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Narrative and Community in Dark Age Greece: A Cognitive and Communicative Approach to Early Greek Citizenship

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In *The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens*, Philip Brook Manville observes that Greek citizenship comprised more than the legal status of full membership in a city-state. Its "supralegal qualities" included "the more intangible aspects" of a citizen's life, among them the "behavior, feelings and communal attitudes" accompanying a citizen's obligations and privileges (1990.7). Unfortunately, Manville continues, describing these supralegal qualities is "tricky" because evidence for them is so scarce (1990.13). A few years before, another historian faced a similar dilemma about citizen behavior and attitudes when he assessed what archaeological evidence could tell us about how the polis originated: "there must have been psychological and spiritual forces," Chester Starr concluded, "not visible in the physical evidence, which encouraged boldness in political revolution" (1986.42).

Why are the intangibles behind Greek citizenship so elusive, particularly at its earliest stage? Perhaps because, whether characterized as emotional, attitudinal, psychological, or spiritual, they are rooted in the cognitive and communicative capacities of the groups whose interests dominated communities in the city-state's "Formative Era," the Early to Middle Geometric period of the late Dark Age (c. 900-760 B.C.). [1] I propose to find a royal road to these cognitive and communicative capacities for **[End Page 179]** citizenship in narrative: in storytelling's ability to organize the ways inhabitants of prestate and early state societies understood, evaluated, and symbolized experience through worldviews that maintained their coherence despite their differences from one another.

The first step on this road is to reconstruct the simple cognitive categories of time, space, and human agency behind Dark Age communities' narrative understanding of the world using the available ethnographic, material, and literary evidence. I will argue that this understanding employed as a symbolic resource cognitive categories and criteria centered around ancestors who absorbed the present into the past in order to resolve two fundamental material and social dilemmas faced by almost all these communities: settlement instability and survival. Linking these dilemmas to the death of community leaders, I will indicate how the cognitive criteria of narrative understanding were operative in another major symbolic resource, funerary ritual, and were expressed in the speech genre of lament. My focus on lament and the related genres of genealogical poetry and epic will show: (a) how the latter two used the notion of a "heroic age" to realign the past and the present so that early state citizens might devalue traditional cognitive criteria in favor of criteria suited to an early city-state worldview; and (b) how all three genres used grief and pity to structure communicative interactions among social groups in ways appropriate to prestate and early state communities, respectively. Homer's version of the Meleagros tale in *Iliad* 9 will exemplify how pity can characterize the cognitive shift from kin-dominated social relations to a more rationally intersubjective communication typical of citizenship.

Dark Age Social Life: Material and Ideological Dilemmas

Today the social life of Dark Age communities has begun to emerge from the obscurity that plagued earlier scholarship. A global description may not yet be possible, but new material evidence over the past twenty years, reinterpretations of earlier finds, and better navigation through confusing streams of evidence from archaeology, comparative ethnography, and Homer now allow us to highlight the following key features: settlement patterns, population levels, modes of production, degrees of social stratification, and forms of authority.

First, a few generalizations about the Dark Age. Its settlements were villages continuing the dominant pattern of the Bronze Age in which **[End Page 180]** an extended family's *oikos* joined with several others to form a "nucleated" hamlet or village cluster. These Dark Age villages remained independent, much as they had been in the Bronze Age (except for the relatively brief period of palace-state formation in the Late Bronze Age). [2] Generally speaking, these autonomous villages (re)appeared within a generation or two of the Mycenaean collapse, around the start of the Protogeometric period (c. 1050 B.C.), flourished c. 900, and lasted until the city-state emerged between 800 and 750. They can be characterized by peaceful prosperity, by a considerable level of economic activity, and, in some locations, by the renewal of contacts with the Near East. Instability characterized most individual settlements, which were inhabited for anywhere from 50 to 300 years, although a few (Athens, Argos, and Knossos) were stable: inhabited continuously from the Bronze Age to the archaic period. [3] Population density tended to be low, with most people living in hamlet groups of 30-50 individuals, although villages whose population numbered in the hundreds were not unusual, and a few such communities (again, Athens, Knossos, and Argos) numbered in the low thousands. [4] The "domestic mode of production" prevailed everywhere, driving a subsistence economy that mixed pastoralism with agriculture; [5] its ideal of self-sufficiency for each *oikos* applied to the "autarkic and autonomous" village as well. [6]

The typical Dark Age community was therefore an isolated village of 35 to 150 inhabitants that occupied its site for about 150 years. [7] Nevertheless, from the broader perspective of political anthropology, this profile of a typical community blinds us to the actual variety of settlements. All were prestate polities on a continuous, ever-shifting spectrum of evolution and devolution, with, at one extreme, semi-nomadic, pastoralist "family-level groups" practicing seasonal transhumance in northern regions **[End Page 181]** like the Pindus mountains of Thessaly, and, at the other, simple chiefdoms like Athens, Argos, or Sparta unifying politically and permanently regional villages by the late eighth century. [8] We might, like Whitley, therefore claim that "diversity was the norm in Dark Age Greece," but this need not mean that "all attempts to describe Dark Age . . . society in general terms [are] suspect" (1991a.193).

From these features, at least one general conclusion may be drawn: the fundamental problem for the typical community at the lower end of Johnson's and Earle's "local group" category, as well as for many other settlements on the spectrum, was long-term survival where autonomy was the economic ideal for individual households and the community at large.[9] For the continuously inhabited "Big Three," perhaps for settlements like Lefkandi that survived from the Bronze Age to at least the late ninth century, and for isolated village clusters like those in East Crete, instability rather than survival was the challenge. Despite prosperity and economic development, the long-term material resources of even larger settlements varied due to climate and the intermittent contacts of exchange, long-distance trade, warfare, and migration. [10]

These problems of survival and stability were compounded for all settlements by the two remaining features we can discern: degrees of social stratification and forms of authority. Social stratification in the smaller and more unstable communities, between Johnson's and Earle's "family-level" and "local" groups, must have been minimal; in these "homogeneous" hamlets ranking appeared only in the form of the village headman, who was probably called a *basileus*. [11] But in somewhat larger settlements, or as smaller settlements grew, local village groups of 100 to 300 would have experienced increased segmentation and ranking, and their headmen would have functioned as incipient big-men through efforts at clan-like organization for the purposes of reducing production risks, focusing ceremonial **[End Page 182]** activity, defending territory, and initiating personal networks of exchange. [12] Would-be big-men also used military raiding of other communities as a supplemental source of food (herds) and symbolic wealth for exchange purposes. [13] Local village groups of 300 to 500, more common by the later Dark Age or Middle Geometric (850-760 B.C.), demonstrated incipient stratification;[14] their big-men, while providing these classic services, would have had to operate on an intergroup, regional scale as well, and so anticipated the function of the chieftain. [15] Larger chiefdoms like Athens and Knossos likely preserved their Late Bronze Age social hierarchy; [16] significantly, however, their chieftains did not provide regional centers for storage and redistribution. [17]

Today we are in a position to understand more clearly the conse-quences, moving from the smaller communities to larger, of mixed degrees of social stratification and hybrid leadership combining features

of big-man and chieftain authority. Instability in this type of leadership was recognized by scholars like Donlan and Qviller in the early 1980s as inherent in the "immature chiefdoms" of Dark Age and Homeric society. [18] Donlan subsequently began to emphasize how "notoriously unstable" these polities were; not only could their populations shift allegiance from one local big-man's kin- or clan-like "pyramid" of authority to another's, but local big-men could, in turn, shift allegiance toward or away from a regional pyramid "constructed" by a paramount chief or his rivals. [19] More recently, he has characterized what was a "fatal defect" of chiefdoms (1989.25) in stronger terms as an "underlying contradiction" based on the "conflicting claims of egalitarianism and authoritarianism which are inherent in chiefdoms" **[End Page 183]** (1994.45). In other words, as general system problems, the survival and instability of settlements both small and large appeared tied to the figure of the *basileus*, whose authority raised ideological questions about the legitimacy of power while simultaneously attempting to manage the economic flux of uncertain resources, exchange, trade, climate, etc.

If the *basileus* was a focus for both economic stress and ideological contradiction, we can understand how his followers confronted instability in economic resources with cognitive resources that could both resolve material dilemmas and render their world ideologically coherent. Until recently, not much attention has been paid to the type of thinking, reasoning, and argumentation that impelled inhabitants to establish or abandon settlements, to legitimate or chafe against degrees of social stratification, or to explain the flux of material and symbolic resources. Political anthropology has begun exploring the function of cognition, ideology, and symbolic thinking in chiefdoms, and Earle has suggested that chiefdoms create and legitimize regional power by manipulating both the past and symbolic categories like the natural and supernatural (1987.298-300 and 1991.5-7).

Narrative and the Funerary Sphere as Cognitive Resources

But classical archaeology has also been exploring how manipulation of time and thought constituted a cognitive resource that sustained the worldview(s) of the Dark Age's immature chiefdoms. Studies by Morris (1987, 1989a, 1989b), Whitley (1991a), Antonaccio (1993, 1994, 1995), and Sourvinou-Inwood (1981, 1983, 1995), to name a few, have called attention over the past decade to the funerary sphere as the principal symbolic resource of Dark Age communities. Their work has illuminated the considerable amounts of labor and wealth these communities invested in the privileges of formal burial, in the manufacture, disposition, and decoration of grave goods, in the periodic practice of tomb cult, and in the use or disposal of iron. But these communities utilized a more fundamental symbolic resource whose cognitive categories of time, space, and agency made these other activities conceivable and comprehensible: storytelling, or the formulation and reformulation of oral narratives about *basileis*. [20] **[End Page 184]**

This link between storytelling and heroic burials illuminates a cognitive instrument used by communities to establish continuity between the present, the past, and the near future, where discontinuity, in fact, had been (and likely would continue to be) more common. As the evidence of tomb cult suggests, some communities needed to reinvent over and again, in the face of present difficulties and an uncertain future, a "shallow" past emerging from stories of agents and events spanning no more than two or three generations. [21] Such stories could also invent ties to other communities within or outside a given region in response to changing patterns of trade, warfare, and migration, rendering coherent the tension within social life between purely local interaction and its sometime expansion to regional and interregional levels. Stories about *basileis* could also evaluate their achievements in terms of ethical success or failure and then relate the positive or negative judgment of a leader to the fate of a thriving or doomed community. In a word, if "variability" in social life typified these communities, then they possessed no more valuable resource than an ability to reconstrue the world by enfolding within a coherent worldview the problems of survival and instability, economic contingency, warfare, and an ideologically flawed leadership.

Before speaking about specific types of narratives or occasions for them in Dark Age communities, we need to clarify a few cognitive features of the act of narrating and narrative itself. In societies entirely reliant on oral communication, the narrative categories of time, space, and agency, and the roles of narrator and audience, provide the components of a cognitive effort we might call "stock-taking." Its function is to restore temporal or causal coherence when actions or experiences in a community's life disrupt pre-established patterns of understanding. [22] In particular, by reaching back to the experiences of previous generations, individuals and communities use the interplay of these narrative components to

understand how they and their predecessors are linked intersubjectively through a sort of cognitive relay, [23] especially when recent events threaten faith in the self-evident effectiveness or appropriateness of, let us say, social hierarchy or forms of authority. **[End Page 185]**

As an instrument of knowledge about the world, this use of storytelling enables oral societies to resist the potentially disruptive effects of novel experiences and innovative ideas by rejecting them as inconsistent with the beliefs and values of their ancestors. Or, if established beliefs have to conform to new realities, storytelling can soften the impact of innovation, remove the novel idea from active reflection, and allow a community's belief system time to adjust to it by projecting it backwards several generations to the time of the ancestors.[24] Here we can be more precise in indicating a probable occasion for developing narratives to reduce cognitive dissonance and restore the coherence of traditional beliefs in the face of a novel or unwelcome event. In the smaller, more typical communities, one such event would have been the death of any of its adult members. In Sourvinou-Inwood's words (1981.29; cf. 1983.42):

> In the small Dark Age villages, community life was *de facto* disrupted by each death, and each dead person had inevitably had social relationships with all the rest of the community which needed severing and consequent adjustment, so the whole community was *de facto* involved in each death-ritual. Moreover, in those years, the survival of the (vulnerable and depopulated) community was the top priority.

More threatening for communities large or small with a hybrid big-man/chieftain authority would have been the leader's death.[25] Because they lacked institutional procedures for an orderly succession of power, the leader's demise would have thrown the future into doubt, provoking a need for the stock-taking described above.

Recent reinterpretations of physical evidence for Dark Age burials do suggest that the funerary sphere anchored narratively based worldviews in elite burials. After 1050 B.C., communities may have begun restricting archaeologically recoverable burials to adults of rank, and graves were **[End Page 186]** perhaps organized in cemeteries along kinship lines.[26] At about the same time, communities either prepared new tombs for their elites with evidence of "tomb cult" in the form of visits and offerings, reused Mycenaean (or earlier) tombs for burial and tomb cult of their own dead, or made offerings for unknown occupants of earlier graves. [27] Changes in burial practices and grave goods after 925 B.C.--more wealth, new decorative styles (Geometric) and disposal techniques--may indicate stress from increased competition among elites; and tomb cult, often of short duration, may reflect these changes and pressures. [28]

In communities with a shallow genealogical memory of three or four generations, funerary ritual and/or tomb cult seem intent on merging into the non-specific category of "ancestors" recent dead with the unknown dead who inhabited the location in a distant past.[29] These symbolic resources are thus marshaled to configure a time, space, and agency projected backward to forge a vital if uncertain continuity between past and present, perhaps to legitimate a kin-like group that, not lacking rivals, faces a far from certain future.[30] Given most communities' isolation and sporadic interregional contact, the use of these resources is likely peculiar to each location and, while open to outside influence, not integrated into a larger, more universal, or consistent narrative interconnection of past, present, and future. The problems of survival and instability, and a cognitive need to defuse the impact of novel or anomalous events, would lead a community to recast periodically, every two or three generations, its understanding of time, space, and agency so that the achievements of new leaders and unusual events can be absorbed into the fiction of a comprehensible past. Cognitively, these worldviews do not appear rooted in prototypically panhellenic tales but in "micronarratives" about ancestors, real and imagined, recent and remote, who thereby extend the tenuous domination of their "descendants," maybe prolonging the survival of a local village group or nascent chiefdom for a generation or two. From a later panhellenic **[End Page 187]** perspective, these micronarratives express a kin-like "microcommunity's" will to dominate locally or regionally in competition with other groups. [31]

Funerary Ritual and Narrative Speech Genres

Admittedly, this material evidence is not very articulate about the communicative interaction between

those who framed specific narratives within a leader's funerary ritual and/or tomb cult (i.e., the "speakers" of a particular kin group) and those for whom they were meant (the "listeners" inhabiting the local village group or region). As one archaeologist put it, "Obviously, archaeology cannot recover oral . . . accounts of kinship or genealogy, nor such practices as prayer, or some types of offerings and sacrifices that leave few or no detectable traces" (Antonaccio 1994.401). Here we need to consider how different types of narratives about *basileis* of recent and remote memory developed within a framework for funerary ritual that was both cognitive and communicative.

We can outline the narrative possibilities surrounding the burial of Dark Age leaders by borrowing a few concepts from Bakhtin's social theory of speech genres. Each type of narrative would have constituted a "complex speech genre," a stable form of utterance absorbing simpler kinds of direct utterances from daily life into conventional elements of theme, composition, and style (1986.60-65). If we agree that the "communicative function of language" allows listeners' anticipated responses to contribute actively to an utterance's meaning, then each complex speech genre in the funerary sphere must parallel developments we have been tracing in Dark Age social history (Bakhtin 1986.67-68). [32] Each genre will pivot around a shift in the social relation between the speakers' intentions and the listeners' responses, and each will be determined by the speakers' "worldview," which, in some way, evaluates their own reality as it incorporates their listeners' anticipated responses (Bakhtin 1986.90). [33] The micronarratives outlined here therefore **[End Page 188]** arise from "dialogic" interactions between and among the Dark Age groups constituting their speakers and listeners.

But if the key to the nature of each speech genre hinges on the question of its intended audience and their response, what possible responses could listeners have had to stories containing a burying group's evaluation of reality in the kin-based microcommunities of local village groups and chiefdoms? Bakhtin suggests a spectrum of possible responses for all speech genres ranging from groups of almost identical speakers and listeners who share a worldview to listeners who are hostile, foreign, or subordinate (1986.95). The degree of social or ethnic otherness between speakers and listeners is thus crucial, deserving particular attention as Dark Age communities expand or contract in population, acquire or lose access to vital resources and external trade, intensify or lessen warfare, etc. At one extreme, we might imagine speakers who anticipate from listeners complete assent or submission to their narratives on ancestors; at another extreme, speakers might anticipate a skeptical or hostile response from listeners whose values the groups do not share.

Bakhtin provides another helpful concept for understanding how one group's narratives might evaluate reality in ways similar to or different from another's. "Chronotopes" are the dominant representations of time, space, and agency in verbal or visual artifacts; they define the parameters of physical and metaphysical reality as well as the logic enabling characters to interact with their environment and one another (1981.84-85). (Typical chronotopes in heroic narratives might be the battlefield, the war council, the sea journey, the hunt, the funeral, the chieftain's hall, etc.) Like the anticipated response from listeners, chronotopes constitute another key to genre by providing a site for dialogic interaction, in this case a dialogue occurring not in the work itself, but in the minds of its speakers and listeners (Bakhtin 1981.85 and 250-51). Chronotopes evaluate the reality they express because they permit speakers and listeners to compare the narrated world with the notions of "real-life time-space" dominating their own worldviews (Bakhtin 1981.253). In particular, it's the cognitive categories of time, space, and agency within a story's chronotopes that help make the world(s) of its speakers and listeners meaningful, and this meaning depends cognitively on criteria of truth, verisimilitude, appropriateness, justness, etc., that mark the worldviews of different groups as compatible or competing. By identifying a narrative's key chronotopes, then, it should be possible to determine whether a story and its agents enact criteria pre-established by the speakers' ancestors in a traditional worldview **[End Page 189]** that listeners (despite their own traditions) are constrained to endorse or criteria that challenge a traditional worldview and that listeners (regardless of their tradition) are invited to share.

As social life varied for communities between the poles of isolation and regionalism, with eventual participation in panhellenic forms of communication, the degree to which chronotopes of the ancestral past absorbed "real-life" chronotopes of the present would likewise have varied depending on the speaker-listener relation. At one communicative extreme, where speakers anticipated complete submission from listeners, some narratives would have minimized in listeners' minds the gap between present and past, readily absorbing a dominant group's deceased leader into ancestral paradigms. At the other extreme, some narratives would have invited listeners to compare the chronotopes and cognitive criteria of the past with those of the present, thereby interpreting the past through the present

and vice-versa. Finally, a narrative's chronotopes can present its agents in a variety of relations to the world and other agents that illustrate the ways a subject may, in Bakhtin's term, "respond" or "answer to" his/her existence (1990 and 1993). Again, at one extreme, certain types of narrative rely largely on a narration whose agents interact passively with the world and others: listeners are left to evaluate actions as successful or failed or as conforming to or deviating from social norms. At another extreme, some narratives conspicuously use agents who interact with the world and others as speaking subjects; here listeners are invited to consider agents' effectiveness according to criteria of sincerity or deception, and whether agents respond to others "communicatively" by understanding that each construes reality for him/herself. [34]

If we return to funerary ritual for a Dark Age leader, specific types of narrative emerge from the combined symbolic resources (material, graphic, and verbal) invested in these events. The first type would have emerged from the most potent but archaeologically least recoverable of the burying group's resources, the emotional, musical, and verbal expression we call "lamentation." There is enough iconographic evidence to see continuity in the attitude, gestures, and ritual centrality of lamentation from the Mycenaean period to Middle-to-Late Geometric (760-690 B.C.); a recent study of iconographic evidence from before and after the Dark Age **[End Page 190]** finds "striking indications of continuity" over 500 years (thirteenth to eighth centuries B.C.).[35]

Lament restores to a burying group a psycho-physiological sense of order through the passive, collective experience of suffering. It serves the bereaved as a kind of therapy for their grief, enabling them both to share in and separate themselves from the experience of death. [36] Just as importantly, it restores cognitive order through stock-taking when death interrupts a sense of narrative continuity in "real-life" time and space. Here narrative first provides the lamenters a vehicle for transforming the discordant event of their leader's death into what Ricoeur calls the "discordant concordance" of a tale as it "emplots" agents, goals, means, and interactions (1984.42-43 and 65-66). But it also evaluates the discordance of death by trying to understand the causes and justness of death in light of criteria for rationality in the burying group's worldview. Lastly, for local village groups and immature chiefdoms, lament has to address the threat to political and economic integration; it has to serve the burying group as a legitimating strategy situating the deceased leader in relation to ancestors, the chronotopes of the past in relation to those of the present, and lament-speakers in relation to listeners construing all this.

Who were its speakers and listeners? And how could emplotment have enabled one group to elaborate and the other to construe these cognitive and political questions? Verbal lamentation for the dead before and up to Homer probably originated from two types of composition, one with a strong narrative element. Though both were later referred to as *thrênos*, meaning an ordered or "set" lament for the deceased, they may originally have consisted of the *goos*, an improvised series of spoken rather than sung cries of grief from the deceased's female kin, and the *kommos*, an antiphonal, choral exchange between non-kin and the deceased's female kin. [37] The antiphonal *kommos* employed a play of alternating perspectives on the great figure's death that contrasted the putative response of the community-at-large to that of the deceased's intimate kin. The *goos,* perhaps narrative rather than musical in form, permitted female kin to contrast the deceased's past life and the sorrowful present, the different **[End Page 191]** fates of the deceased and his mourners, the wish for an alternative outcome to reverse these fates, or the meting out of praise to the deceased and blame to his enemies. [38]

Dark Age lament might then more accurately be characterized as the staging of a controlled dialogue between family members and non-kin, one whose emplotment articulated grief by opposing the deceased's life and death. The speakers consisted therefore of two distinct groups whose separate voices were merged to articulate one worldview. And though the deceased's female kin were privileged spokeswomen for the microcommunity, lament's antiphonal form in the *kommos* required them to articulate their worldview through communicative interaction with outsiders. In local village groups and immature chiefdoms, this interaction must have amounted to a simulated, "ventriloquized" presentation of opposing social worlds. The non-kin speakers would have been: allies in the form of collateral kin, members of the community's "lesser households" who were economically tied to the dominant *oikos* through exchange networks and so obliged to support it, professional mourners, or representatives of exploited, serf-like groups compelled to contribute to their masters' status display. [39] Emotionally these non-kin speakers (and listeners too) would not have responded to the "genuine" grief of family members with anything like pity. Their role instead was to assume or mimic that grief out of a social obligation that reinforced the burying group's status. As a result, they were likely precluded from expressing a reality at

odds with the dominant *oikos*; nor, despite representing the community at large, could they have isolated a paradox or contradiction to challenge the cognitive adequacy of that *oikos'* worldview. Both cognitively and socially their role was assent and submission. [40]

Here lament's chronotopes had the capacity to retard or short-circuit innovative challenges to an established worldview. Listeners would **[End Page 192]** have been constrained to evaluate the deceased's achievements according to criteria from narratives about the kin group's ancestors (or the ancestors of the dominant kin group in the region). These narratives would have absorbed knowledge of the deceased's life into patterns of success or failure, conformity to or deviance from norms, that determined praise for the dead and blame for his enemies consistent with a kin-based worldview. Concepts like "fate" would also have loomed large to keep innovative thinking at arm's length, much as "taboo" operates in other contexts: it discourages listeners from imputing to the deceased actions and choices that reveal deficiencies in the truth of his world or that justify deviation from ancestral norms. [41]

If the symbolic thrust behind funerary ritual was due to competitive stress among elites, then, by the end of the Dark Age, burying groups could not have been elaborating these micronarratives in isolation from similar attempts by rival groups. The generic constraints of lament's emplotment would have made each group's use of lament intelligible to members of other groups, and in competition with them, much as (to paraphrase Whitley) the development of Geometric style in ninth-century Attica used funerary ritual as an "arena of emulation and display" through a "common repertoire" of vase shapes and decorative motifs, whose "syntax" and "schemata" determined their combination (1991a.118, 134). When and where the burying group's prestige could be extended beyond its local sphere, or longer than two or three generations, bardic recomposition of lament's narrative elements could, by the eighth century, have transformed an ephemeral and purely local expression of grief into a regional or incipiently panhellenic heroic tale. [42]

Homeric Lamentation

But lament could not have been embedded within a regional narrative unless its communicative interactions were changed significantly. For an example, we can note the coexistence in the *Iliad* of two types of speaker-listener relation within lament for *basileis*. The first reflects the **[End Page 193]** typical Dark Age microcommunal response of assent and submission outlined above: when Achilles learns of his "kinsman" Patroklos' death and prepares to lament for him (18.22ff.), his gestures of mourning are immediately accompanied by the cries of non-kin who are female subordinates, the *dmôiai* he and Patroklos captured (18.28-31). His ally Antilokhos, a non-kin, likewise responds, presumably because of intimate ties of *philotês* (32-33), followed by Achilles' mother Thetis and her Nereid companions (35ff.). A similar reaction by non-kin occurs when Achilles recounts his dream about Patroklos' ghost to the Greek army and they all yield to the desire for lamentation (*goos*) (23.108 and 153). In none of these cases do the mourners who are Patroklos' non-kin appear to cry out spontaneously: as Sourvinou-Inwood emphasized, lamentation is not spontaneous emotion but "repeated, proscribed behaviour" constituting a "socially meaningful act" (1983.38 and 33-34). Nor is it clear that these non-kin respond with pity for Patroklos or for Achilles; they are instead mimetically roused to express grief by the power of Achilles' example. In acquiescing to lament they acknowledge, assent, and submit to his superiority.

The *Iliad* also dramatizes an alternative response on the part of non-kin to a kin's lamentation. In book 19, the same captive *dmôiai* whose mourning in book 18 expressed submission to Achilles' and Patroklos' authority react to the lament for Patroklos by Briseis, who functions both as Patroklos' "kin" and as their social equal, by "groaning over their own private sorrows in reply" (301-02). Just after this, as Achilles obstinately refuses to eat and continues to lament Patroklos, the elite of the Greek command--who, as *gerontes* (338), must be regarded at least as Achilles' equals--likewise respond to his cries by "groaning in reply as each remembered those he had left behind in his halls" (338-39). Here non-kin listen to and participate in a kin's lament in a form of communicative interaction essentially different from the "assent and submission" of mimetic grief in local village groups and chiefdoms. These listener-participants see themselves as the kin's equals, and they are moved to lament not by mimicking the kin's grief, but by seeing in it a simulacrum of their own sorrow. The kin's cries are not primarily intended to rouse listeners to evaluate the deceased's behavior or the manner of his death; instead they allow a moment of self-presentation that reveals how his or her unique inner world (in Bakhtin's term) "answers to" the reality of death. In responding, non-kin indicate not that they share the very same grief for the deceased, but that they recognize themselves in the mourner's gesture of **[End Page 194]** self-presentation. This, I suggest, describes a communicative dynamics of pity rather than grief.

Pity, as a kind of communicative interaction between putative equals, acknowledges and reinforces the common bonds of those sharing membership in the same group; it does not appear appropriate for communication across socially stratified groups. [43] It could have served early states as a paradigmatic form of interaction for a new citizen estate whose members were formerly of unequal status, and the difference between pity and mimetic grief as forms of communicative interaction demonstrates how kin and non-kin experience grief in different, politically significant ways in prestate as opposed to early state societies. [44] At climactic moments in Homeric epic, sorrow over a great leader's death is articulated through pity rather than through the chiefdom's dynamics of assent and submission in mimetic grief. At these moments, pity enables agents both inside the narrative (the characters) and outside (poet and audience) to construct an alternative reality through a new form of interaction we might call intersubjective communication. It foregrounds the action of the speaking subject who answers to death's reality in such a way as to allow a listener to understand his or her situation in a similar way.

The climactic exchange at *Iliad* 24.468-676 between Achilles and Priam, for example, enables Achilles to recognize that Priam's grief for Hector mirrors his own grief for Patroklos and his father Peleus. Here, "even hostile aliens are reconciled to each other by the integrative power of lamentation and death ritual" (Seaford 1994.176). The laments for Hector by Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen in *Iliad* 24 also demonstrate how, when lament is embedded in an even more complex genre like epic, pity controls the audience's response. These mourning kinswomen at 24.723-76 fictively engage in stock-taking for Trojan society one last time as they unite the listening Trojan kin and non-kin in submission to Hector's **[End Page 195]** authority, but Homer's audience is not simply--or even primarily--being roused to grieve for Hector. Through pity for these women, they are instead invited to play the role of universal listeners, each equal to the other and to the lamenting women, in understanding grief over Hector as an answer to the death of their own *philoi*. The speakers of these lines--both the poet and his characters--thus use pity to structure "models of action and feeling for the age of the polis." [45]

The Cognitive Revolution in Genealogical Poetry

Another complex speech genre emerged in the late Dark Age nourished by lament's narratives of grief and heroic action. Poetic catalogues and genealogies of ancestors served competing elites in the eighth century to extend their family's precarious status to sons and grandsons by (in West's words) "contrast[ing] the celebrity of their fathers and forefathers with the humble origins of their rivals" (1985.8-9). Also fed on "folktale, fiction and saga," these local genealogies provided by 750 the outlines of four independent genealogical systems offering a rich narrative context for early Greek heroic poetry in hexameter verse (West 1985.137). After 750, however, these genealogies began to expand beyond their regional scope as poets invented ties linking heroic figures of one territory with those of others, both Greek and non-Greek, until all four "sprawled across a Panhellenic canvas" (West 1985.165).

In cognitive terms, the genealogical poets broached the potential for a universal, narrative sense of time, space, and agency in which any local Greek community could insert itself. They did this by subordinating narrative elements like emplotment and agent to an overriding concern with a novel chronotopal organization that mapped two worlds, one heroic, the other historical, onto one another. This enabled temporal, spatial, and interpersonal relations in genealogical poetry to display a systematic relation between past and present that Dark Age micronarratives lacked. The resulting "heroic age" not only rendered the past more accessible, it also allowed communities to manipulate their comparisons of past and **[End Page 196]** present by cognitively aligning chronotopes within heroic narrative to "real-life" chronotopes of the battlefield, the war council, the chieftain's feasting hall, and the funeral. Once the time, space, agents, and chronotopes of each era could be rigorously compared and contrasted, a cognitive path opened for listeners to understand the present in terms of the heroic past, and vice-versa.

Such a narrative framework also provided nascent Greek states with a master symbolic form for the network of communicative interaction we call "peer polity interaction." [46] This was a pliable, continually expanding and contracting medium for generating stories that: (a) connected states to one another in friendship and enmity; (b) established the legitimacy of state institutions over against those of kin-based societies; and, most importantly, (c) introduced new cognitive criteria of truth, verisimilitude, appropriateness, justness, etc. to enact the "devaluative shift" needed to reject worldviews held by previous generations. [47]

How did genealogical poetry manage, as lament had not, to instigate a cognitive revolution in understanding the world eighth-century Greeks inherited from their immediate forefathers? The few echoes of this poetry that survive in Homer, and the fragmentary nature of what survives in the post-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (and its dating to perhaps the sixth century), make these questions difficult to answer. [48] Genealogical poetry was animated, to use a term from the Russian Formalists, by a thematic "dominant" prominent in surviving eighth-century hexameter poetry: the opposition between the gods' freedom from death and humans' subjection to it. [49] Far from discouraging interactions between gods and humans, the opposition generated the stuff of genealogical poetry's narrative in the seemingly endless series of erotic and adversarial encounters between them.[50] This poetry broke with tradition by enabling the actors on either side of death's divide to abandon their concept of reality and experience that of the other. In particular, the liaisons between gods and humans that were so vital to these genealogical fantasies compelled the gods to experience death through the demise of their human bedmates and **[End Page 197]** offspring. In dramatizing these scenes, the poets and their audiences assumed the subjective stance of the divine "other" playing the role of the human "self." As the *Catalogue of Women* has been described, "The remarkable feature of the Hesiodic fragments . . . is that they present the gods' rather than man's perspective on death. . . . In telling of such occasions, the poets look beyond human experience and, in an extraordinary act of sympathy, imagine what the gods' feelings must be." [51]

By comparing heroic and historical chronotopes, especially those concerned with death, poets and audiences of genealogical poetry evaluated Thetis' grief over Achilles and Peleus, Zeus' over Sarpedon, or Demeter's over Persephone as "true" or "effective," as "proper" or "improper." But the criteria that enabled eighth-century audiences to judge this grief reasonable differed fundamentally from the criteria for success or failure, and the justice or injustice, of actors and actions in Dark Age lament. As we saw in the *Iliad*'s antiphonal scenes of lament between social equals, audiences must construe a new type of communicative action to understand the god's expression of grief in the face of death as a purely subjective presentation of self to others. This grief must be judged as a sincere or deceitful revelation of an inner world, as well as a true or proper action in relation to the external world. [52] In dramatizing the need to grieve by subjects who will themselves never experience death, these poets presented audiences with a simulacrum of grief not unlike pity, displaying it as a linguistic and emotive construct through which to share another's subjective perception of the world, to recognize it as similar to one's own, and to reach a universal understanding of humans as creatures of limitation.

Assuming another's grief outside the ritual context of funerary cult, in effect, aestheticized lamentation; it transformed this traditional, conservative speech genre into a paradigmatic "performative attitude" allowing historical individuals to orient themselves to new senses of the natural and social worlds. [53] Its poetic performance laid the groundwork in the eighth century for a communicative network in which to negotiate a universal understanding of how to act, judge, and speak effectively and fairly within a shared sense of the natural, social, and personal worlds. In **[End Page 198]** this sense, then, the thematics of grief and pity in such poetry opened the door for participation in a communicative action fundamental to forming an "isonometric" citizen class in the nascent polis. If, within a territory, populations formerly divided by kinship affiliation, by economic roles as exploiters and exploited, and by ethnicity had to learn to assume an identity that in principle recognized all as equals, then state formation must have exploited a thematics of grief and pity that: (a) taught men and women a rational communicative action enabling speakers and listeners to share intersubjectively a sense of the world; and that (b) devalued prestate norms of authority and behavior compelling these groups to experience different worldviews. [54]

The Tale of Meleagros

A brief look at *Iliad* 9 will demonstrate how an eighth-century poet like Homer altered various Dark Age narrative traditions to appeal to this novel communicative action. The story of Meleagros (9.524-605) has over the years provided a valuable lens through which to glimpse the poem's various narrative "strata"; specifically, the distinct layers of a prehomeric epic narrative and, possibly, a folktale have been detected. [55] If we compare the ways actors communicate in the various "strata" through different speech genres, we will find that Homer transformed the tale's earlier plots into sequences of cooperation, competition, and struggle dominated by actions of self-presentation and pleas for intersubjective understanding typical of communication between citizens.

The critical question for most scholars has been to determine which of the tale's elements were prehomeric, which Homer invented, and which were added in later retellings. [56] But their emphasis on the origins of specific narrative details has obscured the question of how Homer's tale may have altered the structure of communicative interaction from earlier versions. West noted Meleagros' prominent role in the Aetolian-Elean-Pylian cycle as the slayer of the Kalydonian boar and as a warrior for his **[End Page 199]** native Kalydon against Pleuron (1985.138-39); and from Hesiod fragments 25.11-13 and 280 it seems that a prehomeric narrative about the war described an epic version of his death in battle by Apollo. [57]

This Meleagros, from our reconstruction of the boar hunt and ensuing war between Kalydon and Pleuron, was for late Dark Age speakers and listeners a heroic agent within the natural and social worlds. But his success in hunting and warfare transgressed the norms of a kin-based society, for in the hunt he quarreled with or killed his maternal uncles over dividing the spoils. His success in battle was likewise compromised in versions that had Meleagros kill his uncles in the war that resulted from the quarrel over the boar. [58] In the Dark Age tale, Meleagros is confronted by utterances in the form of practical and ritual injunctions or taboos regarding hunting and warfare and social activities like relations with maternal kin. These operate like speech genres to which both the speakers and listeners of the tale expect him to "answer" in prescribed ways: conformity is the only appropriate response, stifling any potential for Meleagros to challenge the worldview of kin-dominated societies. Meleagros' error in judgment, therefore, cost him his life when his mother, enraged at the death of her brothers, either threw the firebrand on the fire or, as in Homer, cursed him. Since the hero's response had to be evaluated according to criteria established by ancestors, the concepts of "taboo" and "fate" prevented further inquiry into the reasons for his demise. His death then became a negative paradigm for societies dominated by kinship relations, where an individual's understanding of his or her agency does not include a sense of autonomy or "subjective responsibility." [59]

By inserting this proto-epic Meleagros into *Iliad* 9, Homer expected his audience to be familiar not only with the Dark Age story's narrative elements, but with its communicative interactions among speakers, listeners, and hero. If, in fact, Homer did invent the conflict between Meleagros and his uncles and the mother's curse as the reason for his death (March 1987.34-35), he did so in order to enact a "devaluative shift" away from the cognitive criteria of prestate societies dominated by kinship. Homer's Meleagros illustrates how disastrously the hero's murder of kin **[End Page 200]** and his mother's retributive, kin-based justice could effect a community where alternative forms of communicative interaction were emerging. His version fully articulates the Dark Age speech genres that bid Meleagros conform to practical and ritual proscriptions in hunting and war, but it then dialogically introduces competing speech genres of self-presentation and intersubjective communication.

The dialogic voices, at first, belong to those who plead with Meleagros to stifle his anger and return to defend Kalydon. In Kakridis' "ascending scale of affection" these are the Aetolian elders who use the language of gift-exchange to persuade him; then Meleagros' father, brothers, and mother; then his *hetairoi*. Except for briefly enumerating the gifts, Homer does not articulate these voices, and his listeners had no reason to expect that they appealed to criteria other than those of prestate societies. Only the voice of Meleagros' wife Kleopatra, who is surely Homer's invention, presents a truly dialogic alternative. [60] She pleads with him as a suppliant (*lisset' oduromenê*) to return to battle by evoking the fates of the community members who will suffer because of his anger and withdrawal (*Il*. 9.590-94). As with the *Iliad*'s use of lament between social equals, Kleopatra's reasoning is couched in a cry for pity, inviting Meleagros to set aside his ego-centered understanding of the world in favor of a reasoning that comprehends their fates in terms of a universal, intersubjective reality that is the same for all. [61]

Today we recognize many ways in which Homer's Meleagros is a paradigm tailor-made to suit Achilles, an almost perfect mirror-image.[62] However, Homer's Meleagros and his Achilles reflect one another for reasons other than that each man's absence from battle has disastrous consequences for his people, or that each refuses generous offers of wealth as inducements to return. Homer has Phoinix define both heroes as men imprisoned within their self-presentation to others--this Meleagros and Achilles withdraw from battle according to the purely subjective criteria of an anger that resists changes in the ways their peers and eighth-century audiences understood the social code generating honor and shame. [63] **[End Page 201]** Neither will see how others must experience the consequences of their decision, or that their decision is made simultaneously for themselves and for others. They refuse to have their decision judged as an expression of their own inner, subjective world and also interpreted by others in an

essentially shared world. Locked within their subjectivity, they will not understand how that world is interconnected with worlds that are natural, social, and "subjective-for-another." [64]

Others, too, have seen Homer's Meleagros and Achilles as prototypes of the citizen in an early state society because both the *Iliad* and its Meleagros story foist upon their heroes an enhanced responsibility for their own fates and the fates of the many others, kin and non-kin, who constitute their social peers. [65] But I propose them as paradigms for enacting the Greek citizen's earliest historical consciousness of more than new political privileges and obligations. Citizenship emerged first as a novel capacity to evaluate cognitively the rational criteria behind the achievements, moral decisions, and self-presentations to others of heroic ancestors. The citizen was, in effect, whoever learned to construe differently, and as politically incompatible, the worldviews of immature chiefdoms and early city-states; whoever learned to transpose into daily life a shift originating within the funerary sphere's communicative interaction; whoever, in short, learned to exchange mimetic grief over another's sorrow for the pity that defined a community grounded in a universal understanding of time, space, and agency. [66]

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Notes

1. For this "Formative Era" see Donlan and Thomas 1993.65.

2. Donlan and Thomas 1993.61-62; for Crete see Haggis 1993.

3. Whitley 1991a.184 and 1991b.346-47. See Haggis 1993 on stability in East Crete's small village clusters.

4. Garnsey and Morris 1989.99, Morris 1991.33, Donlan 1994.34.

5. See Johnson and Earle 1987.11-12 on the "domestic mode of production," Donlan 1989.7-12 on the Dark Age *oikos*, Snodgrass 1987.193-209 on pastoralism, Morris 1987.23 and Garnsey and Morris 1989.99 on pastoralism and agriculture.

6. Donlan and Thomas 1993.64.

7. See Snodgrass 1987.190-92 on the average life span. Donlan and Thomas see hamlets and villages as the "normal community for most inhabitants" of Dark Age Greece (1993.63).

8. Under "family-level groups" Johnson and Earle include the simplest and smallest forms of socioeconomic integration, ranging from single families (5-8 persons) to "family/camps" (25-50) and the more settled "family/hamlets" (25-35) (1987.19-20 and 28-97). For seasonal transhumance, see Snodgrass 1987.199, for chiefdoms uniting villages, Donlan and Thomas 1993.68. Cf. Ferguson on the Dark Age's "hybrid polities" (1991.170-71).

9. "Local groups" consist of multiple families in village or regional settlements five to ten times the size of family-level groups (1987.20-21 and 101-203).

10. Whitley's division into "stable" and "unstable" seems too rigid, especially the claim that each type experienced "quite different" social formations (1991a.184).

11. See Donlan and Thomas 1993.63-65 and Donlan 1994.35.

12. See Johnson and Earle 1987.20 for typical functions; a Dark Age example is Nichoria's 13-14 families in the 11th century (Donlan and Thomas 1993.64).

13. Donlan 1994.36-37.

14. Donlan and Thomas 1993.65; cf. Morris 1991.43 on "complex, stratified" societies at Lefkandi and Naxos.

15. See Johnson and Earle 1987.207 on simple chiefdoms and 211 on merging big-man/chieftain functions into one continuum.

16. Morris 1991.27-40, 42. He sees Dark Age societies as stratified between an elite (one-quarter to one-third of the population) and serf-like peasants (1987.173-83, 1989b.506).

17. Donlan and Thomas 1993.66.

18. Donlan 1982a.3, 7 and 1982b.172-73; Qviller 1981.120. Cf. Ferguson on "overlapping, layered and linked authority patterns" before and after statehood (1991.1771) and Earle 1987.282 on continuity between non-Greek big-man systems and chiefdoms. Whitley rigidly assigns big-men to unstable and chiefs to stable communities (1991a.192 and 1991b.352).

19. Donlan 1985.304-05 and 1989.22. Cf. Donlan and Thomas 1993.65-69.

20. Cf. Calligas' (1988) suggestion that the communities of the "Lefkandi Period" (c. 1050-830 B.C.) originated the heroic narrative tradition we associate with Greek epic. He linked storytelling to the funerary sphere by arguing that narratives extended "heroic" burials for leaders and prolonged their legitimacy into the future.

21. See Antonaccio 1995.264ff., 1994.401-02, and 1993.63.

22. See Carr 1986.86-94 for the term and cognitive framework.

23. Carr 1986.113.

24. Here I adapt Horton's notions of "traditionalistic knowledge" and "consensual elaboration of theory" in oral, premodern, or nonwestern societies (1993.329-30, 338-40).

25. See Sourvinou-Inwood 1981.30, n. 53, for the greater impact of a leader's death and a difference in the scale of symbolic expression for his funerary ritual.

26. See Morris 1987--cf. Humphreys' critique (1990)--and 1989a.

27. See Antonaccio 1993 and 1995.

28. On competitive stress, see Morris 1987.42 and 181-82, Whitley 1991a.136-37, and Antonaccio 1995.257ff.; on tomb cult, Antonaccio 1993.48-56, 1994.400-02, and 1995.245-46.

29. See Antonaccio 1993.63-64, 1995.252-53 and 264-65; cf. Lambrinoudakis 1988.245.

30. Antonaccio 1993.64; cf. 1994.410. On the possibility that burials and tomb cult were not always restricted to elites, see 1994.403.

31. Cf. Antonaccio on tomb cult as competition for the past in panhellenic vs. more restricted versions (1994.408). See Whitley 1995.49-50 on use of the past to legitimate the present. To Morris, eighth-century tomb/hero cults "seem ambiguous, meaning different things to different people" (1988.758).

32. Cf. Martin's six "rhetorical genres" in Homer: "prayer, lament, supplication, commanding, insulting and narrating from memory" (1987.44).

33. Bakhtin's term for this is "addressivity" (1986.95).

34. I adapt these cognitive criteria from Habermas 1984.84-96.

35. Cavanaugh and Mee 1995.58 confirm Vermeule's earlier claim of "unbroken continuity of funerary imagery and behavior" from the Bronze Age to the classical period (1979.63).

36. See Sourvinou-Inwood 1981.26-28 and 1983.41-42.

37. Alexiou 1974.11-13 and 102-03, suggesting that non-kin were once collateral kin, but that in time professional mourners took on this role.

38. Alexiou 1974.165-84. In Mycenaean and Geometric iconography female mourners predominate; family and non-kin (professionals or "collective" mourners) are "antithetically" arranged; and costume, gestures, and expressions are similar (Cavanaugh and Mee 1995). Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood on binary opposition in funerary rite (1981), Alexiou on a "balance of opposites" in lament (1974.184).

39. See Seaford 1994.116 and Sourvinou-Inwood 1983.43 on forced participation of non-kin in elite funerals in the archaic period.

40. Cf. Martin 1987.22 on Homeric *mythos* as an "authoritative speech act" seeking from the listener submission, indignation, or fear, with Hecuba's and Helen's laments for Hector (*Il.* 24.746-76) as *mythoi*.

41. See Horton 1993.245-46 for this cognitive function of taboo.

42. For Nagy 1979.94-117, the Homeric theme of grief originates in a lament restricted to ephemeral, local effects; the *thrênos*' heroic narratives are "extend[ed] into epic" (1979.170-77, 184). Crotty 1994.69 defines epic as an aesthetic, "sympathetic remembering by others of [one's] bygone griefs."

43. Cf. Crotty's sense of Homeric pity's "merging effect" (1994.48), where the pitier recognizes his/her "kind of being" in another's griefs (14). He locates pity within family relations, but ignores its social dynamics outside the *oikos* because he places Homer's "warrior society" outside historical time.

44. Cf. Seaford on "collective death ritual's" integrative power (1994.106-43), without distinguishing various funerary practices in various eras for elites, citizens, and mythic figures. Unlike Crotty 1994, Seaford doesn't see pity and grief as different communicative interactions, but both see grief for non-kin as having more aesthetic than political meaning (Seaford 1994.140-41).

45. Seaford 1994.177. For Crotty, too, Achilles' pity for Priam is a paradigm for the audience's response to the poem, but he embeds pity in an aestheticized supplication, denying it a historical and political function (1994.101ff.).

46. See Snodgrass 1986 and Morgan 1990.2 and 203-04.

47. Habermas' term (1984.68), adapted from Piagetian cognitive theory.

48. West 1985.130-37 suggests 580-520 B.C.; March 580-570 B.C. (1987.157-59).

49. On the "dominant" see Jakobson 1971.82; cf. Thalmann 1984.78-112 on how gods and men relate differently to death in Hesiod and Homer.

50. Thalmann 1984.104, commenting on Hesiod fr. 204.

51. Thalmann 1984.106, with 216, n. 59, on fr. 204 and its supplements.

52. Cf. Habermas 1984.90-94 on the concept of "dramaturgical action."

53. I adapt "performative attitude" from Habermas 1984.111ff. On lament and aesthetic pleasure see Seaford 1994.140-41 and Crotty 1994.102.

54. I adapt this sense of "communicative action" from Habermas 1984 and 1987.

55. I draw on Kakridis 1949, Page 1959, Willcock 1964, Petzold 1976, Rosner 1976, Rubin and Sale 1983, March 1987, Bremmer 1988, Swain 1988, and Hainsworth 1993.

56. On the oldest elements, see Kakridis 1949.11-18, Swain 1988.271, Hainsworth 1993.131, March 1987.40, 44-46, and Bremmer 1988.43-45.

57. Swain 1988.272 and 275.

58. Perhaps the hero's quarrel with his uncles violated a double taboo on sexual activity and familial violence during the hunt (Rubin and Sale 1983).

59. For early Greek concepts of agency see Farrar 1988.15-43, esp. 16-18.

60. Cf. Bremmer 1988.41-42.

61. Crotty 1994.100, too, sees Kleopatra as Homer, Meleagros as the audience.

62. See Willcock 1964, Rosner 1976, and Swain 1988.

63. The anger of Meleagros looks like Homer's invention (Willcock 1964.152-53 and Swain 1988.275), but a prehomeric epic may have employed anger since it was a common epic motive for withdrawing from battle.

64. Habermas 1984.69, again adapting Piagetian cognitive theory.

65. E.g., for Meleagros, Page 1959 and Petzold 1976; for Achilles, Nimis 1986.

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