

APHRODITE AND AFTER

ANNE GIACOMELLI

THE *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* tells the story of how the goddess of love disguises herself as a mortal woman in order to seduce Anchises, prince of Troy. After their lovemaking, she reassumes her proper form. As soon as Anchises realizes whose favours he has enjoyed, he drops his eyes, covers his face, and begs the goddess:

μη με ζῶντ' ἀμενηνὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἑάσῃς
ναίειν ἀλλ' ἐλέαιρ'· ἐπεὶ οὐ βιοθάλλμιος ἀνὴρ
γίγνεται ὅς τε θεαῖς εὐνάζεται ἀθανάτησι. (188-190)

What is the fear he is expressing? The adjective ἀμενηνός is of uncertain derivation and meaning but the etymological consensus seems to derive it from ἀ-privative and μένος, and to assign it the meaning "kraftlos, schwach" (Frisk),¹ "sans force" (Chantraine),² "weak, feeble" (Liddell-Scott-Jones). What exactly is μένος?

In an unpublished dissertation³ which includes the most complete study known to me of the Indo-European root *men, Professor E. Robbins demonstrates convincingly why μένος has not been sufficiently understood or explained in the investigation of early Greek psychology. Bruno Snell has shown, in the first chapter of *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*,⁴ how the psychic functions in Homer are thought of as functions of organs which are in turn conceived of as physical or material organs of the body. Snell finds the psychic functions distributed among three constituents—the θυμός, the ψυχή and the νόος—each of which is seen as an organ of the body. R. B. Onians has added a wealth of evidence demonstrating that in Homeric times the organs of consciousness were thought of as organs of the body. Of μένος Onians says, "Mémos is apparently not an abstraction or a mere state of something else, but conceived as itself something, fluid or gaseous, which for convenience we may translate 'energy' and which was felt inwardly much as we feel what we so name. It was thought to be more particularly with the θυμός in the φρένες. Hence he who has it

I would like to express gratitude to Professor L. E. Woodbury and to Professor E. Robbins.

¹H. von Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1960) 1.91.

²P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris 1968) 3.685.

³E. Robbins, *The Concept of Inspiration in Greek Poetry from Homer to Pindar* (Toronto 1968). (Hereafter cited as "Robbins.")

⁴B. Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* (Hamburg 1955) transl. T. G. Rosenmeyer (New York 1960). (Hereafter cited as "Snell.")

'breathes' it and the god who gives it 'inspires' or 'breathes it into' him and alternatively is said to place it in his *θυμός* or in his *φρένες*."⁵ Snell, however, considers *μένος* not as an organ of psychic life but purely as a function of the *θυμός* (16). This, as Robbins points out, is a contradiction of his own terms, "for the function of the organ *θυμός* is properly *θυμός*: that is, the word *θυμός* has two facets, for it is both an organ in which an impulse is generated and also the impulse or function generated in that organ, as for example when Odysseus says: *ἕτερος δέ μοι θυμός ἔρκεν* (*Od.* 9.302)" (133 f.).

Dodds has joined Snell in the misconception that *menos* is not "a permanent organ of mental life like *thumos* or *noos*. Rather it is, like *ate*, a state of mind."⁶ Robbins objects that to consider *μένος* a "state of mind" is to create "a non-Homeric dichotomy between psychic and physical It cannot be overemphasized that any 'mental' organ in early Greek thought is to a certain extent a 'physical' organ as well" (174 n. 18; 178 n. 24). Robbins suggests that the common misconception about *μένος* may arise from the fact that it is apparently mobile and can be given or taken away (as at *Il.* 13.60, 3.294); he reminds us that *φρένες* too can be taken away (e.g. *Il.* 6.234), yet this does not disqualify them as organs (133 f.). (I hope to illustrate below that mobility and potential for loss are in fact part of the essential nature of *μένος*.)

To show that *μένος* is not simply a function of the *θυμός*, Robbins cites the following passages:

<i>τοῦ δ' αἴθι λίθη ψυχὴ τε μένος τε</i>	<i>Il.</i> 5.296
. . . τοῦ δ' αἴθι λίθη μένος . . .	<i>Il.</i> 17.298
<i>αἶ γάρ πως αὐτόν με μένος καὶ θυμός ἀνείη</i>	
<i>ὥμ' ἀποταμνόμενον κρέα ἐδμέναι</i>	<i>Il.</i> 22.346-347
<i>"Ὡς εἰποῦσ' ὥτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμόν ἐκάστου</i>	<i>Od.</i> 8.15
<i>καὶ λίην οὐτός γε μένος θυμόν τ' ὀλέσειε</i>	<i>Il.</i> 8.358

and comments: "In the first two instances the *μένος* is obviously thought of as something as material as the *ψυχὴ* that departs at death. In the last instance quoted above, the goddess is not spurring on one 'state of mind' or 'function' and one psychic organ, but both are conceived analogously as organs" (135). Robbins further specifies that the phrase *λίθη ψυχὴ τε μένος τε* (*Il.* 5.296; 8.123, 315) provides the most convincing evidence that *μένος* was considered an organ, for it indicates "that there was in fact *μένος* permanently in the body and that there could be no life without it" (175 n. 20). He concludes, "It would indeed seem that *μένος* is as much an organ as the *θυμός* or the *ψυχὴ* and that it deserves to be promoted to join

⁵R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, Time and Fate* (Cambridge 1954) 52. (Hereafter cited as "Onians.")

⁶E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951) 8.

the trinity of organs that Snell posits as going to make up psychic or mental life" (135).

Robbins supports his argument about Greek μένος with evidence from the Sanskrit cognate *manas*. "The two words are twins and derive from an original neuter in the mother tongue, **menos*. Now, in Sanskrit the *manas* perceives and is an organ that resides in the heart.⁷ In the *Rig Veda* (10.90.13) the *manas* is associated with the eye, the mouth, and the breath (the breath being the original way of referring to the olfactory sense).⁸ It remains a sense, materially conceived, in more developed, though still early, Hindu thought: in *Vāiseṣika* the *manas*, the inner sense or organ, is described as material and substantial."⁹

Μένος seems, then, like θυμός to have two facets, to be both an organ in which an impulse is generated and the impulse or function generated in the organ. Underlying the many meanings which μένος can have in Homer (Robbins lists "design, anger, strength, courage, life;"¹⁰ Chantraine [above, n. 2] suggests "l'intention, la volonté, la passion, l'ardeur au combat, la force qui anime les membres") is a basic meaning of "energy."¹¹ There is no exclusively mental "energy" in Homer. Energy, μένος, is the impulse generated by the organ, μένος. The term "organ" is awkward for us, as Snell (34) points out and Robbins emphasizes, "for it strikes us as almost a contradiction in terms to think of an organ of psychic life, organs being material, psychic categories immaterial for us. The intention of the phrase is to convey the fact that Homeric man naturally considered what we consider 'spiritual processes' as emanating from material substances resident in the body, even if he was in some doubt as to where exactly these substances could be found" (176).¹² Robbins concludes from Homeric usage of the word that μένος was a permanent constituent of the body and could be present in varying degrees although "a modicum was always necessary to sustain life The quantity of μένος determines the abilities of a man—his 'greatness of soul'" (176 f.).

⁷Cf. Onians 512.

⁸See E. H. Johnston, *Early Sāṃkhya* (London 1937) 18; also the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 4.3.2.31. For a discussion of *manas* in the *Veda* see H. Oldenburg, *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin 1894) 525.

⁹Robbins 135–136; cf. S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (Princeton 1957) 408, 409, 411; also F. Edgerton, *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy* (London 1965), where *manas* is translated "thought-organ" throughout.

¹⁰Robbins 137, referring respectively to *Il.* 8.361, 1.207, 5.254, 5.472, 5.296.

¹¹J. Irmscher, *Götterzorn bei Homer* (Leipzig 1950) 13: "μένος bezeichnet die Energien im Menschen, die das Leben ausmachen, den Drang, die Tatkraft, die Aktivität." See also Onians 52; H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, transl. M. Hadas and J. Willis (New York 1973) 306.

¹²On the lack of distinction between psychic and physical see further B. Snell, *Gnomon* 7 (1931) 74–86, a review of J. Bohme, *Die Seele und das Ich in homerischen Epos* (Leipzig 1929).

There could be no life without μένος. What is the connection between μένος and life? It seems demonstrable that the organ μένος was regarded as furnishing the particular vital "energy" which is the essence, physiologically and psychologically, of manliness. Μένος is both the matter and the activity of this energy. As matter it is a fluid, as activity it is a shooting or thrusting force. Beginning from the image of the movement of the male seed, the Greeks characterize as μένος that which moves as shooting fluid in nature, in the human body, or in the spirit.

Connotations of fluidity and thrust are prominent where μένος is posited of things in nature:

ἀνέμων . . . μένος ὑγρὸν ἀέντων	(Od. 5.478; 19.440; Hes. Th. 869; Hom. Hymn 6.3)
χιόνος μένος ἡδὲ χαλάζης	(Solon fr.9.1W)
ποταμῶν μένος εἰσαγαγόντες	(Il. 12.18)
ποταμὸς ἐκφυσῆ μένος	(Aesch. PV 720)
δεινὸν ἀποπνείουσα πυρὸς μένος	(Il. 6.182)
ἄστρων θερμὸν μένος	(Parmenides fr.11.13D)
τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ κατέπυσ' ἱερὸν μένος Ἑλίου	(Hom. Hymn Apoll. 371)

Fluidity is the physical property of a substance that enables it to flow. Sand running through an hourglass exhibits fluidity. The μένος of each of the natural phenomena cited above surely consists in its fluidity. What do wind, snow, hail, fire,¹³ starlight, and sunlight have in common but their fluid movement? But also, in each case it is an impressive movement, strong and directed. None of these elements trickles. Μένος developed the meaning "strength, force, might," I think, because it originally designated that which impresses the senses and the imagination by running, pouring, shooting, flooding, streaming, by dramatic fluid movement.

In human beings, fluid which moves with a shooting energy in or from the body is called μένος. Archilochos offers the most explicit instance of μένος as the fluid of manliness: [λευκ]ὸν ἀφήκα μένος (Col. Ep. 52).¹⁴ Odysseus' emotion upon seeing his father causes μένος to shoot forward into his nose: ἀνὰ ῥίνας . . . δριμύ μένος προὔτυψε φίλον πάτερ' εἰσροῶντι

¹³Euripides attributes to fire the property of ὑγρότης (Phoen. 1256), perhaps "the lambent and downward-tending flexure of the flame" as Paley suggests or, in Pearson's view, an "unfavourable flickering" (Valckenaer cites Sen. Oed. 309), but uncertain details of prophetic practice hinder clarity.

¹⁴Page's supplement has been generally accepted: see D. L. Page, *Supplementum Lyricis Graecis* (Oxford 1974) 154; R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, *ZPE* 14 (1974) 97 f.; Merkelbach, *ZPE* 15 (1975) 220 f.; Degani, *Atene e Roma* 19 (1974) 113 f.; *QUCC* 22 (1975) 229 f. All adduce the epigram of Dioskourides *A.P.* 5.55.7 = 1489 Gow-Page, while Merkelbach and West compare Hes. Th. 190–191. L. Koenen adds a parallel from Ps.Klem. (Hom. 3.27): νύμφη γάρ ἐστι ὁ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος, ὅπταν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς προφήτου λευκῷ λόγῳ ἀληθείας σπειρόμενος φωτίζεται τὸν νοῦν. "Als Same ist das Wort der Wahrheit weiss," concludes Koenen (*ZPE* 32 [1978] 200).

(*Od.* 24.318 f.). Homer here describes a physiological effect familiar to most people,¹⁵ that of sensations experienced in and around the nose when intense emotion leaves one close to tears. Why designate this feeling *μένος*? Partly, I think, because *μένος* and the nose are already closely associated due to the “breathing in” and “breathing out” of this psychic substance.¹⁶ Blood spurting from Ajax’ wounds is black *μένος*: *ἐτι γὰρ θερμαὶ σύριγγες ἄνω φυσῶσι μέλαν μένος* (Soph. *Ajax* 1413).

Human emotion, so often seen as a moving liquid in Greek,¹⁷ can also be *μένος*. Athene counsels Apollo to calm himself: *κοίμα κελαινοῦ κύματος πικρὸν μένος* (Aesch. *Eum.* 832). Klytaimnestra ridicules Cassandra’s heightened emotional state in a metaphor drawn from horses:¹⁸ *χαλινὸν δ’ οὐκ ἐπίσταται φέρειν/πρὶν αἵματηρὸν ἐξαφρίζεσθαι μένος* (Aesch. *Ag.* 1066 f.). The emotions of madness are designated *μένος* in the fourth stasimon of Sophokles’ *Antigone* (957–960). Here Sophokles stresses the unnaturalness of Lykourgos’ imprisonment (a parallel to Antigone’s death in life, 850–851) by saying that the blooming vigour of the *μένος* will simply “seep away:” *οὕτω τῆς μανίας δεινὸν ἀποστάζει/ἀνθρὸν τε μένος*.

Many passages can be found, especially in Homeric battle contexts, where *μένος* seems to represent a spiritual quality and is conventionally

¹⁵Various emotions resided in, upon, or near the ancient nose. Dilated nostrils are the sign of rage in a horse according to Xenophon (*Eq.* 1.10); erotic emotion sends a lover’s *κραδίη* right up into his nose (*Anakreontea* 29.6–8 Hanssen); Petronius ascribes to fear this same effect (*mihi anima in naso esse*, *Sat.* 62); a Hippocratic treatise on the sacred disease cites fear as the cause of defluxion of phlegm in the nasal area; Heliodoros locates courage and gallantry at the nose (*Aeth.* 2.35); in Herodas, one woman begs another not to lose her temper in the words: *μὴ δὴ, Κοριττοῦ, τὴν χολὴν ἐπὶ ῥινὸς ἔχ’ εὐθύς* (6.37); a goatherd in Theokritos describes Pan’s sour temper as bile in the nose (1.17–19); in his thirty-third discourse Dio Chrysostom discusses disorders of the nose as signals of lewdness and incontinence. See also Plato *Resp.* 343a; *A.P.* 9.188.5; Clem. Alex. *Paed.* 270P; Philostr. *Imag.* 357, 358K; Afranius 384 f. R²; Lucil. 574 Marx; Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.8, 2.2.76. The modern nose is no stranger to intense emotion either. The hero of a current novel experiences rage as a hay fever attack: “Yet strive as he might to keep his anger pure and honourable it was no use. . . . Damnation, he swore to himself. To make matters worse, his hay fever had returned; his nose swelled up and began to run and he had left his handkerchiefs in the firkin. Rage leaked away.” (Walker Percy, *The Last Gentleman* [New York 1966] 117–118).

¹⁶Onians 52. This passage is considered further below, 9–10.

¹⁷E.g., *στάζει δ’ ἐν θ’ ὕπνῳ πρὸ καρδίας μνησιπήμων πόνος* (Aesch. *Ag.* 179–180), *μῖσός τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτρεκε μοι* (Soph. *El.* 1311), *ὕδαλέους δ’ ἄμφ’ ὀδύνης ἔχομεν πνεύμονας* (Archil. 13 West), *κατ’ ἔμον στάλνυμον . . . τὸν δ’ ἐπιπλάζοντ’ ἄνεμοι* (Sappho 14LP = 37V).

¹⁸*Ménos* is especially characteristic of horses (e.g., *Il.* 20.456, 476; 23.468; Aesch. *Sept.* 393) and other animals who foam at the mouth, like lions (*Il.* 20.168 ff.) and snakes (Hes. *Sc.* 235), perhaps because the foaming saliva was identified with semen or, more accurately, because the various vital fluids of men and animals were not clearly differentiated: cf. *ἄφρων αἵματος* (= *σπέρμα*) Diogenes of Apollonia A24 DK, *μέλαν ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων ἄφρον* (= blood) Aesch. *Eum.* 183.

translated “morale, energy, strength.” It is, however, inaccurate, as we have seen above, to confine the meaning of the word to a spiritual process. Homer does not think in terms of a mind/body antithesis. Consider the *μένος* whose loss causes lambs to gasp for breath when their throats are cut (*Il.* 3.292 f.); the *μένος* that fills the Aiantes and gives their limbs a sensation of lightness or mobility (*Il.* 13.60 f.); the *μένε'* *ἀνδρῶν* paired with *ἧῖα πάντα* to represent the substance of goods and men wasted in twenty days at sea (*Od.* 4.363). These are not intangibles. “Morale, energy, strength” are aspects of body. Even as the “spiritual” characteristic of heroes in battle, *μένος* retains its materiality and manifests itself as the matter or the activity of an organ. The martial behaviour of the psychic organ *μένος* has three traits which bespeak its original affiliation with the seed of life: suddenness, forward thrust, and fluidity.

On the battlefield *μένος* appears suddenly out of nowhere and transforms a man or his action. The suddenness of its access causes Homeric man to ascribe *μένος* to the work of a god.¹⁹ For example: *ὡς φάτο τῷ δ' ἔμπνευσε μένος γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη/ κτεῖνε δ' ἐπιστροφάδην* (*Il.* 10.482–483), “Ἔκτορα δ' ὀτρύνῃσι μάχην ἐς Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων/ αὖτις δ' ἔμπνεύσῃσι μένος, λελάθει δ' ὀδυνάων” (*Il.* 15.59–60).

The forward thrusting force of *μένος* is its chief asset on the battlefield. *Μένος* is what makes things go forward. It is either the matter which causes or accompanies dramatic forward movement, or it is the activity of such movement. The Abantes “breathe *μένος*” as they thrust forward with spears outstretched: . . . *ἔποντο θοοί, ὅπιθεν κομόωντες/ αἰχμηταί, μεμαῶτες ὀρεκτῆσιν μελήσιν* (*Il.* 2.536–543). The Achaians similarly advance into battle *μένεα πνείοντες/ ἐν θυμῷ μεμαῶτες* (*Il.* 3.8–9). The Trojans receive *μένος* from Zeus and drive the Greeks straight back to their ditch: *ἄψ δ' αὖτις Τρώεσσιν Ὀλύμπιος ἐν μένος ὥρσεν./ οἱ δ' ἰθὺς τάφροιο βαθείης ὥσαν Ἀχαιοὺς* (*Il.* 8.335–336). *Μένος* propels the lion/Achilles forward into battle: *γλαυκιῶν δ' ἰθὺς φέρεται μένει. . . / ὥς Ἀχιλλῆ ὄτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμός ἀγήνωρ* (*Il.* 20.172–174). Odysseus instructs Diomedes to charge the Thracians by throwing his *μένος* forward: *ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ πρόφερε κρατερὸν μένος* (*Il.* 10.479). Warriors attack by aiming their *μένος* straight forward: *οἱ δὲ μένος χειρῶν ἰθὺς φέρον* (*Il.* 5.506, cf. 16.602) and going after it: *οἱ δ' ὕβρει εἷξαντες, ἐπισπόμενοι μένει σφῷ* (*Od.* 14.262 = 17.431 and cf. *Od.* 24.183). Zeus infuses *μένος* into the knees and *θυμός* of Achilles' horses, empowering them to go and fetch Automedon out of battle (*Il.* 17.451–453). Mules who are invested with “the on-drive of strength” (as Lattimore translates *κρατερὸν μένος*) strain to pull logs down a mountain (*Il.* 17.742). Skamander's *μένος* causes him to tower into a wave and assail Achilles (*Il.* 21.304–307). Hera urges Hephaistos not to deflect his *μένος* from the river:

¹⁹Onians 51.

. . . μηδέ σε πάμπαν/μειλιχίους ἐπέεσσιν ἀποτρεπέτω καὶ ἀρειῇ/μηδὲ πρὶν ἀπόπαυε τεὸν μένος . . . (*Il.* 21.338–340). The μένος and λαιψηρά γούνα of Hektor are his means of temporarily outrunning death (*Il.* 22.203–204, cf. 20.93). His tendency to dart forward in front of the army is ascribed to an unyielding μένος: . . . ἐπεὶ οὐ ποτ' ἐνὶ πληθύνι μένεν ἀνδρῶν/ἀλλὰ πολὺ προθέεσκε, τὸ δὲν μένος οὐδενὶ εἴκων (*Il.* 22.458–459; cf. *Od.* 11.515 and Mimnermos fr. 14.5–8 West). An access of μένος from Athene moves Tydeus and his horses to a burst of speed: πολλὸν τῶν ἀλλῶν ἐξάλλμενος· ἐν γὰρ 'Αθήνη/ἵπποις ἦκε μένος καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ κύδος ἔθηκε (*Il.* 23.399–400). Μένος is often paired with χεῖρας as if the two sum up a warrior's thrusting power or force of attack: . . . οὐδ' ἔτι φασιν/Ἔκτορος ἀνδροφόνιοι μένος καὶ χεῖρας ἀάπτους/σχήσεσθ' ἀλλ' ἐν νηυσὶ μελαίνησιν πεσέεσθαι (*Il.* 17.637–639; cf. 6.502; 7.309; 7.457; 12.166; 13.105; 13.318; 14.73; 15.510). Μένος is defeated when its forward movement is reversed. Athene complains of Hektor as “one who causes the flowing back of my thrusts” (. . . ἐμῶν μενέων ἀπερρώς, *Il.* 8.361).

The fluidity of μένος is evinced chiefly by the method of its passage in and out of heroes. It is breathed. For example, καὶ ῥ' ἔμπνευσε μένος μέγα Παλλὰς 'Αθήνη (*Od.* 24.520), ἔθα μένος πνείοντες ἐφέστασαν, οἱ μὲν ἐπ' οὐδοῦ (*Od.* 22.203). Breath is a fluid medium. For the early poets there seems to have been no clear-cut distinction between air and water. Robbins observes in the archaic poets “an apparent indifference to any real distinction between πνοαί and ῥοαί as the medium through which man is affected” (218). For Sappho love comes as air and as liquid (fr. 47 and 2.13–16 LP). In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* the goddess grants immortality through her breath and by anointing (236 and 237). In Hesiod the Muses both breathe in and pour on their gifts (*Th.* 31–32 and 83–84). Pindar uses images of water and air interchangeably throughout his poetry, especially when he speaks of the power of song, and the two come together in the phrase καλλιρροαῖσι πνοαῖς (*Ol.* 6.83). Pindar also talks of the ὑγρὸν αἰθέρα (*Nem.* 8.41), “not because he transferred the epithet proper to one realm to the realm of the other, but because he saw an intimate bond and perhaps an ultimate identity between the two” (219 f.). Similarly, the breathing in or out of μένος is a fluid motion, whether of liquid or vapour or something in between: τοὺς μὲν ἄρ' οὐτ' ἀνέμων διὰ μένος ὑγρὸν ἀέντων (*Od.* 5.478).

There are other suggestions of fluidity. Hektor and Hekuba discuss the possibility of restoring μένος with wine (*Il.* 6.258–265). Diomedes and Odysseus assert that μένος is food and wine (*Il.* 9.706; 19.161). Hebe restores Ares' μένος with bath and anointing (*Il.* 5.885–905 and see below, 13–14). Μένος is closely associated, and perhaps identified, with χόλος, “bile” (*Il.* 1.282; 9.679). The manly spirit of Odysseus inherited by Telemachos is μένος which has “dripped into” the son: Τηλέμαχ' οὐδ' ὅπιθεν κακὸς ἔσσειαι οὐδ' ἀνοήμων/εἰ δὲ τοι σοῦ πατὴρ ἐνέστακται μένος ἤν' (*Od.* 2.270–271).

The difficulty of distinguishing spiritual or psychological from physical μένος is well illustrated in this last example. Telemachos' hereditary "manliness" is a spiritual state but is also an acquisition literally transmitted in Odysseus' seed. The duality is a problem for us but apparently not for Homer who sees one word and one thing partaking of body and spirit at the same time. As mentioned earlier, the Sanskrit cognate *manas* contains the same physical/psychological duality as μένος and shows some of the same connections with procreativity, some of the same mobile, dynamic, and passionate ethos.²⁰ I cannot say whether the word μένος ever specifically meant "seed" to a Homeric Greek, any more than did *manas* to an ancient Aryan. It seems the wrong question to ask. The prior question is whether any specific concept of physical seed existed for Homeric man. I think it did not. Rather, there existed a wide, rich sensation spanning physical, emotional, and spiritual realms, and given one name, μένος. Homer has no non-material language because he does not think of matter separately. So it is worth exploring the possibility that, although the word does not often mean "seed" in Greek, some essential notions connected with seed are conveyed by μένος.²¹ We have seen this possibility confirmed by the word's range of usage in Homer. The possibility may in turn clarify certain difficulties of usage.

Homer's emotional vocabulary often seems to us an arbitrary or imprecise instrument for representing psychological phenomena. Homer sees resemblances where we see difference. The verb μενεαίνειν, for example, means both "to desire earnestly" and "to be angry."²² In the first book of the *Odyssey* Homer says that all the gods pitied Odysseus νόσφι Ποσειδάωνος· ὁ δ' ἀσπερχές μενεαίνειν/ἀντιθέω 'Οδυσῆϊ πάρος ἦν γαῖαν ικέσθαι. (1.20–21). In the twenty-first book, Telemachos τρις μὲν μιν πελέμειεν ἐρύσσασθαι μενεαίνων/τρις δὲ μεθήκε βίης. (21.125–126). Homer uses the same word of Poseidon's anger and of Telemachos' eagerness. "The psychological phenomenon which links the two usages is a powerful

²⁰Above, 3. On the connection between μένος and *manas* see Robbins 135–136; A. Meillet, *De indo-europaea radice *men-* (Paris 1942) 11–33; G. R. Levy, *The Sword from the Rock* (London 1953) 15, 19 and n.91. In his *Comparative Studies of Greek and Indic Metre* (Cambridge, Mass. 1974) 265 ff., G. Nagy points out that the same kind of semantic duality is exhibited by the Homeric word μήδεα and parallel Indo-European usages: "Within the framework of Homeric diction, the noun μήδεα can mean either 'thoughts, schemes' (as in Γ 202) or 'genitals' (as in σ 67). There are many typological parallels to such a semantic ambivalence in μήδεα." Nagy adds the information, suggestive for our argument that μένος can be sexual and is characterized by forward thrust, that in Hittite the usual expression for sexual excitement is "his mind sprang forward" (*ištanza parā waktui*).

²¹See A. W. H. Adkins's discussion of the usefulness of connecting θυμός to Latin *fumus* and Sanskrit *dhūmas* and thinking of it as "smoke," *From the Many to the One* (London 1970) 16.

²²*Ibid.* 37–44.

forward drive," Adkins concludes.²³ We have seen μένος exhibiting such forward drive in many contexts. If the image of male seed is at the root of μένος and its cognates, this may furnish us with a connection between the various physical, emotional, and spiritual usages. On the basis of this connection I attempt a definition. To throw the essential force of oneself forward is to exhibit μένος. It does not matter whether this action is motivated by anger, eagerness, love, or manly pride. As Adkins emphasizes, it is the results of actions, not their intentions, which interest Homeric man. It is the result to which Homeric man gives a name.

Let us look at one more example of μένος used in a way which confuses our categories but apparently made sense to Homer. In the last book of the *Odyssey* Odysseus is reunited with his father and his first glimpse of the old man sends μένος shooting into his nose:

. . . ἀνὰ ῥίνας δέ οἱ ἤδη
δριμύ μένος προὔτυψε φίλον πατέρ' εἰσορόωντι (Od. 24.318-319).

We examined the physiological aspect of this description briefly above (4-5). What is its emotional reference? Murray translates μένος as "a keen pang" and takes the phrase as "indicative of passion in a more general sense;" he compares, however, the dilated nostrils of an angry horse or bull, and cites Theokritos 1.18 and Herodas 6.37, both of which concern anger. Stanford interprets μένος as "a direct physical effect of Odysseus' indignation at his father's distress, perhaps preliminary to an actual snort of anger." He compares Walter Scott's line, "Duncan snorted thrice and prepared himself to be in a passion," and the French *moutarde au nez*.²⁴ Headlam designates Odysseus' emotion as "distress," adding "but usually the nostrils express anger."²⁵ Dover translates "bitter strength struck along his nostrils" and comments "but a sob would be more appropriate to the context than anger."²⁶ The commentators are inclined to import anger into the situation, but they are clearly uneasy about this. Anger doesn't quite fit Odysseus' state of mind, but if the μένος here is not anger, what is it? I think the passage becomes more intelligible if we once again dispense with modern concern for motive and concentrate, as Homer did, on result. When Odysseus sees his father he experiences a sudden rush of intense feeling. He is momentarily startled out of routine human somnolence and made aware of the living force that constitutes him. Emotion reminds a man of himself. It does not matter whether the feeling begins as an emotion of anger or grief or something between the two. Homer's language records the results: a sudden awareness of the essential force

²³*Ibid.* 41.

²⁴W. B. Stanford, *The Odyssey of Homer* (Basingstoke and London 1948) 423-424.

²⁵W. Headlam and A. D. Knox, *Herodas* (Cambridge 1922) 298.

²⁶K. J. Dover, *Theocritus: Select Poems* (Basingstoke and London) 77.

within himself called *μένος*. To notice the force of one's self thrusting within is to experience *μένος*.²⁷

The connection of *μένος* with the seed of life may help to explain certain post-Homeric usages as well. A poem of Simonides, for instance, seems to make ironic use of *μένος* by attributing its suddenness, fluidity, and thrust to a pillar: *τίς κεν αἰνήσειε νόψ πίσυνος Λίνδου ναέταν Κλεόβουλον/ἀεναοῖς ποταμοῖς ἄνθεσι τ' εἰαρινοῖς/ἁελίου τε φλογὶ χρυσέας τε σελάνας/καὶ θαλασσαῖαισι δῖναις ἀντιθέντα μένος στάλας;* (581.1–4 *PMG*). Kleoboulos is a fool. He is opposing to the universal fluid continuum of nature a single spurt of stone. The deliberate incongruity of *μένος στάλας* points his foolishness: a human being can no more immortalize himself than he can petrify *μένος*. Simonides' verse is much concerned generally with inversions and re-interpretations of words and values, unlike traditional poetry.²⁸ A deliberate tension in his language looks forward to rhetoric. The phrase *μένος στάλας* demonstrates a technique which is used elsewhere by Simonides and which would become a *topos* of rhetorical style, a technique of incongruence which places side by side two words that defy one another. Consider, for example, the first lines of Simonides' ode for the fallen at Thermopylai: *τῶν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις θανόντων/εὐκλέης μὲν ἂ τύχα καλὸς δ' ὁ πότμος/βωμὸς δ' ὁ τάφος, πρὸ γόωι δὲ μνᾶστις,/ὁ δ' οἶκος ἔπαινος.* (531.1–3 *PMG*). Incongruent pairings of words surprise the ear and strike sparks out of conventional meanings. Fragment 581 has a structure different from that of fragment 531, and its intention is blame, not praise, but the technique and the effect are similar. The phrase *μένος στάλας* is incongruent: petrified *μένος* offends common sense. The phrase also defies the sequence of images in the dative which precede and postpone it in *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* fashion. The stony thrust of the stele is an antithesis (*ἀντιθέντα*) to the living fluid *μένος* of rivers, flowers, sun, moon, sea. Stone and *μένος* are no more compatible than humanity and immortality. Only a foolish sage could praise either combination.²⁹

²⁷To notice is to remember. The etymological connection between *μένος* and the Greek verbs of remembering *μυμνήσκεισθαι/μνᾶσθαι* may reflect a common current of meaning: see Robbins 127–148 and Nagy (above, n.20) 266–267. A central characteristic of *μένος* as the fluid of life is its strong direction: *μένος* is energy which aims, is aimed, or aims itself, as we saw above (6–7). The ancient Greek act of remembering seems also to be characterized by directedness. To remember is to direct one's thought or one's attention or one's self at something. To aim at one thing is to aim away from other things, i.e., to forget other things. So in Greek to remember one thing is to forget another: *οἱ δὲ φόβοιο/δυσκελάδου μνήσαντο, λάθοντο δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς* (*Il.* 16.356–357). Perhaps to remember is, essentially, to aim one's *μένος* at something: *οὐδ' ἄρ' Ἀχαιοὶ/ἀλκῆς ἐξελάθοντο μένος δ' ἰθὺς φέρον αὐτῶν* (*Il.* 16.601–602).

²⁸See H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, tr. M. Hadas and J. Willis (New York and London 1973) 319–321.

²⁹Pindar too disparages the vitality of a statue (*Nem.* 5.1–2) using mobile song for comparison, as Simonides uses *ὑγρὰ φύσις*, on the assumption that endurance is the

Ménos is frequently used in a periphrastic construction *ιερὸν μένος* + genitive of a name, designating a person of rank, e.g., *ιερὸν μένος Ἀλκινόοιο* (*Od.* 7.167). It makes sense that the essence of his manliness can stand for the man himself. *Ménos* in this phrase may originally have meant the most concrete essence of a man, his seed. This possibility is supported by the parallel usage of words for “head” in Greek. The head too can stand for the person, e.g., *Τεῦκρε φίλη κεφαλὴ* (*Il.* 8.281), *ἴσον Ἀχιλλῆος κεφαλῇ* (*Od.* 11.557), *τοίην γὰρ κεφαλὴν ποθέω* (*Od.* 1.343). The head too is considered holy³⁰ because it is the seat of life, producing and containing the

ability to keep moving, not just keep existing. Movement is life. The Greek word for “life” or “lifetime,” *αἰών*, interpreted by Ebeling (*Lexicon Homericum*) as *vis vitalis* and by A. C. Pearson as “vitality, living stuff, that which marks the persistency of the living force” (*Verbal Scholarship and the Growth of Some Abstract Terms* [Cambridge 1922] 26 f.), is connected by Onians with *αἰόλλω* “I move rapidly,” *αἰόλος* “quick-moving,” and Sanskrit *ayúh* “mobile, living” (209). Hippokrates equates movement with vitality. If the water which constitutes the nourishing element in all things stops moving, he says, it loses its strength: *ὁκόταν δὲ στῇ οὐκέτι ἐγκρατές ἐστίν* (*Acut.* 3); likewise, if the *πνεῦμα* within the body comes to a standstill anywhere, that part is rendered *ἄκρατές*. (*De Morb. Sacr.* 7).

³⁰Curtius assumes the original meaning of *ιέρως* to have been “vigorous, fresh, blooming,” comparing the Sanskrit word *ishiras* which is used as an epithet of *manas*, “sense,” (cf. *ιερὸν μένος*) and as an epithet of various gods, but means originally “juicy” (*ish* = “juice, strength, freshness”). See *Principles of Greek Etymology*, tr. Wilkins and England (London 1886) 1.401. Chantraine ([above, n.2] 456) agrees that, despite the diversity of the uses of *ιέρως*, “on est revenu avec raison à la conception d’un terme unique répondant à Sanskrit *isira-*.” It is generally agreed that the essential difference between the holy and the profane in Greek consists in a special power or strength exercised by the holy. A recent dissertation on *ιέρως*, for example, concludes that behind the meaning “belonging to a god” lie conceptions like “ausserordentlich, evtl. wunderbar stark, fest, von unvergleichlicher Impulskraft” which can in turn be traced back to a basic meaning “worin ein Gott evtl. Götter machtvoll wirksam erscheinen” (J. P. Locher, *Untersuchungen zu ιέρως hauptsächlich bei Homer* [Bern 1963] 78. See also R. Schmitt, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit* [Wiesbaden 1967] 108–113; Wulfing von Martitz, “*Ιέρως* bei Homer und in der älteren griechischen Literatur,” *Glotta* 38 [1960] 272–307 and 39 [1961] 24–43. Complete bibliography in Frisk [above, n.1] and Chantraine.) That such special power should be attributed to the mysterious, autonomous dynamism of the seed of life is not surprising. Nagy ([above, n.20] 269) is convinced of the connection between *ιέρως* and *ἔμαι*, preserved in such Homeric phrases as *Il.* 13.424 and the collocation *μένος . . . ἔτο*, a verbal equivalent of nominal *ιερὸν μένος*. The cognate Sanskrit adjective, *isira-*, corresponds, Nagy says, to the verb *isnati/isyati*, “bestir.” The image of a sudden fluid leap may explain a usage like *ιερὸν ἰχθύν* (*Il.* 16.407). Connotations of sexual potency make more intelligible Alkman’s wish to exchange his old age for the life of *ἀλιπτόρφυρος ἱαρός ὄρνις* (26 *PMG*): the fluid mobility of the bird, which is paralleled by the flowing vigour of girls’ voices (*παρσενικαὶ μελιγάρυες ἱαρόφωνοι*), is an image of youthful virility. It is perhaps because *μένος* partakes of this sort of holy strength that its activity is not quite within man’s control (see below, 15), has in fact a tendency to go out of control and to become *μανία*. On the connection between *μένος* and *μανία* see Robbins 139–140; Dodds (above, n.6) 9–10; Snell 20–22.

seed.³¹ That the head is the source of seed is an idea found in Alkmeon of Kroton (A13 DK), and in Aristotle, who says that sexual intercourse causes the moisture of the body to be drawn down from the upper parts to the lower, from head to genitals (*Probl.* 876b29–31). Aristotle also states that the area around the eyes is the area of the head “most fruitful of seed” (σπερματικώτατος, *Gen.An.* 747a13). Hippokrates ascribes impotence among the Scythians to their practice of curing certain diseases by cutting the vein behind each ear (*Är.* 22.20).³² Fragment Z23 LP of Alkaios (cf. Hesiod *Op.* 586 f.) describes midsummer impotence in men as a drying up of head and knees.³³ Plutarch tells the story of Molus who νύμφη συγγενόμενος ἀκέφαλος εὑρεθείη (*Def.Orac.* 417e). If the head is where men store their μένος, this explains why Athene, despite the fact that women do not as rule possess μένος,³⁴ has a share equal to her father’s: ἴσον ἔχουσιν πατρὶ μένος (Hesiod *Th.* 896) for she was born from the head of Zeus: Τριτογενῇ, τὴν αὐτὸς ἐγένετο μητίετα Ζεὺς/σεμνῆς ἐκ κεφαλῆς (*Hom. Hymn XXVIII* 4 f.). It also explains why the μένος which makes itself felt in Odysseus’ nostrils is said to “shoot forward” (προῦνψε *Od.* 24.319) i.e., forward into the nose from its storehouse in the cranium behind. Decapitation looses the μένος of a sacrificial ox (*Od.* 3.449–450) and a spear through the brain has the same effect on Hippothous (*Il.* 17.297–298 cf.

³¹Onians 96–116.

³²C. Singer, *Greek Biology and Greek Medicine* (Oxford 1922) 14.

³³On the knees as repositories of the seed, see Onians 111, 124 n.6, 178–179, 233, 246 and cf. *Il.* 17.451.

³⁴There are exceptions: Hera (*Il.* 5.892), Artemis (*Il.* 21.483), Klytaimnestra (*Soph. El.* 610), Cassandra (Aesch. *Ag.* 1066–1067), Eurykleia (*Od.* 19.493), Persephone (*Hom. Hymn to Demeter* 361, 368). Of the exceptions, Artemis (who is λέοντα γυναιξί by virtue of her μένος (*Il.* 21.483), Klytaimnestra (called ἀνδρόβουλον in Aesch. *Ag.* 11), and of course Athene herself, admit classification under a rubric like “masculine-minded.” It should also be taken into account that Cassandra’s μένος occurs within a metaphor, that Eurykleia’s claim οἶσθα μὲν οἶον ἐμὸν μένος ἔμπεδον οὐδ’ ἐπικεικτόν has an almost mock-heroic ring in its context (cf. *Il.* 5.254; 21.426; 22.226), and that the ἥπιον μένος ascribed to Persephone (*Hom. Hymn to Dem.* 362) is an oxymoron (μέμος is usually δριμύ or πικρόν) accompanied by a lifting of Hades’ eyebrows (ὥς φάτο· μείδησεν δὲ ἀναξ ἐνέρων Ἀἰδωνεύς/ὄφρυσιν 357–358). I think that this slightly sardonic note is still present in 368 when Hades promises Persephone that men will “propitiate” (ἱλάσκωνται) her μένος. The outstanding μένος of Hera (*Il.* 5.892) defies palliation.

That μένος was properly a possession of men is suggested by the existence of proper names like Ἀνδρομένης and Μένεσανδρος (see Schmitt [above, n.30] 105) which recall the Homeric phrases μενέ· ἀνδρῶν (*Il.* 4.447 = 8.61; *Od.* 4.363) and μένος ἀνδρῶν (*Il.* 2.387). Another Homeric verse pairs μένος with ἀνδρότης: Πατρόκλου ποθέων ἀνδροτήτά τε καὶ μένος (*Il.* 24.6).

The first man on earth, according to some legends, was a Boeotian hero named Alalkomeneus (*fr.adesp.* 83.3 Bergk). Other sources add that Alalkomeneus was the person entrusted with rearing Athene in the city of Alalkomenai (schol. *Il.* 4.8; Paus. 9.33.5), perhaps as special warden of her μένος.

16.332). Absence of μένος from the head is what defines a dead man in the recurrent Homeric phrase νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρην.

Onians has shown that the Greeks from Homer to Hippokrates associated the vitality of human life with vital fluid in the body.³⁵ Vitality depends upon a cerebro-spinal fluid which is produced in the head, travels down the spine, and circulates throughout the body, collecting in terminals at the knees, elbows, genitals, feet, and head, and manifesting itself in the various effluences of the body—tears, sweat, semen, etc. The fluid in the spine and the fluid in the brain are called by the same name, μύελος (cf. *Il.* 20.482 and *Soph. Trach.* 781). The brain and its fluid are merely a continuation of the spinal “marrow” and are considered one with it. The seed which carries new life is a portion of the cerebro-spinal fluid in which was the life of the parent. Hippo of Samos refers to the substance of the ἐγκέφαλος as “generative water” (ὕδωρ γονοποιόν) and names it “seed” (τὸ σπέρμα) which flowed as he thought from the marrow (fr. A3 and 12 DK). Plato describes the ἐγκέφαλος as that part of the μύελος which is to receive τὸ θεῖον σπέρμα (*Tim.* 73c-d). The concept, then, of a circulating fluid which begins in the head and contains the seed of life was widely held in antiquity,³⁶ and the scientific writers who take up this question in the fifth century and later do not diverge significantly in their conclusions from the picture given by the earliest poets, perhaps because they are drawing upon the poets but more probably because they are viewing the same phenomena with many of the same preconceptions and preoccupations. If μένος ever was, as I have argued, identified with this circulating seed, it is not surprising that, though produced and stored in the head, μένος is found elsewhere in the body and comes eventually to signify an energy animating the body as a whole.

What does it mean to be without μένος? Hesychius glosses the adjectives ἀμενής and ἀμενηνός with ἀσθενής, ἀδύναμος and ἄψυχος (which is especially interesting in the light of Onians's suggestion that ψυχή was originally identified with the seed of life).³⁷ Homer's *Odyssey* has ἀμενηνός of the dead (*Od.* 10.521, 536; 11.29, 49) and of dreams (*Od.* 19.562). The *Iliad* uses ἀμενηνός only once, when Ares, wounded by Athene's spear (5.857), complains to Zeus:

. . . ἧ τέ κε δηρὸν
αὐτοῦ πήματ' ἔπασχον ἐν αἰνῆσιν νεκάδεσσιν
ἧ κε ζῶς ἀμενηνός ἔα χαλκοῖο τυπῆσιν. (*Il.* 5.885-887)

Ares experienced anxiety about whether he would have to live without μένος because of a wound to the lowest part of his belly: it sounds as if he is

³⁵Onians 109, 118 f., 149 f., 177, 182, 191 f., 202, and 205.

³⁶See also Aristotle *Gen. An.* 729a21.

³⁷Onians 109-116, 119-200, 206-209.

talking about castration, or at least damage to the organ of manliness.³⁸ Pygmies³⁹ are called *ἀμενηνοί* in Hesiod (*POxy* 11.1358.18) as are the shrill voices of boys and sickly men in Aristotle (*Probl.* 899a30). The adjective is used in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* to describe men rendered unproductive when Demeter hides the seed of life in the ground: *φθίσαι φύλ' ἀμενηνὰ χαμαιγενέων ἀνθρώπων/σπέρμ' ὑπὸ γῆς κρύπτουσα* (352–353).

Things which are without a vital liquid are frequently *ἀμενηνος*. Aristotle designates *οἱ ἄκεντροι σφήκες* as *ἀμενηνότεροι* (*HA* 628b4): compare the wasps in Aristophanes' play of that name who describe themselves as *μένους ἐμπλημένους* as they aim their stings for attack (424). Theophrastus describes the seed (*σπερμάτιον*) of a certain type of rush as *ἀμενηνότερον* in connection with the fact that the plant withers and dries up every year *αὐαίνεται καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτόν*, *De causis plantarum* 4.12.2). He applies the same adjective to the leaf of a fir tree: *τὸ δὲ φύλλον λεπτότερον καὶ ἀμενηνότερον* (3.8.1). Note that *λέπτοι* is the adjective used by Alkaios (Z23 LP) of men dried to impotence by summer heat.⁴⁰ Hippokrates connects *ἀμενηνός* with *ἰσχνος*, "dry, thin, weak" (*Proorrh.* 2.30).

Old age, characterized by dryness in Greek thought,⁴¹ is associated with lack of *μένος*. Aristophanes contrasts the feeble race of men, *φύλ' ἀμενηνά*, with that of the ageless and deathless birds, *τοῖς αἰὲν εὐοῦσιν . . . ἀγήρως* (*Birds* 685–689). The chorus of Euripides' *Suppliants* refers to itself as an old woman who is without *μένος* and *ρώμη* because she has been "melted away" in grief (1115 ff.).⁴² Old Hekuba in the *Trojan Women* compares herself to a drone (cf. Aristotle on drones, above) and a mere image of death: *ποῦ πᾶ γαίης δουλεύσω γραυς/ὥς κηφὴν ἃ δειλαία νεκροῦ μορφά/νεκῶν ἀμενηνὸν ἄγαλμ'* (191–193). Pindar makes *μένος* the adversary of old age:

³⁸Seventh-century vase paintings often depict the spear-thrust at the groin below the shield, a spot to which early hoplite-armour failed to give adequate protection; Tyrtaios (fr.10.21–27 West) described the effects of such a wound. See A. M. Snodgrass, *Arms and Armour of the Greeks* (London 1967) 56.

³⁹Deficient in both physiological and psychological *μένος*, pygmies were regarded as weak: *Πυγμαίων ὀλιγοδρανέων ἀμενηνὰ γένεθλα* (Oppian *Hal.* 1.623), cowardly: *θράσος δὲ εἶχον οὐδὲν ἄλλὰ καὶ δρώντες τοὺς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀνθρώπους ὑπέπηττον ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς τὰ μείζω τῶν θηρίων* (Phot. *Bibl.cod.*3) and were traditionally classed with creatures anomalous by virtue of the lack of an organ or bodily part e.g. *ἄστομοι*, *ἄρινες*, *μονόφθαλμοι* (Strabo 70, 711). Connections are made by Hippokrates between physical stature and courage (*Aēr.* 24.10) as well as between lack of stature and infertility (22.60).

⁴⁰Hippokrates implies that natures which are *ὕγροί* are invariably *οὐ λεπτοί* (*Aēr.* 24.50). Hesiod calls such men *ἀφαιρώτατοι* (*Op.* 586); cf. *Il.* 7.457 *ὅς σέο πολλὸν ἀφαιρότερος χεῖράς τε μένος τε*.

⁴¹On the dryness of old age, see Aristotle *Long.* 466a19 f.; Aesch. *Ag.* 76–82; Photius: *ἰσχνοὶ γὰρ οἱ παλαιοί*; Onians 214–215, 219–221.

⁴²The adjective *ἀμενοῦς* is *ἄπαξ λεγόμενον* but *ἀμενής* = *ἀμενοῦς* according to Chantraine and Frisk who adduce *ἄκμηνός* as model. See also C. Collard, *Euripides: Suppliants* (Groningen 1975) *ad loc.*

πατρὶ δὲ πατρὸς ἐνέπνευσεν μένος/γῆρας ἀντίπαλον (*Olympians* 8.70). It is Hebe herself who reconstitutes Ares when he has been damaged in μένος (*Il.* 5.905).

Μένος, then, is a fluid of which men have a certain supply. The supply can be lost ("Ἐκτορ', πῇ δὴ τοι μένος οἴχεται δ' πρὶν ἔχεςκε; [*Il.* 5.472]) or depleted (καὶ νῦν κεν ἦϊα πάντα κατέφθιτο καὶ μένε' ἀνδρῶν [*Od.* 4.363]) and must then be reconstituted by infusions of divine breath (. . . καὶ ῥ' ἔμπνευσε μένος μέγα Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη [*Od.* 24.520]), by food and wine (ἀνδρὶ δὲ κεκμηῶτι μένος μέγα οἶνος ἀέξει [*Il.* 6.261]) or by bath and anointing (see above on *Il.* 5.905). Among men, Odysseus has "exceptional" μένος (περὶ τοι μένος *Od.* 12.279), but only the semi-divine Herakles is possessed of a μένος that does not ever wear out: Ἀμφιτρύωνος υἱὸς μένος αἰὲν ἀτειρὴς (*Od.* 11.270). For most men, maintaining the supply of μένος is an ongoing anxiety. Homeric warriors on the verge of some undertaking frequently assure one another that their μένος is ἔμπεδον (*Il.* 5.253–254; *Od.* 19.493; 21.426, cf. Athena's rebuke to Odysseus, *Od.* 22.226). The inconstancy of μένος may be a consequence of men's inability to control it. Once μένος is stirred forth, men follow it (ἐπισπόμενοι μένεϊ σφῶ, *Od.* 14.262; 17.431; 24.183) and are unable to restrain it (μένος ἄσχετοι νῆες Ἀχαιῶν, *Od.* 3.104, cf. 2.85; 2.303; 17.406, and of the Cyclops 20.19).

The starting and stopping of men's μένος is in the control of the gods. Athene says to Achilles ἤλθον ἐγὼ παύσουσα τὸ σὸν μένος (*Il.* 1.207). Hektor instructs the Trojans: ρεία δ' ἀρίγνωτος Διὸς ἀνδράσι γίγνεται ἀλκή . . . /ὥς νῦν Ἀργείων μινύθει μένος ἅμμι δ' ἀρήγει (*Il.* 15.490–493). The *Homeric Hymn to Ares* entreats the god as guardian of peace and war: ὥς κε δυναίμην . . . /θυμοῦ τ' αὖ μένος ὀξὺ κατισχέμεν ὅς μ' ἐρέθῃσι/φυλόπιδος κρυερῆς ἐπιβαινέμεν (*Hom. Hymn* 8.11–15). Gods can control the precise measure of a man's μένος. The encouragement of Athene triples Diomedes' μένος (*Il.* 5.136). Zeus commands Apollo to stir in Hektor just as much μένος as will see the Greeks driven to their ships (*Il.* 15.232 f.).

The gods themselves clearly have access to a huge, perhaps inexhaustible, μένος since they are constantly restoring it to men, by sending (*Il.* 5.125) or by breathing (*Il.* 10.482) it in. The μένος of Helios is πέλωρ (*Hom. Hymn to Apollo* 374) and that of Ares is so big that two armies can "share in" it: ἐν μέσῳ ἀμφοτέρωι μένος Ἀρης δατέονται (*Il.* 18.264). The μένος of Zeus is capable of being "heaped up:" Ζεὺς δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν κόρυθεν ἐὼν μένος (*Hes. Th.* 853). Ares is ὑπερμενέτης (*Hom. Hymn* 8.1) and Zeus ὑπερμενής (*Il.* 2.116, 350, 403). For men, on the other hand, μένος is a matter of serious concern. Its presence is necessary to life but its presence is a shooting flow: it is the nature of μένος to expend itself. Neither the starting nor the stopping nor the rate of expenditure is within man's control.

There is, however, one aspect of μένος over which men are granted a measure of power: they can aim it (οἱ δὲ μένος χειρῶν ἰθὺς φέρον, *Il.* 5.506).

That *μένος* is not just blind energy but a dynamic force with a definite aim has been stressed by several scholars. R. Schroter says "*μένος* ist ein zeitweiliger, meist stark auf bestimmte Betätigung gerichteter Drang eines oder mehrerer aller leiblichen oder geistigen Organe. . . ." ⁴³ Robbins (137) feels that the basic content of *μένος* is "volitional." Dodds sees an important connection with *μενοιῶν* ("to be eager") and *μαιώωσι* ("feel eager"). ⁴⁴ But it is important to observe that this volitional aspect makes available to man a tantalizingly partial control of *μένος*. The taste can be fatal: Andromache says to Hektor *Δαιμόνιε, φθίσει τὸ σὸν μένος* (*Il.* 6.407).

The situation in which Anchises finds himself in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* is one of a number of situations in which *μένος* could be lost. Its loss might manifest itself in a variety of ways: sexual activity implies sexual manifestation. When Anchises asks Aphrodite not to leave him living *ἀμενηνός* among men, therefore, he is voicing a fear of lifelong impotence. A number of commentators have advanced this interpretation but have generally ascribed this aspect of the story to Middle Eastern influence upon the Greek sources. ⁴⁵ The myth of Anchises and Aphrodite is presumed to be a transformation of an Anatolian legend about the Great Mother and the young paramour who must sacrifice his virility to fecundate her. Most of those who oppose this view feel that Anchises' anxiety is to be explained by reference to Kalypso's words in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 5.118-129). Kalypso here complains that the male ego on Olympos begrudges sexual licence to goddesses who prefer mortal men. Commentators who appeal to this parallel imply that Anchises does not fear sexual debilitation arising directly from intercourse with the goddess but rather the subsequent retaliation of jealous Olympian gods. ⁴⁶ Allen, Halliday, and Sikes reject the Anatolian hypothesis but also find the fear of Olympian jealousy inadequate to account for Anchises' panic. They reduce his fear to "a vague dread of the supernatural like the belief that 'no man may see God and live'." ⁴⁷ The most recent commentator on the hymn, L. H. Lenz, seems to see the influence of Eastern cult-legend as well

⁴³Die *Aristie als Grundform homerischer Dichtung und der Freiermord in der Odyssee* (diss. Marburg 1950) 47; R. Schmitt (above, n.30) 104. See also H. Fränkel, *Gnomon* 3 (1927) 382.

⁴⁴Dodds (above, n.6) 9. On the dynamism and aim of *μένος* see also above, 6-7.

⁴⁵A. Baumeister, *Hymni Homerici* (Leipzig 1865); R. Thiele, *Prolegomena ad hymnum in Venerem Homericum quartum* (Halle 1872) 59 f.; R. Wirsell, *Questiones de Hymno in Venerem Homericum* (Münster 1869); H. J. Rose, "Anchises and Aphrodite," *CQ* 18 (1924) 11 f.

⁴⁶H. Podbielski, *La Structure de l'hymne homérique à Aphrodite à la lumière de la tradition littéraire* (Wrocław 1971) 63-64; K. Reinhardt, "Zum homerischen Aphrodite-hymnus," *Festschrift Bruno Snell* (Munich 1965) 13-14; J. C. Kamerbeek, "Remarques sur l'hymne à Aphrodite," *Mnemosyne* 20 (1967) 385 f.

⁴⁷T. W. Allen, W. R. Halliday, and E. E. Sikes, *The Homeric Hymns* (Oxford 1963) 363.

as a certain seventh-century "Angst vor strafenden Göttern" blended in the narrative.⁴⁸

The suggestion that Anchises fears Olympian repercussions and not the physical effects of the act of love itself simply does not account for his choice of words in 188–190. On the other hand, it may not be necessary to adduce Anatolian influences to explain Anchises' panic. The fear is emphatically Greek and has a precedent in Anchises' own family. Like his ancestor Tithonos, Anchises abhors the thought of an old age that will last as long as his life (cf. Mimnermos fr. 4 West and Hes. *Op.* 181). Dryness is the definition of old age for the Greeks and, as we saw, the dryness of old age is connected with loss of μένος. Dryness could be counteracted if the stuff of life and strength was fed back into the body by bathing and anointing the skin or by drinking liquids, especially wine.⁴⁹ Aphrodite describes Eos' attempts to prolong Tithonos' youth by feeding him ambrosia (*Hymn* 227). Plato recommends wine as an ally against the crabbedness of old age and as a medicine for renewing youth which acts to soften the hard, dry soul as fire melts iron (*Laws* 666a–b).⁵⁰ Hebe restores Ares with a bath in the Iliadic passage mentioned above (*Il.* 5.905). Odysseus, fearing that sex with Kirke will leave him "weak and unmanned" (κακὸν καὶ ἀνήνορα [*Od.* 10.301, 341]) exacts from her an oath, before lovemaking, that she will not harm him, and is personally restored by her afterwards with bath and anointing: ὄφρα μοι ἐκ κάματος θυμοφθόρον εἴλετο γυίων (*Od.* 10.363). Odysseus here specifies θυμός, not μένος, as the organ debilitated by the κάματος of sexual exertion but θυμός is elsewhere frequently paired with μένος to designate the essence of a man's strength (e.g., *Il.* 7.210; 8.358; 22.346; *Od.* 11.562; 8.15; Mimnermos fr. 13.1 West). Moreover, Tzetzes glosses θυμός in Hipponax with τὸ ἄρπεν αἰδοῖον,⁵² and Homer sometimes locates μένος in θυμός (e.g., *Il.* 16.529; 17.451; *Od.* 1.321). It is clear that permanent damage to Odysseus' sexual potency has been

⁴⁸*Der homerische Aphroditehymnus und die Aristie des Aineias in der Ilias* (Bonn 1975) 88–115, 151–152.

⁴⁹Onians 209–228. See also *A.P.* 11.57.7. and 11.256.

⁵⁰Hippokrates speaks of τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴνου μένος (*Acut.* 63) and warns that over-indulgence in neat wine can cause impotence (*De Prisca Medicina* 20); see D. Micallella, "Vino e amore: Ippocrate *Antica medicina* 20," *QUCC* 24 (1977) 151 f.; perhaps an instance of one μένος quenching another (cf. Hipp. *Aph.* 14; *Il.* 16.621).

⁵¹The adjective ἀνηνῶρ is clearly a synonym for ἀμενηνός in the sense "unmanned, impotent," to judge from Hesiod's use of it in *Op.* 751 where he warns that a boy permitted to sit about ἐπ' ἀκινήτοισι may grow up to be ἀνερ' ἀνήνορα; see E. E. Sikes, "Folklore in the *Works and Days* of Hesiod," *CR* 7 (1893) 393–394. Hesychius glosses ἀνηνῶρ with ἀδύνατος and ἀνανδρος; *pace LSJ*, I can find no meaning "childless" in Hesychius.

⁵²See O. Masson, *Les Fragments du Poète Hipponax* (Paris 1962) 112. Merkelbach and West suggest a possible *sensus obscaenus* for θυμός ("penis") in the second verse of the *Cologne Epode* of Archilochos: εἰ δ' ὦν ἐπείγεται καὶ σε θυμός ἰθὺει.

averted by the oath and the bath. Anchises, who slept with the goddess *οὐ σάφα εἰδώς* (167), exacted no oath and receives no reconstitution, by bath or otherwise. He fears that he will be without *μένος* for the rest of his life.

The question which presents itself, then, is not "What is Anchises afraid of?" but rather "Why is Anchises afraid that a single encounter with Aphrodite has dried up his life's supply of *μένος*?" The answer is to be found in a basic tenet of the Olympian religion, that the spheres of mortal and immortal activity are incommensurable. Incommensurable standards obtain in each. Aphrodite addresses Anchises (*Hymn* 108) as *κύνιστε χαμαιγενέων ἀνθρώπων*. The adjective *χαμαιγενής* (cf. *Hom. Hymn to Demeter* 352; Pindar *Pyth* 4.98) appears in epic and lyric usage to be generally "an epithet of men as opposed to gods."⁵³ As such, it characterizes men as "creatures who live at ground level," gods being *οὐρανίδαι*, *οὐρανίωνες*. Whatever exceeds the human level is measured against heaven: *κλεῖος οὐρανόμηκες ἐν βροτοῖσιν ἔξεις* (Aristoph. *Nub.* 459); *τῶν ὕβρις τε βιή τε σιδήρεον οὐρανὸν ἔκει* (*Od.* 15.329; 17.565). Quintessential *ὕβρις* is a human attempt to scale heaven (Alkman 1.15 *PMG*). Gods span the levels from ground to sky: Eris' head touches heaven as she treads the earth (*Il.* 4.443)⁵⁴. Gods who consort at ground-level must adjust to human scale. Aphrodite, disguising herself as a mortal girl (*Hymn* 82–83), must assume not only the *εἶδος* but also the *μέγεθος* of humankind, in order not to terrify Anchises. When she discards this form her head hits the roof-beam of Anchises' hut (173; Demeter has similar difficulty entering Keleos' house, *Hom. Hymn to Demeter* 188).

Such incommensurability, in an erotic context, is the theme of the story of Ixion as Pindar tells it in *Pythians* 2.21 f. Ixion sought to love a goddess. Pindar characterizes Ixion's attempt on Hera as "a crime conspicuous above others" (*αὐάταν ὑπεραφάνον* 28) and his punishment as "hardship so bad it stands out" (*ἐξαιρετον μόχθον* 30). The chamber where mortal Ixion presumes to approach Hera is "a room so big highways cross in it" (*μεγαλοκευθέσιν ἐν ποτε θαλάμοις* 33) and Hera herself is said to stand "head and shoulders above the women of heaven in beauty" (*εἶδος γὰρ ὑπεροχωτάτα πρέπεν Οὐρανίαν* 38). The bed of Zeus which Ixion hopes to usurp is one "made for huge joys" (*τὰν Διὸς εὐνὰι λάχον πολυγαθῆς* 27–28). Pindar's repeated compounds of *ὑπερ-*, *ἐκ-*, *μεγαλο-* and *πολυ-* draw attention to the moral: *χρὴ δὲ κατ' αὐτὸν αἰεὶ παντὸς ὀρᾶν μέτρον* (34), "You have to measure things from your own size." Ixion is out of his depth. He has

⁵³R. B. Burton, *Pindar's Pythian Odes* (Oxford 1962) 155.

⁵⁴Cf. Demeter in Kallimachos (*Hymns* 6.57), Fama and Orion in Virgil (*Aeneid* 4.177 and 10.767). Herodotos 1.60 tells the story of a woman chosen to impersonate Athene because of her extraordinary height; see A. D. Nock, "Religious Attitudes of the Ancient Greeks," *PAPS* (1942) 478 f.; H. J. Rose, "Some Herodotean Rationalizations," *CQ* 34 (1940) 81 f.

forgotten the discrepancy of measure between his world and Hera's.⁵⁵ This lesson is eternalized in his punishment. Stretched on the wheel "in inevitable limb-bonds" (ἐν δ' ἀφύκτοισι γυιοπέδαις 41), he is an image of the measure of his own humanity.

Anchises fears he has strayed into the sphere of gods' measures where a single copulation can expend all the moistures of life and leave one, like Tithonos, flowing in nothing but voice: τοῦ δ' ἡ τοι φωνὴ ῥεῖ ἄσπετος οὐδέ τι κῆκυσ (*Hymn* 237).⁵⁶ Copulation with the goddess of love is especially reckless. Adonis brought impotence on himself by this act, according to Athenaios' version of the story. After citing a poem of Kallimachos which relates how Aphrodite hid Adonis in a bed of lettuce, Athenaios explains that this is a poetic way of saying "too much lettuce makes you impotent" (69c).⁵⁷ An anonymous hexameter in the *Suda* (s.v. τέγγε) gives explicit warning of the danger, οἶνω πνεύμονα τέγγε φίλης δ' ἀπέχου Κυθερείης, and Alkman repeats the thought in a gnome which summarizes Greek wisdom:

ἀπ]έδιλος ἀλκὰ
μὴ τις ἀν]θρώπων ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω
μηδὲ πη]ρήτω γαμῆν τὰν Ἀφροδίταν. (1.15-18 *PMG*)

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⁵⁵The myth of Semele offers another instance of such an oversight in an erotic context. In Ovid's account, Semele's mortal frame cannot endure Jupiter when he comes to her *quantusque et qualis ab alta / Iunone excipitur* (*Met.* 3.284 f.). This reference is owed to R. J. Tarrant.

⁵⁶*Etym.Gud.* 321.58 and *Etym. in Anecd. Paris. (Cra.)* IV 35.22 tell us that Apollodoros explained κικῶς, usually interpreted "strength," to mean *ικμάς*, "moisture;" cf. Aesch. fr. 230 N².

⁵⁷For lettuce as an agent of impotence see the comic fragments of Amphis (20 K) and Eubulos (14 K); Dioskorides *Materia Medica* 2.136; Pliny *Nat.Hist.* 19.127; *A.P.* 11.295 and 396; Plutarch *Quaest. conv.* 672; M. Detienne, *Les Jardins d'Adonis* (Paris 1972) 118-138.