of the Trojans.

These conclusions shed additional light on the thematic identity of both Akhilleus and the Akhaioi in Homer. As a traditional figure of heroic song, Akhilleus' name can be interpreted as meaning "he whose *laos* has *akhos*."⁶⁷ This identity would be entirely appropriate to a leader whose *laos* suffered continued hardships, including a ten year absence from home and the loss of countless *philoī* in battle. Gregory Nagy has shown, however, that in terms of Iliadic thematics, Akhilleus is not simply a hero whose *laos* has *akhos*, but he himself causes the *laos* to suffer *akhos* because of his own loss of *timē*. Moreover, in an interesting reversal of the thematic pattern we have been examining, the transformation of Akhilleus' *akhos* from a loss of *timē* into the loss of a *philos* (18.22) produces a corresponding transformation in Akhilleus himself who now becomes a source of *akhos* for the enemy *laos*.⁶⁸ One may also add that the twofold *akhea* that define the Akhaioi thematically in Homer—loss

the same *Körperseele* regularly targeted by *akhos* in the passages above in which the noun is used with a transitive verb (for *menos* and *akhos*, cf. e.g., *Il.* 1.103–4, where it again describes the impulse to retaliate over a loss of *timē*). Further in Wilson 2002a, 60–62, 120–23, and 135–41, and 2002b.

⁶⁷ Nagy 1979, 69–93. Holland 1993 reviews previous scholarship on Akhilleus' name and proposes a new etymology, which he views as opposed to Nagy's. This is to miss Nagy's point, as Nagy himself observes in his response (1994). Holland follows most comparative linguists in assuming that the only valid etymology is one that can be traced back to the proto-language, whereas it is this very assumption that Nagy seeks to challenge. He does so by demonstrating that whatever its ultimate source, the interpretation of Akhilleus' name as "whose *laos* has *akhos*" is deeply rooted in Homer's inherited formulaic system. Thus, from the standpoint of the thematics of traditional Greek epic, the IE etymology of Akhilleus could well be "false."

⁶⁸ Nagy 1979, 69–82.

of comrades and of *timē*—are given full expression in Agamemnon's speech where they motivate the contrasting responses of Odysseus and the army.⁶⁹

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