

MOURNING IS ETERNAL—AND PROCEEDS FROM IRON AGE: HOMER'S PATHOS OF ACHILLES AND HECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Homeric heroes know the consequences of combat, of their own possible death and an enemy's, with the impact of either upon persons nearest and dearest. A malicious taunt reminds a foe of what his death will mean to old parents, to young wife, and to other relatives. A warrior's own premonition of falling in battle before a superior fighter and/or by Fate or deadly intervention of a hostile god may add his child or children to those who will miss and mourn him. The *Iliad*-poet anticipates the painful aftermath of demigod Achilles' coming death for his irregular family, which includes a divine mother who will mourn him forever. "Homer" dramatizes the pain of mortal Hector's death, first expected then effected, for a family many of whom we have met, from aged parents to infant son. Hector's slaying, linked by Fate to that of Achilles, is the key event. It leads to a sublime reconciliation between Achilles, his killer, and Priam, his devastated father. Hector's mother, however, and his loving wife—mother of his defenseless son—cannot be reconciled with his loss and with their dreaded and certain harsh future.

KEYWORDS: *Iliad*, Trojan War, Achilles, Hector, Death in battle, Woman during war, Widow, orphan, Bereavement, Mourning

As wellspring of Western literature, the twin Homeric epics are sources of several genres, diverse registers, and manifold themes or motifs that have appeared over the two and a half millennia since they were transcribed.¹ War Story, Adventure Story, Family Drama, Tragedy with its associated insights, Romance, and even the so-called "Divine Apparatus," if we read the gods as Forces of Nature Biology and Society, are timeless. Among inevitable, even inexorable themes are love and hatred, of course, as well as mortality and death: one's own, that of persons loved and of persons hated.

Death above all is a shadow everywhere. The *Iliad* contrasts Achilles' rather detached notion of his own death with his eventual victim Hector's more painful

¹ A shorter form of this paper was presented November 2008 at the biennial meeting of the Southern Section of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South in Asheville, North Carolina, USA. For all of the references to the texts of the *Iliad*, I urge readers who may not have at hand a translation with line numbers indicated to "Enter" open-access "The Chicago Homer" site, <http://homer.library.northwestern.edu/>, to select "Iliad," and to use the finder by book and by line—by first line, with sequel lines following; to continue through the longest passages, simply click "next" at the horizontal menu. You will see the Greek with interlinear English from the revered 1951 Lattimore version, which many Classicists think has seldom been rivaled, never surpassed by any of the numerous, ambitious English *Iliads* published since. Brief literal translations within my exposition are my own.

awareness of his own doom, of his family's and of his Trojan people's. Each of these adversaries, however, imagines a world without him, the world of his dear survivors during or after the Trojan War, of a friend (Patroclus to Achilles) or of family, whether regular (Hector's) or irregular (Achilles').

The hero of the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, who resembles Hector in accepting his mortal condition, actually experiences the effect of his *presumed* death upon mother (whose ghost he meets, dead because she died out of grief for him), loyal slave, grown son, faithful wife, and finally aged and feeble father. These four living persons behave toward *disguised* Odysseus in ways that dramatize provisional mourning for him and their helplessness in his absence, cling though each does to a hope that the master/father/husband/son may still live after a decade of his disappearance since the war at Troy.

Amid the slayings of friend and foe during that war, this paper will consider the *Iliad*'s dynamics of killing and being killed in wider reference to killer's and victim's relationships with one another and with those they love.

"Unhappy are those whose sons match warcraft against me" is Richmond Lattimore's version of a stunning battlefield statement. More literally: "Of unfortunate [persons] do sons oppose my *menos*/strength-in-war." The current deadliest of the Achaeans, Diomedes, speaks this formulaic line during Achilles' boycott from the fighting at *Iliad* 6.127 and Achilles himself, returned to battle, repeats it at 21.151. It adumbrates a broader pathetic theme, the woe that a warrior's death in battle entails for all his nearest and dearest.

War is an unpleasant affair. Those who exploit it, those who deplore it, even those who experience it understand the cost of every fallen warrior to his family. (Except for Amazons, in the Greek epic tradition the warrior is always a "he," usually married or, more pathetic, betrothed.) Often he himself, facing death, is aware of what his possible, likely, or certain death will mean to others—to wife and progeny (sometimes, again more pathetically, to children he will never see or even who are yet to born), to parents, among others maybe to younger brother or to a loving sister. Or to a sweetheart. I use this word because we may think of Hollywood World War 2 movies—these were not sophisticated "cinema," they were *movies*—where a soldier receives love letters. The quaint, now obsolete term of endearment "sweetheart" appeared in the script. Whether war was romanticized, as in the old John Wayne black-and-whites, or made terrible, as in more recent films, family and concern for family have been important emotional themes, from the fake "Courage Mom" of the Sergeant "Shoe" Schumann in the satiric film *Wag the Dog* (1997) to the urgent effort to prevent catastrophic loss of an entire generation of Ryan boys in *Saving Private Ryan* (1998).

In order to thematize untimely, emotion-laden death in battle the *Iliad*-poet early on recalls one figure already long *hors de combat*: Protesilaus (2.698-701), the first casualty of the Trojan War. In that young hero's "house half-finished" (*domos hēmitelēs*) in Thessaly his bride-mourner "with both cheeks torn" Laodamia (Apollodorus, *Epitome* 3.4)—or, as Pausanias (4.2.5) calls her, Polydora—joined

him in death. As the audience of *Iliad* knew from the wider, “Cyclic” epic tradition her young husband had not left her pregnant; and after a brief visit from his ghost, she killed herself.

Elsewhere in the poem other young combatants appear, unmarried, just married, or (like the older man Odysseus) with an infant child left at home. Some are introduced only to be killed off, like Trojan defender Simoeisios who did not return “reward for upbringing” (*threptra*) to his parents (4.477-478). In the same category are a number of young sons of King Priam. Polydorus is one, the old king’s youngest son and especially dear to him (20.463-474), whom Euripides and Virgil make into a mere boy. His slightly (?) older brother Lycaon is another (21.34-135). Achilles slays both: the latter, despite his pleas for mercy, explicitly to hurt Priam, father of their hated half-brother Hector. Polites is another, full brother of Hector, who at *Aeneid* II.526-532 becomes the adolescent victim of villainous Neoptolemus. Achilles’ companion Patroclus, indeed Achilles himself fall into the same category. They leave behind parents to mourn them, Patroclus his father Menoetios, Achilles both father Peleus and immortal mother Thetis who will lament forever. Within the sequel to the *Iliad* in the lost epic *Aethiopis* demigod Memnon’s death, on the Trojan side, had an aftermath that anticipated Achilles’. His goddess mother Eos/Dawn rises sad daily, to this very day, because of her mortal son’s death. (We examine Hecuba’s response to the slaying of her dearest son Hector below, Andromache’s to that of her beloved husband.)

Consider bereaved *fathers*, at this point ones other than Priam (to whom we return when Hector falls and is mourned). According to the *Odyssey* Nestor still misses Antilochus (*Od.* 3.111-112) a decade after the Trojan War. The garrulous old man, a figure of gentle mockery elsewhere, must have been devastated by the death of his son Antilochus, who died saving his father’s life on a battlefield where such an old man did not really belong. This was a first emotional climax in the lost *Aethiopis*, a helpless old father’s bereavement which preceded that of the aforementioned goddess mother. In fact, Nestor’s youngest son Peisistratos also mourns his brother (*Od.* 4.187-186-189 and 199-202). The old Pylian-Greek warrior’s anguish at Troy was imitated in the *Aeneid*, where the slaying of Aeneas’ new young ally Pallas had a similar impact upon his aged father Greek Evander, who regrets that he has lived so long as to survive and mourn the boy (XI.139-181).

Moreover, any time *women* are widowed and *children* lose their fathers, the damage they sustain is not only immediate in emotional impact but social, economic, even literally vital. Widows are vulnerable and sons’ life-chances are seriously reduced; for the ancient Greeks and Romans knew nothing like the Judeo-Christian God’s biblical injunctions to “seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause” (Is. 1:17) and the like.

What is unusual in “Homer” (let us so call the author of the *Iliad*) is that (a) a proficient killer may be conscious of the torrents of woe that his killings entail and (b) an opponent may taunt an adversary whom he intends to slay with the

thought not only that the foeman himself will die, a normal boast, *but also that his fall will cause great pain and hardship to others*. This malice is a variation on a motif all too frequent in Greco-Roman myth: cruel attack on a hated enemy, whether a god's or a particularly malevolent mortal's, by which a slayer leaves the actual offender alive, but kills one or more other persons dear to that person, themselves often unoffending. The slayer usually makes it clear to the survivor that such gratuitous death or deaths are really intended to punish him or her. On the other hand, such exceptionally hurtful taunting differs from the mutilation of a hated fighter's corpse. That atrocity, of course, does grieve those who love him, but it no longer affects or provokes *him*.

As a trait of a particular hero's Homeric characterization, the topic of mournful survivors is especially associated in the *Iliad* with Diomedes, who first speaks that fearful line quoted above. Nestor comments on all those women whose lives that deadly son of brutal Tydeus ruins. "If Hector calls you coward and weakling, the Trojans and Dardanians won't believe [it], nor will the wives of the greathearted Trojans, whose robust husbands you have struck down in the dust" (8.153-156). Three books later Diomedes himself, though wounded in the foot by an arrow that gleeful Paris shot and unable to retaliate against the shooter, reminds the cowardly archer about the consequences of the Trojan War, *Paris'* war, for families of the Trojans and allies who have the bad luck of crossing Diomedes' path when he is not incapacitated. The Trojan prince has only scratched him with a light hit, he says, "But it's different with me; my missile, even if I just graze, is sharp, and immediately puts a man to death; his wife's cheeks are torn both sides, his children orphaned. He rots on ground reddened with his blood, and more carrion birds surround him than women mourners" (11.391-395).

In the larger panorama of the war, however, and cumulatively—so that those remarks of and about Diomedes contribute to the effect—the motif of threatening a foeman's family with catastrophic loss is by far most elaborate and chilling in relation to *Achilles* as perpetrator and to *Hector* as victim.

Whatever philologists think about Wolfgang Kullmann's theory on the intertextual relationship between *Iliad* and *Aethiopis* and parallelisms between them or Martin West's solution to its problems, comparison of those two epics' climactic duels rewards us, setting an Achilles-versus-Memnon one, which we may tentatively reconstruct, alongside the canonic *Iliad's* elaborate Achilles-versus-Hector.²

The greatest of Attic vase-painters, the Berlin Painter, tellingly pairs these two duels on sides A and B (or maybe B and A) on a splendid mixing-bowl in the British Museum (E468). This indicates that a hypothetical "*Memnonis*" within the

² See W. Kullmann, *Die Quellen der Ilias: Troischer Sagenkreis* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1960); and M. L. West, *Classical Quarterly* 53 (2003), 1-14, and *The Epic Cycle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

more compendious *Aethiopis* developed as its climax a fateful clash of two young demigods and its sequel in both their goddess-mothers' eternal lamentation. Death came first to Eos' son, but Achilles' fall followed soon thereafter. indeed, the deaths of the two heroes may have been linked by Fate. Mourning Eos is a famous subject in vase-painting.³

Memnon's mortal father Tithonus, however, is out of the story, evidently growing into ever more decrepit old age elsewhere, probably in faraway sunny "Aethiopia" (Arabia? the Horn of East Africa?). He is not mentioned at all in the *Epitome* of Proclus that summarizes lost *Aethiopis*. Tithonus is that Trojan prince, brother to Priam, who is "privileged" to live forever, yet to grow forever older. Meanwhile Achilles' sire venerable Peleus is aging the normal way in distant Phthia across the Aegean Sea, likewise far from Achilles when *his* only son dies.

Demigod Memnon seems to have neither wife nor child. A son of Achilles does exist, on the other hand, Neoptolemos on faraway Scyros.⁴ In the extant *Iliad* Neoptolemos is named, not to only to harmonize the poem with the greater Trojan War tradition as given in both the *Little Iliad* and the *Sack of Ilium* epics (and acknowledged in the Nekyia of the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus visits the Land of the Dead and praises Neoptolemos to the ghost of Achilles, *Od.* 11.504-540). The young hero ought also to be mentioned so that Achilles may have both father *and* son in addition to his "wife," forlorn Briseis. Thereby he himself becomes a tragic family man, leaving an old father defended, a son unprotected and unguided, a *de facto* widowed woman.

Achilles expresses anxiety about his old father's mortality at 16.15-16 and 24.511); in 19 he contemplates his son's or his father's potential predecease in an *a fortiori* statement that the death of either would be a heavy blow which nevertheless that of Patroclus outweighs (321-337).⁵

The Phthian hero elsewhere in the Trojan saga has sometimes shown mercy, or at least chivalry in sparing, among anonymous others, a son of Priam by Laothoë named Lycaon. On the other hand, in his second wrath after Lycaon's

³ The Berliner's krater may be seen at <https://goo.gl/jF83GZ>; mourning Eos at <https://goo.gl/5FyMm6>, <https://goo.gl/KcgwB8>, <https://goo.gl/jFXpkx>, <https://goo.gl/QUUkQe>, <https://goo.gl/XcdGbE>, and <https://goo.gl/kuZh8g>.

⁴ M. L. West postulates that this person is in the *Iliad* only by interpolation. Indeed the flashback to Achilles' and Patroclus' departure from Phthia at *Iliad* 11.765-790, alluded to also at 18.324-327, certainly seems to exclude the story known from later texts: that his mother hid hero Peleus' toddler son on the island Scyros to be raised as a girl so he would not grow to a warrior with destined short life. In fact, *Iliadic Achilles conquered Scyros* (9.668), likely one of those dozen "cities" he boasts that he took by ship (9.328). In any case, Neoptolemus is too well established in the Cycle for West's excision to be taken as the Muse's truth. The *Odyssey*-poet knows all about him and names him at 11.506.

⁵ In the same interview with his living, visiting Ithacan comrade Achilles' ghost inquired about his son (not yet named) at 11.492-493 and at 494-503 about his father Peleus. Has the old man been mistreated and dishonored by neighbors because of his age and weakness and the absence of a son to defend him?

half-brother Hector has slain Patroclos, he brutally slaughters him. 22.34-102). Achilles was also the killer of Priam's son Troilus, whom Priam mourns along with utterly obscure son Mestor and, of course, Hector in his Book 24, named during his tirade against his craven sons, "dancers" who now survive (253-260). Troilus, we know, was a victim of Achilles in the *Cypria*. His death by Achilles' ambush at a suburban water fountain, in the presence of his sister Polyxena, was a favorite theme of 6th-century vase-painters. The atrocious, sacrilegious killing of this unarmed young prince (called *hippiokharmēs*, "delighting in horses") on Apollo Thymbraeus' sacred ground, included, if we may trust some vases to reflect the epic narrative, a further atrocity. Achilles caught the defenseless boy as he tried to ride away, slew and decapitated and flaunted his head on the tip of his Pelian ash spear—in the face of his brother Hector and over an altar of Apollo, according to a vase in Munich (Antikensammlungen M 1426).⁶

It is to the central Achilles-Hector plot that all of this gives moral-emotional background and thematic depth. In the *Iliad* Homer devises a gradual build-up, with false leads toward Hector's death at another's hands (Diomedes' in Book 5 or 11, Telamonian Ajax' in 7 or 14) and, once Achilles has rejoined the war, toward an earlier confrontation between him and his eventual killer (in Book 20 or 21). The climactic, fatal confrontation comes in in Book 22. All the while Homer is elaborating, before the death of the Priamid prince and in its sequel through to the very last line of our *Iliad*, two grand themes. One is an ideological-polytheological antithesis of immortal-mortal partnerships: *Athena*-and-Achilles versus *Apollo*-and-Hector. For *Athena* encourages and boosts, *Apollo* opposes and suppresses such more-than-mortal aspiration as Achilles embodies by his very birth.⁷ The other is maximum amplification of the family-pathos theme that comprises not only loving survivors' anticipated suffering, already discussed, but the angst of a hero facing death who is afraid not only for himself but also for those whom he will leave undefended behind. In Achilles' memorable address to Patroclos' corpse at 19.315-337 *Peleus'* son acknowledges profound fear, though not for himself—he is fated and resolved to avenge his companion and die—but for his son's future and especially for his father's.

I wish now to show how masterfully two narrative currents converge on the climactic episode of Hector's death, despite the best will of his parents and his patron god *Apollo's* efforts to save him, which takes place at the hands of *Athena*, who intervenes physically, and Achilles at 22.225-366).

One strand of the poet's ingenious exposition gets us used to the idea that Achilles and Hector must eventually meet and fight to the death—that of *Hector*, of course. In fact, this thread begins in Book 1 (240-244). The other introduces us

⁶ This may be viewed at <https://goo.gl/uB4Hm9>.

⁷ A thorough treatment of this is will appear in my "*Apollo's Plan Was Also Being Completed: Phoebus versus Achilles in the Iliad*," forthcoming in *Zbornik, Classical Journal of Matica Srpska* 19 (2018).

to several family members whom Hector's death will ruin, indeed in several cases, whose own *deaths*, when he is no longer around to defend them, his absence entails. We first meet his father King Priam at Trojan high council in Book 2 where Hector, as the nation's field commander, is also present (786-818). Priam will die during the sack of Ilium, while Hector's little son Astyanax, whom we see and, with imagination, hear in Book 6, will be slain atrociously, whether in Priam's presence upon an altar of refuge and to taunt him (in vase paintings) or, after his grandfather's sacrilegious slaying, flung to his death from the burnt city's highest tower (in the lost *Sack of Ilium*; also during the course of Euripides' *Trojan Women*).

Already from Book 1 we know how important Hector is in Achilles' thinking. The Phthian demigod's ambition for supreme glory depends upon his catching and killing that greatest warrior on the Trojan side, the principal defender of Ilium. On the other hand, in Achilles' first wrath, he wants his most prestigious opponent to make the Achaean Greeks regret Agamemnon's outrageous misconduct toward him.

Late in Book 4, as the pitched battle that Paris' rash challenge to Menelaos in Book 3 interrupted resumes, Apollo shouts from the Ilian citadel, in a voice the Trojans must recognize as a god's, that Achilles no longer is fighting on the Achaean side (4.507-514). During the battle of Books 3 to 7 Achilles is at first missed, happily, by the Trojans and their allies, but not so happily when despite a wound Diomedes, with Athena lending support and vigor, carries all before him in Books 5 and 6. Another son of Priam Helenus shouts to his brother Hector, "We never feared Achilles so, chief of heroes, who they say was born of a goddess, but this man is rampaging, nor can anyone match *menos*/strength with him" (6.99-100). Hector's wife Andromache unwittingly reminds her husband of eight killings that remain unavenged, those of her father and seven brothers whom Achilles slew (6.415 and 421-424), even as she tries to persuade her husband to wage a defensive war.

In the "Embassy" sequence of Book 9 Odysseus tactfully substitutes for unpolitic, provocative words in Agamemnon's message to Achilles as incentive that, if Achilles returns to the fighting now, "You can gain very great *kūdos*/glory: you can take Hector, since he is coming very near now, in a murderous rage, because he does not think any of the [other] Danaans whom the ships brought here to be his equal" (9.303-306).

In Book 11, after Nestor has given Achilles' companion the idea to borrow his friend's unique divine armor and play "Achilles" (and thereby to get himself killed), Patroclus asks a wounded Greek warrior "Come, tell me, Zeus-nourished hero Eurypylos, will the Achaeans hold against the giant Hector, or are they now going to be wasted, subdued by him and his spear?" (819-821). When in Book 16 hours later that same bloody day Patroclus reports to his mightier, demigod friend and is given loan of the armor, Achilles warns of the danger that his companion should avoid. He must not face Hector alone, without Achilles at his

side or in the same chariot where he has always been before, because he risks facing Hector *and Apollo*, Hector's protector, alone, one man against a formidable mortal *and* a hostile god (16.91-94). This, of course, he does and he dies (16.786-855).

During the same day-long fight, in fact, Agamemnon regrets that Achilles is not on the battlefield to check Hector's boasts and mayhem (14.44-51). Moreover, pro-Greek Poseidon, in disguise as a mortal old man, says to the wounded Achaean commander that Achilles (damn him!) must be glad to see his comrades' deaths and panic flight (14.139-142). Consequently, while Zeus sleeps after being seduced by his unloving pro-Greek wife Hera, their brother the God of Sea and Earthquake exhorts the Danaans not to concede victory to Hector (14.364-377). Hector, Poseidon say, must be praying that Achilles (who needs *him!*) will continue to sulk angrily among the invaders' ships on the beach (14.366-367).

As we know, Patroclus' fatal indiscretion in Book 16 leads, by way of his dying prophecy that Hector soon will fall to his avenger Achilles, to Achilles' determination to avenge his friend even at the imminent cost of his own life (18.96 and 122-124). As unwisely as Patroclus faced Hector, Hector allows himself to think that, having defeated Achilles' companion, he is ready to take on Achilles himself (18.305-309). This he resolves to do at 20.364-374. Suspense builds as Apollo saves his darling Trojan for the last times, in Book 20 (at 375-387 by words, at 421-454 by physical intervention). Soon, however, he must leave the man to his fate. All of this, and the sequel, is too familiar to require detailed rehearsal here.

The poem will frame Hector's death with detailed expressions by family members before and after in Book 22.

Early in it from the walls of Ilium his parents see him standing, alone, outside the gate of the city through which all the other Trojans whom Achilles has not slain in a terrifying rampage that began in Book 20. They plead with their son to follow them in. Though he is unresponsive, indeed disobedient the poet lets us understand that hears them both (22.78).

Priam sees Achilles approaching and implores his son at length (see 22.38-76) and pulls out his gray hair by the handful. Hecuba exposes one of the now withered breasts that had nursed Hector and pleads with him urgently and concisely (82-89).

Their son is not unmoved, yet he does not move. He meditates on his two bad options —to turn tail and be reproached by the Trojans whom he had persuaded to remain on the battlefield when Achilles' return there was imminent, costing them countless lives that day, or else to stand fast and face the dread demigod enemy (see 99-130).

As Andromache has earlier warned him, at 6.407, and as she will fear moments before she sees his dead body being dragged around the city, at 22.455-45, his courage does indeed lead to his death. He dies some distance from the city, out of his parents' view. However, malevolent Achilles drags his corpse

toward and around Ilium (22.395-405). The dead man's mother is first to see this. At first speechless, Hecuba then utters half a dozen sobbing lines of apostrophe to her darling son (431-436). Next his father speaks, to bystanders who restrain him from running after Achilles' chariot and the corpse. These are thirteen of the most moving lines in Greek or any literature, anticipating the inglorious abuse that Priam's own, soon-to-be dead remains will suffer (416-428). These lines are nevertheless topped by the sublime pathos of the Andromache sequence that ensues. Hector's still young wife Andromache, however, is indoors preparing her husband's bath. She has a premonition of her husband's death (454-59), gradually senses what has in fact happened, rushes outside to see, and reacts with a swoon when she spots his corpse being dragged away (463-74). Then, recovered, she addresses a thirty-eight line apostrophe to Hector almost thrice as long as Priam's frantic speech, and now foresees what she had merely feared before (in the pair's only scene together at 6.407-410 and 431-432: at 477-514). She now predicts a hard life for their orphaned son—if in fact he outlives the war (22.484-507). We recall that he, although he feared for parents' and brothers' future and could envision the suffering of his widowed wife (6.450-465), nevertheless, irrationally hoping against hope, prayed to Zeus and the other gods that their little boy Astyanax/Scamandrios survive the war and grow up to be an even greater war hero than himself, to make his mother proud. (476-481).

The first several hundred lines of concluding Book 24 relate the sublime reconciliation of Hector's doomed killer and his grieving father. Each is aware of the other's loss—and imminent death. Old Priam, soon to share his city's catastrophe, reminds Achilles of his own aged father who will presently to mourn him. In fact, Priam admires the uniquely handsome *doomed* hero who slew his dearest son, and whose death will cause Peleus, an enemy age mate of Priam's, anguish like his own, over *Peleus'* son, his *only* son.

That dialogue of old young man and old man each fated soon to die is symmetrical. However, Hector's family larger and more complex in relationships, including as it does brothers, half-brothers, and brothers-in-law, and in recent contact with him. Four women—his terse sister Cassandra, wife Andromache, mother Hecuba, and unexpectedly sister-in law Helen (if "law" is the right word to use)—offer intimate fare-well eulogies on the last pages of the poem before it ends with the grand funeral of Hector.

We may now review the cumulative exposition of Hector the family man.

Though father Priam and son Hector are both present at the council meeting in Book 2, they do not interact.

Book 3 shows Hector as "big brother" privately reproaching Paris (3.39-57), not for the last time. He will do so again three books later, at 6.326-331. That, however, is hardly because Hector does not love him. Rather he wishes that his younger brother would behave more honorably, for his royal family's sake and for his individual honor, that Paris would take on his share of the fighting in what I have above called his war, the costly war being fought so Paris may keep

another man's wife. On the other hand, in the Trojan council of Book 7 when Antenor proposes and Paris rejects the idea of returning Helen to the Achaeans (344-364), Hector, though surely in attendance as their father Priam presides (365-379), is silent. In public, he stands firmly with his wayward brother.

Book 6 dramatizes his family's affective relationships with him, first that with his doting mother Hecuba (251-285), then with moody Paris (325-342) and ashamed Helen (343-368) and, climactically, with his wife Andromache. To her we now return. Her entire remaining family is husband and child, since Achilles has slain her father and brothers, as we have noted. Her mother, whom the Phthian hero had captured and surrendered for ransom, has died in her own parental home (425-428). Reinforcing Andromache's pleas, their baby son Astyanax adds his voice though not, as a literal *nēpios*, "*infans/not-yet-talking one*," articulate *words*. He flinches and bawls at the sight of Hector's gleaming-helmeted head and daunting aspect, not recognizing the daddy in the warrior (466-470).

In this entire famous sequence which gives the book its ancient title "Hector's and Andromache's Conversation (*Homilia*)," the hero anticipates his death. Echoing Agamemnon's assurance that Ilium, Priam, and Priam's people are doomed (Agamemnon at 4.163-165 = Hector at 6.447-449), Paris' realistic brother understands the dreadful consequence of the truce broken earlier that day. Under the terms of both sides' solemn oath at 3.299-301, dreadful things will happen to violators of the agreement. Menelaus and Paris were to settle matters between them by the outcome of their duel. Menelaus won, but Paris escaped, thanks to his patroness Aphrodite (3.355-382). Not only did the Trojans fail to hand Paris over and Helen back, Athena enticed one of them to shoot at and wound Agamemnon's brother, the winner (4.86-140). Thereupon the Achaean commander predicts for the offending party that "even if the Olympian has not fulfilled this right away, he will finish it later, and they have all collectively incurred a great debt, with their own heads and with wives and children" (4.160-162).

Hector ever after fears for his nation generally, for Hecuba and Priam and for his brothers, but most for Andromache, as we have seen. The Trojan prince-hero expresses specific fear that Andromache will suffer special indignities as the late Hector's wife (6.450-463)—exactly what, as the original audience would have known, is indeed in store for her. In an *a fortiori* statement he declares that, although the fate of his parents Priam and Hecuba distresses him, too, he is even more grieved by his wife's. *He hopes to be dead when it befalls her* (464-465). Nevertheless, repressing fear for their little son, whose death too terrible for him to contemplate (and what Andromache herself can articulate only days after Hector's death (24.726-739), he prays earnestly for a happier post-war future for the "Hectorides" and includes the young hero's mother in that wishful fantasy of 6.476-481. We know better what will happen to the boy in either of the atrocious infanticide murders mentioned above.

Before Hector's fatal confrontation with Achilles both his parents pleaded that he withdraw into the city, describing consequences of his certain death if he stands to face Achilles. Priam foresaw among other pitiful events (22.61-65) his own unburied corpse's hideous defilement, by his own hounds turned feral (66-76). For her part Hecuba dreads the likelihood that she and her daughter-in-law Andromache will not be able duly to mourn Hector (22.86-89), since their savage enemy is apt to inflict further insult his enemy's unfeeling body, sore pain for his survivors, bereaved mother and wife. And profound grief for father Priam, who in Book 24 will undertake to put an end to it.

Now, therefore, we better appreciate the crescendo through and beyond the awful threat that Achilles speaks at 18.120-126. His targets include Hector and Hector's nearest and dearest, mother and/or spouse. He has now resolved to kill the Trojan foeman and die. Indeed, his divine mother Thetis already has begun with her sisters, to lament his imminent doom (18.35-78). Now declares to her that, "If a like fate [to that of Heracles, not a god according to the *Iliad*, but merely dead after all his glorious deeds] has been fashioned for me I shall lie down whenever I die. But now may I gain *kleos*/glory, and may I set someone of the Trojan and busty Dardan women, wiping her tears away with both hands from her soft cheeks to groan shrilly, so she might know that I have stayed long out of the war. Don't prevent me," he says to Thetis, "though you love me. You won't persuade me" (18.120-126).

After the emotional *fff* of Book 22, Book 24 returns us to Hector's parents, still anguished by his death ten or a dozen days earlier (160-321), then proceeds to the interview of an ancient father, Priam, missing his deceased dearest son, and a young son Achilles, who misses the aged father whom he will never see again. Their humane reconciliation cannot, however, undo that harm, both to them and to their women, which Achilles' wrath has wrought, directly upon Hector, maliciously on all those women of Troy, who with his mother and wife will join in the keening over Hector's improvised hearse after Priam has effected the body's honorific release (24.710-712 and 720-724). A wife's farewell (725-745)—as well, in Andromache's apostrophe (732-739), as a little son's—follows, then a mother's (748-759). The late prince's demigoddess sister-in-law Helen, immune to such pains in *her* life (blissfully unaware as she is of her own *brothers'* death (3.236-244), eulogizes him, too, at 24.762-775. These utterances have already been cited. The last word, however, belongs to patriarch Priam, who order one man's funeral that also is his dynasty's and his city's (778-781), all in consequence of Achilles' malevolent, suicidal triumph over "Hector, tamer of horses."

CONCLUSION

We may be pleased with what the two *men* Achilles and Priam achieve toward what Aristotle might call *to philanthrōpon*, "pleasant humane feeling" (*Poetics*

1453a). However, each bears much blame for what has been turning out so badly for so many and will continue to do so. What has happened and will yet happen to *countless females*—to the hapless goddess Thetis and to mortal women on *both* sides, not only to all those Trōiades and Dardanides in Ilium who speak and who weep in Books 22 and 24, but also to Briseis and other captives in the Achaean camp who mourn gentle Patroclos (19.282-302)—*every one of them innocent*, must not be forgotten or minimized. Need I mention Hector's little son! None of *these* is sublime

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