

HOMERIC MASCULINITY: ΗΝΟΡΕΗ AND ΑΓΗΝΟΡΙΗ*

Abstract: This article investigates concepts of masculinity in the Homeric poems by focusing on two words: ἡνορέη and ἀγηνορίη. We argue that whereas ἡνορέη is a positive quality best understood as ‘manliness’, ἀγηνορίη denotes ‘excessive manliness’ in a pejorative sense. By comparing the use of these two terms we claim that it is possible to explore what constitutes proper, as opposed to excessive, masculinity in the Homeric poems.

Our analysis of ἡνορέη and ἀγηνορίη suggests that some current views of Homeric masculinity need to be reconsidered. Whereas much recent scholarship has emphasized the individualism of ‘the Homeric hero’, we suggest that individualistic behaviour on the part of men is presented as a serious problem in the Homeric poems. As well as the use of the terms ἡνορέη and ἀγηνορίη, the frequent injunctions to ‘be men’ found in the poems confirm that solidarity with other men is an important aspect of Homeric masculinity.

Our analysis also shows that the language of masculinity is employed very differently in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In the *Iliad*, excessive manliness is typically displayed by an individual who fails to show solidarity with other men on the battlefield. In the *Odyssey*, the suitors are standardly designated as ‘excessively manly’ for coveting another man’s wife. In both poems, normative definitions of masculinity seek to regulate proper relationships among men.

THE Homeric poems are fundamentally concerned with men and their exploits.¹ They explore masculinity from a variety of angles, offering paradigms of male behaviour that became extremely influential in Greco-Roman antiquity.² Scholars have discussed the question of what it is to be ‘a/the man’ in the *Odyssey*, and there has been much interest in the connection between ‘heroism’ and ‘masculinity’ in the *Iliad*.³ For this reason, it is all the more surprising that relatively little work has been done on some of the abstract concepts used in epic to define models of male behaviour. This article investigates the issue of Homeric masculinity by focusing on two words: ἡνορέη and ἀγηνορίη. Both nouns are etymologically linked to the word ἀνὴρ and, we argue, are gendered terms in Homeric epic. We believe, moreover, that there is an important difference between them: whereas ἡνορέη is a positive quality typical of men, ἀγηνορίη denotes extreme manliness in a pejorative sense. By analysing the use of these two terms we argue that it is possible to trace some of the assumptions, expressed by the poet and several characters, about what constitutes proper, as opposed to excessive, masculinity.

An analysis of ἡνορέη and ἀγηνορίη suggests that some current views of Homeric masculinity need to be reconsidered. Scholars have often emphasized the merciless individualism of ‘the Homeric hero’, whose bellicosity is supposedly unrestrained by notions of self-preservation or solidarity with others. Redfield, for example, speaks of ‘an anticomunity of combat’ where heroes ‘must overcome mercy and terror and learn to value their honor above their own lives or another’s’. Brooks claims that Homeric men are ‘trained to meet every emergency by an act of reckless bravery’.⁴ We suggest, by contrast, that in the Homeric poems individualism is seen as typical of men, but is also presented as a serious problem. Proper masculinity, several passages imply, should involve consideration for, and solidarity with, other men. This aspect of Homeric masculinity has not been sufficiently highlighted. One consequence of this neglect is that histories of masculinity – and of warfare – tend to present the rhetoric of masculine self-restraint as a post-Homeric invention.⁵ By contrast, this article suggests that the problems of masculine excess and lack of solidarity with other men are embedded in the very language of epic.

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¹ In the diction of epic, the Homeric poems can be described as κλέα ἀνδρῶν, as opposed to hymnic poetry and catalogues of women. Cf. *LfgreE* s.vv. κλέος (B3) and κλείω.

² For the influence of Homer in antiquity, see, for example, Lamberton and Keaney (1992).

³ E.g. Goldhill (1991) ch.1; van Wees (1992).

⁴ Redfield (1994) 104; Brooks (1977) 455.

⁵ See, for example, van Wees in Foxhall and Salmon (1998) 16-19.

In gender studies masculinity has often been explored in relation to its opposite, femininity.⁶ However, recent scholarship has increasingly drawn attention to the fact that relationships among men are an important aspect of masculinity.⁷ It can indeed be argued that definitions of how men should behave towards one another are inextricably bound up with the conceptualization of male versus female gender roles. Along similar lines, this article mainly explores definitions of masculinity based upon notions of how men should behave towards one another. In section 4, we briefly explore some connections between notions of masculinity, as they emerge from a study of ἡνωρέη and ἀγηνωρίη and a wider Homeric discourse about gender difference.

1. HNOPEH AND ATHNOPIH: SOME LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

Before investigating the wider implications of the Homeric words ἡνωρέη and ἀγηνωρίη, it may be useful to start with some preliminary points about their formation and meaning. The word ἡνωρέη is etymologically linked to ἀνήρ. The scholia gloss it with ἀνδρία and translators tend to render it with terms such as ‘manliness’, ‘courage’, ‘valour’. The abstract noun ἀγηνωρίη derives from the adjective ἀγήνωρ.⁸ The etymology of ἀγήνωρ is obscure: while the last part of the word is transparently linked to ἀνήρ, the opening *ag-* remains a puzzle. On the basis of parallels with adjectives such as ἀγαπήνωρ, δεισήνωρ and ῥηξήνωρ, some scholars have argued that the first part of ἀγήνωρ originally derived from a verb, perhaps ἄγω.⁹ According to this view, the first element of ἀγήνωρ was later reinterpreted as ἀγα-, ‘very much’ or ‘too much’.¹⁰ A recent study challenges this view and proposes that the emphatic prefix ἀγα- is the real as well as the folk etymology of the beginning of ἀγήνωρ.¹¹ This debate need not concern us here: for our purposes, it is sufficient to show that ἀγήνωρ was thought to derive from ἄγαν (‘very’/‘excessively’) and ἀνήρ (‘man’) from early on in the epic tradition. Several Homeric words indicate that this was the case.

In the *Odyssey*, other adjectives are attested which look as if they were formed on the model of ἀγήνωρ, understood as ‘very/excessively manly’: ἀνήνωρ, εὐήνωρ, cf. ὑπερῆνωρ. Just as in the case of these other adjectives, the first element of ἀγήνωρ would have been understood as adverbial rather than verbal. Subsequent readers agree with this interpretation when they gloss the word ἀγηνωρίη as ἄγαν ἀνδρία.¹² Modern scholars follow their example, translating the noun ἀγηνωρίη with terms such as ‘excessive valour’, ‘pride’, ‘manliness’.¹³

In sum, from a synchronic perspective, ἡνωρέη and ἀγηνωρίη both describe abstract qualities linked to the word for ‘man’; ἀγα- at the beginning of ἀγηνωρίη is emphatic. What remains to be seen is whether the meaning of these two words is closely connected to their etymology, and whether there are any significant differences in the way they are used.

Let us begin with the first question. The fact that ἡνωρέη and ἀγηνωρίη are etymologically linked to the noun ἀνήρ does not in itself explain their meaning at any given period. In other words, it remains an open question whether, in the Homeric poems, they are strongly gendered terms. The only way to establish the denotative centre of ἡνωρέη and ἀγηνωρίη in the Homeric poems is to examine in detail the passages in which the two words are used – which is what we

⁶ See, for example, Connell (1987) 70.

⁷ See, for example, Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994).

⁸ For the formation of abstract nouns ending in -ίη, cf. Coffey (1956). He discusses ἀγηνωρίη at 33-4.

⁹ For ἄγω, see Risch (1944-49) 39-41, followed by Chantraine (1968) 10. Sommer (1937) 193 suggests ἀγαμαι.

¹⁰ For the etymology and meaning of ἀγα-, see Anttila (2000) 28-30.

¹¹ See Anttila (2000) 36-8.

¹² See schol. D *ad Il.* 4.303, cf. Ap. Soph. s.v. ἀγήνωρ, *Etym. Magn.* s.v. ἀγηνωρίαίς, Suda s.v. ἀγηνωρίη schol. D *ad Il.* 9.700. Other references in *LfggE* s.v. ἀγηνωρίη (A).

¹³ See, for example, *LSJ* s.v.; Chantraine (1968) 10.

do below.¹⁴ To begin with, however, we offer some observations which, in our view, strongly suggest that ἡνοπέη and ἀγηνορίη are indeed gendered terms in Homeric diction. In the first place, it should be noted that ἡνοπέη is a quality exclusively displayed by men. Ἀγηνορίη can be displayed either by men or by some male animals (lions and boars) to whom warriors are compared. Only men are described as ἀγῆνορες; men, as well as the male lions and boars of the similes, are said to have a θυμὸς ἀγῆνωρ. Other adjectives whose formation parallels that of ἀγῆνωρ are also strongly gendered. Ἀνήνωρ is used in a context which leaves no doubt as to its sexual connotations: Odysseus should make Circe swear that she will not make him ἀνήνωρ: 'unmanly', 'impotent'.¹⁵ The participle ὑπερηνορέων is applied only to the suitors and the Cyclopes: two all-male groups. The adjective εὐῆνωρ, attested only twice in Homeric epic, qualifies things rather than men, yet the things it describes are associated with typically male activity: bronze is described as εὐῆνωρ at *Od.* 13.19. Εὐῆνωρ is also the wine that Menelaus' male guests bring to the banquet; their wives, by contrast, send bread.¹⁶

Even this brief survey strongly suggests that ἡνοπέη, ἀγηνορίη and related words are gendered terms in the Homeric poems: they are applied only to men, male animals, when they are compared to warriors, and objects which are linked to men. What remains to be seen is whether there are significant differences in the use of ἀγηνορίη as opposed to ἡνοπέη. This is not easy to establish: the two words are never explicitly contrasted in the poems or even used in close proximity to each other, so no single passage can be quoted in order to answer the question.

As we have seen, the main difference between the two words is the *ag-* element at the beginning of ἀγηνορίη. A comparison with ἀνήνωρ and εὐῆνωρ shows that *ag-* was understood as ἀγα-, 'very', 'extremely'. However, the precise force of the prefix remains to be explored. Since ἀγα- need not be pejorative in Homeric compounds,¹⁷ ἀγηνορίη can be understood as 'great manliness' or 'excessive manliness'.

Some scholars argue that ἀγηνορίη is always pejorative: Chantraine, for example, renders it as 'vaillance excessive, orgueil'.¹⁸ Others see no significant difference between ἡνοπέη and ἀγηνορίη: they treat the latter as an emphatic version of the former.¹⁹ The only way to establish whether ἀγηνορίη indicates 'excessive manliness', as opposed to properly virile behaviour, is to look in detail at the passages where the term is used. In our view, a close reading of these passages shows that ἀγηνορίη always implies an element of criticism towards those who display it. The adjective ἀγῆνωρ also tends to have a negative connotation.

Because the exact meaning of the words we discuss is yet to be established, we leave them untranslated in the course of the discussion. For the sake of clarity, we treat Iliadic and Odyssean passages separately: as will emerge from the argument, the terms are employed to different ends in the two poems.

2. HNOPEH AND ΑΓΗΝΟΡΙΗ IN THE *ILIAD*

In the *Iliad*, ἡνοπέη tends to be mentioned together with other qualities: κάρτος, σθένος, κάλλος;²⁰ and, in one case, it is said to be a gift from the gods.²¹ At *Iliad* 8.226 = 11.9, Achilles and Ajax are said to have trusted in their ἡνοπέη when settling at the extreme ends of the Achaean

¹⁴ For later uses of ἀγῆνωρ in lyric and tragedy, see Sideras (1971) 42 and Silk (1983). Silk convincingly argues that although by the fifth century the word was archaic, its meaning was stable and continued to reflect Homeric usage.

¹⁵ *Od.* 10.301, cf. 10.341.

¹⁶ *Od.* 4.622.

¹⁷ Olympus, for example, is ἀγάννιφος, 'very' – rather than 'excessively' – 'snowy'; similarly the adjectives

ἀγακλυτός, ἀγακλειτός, ἡγάθεος indicate great, rather than excessive, fame or godliness.

¹⁸ Chantraine (1968) 10.

¹⁹ *LSJ*, for example, translates both Greek words with the English 'manliness'. Translators of the Homeric poems tend not to differentiate between the two terms.

²⁰ See, for example, *Il.* 6.156, 8.226, 17.329.

²¹ *Il.* 6.156.

camp. In this way, the settlement is safest: the two strongest men flank it on either side. The safety of the group is also important when ἡνορέη is displayed on the battlefield. In *Iliad* 17.327-32, Apollo, disguised as Periphas, describes a group of men as trusting in their own ἡνορέη (ἀνέρας ... πεποιθότας ἡνορέη) and fighting to victory. Their example is meant to inspire Aeneas and the Trojans at large: they should all fight like the men described by Apollo. In a rather different passage, ἡνορέη characterizes the behaviour of a single individual: in this case, it is said to weaken rather than improve the chances of the group as a whole. This is how Nestor instructs the Achaeans before battle (4.303-5):

μηδέ τις ἵπποσύνηι τε καὶ ἡνορέηφι πεποιθῶς
οἶος πρόσθ' ἄλλων μεμάτω Τρώεσσι μάχεσθαι,
μηδ' ἀναχωρεῖτω· ἀλαπαδνότεροι γὰρ ἔσσεσθε.

Let no man, trusting in his horsemanship and *ēnoreē*,
dare to fight with the Trojans alone, in front of the others,
nor let him give ground, for that way you will become weaker.²²

Both Apollo in Book 17 and Nestor in Book 4 encourage cohesion among fighters, but their attitude towards ἡνορέη seems to be different. It is viewed positively if it inspires confidence in a whole group (*cf.* 17.329 ἀνέρας ... πεποιθότας ἡνορέη), but can become a problem when an individual who trusts in it (4.303 ἡνορέηφι πεποιθῶς) advances on his own. In fact, Nestor claims that a rash action of that kind is as damaging to the group as retreating behind others.

If we now turn to ἀγηνορίη and the more common adjective ἀγήνωρ, we find that these terms also betray a preoccupation with individualistic behaviour and the safety of groups, but that they are not used in the same way as ἡνορέη. One common context in which the adjective ἀγήνωρ is found are similes. Typically, a lion with a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ faces a crowd of armed men and dogs, thereby risking his life. In Book 12.299-309, for example, Sarpedon is likened to a hungry lion whose θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ bids him to face a crowd:

βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ὡς τε λέων ὀρεσίτροφος, ὅς τ' ἐπιδευῆς
δηρὸν ἔηι κρειῶν, κέλεται δέ ἐ θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ
μήλων πειρήσοντα καὶ ἐς πυκινὸν δόμον ἐλθεῖν·
εἶ περ γὰρ χ' εὐρησι παρ' αὐτόφι βώτορας ἀνδρας
σὺν κυσὶ καὶ δούρεσσι φυλάσσοντας περὶ μῆλα,
οὐ ρά τ' ἀπειρήτος μέμονε σταθμοῖο δῖεσθαι,
ἀλλ' ὅ γ' ἄρ' ἦ ἥραξε μετάλμενος, ἠὲ καὶ αὐτὸς
ἔβλητ' ἐν πρώτοισι θοῆς ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἄκοντι·
ὡς ρά τότε ἀντίθεον Σαρπηδόνα θυμὸς ἀνήκε
τειχος ἐπαίξαι διὰ τε ῥήξασθαι ἐπάλλεις.
αὐτίκα δὲ Γλαῦκον προσέφη, παῖδ' Ἴππολόχοιο· ...

He advanced like a mountain lion, who for a long time
has gone lacking meat, and his *thumos agēnor*
bids him get at the sheep, even entering their well-built fold.
And although he finds herdsmen there, guarding their flocks
with dogs and spears, still he does not refrain from trying the fold,
and either he makes a leap and seizes a sheep, or else
he is hit in the first attack by a spear from a swift hand.
Just so, his spirit bid godlike Sarpedon to rush to the wall
and break through the battlements.
At once he spoke to Glaucus, the son of Hippolochus: ...

²² All translations are loosely adapted from Lattimore (1962) and (1975).

After this passage, Sarpedon goes on to deliver a famous speech in which he reminds Glaucus and, probably, himself of the reasons why they should fight in the first line of battle.²³ Sarpedon points out that glory, and the many social and economic advantages which he and Glaucus enjoy, must be earned by fighting in the front line together with the other champions (12.321). The lion, of course, needs no such elaborate explanations about social prestige, banquets, wealth and fame: his θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ bids him to leap forward simply because he is hungry. While the simile rests on the parallels between the θυμὸς of Sarpedon and that of the lion, there are important differences between the two: Sarpedon justifies his decision to fight in social terms, whereas the lion is isolated and governed by his individual need for survival. The isolated animal, moreover, has to face socially organized men who may well overcome him.

Other similes emphasize the hunger and isolation of an animal, and imply that a man should not behave exactly like that animal. For example, at the beginning of Book 12 a raging Hector urges the Trojans to leap across the Achaean ditch, although the action seems suicidal.²⁴ In his impetus, he is compared to a boar or a lion who is killed by his own ἀγηνωρίη (12.41-50):

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἔν τε κύνεσσι καὶ ἀνδράσι θηρευτῆσι
 κάπριος ἢ ἑλέων στρέφεται σθένει βλεμεαίνων·
 οἱ δέ τε πυργηδὸν σφέας αὐτοὺς ἀρτύναντες
 ἀντίον ἴστανται καὶ ἀκοντίζουσι θαμειὰς
 αἰχμὰς ἐκ χειρῶν· τοῦ δ' οὐ ποτε κυδάλιμον κῆρ
 ταρβεῖ οὐδὲ φοβεῖται, ἀγηνωρίη δέ μιν ἔκτα·
 ταρφέα τε στρέφεται στίχας ἀνδρῶν πειρητίζων·
 ὄππῃ τ' ἰθύσῃ, τῆι τ' εἴκουσι στίχες ἀνδρῶν·
 ὡς Ἴκτωρ ἂν' ὄμιλον ἰὼν ἐλίσσεθ' ἑταίρους
 τάφρον ἐποτρύνων διαβαίνεμεν ...

As among dogs and hunters a boar or a lion turns about,
 exulting in his own strength, but the men, closing themselves
 into a wall around him, stand facing him and shoot him with
 arrows thick and fast from their hands – yet his brave heart
 does not flinch or fear: his own *agēnoriē* kills him;
 and again and again he turns on them trying to break the men's ranks,
 wherever he charges, the ranks of men give way to him;
 so was Hector as he went in the crowd, rallying and urging his friends
 to cross the ditch...

The simile is meant to emphasize Hector's isolation at the precise moment when he is trying to rally his supporters. Moreover, it suggests that Hector's isolation makes him vulnerable to the enemy. As in the previous simile, the single animal is confronted by socially organized men in battle formation, and in this case they kill it. Hector, by contrast, is saved from his own impetus because a friend, Polydamas, manages to persuade him not to cross the ditch.²⁵ The man, as opposed to the animal, can count on the support of other men. Sarpedon turns to Glaucus, Hector accepts Polydamas' advice.

²³ This has often been seen as the most explicit expression of 'the heroic code', although it should be noted that Sarpedon mentions what 'kings', rather than 'heroes', should do (cf. *Il.* 12.319: βασιλῆες). See Whitman (1982) 28, Redfield (1994) 99-101, Haubold (2000) 3-6.

²⁴ Clarke (1995) 149-52 offers a good discussion of this and other similes where, he argues, there is an implication that a man should not behave exactly like a lion.

²⁵ At *Il.* 12.61-2, Polydamas diplomatically addresses Hector together with the other Trojan leaders, although he was the only one who wanted to cross the ditch: in this way, he avoids direct confrontation and manages to reintegrate Hector into the group.

There is one extraordinary case in which a man is compared to an animal with a θυμός ἀγήνωρ, and no difference between the two is implied. The man is Achilles and the comparison is meant as a criticism.²⁶ When Achilles insists on mistreating the corpse of Hector, Apollo urges the other gods not to support him, and describes his attitude as follows (24.39-45):

ἀλλ' ὀλοῶι Ἀχιλῆϊ, θεοί, βούλεσθ' ἐπαρήγειν,
 ὡι οὔτ' ἄρ φρένες εἰσὶν ἐναίσιμοι οὔτε νόημα
 γναμπτὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι, λέων δ' ὡς ἄγρια οἶδεν,
 ὅς τ' ἐπεὶ ἄρ μεγάλη τε βίηι καὶ ἀγήνορι θυμῶι
 εἷζας εἶσ' ἐπὶ μῆλα βροτῶν, ἵνα δαίτα λάβηισιν·
 ὡς Ἀχιλεὺς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν, οὐδέ οἱ αἰδῶς
 γίγνεται, ἦ τ' ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι.

But no, you gods want to help this destructive Achilles in whose breast there are no proper feelings nor a pliable mind: his thoughts are as savage as those of a lion who gives way to his own great strength and *thumos agēnor* in order to get food; so Achilles has lost pity and has no shame – shame, which greatly hurts and benefits men.

Apollo's remark harks back to another lion simile in 20.164-75: in that passage, Achilles, whose θυμός ἀγήνωρ urges him to attack Aeneas, is compared to a particularly terrifying lion. The overall effect of that simile is one of pitiless ferocity, and indeed, in Book 24, Apollo accuses Achilles of being immune to considerations of pity or shame, like an animal. The god implicitly remarks on the differences between the behaviour of the lion and what is expected of Achilles: it should be noted that whereas the lion's spirit is described as ἀγήνωρ, shame is said to pertain to 'men' (ἄνδρας 24.45).²⁷ The qualities mentioned by Apollo are essentially relational, whereas the lion and Achilles act without consideration for others. Once again, the expression θυμός ἀγήνωρ brings with it the problem of proper interaction among men.

Apart from the similes in which an isolated warrior is compared to a lion or boar with a θυμός ἀγήνωρ, several other passages suggest that the terms ἀγήνωρ and ἀγηνορίη characterize individualistic, antisocial and often self-destructive behaviour on the part of an isolated warrior. This point emerges, for example, from a comparison of the nightly foray carried out by Diomedes and Odysseus with Dolon's failed attempt to accomplish a similar feat.

When Diomedes plans the expedition, he tells Nestor that his θυμός ἀγήνωρ bids him to go and spy on the Trojans. However, he immediately adds that it would be more comforting and safer to go with another man (10.220-6):

Νέστορ, ἔμ' ὀτρύνει κραδίη καὶ θυμός ἀγήνωρ
 ἀνδρῶν δυσμενέων δῦναι στρατὸν ἐγγὺς ἐόντων,
 Τρώων· ἀλλ' εἴ τίς μοι ἀνήρ ἄμ' ἔποιτο καὶ ἄλλος
 μᾶλλον θαλπωρὴ καὶ θαρσαλεώτερον ἔσται.
 σύν τε δὺ' ἐρχομένω, καὶ τε πρὸ ὃ τοῦ ἐνόησεν
 ὅπως κέρδος ἔηι· μῦνος δ' εἶ πέρ τε νοήσηι,
 ἀλλά τέ οἱ βράσσων τε νόος, λεπτή δέ τε μῆτις.

²⁶ Clarke (1995) usefully discusses *Il.* 24.39-45 in the context of other similes where Achilles is compared to a lion. He argues that these similes mark different stages in the story of Achilles' anger.

²⁷ Cf. Cairns (1993) 132 with further bibliography.

Nestor, my heart and my *thumos agēnor*
 bid me to infiltrate the army of enemies who are near us,
 the Trojans; yet if another man accompanied me as well,
 there would be more warmth and greater confidence.
 When two go together, one at least recognizes
 where the advantage may be; a single man, even if he thinks
 about it, has a limited mind and shallow plans.

Eventually, Diomedes chooses Odysseus for the task, and the choice is appropriate, since *μητις*, *νόος* and the ability to recognize *κέρδος* are needed. Interestingly, however, Diomedes justifies his choice in a different way: he could not forget, he says, Odysseus' *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* (10.244). Odysseus, in other words, can match Diomedes' own *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ*: the danger that he may rush forward on his own and lose his life is thus averted. It is telling that, later in the book, Odysseus signals to Diomedes not to indulge in killing more enemies and drives him back to safety.²⁸

Unlike Diomedes, Dolon shows no consideration for his own safety. At 10.319-20 he informs Hector that his *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* bids him to go and spy on the Achaeans: to that extent, his announcement parallels that of Diomedes. What he says next, however, represents a sharp departure. Instead of musing on the advantages of sharing risks with a capable friend, he thinks about the possible rewards of his expedition: he wants Hector to promise him Achilles' horses, should his sortie be successful. Later, he seems to regret his bravado. When he hears the sound of men running after him, he supposes that they may be friends sent by Hector.²⁹ Instead, the footsteps turn out to belong to 'enemy men' (10.358 *ἄνδρες δῆιοι*). When Diomedes and Odysseus catch up with him, they find out from him the location of Rhesus and his men, and then proceed to take his life. Dolon's *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* inspires a rash and self-destructive action which, moreover, has dreadful consequences for the Trojans at large: Rhesus and his men are also killed by the two Achaeans. The text presents Dolon's isolation as a reason for his vulnerability: Diomedes and Odysseus pursue him as two dogs chase a single hare or a fawn,³⁰ and, when they catch up with him, they demand an explanation for the very fact that he is alone.³¹

The examples discussed so far show, among other things, that when a man yields to his *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ*, his actions have negative effects for other men: Dolon's confession causes the death of Rhesus and his men, Hector urges the Trojans towards a suicidal action, Achilles fails to show proper shame or pity and thereby causes great suffering. Some other uses of the expression *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* show that it is linked to antisocial behaviour even in contexts where it does not refer to bravery on the battlefield.

At lines 2.225-42, Thersites encourages the Achaeans to mutiny and urges them to sail home. There are some indications in the text that when he begins to speak he commands some support. However, he is eventually brought low by Odysseus. At that point, the Achaeans have lost all sympathy for him. The spectacle of Thersites shedding a tear prompts one man to whisper to another: 'This is the best thing Odysseus has ever done. I do not think Thersites' *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* will bid him insult our leaders again.'³² In this context, the expression *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* is employed with a certain amount of irony: it is hard to envisage the deformed and by now thoroughly humiliated Thersites as in any way similar to a lion or a warrior ready to leap forward and face the enemy. Yet, the Achaean's choice of words is not inappropriate: Thersites has stepped out of line with his decision to speak; his action, moreover, is damaging to himself (he ends up in tears) and, potentially, to the community (in that it encourages dissent and lack of cohesion).

²⁸ See *Il.* 10.488-93, 502, 513-14. Diomedes' dangerous thirst for blood is compared to that of an attacking lion at *Il.* 10.485-8.

²⁹ *Il.* 10.355-6.

³⁰ *Il.* 10.360-4.

³¹ *Il.* 10.385.

³² Paraphrase of *Il.* 2.272-7.

The story of Achilles confirms the intimate connection between ἀγνηορίη, isolation and anti-social behaviour. When Phoenix, Odysseus and Ajax try to persuade Achilles to return to the battlefield in Book 9, he refuses to do so. He replies to Odysseus' entreaties by stating that, rather than joining them in the fighting, he plans to go back to Phthia (9.398-400):

ἔνθα δέ μοι μάλα πολλὸν ἐπέσσυτο θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ
γῆμαντα μνηστὴν ἄλοχον, εἰκυῖαν ἄκοιτιν,
κτῆμασι τέρπεσθαι τὰ γέρων ἐκτίσατο Πηλεύς.

and my *thumos agēnor* much rather drives me in that place
to take a wedded wife in marriage, a suitable bride,
and enjoy the riches gathered by old Peleus.

It may seem strange, even paradoxical, that a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ bids a warrior to turn his back on the battlefield and find himself a wife. As we have seen, it usually impels lions and boars to face the enemy and die, which is precisely what Achilles is refusing to do. Yet his use of the expression is not simply perverse.³³ As we have seen, a θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ typically belongs to an isolated individual who pays no attention to the views, needs and safety of the men around him.

Other characters agree in blaming Achilles' θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ for his refusal to return to the battlefield. Ajax points out to him that a man's θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ should be satisfied by recompense and apology (9.635); and, at the end of Book 9, Diomedes describes Achilles' reaction to the embassy as the ultimate manifestation of ἀγνηορίη. This is what he says to Agamemnon (9.697-700):

Ἄτρείδη κύδιστε, ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον,
μὴ ὄφελος λίσσεσθαι ἀμύμονα Πηλείωνα,
μυρία δῶρα διδούς· ὁ δ' ἀγήνωρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἄλλως·
νῦν αὖ μιν πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀγνηορίησιν ἐνήκας.

Son of Atreus, most lordly and king of men, Agamemnon,
I wish you had not supplicated the blameless son of Peleus
with countless gifts. He is *agēnor* at the best of times,
but now you have driven him far deeper into his *agēnorai*.

Achilles' exceptional manifestation of ἀγνηορίη is emphasized by the unique use of the plural at 9.700: there are many instances in which he displays this quality. Diomedes continues by urging the Achaeans to forget about Achilles and concentrate on what they can do themselves: sleep and eat to gain strength, and then, at the break of dawn, begin to fight again. His intervention prevents the assembly from sinking into utter despondency: in the face of Achilles' defection, he encourages bravery and solidarity among the others.

Diomedes' comment suggests that the problem of Achilles' ἀγνηορίη is crucial to the *Iliad* as a whole. The proem of the *Iliad* tells us that Achilles' wrath causes 'endless suffering' for the Achaeans, on whose side he is supposed to be fighting. The opening lines, in other words, invite us to see the poem as an exploration of Achilles' damaging relationship to the other Achaeans.³⁴ One important question, in the interpretation of the poem, is whether Achilles is justified in rejecting Agamemnon's embassy in Book 9.³⁵ Like Apollo in Book 24, Diomedes in Book 9 uses the term ἀγνηορίη to suggest that Achilles is in the wrong. As the ἀγήνωρ man *par excellence* (cf. 9.699: ὁ δ' ἀγήνωρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἄλλως), he does not have sufficient consideration for others.

³³ For Achilles' exceptional use of language, see Parry (1956), Griffin (1986), Martin (1989).

³⁴ *Il.* 1.1-2 with Latacz (2000) *ad loc.*

³⁵ See, for example, Schein (1984) 104-16, Edwards (1987) 231-7, Zanker (1994) ch.3, Griffin (1995) 25-8.

3. INJUNCTIONS TO 'BE MEN'

An analysis of ἡγορή, ἀγγορή and ἀγῆνωρ in the *Iliad* shows that these words tend to be used in contexts where solidarity among men is of paramount importance. Normative uses of the word ἀνήρ confirm that men, *qua* men, are expected to show solidarity with one another in the context of war.

Perhaps the most significant observation to make is that, in exhortations, the word ἀνήρ is always used in the plural. Never, in the course of the poem, is an individual told to 'be a man'. By contrast, warriors are often addressed collectively and told to 'be men'. Passages which contain the injunction to be men are frequent and similar.³⁶ In every case, the context is war: a group of men are told to take courage, be ashamed of each other, and keep together in mutual support. The speaker, moreover, always addresses them as φίλοι. The standard opening, 'be men, my friends...', not only establishes a positive sense of bonding, but also suggests that the speaker belongs to the group of φίλοι he addresses, and speaks from within it.

Given that injunctions to be men follow a traditional pattern, one example may be sufficient to capture the general flavour and implications of this type of encouragement. At *Il.* 5.529-32 Agamemnon addresses the Achaeans as follows:

Ἄτρείδης δ' ἄν' ὄμιλον ἐφοίτα πολλά κελεύων·
 "ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔλεσθε,
 ἀλλήλους τ' αἰδεῖσθε κατὰ κρατερᾶς ὑσμίνας·
 αἰδομένων ἀνδρῶν πλέονες σοοὶ ἢ ἐπέφανται·
 φευγόντων δ' οὔτ' ἄρ κλέος ὄρνυται οὔτε τις ἀλκή."

And Atreus' son ranged through the masses with his many orders:

'Be men, dear friends, and take up the heart of courage,
 and have consideration for each other in the strong encounters,
 since more come through alive when men consider each other,
 and there is no glory when they give way, nor strength either.'

Every element in Agamemnon's speech is paralleled in other injunctions to 'be men' found in the *Iliad*: the address to a group of friends, the connection between masculinity and courage in war, the suggestion that the judgement of friends should be heeded, the overall sense of solidarity for the sake of safety and glory. There is one passage, however, which differs from other injunctions in one crucial detail. At *Iliad* 15.659-60, we are told that Nestor exhorts the Achaeans to battle by addressing each man individually. The fact that Nestor talks to each man, as opposed to addressing a group, is repeated at the end of his speech (15.667). For the present investigation, it is interesting to see in what ways Nestor's address to 'each man' affects the pattern described so far. This is what he says (15.659-67):

Νέστωρ αὖτε μάλιστα Γερήνιος, οὔρος Ἀχαιῶν,
 λίσσασθ' ὑπὲρ τοκέων γουνοῦμενος ἄνδρα ἕκαστον·
 "ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε, καὶ αἰδῶ θέσθ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ
 ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων, ἐπὶ δὲ μνήσασθε ἕκαστος
 παίδων ἢ δ' ἀλόχων καὶ κτήσιος ἢ δὲ τοκῆων,
 ἡμὲν ὅτεωι ζώουσι καὶ ὦι κατατεθνήκασι·
 τῶν ὑπὲρ ἐνθάδ' ἐγὼ γουνάζομαι οὐ παρεόντων
 ἐστάμεναι κρατερῶς, μηδὲ τρωπᾶσθε φόβονδε."
 ὡς εἰπὼν ὄτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμὸν ἕκαστου.

³⁶ See *Il.* 5.529, 8.174, 11.287, 15.487, 561, 661, 734, 16.270. Thersites mimics this standard trope at *Il.* 2.235.

And then Gerenian Nestor, the Achaeans' watcher
 begged and supplicated each man, for the sake of his parents:
 'Dear friends, be men, have shame in your hearts
 in front of other human beings, let each of you remember
 his children and wife, his property and his parents
 whether one man's parents are alive or have died. Here
 I beseech you for the sake of those who are far away
 to stand strongly and not be turned in flight.'
 Speaking like that he stirred the courage and spirit of each man.

The parallels with the speech of Agamemnon are obvious. Nestor addresses the Achaeans as φίλοι and tells them to be men: note, once again, the plural. The purpose of the speech, moreover, is ostensibly the same: to encourage strength in battle and prevent the men from running away. This is achieved by an appeal to shame (αἰδώς, αἰδεῖσθαι), but the group whose judgement the men should heed is different: in one case, they should think about one another, in the other, they are encouraged to remember their families. Unlike Agamemnon, Nestor is envisaging two groups: the men (ἄνδρες) who are there on the battlefield, and the far-away human beings (ἄνθρωποι) who are dear to them. It is in relation to those back home that each man becomes an individual with a particular set of people to care for and circumstances to remember.

While it is acceptable for an individual man to think about his own family back home, all the passages of martial exhortation where men are told to be men suggest that masculinity or 'being a man' in this context entails belonging to a group of warriors. Proper men should think about one another and offer support.

4. HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE ON MASCULINITY

We are now in a position to place the norms of proper masculine behaviour as they have emerged so far within a wider discourse of gender difference. Several passages in the *Iliad* can be quoted in order to explore how differences between the two sexes are conceptualized, but the most explicit definition of gender roles, in a context other than abuse, is uttered by Hector.³⁷ His last words to his wife provide a useful starting point (6.490-3):

ἀλλ' ἐς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε,
 ἰστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε
 ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει
 πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί, τοῖ Ἴλίῳ ἐγγεγάασιν.

But you must go back home and take up your work,
 the loom and the distaff, and see to it that the maids
 ply their work too; war will be the concern of men,
 all men who live in Ilios, but me beyond others.

To some modern sensibilities, Hector's words may sound dismissive, but he actually intends to comfort his wife. At this point in the narrative, Hector and Andromache do not find themselves in their proper place: they have met half-way between home and the battlefield, at the Scaean

³⁷ For the definition of gender roles in abuse see, for example, *Il.* 2.235, 7.96; cf. Diomedes' words to Aphrodite at *Il.* 5.348-51: all these passages define the battlefield as the domain of men. For other passages, see also Beye (1974) and Easterling (1991).

gates.³⁸ The encounter is painful for them both, and provokes Andromache to give Hector some military advice: he should stay inside the citadel, while ordering the people to protect the most vulnerable section of the walls.³⁹ In response to his wife's questionable advice, Hector tells her that he shares her anxiety, that he cares for her more than for anyone else in the world, but that he would be ashamed to face the men and women of Troy if he did what she suggested: Troy will fall, if the gods so decree, but in the meantime Hector and Andromache must do their duty and return to their proper place.⁴⁰ This statement, then, rather than simply an assertion of male authority, should be seen also as an attempt to establish normality, or 'proper tasks', in a moment of crisis.

For our purposes, the most obvious point which emerges from Hector's words is that the task of men, as opposed to the several female duties he mentions, is summarized by a single word: πόλεμος. Other passages in the *Iliad* confirm that war is presented as the defining activity of men. Poseidon, for example, uses the same sentence uttered by Hector to put an end to the battle of the gods. He invites Hera to sit and watch, while men do the fighting: πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, 'war will be the concern of men', he points out at 20.137. The *Iliad* as a whole bears out what Hector and Poseidon say: men, as opposed to both women and gods, are largely defined by their engagement in war.⁴¹ In a sense, then, the discourse about masculinity we have investigated so far aims to define how exactly men should behave when engaging in the male activity *par excellence*.

What is perhaps less obvious about the encounter between Hector and Andromache is that both of them seem to be aware of the more precise definitions of proper masculine behaviour on the battlefield we have investigated so far. When Hector draws a distinction between his own duties and those of his wife, he insists that war is the concern of all men. At the same time, he also singles himself out 'beyond others'. In doing so, he seems to be performing a careful balancing act between ἠνωρέη and ἀγηνωρήη. On the one hand, he is perfectly aware that war demands solidarity with all men as a group; on the other, he singles himself out as being particularly concerned with war. For this reason, perhaps, Andromache is not reassured by his speech: she goes back to her duties crying and fearing for the safety of Hector.

Later, in Book 22, when she hears the noise of people crying outside, she immediately concludes that Hector is dead. In this context, she explicitly mentions Hector's ἀγηνωρήη as the cause of his death (22.454-9):

αἶ γὰρ ἀπ' οὐρατος εἶη ἐμεῦ ἔπος, ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰνῶς
 δεῖδω μὴ δὴ μοι θρασὺν Ἑκτορα δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
 μῶνον ἀποτμήξας πόλιος πεδίονδε δίηται,
 καὶ δὴ μιν καταπαύσῃ ἀγηνωρήης ἀλεγεινῆς,
 ἢ μιν ἔχεσκέ, ἐπεὶ οὐ ποτ' ἐνὶ πληθυὶ μένεν ἀνδρῶν
 ἀλλὰ πολὺ προθέεσκε, τὸ ὄν μένος οὐδενὶ εἴκων.

May what I say never come close to my ear, yet dreadfully
 I am afraid that great Achilles might have cut off bold Hector
 alone, away from the city, and be driving him towards the plain,
 and that he will have put an end to the bitter *agēnoriē*
 that always was on him, for he would never stay back where the men
 were in numbers, but break far out in front, his strength giving way to no one.

³⁸ The tensions created by this unusual circumstance are explored by Arthur (1981).

³⁹ *Il.* 6.431-4.

⁴⁰ *Il.* 6.440-93.

⁴¹ For the connection between masculinity and war in the *Iliad*, see also Redfield (1994) and van Wees (1992).

Andromache's reaction seems to follow directly from her last encounter with Hector. When he told her he was concerned with war above all other men, she was not reassured; and when she hears the wailing on the walls, she immediately concludes that Hector must have died because he was far away from the others, on account of his ἀγνηοπή. Although he told her he was only doing a man's duty, she feels that he went beyond the call to which all men were responding.

This disagreement between husband and wife shows one last time how difficult it can be to pin down exactly what proper ἡγοπή might entail in any given situation. It also confirms that the problem is keenly felt by the characters in the story; and that the narrator takes care to make sure that we, the audience, feel it too. Finally, and most importantly for our purposes, this crucial episode, which spans the better part of the poem, confirms the basic parameters of the discourse of ἡγοπή/ἀγνηοπή. What is implied in Hector's statement in Book 6 is spelled out by Andromache in Book 22: excessive manliness, ἀγνηοπή, entails separation from other men, death and, ultimately, negative consequences for the other men on the battlefield, as well as for one's own family and community.

5. HNOPEH AND ΑΓΗΝΟΠΗ IN THE *ODYSSEY*

As we have seen, solidarity on the battlefield turns out to be a crucial aspect of what it means to be a man in the *Iliad*. Injunctions to 'be men' confirm that masculinity involves above all proper relationships with other men on the battlefield. Achilles is a key character through which the implications of masculinity are defined and explored: as the proem makes clear, his story is concerned above all with his relationship to the other Achaeans in the context of war. Iliadic views about masculinity, in other words, are intimately connected to the poem's overall narrative project.

In the *Odyssey* too, the language of masculinity reflects the wider themes and preoccupations of the poem. For this reason, before offering an analysis of ἡγοπή and related terms, it is best to start with some general considerations. The *Odyssey*, as the proem makes clear, is concerned above all with one man: Odysseus. It has been argued that the first word, ἄνδρα, asks us to read the poem both as the story of a particular man, Odysseus, and as a paradigmatic exploration of what it is to be a man.⁴² It has also been pointed out that ἀνὴρ can mean 'husband' as well as 'man', and that this meaning is relevant to our understanding of the *Odyssey*, since the poem tells us the story of the ἀνὴρ who, after a long journey and a war against his wife's suitors, finally manages to be reunited with her.⁴³ For our purposes, it is above all important to note that the man of the proem is an isolated individual on his way home. In this context, the language of masculinity no longer emphasizes the importance of solidarity among men on the battlefield. However, as we shall see, relationships among men continue to be an important aspect of masculinity.

As well as telling the story of Odysseus, the poem focuses on his son Telemachus, who grapples with the problem of how to become a man worthy of his father. In the first book, he echoes Hector's words to Andromache in an attempt to define himself as the man of the house, but he is only partially successful in doing so. When Penelope appears in front of the suitors, he tells her to go back to her rooms and let him do the talking, because μῦθος is the concern of men (1.356-61):

⁴² See, for example, Goldhill (1991) ch.1. Kahane (1994) 59-67 also discusses the tension between a general meaning of ἄνδρα (any man) and one that indicates Odysseus in particular.

⁴³ See, for example, Kahane (1994) 59-67 and Haubold (2000) 140-3.

“ἀλλ’ ἐς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ’ αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε,
 ἰστόν τ’ ἡλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε
 ἔργον ἐποιχεσθαι· μῦθος δ’ ἄνδρεςσι μελήσει
 πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ’ ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ’ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ.”
 Ἥ μὲν θαμβήσασα πάλιν οἰκόνδε βεβήκει·
 παιδὸς γὰρ μῦθον πεπνυμένον ἔνθετο θυμῷ.

‘But you must go back home and take up your work,
 the loom and the distaff, and see to it that the maids
 ply their work too; speeches will be the concern of men,
 all men, but especially me, since I am in charge of this household.’
 She went back inside the house in amazement,
 for she took to heart the wise speech of her child.

Penelope is impressed, but there are problems with Telemachus’ claim that μῦθος defines what men do. In fact, both men and women utter μῦθοι in the Homeric poems.⁴⁴ His own speech, moreover, is said to be that of Penelope’s ‘child’ (361: παιδὸς μῦθον πεπνυμένον). If we bear in mind that the word παῖς, unlike υἱός, characterizes (male and female) children as opposed to adults,⁴⁵ it becomes all the more obvious that, no matter what Telemachus might claim, μῦθος is not exclusively or unproblematically the prerogative of adult men. Later, in Book 2, the suitors accordingly suggest that fine speeches alone will not turn Telemachus into a man worthy of respect (2.85-6, 2.200). In the course of the poem, it becomes clear that being a man involves fighting the suitors, not simply talking to them.

If we now turn to the language of masculinity, we see that it resonates in harmony with the overall narrative project of the *Odyssey*. Ἥνορέη is attested only once, ἀγνηορή is not attested at all, so our analysis focuses on the adjective ἀγῆνωρ which, together with the participle ὑπερηνορέων, conveys a clear impression of what it means to be excessively manly in the world of the *Odyssey*. Let us begin, however, by looking at the one instance in which the word Ἥνορέη is used.

In Book 24, when the war between the suitors’ faction and that of Odysseus is about to break out, Odysseus turns to Telemachus and exhorts him to match the Ἥνορέη of his forefathers (24.506-9):

Τηλέμαχ’, ἤδη μὲν τόδε γ’ εἴσαι αὐτὸς ἐπελθών,
 ἀνδρῶν μαρναμένων ἵνα τε κρίνονται ἄριστοι,
 μή τι καταισχύνην πατέρων γένος, οἷ τὸ πάρος περ
 ἀλκῆι τ’ Ἥνορέηι τε κεκάσμεθα πᾶσαν ἐπ’ αἶαν.

Telemachus, now that you have come yourself and are present
 where men do battle so that the best distinguish themselves,
 make sure not to shame the blood of your fathers, for in the past
 we have excelled in valour and *ēnoreē* all over the earth.

As was the case in the *Iliad*, solidarity among men on the battlefield is an important aspect of Ἥνορέη. However, in this case the concept is invoked in order to establish continuity between different generations, not co-operation among equal members of a group. There is an important difference between Odysseus and Telemachus: for the father, Ἥνορέη is linked above all to his past exploits; for the son, it is something still to be proven. This use of the term reflects the fact

⁴⁴ For example, Penelope and Odysseus rejoice in one another’s μῦθοι when they are finally reunited (*Od.* 23.301).

⁴⁵ See *Lfgre* s.v. (B)1.

that the conflict with the suitors' faction, although repeatedly described as πόλεμος,⁴⁶ remains at the same time a family affair. The masculine solidarity embedded in the concept of ἠνορέη is appropriated here for the purpose of reinstating Odysseus' rule within the family and in Ithaca. Telemachus remains first and foremost a son, not a full-grown man fighting a war among other men on the battlefield.

ἠνορέη, as a concept, remains marginal to the *Odyssey*: it is invoked as something that was displayed in the past and should be displayed again by the next generation. An analysis of ἀγήνωρ, by contrast, shows that excessive masculinity is a central concern in the *Odyssey*, although it entails a different kind of behaviour from what it involves in the *Iliad*. To be sure, there are some continuities between the two poems. At *Odyssey* 11.562, for example, Odysseus asks Ajax to master his θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ and listen to him. Ajax, however, refuses to do so: the parallels with Achilles' ἀγηνορίη in *Iliad* 9 are unmistakable. By and large, however, the expression θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ is used in contexts where characters manage to restrain their impulses and listen to someone else, or to their own better judgement. Thus Odysseus restrains the θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ of his companions and *vice versa*, in the interest of common safety;⁴⁷ while Penelope manages to persuade the suitors' θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ by arguing that they should postpone any plans for marriage until she has finished weaving the shroud for Laertes.⁴⁸ It is significant that in the majority of cases, the expression θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ is coupled with the verb πείθομαι: because their θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ is persuaded, characters manage to avoid rash and (self-)damaging behaviour.⁴⁹

There is, however, one important exception to this tendency. The adjective ἀγήνωρ is standardly used to characterize the behaviour of one particular group of men: the suitors.⁵⁰ This use of the adjective may, at first sight, seem strange. In the *Iliad* it is almost always used in the singular, and it often describes an isolated individual who rushes forward into battle on his own. The suitors are neither isolated nor excessively brave. And yet, if we bear in mind the interpretation of ἀγήνωρ as 'excessively manly', it makes sense that it should be used to describe them. Their excessive masculinity is displayed, above all, in the fact that they covet someone else's wife. An ἀνὴρ, or the ἀνὴρ of the proem, desires his own wife; the μνηστῆρες ἀγήνορες reveal their lack of manly restraint by wooing another man's wife. As in the *Iliad*, proper as opposed to excessive masculinity is determined largely by one's behaviour towards other men.

That the expression μνηστῆρες ἀγήνορες refers specifically to the suitors' excessive masculinity is confirmed by the use of the participle ὑπερηνορέων, 'engaging in hyper-masculine behaviour'. Except for one passage,⁵¹ the term always describes the suitors and is obviously modelled on ἀγήνωρ in the narrow sense of 'excessively manly'.⁵²

⁴⁶ See *Od.* 24.475, 543; *cf.* 24.499.

⁴⁷ See, for example, *Od.* 12.324 and 10.474.

⁴⁸ See *Od.* 2.103, 19.148 and 24.138.

⁴⁹ Odysseus tells his companions not to touch the cattle of the Sun and (initially) manages to persuade their θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, *Od.* 12.324. After he has rescued them from Circe's transforming powers, she begins to co-operate with them: she gives them advice on how to look after their ships and possessions and persuades their θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, *Od.* 10.406. Later, at *Od.* 10.466, she persuades the θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ of Odysseus and his companions to eat, drink and regain strength. After a year, Odysseus' companions remind him they should go back to Ithaca and manage to persuade his θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, *Od.* 10.474. Circe then asks them to eat, drink and sleep and then listen to her advice on how to accomplish the rest of their

journey, *Od.* 12.28, thus persuading their θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ. Not all passages follow this pattern. For an exception, see *Od.* 12.414.

⁵⁰ *Od.* 1.106, 144, 2.235, 299, 16.462, 17.65, 79, 105, 18.43, 346, 20.284, 292, 21.68, 23.8.

⁵¹ At *Od.* 6.5, the Cyclopes are described as ὑπερηνορέοντες. The participle qualifies the noun: they are no ordinary men.

⁵² See *Od.* 2.266, 324, 331, 4.766, 769, 17.482, 20.375, 21.361, 401, 23.31. Note that ὑπερηνορέω is formally a verb although it is never actually used as such. Using a verbal form, rather than an adjective, may be a way of emphasizing the outrageous activities of the suitors and the Cyclopes. In direct speech, the already negative participle may be further qualified by the adverb κακῶς (*Od.* 2.266, 4.766).

The language of masculinity suggests a close parallel between the excessive, over-bold suitors of the *Odyssey* and the recklessly individualistic warriors of the Iliadic battlefield. This parallel may, at first sight, seem surprising; and yet it makes sense on more than one count. In the first place, the behaviour both of suitors, *μνηστῆρες ἀγήνορες*, and of warriors who listen to their *θυμὸς ἀγῆνωρ* is self-destructive. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, it is antisocial, in that it fails to take into account the needs and rights of other men. In both poems, therefore, normative definitions of masculinity emphasize the importance of proper relations among men: on the battlefield, they seek to ensure solidarity for the sake of safety and glory; in times of peace, they safeguard the role of the man/husband within the family.

CONCLUSION

The notion of progress features large in histories of women and female gender roles.⁵³ To be sure, scholars usually draw attention to persisting problems in gender relations,⁵⁴ and often add that progress has taken place only in Western societies;⁵⁵ but these qualifications only serve to reinforce the underlying teleology. Histories of masculinity tend to mirror these problematic assumptions about progress and change,⁵⁶ although the tone can be more ambivalent. Claims about the condition of men in earlier times can be read either as critical or nostalgic.⁵⁷ However, the notion that the standards of acceptable masculine behaviour have changed is paramount. What is less easy to see is in what ways normative definitions of masculinity changed over time. At a very general level, it is often claimed, or assumed, that masculine self-restraint was learned only gradually in the course of history, typically in response to certain social challenges, such as the establishment of democracy, or the movement for women's liberation.⁵⁸

In order to sustain this kind of discourse, it is important to show that 'in the beginning' men were unfettered by notions of self-restraint, collaboration or social responsibility. Within the field of classics, the Homeric poems have often been used precisely to make that point. Many scholars discuss the Homeric world as a foil for the self-restraint and social cohesion that men were expected to display in the fifth century.⁵⁹ In doing so, they can rely on a substantial body of Homeric scholarship which does indeed claim that 'the Homeric hero' displays little or no sense of solidarity, collaboration or self-restraint.⁶⁰

⁵³ See, for example, Duby and Perrot in Schmitt Pantel (1992) IX-XXI.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Clark (1989) 39-40.

⁵⁵ The encyclopaedic *History of Women* edited by Duby and Perrot (1992-94), for example, only includes Western women: the implication must be that other women have experienced no change worthy of historical enquiry. Nussbaum (1999) 85 explicitly equates the experience of women in the developing world to what happened 'further back in our history'. This attitude underplays the amount of communication and shared historical perspective which exists among contemporary societies. Ancient women did not know the word 'feminism', whereas contemporary ones do, even though the works of feminists writing in Arabic do not tend to be translated into Western languages. For the latter problem, see Badran and Cooke (1990).

⁵⁶ Connell (1987) 68, for example, limits the history of masculinity to Western Europe and North America between the 18th and 20th centuries. He claims that in

other societies and 'in European culture itself before the eighteenth century' women are/were considered inferior specimens of men, rather than bearers of distinguishable 'female' characteristics. This extraordinary claim reflects widespread assumptions: most works on masculinity limit themselves to Western Europe and North America in the last two centuries. For more inclusive ethnographic approaches, see, for example, Gilmore (1990), Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994).

⁵⁷ See, for example, the summary history of gender relations in Farrell (1994) 24-5.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Connell (1995) 191-2.

⁵⁹ See, for example, van Wees in Foxhall and Salmon (1998), and Goldhill (1986) ch.6, with further bibliography. For the importance of caring and kindness in the *Iliad*, see Lynn-George (1996), who does not relate his findings to definitions of masculinity.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Redfield (1994) 104 and Brooks (1977) 455, quoted above, p. 60.

The observations made in this article can help to qualify these assumptions in some important ways. Although there are obvious affinities between modern conceptions of the ‘Homeric hero’ and ancient epic views of masculinity, a study of the terms ἥνοπέη and ἄγηνοπέη can serve to focus our attention on a well-developed discourse which condemns male tendencies towards antisocial and self-destructive behaviour. Such language is, of course, situationally motivated. It is often employed by characters to suit specific rhetorical ends, and put in their mouths by a narrator who is interested in exploring various aspects of male behaviour. What we suggest, then, is not that the dominant model of Homeric masculinity was ‘in fact’ collaborative and restrained rather than individualistic and ruthless. Rather, we hope to have shown that much of the tension between men’s individual achievement and their need for collaborative effort, which scholars have so often detected in fifth-century responses to Homeric epic, is built into the language of epic itself.

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