

## SIGNALS FROM THE UNCONSCIOUS IN EARLY GREEK POETRY

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ONE OF THE THINGS George Walsh was thinking about in the years before his death was Hellenistic poetry's representation of mental revolution. He found cases in which men and women were shown to be, in his words, "surprised by self"—poetic figures who came by accident on a message from a buried part of their own souls. It seemed to him that the later poets had had a stronger sense of the mind's uncontrolled areas than earlier Greeks had known, and he wanted to measure the difference. We talked about a few archaic and classical parallels, and what I offer here I meant to give to him: three passages that might have provided a background for his thought. He was looking for depictions not of the invasion of the conscious mind by an idea or an impulse foreign to it, but an invasion from within. Dreams and divine interference are not under discussion because, though these may seem to us to denote pressures from the unconscious, they were thought of as external by the early poets. Nor do I mean to treat episodes into which a psychoanalytic interpreter might read the insurgence of the id. Instead, the subject will be limited to what George Walsh sought, cases in which an early poet clearly depicts a consciousness that collides with an unknown aspect of the self.

### I

The first case is supplied by Homer. In the *Iliad* Homer necessarily shows minds bent on aggressive action, and these minds as a rule work with simple awareness. An outer stimulus—an act, object, or word—produces an inner impulse which at once directs the limbs,<sup>1</sup> and much of the joy and terror of the poem comes because its men move with so little doubt or obscurity of motive. The thrust from perception to motion occurs for them in the chest cavity or *σπῆν* (e.g., *Il.* 16. 481, 504), a vaporous chamber above the liver in the neighborhood of the heart (*Od.* 9. 301,

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1. In *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge, 1951) p. 16, R. B. Onians spoke of the "primal unity of mind in which perception or cognition is associated with or immediately followed by an emotion and a tendency to action."

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*Il.* 16. 481) where impressions and emotions shift about like gases.<sup>2</sup> The strongest make their way into a breathy control-center called the θυμός,<sup>3</sup> where they are converted into an impulse that directs specific muscular activity. Thus when a single urgent emotion (rage, for example, "like smoke but sweeter than honey," at *Il.* 18. 110) succeeds in occupying this center it translates itself into a bodily command,<sup>4</sup> for it is the temporary ruler of the whole psycho-physical machine. And on the other hand, if it is a soft emotion like grief, cowardice, or pity, it may cause the θυμός to melt;<sup>5</sup> similarly, a sense of helplessness can seize the θυμός and shut down all commands (*Od.* 9. 295; cf. *Il.* 17. 744, 22. 242). In ordinary cases there is no need for the intermediate activities we call thought,<sup>6</sup> for the process of converting perception into active response is so clean that it can be expressed in a tight formula: X occurred, it stirred the θυμός in his chest, he moved to go (e.g., *Il.* 4. 208–9).<sup>7</sup> The inner command ex-

2. One may of course feel several emotions at once: Achilles, at *Il.* 19. 15–19, still feels anger even as joy enters his φρένες at the sight of the gifts. Neither of these emotions is accompanied by a strong impulse, however, so there is no rivalry for possession of the θυμός.

3. Onians, *Origins*, p. 80, called the θυμός a "vapor of blood." B. Snell, *Der Weg zum Denken*, Hypomnemata 57 (Göttingen, 1978), p. 61, termed it "eine Funktion," finding that φρήν provided the emotional, conceptual climate in which θυμός determined specific actions. M. Biraud, "La conception psychologique de l'époque d'Homère," *Cratyle*, n.s. 2 (1984): 1–21, esp. 6, calls it "un principe de mouvement." E. L. Harrison, "Notes on Homeric Psychology," *Phoenix* 4 (1960): 63–72, would have θυμός equal life energy, the source of irrational impulses, and others have likewise tried to make an irrational/rational distinction between θυμός and φρένες. A. Dihle, in *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 26 (cf. also p. 180, n. 34), reports a θυμός that is not the seat of emotion but emotion itself, and a φρήν that is simply intellect. In fact, however, the two terms are neither so abstract nor so distinct as this in their Homeric appearances. For surveys of usage, see S. M. Darcus, "A Person's Relation to φρήν," *Glotta* 57 (1979): 159–73; "How a Person Relates to θυμός in Homer," *IF* 85 (1980): 138–50; "The Function of θυμός," *Glotta* 59 (1981): 147–55; "Πραπίδες in Homer," *Glotta* 65 (1987): 182–93. The most recent discussion is that of C. P. Caswell, *A Study of Thymos in Early Greek Epic*, Mnemosyne Supplement (1990); see esp. her section entitled "Inner Debate," pp. 45–47.

4. Formulas like θυμοβόρος ἔρις and δάκε φρένας remind us that the φρένες and θυμός receive an emotion in much the same way that an organ of tactile perception does an external stimulus. Compare also cases in which the θυμός is "kneaded" like bread (*Il.* 17. 564, 20. 425). What happens in the θυμός is evidently not unlike the Aristotelian interaction of sensitive, conative, and locomotive faculties in a κοινὴ αἴσθησις that occurred in the heart (*De an.* B 416b33–417a14). The θυμός can also entertain a more lasting set or disposition, such as friendship (*Il.* 4. 360) or pity (20. 467).

5. E.g., πένθος, *Il.* 22. 242; ἄδος, *Il.* 11. 88; κήδεα, *Il.* 1. 196, 209; μελεδήματα, *Il.* 23. 62.

6. There are rare occasions when simple reason controls action; Diomedes is made to kill Dolon without emotion, on the basis of a logical demonstration (*Il.* 10. 446–53). "Thought" in other cases may follow upon the conquest of the θυμός by an emotion, and may influence subsequent action. Thus Phoenix, at *Il.* 9. 434–37, supposes that γόλος has fallen upon the θυμός of Achilles and that he has, as a result, cast a plan of return into his φρένες, from which place it may rise as a direct impulse toward action at any time. In a more complicated case at *Od.* 1. 322–23, Telemachus' eye perceives the disappearance of his interlocutor; this perception is processed by his φρένες, and his θυμός passively registers astonishment, after which comes the logical conclusion that this must have been a god; meanwhile all of Telemachus' active impulses have remained under the dominance of the μένος and θάρσος which have been artificially introduced into his θυμός (321). There seems to be a distinction between φρένες and θυμός in cases of preliminary consideration; if an intended action is eventual, it is ordinarily lodged in the φρένες, like Achilles' notion of return, but if it is to be immediate the θυμός receives it. Thus at *Il.* 20. 195–96 Achilles accuses Aeneas of having drawn a conclusion from the past which he now casts into his θυμός as the basis of his present action (cf. *Il.* 15. 566, where counsels of Ajax are cast into θυμοί of others whose action is prompt; cf. also *Od.* 12. 217–18).

7. The θυμός can also exercise a corresponding negative control, not commanding but inhibiting. So at *Od.* 9. 299–302, a quick change of ruling impulse is described: Odysseus' ego goes to his θυμός with the idea of killing Polyphemus, and the command is evidently given, for his hand draws his sword. Then ἕτερος θυμός (i.e., a θυμός possessed by another impulse) holds him back. The lines that follow indicate

tends directly to the limbs concerned and can be broken only by some force external to the mind:<sup>8</sup> physical injury (*Il.* 15. 24), exhaustion (*Il.* 19. 164–65), or the interference of a god.<sup>9</sup> Or rather, that is the general rule. There is one sensational exception in which the unconscious plays a role, but in order to appreciate that single episode we will have to look more closely at the standard Homeric mind as it formulates a decision.

The typical warrior is characterized by inner unanimity. In moments of heightened consciousness he is aware of his own mental processes (at *Il.* 5. 669–70, Odysseus knows that his θυμός is overcharged because his heart quivers), and as ego he can encourage or suppress emotion (e.g., Achilles at *Il.* 1. 193). He may turn a problem over in his breast (e.g., *Il.* 1. 193 ὥρμαινε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν; cf. *Il.* 14. 20; 21. 137) or even entertain alternatives (e.g., *Il.* 13. 455 διάνδιχα μερμήριζεν), but as a rule one mode of action at once recommends itself as most profitable (e.g., *Il.* 13. 458 δοάσσατο κέρδιον εἶναι).<sup>10</sup> An internal command is issued and to it, as to an external one, the whole man gives automatic obedience.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, Homeric mental life cannot always be so uncomplicated because the men of the *Iliad* feel two strong drives, one toward self-preservation and one toward self-enhancement, and obviously certain conditions can set these against one another. Still, the poem is almost half finished before we come upon a warrior who is extensively troubled by a divided inner response to his outward situation.<sup>12</sup> That warrior is Odysseus, and the rhapsode marks

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that this second inhibiting impulse was dictated by an imaginative reconstruction of the consequences of the action already commenced—by reason, in other words, which here can be called θυμός because it is in control.

8. On the connection between θυμός and the limbs, see Onians, *Origins*, p. 79. The usual verbs for the activity of the θυμός are ἐποτρύνειν (e.g., *Il.* 6. 439), ἀνωγέμεν (e.g., *Il.* 18. 90, 22. 142), κελεύειν (e.g., *Il.* 7. 349). When the θυμός “trembles” with fear this trembling may spread to the limbs (e.g., *Il.* 7. 215–16). Nonetheless emotion sometimes seems to bypass the θυμός and attack the limbs directly, not causing them to act, but simply to give an involuntary reaction (e.g., *Il.* 14. 506 τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα). At *Il.* 7. 215–16 the two possible consequences of a single perception are depicted: the sight of Ajax causes trembling to seize directly upon the limbs of the men, while in Hector it is registered in the θυμός, which shudders in his chest.

9. As happens, e.g., at *Il.* 9. 458–61 (reading Plutarch’s lines) when a god plants the thought of future blame in the θυμός of Phoenix and so interrupts his angered impulse to kill. In a positive form, such interference can bring physical strength and courage, as with the two Ajaxes at *Il.* 13. 59–61. And in one case the interference comes from a stronger mortal. At *Il.* 6. 51 the words of Adrastus have persuaded the θυμός of Menelaus, and action would have followed, as the poet explicitly says, had not Agamemnon spoken the words that turned his brother’s φρήν (61). The impulse to spare the captive loses control of Menelaus’ θυμός and his hand spurns the suppliant; nevertheless it is notable that Agamemnon does not intrude directly into his brother’s command center, as a god might have done. He cannot cause Menelaus to kill Adrastus, but must do this himself (63–65).

10. A warrior may entertain two parallel thrusts toward action; so Odysseus at *Il.* 5. 671–73 would go after Sarpedon or look for more Lycians with equal satisfaction (cf. Hector at 16. 713, who is likewise of two minds in a question of strategy). In these cases choice is imposed either by circumstance or by an interfering divinity (Athena at 5. 676; Apollo at 16. 715; cf. 10. 507, where Athena puts an end to Diomedes’ indecision). In a few cases we are told that a pair of potential impulses momentarily coexist in the φρένες and that one imposes itself as more profitable (Deiphobus, *Il.* 13. 455; Nestor, 14. 20; Zeus, 16. 652). An alternate formula for the same process locates this partly conscious act of comparison in the θυμός (*Il.* 2. 5, 10. 17, 14. 159–61), but here again the phrasing leaves the “thinker” passive.

11. See Biraud, “La conception psychologique,” p. 4: “l’acte succède sans délai.”

12. The one example of extended indecision before Book 11 is provided by Agamemnon at *Il.* 10. 4–17. Perceptions of activity in the Trojan camp (11) have provoked an emotion of wonder (12), and as his

his unusual mental condition with a special poetic device, the interior monologue of choice.<sup>13</sup> By means of this invention, Homer taps the warrior's mind and lets us hear the voice of the ego within,<sup>14</sup> as it imposes its will upon the organs of psychic control. There will be three more occasions on which exactly the same device is used.<sup>15</sup>

In Book 11 of the *Iliad* Odysseus stands isolated in the path of a perceived Trojan advance, arrested by inner turmoil and addressing his own θυμός (403 ὀχθήσας δ' ἄρα εἶπε πρὸς ὃν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν). First he reminds

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heart groans under the weight of this emotion (10. 16), Agamemnon's φρένες shudder (10). Then a "best plan" makes its appearance, already in possession of the θυμός (17); Agamemnon jumps up and dresses himself, ruled by an impulse he was apparently not even aware of entertaining. This kind of rapid, unsupervised inner resolution would seem to be the basis of the early "swift as thought" similes; see, e.g., the Hymn to Hermes (43–44), "swift as the thrust of νόημα through the breast of one turned this way and that by μέμνηται."

13. In the *Iliad* there are no monologues until Book 11; after this Achilles has four that do not come into the present discussion because they register simple recognition, not choice (18. 6–14; 19. 315–37, addressed to Patroclus; 20. 344–52; 21. 54–63). Of these the most interesting is the one in Book 21, where a complex psychic process is detailed. Eye has reported the presence of Lykaon and an unspecified part of the mind has recognized him as a captive sold in Lemnos; ego wonders aloud to θυμός at such apparent perceptual evidence that the dead may rise; then it imposes a command to be transmitted by the θυμός. An action that will allow new perceptions to enter the φρένες is to be taken, so that further conclusions may be drawn. The ego, in other words, decides to make an empirical test of the conclusions that have been tentatively drawn by some separate, undefinable rational organ! The monologues of the *Odyssey* may display an ego in a similar process of reviewing perception (*Od.* 5. 299–312, 356–64, 408–73, 6. 119–26), but they do not reflect choice or genuine decision. See, e.g., *Od.* 5. 465–73, where a mental review of perceived facts finds danger on shore, danger in the woods, and the mind remains divided (474); then in the next line Odysseus' body moves into the woods. There are in all ten such monologues in the *Odyssey*, seven of which belong to Odysseus, six occurring in Book 5. Of the gods, only Zeus ruminates aloud in the *Iliad* (17. 201–8), only Poseidon in the *Odyssey* (5. 286–90, 377–79).

14. I am using "ego" to mean that part of the warrior that supervises the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain. It is conscious, though not always conscious of itself. It brings affects and instinctual processes into contact with words, and it controls normal speech. It is the part of a man that makes deception possible, since it can direct verbal statements that are at variance with what it keeps hidden in the φρένες (*Il.* 9. 313 ὅς γ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθη ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἄλλο δὲ εἶπη). It is, however, also the part of a man that can make a formal promise on behalf of the whole psycho-physical organism, whether of passion or action, to take effect in the future (as Achilles does at *Il.* 16. 62).

15. The four monologues of choice (*Il.* 11. 404–13, 17. 91–105, 21. 553–70, 22. 99–130) have a common formal structure. Each is introduced and identified with the narrative line ὀχθήσας δ' ἄρα εἶπε πρὸς ὃν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν (the phrase μεγ' ὀχθήσας is also used elsewhere of mental turmoil, e.g., *Il.* 16. 48, 22. 14; even gods can be in this state, e.g., *Il.* 4. 30, 7. 454, 8. 208). Each speech begins ὦ μοι ἐγώ(v) and each has two clearly defined sections divided by the interrupting line ἀλλὰ τίη μοι ταῦτα φίλος διελέξατο θυμός; In the section preceding this line a pair of alternatives is set out with preliminary evaluations. In the section following there is a reformulation of alternatives so that a clear predominance adheres to one; either the original items receive altered evaluations, or else a new possibility is introduced, superior to both. (It is Menelaus' distinction to introduce a third hypothetical action, superior but frankly contrary-to-fact, after he has arrived at his choice.) Though one course may be overtly labeled as better, there is no formula to record the actual process of resolution; instead, as soon as the alternatives have been put into a satisfactory order, the speaker breaks off and the epic narrator reestablishes his external stance (εἶτος ὁ ταῦθ' ὤρμαινε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν at 11. 411 and 17. 106; or the variant, "Ὡς ὤρμαινε μένων, at 22. 131). Hector's monologue, longer and more elaborate than the others, follows this scheme with significant aberrations. In its first section a double devaluation of retreat (as too late to save lives, and also as bringing dishonor) is followed by the premature application of the "more profitable" label to the course of resistance (22. 108); then without interruption a third alternative is introduced and expanded favorably (111–21). The formulaic interruption occurs only when this third course seems to have eclipsed the other two (122); in the section that follows the interruption, only the third course is reviewed, its evaluation now strongly negative. At the end the initial choice of resistance is restated in two terse lines, as if the preceding twenty lines had not been spoken at all.

himself that he has a self:<sup>16</sup> ὦ μοι ἐγώ, he cries (404)—not just, “Ah me!” as usually translated, but a call, “O ego of mine!”<sup>17</sup> This conscious self then casts Odysseus’ inchoate impulses into words, synthesizing and reducing them to a pair of alternatives, both bad. To withdraw would be a strategic evil, for the field would be entirely abandoned; to stand would be an almost certain death, the chill of which Odysseus can already feel (405). At this point of deadlock the ego asserts its superiority by scolding the θυμός. “But why does my θυμός debate in this way?” it asks sternly.<sup>18</sup> By granting access to two impulses at the same time it has made action impossible, and so the ego must impose itself upon the system of motor command. It is empowered to do this because it has knowledge, knowledge in this case of language, and so of the labels and values of the outside world.<sup>19</sup> “I know (οἶδα),” it says, “that those who desert are ‘base,’ whereas the man termed best is the one who stands, to kill or be killed” (408–10). Odysseus’ ego is evidently united with what we today might call his super-ego<sup>20</sup>—his normative, socially oriented self—and the effect of their combined influence is immediate. The physical man stands and fights like a wild boar.

The next time we hear the internal monologue of choice it comes from Menelaus’ mouth in Book 17 (91–105). He is standing alone over the corpse of Patroclus, a lion over the cow he has killed (61–65), when he sees Hector shouting to his companions and coming on like a flame. For him the tension between self-enhancement and self-preservation is drawn more tightly than it was for Odysseus because the glory to be won by resisting, the shame to be earned by falling back, are each more extreme. Likewise the death that will be the price of the first, the safety that will compensate the second, seem to be even sharper certainties. The important

16. Bruno Snell some time ago decided that “there is in Homer no genuine reflexion, no dialogue of the soul with itself,” and indeed no sense of self at all (*Discovery of the Mind*, trans. T. G. Rosenmeyer [Oxford, 1953], pp. 14, 19). In contradiction, J. Böhme has argued in *Die Seele und das Ich im Homerischen Epos* (Leipzig, 1929), that the Homeric φρήν was essentially indistinguishable from the self.

17. C. Hentze, “Die Monologe in den homerischen Epen,” *Philologus* 63 (1904): 12–30, reports that the ego is here scolding itself. B. Fenik, “Stylization and Variety,” *Homer: Tradition and Invention* (Leiden, 1978), p. 69, finds instead a “cry of desperation.”

18. This line signals the psychic turn that we might be tempted to call “decision”; it comes as the mind shifts from disorder toward order under the influence of an emotion or idea that has not previously been recognized. (Achilles thus uses it at *Il.* 22. 385, when the thought of Patroclus interrupts his consideration of practical alternatives.) Fenik (“Stylization,” p. 70) would translate, “Why does my θυμός even bother to reflect?” but the sense is better preserved by C. Voigt (following Snell): “Aber wozu sprach in der Unterhaltung dieser mein eigener thymos?” (*Überlegung und Entscheidung: Studien zur Selbstauffassung des Menschen bei Homer*, Beitr. zur kl. Phil. 48 [Meisenheim am Glan, 1972], p. 89, with ref. to Snell at *Gnomon* 7 [1931]: 82, n. 4). With two impulses in the command center the θυμός can be said to be in debate; the ego’s complaint seems to be that a truly effective θυμός would have granted entrance only to the one impulse the present speech favors. At Alcaeus 129 V. the idea of the θυμός debate becomes positive as Pittacus is accused of having failed to entertain the awe of oaths, as well as the impulse of greed, in his θυμός; κήνων (oath-sanctions) . . . οὐ διελέξατο/πρὸς θυμόν.

19. The ego claims “das Wissen dass es eine Norm gibt,” according to G. Petersmann, “Die Entscheidungsmonologe,” *GB* 2 (1974): 151.

20. D. Lohmann, *Die Komposition der Reden in der ‘Ilias’* (Berlin, 1970), pp. 37–38, calls these two parts of the mind the “personal” and the “normative.” What I am calling the super-ego is that part of a warrior’s mind which may visit an inner nemesis upon himself; when powerful, it can even cause a sensation of pain (e.g., *Il.* 16. 544–48). The ideal and continuous function of the Homeric super-ego is described by Hector when he says (6. 444–46) that his θυμός does not command him to shirk because he has learned to be ἐσθλός and to strive for κλέος.

difference, however, is not between the two situations but between the two men, and Homer uses this second choice-monologue to display an alternate mental dynamic. The world's evaluations enter Menelaus' mind even in its first turmoil, but they are easily set aside by an ego that does not agree with its normative partner. The super-ego had delineated the initial definition of deadlock (blame in case of departure, personal disaster in case of an honorable stand), but the ego objects—why has the debate been set in this way (97)? After this formulaic interruption, the ego attacks the blame hypothesis with a lawyer-like quibble, as not applicable in the present case;<sup>21</sup> then it coolly proves that retreat under these conditions will not merely be honorable, it will be an act of piety. Enemies so fierce must be favored by the gods;<sup>22</sup> no one is blamed for yielding to divine superiority; consequently he can withdraw without loss of reputation. The flimsiness of this argument is betrayed by a last sop tossed to the super-ego (102–5: if Ajax were there to support him, he would of course resist even a daimonic power),<sup>23</sup> but the impulse to withdraw is confirmed. Hector comes on and Menelaus abandons the corpse, turning to run like a lion chased by dogs (109–10) because he is dominated by a fear that his will to survive has dressed up as a form of reverence.<sup>24</sup>

The third man to use the monologue of decision is the Trojan, Agenor, in Book 21 (552–70), and this time the normative part is not heard from at all. A single emotion, panic, is in possession of Agenor's θυμός, and his mind is divided only because there are questions about the best mode of escape. With no super-ego to impose sanctions, the summoned ego has no criteria to guide it, aside from the real and the rational, and these turn out to be worse than useless because what the ego knows, in this case, is that no one can outrun Achilles (564). The self that would find preservation perceives physical risk wherever it looks and, convinced that there is no escape, can give no command whatsoever. For a moment Agenor simply stands still, a monument to the poet's conviction that without a sense of honor a man cannot truly move. Then Apollo intervenes, supplying the voice of the missing super-ego, and Agenor thinks a new thought: "Sup-

21. Compare Creusa, at Eur. *Ion* 862–69, where the super-ego's demand for modest secrecy with good fame is put aside by the ego with the argument that such modesty does not really win fame as its reward.

22. Similarly, at *Il.* 20. 97, Aeneas states that it is impossible to resist Achilles because there is always a god at his side, but Apollo responds that in such a case an opposing warrior should call for his own divine ally.

23. Continuing events offer an elaborate commentary. Menelaus does in fact find Ajax and return with him, but his self-preserving resolve maintains itself and he stands aside from combat, while his overruled super-ego fills his chest with pain (139). Ajax, after performing to full capacity, sees that he cannot survive (242); he does not withdraw, however, but sends Menelaus for help, and Menelaus has no scruple about manipulating the sanctions he himself has quibbled away (254). Others should apply blame to themselves within the θυμός and move, but he himself continues to be controlled by his unvarnished will to live, and at 561–64 he announces that only with supernatural protection would he defend the corpse; this is given to him by Athena (569).

24. This is the only case of deliberated flight. The same movement occurs without deliberation at *Il.* 16. 119–22, where a single run-over line takes care of Ajax's mental activity: γνῶ δ' Αἴας κατὰ θυμὸν ἀμύμονα, πύγῃεν τε/ἔργα θεῶν. Cf. 5. 596–606, where a similar recognition of the opponent's divine advantage is externalized in public speech.

pose I go out against him? He too is mortal, after all" (567–70). The god has thrown courage into his heart as the poet earlier promised (547), and suddenly there is no fear in his θυμός (574), nor does he know any wish to run away (580). He fights like a panther (573) and he thinks now like a Trojan hero who has more than his physical self to defend (586–88).<sup>25</sup>

With these three monologues Homer elaborates a picture of the heroic mind,<sup>26</sup> showing it to be complex but single-chambered. Its ideas, sensations, and impulses jostle one another like the noblemen of an aristocratic society,<sup>27</sup> but nevertheless there is a prominent, though not always present, chief who may scrutinize all of the assembled passions and reasons, causing some to come forward and others to retire. This psychic commander can dominate any power struggle that develops inside the chest, so that Phoenix can urge Achilles δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν (*Il.* 9. 496).<sup>28</sup> Ethical variations appear when this ego does or does not submit to the influence of a socially shaped extension of itself, a part of the psyche that responds to the nonphysical stimuli of praise and blame. Nevertheless, all Homeric warrior minds are alike in that they give little accommodation to autonomous imaginative faculties. Memory exists, and even the power to evoke a scene from the future, but these potentially creative capacities are strictly disciplined and exploited only for military purposes. The eventual communal memory that is called κλέος is a matter of obsessive concern, but personal recollection has no place on the battlefield.<sup>29</sup> A warrior is urged to "remember his courage" (*Il.* 15. 477, 487, 734), or to "remember the joy of battle" (*Il.* 19. 148, 153), to "remember food and drink" (*Il.* 19. 231), and once to "remember family" (*Il.* 15. 662–63), but only so that he may put αἰδώς into his θυμός and fight more effectively.<sup>30</sup>

25. Apollo's interference is not recognized within the monologue because Agenor is ignorant of it. It has, however, been fixed as fact in the programmatic statement at 21. 545, 547, a statement that Fenik will not hear ("Stylization," pp. 77–81). He does not admit any intervention by the god; for him the idea of a courageous stand is simply a third alternative that Agenor himself generates. Fenik's reading creates an inconsistency between the indecisive monologue and its surrounding narrative, as does the similar report of Petersmann ("Die Entscheidungsmonologe," p. 153): "Dadurch tritt zwischen der epischen Erzählung und der direkten Rede des Troers eine scheinbare Diskrepanz auf," by which he means that the θάρσος of 547 and the battle performance at 573 are in contradiction to the monologue's search for escape. For Voigt, Agenor's speech is a poetic blunder: "fehlt dem Monolog die Sentenz" (*Überlegung und Entscheidung*, p. 95).

26. Snell has said, "Homer does not know genuine personal decisions; even where a hero is shown pondering two alternatives, the intervention of the gods plays the key role" (*Discovery*, p. 20; cf. *Aischylos und das Handeln*, *Philologus* Supp. 20 [Leipzig, 1929], p. 211, and see the qualifications made by A. Lesky, *Göttliche und menschliche Motivation* [Heidelberg, 1961], and *Homeros* [Stuttgart, 1967], cols. 49–54). Snell's assertion is accurate in the case of Agenor, but it is not true for Odysseus, Menelaus, or Hector.

27. Note that like such a society the Homeric mind is pluralistic; a wise man is one who has a multiplicity of potential ideas and impulses, one who is πολύφρων or πικυμῆδης.

28. So also Achilles can promise himself that he will not put an end to his anger until his aim is achieved (*Il.* 16. 62; cf., e.g., 19. 66–67, and see n. 14 above).

29. Something like an exception occurs at *Il.* 18. 5–14, where Achilles, disturbed by Patroclus' long absence, rallies himself as if for a decision (ἀγθήσας . . . εἴπε πρὸς . . . θυμόν: "ᾧ μοι ἐγὼ"), then stumbles, apparently by way of undirected memory, upon the relevant words of Thetis' ancient prophecy. The narrator's phrase, as he returns to his third-person account, is the same as would follow a monologue of choice (15).

30. In a more elaborate example, Achilles exhorts the Myrmidons at *Il.* 16. 200–209 by saying, "Do not forget how you scolded me for holding you back; do now what you longed to do then!" He even revives the actual words of the men's former anger, so as to channel that old passion into their present lust for battle. Compare also the negative form of this topos at 16. 357, where the Trojans "remember" fear and "forget" their courage.

The individual must manipulate his own memory much as Nestor does that of the whole group, with the sole purpose of advancing the war effort,<sup>31</sup> and the tyranny of the martial super-ego is even more absolute in the realm of forward-looking fantasy. The heroic mind is capable of ποιήσις; it can make its own fresh representations of objects, movements, even sounds, but it does this strictly in support of military values.<sup>32</sup> Hector, for example, inflates his own courage with the vision of a grave-marker for Ajax on which he finds a heartening inscription: "This is the man whom great and valorous Hector killed" (*Il.* 7. 89–90).<sup>33</sup> More often, however, these acts of imaginative creation are negative.<sup>34</sup> A man will envisage future blame and cast it into the form of a taunt from an inferior, or an enemy's nasty laugh, so that he can apply this ugly sound like a whip to his own pride. This technique of mental self-flagellation serves to drive the body once more out into the physical dangers of combat.<sup>35</sup>

That is the canonical heroic mind. It is more or less rational, more or less ethical, barely creative, and always under the direction, actual or potential,

31. At *Il.* 19. 315–37, Achilles shows exactly how a warrior should discipline his memory as he forces his mind to move from the recollection of Patroclus' corpse to the idea of his own death. In reverse Priam will urge Achilles to remember his father, that he may lose some of his ferocity (24. 486). In its martial limitation of memory, the *Iliad* is very different from the *Odyssey*, which is largely about memory, both public and private. According to Odysseus (*Od.* 9. 5–15), feasting, hearing a bard, remembering, reflecting, and conversation are the best things in life, and there is an orgy of memory at Sparta, where all is idleness (4. 187 ff.), and Menelaus can indulge even in imaginative remorse (4. 94–112). On epic memory in general, see J. I. Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition* (Oxford, 1906), p. 251, who reports no serious thought on the subject until the time of Plato.

32. The epic poets of course knew that ordinary men might sometimes indulge in fantasy just for fun; thus, at *Il.* 15. 80, Hera's motion is compared to the journeying of a man's mind when he imagines going freely from one land to another.

33. To this one may compare two more fantasies that Hector allows: at *Il.* 6. 479, he imagines future Trojans who greet Astyanax saying, "He surpasses his father"; at 7. 300–302, he urges an exchange of gifts with Ajax so that future men may say, "They fought, but parted in friendship"; cf. Sarpedon to Glaucus at 21. 318–21. These are like the positive fantasy of Aeneas who (according to Achilles at 20. 195–96) stirs himself to action by placing in his θυμός an expectation of divine aid. In a sense one could say that the whole action of the *Iliad* grows out of a controlled positive fantasy, since Achilles maintains his separation from the Achaeans by feeding himself on the memory of his insults (9. 646–48) and the vision of an entire host ruined and begging for his help (1. 411–12, 509–10; 11. 609–10). As in the case of memory, the *Odyssey's* presentation of fantasy varies from that of the *Iliad*: see, e.g., *Od.* 8. 242, where a positive future fantasy (a fantasy about memory!) is indulged for its own sake, as Alcinoüs imagines Odysseus far away in the future, remembering this day among the Phaeacians.

34. See, e.g., Hector at *Il.* 6. 450–65; Diomedes at 8. 146–50 (objecting to Nestor's advice to withdraw); Agamemnon at 4. 169–82. With the opposite intention, Priam at 22. 60–71, tries to induce a visionary shame in Hector with a picture of his own imagined sufferings without a protector; similarly, Andromache intensifies her own grief, at 22. 491–99, by imagining the future of a fatherless Astyanax. An extraordinary negative fantasy about the past is licensed by Hector at 16. 839–41 when, standing over Patroclus, he resists his own sense of appeasement and keeps his anger alive by imagining the voice of Achilles, sending Patroclus out with the words, "Do not return until you have pierced the breast of man-slaying Hector." To the negative fantasies of the *Iliad* one may compare Nausicaa's vision of shame, at *Od.* 6. 273–85, with its speech by an evil-minded nemesis-bearer; in this case the super-ego is using the fantasy to shore up the ego's resolve to separate from Odysseus. (Compare Macaria's tragic use of a shame fantasy at Eur. *Heracl.* 516–19, as she rouses herself to face death.) Some of the fantasies containing the speech of a hypothetical person are discussed from a narratological point of view by J. I. F. de Jong, "The Voice of Anonymity," *Eranos* 85 (1987): 69–84; she reviews the bibliography and finally agrees with the standard judgement, i.e., that these are "choral passages" conveying the "mind of the masses" to the listener.

35. The notion that a thought or word may serve as a whip is expressed literally in a phrase from Aeschylus (*Supp.* 466): μαστικτηῖρα καρδίας λόγον. In psychological parlance, such fantasies are invitations to the objective anxiety that will motivate action.

of a conscious ego. The men who own these minds are not troubled by inexplicable drives, inner subversion, or subterranean revolutions of feeling. Or rather, they are not, with one great exception. Homer knew that the disciplined part was not the entirety of a man's mind, and there is one figure on this battlefield who receives a disturbing signal from his unconscious. The moment comes so unexpectedly that a listener might have doubted his own apprehension, or suspected a bardic lapse, and so the poet marks it strongly by placing just here the longest and most elaborate monologue of choice to be found in his epic. It is as if he said: "By this means I have analyzed the psychic governance of the standard warrior. Now I shall use it to explore a case of aberrance."<sup>36</sup> And then, having fixed our attention, he shows how a phantom impulse can rise unsummoned, even in the warrior mind, and how such a visitation can alter and disable the heroic self.

We are in Book 22. Achilles is raging at the gates of Troy, and Hector is as full of hatred as a poisonous snake (*Il.* 22. 94–96). Nevertheless he must form a resolution: will he stand or will he withdraw for a time into the city? He is in a turmoil of indecision (98) and he addresses himself, his speech beginning with the same phrase that has introduced the three previous inner exhortations (99). His ego, at first powerfully influenced by its normative partner, evaluates even as it makes its initial statement, and it arrives at the obvious and most warrior-like assessment of the situation. To withdraw means shame (105), especially since he refused to do so earlier when lives might have been saved. To stand means glory (110), and is therefore more profitable (108). Ego and super-ego are agreed; the impulse to go into the city is excluded, the impulse to kill or be killed is retained. The speech is already longer than that of Odysseus and has reached the same conclusions, and so we expect it to end almost at once as Hector moves and narrative is resumed. But that is not what happens; instead, without any preparation,<sup>37</sup> the monologue veers off in a

36. The extent to which Hector's monologue and his subsequent behavior break the pattern of the other examples (see above, n. 15) is not always recognized. Older scholars found Hector's speech odd enough to suggest that it was an interpolation, coming perhaps from the Ionian *Hektoros anairēsis* posited by Robert; see Hentze, "Die Monologe," p. 27, who bases his suspicions on the unusual length, and also on the exceptional juxtaposition of monologue with preliminary simile. More recent opinion, however, tends to agree with Voigt, *Überlegung und Entscheidung*, p. 97: "geistig zeigt diese Szene keine neuen Züge" (cf. J. de Romilly, "*Patience mon cœur*" [Paris, 1984], p. 33, who observes only that Hector's speech is longer than the others). Fenik, "Stylization," p. 83, likens Hector's speech to Agenor's, in that "he plots two routes of escape and fights only because neither is good enough"; cf. de Jong, "Voice," p. 78, who reports that Hector "considers, and in the end rejects, two possibilities to avoid the dreaded confrontation with Achilles." Petersmann, "Die Entscheidungsmonologe," p. 155, asserts that the general effect sought by the poet is that of pathos; he describes the speech as a more elaborate version of the typical decision monologue, though he does say that the "why does my θυμός" phrase "wird auch hier in spezifisch eigener Weise gesetzt, er leitet die Bedenken der 2. Möglichkeit ein (122) und wirkt wie ein herber Einschnitt in eine Welt von irrealen Träumereien." The actual variation of Hector's monologue can be stated schematically. The other three follow the model: "A and B look to be equal/actually A (or B or C) is preferable." Hector's monologue has an extra step: "A and B look equal but B is far preferable; C is yet more preferable/C is despicable, which leaves B." And there is certainly no question of hesitation between "two routes of escape."

37. The new thought erupts in the pause between lines; the potential conclusion reached at the end of 110 is thrust aside by an εἰ δὲ κεν at the beginning of 111, exactly as Agenor's despair was thrust aside by Apollo's inspiration at 21. 567.

wholly new direction as an unwanted impulse thrusts its way into Hector's consciousness and makes a bid for control over his muscles.

If you study the speech you can see precisely when and how the insurrection begins. As a part of the initial devaluation of retreat the super-ego has licensed a quick shame-fantasy, and Hector's creative faculty has produced a brief scene from the future—an instantaneous waking nightmare in which Nemesis appears as a vulgar upstart to cry, "Hector destroyed his people!" (107). This self-inflicted imaginary blame was meant to lacerate the ego and hasten its aggressive decision but, once activated, the imagination refuses to be shut down. Functioning on its own and quite out of control it creates another vision, an unsolicited and wholly unmilitary dream in which Hector sets out, unarmed, as an ordinary private man on a personal mission of peace. The conscious mind formulates this as a third alternative and is momentarily so dazzled that, instead of seizing his arms as he had meant to do, Hector finds himself speaking almost automatically. At line 110 he had chosen the way of greater glory, but at 111 his voice continues, "Or I might leave my bossed shield and my helmet, prop my lance against the wall, go alone to bold Achilles and promise to give back both Helen and her treasure" (111–14). His reason joins in, specifying spoils that might be returned, oaths that might be sworn (115–20), and this visionary program swells until it challenges the chosen occupant of the θυμός. Only then does an ego again united with the super-ego assert its conventional control. "But why does my θυμός debate in this way?" it scolds (122), and in order to reestablish its dominance it argues first from self-preservation: "I would never approach him and live, for he would neither pity nor respect me, but would kill me in that naked state" (123–24). Then the super-ego brings out its own special weapon, shame, and as it attacks the notion of a parley it reveals the repressed content of Hector's fantasy: "Unarmed, I would be like a woman, and this is not a time to whisper with him<sup>38</sup> about stones and trees like a young girl with her lover—a girl with her love!" (125–28).<sup>39</sup>

What Hector envisioned was nothing like the military parleys that have already occurred, for those were meetings determined by a group and then held in public by men who did not for an instant surrender their martial definition.<sup>40</sup> His, by contrast, was evidently to be a lonely secret rendez-

38. Compare Hymn to Hermes, line 58, where Zeus and Maia ὀρίεσκον in amorous dalliance.

39. I take "oak and stone" to refer to popular tales about mortal origins, of the sort repeated to children (something like "we found you under a cabbage"); cf. *Od.* 19. 164. Generalized, the phrase can refer to any childish or playful talk, especially of the "birds and the bees" sort, and so to lovers' foolishness. Most of the older editors paraphrased the words simply as "tell long-winded stories" (Leaf, Ameis-Hentze), but some supposed a reference to Cretan cults of pillar and tree (as if rough rock and oak might signify dressed stone and olive). For a review of various nineteenth-century interpretations, see A. B. Cook, "Oak and Rock," *CR* 15 (1901): 322–26. Cook took the reference to be to initial boasts exchanged by warriors, each claiming noble descent, but this is quite at odds with the meiosis evident at Hes. *Theog.* 35, where the phrase means "my modest beginnings as a poet." See further the remarks of M. L. West, *Hesiod: "Theogony"* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 167–69.

40. Cf. esp. *Il.* 7. 381–420, where *Idaios* goes to the Greeks; also 3. 67–110, where truce is to be made in order that a single combat may be held. On such embassies, see S. P. Karavitis, "Diplomatic Envoys," *RIDA* 34 (1987): 41–100.

vous; this much the objections of the ego make clear. He and Achilles were to sit down, no longer two warriors but naked mortal with naked mortal, as they discussed an alternative to war. And of course the detail that renders the passage almost bizarre is the one revealed by the super-ego: on some level or other Hector imagined his own transformation into a woman as a part of his peacemaking scheme. With this sensational exposure of the wish to find peace as in essence feminine and lover-like, the super-ego of course wins its victory. Hector rejects the now shameful notion of ending the war,<sup>41</sup> and the predictable choice is made once more: "It will be better to meet him in battle" (129–30).

The monologue ends with that warrior-like decision. The intrusive idea of a parley has been suppressed, and the heroic mind seems to have re-established its normal boundaries, but Hector's behavior in the moments that follow shows that this victory of battlefield normality is itself only an illusion. A heroic decision is properly followed at once by bodily movement.<sup>42</sup> In no other case is there any hitch between choice and muscular response, but now, in spite of a determined joint command from both ego and super-ego, Hector's muscles do not obey. Achilles comes up like Ares, blinding as the sun, and in perfect opposition to his conscious resolve, Hector does not stand. A tremor seizes him, and as he turns and runs Homer cunningly likens him to a shy female dove pursued by a fierce masculine hawk—she shrinking in panic, he swooping with harsh cries (22. 139–43).<sup>43</sup> The narrated action shows the collapse of the heroic machine, and the simile tells us that Hector's poetic valence is now changed—snake has become dove—all as the result of a momentary contact with an unauthorized part of the self.<sup>44</sup>

41. Ameis, ad loc., notes the emotional emphasis of the phrase οὐ μὲν πως νῦν ἔστιν (22. 126), calling it "eine kräftige Versicherung, welche zeigt dass Hektor nach jener kleinmütigen Anwendung sich selbst wieder gefunden hat." This description of Hector's impulse as one of cowardice is repeated by Fenik, who terms the notion of a parley "a sorry contrivance born of desperation and weakness" ("Stylization," p. 84). Fenik repeatedly states that Hector plans to "beg for mercy," though nothing of the sort is mentioned in the text. To explain the words about whispering, he supposes that along with the stratagem for self-preservation "a memory arises of young lovers" (p. 85). Perhaps this curious idea comes from E. T. Owen who, in *The Story of the Iliad* (New York, 1947), p. 220, reports that Hector at this point has fallen into a disguised reminiscence of earlier passages with Andromache. The only critic I know of who recognizes the idea of the parley as a total anomaly (and so as deeply significant) is R. J. Raber, "The Shield of Achilles and the Death of Hector," *Eranos* 87 (1989): 81–91. Raber, however, supposes that Hector, with amazing eyesight, sees the representation of Cretan dancers on Achilles' shield and is thus put in mind of formal sexual rituals. His conclusion: "In Book 22 Hector first imports a sexual spin to the dynamics of his confrontation with Achilles, envisioning a form of struggle between the superior physical force of the male and the abject helplessness of the female. So the decision to run stems naturally from his fears and embodies itself in a sort of battlefield substitute for the rites of sexual conquest and possession in peacetime" (88). Perhaps refutation is a waste of time, but it must be pointed out first that it is precisely not a "struggle" that Hector envisions, and second that he does not decide to run: his "decision" is to stand and fight.

42. Ordinarily feet and hands are "eager" when μένος drives a man; e.g. *Il.* 13. 73–75.

43. On the hawk and the dove, see W. Schadewaldt, *Von Homers Welt und Werk*<sup>4</sup> (Stuttgart, 1965), p. 307. For cross-sexual similes in the *Odyssey*, see H. Foley, "'Reverse Similes' and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*," *Arethusa* 11 (1978): 7–26.

44. Note the contrasts provided by Hector's second monologue (*Il.* 22. 297–305), a speech of recognition (death is near, Athena has tricked me) that ends with an effective resolution not to die unstriving and without glory. As he acts on this resolution, Hector's simile equivalent becomes eagle, to Achilles' lamb or hare (308–10), until Achilles and his spear-point unite to become a burning star (317).

Now as far as one can tell, Homer created this one case of influence from the unconscious<sup>45</sup> primarily as preparation for a scene that was coming up, the great three-lap race around Troy. This event belonged to a fixed and ancient tradition; probably it reflected a ritual. It could not be left out, and yet it did not fit easily into the song that this particular bard was singing because he had made a Hector who was perfectly valiant.<sup>46</sup> In order to be pursued, the Trojan would have to turn and run away from his rival, and this was a thing that Homer's Hector seemingly could not do. At another point in the action the singer might have let Zeus meddle with Hector's will to fight (as he does at 16. 656), but here at the battle climax Achilles must display the full *éclat* of his own personal superiority.<sup>47</sup> And so the problem stood. The poet had to maintain a character of his own making within a contrary plot that he could not revise. He had to display a man of deep courage as he made the motions of a fearful creature, and it was this paradoxical necessity, apparently, that caused him to consider the hidden parts of the human mind. He saw that where the self-preserving and the self-enhancing impulses were agreed in directing acts of aggression, a man's contrary longing for the pleasures of comfort and tranquility had to be entirely banished.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, he knew that such desires, though buried, were not dead and might, on occasion, thrust soft notions up into even the most ferociously disciplined minds, with great consequent confusion.<sup>49</sup> Homer saw, in other words, that if Hector were presented as a man whose conscious determination was undermined from within, the Trojan prince could continue to be himself while he yet conformed to the demands of the tale of Troy.

Thinking about this strange episode and remembering in particular the repeated phrase about the whisperings of lovers, one might be tempted to expand on some recent discussions of the eroticization of death in the *Iliad*.<sup>50</sup> Inspired by Walter Burkert one might even muse retrospectively about the hunter's need to sexualize his prey in order to maintain his spirit of aggression. The passage lends itself to all sorts of elaborations, but

45. I use the term "unconscious" to cover all that is not open to direct governance by the ego; there is no attempt here to distinguish between unconscious and subconscious.

46. He can take a strategic decision not to oppose Ajax, who is objectively stronger and can only be driven back by a multitude (*Il.* 11. 542), but he is later to be seen attacking this same stronger opponent (15. 415). I am not in agreement with those who believe that Homer has tarnished Hector's bravery by making Apollo join him in the killing of Patroclus (e.g., S. Farron, "The Character of Hector," *AClass* 21 [1978]: 48): such divine aid means honor for Patroclus, not dishonor for Hector.

47. In any case, though they may break one's weapon or inspire a temporary retreat (*Il.* 11. 544, 17. 176), Homer's gods do not infect a brave man with unnatural and humiliating cowardice.

48. Impulses toward social pleasures such as eating, drinking, and sex are satisfied by warriors either not at all or in excess. Meanwhile, impulses toward solitary pleasures like day-dreaming are repressed; even Achilles in self-imposed nonwarrior status passes his time in the disciplined, socialized pleasure of song.

49. It is significant that Hector's monologue follows the pleas of his mother and father; his martial self has refused to hear their calls from a peacetime order (*Il.* 22. 78, 91), but his not quite buried alter-nate self has been stirred.

50. E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Archaic Greece* (Berkeley, 1979); J.-P. Vernant, *L'individu, la mort, l'amour* (Paris, 1987), p. 137. Of this passage Vermeule says only, "Hector fears he will be stripped naked like a woman and killed by some piercing weapon." She goes on to note the peculiar softness of his body in the description of his death at *Il.* 22. 373 (p. 103).

there is no need to go beyond the poem itself in order to understand what Homer means. He is not suggesting that the long rivalry with Achilles is a kind of love affair, nor is he revealing a strain of hunter-homosexuality in Hector. Rather, he makes the Trojan prince unconsciously figure himself as a girl because that is the most efficient way of saying that this man for a moment longs to be his own opposite. Hector knows himself to be one of the greatest warriors on this field,<sup>51</sup> but just now his wish is to be the reverse: to be one whose only weapons are words, whose mode is not violence but yielding and soft persuasion. He would like to renounce his martial science, and since the emblem for one who knows nothing of war is Woman—he has used it himself in earlier speeches (7. 235–36, 8. 163)<sup>52</sup>—he sees himself now in that guise.<sup>53</sup> With his sword in his hand he is as far from being a woman as a man can be, but he is nevertheless unlike all the men around him, for he alone can dream of putting off his masculine ferocity. His mind, and only his, can entertain the alien vision of two equal enemies joined in unthinkable intimacy, free of the obligation to behave magnificently, plotting like lovers for the repression of war.<sup>54</sup>

Hector has already been shown as the only active warrior at Troy who still knows and feels a life beyond war. His is the only figure from this battlefield to be seen with a child in his arms (6. 474), the only one overheard laughing tenderly with a woman (6. 471).<sup>55</sup> He alone is visibly rooted in an alternate world of kinship and family where violence and the tyranny of the martial super-ego are not so necessary. He will die, moreover, not on the field but at a place that stands for peace and culture, a spot where hot and cold springs mix and where women come to wash the city's clothing (22. 147–56).<sup>56</sup> And finally, he will be mourned by women, when his funeral at last is held. In the end, then, it is because he is so much more than a warrior that his hatred can be undermined by an obscure longing to treat an enemy as a friend. It is because he has been shown to be in every dimension a man that, in the ritual of flight and pursuit, as in his own fantasy, he can figure as female to Achilles' male. There is a sense in which Hector is Humanity to Achilles' War, and

51. In sheer physical strength he is inferior to Ajax (*Il.* 17. 167), but he has killed more men than any other warrior on either side; see C. Armstrong, "The Casualty Lists," *G&R* 16 (1969): 30–31.

52. Compare Menelaus at *Il.* 7. 96 Ἀχαιῶδες, οὐκέρ' Ἀχαιοί. At 11. 389 Diomedes likens archers to ignorant women or children without battle courage. Most notorious is Achilles at 16. 7–8: himself softened by pity, he compares the weeping Patroclus to a girl in a simile that would seem to include himself as her mother. Again at 9. 323–24 he likens himself to a mother-bird, in his care for the Danaans. The poet also makes such comparisons in his own voice: at 11. 269 Agamemnon, in pain from a wound and unable to fight, is likened to a woman in labor.

53. Compare the simile at *Od.* 8. 523–30, where Odysseus, as he weeps over the tale of the Trojan horse, is like a woman weeping over her fallen husband: his softer peacetime self, seen as feminine, laments the last great deed of his warrior self, seen as masculine. For further analysis of this passage, see H. Rohdich, "Ein Gleichniss der *Odyssee*," *A&A* 33 (1987): 45–52.

54. Raber ("Shield," p. 86) sees something of this sort: "Hector allows his thought to linger briefly upon the Heracleitean opposite of the situation he now faces."

55. Note also the strong contrast made at *Il.* 7. 297–98, where Ajax will return to his male battle companions, while Hector will go into the city among Trojan men and "robe-trailing ladies of Troy."

56. See D. Bouvier, "Mourir près des fontaines de Troie," *Euphrosyne* 15 (1987): 9–29.

evidently humanity must sometimes be touched by signals from the socially unsanctioned parts of the human mind.<sup>57</sup>

## II

It is in tragedy that a modern observer might expect to find the plainest representations of the power of the unconscious, but in fact the tragic mind is seldom surprised by unfamiliar parts of itself.<sup>58</sup> Even as he pours his passion into the irrevocable mold of an act of bloodshed, the tragic figure is clear about his motives and his impulses.<sup>59</sup> His ego has already reviewed them, often with the help of outside opposition or advice, and although emotion may divert or destroy a settled intention, that emotion will itself be consciously explored and understood.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless it would be quite wrong to say that Attic tragedy knows nothing of the unconscious parts of a man's mind, because the sensation of being invaded from within by an unauthorized emotion is conveyed with almost clinical detail in the odes of the *Agamemnon*. The attack, this time, comes from an unformulated horror, not a hidden wish, and the subject is a group, not an individual, as Aeschylus plunges an entire chorus into neurotic inner conflict. They themselves never understand the nature of their trouble, though they attempt a kind of self-analysis, but the audience is eventually given the poet's diagnosis in the Cassandra scene.

57. The fantasy of Hector also prefigures the successful exploit of his father in Book 24. That private embassy, however, is motivated on both sides by divine interference, and it is directly shaped by gods in its enactment. The concluding reconciliation is thus the achievement of Zeus, just as the poet has promised at the beginning of his epic; consequently, though it tells us something about the divine ordinance of the cosmos, it does not make a general statement about man and his potential. Hector's imagined embassy, on the other hand, proves that there is even in a warrior an impulse that might dictate a similar reconciliation, independent of messages from Iris or guidance by Hermes.

58. Nevertheless, I will argue elsewhere that Medea is thus surprised in the course of her central monologue. A fragment from the *Manteis* of Sophocles could refer to communication with ordinarily closed parts of the mind (ψυχῆς ἀνοιξαι τὴν κεκλημένην πύλην, 393 R.); more probably, however, it treats of a consciously kept secret, like the one Creusa decides to reveal at Eur. *Ion* 859–75.

59. At Aesch. *Supp.* 407, Pelasgus describes the mental process by which a tragic decision is ordinarily reached: one dives with open eyes not clouded by wine into the depths of one's thought (φροντίς). Like a sponge-gatherer, then, the consciousness will exercise discrimination as it chooses among clearly perceived ideas and impulses. Other Aeschylean mental metaphors and similes show consciousness as hunter or traveler among thoughts that are in motion; as cultivator of the contents of the mind; as tailor, stitching plans and counsels; see D. Sansone, *Aeschylean Metaphors for Intellectual Activity*, Hermes Einzelschriften 35 (Wiesbaden, 1975). Sansone's chapter on cognition contains a summary of Aeschylean representations of the normal course from perception to appropriate emotion and action. On the generalities of tragic psychology, see J.-P. Vernant and M. Detienne, *Mythe et Tragédie* (Paris, 1972), pp. 43–74.

60. The tragic ideal of emotion consciously controlled is expressed by Jocasta when she urges Oedipus not to let fearsome matters enter into his θυμός (Soph. *OT* 975). At *Cho.* 896–99, when Orestes experiences a momentary shift of mind, Aeschylus identifies a specific external cause, the optical stimulus of Clytemnestra's bared breast; the reverse shift is similarly caused, not by any movement inside Orestes' mind, but by the heard voice of Pylades. A case of real indecision is provided by the reported inner monologue of the guard at Soph. *Ant.* 225–34, but the resolve here explored does not belong to a principal, nor does it determine the praxis of the drama. It is, however, interesting for its revelation of a "normal" tragic psychology. The psyche of the guard addresses a self already in motion; because of its interference, the motion is reversed, but the psyche then attacks this alternate action; like Agenor, the man is for a time paralyzed, but ultimately one impulse conquers (ἐνίκησεν) so that resolution comes, as in the Homeric decisions discussed above in n. 10, without any intervention from the psyche-ego.

These old men of Argos are beyond the age of military service. There is no Ares in them, and no aggressive stance is demanded of them. Instead it is their business, both as elders and as tragic chorus, to embody and express customary wisdom while they watch what other people do. On this particular day they should, as public representatives, welcome their king with joy. And they should, as representatives of the inner palace community, translate their perception of the queen's bad faith into a warning for that king. Their duty on both scores is plain, but they are quite unable to perform it. True, they do not turn and run as Hector did, but they decline, garrulously, into complete incapacity. And this is because, unlike him, they refuse to see even for a moment what the unconscious is offering. They are paralyzed by their effort to be blind.

All the disciplinary power of these old men's minds is required for an act of repression, and this leaves them in an uncomfortable state of mental anarchy. The first sign of disorder is that, to a specific outside stimulus, they cannot respond with an appropriate emotion. The king's return is positive news, and the old men expect a response of pleasure from themselves, but what they feel is a weight of apprehension and an unseemly fear (Ag. 99–103, 165; the repeated αἶλινον at 121, 139, 159).<sup>61</sup> This anomaly distresses them, and they try to take themselves in hand. Again and again they set out to prove reasonably that this perverse emotion does not reflect reality and should therefore be quashed. And over and over again, even as they develop their proofs in one part of their minds, another part produces dread images that deepen apprehension instead of dispelling it.<sup>62</sup>

First of all, consciously intending to recall the triumph of the Argive departure as a portent of triumphant return, the old fellows find themselves gazing instead at a mental picture of a child dying at her father's command. They receive the imagined message of Iphigeneia's imploring eyes, and their discomfort is increased by a sense of vicarious guilt. In the face of this vision they quickly deny the possibility of any sort of knowledge—they, who are trying to be realists—and they end their first song in a state of self-induced horror, determined not to think (252–53). In their second song, consciously meaning to shift their newfound sense of guilt to Paris, they find that, by a kind of conceptual symmetry, Helen's going

61. In the play that follows, the chorus describes very similar emotions, but without a similar confusion because these reactions this time are appropriate to the choral perception of outside actuality (*Cho.* 410–17). The chorus of *Persae* is likewise appropriately filled with mantic fear because of the absence of news, κακόμαντις ἄγαν ὀρσολοπέιται/θυμός ἔσωθεν (10–11). One might also remember Andromache, who felt similar physical pangs of fear, but in direct response to the outer stimulus of the sound of wailing (*Il.* 22. 452).

62. Those critics who insist that the old men's fear in these early odes is the expression of their rational expectation of the murder are in difficulties when they reach explicit later choral statements about the incomprehensibility of their panic. Advocates of a knowing chorus cannot explain the choral behavior in the Cassandra scene, and as a result they often charge Aeschylus with willful carelessness; according to R. D. Dawe, he is just trying to avoid "that dullest of virtues—consistency" ("Inconsistency of Plot and Character," *PCPS* 189 [1963]: 52; cf. 45). B. Alexanderson, "Forebodings in the *Agamemnon*," *Eranos* 67 (1969): 19–22, remarks, "Certainly Aeschylus changes his chorus rather violently," having found that in the Cassandra scene the choral character is "not very consistent with the chorus earlier in the drama."

brings to their minds the coming home of urns filled with ashes of the dead. The image of these containers proves to be a stimulus stronger than the witnessed beacon fires (479–82), and it produces an emotion opposite to the one the old men meant to enjoy. Instead of the elation of righteous confidence, they feel the oppression of the accursed (456–70). A third time they try to shape and instruct their own emotions, but the result is still the same. They mean to see Helen as a punishment for Troy, in order that the Greek army may appear as god's implement, but the parable they tell themselves is attacked and destroyed by a series of nightmare creatures: a bride-fury (749), a lion that spatters the house with blood (727–34), a demon called Outrage and Ate (763–71). One after another these bogeys escape from the inner chambers of the old men's minds to invade the song, so that this ode feeds the choral panic instead of soothing it.

It is in their fourth attempt to respond properly to the Argive victory that the chorus-men receive their worst internal shock. By this time their mental discomfort has become physical,<sup>63</sup> and as they try to still their own leaping heartbeats they marvel at the disorder of their minds (975–82):

Why does this stubborn and officious fear  
fly about my mantic heart, hawking its predictions  
unsummoned and unpaid? Why does courage  
sit no more upon my mind's throne  
to spit away this fear as it would an obscure dream?

Something unwanted has entered their consciousness, something that swoops and flutters like a bat and cannot be driven off.<sup>64</sup> The mind's throne is empty because the ego's candidate, courage, has abdicated, leaving the post of command open to a dream-like emotion that has no source in the external world. As a defense against this psychic usurper, the old men first appeal to perceived fact, ever the weapon of the conscious mind. The images that caused their previous panic were all shades from the past—the dying girl, the funeral urns, the demons—and so they decide to cut away the past with a pragmatic demonstration. “It is many years,” they say, “since our army went to Troy, whereas now my very eyes report their safe return” (984–89). They are trying to force perceptions upon their own senses, but their physical organs continue to be excited by inner rather than outer stimuli. The eye may see and the ego may know the phenomena of actuality, but the old men report that some interior power persuades the soul; in spite of the visible triumph of Agamemnon's entry,

63. The sensations of the chorus are almost exactly those of a man who has just killed his mother and is going mad; compare *Cho.* 1024–25 πρὸς δὲ καρδίᾳ φόβος/ἄδειν ἐτοῖμος ἢδ' ὑπορχεῖσθαι κότῳ (cf. *Io's* symptoms of madness at *PV* 877–86). The same symptoms appear in other Aeschylean choruses when in the grip of well-founded fears: *Septem* 287, when enemy presence is perceived; *Supp.* 566–67, report of those who witness the appearance of a monster.

64. The privative forms ἀκέλευστος and ἄμισθος (979) emphasize the unwillingness of the conscious mind to license any such emotion; they also suggest what seems to the ego to be the disorderly and primitive nature of the intrusive fear. Because this fear “flies,” de Romilly insists that it is somehow external to the old men so that their struggle is “entre le dedans et le dehors” (“*Patience*,” p. 65), but nothing in the passage suggests any sort of demonic interference. Fear flutters within, just as we would say that someone “has butterflies in his stomach.”

their spirits crouch in their breasts, “tunelessly singing the Furies’ dirge” (990–93). They feel as if they had no judgment left because a witches’ jamboree is being held in their viscera, and “the heart is dancing what will come to pass, trampling magic circles on the straightness of the mind” (995–98).<sup>65</sup> All they can do is pray that some god will intercede and give the lie to the rhythmic illiterate prophecy that throbs inside their chests (998–1000).<sup>66</sup>

Having hit on the notion of divine aid, the old men experience a brief upsurge of confidence and the super-ego at once tries to take control.<sup>67</sup> It points to the socially maintained treasure of wisdom and piety and, like a street-corner philosopher, urges that whatever there is to fear, most maladies have a cure (1001–16). Fever, plague, famine come, but they all have their limits, says this normative voice,<sup>68</sup> yet the old men are not comforted. An ugly apparition is suddenly projected from another part of their minds and they cry out, “But the drop of black blood! Once spilt, who can call that back? Neither man nor god knows any cure” (1017–24). The image of the drop of blood at once generates the idea of paternal punishment (1024), and under this double weight the temporary structure of gnomic hope collapses. Fear rises up and challenges the ego in its central function: speech (1029). The last mental event reported is an attempted psycho-physical coup d’état as a roaring raging heart tries to take over the office of the tongue,<sup>69</sup> while the conscious mind rolls to a boil.<sup>70</sup>

By definition what is repressed cannot speak, but it can silence the voice of the ego, and so the ode comes to a violent stop. In contrast to the previous songs, this one has brought no visions. Only one image, that of the drop of blood, has been able to cross the boundary and enter the old men’s verbal sector from the closed mental area. In a sense, then, the song

65. T. B. L. Webster, discussing this passage, talks of “physical *phrenes* restraining beating *kardia* and panting *thymos*, physically registering the emotions which are restrained by reason” (“Some Psychological Terms in Greek Tragedy,” *JHS* 77 [1957]: 154). There is, however, no restraint recorded as καρδιά dances upon φρένες, nor is there any hint that “reason” plays any part at all. (Later an external μοῖρα will restrain καρδιά, but only in the sense of denying it the power of speech.)

66. Sansone says of the old men’s condition, “*kardia* and *thymos* have seen the future but only the *phrenes* can articulate it” (*Aeschylean Metaphors*, p. 73). In fact, however, the θυμός is not mentioned at this point, nor has any part of the old men “seen the future,” much less been able to “articulate” it. The καρδιά is “mantic” not because it sees anything, but because it is frenzied and full of foreboding.

67. Sansone (p. 48) attributes the strophe at 1001–16, the most hopeful part of the ode, to an actual Furies’ Song which he thinks is being sung by the θυμός.

68. On gnomic utterance as expression of the super-ego, compare B. Snell, “Das Bewusstsein von eigenen Entscheidungen,” *Gesammelten Schriften* (Göttingen, 1966), p. 21, citing W. Schadewaldt, *Monolog und Selbstgespräch* (Berlin, 1926), p. 205, where gnomes are called “die archaische Form des Wertedenkens.”

69. Compare Odysseus’ heart which can only “bark” at *Od.* 20. 13. Sansone (*Aeschylean Metaphors*, p. 73) says, “*kardia* . . . is incapacitated . . . because the *phrēn* is feverish,” but the old men plainly tell us that the heart is limited by μοῖρα, the portioning out of functions that makes the human machine work: “If each human part were not given its fixed enablement by divine allotment, so that none encroaches on another’s office, surely then my heart would speak and surpass my tongue” (1025–29). Compare Aristotle *De an.* B 418a11, where each special sense has a particular area of reality assigned to it so that it cannot perceive in the realm of any other.

70. Cf. Aesch. *Septem* 289–90, where μέμναι bring terror to the boiling point in the near vicinity of the καρδιά. It is this same mute but influential (and liquid?) καρδιά into which Zeus slowly drips remorseful understanding at Ag. 179.

records a defensive success for the conscious mind. The act of resistance, however, has been extremely costly, for it has brought on all the symptoms of near breakdown: rapid heartbeat, suffocation, a burning sensation in the chest, difficulty with speech, and a sense that vital organs are swelling and pressing intolerably on one another. The severity of their physical reaction clearly measures the enormity of the danger posed by whatever it is that the old men cannot let themselves think about, but it also serves to increase a certain restlessness in the audience. What is it, we ask, that keeps these gentlemen from using their heads? Their "prophetic hearts" have been telling them from the beginning that this is a day to dread, and their eyes and ears have for a long time reported reasons for suspecting Clytemnestra, so why are these people unable to make the obvious synthesis: "Dread the queen!"? To satisfy us, the dramatist will have to make his old men disclose something that they themselves refuse to see. He will have to let us hear and understand what remains for them mute and incomprehensible, the message of their voiceless nonlinguistic parts. All of which would seem to be dramaturgically impossible, and all of which Aeschylus achieves in the course of the scene that follows.

The functions of the Cassandra scene are multiple. It lets us see the girl whose death symmetrically replaces that of the unseen Iphigeneia, thus making evident the design and complexity of Clytemnestra's crime. Furthermore, by making it the subject of prophecy, the scene locates that crime in the province of fatality. Cassandra's baroque language thus transforms a pair of sordid murders into tragedy, linking them with past and future and lending them the enigmatic outlines of a ritual. On a sensational level the spectator feels an increase of horror at the sight of this girl whose throat will soon be cut, but he takes a deeper tragic pleasure as he recognizes the fullness of her truth. Cassandra imposes a general view of the play's central action but meanwhile, as she speaks, Aeschylus offers a particular revelation about the nature of his chorus. The old men are mechanically redundant here, but the poet makes them almost embarrassingly conspicuous with their obtuse refusal to do what the audience does: they *won't* understand what the prophetic girl says. Indeed, he endows the choregus with such idiocy that, after a series of senile complaints (he "cannot follow her there," 1245; he "does not know what she is talking about now," 1112; cf. 1105, 1120), Cassandra is finally exasperated: "And yet I speak Greek all too well!" she says impatiently (1254).

It is plain that the old men are stunned, as well they might be after the attack of their nameless Fear, but this is not just a case of naturalistic choral portraiture. We soon realize that the Cassandra scene has been designed to isolate and display exactly what it is that the choral mind is so busy censoring. Cassandra sings or speaks; prophecy, exclamation, image, and lament pour out of her mouth in full sentences or in broken phrases. She uses every kind of discourse, but her subject is almost always killing, and as the scene progresses this idea is presented to the listening chorus in

a wide variety of forms. She pays little attention to their response, but the audience watches as the old men choose and reject what they will and will not comprehend, much as if they were playing some diagnostic game. Cassandra speaks of her own coming death inside the house, and the chorus can hear and understand (1297). She refers to the ancient killing of babies, and they can also understand, though this time her words are frenzied (1096–97). They can even follow her in the suggestion that Agamemnon will be killed, so long as they are allowed to suppose a male assassin (1250–51, 1253). On the other hand, they cannot interpret the vision of a female arm that stretches out against a naked husband's body (1112). They rudely reject the riddle of the horned cow that threatens the bull (1130–31), and the emblem of a female hunter who nets a masculine prey—wife as web (1115)—brings a return of their worst anxiety symptoms (1121). The old men can, in other words, contemplate bloodshed, even kin bloodshed, even the killing of children by parents, *so long as the killer is male*. And they can entertain the notion of male-to-male assassination. What they cannot consider is any form of violence directed by a female creature against the male. The system of their incomprehension becomes plain, but as if for an ultimate test the poet at one point reduces the unthinkable notion to its minimal linguistic form, causing Cassandra to present it to the old men in four stark words: θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεὺς ἔσ-τιν (1231–32). And her phrase floats past the choral ear as if it had never been spoken!

This, then, is the bugbear that makes the chorus deaf and blind. Cassandra has uncovered it, and she describes it so that we may understand just why the old men are so afraid to look. Such a woman, she says, a woman-killer-of-man, is a tooth of hatred, a sea-serpent with two stinging tails, Hell's own mother, and a Scylla who gobbles up sailors in her terrible maw (1231–36). With these bestial equivalents the seeress shows us at last the fright that lives speechless at the bottom of the old men's minds. They are not able to see that Clytemnestra may kill Agamemnon because if they were to look directly at this external possibility they would find themselves face to face with a Gorgon of their own making—the primitive fear resident within them of a she-monster Other who may chew up and swallow all.

I am not saying that in making this hag-ridden chorus Aeschylus was moved by an interest in what we call psychology, any more than Homer was when he created Hector's desire to be a nonwarrior. I believe on the contrary that, like Homer, he was solving a poetic problem. He wanted a chorus visited by visions and premonitions so that his drama might be played simultaneously on many temporal planes. And yet, in the interest of verisimilitude, he could not afford the constant presence of men endowed with even normal powers of observation, because such men would necessarily see the murder coming. What he needed was a chorus able to perceive the invisible, but blind to immediate fact, and with the economy of genius he attributed this paradoxical mental condition to interference from the unconscious. Legitimate, effective seers received messages from

the gods in their conscious speaking minds;<sup>71</sup> Aeschylus wanted seers whose powers were flawed, and so he made his old men listen instead to the Furies, hearing them in the mute darkness of the lower body cavity. This sector of a man's self was, to the human organism, what the Furies were to the Cosmos, just as the radiant rational sector was analogous to the Olympians, and this was the final reason for the Aeschylean creation of a chorus that was instructed but crippled by its own repressed horrors. A group of old men alternately moved and paralyzed by female-inspired brute panic could perfectly represent in microcosm the condition of all humanity in this early first-play time, before Zeus, the City, and the Law had found a fruitful place for Phobos and the horrific Erinyes.

### III

The third passage I want to talk about is a monologue from Euripides' *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* (344–91). Here again, even as words are formed, a speaker experiences a moment of contact between the conscious and the unconscious parts of the mind, but this time she does not blindfold herself or reject what the unconscious has to show. Instead, she takes its sign into her consciousness and lets it work a revolution there, destroying a settled mode of thought and replacing it with a new philosophy.

Like Hector and the old men of Argos, Iphigeneia has a plain duty before her, but she is neither undecided nor gloomy as she faces it. This morning she woke from a dream that seemed to say that her brother Orestes was dead (55–58). Just now she has learned that fresh victims for her thirsty goddess have arrived (241–43), shipwrecked Greeks for the Taurian blood-sacrifice. These two pieces of information have interacted in her mind to produce an eager wish to kill.<sup>72</sup> Before, she had been humane and therefore reluctant; now she is filled with anger, and in good tragic style she stops to make an analysis of her present emotion. To her heart<sup>73</sup> she says: "You used to be full of pity and quick to weep for any fellow-Greek who came into your hands. But now, since my dream, how savage we have grown, from thinking of Orestes—how he is dead! You

71. For prophecy in the *φρήν*, see *Ag.* 1084, 1140; *Septem* 25; *Eum.* 17; *PV* 842. It occurs in the *voûς* at *Ag.* 1172. Ordinary premonitions may appear in the *θυμός*, as at *Persae* 10–11; 224, anon. tr. frag. 176 N; cf. *Od.* 1. 200. For conscious acts of memory the chorus presumably uses its *φρένες*, where items could be written (*Cho.* 450; *Eum.* 275).

72. Compare Achilles at *Il.* 21. 100–105: While Patroclus was alive I was soft and spared captives; now no one will escape death.

73. Note that Iphigeneia, as she addresses her heart, speaks of captives that "you had in your hands" (*IT* 347); evidently she makes an entity of the *φρήν-θυμός*-hand complex, like a Homeric warrior, and identifies it with the energy source that fuels the whole, the *καρδία*. As an extended address to *καρδία*, this speech would be unique in tragedy, but in fact the visceral addressee disappears at 350, ostensibly replaced by the chorus (the *φίλοι* of 351). As at Eur. *Medea* 1042, *καρδία* here is the seat of a man-like wish to kill; consequently it is also the location of the opposite impulse, pity. F. Solmsen notes that *καρδία* (in distinction from *ψυχή*) is, in Sophocles and Euripides, generally oriented toward action; see "*Phrēn, kardia, psychē* in Greek Tragedy," *Poetry and Philosophy: Essays presented to Leonard Woodbury* (Toronto, 1984), p. 273. This present speech Solmsen terms "mournful," as if it expressed but a single emotion.

Greeks who come into my hands today will find me in an evil frame of mind!" (350 δυσνοῦν με λήψεσθ').

That was her ego speaking, claiming review powers over both καρδία and νοῦς, and licensing a new ferocity as the impulse to guide present action.<sup>74</sup> Her super-ego (characteristically addressing an outer audience, the φίλοι of line 351) adds its approval in the form of an old saw: her case only bears out the proverb that says misery cannot even pity greater misery (352–53).<sup>75</sup> With her cruel anger thus normalized, Iphigeneia has seemingly finished her self-investigation. She has taken her resolve, and she regards it with admiration. Her psychic commanders are as unanimous as were those of Odysseus when he fought like a wild boar and so, if the two Greeks were to enter at line 353, the sacrifice would presumably be carried out at once by a priestess who positively enjoyed her task. That is not what Euripides intends, of course, and so he delays their appearance while his heroine goes a bit further with her introspection. Like Homer with Hector or Aeschylus with the old men, he means to expose a part of her mind that she herself ignores, and in fact the mental dynamic that he uncovers is close to that of Hector. We watch as a flood of unconscious material is unwittingly released by a priestess who is only trying to stiffen her present resolve.

Iphigeneia would like to think of her victims as deserving to die, and so she lets her imagination touch on a fantasy in which killing would be a justifiable pleasure.<sup>76</sup> Helen and Menelaus have never come,<sup>77</sup> but how she would like to make them suffer a replica of her own experience at Aulis, "where Greeks took me by force and tried to cut my throat with my noble father in the role of priest" (358–60). With this model she would make all chance victims proxies for her own special enemies,<sup>78</sup> all Greek males sharers in Agamemnon's guilt, so that her sacrificial office might serve her own private revenge.<sup>79</sup> That, apparently, is as far as her ego-directed increase of bitterness was supposed to go, but her memory has been activated and, like Hector's imagination, it begins to work spontaneously. A fully realized scene, complete with sensual effects, is now set before a consciousness that

74. Or, to speak more precisely, "re-licensing." The original conscious rejection of pity comes at 229 where, having just spoken of her past victims, Iphigeneia decrees that their sufferings shall be forgotten as she laments her brother.

75. Reading the text of M. Platnauer (Oxford, 1938), which uses an emendation suggested by Wecklein, τοῖσι δυστυχεστέροις.

76. Platnauer, ad loc., discovers a logical sequence: I shall deal harshly with today's victims because no wind has sent the real culprits. Others find an airy potential wish: If only Helen and Menelaus would come!

77. Photius reports that Ptolemaeus Hephaestion provided this episode, bringing Menelaus and Helen to Taurus and allowing Iphigeneia to sacrifice them (*Bibl.* 190. 149a, ed. R. Henry [Paris, 1962]).

78. When the chorus returns to this motif (438–46), they wish only for Helen, and Iphigeneia in her later questions makes Helen alone the enemy of Greece (521–25). Menelaus is thus exceptionally joined with her in the monologue, in order that the model objects of hatred might better suit their surrogates, the male sacrifice victims.

79. Parmentier (ad 347) asserts that the monologue establishes Iphigeneia as untouched, even in intention, by blood-guilt; he claims that her initial ferocity is merely an expression of family sentiment: she wishes for revenge on Helen and Menelaus only because they were agents in separating her from Orestes.

had not summoned any such thing, its sudden emergence marked by an οἶμοι! (361) that breaks the surface of the ego's rhetoric.

It is apparently the inner stimulus of the purposely recalled figure of Agamemnon that triggers this new phenomenon, hailed by Iphigeneia as something outside her control. "Oh, oh! I do not forget!" she cries,<sup>80</sup> as she sees the hands once aimed in supplication at her father's beard, hears her own past complaint and repeats it directly (365–71):<sup>81</sup>

"O father, you marry me off in a shameful way.  
You kill, and all the while my mother and the Argive women  
sing my wedding song. Flute music fills the chamber there  
as you destroy me here. He is Hades' son and not the son of Peleus,  
the Achilles whom you held out as a husband-lure  
to set me on my journey toward this bloody wedding feast!"

Memory, like a poet, has made the old moment concrete by reviving an actual voice, but the trick is almost perversely complex because the cry from the past contains another sound of the opposite sort, the wedding song the girl did not hear on that fatal day. Melodies unheard but imagined long ago at Aulis thus make their way unasked into this present moment at Taurus, where they induce a response diametrically opposed to what the remembering woman intends. Having solicited a recollection of blood and paternal cruelty as a prop for her hatred of Hellenic men, she has been presented instead with the song that is a mother's last gift to her girl, an emblem of sweet maternal care. The summoned outdoor masculine reality has been overlaid in montage by an imagined female interior, and the aggressive rage Iphigeneia meant to feel melts away, leaving her open to a further and even more debilitating assault from her unconscious.<sup>82</sup>

It is clear that the priestess in Iphigeneia has lost control, for logic and sequence (the predilections of the ego) are now abandoned. The unseen singers of Argos have excited further recollection, and the reverie goes on, defiant of time and geography, abruptly replacing the cry at Aulis with a silence at Argos. Almost entranced, the speaker continues without even a pretense of transition (372–79):

I gave Orestes a quick look through my veil—  
Orestes who is dead. I did not touch his hand  
or kiss my sister's lips, out of modesty.  
But I meant to hug them, meant to kiss them  
time and time again when I came back a married woman!  
O poor dear, if you have died, Orestes,  
what fair and splendid things you miss!

80. Because of her conscious imposition of λάθρα at 228–29, it seems right to take οὐκ ἀμνημονῶ as more than litotes: "non posso dimenticare," as R. Moretti has it, *Ifigenia Taurica* (Vicenza, 1973), ad loc.

81. Iphigeneia's association of death with marriage belongs to the conscious rhetoric she used in the past. It thus counts as part of the total poetic effect that the dramatist commands here, but not as an element in his depiction of his character's unconscious psychic state in the present staged day.

82. Iphigeneia calls upon the same female solidarity later when she begs the women of the chorus for their help (1061–62): "We are all women, by nature well-disposed to one another and the surest allies when it comes to saving what we have in common."

The fantasy of self as bride manquée has given way to the more poignant figure of self as sister, no fantasy this time but a factual memory. Iphigeneia is reliving something that actually happened, but this second recollection is strikingly negative in every aspect; what is remembered is a promise not spoken, of embraces never given, conveyed (or rather, not conveyed) by a glance blocked by a veil. One is reminded of Eliot's lines in "Burnt Norton":

Footfalls echo in the memory  
Down the passage which we did not take  
Towards the door we never opened . . .

Iphigeneia has revived the sensual experience of not touching a baby, but the emotion that attends this hollow Euripidean memory is strong and positive. The recollection of her truncated past impulse stirs her now as if it were a perceived object, and she responds with a rush of fraternal love that effectively undermines her belief in Orestes' death. The phrase "who is dead" (374) changes to become "if you are dead" (378) on contact with the long-ago passion of parting,<sup>83</sup> for how can he have lost all that she and the world had to give? A mind occupied by a specific hatred, shored up with images of death and a monstrous father, has been overrun by an opposite emotion that is borne along by ideas of mother, wedding song, and a baby brother. And in the conflict that results, Iphigeneia's whole soul is reversed.

After her plunge into memory the speaker surfaces in a pool of conscious theological reflection. From her passionate apostrophe to a brother who might now be alive she goes directly to a cool consideration of the goddess who asks her to kill. She continues, again without any transition (380–91):

But there is a kind of sophistry about a goddess  
who calls a man unclean because he is stained with murder,  
birthblood, or the touching of a corpse, and forbids  
her altar to him, while she goes on rejoicing  
at that very altar in offerings of human gore!

She cannot praise such a one, she concludes, and she appends an anthropological defense of her new position. Every established cult is not necessarily right and true, since such things are man-made and men tend to give the gods a share of their own malignity. Her actual local cult must be observing one of these false rituals: "The people of this place, being murderers themselves, transfer their crime to Artemis. This must be it, for I think that nothing belonging to the Powers is base" (389–91).<sup>84</sup>

This from the priestess of a temple red with human blood (74)! It is as if Hector had ended his monologue with a denunciation of war. He could not have done that because his warrior self resisted and put his fantasy to shame, but Iphigeneia has succumbed and let her whole mind be suffused

83. As Moretti notes (*Ifigenia Taurica*, ad loc.), a hope appears "anche contro la sua volontà."

84. Cf., e.g., Eur. *Bellerophon* frag. 292.

by her uninvited recollections. As a result, her mood is exactly what she said it would not be—gentle—and her religious tenets are likewise turned inside out. Two minutes ago she was savage and eager to kill (348); now ritual killing is stupid and depraved (386). Two minutes ago she gave commands as the priestess of a goddess of human sacrifice (342); now she denies the existence of such a divinity. And all this has happened, not in response to any external stimulus, not through outside pressure from either god or man, but simply because of an importunate memory. The chain of negative images—the absent mother, the unheard melody, the veiled glance, the embrace withheld, the joy denied—all were generated by an unsatisfied familial yearning lodged just beneath the surface of her consciousness. Brought forth, it has no object and so it cannot distill itself into any ordinary impulse. Volatile and unspent as it is, it can only swell into a love for all beings, male and female, human and divine. And since one cannot simultaneously love both men and gods unless one perceives those gods as likewise in some sense loving humanity, the theological revolution follows: the divine cannot be crudely inimical to man. Iphigeneia's new beliefs are thus an emotional necessity created by the upsurge of the love she meant to repress.<sup>85</sup>

After such a speech it is a shock to find Iphigeneia saying, at the beginning of the next scene, "I must think first of how best to carry out the rituals of the goddess" (467; cf. 620). She orders the victims brought to the altar, and her observance of the rite she has just defined as hateful is interrupted only by the accidental discovery of Orestes' name. At first, then, the mindswerve of the monologue seems to have been nothing more than gratuitous sensationalism but, as the scene goes on, the preceding speech is subtly justified by its evident effects. The priestess who has just touched on a moment of past tenderness proves to be quite unable to treat these fresh victims as enemies, though that had been her intention. She does not hate them with a reflection of her hatred for Helen and Menelaus;<sup>86</sup> instead her first gesture is to have their chains removed (468). The notions of "mother," "father," "sister," and "loss" dominate her opening interrogation (472–73), and in questioning the young men about the Greece that tried to destroy her she finds herself unaccountably pitying even Agamemnon (553, 565). She is ready now to reject her baleful dream and believe that Orestes lives (569), and it is this positive belief that opens the way to the letter, the trick of its public reading, the recognition, and finally the escape. Thanks to her unruly memory, Iphigeneia knows her brother and brings an appropriate emotion to the saving of him.

In more formal terms it can be said that the monologue solves a dramaturgical problem. The suspense of the recognition depends on the premise of immediate death for the two young men, and so on a priestess

85. This is made explicit at 1401–2, where Iphigeneia's prayer to Artemis, reduced to logical argument, is: I love you enough to pray to you; you love your (divine) brother; I love my (mortal) brother; ergo you love me enough to save and pardon me.

86. Note how literally line 637, τὸ μέντοι δυσμενὲς μὴ μοι λάβῃς, reverses the earlier δύσνονν με λήψεσθ' at 350.

who is ready to officiate. Nevertheless, the poet means to use this same priestess as a savior, the organizer of a rescue, and one who cleanses a barbarian cult. He means in the end to reward her with love and a journey home. Consequently he cannot let her behave as an overseer of throat-cutting until he has somehow told his audience that this is not a naturally bloodthirsty creature who kills Greeks for her own satisfaction. Staged, this becomes a scene in which Iphigeneia briefly entertains just such tendencies, then repudiates them according to a stronger impulse found within herself.<sup>87</sup>

If the ferocity of the priestess had crumbled only when she found that her victim was Orestes, her emotional reversal would have been specific to this unique and outrageous situation: melodramatic, rather than tragic. And that is why we see her change twice, once under the pressure of circumstance, but also once previously from inner causes. This tragedy, moreover, was to be of a particular sort, reflecting an astonishing upward leap in the fortunes, not just of its principals, but of all of humanity (or at any rate its Hellenic sector). At its center is a scene of sacrifice in which the officiant at the last moment drops the knife, so to speak, in order to embrace her victim. The scene is a tour de force, filled with pleasures that only theater can bring, but it is also the living core of a play about man's passage from savagery into more civilized cultural forms, from madness into sanity. And as Euripides presents this largest praxis it is divinely sponsored but willed by man. The statue is stolen because of Apollo's command (976–78), but the whole escapade depends on the central recognition, and that has been achieved entirely by the mortal part of the team. No Sibyl steps out with a casket of tokens, no heirloom sword hilt flashes in the sun; instead, Iphigeneia's self-liberated sympathy works deftly toward a magic entirely of her own invention, the letter she dictated in a past moment of faith.<sup>88</sup> Thus the Taurian sacrifice ends and a new cult appears at Brauron according to divine decree, but the event occurs only when Iphigeneia, acting independently, has thrown off superstition and reviewed her own convictions about the nature of divinity.<sup>89</sup> Dreams, vengeance, and spilt human blood are all highly valued in the place where she lives, and in order to move to another she must repudiate them all, turning away from the institutions<sup>90</sup> that have for a long time nurtured her (e.g., 748). This is a great deal to ask of anyone, even of a

87. The statement is reinforced by Iphigeneia's claim at 345–46 that she was not always cruel, and by the existence of her letter, a manifest proof that in the past she behaved, in her office of sacrificant, so as to earn the pity of her victims (584).

88. One should not forget the canniness of Pylades, which evokes the necessary act of reading aloud (758).

89. It is to a goddess of the sort envisaged at 391, not to one thirsty for human blood, that Iphigeneia prays successfully at 1082, at 1230, and at 1398–1402. Meanwhile, it is by pretending to a scrupulous regard for the man-made rules of a cruel cult that she is able to deceive Thoas (see esp. 1222–29, 1337). The chorus follows Iphigeneia in her rejection of dream superstition with the myth of their third stasimon, in which the laughter of Zeus drives truth from dreams so as to honor the prophecies of Apollo (1274–79).

90. Note 595, where Iphigeneia speaks of the Taurian community as a polis. At 1422 Thoas calls on the citizens to proceed against Iphigeneia and her companions, who are defined as *δυσσεβείς* (1426).

tragic principal, but apparently Euripides means to show that there is an inner motive force that can compel humanity to become more humane. He attributes this force, in this play at any rate, to a female character,<sup>91</sup> locating it beyond the reach of conscious control in an autonomous movement of memory. And having displayed it in a monologue, he draws his whole happy tragedy from this unexpected source. It is her unconscious that teaches Iphigeneia to love, to break with men's institutions, and to collaborate with god.

#### IV

In early Greece law, education, and the state depended upon the imperatives of inhibition and duty, as did poetry. These imperatives were creatures of the conscious mind, as it was reinforced by society, and consequently all that escaped conscious scrutiny was potentially subversive. To recognize the existence of an inscrutable and auto-excited source of action was to undermine the Greek ideal of order and self-mastery. Nevertheless, we have found three prominent passages from early Greek poetry in which exactly such a source is portrayed. We cannot really be surprised that Homer, Aeschylus, and Euripides knew of disruptive psychic forces because all three had watched men closely. Nor should we be surprised to find that all three chose to exploit this knowledge, under the pressure of creative necessity, for each of these poets was conscious above all of the imperatives that exist within a given piece of poetry. What is astonishing, however, is to find that all of them saw in the unconscious an ultimate source of positive strength, both for the individual and for society. With Hector's yearning for acts opposite to the masculine acts of war, Homer locates a deep well of nonviolence in the human mind, and this means that his listener can take the final reconciliation of the *Iliad*, god-ordained though it is and peculiar to this tale, as a possible model for more general initiatives. Similarly, the fear of the old Argives is labeled by Aeschylus as a monstrous premonition of the Justice to come at the *Oresteia's* close, when men will take their reason from the city, their unreason from Delphi, but keep the unconscious (like the Eumenides) as the fundament of their psychic and political order. And finally, the balked fraternal love that dissolves Iphigeneia's conscious savagery becomes proof, in Euripides' hands, that passion can live in forms that are clean and instructive deep in memory's underground streams.

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91. A complementary source of continuing humanization is located in the *φιλία* consciously felt between Orestes and Pylades, but this masculine potential is not given an equal emphasis by the plot: the recognition and escape could have occurred even had Orestes not insisted on replacing his friend as victim, at 605.