



The King of Sacrifice. Ritual and Authority in the *Iliad*.

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4.1 The Sacrificer in Enacted Sacrifices

§4.1.1 As no two Homeric sacrifices are identical, we know that the emphasis placed on particular aspects of a sacrifice is carefully controlled within the narrative according to the thematic needs of the context.¹ The bare-bones ingredients may be elaborated, such as I.436-74, or abbreviated, such as I.313-7, according to the thematic needs of the poetry. This is true of everything in Homer, as first demonstrated by Lord, whose field research showed that individual singers spontaneously improvised on inherited thematic material according to their own interpretation of the context.² Consistent repetition draws attention to these elements and the pattern created through them. In chapter one, I discussed the continuum of sacrifice in the *Iliad*: the narrative presents the slaughter of animals specifically dedicated to gods, which I call 'enacted sacrifices', to be distinguished from descriptions of preparations for meals without reference to gods, which have a different thematic function within the poem. Formulaic verses shared between sacrificial feasts and feasts without reference to gods, which I do not consider to be enacted sacrifices, provoke the audience to recognize the lack of divine worship preceding the feast. The shared verses highlight the lack of sacrificial ritual, rather than imply it, as some scholars have suggested.³ In chapter two, I delved further into the

¹ Even Arend admits this, while maintaining that sacrificial scenes are the most repetitive of all type scenes, 1933:8ff. Seaford 1994:46: "The Homeric selection of sacrificial elements is determined, consciously or unconsciously, by the function of the description in the overall poetic conception."

² Lord 1960; for instance, the singer Audo's lengthening of another singer's assembly scene, 1960:79. See also Nagy 1979.

³ Most recently, Kitts 2004.

significance of sacrifice in the poem by distinguishing between these primary narrative descriptions of sacrifice, the enacted sacrifices, and complex narrative and character speech references to sacrifice, the embedded sacrifices. This distinction is supported by the use of different terminology and focus on different aspects of ritual process. For instance, ἱερὰ ῥέξω is only used in embedded sacrifices, in which context it occurs eleven times, listed in Appendix I. The shared feast which is described following three of the seven enacted sacrifices is only mentioned in one of the over forty embedded sacrifices.⁴ In chapter three, the individual elements of enacted sacrificial scenes were analyzed according to van Straten's tri-partite division of pre-kill, kill, and post-kill.⁵ We found that the particular pre-kill and post-kill procedures were not fixed, but adapted to suit the thematic needs of the context, as one would expect. However, certain features of sacrificial procedure were always present, as shown in Table I below: the most frequently recurring elements are the location (7/7), sacrificer (7/7), victim (6/7), and divine recipient (6/7). In this chapter, I will explore the emphasis on Agamemnon in the enacted sacrifices and the structural function of these scenes in the context of the quarrel with Akhilleus. In 4.2 we will explore the nature of Agamemnon's authority in the context of the Pan-Akhaian community represented in the poem. This will lay the groundwork for a close examination in 4.3 of the sacrificial framework for the quarrel in Book I, also supported on the level of diction, as shown in 4.4. We will then look at the other sacrifices in the epic as a continuation of the pattern established in Book I in 4.5, and finally an analysis of Akhilleus' ritual isolation in 4.6.

⁴ XI.725-30. The embedded sacrifices are listed in chapter five of my forthcoming book, *The King of Sacrifice. Ritual and Royal Authority*.

⁵ Van Straten 1995.

<i>The Iliad</i>	I. 313-17	I. 436-74	II. 400-1	II.402-32	III.245-312
Location of Sacrifice	seashore	altar	huts	Around victim	between armies
Sacrificer	Agamemnon	Odysseus/ Khruses for Agamemnon	Akhaians	Agamemnon	Agamemnon
<i>katarkhtesthai</i>	Purification	Hand washing Barley scattering		Ritual stance Barley scattering	Hand washing First hairs
Recipient (Response)	Apollo (smoke rises)	Apollo (he rejoices)	various	Zeus (receives sacrifice, denies prayer)	Zeus, Helios, Rivers, Earth (denies prayer)
Victim	Hecatomb (pl.)	hecatomb		ox	lambs, boar

Prayer		prayer	prayer	prayer	prayer
Details of Kill		details of kill		details of kill	details of kill
God's Portion	κνίση	μῆρε καὶ σπλάγχνα ὠμοθέτησαν		μῆρε καὶ σπλάγχνα ὠμοθέτησαν	Libations
Shared Feast		Shared feast		Shared feast	

§4.1.2 The consistency of the primary narrator's focus on the sacrificer and the dominance of Agamemnon in this field in the *Iliad* is remarkable. It seems that sacrifice is an authoritarian construct in the *Iliad*, a re-affirmation of the tense social hierarchy created by the expedition to Troy, in which various kings must submit to the most powerful, Agamemnon. This is supported on both the level of theme and diction. On the level of theme, five out of the seven sacrifices enacted in the *Iliad* are initiated and carried out by Agamemnon for the benefit of the group: I.312-17, II.402-432, III.267-311, VII.313-23, and XIX.250-60. Agamemnon provides the victims for these sacrifices, as well as I.436-74, for which he uniquely delegates his ritual authority to Odysseus, an important point to which we will return. There is one sacrifice in which a group, "one and another of the Akhaians", replace the individual sacrificer, II.400-1, a brief precursor to the very large, detailed sacrificial scene led by Agamemnon, II.402-32. This unique description is probably intended to draw attention to the subsequent sacrifice of Agamemnon, itself introduced by a preparatory verse, II.402-3.

§4.1.3 Vernant has written that the sacrificer enjoys a special religious quality as the intermediary between man and god, alone in his connection to the sacralised object he is offering: "By furnishing the divinity with the consecrated object, the sacrificer expects the ceremony to produce a transformation as a result of the sacrifice and bestow on him a new religious quality."⁶ The fact that six of the seven enacted sacrifices are organized by Agamemnon represents his special ritual authority and demonstrates his supremacy. Agamemnon hosts other feasts described by the narrative which do not depict explicit animal sacrifice. So, he invites the councilors to this hut in Book IX.89f., similar to the context of the sacrificial feast in Book II. Agamemnon provides a *dais* for them, which satisfying meal leads to Nestor's advice about reconciliation with Akhilleus. This is very similar to the councillor's feast provided by Agamemnon in Book II, but the former scene is introduced as an animal sacrifice and is one of the longest such scenes in the poem, whereas the Book IX meeting is not marked by sacrifice. The connections between the two meetings are further reinforced by similes comparing the consternation of men to stormy seas, II.144f. and IX.4f.⁷ Stanley compared these two advisory meetings, remarking that Agamemnon is depicted in the Book IX scene in an "unceremonious" manner, appearing without his sceptre.⁸ Not every feast followed by advising sessions is a sacrifice, although Agamemnon is still acting as the provider for the others. Why not sacrifice before the feast for the councillors in Book IX? I propose that animal sacrifice is limited to contexts which bolster Agamemnon's authority in the face of Akhilleus' withdrawal: this scene and the sacrifice at Khruse in Book I are admissions of guilt and defeat for Agamemnon, therefore no sacrifices are performed.

⁶ Vernant 1991:291.

⁷ The similes are discussed by Stanley 1993:109-10.

⁸ Stanley 1993:109-10.

The lack of sacrifice at this juncture in Book IX is made more obvious by frequent libations and prayers performed by the embassy. In fact, three libations are poured marking the different stages of action in this Book: before the embassy leave the camp of Agamemnon, IX.174, before they leave the camp of Akhilleus, IX.656, and at the end of the Book in the camp of Agamemnon, IX.712. The embassy is also described as praying *en route* to Akhilleus, IX.182. It is interesting that none of these libations refer to gods as the recipients, as opposed to others which are dedicated to specific gods and accompanied by prayer, perhaps shifting the focus to the sense of communality amongst mortals and increasing audience anticipation of upcoming events.⁹ Compared to other ritual actions directed at divinities, enacted sacrifice is strictly limited to Agamemnon's authority. Compare Agamemnon's dominance in the performance of sacrifice to the wide variety of people who pour libations and/or perform prayers. The Trojans and Akhaians in general, VII.479, the Akhaian 'councillors', IX.174, 712, the embassy to Akhilleus, IX.656, Odysseus and Diomedes, X.578, Akhilleus, XVI.225, XXIII.193, and Priam, XXIV.283, pour libations, most of which are accompanied by prayers, in the *Iliad*. If we look forward to sacrifices embedded in prayers and vows, discussed in depth in chapter five and summarized in Appendix II, we find a range of different heroes and priests referring to sacrifice to bolster a request to divinities.

§4.1.4 To further demonstrate the restrictive presentation of sacrificial ritual within the plot and the timing of such performances, we may briefly look at the structure of Book VII.¹⁰ A second duel is proposed, reminiscent of the first duel in Book III, which was sanctified by an oath sacrifice performed by Agamemnon in front of all the armies. Yet, in Book VII, no sacrifice is performed. The Akhaians are timid to meet Hektor's challenge, and Nestor rebukes them with a digression on his personal experience against the Arkadian Ereuthalion, v.123-60. This digression, unlike his speech to Patroklos at XI.655f, does not refer to sacrifice. Nine heroes, including Agamemnon, volunteer and lots are cast. The army prays to Zeus that the lot fall to either Aias, Diomedes, or Agamemnon, v.176-80. Once Aias recognises his lot, he exhorts the army to pray either silently or openly, which they do, v.181-206. Aias and Hektor duel and are broken up by the approaching darkness, v.206-312. The Trojans as a group rejoice upon seeing Hektor, while Aias is lead straight to Agamemnon, who then sacrifices a bull to Zeus, v.313-23.

οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ κλισίῃσιν ἐν Ἀτρεΐδαι γενόντο,
 τοῖσι δὲ βούν ἰέρουσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
 ἄρσενα πενταέτηρον ὑπερμενεί Κρονίωνι. (VII.313-5)

⁹ Compare Akhilleus' libation and prayer to Zeus, XVI.225.

¹⁰ Kirk 1990:230 gives a brief discussion of the problems with Book VII, including the relation of this duel to that in Book III, and a bibliography.

Soon as they had gathered within the warlord's tents
he sacrificed an ox in their midst, a full-grown ox,
five years old, to the towering son of Kronos, Zeus.¹¹

The resultant feast honors Aias with the chine, and gives way to Nestor's plan to build the wall, v.324-43. The focus shifts to the Trojans in their *agora*, where the Trojans argue, Priam tells them to go eat (for which he provides nothing), and Idaeus is sent as a messenger to the Akhaian camps, v.343-97. Diomedes rejects Paris' proposal; Agamemnon agrees to a burial truce, v.398-411. The dead are buried, without reference to ritual, v.412-33. The Akhaians secretly build a wall, v.433-41. The direct 'eyewitness' narration breaks to show Poseidon complaining to Zeus that the wall was built without sacrifice, which Zeus promises will be avenged, v.442-63. The Akhaians are then described as feasting, βουφόνεον δὲ κατὰ κλισίας καὶ δόρπον ἔλοντο, v.466. In contrast to Agamemnon's sacrifice to Zeus, this feast is not described as in honor of a divinity. The narrative explains that Lemnian Eumeos brought wine for Agamemnon and Menelaos to sell, which they do in exchange for a variety of objects, v.467-75. The feast is possibly then described as a *dais*, although the Hellenistic commentators rejected v.475. The narrator then describes the Akhaians and Trojans as feasting all night, which is interrupted by Zeus' thunder, v.476-79. They all then pour libations before drinking and then go to sleep, v.480-82.

§4.1.5 This abbreviated summary of Book VII gives a good indication of both the selectivity of the poem in representing ritual and the pattern of Agamemnon's special ritual dominance. So, sacrifices are not performed where we might expect them: before the oath, at burial, upon building the wall, and before dinner. They are not mentioned in Nestor's digression, although he will thrice describe them in his digression to Patroklos in Book XI. Other ritual actions, such as prayer and libations, are performed by larger groups without special emphasis on anyone. But, Agamemnon is the host of a sacrificial feast, which the narrative takes pains to identify both as sacrificial, i.e. dedicated to gods, and as performed and distributed by Agamemnon. However, his ritual generosity is not to be consistently expected, because later everyone eats and no sacrifices are performed, and Agamemnon and Menelaos distribute wine for a price. Menelaos is never described as a co-sacrificer or provider of sacrificial animals slaughtered for the gods in the poem, but here he and Agamemnon jointly sell wine. The generic meal is described in reference to both armies, nor is it specifically linked to Agamemnon, providing a contrast to the marked demonstration of Agamemnon's ritual largess after the duel. Poseidon even complains about the lack of sacrifice, an embedded sacrifice discussed in detail in chapter five, highlighting the importance and restricted

¹¹ All translations are from Fagles 1990, although I have changed some spelling to be consistent with my transliterated spelling of Greek names and terms. All Greek text is from the TLG, which I checked alongside West's edition, West 1998.

performance of this event for the audience. Zeus frightens the men, and they pour libations before drinking, but another sacrifice is not performed until the reintegration of Akhilleus in Book XIX. So, we can surmise that sacrifice is selectively included in the narrative, depicted as a special event restricted to the elite group and performed by Agamemnon. Before we examine each enacted sacrifice in detail, §4.3 below, we must explore the nature of this social hierarchy and Agamemnon's authority over the army.

4.2 The Basis for Agamemnon's Ritual Authority

§4.2.1 This chapter is part of my argument that sacrifice functions as a specific expression of two major themes: the quarrel between Agamemnon and Akhilleus via the enacted scenes and the frustrations implicit in a reciprocal relationship between mortals and immortals via the embedded scenes. What is at stake is the way in which Agamemnon's exact relationship with the army and the other kings, ambiguous in some respects, is clarified and bolstered by the performance of sacrifice. Sacrifice is significant only within the context created by the narrative and defined by the characters themselves, whose interactions and comments are our guide to the Homeric world. Their perspectives on deeds and events form a "cultural grammar" which must be our decoding system for symbolic ritual actions like sacrifice.¹² Before we can fully appreciate the significance of a particular ritual action, we must establish a working sense of the social context of the action. For instance, a recent study on fourth century Athenian cult inscriptions excludes the third century material because the political changes from democracy to monarchy create a totally different ritual environment.¹³ Much good work has been done on social institutions in Homer, such as land-tenure, currency, clothing, housing, etc., but the nature of human relationships amongst said institutions continues to puzzle.¹⁴ Sacrifice may be said to be a social institution itself, as an action understood within the society, and the key to understanding this type of institution is the social relationships which provide the context for performance. The composition and meaning of the social network in the *Iliad* has been much analyzed and is largely beyond the scope of this work. Before focusing specifically on sacrifice, I will show in this brief summary of what we may term 'politics' in Homer that there is a recognized supreme king, whether at home or camped outside of Troy, and that this person has a special ritual authority recognized by the others as part of his unique powers. Related to sacrifice is the very important social principle of redistribution: the king maintains his authority not through gifts or land as much as through feasting, but this largess is confined to the elite group of people closest to him in

¹² "Cultural grammar" is Hammer's term, 2002:11. Similar is Bakhtin's 'value centers', Bakhtin 1981 and Felson-Rubin 1993:161.

¹³ Rosivach 1994:4.

¹⁴ Finley 1978 is a standard treatment of social institutions; more recently and with a good bibliography is Raaflaub 1998:189n2.

status. This has some correspondence with the evidence for banqueting in the Mycenaean period.¹⁵ These elite people may provide in a similar fashion for their own people or subordinates. However, contrary to some recent discussions, Agamemnon does not provide food for the entire army.

§4.2.2 The possible historical basis for and consistency of the Homeric world has been the subject of long debate. With a few exceptions, most agree that the values and morals of the Homeric community are consistent, as is the depiction of social institutions, one of which is sacrifice. The context in which these values and social institutions are situated, which we may term Homeric society, still continues to puzzle scholars. Are Homeric societies political and represent *poleis*, in an evolving or developed form? In other words, do the characters in the epics identify themselves as parts of a unified group, which identity affects their actions and decision making? There are no consistently represented formalized political institutions, yet much of the *Iliad* is concerned with frictions within society. This tension, between a clearly demonstrated collective awareness of a civic space which influences the actions and decisions of the heroes and an informal power structure based upon power and wealth, has led to speculation on the possible historical influences on the epic which would reflect a shift from a warrior society obligated by kinship and *philia* towards the social structure of the *polis*. Many scholars, following Moses Finley, do not recognise a political awareness or identifiable *polis* in the epics, but interpret social interactions as functioning primarily on a private level.¹⁶ Finley, who believes the epics represent Dark Age society, has proposed that the *oikos* is the primary unit, led by the senior male who owns the property, linked to other households by a closed society of aristocratic birth.¹⁷ Similarly, Drews has argued that the Homeric king is drawn from the power vacuum created by the collapse of the Mycenaean kingdoms in the Dark Ages, leading to a consolidation of power in the hands of a few *basileis*.¹⁸ Other scholars, who believe that Homer represents the society of the early Archaic period in which the *polis* emerged, recognise the components of a *polis* and political activity in the *Iliad*, the uncertain nature of which reflect the political changes in the 9th-8th centuries.¹⁹ In both Finley's model and the

¹⁵ Bendall 2003 discusses the archaeological evidence for socially stratified banqueting at the 'Palace of Nestor'.

¹⁶ Finley 1978:82-89, supported recently by Edmunds 1989:27-8 and Hammer 2002, *inter alia*, who defines Homeric society as 'interdependent', formed of otherwise independent aristocratic households.

¹⁷ Finley 1978:82-89. See van Wees 1992:26-7, Adkins 1960. Scully 1990:100-113 recognises collective decision making and an emerging *polis*, but sees Homer as pre-political due to the lack of notions of citizenship. Citizenship is important for sacrifice, as it can be the criterion for participation: Rosivach 1994 lists the *testimonia* for exclusion of non-citizens from 4th c. Athenian sacrifices.

¹⁸ Drews 1983.

¹⁹ West 1966:46-7, Van Wees 1992:54-8, Taplin 1992:37, Redfield 1994, Raaflaub 1997, detail the evidence for the representation of late 8th c. -early 7th c. society. Quiller 1981:113, van Wees 1992, and Raaflaub 1991:239-47 give the lengthy arguments for the existence of the *polis* in Homer. Kirk 1962, Long 1970, Snodgrass 1974, and Sherratt 1990 suggest that the evidence is too inconsistent to conclusively prove anything.

transitional *polis* theory, the *oikos* is usually recognised to have the predominant influence over decisions and actions, whether at the expense of the nascent political conscious of the Homeric masses, as a tool to bolster the aristocratic audience threatened by the transition, or as the only secure space for collective action before the development of political activity.²⁰ Sacrifice may shed some light on this question, as either a marker of civic participation and identity, or a symbol of monarchical control.

§4.2.3 In both epics, multiple different societies are represented, which further complicates an overall understanding of the social constructs. In the *Iliad*, there is the patchwork society created by the pan-Akhaian expedition, which does not focus around an *oikos* but rather individual ships and huts erected by the ships, there is the Trojan society, which revolves exclusively around the *oikos* of Priam, there is the elusive world hinted at through numerous similes, and then the society of the gods, which is probably a reflection of what we should consider the norm: a hierarchical, kinship society based upon the authority of the eldest male.²¹ However, in the *Iliad*, the only society to practice sacrifice is the artificial conglomerate of the pan-Akhaian forces, and the only person who enacts full-scale sacrifices is Agamemnon, the thesis of this chapter. In the *Odyssey*, there is the social chaos of Ithaka created by Odysseus' absence, the social perfection of Skheria, and the numerous other societies represented, ranging from Nestor's *oikos* to the cave of the Kuklops. In this poem, sacrifice acts as an indicator of social harmony and happy families, such as in Skheria and Pylos.²²

§4.2.4 Homeric society, whatever form one chooses to read in it, is consistently presented as a socially gradated society. Different social ranks have different obligations; identity and wealth are the result of fulfilment of these roles and the appropriate punishments and rewards.²³ Social obligations are reciprocal and exist between kin and not, are defined through households, starting with the king, whose home is a model for the community, and social interactions such as friendship, hospitality, and 'negative reciprocity', or the obligations

²⁰ Taplin 1992:7 describes the “shading” of public issues into the private sphere. Hammer 2002:148 supports the arguments for the use of the *Iliad* as an ideological tool to support a threatened aristocracy; see also Seaford 1994, Raaflaub 1998:182. The security of the *oikos* at the expense of the *polis* is advocated by Scully 1990:105.

²¹ The three alternative social models are given by Gould 2001:343. Mackie 1996:chapter 4 details the differences between Trojan and Akhaian societies based on social conflicts in Troy. So, the Trojans are never depicted preparing a *dais*. Schein 1984:16: “The conception and the social and political organization of these gods is anachronistically modelled on the Mycenaean society as portrayed in the *Iliad* and as evidenced by the archaeological record.” See also Nilsson 1932.

²² Redfield 1983 explains the problems created by Odysseus' absence; Launderville 2003 discusses the idealized representation of Alkinoos. Vidal-Naquet 1977 discusses the contrasts between normalized social settings and those lacking civilization in regards to sacrifice and eating. I intend to write a full length study of this theme in the *Odyssey*.

²³ Gift-giving and reciprocity are essential in gradated societies, Muellner 1996:34, Hammer 2002:59.

of enmity.²⁴ Another important factor in social relations is kindred obligations within Homeric society, as well as those binding non-kindred, such as Phoinix and Akhilleus. This has been discussed by scholars in many other contexts, such as feeling shame on the battle-field on behalf of a fallen comrade.²⁵ The kin of Agamemnon are understandably obligated to him, but this would not entirely explain why Menelaos is subordinate to him. More complicated is the obligation owed to his leadership by non-kindred people. Is there an organized authority structure which has the same significance to all heroes, kindred or not? Following van Wees, I propose that the society revolved around an authoritative figure, whose authority is both inherited and socially accepted on the basis of his status, who may be described as a *basileus* or *anax*, terms which we will explore in greater depth in §4.4.1 below. We may see evidence of this in the catalogue, as most contingents are composed of men from multiple towns, but are led by one leader or occasionally a pair of brothers.²⁶ Agamemnon is, in the words of Kalkhas, "the one who rules mightily over the Akhaians and whom the Akhaians obey", I.79.²⁷ The basis for Agamemnon's superior authority has sparked much debate, beginning with Akhilleus in Book I, and the might with which he rules is less clear than Kalkhas suggests. Gould surmises: "The reciprocal obligations owed by Akhilleus and the Greeks are made unclear by the pervasive ambiguity of social values among the Greeks at Troy".²⁸ The question we must raise concerns the type of authority represented by the character Agamemnon: is he an absolute ruler, whose complete control of goods and property necessitates his identity as *Opferherr*? Is he one of a group of authority figures, but is specifically and individually identified with sacrifice to give his power an irresistible weight, a special quality the others don't have?

Many scholars have suggested that Agamemnon is the *primus inter pares* because he is the ruler of the largest kingdom, as he and Nestor assert, I.281, 279.²⁹ Other scholars see Agamemnon's authority as stemming from a more formal, public position based upon birth and wealth.³⁰ Van Wees believes that the gift of seven cities on the border of Pylos and other references to Agamemnon's control of Argos suggest that he is the supreme leader of all

²⁴ Redfield 1983:218-47; Gould 2001:336.

²⁵ Long 1970:121-39, Gould 2001:337.

²⁶ Van Wees 1992:37.

²⁷ See also Nestor's description of Agamemnon, II.79-83.

²⁸ Gould 2001:352.

²⁹ Murray 1980:40-1, Edmunds 1989:27, and Mackie 1996 are good treatments of this theory. Taplin 1992:57 does not understand the label *primus inter pares* and argues that Agamemnon is the summoner of the army rather than a sovereign king, which obliges him to feast his followers, p.48-53, 211.

³⁰ Van Wees 1992:32 and Appendix 3, Hammer 2002:84, *contra* Geddes 1984:36 and Seaford 1994:2n11. Launderville 2003:84 notes that Odysseus' royal authority in Ithaka is not a sufficient basis for power without the wealth which the suitors threaten.

Akhaian states.³¹ Donlan views Homeric society as a 'ranked society', in between egalitarian and stratified societies, in which the chief has authority but little 'coercive power', so that Agamemnon's power relies upon the willingness of people to follow him.³² We may compare Akhilleus' assertion that they followed Agamemnon to Troy to please him, *kharis*, and to bring honor, *timē* to him and Menelaos, I.158.

§4.2.5 There are many other 'leading men' who are capable of initiating actions based upon their 'established social position' or 'standing based upon ability'.³³ Established social position can be defined as the leader of a group, such as Aias over the Locrians, and Agamemnon's position as supreme leader over the Akhaians, which seems to be based on an accepted rather than demonstrable premises.³⁴ There seem to be noblemen, 'leaders of men', and then the chief leader. The 'leading men' are described as *gerontes*, which I translate as 'councillors', as this is the function they perform when thus described. They are Nestor, Idomeneus, the two Aiases, Diomedes, Odysseus, and Menelaos, twice summoned by Agamemnon, II.404-40, IX.89-172, who seems to provide sacrificial feasts as a prelude to the first advisory session. We may compare the Trojan social interactions: Hektor never provides dinner for his 'leading men' and seems to pay his allies, whereas no payment is mentioned in connection with Agamemnon.³⁵ However, Agamemnon seems to provide food and drink for the *gerontes*, as expressed at IV.434, and wherever ultimately these provisions come from, we may infer that he supports the leaders, at least, in this regard.

§4.2.6 In general terms, Homeric leadership is relatively unstable because it is not based upon easily identifiable institutional mechanisms such as taxation or judicial functions and is the subject of much controversy within the poem. The power of a Homeric leader is based upon "wealth, prestige, and military prowess, an informal authority over the other like-named chiefs (*basileis*), and on his ability to act as a redistributor".³⁶ Not only is Agamemnon's leadership based upon potentially changeable variables, he is ruling over other kings, ostensibly given the same rank as he in the name *basileus*. "The kings do not seem to have any function in the world of Homer. They do not make decisions on behalf of the people, they have no judicial function, even their command of the army seems dependent...on their powers of persuasion and their reputation in the eyes of their men."³⁷ This is true to a certain extent,

³¹ Van Wees 1992:40.

³² Donlan 1993:155. Hammer 1997:4 describes Agamemnon's power as based on fear and inheritance. Pucci 1998:189 points out that Agamemnon's ability to compel obedience is never contested.

³³ The terminology comes from Donlan 1979:53, who notes the inadequacy of terms such as 'rank' or 'status' to explain the structure of authority in the *Iliad*.

³⁴ Donlan 1979:53. He stress the elusive cause of Agamemnon's power.

³⁵ Van Wees 1992:40.

³⁶ Seaford 1994:22.

³⁷ Geddes 1984:36. Martin 1989:59-60 discusses Agamemnon's inability to enact a *muthos* before the Akhaians.

and reflected in *Iliad* I: Akhilleus calls the assembly, he, Kalkhas, and Nestor offer their opinions in addition to those of Agamemnon, and Akhilleus proves that the informal authority Agamemnon wields over the other kings is not sufficient to prevent him from withdrawing. Agamemnon often defers to other kings in important matters, such as Nestor in IX.109ff or Odysseus in XIV.84ff. In fact, some scholars view Agamemnon as such a flawed leader as to provide evidence that no clear hierarchy exists in Homer, but rather a 'centrality' based on mutual obligation and the fact that he is Menelaos' elder brother.³⁸ Indeed, if the two criteria for kingship are powers of persuasion and reputation, Agamemnon seems unable to make persuasive speeches and is not the best warrior.³⁹ Nestor, Odysseus, and Diomedes often express this frustration, for instance when Odysseus wishes Agamemnon were not their leader: "Would to god you commanded another army/a ragtag crew of cowards, instead of ruling us/", XIV.84-85. Odysseus here shows that his contempt for Agamemnon's weaknesses is overpowered by his resignation that Agamemnon is their leader. Many modern scholars have even argued that Agamemnon is deliberately and obviously portrayed in the poem in a very negative manner, described by Segal as "the most wantonly cruel of the Greeks".⁴⁰

§4.2.7 Another possible basis for his authority is divine sanction, or even representative of the vestiges of a divine kingship in Homer, which would suggest that Agamemnon's sacrificial authority is mandated directly by Zeus.⁴¹ Drews, discussing the nature of kingship in Homer, posits that the two characteristics of all *basileis* are divine lineage and a special relationship with gods.⁴² Agamemnon often compares himself to the king of gods at crucial stages in the social drama: the start, I.182-7, the first attempt at reconciliation, IX.69-73, and the actual reintegration of Akhilleus, XIX.87-138. Also, Agamemnon is addressed by Nestor in language echoed in the hymns, "I will begin and end with you, Agamemnon", XXI.3-4, XVIII.10-11.⁴³ I would not go as far as to say that Agamemnon's leadership is reminiscent of a divine kingship, but rather that his authority is substantiated through his exclusive control over sacrifice, and therefore his authority may be referred to by him and others in a religious context. His exclusive control over sacrifice has economic implications, and the redistribution theories posited by modern scholars are very complicated due to the inconsistencies in the text. No matter where Agamemnon gets the provisions, he is the sole distributor of sacrificial meat, and, moreover, he is the community spokesperson to the gods. This latter element is less emphasized than the former, but equally important. Launderville has a very interesting

³⁸ Taplin 1990:62-9.

³⁹ Taplin 1990:72, 75; on the battles, see Fenik 1968:15, 84.

⁴⁰ Segal 1971:11, Whitman 1958:156f, Schadewalt 1965:4f.

⁴¹ Mondy 1980.

⁴² Drews 1983:114.

⁴³ Mondy 1980:206. Another interesting comparison is modern scholarship's attention to the god-like role taken on by priests in Greek religion, for example Burkert 1985:97.

study on the legitimation of royal authority through divine sanction and worship: "An important factor in whether or not people obeyed a directive from the king was their perception of the king as one obedient to and empowered by God or the gods."⁴⁴ He recognizes that contrary to other examples in the Bible and old Babylonian texts, Agamemnon ignores the potential divine sanctioning of his rule, relying more heavily on material goods to control his flock.⁴⁵ I would add that Agamemnon's frustrated attempts to influence the gods on behalf of his men, presented through the medium of public ritual, is directly contrasted with Akhilleus' unique ability to influence the gods through his mother.

§4.2.8 If Agamemnon is an inadequate leader, why do the others concede the power to him? Certainly Agamemnon is the leader and highest authority of the Akhaians: Nestor cautions Akhilleus that no man has *timē* equal to Agamemnon, I.275f. The catalogue of heroes explains that he leads the most men as well as being ἄριστος, II.580.⁴⁶ The importance of his leadership over the others is constantly emphasized throughout the narrative, such as the description of his sceptre, II.100-8. Agamemnon is the chief leader, but he is not an autocrat. Others have the power to call an assembly or withdraw from the war, if they so choose. He often asks the opinions of others and is easily persuaded, such as II.360ff, when Nestor advises him to separate the men into clans. However, no one can tell Agamemnon what to do, some people, such as Khalkhas, are afraid of him, and no other kings withdraw with Akhilleus, even though we are told that they wanted to respect the priest's request, I.22-3. Although he asks advice of other people, his approval must be given before any action is taken.⁴⁷

So, Agamemnon is certainly the chief leader, but partly due to his own shortcomings and partly due to the tenuous nature of leadership in Homeric society, he and others must constantly identify and define his authority. Austin concludes: "Among the kings there is one acknowledged superior, but he is not the superior in either fighting or planning; his superior authority is merely accepted."⁴⁸ I think that his one successful display of his authority is sacrifice. As a necessarily group action, sacrifice brings together members of a community, but distinguishes one from all others, the sacrificer. Sacrifice provides the only clear, unassailable demonstration of Agamemnon's dominance over the other kings, something that need exist, but is questionable in other areas of leadership, in which other heroes seem better equipped.

⁴⁴ Launderville 2003:1. Compare also Luce 1978:78: "The king under Zeus is the ultimate source of authority. His word is the law."

⁴⁵ Launderville 2003:41, 75; Carlier 1984:193, 202-3 cites Briseis as an example of this.

⁴⁶ See Nagy 1979:26ff on the semantics of ἄριστος. On the problems with Agamemnon's entry in the catalogue, Kirk 1985:181ff and Page 1959:130-2.

⁴⁷ In Book IX, Agamemnon calls the assembly, Diomedes and Nestor speak, and action is only taken with Agamemnon's assent, IX.9-732. The assembly in Book X repeats this pattern, X.204-34: Shear 2004:n.594.

⁴⁸ Austin 1975:109. It is important to distinguish between authority and power, as does Hammer 2002:85-5: Agamemnon's authority remains intact, but the withdrawal of Akhilleus weakens his power.

Martin has described the poem as the conflict between 'status-based *timē* and 'performance-based judgements', adding the important thesis that status must be re-created and re-affirmed, typically through persuasive speech.⁴⁹ Standing based upon ability is honor or deference given to a hero because of a certain skill, such as Nestor's acknowledged talent in speech making persuades others to listen to him. To fulfil a social role is to have *aretē*, which in turn leads to *kleos* and *timē*. *Timē* may be defined as "honor, value, worth, recompense", a concept important in a hierarchical society, in which individuals are not equal, but identified in terms of rank.⁵⁰ *Timē* is the immediate compensation, *kleos* the gift of immortality.⁵¹ *Timē* can often be demonstrated through honorary portions of food at a communal meal, an important part of the theme of sacrifice, as described by Hektor, VIII.538-40, and Glaukos and Sarpedon, XII.310-11. On the one hand, Agamemnon is the chief king based upon his status. On the other, Akhilleus can challenge his authority on the basis of his own status as the best warrior, the ultimate key to Greek victory. In other words, Agamemnon does not perform actions which earn him his status, but rather has an accepted authority seemingly based upon his wealth and power. I will argue that sacrifice is thematically connected with his royal authority, rather than his status, a demonstration of his supremacy, an aspect questioned by many scholars in regards to other social institutions, such as speech making.

§4.2.9 Many scholars have noted the importance of sacrificial ritual in political systems. Detienne, in reference to the Classical city, states that "political power cannot be exercised without sacrifice."⁵² Seaford has recognized that the political system represented in Homer is still undeveloped: the state is weak, families are autonomous, and ritual and reciprocity play the central roles which 'co-operative virtues' will later play in the *polis*.⁵³ Seaford considers the role of the sacrificial feast as a ritual largesse utilized to achieve social integration: "Collective participation in the ritual as well as the distribution of meat in a fixed order create community".⁵⁴ This statement may well apply to Classical representations of sacrifice, but it is precisely the dominance of Agamemnon in the *Iliad* and household leaders in the *Odyssey* that is so remarkable and constitutes a clear pattern of sacrificial practice based upon social power. As demonstrated in chapter three, all enacted sacrifices are performed by Agamemnon or under his authority. Agamemnon does not use sacrifice to achieve social

⁴⁹ Martin 1989:97.

⁵⁰ Nagy 1979:72-3, 118, 149; Martin 1989:97. See also Muellner 1996. Stanley 1993:39f has analysed the structure of Book I as an interlocking series of events relating to wrath and divine will, *boulē*.

⁵¹ Nagy 1979:184.

⁵² Detienne 1989:3.

⁵³ Seaford 1994:6-7. He follows Finley 1978 (*contra* Snodgrass 1974) in allowing a degree of historicity based on the internal consistencies of the political system within the poems and its resemblance to comparable known societies.

⁵⁴ Seaford 1994:8, 44. See also Puttkammer 1912 and Nagy 1990:270 on the distribution of meat in the ideology of the *polis*.

integration, but to enforce his position of authority. Burkert notes the role of the sacrificer in leading the ritual action, but maintains that the emphasis is on communal participation: "What (sacrifice) means for men is always clear: *koinonia*...Boys and girls, women and men all have their place and their task. Directing the action is the sacrificer, the priest, who prays, tastes, and makes libation; in his awe of the divine he also demonstrates his own power...".⁵⁵ The differences in this sacrificial model, drawn from an amalgamation of Classical sources, and the Homeric picture are stark. Sacrifice in the *Iliad* is a very restricted procedure, performed within the narrative by the elite rather than what could be called a community event.

Agamemnon's biggest challenge to his leadership is Akhilleus' rebellion and withdrawal. How does the chief king re-establish his authority in the context of a mutiny? He does this through the providing for and officiating at sacrifices, a form of redistribution or gift-giving, the economic basis of Homeric leadership.⁵⁶

In regards to Classical Athens, Rosivach has described wide-scale sacrifices as a type of resource redistribution, a reflection of earlier social structures controlled by the 'big man' who reinforced their pre-imminent position in communities by distributions of largess, the type of social hierarchy I would argue is depicted in the *Iliad*.⁵⁷ Hammer defines this social structure as a network of reciprocal obligations maintained by the big-man through gift giving, which is coupled with decision making in the *Iliad*.⁵⁸ The *polis* replaces the 'big man' redistributive type of economy depicted in Homer. In the Classical period, Athens sacrificed and distributed meat to the citizens at all of the major festivals, temple dedications, and to celebrate military successes.⁵⁹ A *lex sacra* from Cos states that heralds would announce the value of the sacrificial victim provided, showing that the material value of the offering was important to the participants.⁶⁰ Sacrificial animals are expensive, and function not only on the religious level of influencing the gods favorably towards the group, but also provide meat for dinner.⁶¹ Sacrificial victims were of considerable value in Homeric society, as demonstrated in the simile in XXII.158, in which sacrificial victims are described as the prize for a race. Providing victims could even be a mark of membership in a society in the Classical times, as was the case for the

⁵⁵ Burkert 1985:58-9.

⁵⁶ Seaford 1994:21 defines Homeric 'chieftainship' as based upon redistribution. See also Quiller 1981. Kitts 2004:29 describes Agamemnon's sacrifices as based on "munificence".

⁵⁷ Rosivach 1994:3n6, citing Xen.*Oikon*.2.4-5 where Kritoboulos provides feasts to maintain his reputation.

⁵⁸ Hammer 2002:146-148. On the "big-man" social model in Homer, see Donlan 1979, Finley 1979, Quiller 1981, and van Wees 1992.

⁵⁹ Rosivach 1994:61, n.138, citing Ar.*Eq*.1320.

⁶⁰ LS 151A.22f; Bowie 1995:464.

⁶¹ Cf. Rosivach 1994:2n1. Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 2.9, gives a description of the *polis* sacrificing at public expense to feed the *demos*; Plato *Laws* 738D; also Theopompos 115 F 213.

Boiotian Federation.⁶² As a comparison, we may look to Alkinoos' parties for the nobles in his city, viii.58-61, and the abuse of this type of hospitality in Odysseus' absence by the suitors. In the instance of Odysseus' home, we are told specifically that the suitors are wasting away his livelihood, which certainly is not provided at public expense.

Some scholars have noted Agamemnon's control over the distribution of property, food, etc., but believe that he is providing these things at public expense, acting as re-distributor rather than a provider.⁶³ Van Wees proposes that the food and wine for the elders is provided at public expense on the evidence of XVII.249-50, where the wine is called *demia*, and IV.343-4, where Agamemnon refers to the invitation of 'we Akhaians' to the feast, rather than to himself individually.⁶⁴ However, a closer look at Menelaos' exhortation to the troops to protect the body of Patroklos in Book XVII reiterates the emphasis on Agamemnon's control over eating and drinking. Fagles translates, "Friends- Lords of the Argives, O my captains!/ All who join the Atridae, Agamemnon and Menelaos/ who drink wine at the king's expense (*demia*) and hold command/ of your own troops, your rank and fame from Zeus!" At this critical moment in the poem, he seems to encourage the men by reminding them of an obligation to Agamemnon in the context of feasting. When Agamemnon rebukes the Cephallenians by claiming that they are "the first to hear the call of δαῖτα ἐμεῖο my feast, whenever we Akhaians prepare the δαῖς for the councillors", IV.343-4, the emphasis is on the possessive, "my feast".

In all of the feast scenes in the poem, if Agamemnon is described as providing for or hosting meals, it is specifically in reference to the councillors, as implied in Menelaos' exhortation, whilst the anonymous army feasts. For instance, in Book II, he commands the army to feast: they scatter off to their huts where they are described as praying, sacrificing, and eating. Agamemnon simultaneously hosts a sacrificial feast in his hut for the councillors, II.400f. We have seen the contrast between the description of the whole army feasting in Book VII, at which point Agamemnon and Menelaos sell wine to the troops, VII.471f, and his private sacrificial dinner after the duel, VII.314f. The social hierarchy has a 'trickle down' effect: Agamemnon provides for the councillors, who might then be expected to provide for their own men, just as Agamemnon commands the leaders, who are then expected to command their own troops, as in Menelaos' speech above. So, Akhilleus provides a 'funeral feast' for the Myrmidons exclusively, XXIII.29.

⁶² LS 71.7-12, cf. Aristophanes *Clouds* 386; Bowie 1995:464n12-13 lists the *testimonia* for this practice.

⁶³ Van Wees 1992:35-6.

⁶⁴ Van Wees 1992:32.

§4.2.10 Why do the Akhaians obey Agamemnon? Therein lies the best evidence for an understanding of the Akhaian society, an accepted reality that is never universally defined nor consistently described within the narrative with identifiable terminology. Akhilleus' challenge to Agamemnon's authority creates the society of the *Iliad* and both characters are thematically linked to sacrifice in very different ways: Akhilleus through his deviance from normal practices and Agamemnon through his manipulation and control of normal practices. Dean Hammer, drawing on the work of Victor Turner, creates a definition of Homeric society as a "political field" for "social drama".⁶⁵ 'Political field' is a very useful definition, as it emphasizes that "political" is not a structure or function, but an activity created by the interactions of the characters therein. Questions of community organization, identity, relationships and value systems are raised by the characters in discussions in the political field. "Social drama" is "an objectively isolable sequence of social interactions of a conflictive, competitive, or agonistic type".⁶⁶ Sacrifice is one such social interaction, a representation of status, which can take on an agonistic aura when used to maintain a leader's authority in times of crisis, its function within the Homeric poems, as we shall see. The sacrifices in the *Iliad* reflect Akhilleus' challenge to Agamemnon's authority and in the *Odyssey* are performed in 'happy' societies juxtaposed to the chaos of Ithaka.

4.3 Ritual Authority and Sacrificial Abstinence

§4.3.1 Enacted sacrifices in Homer are a monarchical tool, a status symbol for the wealthy and powerful and a critical method of maintaining the social hierarchy. The theme of Agamemnon's ritual authority is established by the repeated emphasis on his role as sacrificer and the placement of the scenes within the narrative. This theme, like all themes in the *Iliad*, directly relates to the central action, the anger of Akhilleus. Sacrifice is used in Book I and throughout the poem as a symbol of Akhilleus' isolation, and embedded and enacted sacrifices provide a framework for his withdrawal in the challenge that it poses to the chief leader.

It has been well noted by Nagy, followed by Martin, that *timē* is the guiding force behind the actions of Book I.⁶⁷ Akhilleus' *timē* is slighted when Agamemnon publicly asserts his superior authority by taking away Briseis, I.505-10, 559ff. The response of Nestor, who here identifies himself as the wise advisor to the king, is telling. He counsils Agamemnon not to take Briseis, I.275-81, although it is in his power to do so, but he even more strongly cautions Akhilleus to respect the authority of a mightier king. "The sequence (I.53-292) as a whole is

⁶⁵ Hammer 2002:12. Turner 1988:33.

⁶⁶ Hammer 2002:14.

⁶⁷ Nagy 1979 and Martin 1989.

organized precisely and strikingly to articulate the conflict that emerges between honor due the divinely sanctioned king and that owed the divinely favored hero."⁶⁸

In addition to the central question of Akhilleus' wrath, which is established in Book I, another pattern of royal authority through animal sacrifice is established. Divine will is appeased by sacrifice, the characters speculate on the wrath of gods in relation to sacrifice, and Agamemnon's first action in the face of Akhilleus' withdrawal is sacrifice. The key issues of *timē* and *geras* which are raised between the king and warrior are also functioning between man and god; the gods favor men who give them their proper *timē*, which Zeus defines as sacrifice.⁶⁹ Agamemnon is the divinely sanctioned king, and is therefore the only person represented performing animal sacrifice, the *geras* of the gods, but is remiss in honouring the *timē* of Akhilleus.⁷⁰ The contrast between Agamemnon's honor towards gods and his treatment of Akhilleus is part of the depiction of the latter's isolation from normal heroic society. By emphasizing Agamemnon's practice of honouring gods and men after his insult to Akhilleus, the poem emphasizes Akhilleus' isolation. Agamemnon's attempts to honor the gods are not necessarily successful, in contrast to Akhilleus' special treatment via his mother, part of an overarching theme of the futility of sacrifice, which we will see more clearly in the embedded sacrifices in chapter five.

§4.3.2 Burkert has described the importance of ritual as a tool for overcoming anxiety: "(Ritual) signals and creates situations of anxiety in order to overcome them, it leads from the primal fear of being abandoned to the establishment of solidarity and the reinforcement of status, and in this way it helps to overcome real situations of crisis by substituting diverted activity for the apathy which remains transfixed in reality."⁷¹ As a necessarily group action, sacrifice brings together members of a community, but distinguishes one from all others, the sacrificer. The first Book of the *Iliad* is an excellent example of the interplay between enacted and embedded sacrifices and the way in which they emphasize Agamemnon's authority. The result of the tension between the men and their leader created by the quarrel is a constant need for Agamemnon to recreate and reassert his leadership, his own form of *timē*.⁷² The quarrel begins and ends with sacrifice. Kalkhas' recommendation that Khryseis be returned with a propitiatory sacrifice initiates the quarrel. The oath sacrifice in Book XIX, the final enacted sacrifice, reunites Akhilleus with the army. The first assembly scene is an incredibly

⁶⁸ Stanley 1993:41.

⁶⁹ IV.44-9; see chapter 5. Compare Hesiod WD.134-7 which describes the gods in the Silver Age as bereft of *timē* because men did not offer sacrifice. On the presentation of *timē* in the *Iliad*, Nagy 1990:135.

⁷⁰ Cf. Nestor's comments to Akhilleus, I.278-9, ἐπεὶ οὐ ποθ' ὁμοίης ἔμμορε τιμῆς / σκηπτούχου βασιλεύς, ᾧ τε Ζεὺς κῦδος ἔδωκεν.

⁷¹ Burkert 1985:55.

⁷² Martin 1989:97. In contrast, Donlan 1979:55 believes that the collectivity of a group comprised of equals does not require the chief leader to re-establish his authority.

vivid illustration of such interaction within Homeric society. We are introduced to the main characters and shown their relationship to one another within their society, and the role played by *timē* in social relationships. Agamemnon's *timē* is most obviously represented by his ability to command others, and an important part of his social control is economic. It is in this context that we get the first sacrifices of the epic, which are as much a part of Agamemnon's domination as the unequivocal prizes he claims from the booty, I.161-8.

§4.3.3 The events of Book I are set out in Table II, with the scenes involving sacrifice italicized to best demonstrate the import of sacrifice in the evolution of the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon. The major events are individually numbered, and will be so referred to throughout this chapter.

Table II

An Outline of Sacrifice in Book I

1. Invocation to the Muse, summary of theme, 1-7
2. Khryses' request of Agamemnon, 8-32
3. Khryses' request of Apollo, 33-42
4. Apollo smites the Akhaians, 43-52
[Assembly, 53-305]
5. Khalkhas advises sacrifice and the return of Khruseis, 53-120
6. Quarrel begins 121-139
7. Agamemnon decides to send an embassy for the sacrifice, 140-8
8. Quarrel Resumes/Akhilleus withdraws, 141-307
9. Narrator describes Agamemnon launching the ship and Odysseus going on board, 308-11
10. Akhilleus goes to his huts, 306-7
11. Embassy sets off / Agamemnon commands the men to sacrifice, 308-17
12. Briseis taken from Akhilleus, 318-56
13. Akhilleus and Thetis, 357-429
14. Sacrifice on Khryse, 430-87
15. Events on Olympos, 488-611

Homeric society is reinforced through the performance of sacrifice, and who leads the sacrifices and who participates in them is an important demonstration of social cohesion. It is fitting that the first Book of the *Iliad* is more concerned with sacrifice than any other in the poem, as this Book so clearly demonstrates the structure of Homeric society. The enacted and embedded sacrifices literally provide a framework for Akhilleus' wrath, with every major event followed by a reference to or performance of sacrifice. Most striking is the imposition of Akhilleus' conversation with Thetis in between the preparation for the sacrifice on Khruse (and Agamemnon's small sacrifice) and the actual sacrifice on Khruse. This narrative structure highlights the impact of Akhilleus' isolation via his abstention from sacrifice, which all other Akhaians perform.

To briefly summarize, Agamemnon must authorize a sacrifice to appease Apollo and return Khruseis to her father. This decision, suggested first by Kalkhas (4) and then supported by Akhilleus (5), leads to the quarrel between Agamemnon and Akhilleus' withdrawal (6-8). The narrator describes Agamemnon launching the ship and Odysseus boarding (9). Then Akhilleus goes to his huts (10), but rather than immediately depicting the conversation with his mother, the narrative describes the disembarkation of the embassy (11), immediately followed by the purificatory sacrifice led by Agamemnon. The seizure of Briseis and Akhilleus' conversation with Thetis follows (11-12), then the narrative shifts to the sacrifice at Khruse (13), before returning to the movements of Thetis and her supplication of Zeus (14). The primary focus of Book one, the alienation of Akhilleus and the threat to Agamemnon's supremacy, is thus literally entwined with the performance of this sacrifice.

§4.3.4 Let's take a closer look at the major events of Book I. The old priest's prayers, I.34-43 (3), initiate the drama. This prayer begins the "plague", which can only be remitted by the return of Khruseis and a sacrifice (5).⁷³ The old priest responds to Agamemnon's denial of his request by retreating to the seashore and praying to Apollo in response to Agamemnon's dismissal of him, the leader's first authoritative act in the poem. Khruses' prayer is successful, leading to the quarrel between Agamemnon and Akhilleus. "The wrath of Khruses-Apollo caused the wrath of Agamemnon, which caused the wrath of Akhilleus-Thetis-Zeus, the main tale of the *Iliad*."⁷⁴ Both Khruses and Akhilleus make unsuccessful attempts to convince Agamemnon to do something, which requests are only accomplished through the help of gods; Khruses is only successful through the help of Apollo and Akhilleus through Thetis.⁷⁵

The first references to sacrifice, that in Khruses' prayer and then the discussion in the assembly scene, leading up to Agamemnon's instructions for sacrifice, are both the results of Agamemnon's refusal to acknowledge the religious authority of a priest and a seer. I believe that Agamemnon's special ritual authority in the *Iliad* eclipses the role which might otherwise be played by a priest. In other words, priests, although never necessary for the practice of Greek ritual, play a surprisingly small role in the *Iliad's* ritual contexts due to Agamemnon's monopoly of sacrifice.

⁷³It is unclear what exactly constitutes the *loimos*, which kills both men and animals. See Pulleyn 2000:138 and Kirk 1985:58. Lord 1960:190 thinks there may be an implicit suggestion of the sacrifice of Khruseis.

⁷⁴Lord 1960:188, who cites Lévi-Strauss 1955:433 on the comparison of patterns.

⁷⁵Lowenstam 1993:8, who does not admit Akhilleus' eventual success through divine agency. He also believes that Khruses is not in danger due to his status as a priest, which is contradicted by the text, where Agamemnon is described as dishonouring the priestly accoutrement and scaring the old man. There are verbal echoes between Khruses' prayer on the seashore to Apollo and Akhilleus' prayer on the seashore to Thetis, first noticed by Havelock 1978:14; Kirk 1985: note *ad* I.348-57.

§4.3.5 Two kinds of ritual experts could be consulted in the Classical period: *hiereis*, henceforth translated as "priests", who were custodians of traditions, and *manteis*, which I will translate as "seer".⁷⁶ The *mantis* was an important part of the Greek army in Classical times, as evidenced in Xenophon, as were sacrifices performed before battle for divination.⁷⁷ Jameson, having collected the historical evidence, surmised that sacrifices in war contexts were almost always performed by the *mantis*.⁷⁸ However, in Homer, priests are not consulted in any standardized or consistent fashion, nor are *sphagia* ever enacted before battle. In Homer, several types of religious professionals are described, usually called *arateres* or *hiereus*. Pulleyn has argued that the *hiereus* is specifically connected to sacrifice, *arateres* to prayer, but the textual evidence is not consistent enough to support such observations.⁷⁹ Akhilleus suggests consulting a *mantis*, *hiereus*, or *oneiropolos* to learn the cause of the plague, I.63. Aristarkhos argued that *mantis* was the generic type, *hiereus* and *oneiropolos* being subcategories according to method of seeing, by sacrifices and dreams respectively, while Zenodotos athetized I.63. Interestingly, Akhilleus suggests that these people can interpret whether the god is angry about lack of sacrifice, but priests are never depicted performing sacrifices.

Priests do not play much of a role in ritual performance in the *Iliad*, active in only one enacted sacrifice (Khruses:I.436f.), one temple offering (Theano:VI.297f), and three embedded sacrifices, none of which describe the priests as sacrificers, (Khruses:I.37f., Kalkhas I.93-100, and Helenos VI.185f). Although there are numerous prophets and seers in the *Odyssey*, there is actually only one priest, Maron, mentioned only as the provider of the special wine in Book ix. The dubious role of priests in Homeric society would be an interesting study on its own. Khalkhas seems to be the only Akhaian consulted in a religious role as a *mantis*, although he never practices *heptascopy*, the primary function of the *mantis* in Classical literature. The Trojans have a few, including Theano who is described as appointed by the Trojans and has a key to the temple, VI.85, 300.⁸⁰ Kalkhas is not involved in any sacrifice and seems to act exclusively as an interpreter of divine signs.⁸¹ He figures in Odysseus' memory of the sacrifice at Aulis in his role as bird-sign interpreter and he alludes to past sacrifices, I.37-42, but does not himself perform or take part in any enacted sacrifices. This reference by Odysseus to sacrifice at Aulis is the only hint of sacrificial practice before embarking for Troy accompanied

⁷⁶ Arist.Pol.1322b describes different types of religious officials. The translation "priest" is woefully misleading, but is the commonly used designation for this complex role. See Henrichs 2006.

⁷⁷ See Pritchett 1979:47-90 and Parker 1998.

⁷⁸ Jameson 1991:204.

⁷⁹ Pulleyn 2000:note ad I.11

⁸⁰ Similarities between the description of Theano and Mycenaean priestesses attested in the Linear B tablets have been noticed. A Mycenaean priestess is described on a tablet from Pylos, Un 6, as a 'keybearer' and in conjunction with textiles in a dedicatory context, Killen 2001:440. Kirk 1990:165 summarizes the discussion on the 'appointment' of Theano, the only priestess in Homer.

⁸¹ Burkert 1985:112.

by divination, which ritual seems to have been *de rigueur* in the Classical period.⁸² It is further indicative of the lack of this practice in Homer that Kalkhas' divination comes from an interrupted sacrifice rather than the anticipated result of the ritual performance.

Khruses employs a traditional *do-ut-des* prayer in which he reminds the gods of past services in order to get something accomplished, which type of prayer, presumably spoken in lieu of sacrifice, is rare.⁸³ Pulleyn hypothesizes that *hypomnesis* may be used by people who would like to sacrifice, but cannot. We may assume that Khruses cannot sacrifice on the shore outside of the Akhaian camps, but why doesn't he return to the sanctuary he describes in his prayer to make this request with an accompanying sacrifice? We next see Khruses at Khruse, which seems to be his place of residence and the cult site of Apollo, I.37-8. But here too the authority of Agamemnon is felt, as Odysseus specifies that Agamemnon has sent the embassy, I.442-5, and provided the sacrificial victims. Although not physically present, Agamemnon has provided the necessary men and animals, as well as approval of Khruses acting as the stand-in sacrificer. Agamemnon cannot physically accompany this sacrifice as it would be an admission of guilt, which he will not be prepared to do until Book XIX, see below. Peirce and Gebauer's work on the iconography of sacrifice is interesting in this regard, as they have pointed out that many identifications of "priests" in vase painting are more probably members of the group who have been depicted with a special significance, such as we might expect of the sacrificer. These individuals are clearly meant to be distinguished from the group, but do not have any recognizable symbols usually found with "priests".⁸⁴

§4.3. Agamemnon's ritual dominance is first established through his contempt for priests, who might be expected to have a protected status through their profession, as Maron appears to have in the *Odyssey*. He clearly establishes his power over the priesthood, who seem to have had a good degree of independence in the Mycenaean record.⁸⁵ It is highly significant that the first two embedded references to sacrifice in the *Iliad* are in the context of Agamemnon's intimidation and abuse of Khruses and Khalkas, the only priest and seer he ever comes into contact with.⁸⁶ Agamemnon's treatment of Khruses, his first action in the *Iliad*, is so brutish that Aristarkhos athetized I.29-31, believing this scene to be inappropriate to the leader's

⁸² For instance, Parker 1998:300n3 cites the following sources which indicate that "fair omens" were typically sought before any Athenian military expedition: Xen.*Hell.*6.5.49 with Szymanski 1908:16, *IG* 1³ 93.23 (ML no.78 c 14), Aeschin.3.131, 152.

⁸³ Pulleyn 2002:133; 1997:16-39.

⁸⁴ Peirce 1993:231, Gebauer 2002:471-8.

⁸⁵ *Contra* Shear 2004:54 who believes that Khruses' supplication indicates his independence in that he is not represented by a king and claims credit for roofing the temple, etc.

⁸⁶ Trojan Polydamas does not fare much better at the hands of Hektor, XII.229; Mackie 1996:33.

character.⁸⁷ Khruses' special status as a priest is clearly described, I.14-15, noticed and then dismissed by Agamemnon, who tells him that this status will not protect him, I.28-9. Khruses' στέμματα are the only reference to priestly costume in the poem, I.14, 28, and Agamemnon specifically states that these ritual implements will not shield Khruses from his wrath.⁸⁸ Agamemnon does not even recognize his status as a priest, calling him γέρων, I.26, whereas the other Akhaians refer to him as ἱερεύς, I.23. Agamemnon's behavior is not only irreverent, but it clearly contradicts the harmonious view of the troops, who unanimously want the priest's desire to be respected, I.22-3. Agamemnon is of course wrong in this respect, but I believe that his attitude is related to his special status as sacrificer rather than general impiety. Kalkhas' role in Book I has been interpreted by Latacz as a deliberate counterweight to the authority of Agamemnon and a relic of a longer account of fighting between the two men.⁸⁹ The marginalized, subservient role of the priests who interact with Agamemnon is a reflection of his ritual dominance. So, when Agamemnon orders the sacrifice to appease Apollo and accompany the return of Khruseis, he wants a 'council-bearing' man to go, but does not think of Kalkhas in this regard.

The other notable feature of Khruses' interaction with Agamemnon is the brevity of this supplication scene in comparison with the others in the *Iliad*.⁹⁰ The embassies to Akhilleus in Books IX and XXIV show the scale on which supplication can be performed in Homer. Edwards attributes the lack of details here to a desire for swiftness and a need to demonstrate Agamemnon's distance from the army, which is emphasized by a focus on their reaction to Khruses rather than Agamemnon himself.⁹¹ Certainly the initiation of the plague is brief when compared with the resolution, the sacrifice on Khruse. The focus is on the sacrifice, rather than the meeting between the priest and pan-Akhaian leader, emphasizing the crucial social difference between these two events: the withdrawal of Akhilleus.

§4.3.7 The plague leads to Kalkhas' recommendation that Khruseis be returned with an accompanying sacrifice (5). The assembly scene focuses extensively on sacrifice and the power

⁸⁷Schol.A *ad* I.29-31, Kirk 1985:56; Bassett 1934:48-9; Erbse 1969 *ad loc.* It is interesting to compare Agamemnon's harsh treatment at the hands of modern critics. On the scene in general, Muellner 1996:98-9. Scully 1986:140 argues that Agamemnon has no regard for "religiously sanctified customs of heroic society", which forces Akhilleus to seek justice from a higher power-the gods. Kitts 2004:29 contrasts the "ritual savy" of Nestor, Akhilleus, and Odysseus with Agamemnon's "undisguised and obtuse" attempts.

⁸⁸Pulleyn 2000 note *ad* I.14 gives the ancient *testimonia* on στέμματα, which seem to have been made of laurel wreaths or wool, the latter supported by Pulleyn. Bassett 1938:48-9, Edwards 1980:6, and Scully 1986:139 think that the emphasis on Khruses' priestly garb highlights Agamemnon's folly in rejecting him.

⁸⁹Latacz 1996:95.

⁹⁰Discussed by Edwards 1980:4-6; Kakrides 1971:125ff has a more optimistic interpretation of Khruses' approach as 'gentle'. On supplication in general, see Thornton 1984. Kirk 1985:55 details the highly formulaic language of Khruses' speech, which further links this scene with other supplications in Homer.

⁹¹Edwards 1980:6.

of this action to influence gods, as do many embedded sacrifices which we will discuss in chapter five. However, despite Kalkhas' initial suggestion to sacrifice to Apollo, I.53-120, it is ultimately Agamemnon who orders the sacrifice, I.140-8, which action is directly tied to his claim of another man's prize, which action causes Akhilleus to withdraw. Agamemnon's response to Kalkhas' suggestion clarifies his own ritual authority in the context of his supremacy over Akhilleus. He tells the others, I.140-8 (7),

ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοὶ
ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμὸν ὅπως ἀντάξιον ἔσται· (135)
εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἔλωμαι
ἢ τεδὸν ἢ Αἴαντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος
ἄξω ἐλών· ὃ δέ κεν κεχολώσεται ὄν κεν ἴκωμαι.
ἀλλ' ἦτοι μὲν ταῦτα μεταφρασόμεσθα καὶ αὖτις,
νῦν δ' ἄγε νῆα μέλαιναν ἐρύσσομεν εἰς ἄλα δῖαν, (140)
ἐν δ' ἐρέτας ἐπιτηδὲς ἀγείρομεν, ἐς δ' ἐκατόμβην
θειόμεν, ἂν δ' αὐτὴν Χρυσηίδα καλλιπάρηρον
βήσομεν· εἷς δέ τις ἀρχὸς ἀνὴρ βουλευφόρος ἔστω,
ἢ Αἴας ἢ Ἰδομενεὺς ἢ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
ἢ ἐ σὺ Πηλεΐδη πάντων ἐκπαγλότατ' ἀνδρῶν, (145)
ὄφρ' ἤμιν ἐκάεργον ἰλάσσειαι ἱερά ρέξας.

"No- if our generous Argives will give me a prize,
a match for my desires, equal to what I've lost
well and good. But if they give me nothing
I will take a prize myself- your own, or Aias'
or Odysseus' prize- I'll commandeer her myself
and let that man I go to visit choke with rage!
Enough. We'll deal with all this later, in due time.
Now come, we haul a black ship down to the bright sea,
gather a decent number of oarsmen along her locks
and put aboard a sacrifice, and Khruseis herself,
in all her beauty...we embark her too.
Let one of the leading captains take command.
Aias, Idomeneus, trusty Odysseus, or you, Akhilleus,
you-the most violent man alive- so you can perform
the rites for us and calm the god yourself."

Agamemnon links his control over Akhilleus with his sacrificial authority; it seems as though the orders for the sacrifice are meant as a signifier of authority. This speech demonstrates both that only Agamemnon can order the sacrifice to be performed (just as only he can decide to give back Khruseis) and that sacrifice is a demonstrable show of authority. His hegemony has been threatened by Akhilleus' actions, so that Agamemnon is forced to recreate and refresh his status, which he does through the performance of animal sacrifice. Agamemnon even refers to Akhilleus as one of the potential leaders of the sacrificial embassy, further illustrating the extent of his power over the other heroes in the context of sacrifice. This is the only type of royal largesse that Agamemnon distributes properly. It seems that Agamemnon does not distribute booty from raids, as Briseis was given to Akhilleus by the men, I.162, and Agamemnon exhorts them to give him another prize, I.135. The quarrel with Akhilleus is caused by Agamemnon taking away prizes which were previously distributed by the men. Akhilleus even tells him that he is undermining his own authority by reversing the principles of redistribution, I.150-1.⁹²

Scholars have been reluctant to interpret this kind of thematic significance in the performance of animal sacrifice in the narrative text.⁹³ Seaford summarizes, "animal sacrifices in Homer contrast with military killing; the predictable and peacefully ordered process of killing and cooking the animal ends in the joyful concord of the feast, whereas on the battlefield all is uncontrolled violence."⁹⁴ Yet, there are two enacted sacrifices in Book I whilst fighting does not begin until Book II. There is another guiding force, more influential within the presentation of the story than reactions to battle, which shapes the inclusion of sacrifice in the *Iliad*. That guiding force is, of course, the central action, the wrath-withdrawal-return of Akhilleus. When Akhilleus grows angry and withdraws, Agamemnon's authority is threatened and must be constantly re-iterated, not least because they begin to lose the war. Akhilleus' isolation from the group is re-iterated through group exhibitions of solidarity and subservience to Agamemnon.

§4.3.8 After Agamemnon has given the orders for the sacrifice, Akhilleus withdraws. The structure of his withdrawal in the midst of the preparations for this sacrifice is very striking. As shown in (10), Akhilleus' withdrawal to his huts is directly followed by the disembarkation of the sacrificial embassy, I.305-10,

⁹² Muellner 1996:106.

⁹³ The only modern study to observe sacrifice as a specialized feature of Agamemnon's authority is a brief mention by Bonner 1930:3-4, who defines Homeric kingship as based upon divine lineage, and lists performing sacrifice as one of the most important duties. Seaford 1994:42-53 does touch on the issue in Homer, as does Launderville 2003.

⁹⁴ Seaford 1994:47.

Πηλείδης μὲν ἐπὶ κλισίας καὶ νῆας εἴσας
ἦϊε σύν τε Μενoitιάδῃ καὶ οἷς ἐτάροισιν·
Ἄτρεΐδης δ' ἄρα νῆα θοὴν ἄλα δὲ προέρυσσεν,
ἐν δ' ἑρέτας ἔκρινεν εἰκόσιν, ἐς δ' ἑκατόμβην
βῆσε θεῶ, ἀνά δὲ Χρυσηΐδα καλλιπάρηον
εἶσεν ἄγων· ἐν δ' ἀρχὸς ἔβη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς.

"Akhilleus strode off to his trim ships and shelters
back to his friend Patroklos and their comrades.

Agamemnon had a vessel hauled down to the sea,
he picked out twenty oarsmen to man her locks,
put aboard the cattle for sacrifice to the god
and led Khruseis in all her beauty amidships.

Versatile Odysseus took the helm as captain."

In chapter three, §3.3.2, I referred to the work of Bakker on linking particles in Homeric narrative; when a μὲν /δέ clause is used, the audience anticipate the second action, giving it an increased emphasis through the medium of oral song performance. Bakker has demonstrated that δέ acts as 'stepping over' signal that a separate detail is being introduced, such as two items in a catalogue; when it is preceded by μέντ he audience anticipate the following action, giving the δέ clause maximum effect.⁹⁵ In the above passage, we see Agamemnon's preparations for the sacrifice given emphasis as the second, even more significant part of the description of Akhilleus' withdrawal. We may also note the accumulation of third person singular verbs referring to Agamemnon's individual authority as the "hekatomb for the god" is put on board.

After the ship is launched, Agamemnon directs the men to cleanse themselves and sacrifice, I.312-7, the first enacted sacrifice of the poem.

Οἱ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἀναβάντες ἐπέπλεον ὑγρὰ κέλευθα,
λαοὺς δ' Ἄτρεΐδης ἀπολυμαίνεσθαι ἄνωγεν·
οἱ δ' ἀπελυμαίνοντο καὶ εἰς ἄλα λύματα βάλλον,
ἔρδον δ' Ἀπόλλωνι τεληέσσας ἑκατόμβας (315)
ταύρων ἠδ' αἰγῶν παρὰ θῖν' ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο·
κνίση δ' οὐρανὸν ἴκεν ἑλισσομένη περὶ καπνῶ.

"The party launched out on the sea's foaming lanes

⁹⁵ Bakker 1997a:62-71, 82. Stallings 1985:123 describes the "extreme compression" of Homeric language in sacrificial scenes, giving every word heightened importance.

while the son of Atreus told his troops to wash,
to purify themselves from the filth of plague.
They scoured it off, threw scourings in the surf
and sacrificed to Apollo full-grown bulls and goats
along the beaten shore of the fallow barren sea
and savory smoke went swirling up the skies."

I.312-7 is set up as a contrast to I.436-74; as the men set sail for Khryse, Agamemnon directs the remaining men to purify themselves and sacrifice. Again, the smallest elements of diction, such as the particles μέν and δέ help draw the audience's attention specifically to Agamemnon. Agamemnon's first sacrifice expresses the theme of his special ritual authority with a μὲν clause describing the men processing to the place of sacrifice, the shore, followed by the king's command for them to purify themselves ἄνωγεν, I.313; the anticipated δέ emphasizes his name. This sacrifice is then directly followed by the removal of Briseis from Akhilleus (12), an interruption in the linear progression of the narrative, which resumes again when the ship arrives at Khryse (14). Agamemnon is represented as leading a sacrifice and then ordering the seizure of Briseis, both demonstrations of his authority. Further, the narrative structure ties Akhilleus' withdrawal and subsequent isolation to the depictions of the rest of the Akhaian army sacrificing, whether with Agamemnon or his delegate Odysseus. In between the launching of the sacrificial embassy and the landing of the ship at Khryse, we see Akhilleus surrender Briseis and explain his woes to Thetis. As his mortal counterparts attempt to influence the gods through sacrifice, Akhilleus employs his own method of communication with divinities, his mother.

§4.3.9 Agamemnon delegates authority for the sacrifice at Khryse, just as he does with the embassy for Briseis in Book I and later in Book IX: he is not prepared at this point to take responsibility for his mistakes. We will later see Odysseus as second in command in ritual contexts, standing by the side of Agamemnon in the oath sacrifice, III.267-8, and then as part of the apologetic embassy to Akhilleus, another example of Agamemnon delegating authority when the situation would force him to take responsibility for his mistakes. The purificatory sacrifice, in which we see Agamemnon in his expected role, is followed by the most detailed sacrifice in the *Iliad*, in which Agamemnon is absent is contrary to the expectations of the audience, an example of the well documented Homeric 'misdirection', in which the narrative creates expectations on the part of the audience, but then frustrates them.⁹⁶ The audience is also being set up for the reconciliation sacrifice in Book XIX in which Agamemnon demonstrates his full sacrificial and social supremacy, which is recognized by Akhilleus, and is therefore the last sacrifice of the epic.

⁹⁶ Morrison 1988:13ff, although he does not cite this instance.

So, the linear, historical narrative resumes with the arrival of the hecatomb at Khruse and the disembarkation. Although Agamemnon is absent, Odysseus immediately notifies Khruses of Agamemnon's authority as they stand around the altar preparing to sacrifice, I.436-444,

ἐκ δ' εὐνάς ἔβαλον, κατὰ δὲ πρυμνήσι' ἔδησαν·
ἐκ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ βαῖνον ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης,
ἐκ δ' ἑκατόμβην βῆσαν ἐκηβόλω Ἀπόλλωνι·
ἐκ δὲ Χρυσῆς νηὸς βῆ ποντοπόροιο.
τὴν μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ βωμὸν ἄγων πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεὺς (440)
πατρὶ φίλω ἐν χερσὶ τίθει καὶ μιν προσέειπεν·
ὦ Χρῦση, πρό μ' ἔπεμψεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
παῖδά τε σοὶ ἀγέμεν, Φοῖβω θ' ἱερὴν ἑκατόμβην
ῥέξαι ὑπὲρ Δαναῶν ὄφρ' ἰλασόμεσθα ἄνακτα,

"Out went the bow-stones- cables fast astern-
and the crew themselves swung out in the breaking surf,
leading out the sacrifice for the archer god Apollo,
and out of the deep-sea ship Khruseis stepped too.
Then tactful Odysseus led her up to the altar,
placing her in her loving father's arms, and said,
"Khryses, the lord of men Agamemnon sent me here
to bring your daughter back and perform a sacrifice,
a grand sacrifice to Apollo- for all Akhaia's sake-
so we can appease the god"

This is the only lengthy scene not to specify the sacrificer along with details of the victims and divine recipient. Like other long scenes, the location is first described, then the victims and the god, all closely linked by the repetition of ἐκ⁹⁷ Only the sacrificer is missing, explained by Odysseus: he is present as the delegate of Agamemnon. Agamemnon cannot be the sacrificer in this context, as this sacrifice is the result of disharmony amongst the crew and a challenge to his authority. Notice the third person plural verbs describing the removal of the hecatomb from the ship, compared to the emphasis on Agamemnon's individual actions in loading the ship, I.307-10. Odysseus brings the victims and initiates the sacrifice, but Khruses makes the prayer and roasts the meat, I.450-7 and 461. So, Odysseus and Khruses share the role of

⁹⁷ Lord 1960:190 thinks there may be an implicit suggestion of the sacrifice of Khruseis, who also seems to be linked to the hecatomb by the repetition of ἐκ.

sacrificer. The fact that there is not one definite sacrificer in this scene further demonstrates the significance of Agamemnon's authority in this regard. Nowhere else in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* does a priest or seer conduct a sacrifice, despite Kalkhas' manifest presence in Books I and II. Also, Odysseus refers to Agamemnon as ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, his special noun-epithet formula associated with the quarrel and his role as sacrificer, as discussed in §3.4.2 and below.

s. We are told by Thetis that the gods are out of town, which suggests that the sacrifices are futile. ⁹⁸ We will return to this thematic tension in our discussion of embedded sacrifices in chapter five.

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§4.4.1 When Odysseus informs Khruses that he is present at Agamemnon's behest, he uses the specialized noun-epithet formula ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων. I

λαοὺς δ' Ἀτρείδης ἀπολυμαίνεσθαι ἄνωγεν·, I.313

αὐτὰρ ὁ βοῦν ἰέρευσε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, I I.402

B

τοῖσι δὲ βοῦν ἰέρευσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, VII.313

ἄν δ' Ἀγαμέμνων ἴστατο·

XIX.249b

r. Narrative repetition, aside from establishing a pattern of significance to the central action of the poem, can also be utilized to create foreshadowing, a popular technique for poems drawn from traditional material already familiar to the audience.⁹⁹ If we move onto the larger level of formulae, we will see how repetition links these scenes together as a group, further emphasizing this action as a demonstration of Agamemnon's authority. Significantly, the formula ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων is used in four of the six scenes. This is the epithet by which he is most often referred; starting with the proem, I.7, he is thus described 45 times.¹⁰⁰ The significance of epithets has been debated by modern scholars, primarily due to the perceived application of epithets inappropriately and a strict interpretation of Parry's theory of economy. For instance, Penelope's hand is described as 'stout', χειρὶ παχείηχ xi.6.¹⁰¹ This question is related to the fundamental issue of the utility of Homeric verse. Parry viewed epithets as ornamental additions applied for metrical purposes to the verse, which did not

⁹⁸ On the latter, Griffin 1983.

⁹⁹ Duckworth 1933, Lowenstam 1993:9.

¹⁰⁰ Parry 1971:39 lists 37. I found 45 with the TLG. Dee 2000 gives a comprehensive list of noun-epithet formulae in Homer.

¹⁰¹ Refuted absolutely by Lowenstam 1993. Kirk 1985:18-19 gives examples to demonstrate the flexibility of meter and the significance of epithets, e.g. Akhilleus is never called 'hard-enduring' even when metrically possible.

necessarily have independent significance, taking as an example δῖος, which is applied to over thirty people, including Akhilleus, leading to the conclusion that the epithet is applied to heroes, but does not have a significant meaning of 'associated with Zeus'.¹⁰² Scholars have developed Parry's excellent work, realizing that the theme and meter have a reciprocal relationship, so that the one does not necessitate the other, but that they develop simultaneously as part of the same process. Meter may be regarded as a 'regulator' or basic pre-condition for the formula, but the context is equally important.¹⁰³

The epithet chosen for the particular event being described is the audience's key to understanding the meaning of the event. Firstly, an overtly expressed subject is not required in Greek and therefore is introduced as a signpost for a separate unit, a device for drawing attention.¹⁰⁴ Bakker has written that the use of proper names in Homer is used to channel the discourse and make "sure that a given event is seen in the right perspective."¹⁰⁵ Nagy has written that the epithets "evoke the persona provided by the tradition"; Foley has explained that the noun-epithet formula acts as a "metonymic pathway to the poetic conjuring of personalities".¹⁰⁶ The persona needed for the theme of sacrifice is that of the top leader of the Akhaians: this person is of course Agamemnon, but the narrative is careful to emphasize his religious role in terms of his broader responsibility for the army. In four out of six enacted sacrificial scenes, the transitional verse contains the formula ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, a crucial moment in the linear progression of Homeric narrative, signalling the beginning of the 'zooming in' process.¹⁰⁷

The use of this noun-epithet formula in sacrificial contexts is highly significant, both as an expression of special authority in the word *anax* and in the use of this formula in reference to the quarrel. All of the Argives at Troy are described *en masse* as *basileis*, VII.106 X.195, as are Nestor, I.277, II.77, Akhilleus, I.176, and Priam, II.373, on an individual basis. Agamemnon is twice called *basileus*, followed by a possessive genitive, 'King of gold-rich Mykenae', the only instances where the noun is followed by a specification of the land under his rule.¹⁰⁸ Skheria has at least thirteen *basileis*, viii.390-1, perhaps comparable to the Mycenaean situation, in which as many as 40-50 were active at one time, and the suitors are twice called by this title,

¹⁰² Parry 1971:84f.

¹⁰³ Nagy 1974:145, 1990:37, Whallon 1969:1-32, Nagler 1974:xxi-xxii, Austin 1975:11-80, Bakker 1997a:98, Lowenstam 1993:13-57, Tsagarakis 1982:34-9.

¹⁰⁴ Meillet and Vendryes 1968:598, Bakker 1997a:97.

¹⁰⁵ Bakker 1997a:93, 94.

¹⁰⁶ Nagy 1990:23; Foley 1990:23, see also Nagy's review of Foley, 1996. So also Bakker 1997a:162, who describes the changing nuances of the epithets to their contexts and the audience's ability to recognise the meaning in the context of the event.

¹⁰⁷ Bakker 1997a:57; Latacz 1977:75-81.

¹⁰⁸ Drews 1983:101, Geschnitzer 1965:101n.8. See Kirk on the *aristeia* of Agamemnon in general, 1962:186.

i.386, 392.¹⁰⁹ *Basileus* is not applied to divinities in Homer, although frequently used in this regard in the Classical period. So, to be a *basileus* probably means to have a high social rank, but not the top position, which seems to be that of the *anax*. This is the title given only to Agamemnon, Nestor, and Priam, defined by Drews as "monarch".¹¹⁰

ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν is not only the epithet by which he is most often referred and is the most closely linked with the central action of Akhilleus withdrawal, as it is used in the description of the quarrel in the proem, I.7. Kakrides has described the significance of the epithets applied to Agamemnon and Akhilleus in the proem, Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς. I.7.¹¹¹ Agamemnon's leadership is emphasized, his defining feature, whereas Akhilleus' divine parentage is highlighted, the key to his revenge. Bakker has written of the "quintessential identity" reflected in a "quintessential name", which for Agamemnon is "monarch of men".¹¹²

§4.4.2 For instance, when Akhilleus insults Agamemnon, he replaces the formulaic verse Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνων, used eight times in the *Iliad*, with Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε φιλοκτεανώκτατε πάντων, I.122. Obviously, an epithet meaning "monarch of men" would have been associated with authority figures. But, there are other ways of expressing this notion, such as κρείων, used thirty times of Agamemnon, or other phrases such as ὄρκαμε λαῶν, used to describe Menelaos.¹¹³ The fact that Akhilleus alters the formulaic verse containing ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν when challenging Agamemnon's authority indicates the representation of his authority in this particular epithet. Agamemnon's superior authority, which is abused, is at the heart of Akhilleus' wrath: when the two men are finally reconciled, preceding the oath sacrifice, Akhilleus twice addresses Agamemnon with the full honorific verse cited above, Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνων XIX.146, 199.¹¹⁴ Here we see how the repetition of ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων links these scenes together as a group, further emphasizing this action as a distinct demonstration of Agamemnon's authority. Of particular importance is the repetition of ὁ βοῦν ἰέρευσε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, II.402 and VII.313, in which the sacrificial performance replaces the honorary adjectives, Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε.

§4.4.3 So, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων is a very important signal of the king's special authority and an expression of the central action, the quarrel. Martin has described Homeric

¹⁰⁹ Drews 1983:102.

¹¹⁰ Nestor is called *anax* at II.77, Priam at II.373. cf. Nestor's ritual authority in the *Odyssey*, which may be a reflection of some sort of special status. Drews 1983: 101f, drawing heavily on Gschnitzer 1966:99-112, argues that Homeric *basileis* can be synonymous with *anax* but the system is undergoing radical changes. A recent bibliography on the topic is given by van Wees 1992:32n.23.

¹¹¹ Kakrides 1971:129.

¹¹² Bakker 1997a:170.

¹¹³ Parry 1971:142 cites the usages of these noun-epithet formulae.

¹¹⁴ Whallon 1969:3.

heroes as authors of their speech as well as critics, because all Homeric speech takes place in agonistic contexts, which is supported by the epithets, the markers of critical praise.¹¹⁵ Scholars since Aristarkhos have noticed the difference between particularized and generic epithets.¹¹⁶ The noun-epithet formula ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων is the particularized epithet, used at important junctures crucial to his quarrel with Akhilleus and as a signpost of his authority. So, the epithet is used by the narrative and other characters to refer to Agamemnon six times in Book IX and and Book XIX, more often than in any other Book. It is only used four times in the poem in individual reference to other characters: Ankhises, V.38, Aineias, V.311, Augeias, XI.701, and Eumelos, XXIII.288, compared to the 45 uses with Agamemnon. The formula is used exclusively in three contexts: sacrifice, the *aristeia*, and speech contexts, describing his own speech, his responses to others' speeches, and in honorific address to him by other speakers, all three contexts signifying social status and worth, themselves the question raised by the poem.

After Book XIV, this formula is used of Agamemnon exclusively in contexts directly linked with Akhilleus. In fact, the entire conversational exchange in Book XIX is marked by the use of this epithet: when Agamemnon approaches the Assembly, XIX.51, at the beginning of his apology speech, XIX.76, in Akhilleus' response, XIX.146, Odysseus' comments, XIX.172, when Agamemnon gives the instructions to prepare the sacrifice, XIX.184, and Akhilleus' final response to Agamemnon in this Book, XIX.199. Nagy has written, "Each occurrence of a theme (on the level of content) or of a formula (on the level of form) in a given composition in performance refers not only to its immediate context but also to all the other analogous contexts remembered by the performer or by any member of the audience."¹¹⁷ So, the use of this epithet in the context of sacrifice is an important key to the understanding of the theme of sacrifice in the *Iliad*. The epithet chosen for the performance of sacrifice is not only significant in of itself, but the position at the end of the verse in every instance insures that the audience will respond appropriately.¹¹⁸

§4.4.4 So, at I.436f, Agamemnon's authority despite his physical absence is made clear by the use of this formula. Agamemnon is described by Odysseus with the epithet most clearly tied with the theme of his authority, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, while Odysseus, whose name is also at verse end, is not ornamented with an epithet. Different verbalizations are equivalent with differing status in the narrative: the narrator has carefully emphasized Agamemnon's

¹¹⁵ Martin 1989:95, drawing on the work of Irina Shtal', and his bibliography at n18 on ranking in Homer.

¹¹⁶ The evidence is summarized by Parry 1971:120.

¹¹⁷ Nagy 1996b:50. Lord 1960:45-6 argued that the oral tradition made little use of purely ornamental epithets, has described themes in Homer as having a *suprameaning*, resonance acquired from all past uses and contexts.

¹¹⁸ On the significance of verse-end noun-epithet formulae, which all characters do not have, Kahane 1994:135-41, cited by Bakker 1997a:170.

authority, even his special ritual authority, by using this highly significant epithet.¹¹⁹ It is most important in this context, as Agamemnon did not physically accompany the embassy, which action would have been an admission of guilt, a minor victory for Akhilleus, something the supreme leader will not be able to do until much later in the epic.

4.5 Agamemnon's Sacrificial Authority in Akhilleus' Absence

§4.5.1 In 4.3 we discussed the thematic links between Agamemnon's ritual authority in Book I and the withdrawal of Akhilleus. If we turn to the remaining enacted sacrifices, the pattern established in Book I is continued. The structure of the poem as a whole, composed of intricately balanced parallel scenes, episodes, and Books, has received much attention from modern scholars. Whitman has shown that the structure of the whole work reflects a geometric pattern, following a complex pattern of ring composition.¹²⁰ As a consequence, the entire poem is structured around and refers back to the first Book, and this trend can be seen also in the use of sacrifice. The delegated sacrifice at Khryse and Agamemnon's grand sacrifice for the councillors in Book II are linked by the exact repetition of ten verses, I.458-61 = II.421-4 and I.464-9 = II.427-32.¹²¹ I believe that the narrative has linked these scenes to emphasize Agamemnon's role as sacrificer: he delegated that authority in Book I, but is clearly identified as the sacrificer in this very similar scene in Book II. Agamemnon's grand sacrifice is preceded by a little description of the men sacrificing at his command, a command so moving that their shouts are compared to waves stirred by the South wind, II.394-401. The narrative emphasizes both the authority of Agamemnon (only he can give the command for sacrifice) and the grand scale on which only he can sacrifice, as demonstrated by the juxtaposition of the anonymous Akhaian sacrifice with his grand sacrifice to Zeus, II.398-403,

κάπνισσάν τε κατὰ κλισίας, καὶ δεῖπνον ἔλοντο.
ἄλλος δ' ἄλλω ἔρεζε θεῶν αἰειγενετᾶων
εὐχόμενος θάνατόν τε φυγεῖν καὶ μῶλον Ἴαρος. (400)
αὐτὰρ ὁ βοῦν ἰέρευσε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
πίονα πενταέτηρον ὑπερμενεί Κρονίωνι,
κίκλησεν δὲ γέροντας ἀριστήας Παναχαιῶν,

"(the troops) lit fires beside their tents and took their meal.
Each sacrificed to one or another deathless god,
each man praying to flee death and the grind of war.
But the lord of men Agamemnon sacrificed a fat rich ox,

¹¹⁹ Bakker 1997a:111 discusses the different ways the narrative can express characterization.

¹²⁰ Whitman 1958:87f; see also Schein 1984:31-2 and Lowenstam 1993:12.

¹²¹ Arend 1933 believes that II.402-32 was composed at an earlier date, providing the model for I.436-74.

five years old, to the son of mighty Kronos, Zeus,
and called the chiefs of all the Argive forces."

De Jong has noted that the narrative includes comments or actions by anonymous Akhaians as a contrast with the leader.¹²² Kirk noticed similarities between the contrasting dinners of the army and the councillors represented here and on the shield of Akhilleus. Here, the army take their dinner while Agamemnon provides a luxurious feast; on the shield, the harvesters eat porridge while the heralds prepare an ox for the king, XVIII.556-60.¹²³ The narrative emphasis on demonstrating a contrast between the wishes of the leaders and their followers has been acknowledged by scholars as potentially relevant to the performance context.¹²⁴ For our study, it is another instance of the link between sacrifice and royal authority. So, the men pray to escape death after an unremarkable supper in their huts while Agamemnon is shown performing a very detailed and grandiose ox-sacrifice to Zeus.

§4.5.2 We find Agamemnon's authority emphasized in all scenes even in the particles which introduce his actions. So, in III.271 = XIX.252 and VII.313, the particle *δέ* distinguishes Agamemnon's authoritative actions from the previous events. In VII.313, the final *thusia* sacrifice of the epic, the established theme of Agamemnon's special ritual authority is specially emphasized. The scene begins with the description of the location, Agamemnon's hut, οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ κλισίησιν ἐν Ἀτρείδαι γέγοντο, VII.313. *δέ* is followed by both *ὅτε* which Bakker has shown is used by the narrator as a signpost for audience participation, and *ἦ*, which is a sign that the audience are in step with the narrative goals.¹²⁵ Then, the same verse identifying Agamemnon as the sacrificer found in Book II is repeated, II.402 ~VII.313, with the substitution of *τοῖσι δέ* for *αὐτὰρ ὃ*

οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ κλισίησιν ἐν Ἀτρείδαι γέγοντο,
τοῖσι δὲ βοῦν ἰέρευσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
ἄρσενά πενταέτηρον ὑπερμενεί Κρονίωνι. (VII.312-4)

"Soon as they had gathered within the warlord's tents
he sacrificed an ox in their midst, a full-grown ox,
five years old, to the towering son of Kronos, Zeus."

These scenes are contextually very similar: II.402 is a sacrifice performed at Agamemnon's hut for the benefit of his councillors and VII.313 is performed at his hut for the benefit of Aias, the substitute for Akhilleus. Both of these scenes involve Agamemnon either inviting people to his huts for sacrifice or honouring them with sacrifice. Either way, he is the provider for the

¹²² De Jong 1987.

¹²³ Kirk 1985:note ad II.402-3.

¹²⁴ For instance, Launderville 2003:295-6, Raaflaub 1989:4.

¹²⁵ Bakker 1997a:79, 75.

others. Τοῖσι δέ casts Agamemnon's ritual authority as a type of ritual largess, re-iterated by his gift of the best meat to Aias, VII.321-2. The sacrifice honoring Aias begins with almost the exact same verse, but αὐτάρ has been replaced with τοῖσι δέ, reflecting the expectations that the audience is familiar with this theme.

αὐτάρ ὁ βοῦν ἰέρευσε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων I.402

τοῖσι δὲ βοῦν ἰέρευσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων VII.313

This full verse introduction to Agamemnon's first feast sacrifice, II.402, is very striking, as his specialized epithet ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων is combined with the particle αὐτάρ which Bakker has observed is unusual. Typically, αὐτάρ would be enough of a signal to the audience alone and would not normally be accompanied by a noun-epithet formula.¹²⁶ So, αὐτάρ ὄδι distinguishes II.402 from the preceding anonymous Akhaian sacrifice, II.400-1, acting as a sort of sign post to draw the audience's attention to Agamemnon.¹²⁷ The combination of αὐτάρ and ὄδι particularly direct the audience to the change of subject from the Akhaians to Agamemnon.¹²⁸

§4.5.3 It seems that Agamemnon's ritual largess is confined to an elite group. He performs two special enacted sacrifices for the "councillors": Nestor, Idomeneus, the two Aiases, Diomedes, Odysseus, and Menelaos, who are summoned by their leader in that order, II.404-8. Agamemnon's summons is presented as part of the ritual action, following the two verse introduction to the sacrifice, II.402-3. The description of the councillors as "excellent elders of the Panakhaians" at this juncture is unique, again drawing the audience's attention to this importance of this event.¹²⁹ The councillors are then described as standing around the bull and sprinkling barley after Agamemnon's prayer. They all then as a group help with the preparation of meat and handling of the carcass, followed by the feast, which in turn leads to Nestor's advice.

Agamemnon's grand sacrifice begins the day of battle, which ends in Book VII with an honorary banquet for Aias, Akhilleus' replacement as champion of the Akhaians. This sacrifice also initiates advice from Nestor and in design and structural function closely recalls the scene in Book II.¹³⁰ Significantly, the sacrifice in Book VII frames the ritual performance with statements about Agamemnon's authority, VII.313-22,

¹²⁶ Bakker 1997a:110.

¹²⁷ cf. Gunn 1971:23.

¹²⁸ cf. Bakker 1997a:62f.

¹²⁹ Stallings 1985:143, Kirk 1985: note *ad* II.404 and p.158 in general on the ancient commentary on this passage, esp. the description of Menelaos coming of his own accord, which was debated in Antiquity.

¹³⁰ See Stanley 1993:56; Bassett 1938:49.

Οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ κλισίησιν ἐν Ἀτρεΐδαο γένοντο,
τοῖσι δὲ βοῦν ἱέρευσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
ἄρσενά πενταέτηρον ὑπερμενεί Κρονίωνι. (315)
τὸν δέρον ἀμφί θ' ἔπον, καί μιν διέχευαν ἅπαντα,
μίστυλλον τ' ἄρ' ἐπισταμένως πεῖράν τ' ὀβελοῖσιν,
ὄπτησάν τε περιφραδέως, ἐρύσαντό τε πάντα.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ παύσαντο πόνου τετύκοντό τε δαῖτα,
δαίνυντ', οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς εἴσης· (320)
νώτοισιν δ' Αἴαντα διηνεκέεσσι γέραιρεν
ἥρωσ Ἀτρεΐδης εὐρὸ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων.

"Soon as they had gathered within the warlord's tents
he sacrificed an ox in their midst, a full-grown ox,
five years old, to the towering son of Kronos, Zeus.
They skinned the animal quickly, butchered the carcass,
expertly cut the meat into pieces, pierced them with spits,
roasted them to a turn and pulled them off the fire.
The work done, the feast laid out, they ate well
and no man's hunger lacked a share of the banquet.
But the lord of far-flung kingdoms, hero Agamemnon,
honoured giant Telamonian Aias first and last
with the long savory cuts that line the backbone."

Sacrifice is an important part of his social control, a clear symbol of his wealth and superiority. The framing of the honorary sacrifice with formulaic noun-epithet formulae expressing his leadership, VII.314 and 322, makes the significance of this action clear to the audience. The sacrificial details of the animal's death and the treatment of the carcass, in comparison to the sacrifices in Books I and II, have been abbreviated, a cause of consternation for some scholars. Gunn describes this abbreviation as an "unusual failure to expand upon the sacrifice of an ox" in order to avoid confusion over the lack of sacrifice upon building the wall.¹³¹ I have detailed the linguistic similarities between the sacrifices in Books II and VII above; the diction supports the theme of sacrifice as controlled by Agamemnon. We may also surmise that the social power of Agamemnon's control is the focus of this sacrificial scene, rather than the ritual process. Agamemnon uses sacrifice at this critical juncture to honor Akhilleus' substitute, Aias.

¹³¹ Gunn 1971:28. Arend 1933:65f argues that the Book II sacrifice is the model for Book I but had no influence on this scene.

Aias is established as Akhilleus' substitute in the catalogue of heroes, in which Agamemnon and Akhilleus are also juxtaposed in a symbolic expression of the quarrel. Agamemnon is described as "bearing himself triumphantly, he was pre-eminent amongst all the warriors, because he was the best (ἄριστος), and he led the most men.", II.579-80. At the end of the Akhaian catalogue, the narrator asks "who was the best (ἄριστος) of the Akhaians?", II.761, answering that Aias was the best while Akhilleus maintained his wrath, II.768-79. Agamemnon is singled out as the best (ἄριστος) in terms of his leadership, whereas Akhilleus and Aias are the best warriors.¹³² While Akhilleus is absent, Aias has an *aristeia*, which culminates in Agamemnon honouring him at a sacrificial banquet, VII.313-23. The catalogue also highlights the tension between Agamemnon and Achilles, "Within the catalogue, the juxtaposition of Agamemnon and Akhilleus at equivalent positions in the series (in the second and next to last sections) demonstrates an interest less in consistent geographical logic than in placement of two conflicting elements in a formal balance that reflects and emphasizes the dramatic polarity established in Book I."¹³³

4.6 The Reintegration of Akhilleus

§4.6.1 Sacrifice establishes the link between the primary leader and his best troops: Akhilleus' departure is marked by a sacrifice, I.436-74, and his reintegration is marked by the last enacted sacrifice of the epic, XIX.250-69. The poem is in many senses a conflict between hero and king. Lowenstam has described the plot of the *Iliad* not as the Aristotelean 'central action', but as motivated by a 'central question': what does it mean to be 'pre-imminent' in the *Iliad*? He concludes that the poem demonstrates the necessity of leadership and gallantry to co-exist, but recognising the impossibility of these two notions being expressed in one person.¹³⁴ If we take a close look at Akhilleus' reintroduction to Akhaian army, we will see that the final enacted sacrifice demonstrated the thematic connection between sacrifice, Agamemnon's authority, and Akhilleus' isolation from normative social interactions.

Initially, when Agamemnon wants to perform an oath sacrifice upon the return of Briseis, Akhilleus tries to postpone any ritual action because his heart is set on fighting immediately, XIX.199f. This attempted rejection is thwarted by Odysseus, XIX.215f, but his speech is concerned with the men fighting with full bellies, and Agamemnon has specifically ordered an oath sacrifice, which will be uneaten. Agamemnon's authority is in this case directly linked to the act of sacrificing and not feasting the troops, which he does not do at this time or any other. Akhilleus addresses Agamemnon with his full ornamental address, including the noun-epithet formula "monarch of men", which I have argued is a marked

¹³² Nagy 1977:26f discusses the meaning of ἄριστος in the *Iliad*.

¹³³ Stanley 1993:24.

¹³⁴ Lowenstam 1993:139.

expression relating to the quarrel and Agamemnon's ritual attempts to stabilize his authority. The full verse address used by Akhilleus, is used restrictively throughout the poem at significant junctures. Nestor twice addresses Agamemnon thus when he begins a speech with advice: after the sacrifice in Book II.434, after the non-explicit sacrificial meal in Book IX.96 and in response to Agamemnon's list of gifts, IX.163, when Odysseus breaks the bad news about Akhilleus, IX.677, reiterated by Diomedes, IX.697, Nestor upon Agamemnon's surprise night visit, X.103, and then twice by Akhilleus in Book XIX, 146, 199.

§4.6.2 It is significant that Akhilleus wants neither sacrifices, food, nor the prizes which he seemed so eager for in Book I. However, Agamemnon persists, and is described by the narrative in the last performance of sacrifice in the epic, an oath sacrifice, in which a boar is slaughtered with the same verses used in the earlier oath sacrifice,

Ἄτρειδης δὲ ἐρυσσάμενος χεῖρεςσι μάχαιραν,
ἦ οἱ πὰρ ξίφος μέγα κουλεὸν αἰὲν ἄωρτο, (III.271-4) = (XIX.252-3)
"Atreus' son drew forth the dagger always slung
at his battle sword's big sheath"

Agamemnon's speech to Akhilleus, XIX.78-144 has been much discussed by scholars, primarily in his clever avoidance of a direct apology, his delayed recognition of the person of Akhilleus until the end of the speech, and his unprecedented claim to understand the minds of the gods.¹³⁵ Akhilleus' acceptance of Agamemnon's superior authority is demonstrated through his use of the honorary formulaic address and observance of Agamemnon's parade of the prizes and oath sacrifice. When Agamemnon's reign was challenged, he asserted himself through enacted sacrifices. Fittingly, sacrifice is given a particular prominence early on in the epic, when this hierarchy is challenged by Akhilleus' rebellion: seven of the eight sacrifices occur before Book X. The use of sacrifice at this early stage to define human relationships within Homeric society is significant and once these relationships are no longer contested, sacrifice is no longer needed. The last sacrifice, indeed the only sacrifice between Books IX and XXIV, marks the reintegration of Akhilleus into the group. Thereafter, relationships have been defined, established, and unanimously recognized. The performance of animal sacrifice is no longer needed within the poetry, and, although still a topic of conversation, it is no longer practised.

Even here, at his symbolic reintegration, Akhilleus' isolation from Akhaian social practices is highlighted. His withdrawal in Book I has been described as a reversal of the "traditional values of a competitive system in which men are judged by their success and

¹³⁵ Rabel 1997:82f is a good discussion of this speech as Agamemnon's personal description of the plot of the poem; see also Lohmann 1970:173-4, Arend 1933:117, Dodds 1951:1-27, and Edwards 1991 note *ad loc.*

failure in visible action"¹³⁶ I believe that two of these traditional values which is reversed is sacrifice and feasting, the former of which Akhilleus never performs or takes an active part in, and the latter is used as a direct symbol of his ritual deviance and isolation. Agamemnon tries to compete with Akhilleus in aristocratic gift exchange by imposing gifts upon him, which Akhilleus rejects.¹³⁷ This oath sacrifice, like that in Book III, is uneaten: Talthymbios throws the boar into the sea, XIX.267. Although he declines to eat, he cannot decline Agamemnon's oath sacrifice, which is specifically depicted as uneaten and separate from the troops' meal alluded to by Odysseus and Akhilleus, XIX.275. Interestingly, Akhilleus, when urged to eat by the councillors, refuses and remembers how Patroklos used to prepare food for him in his hut, XIX.316, again highlighting food as a symbol of his grief. There has been much work done on the expression of Akhilleus' uniqueness through the symbol of food: he is given ambrosia while fasting, IX.340, he rejects Lykaon's pleading on the basis of a prior shared meal together, XXI.74, his descriptions of the "loathsome banquet", XXIII.35, and his later insistence to Priam that they eat, XXIV.802.¹³⁸

§4.6.3 If we take a brief look at other practices of ritual performed by Akhilleus, we see similar deviations, as discussed in 1.5. Sacrifice, most prominently in Book I, is equally a marker of Akhilleus' isolation and unique status within the poem as of Agamemnon's authority. "Akhilleus confounds the order of the Akhaian system, complicates the conceptual distinction between the two groups and presents an alternative perspective on the way the Akhaians govern themselves as a group."¹³⁹ This is demonstrated by his linguistic uniqueness and authorial knowledge of plot events and other characters' motives, a "narrative focalizer" in de Jong's terminology.¹⁴⁰ Mackie has asserted that "Akhaian culture", by which she is primarily referring to heroic epic culture, "cramps (Akhilleus') style".¹⁴¹ I would add ritual performance: he cannot fit in with the normative procedures practiced by Agamemnon and recognized by the group as a whole.

Akhilleus' isolation from the Akhaians is expressed in two ways, by his own actions and his status as the son of a goddess, which uniquely entitles him to special treatment. He is constantly identified by other characters as the son of a goddess, and is he only semi-divine hero to speak face to face with the gods.¹⁴² His thematic wrath is described as *menis* which is

¹³⁶ Stanley 1993:43.

¹³⁷ Mackie 1996:157.

¹³⁸ See Whitman 1958:178-9, Arend 1933:35f, Stanley 1993:197f and most recently, Kitts 2005:162-165; I discuss this theme in depth in chapter one, §1.5.

¹³⁹ Mackie 1996:138.

¹⁴⁰ De Jong 1987b, Martin 1989:235, Mackie 1996:139, who compares Akhilleus' language to the "wisdom poetry" of Hesiod.

¹⁴¹ Mackie 1996:157.

¹⁴² On his identification as the son of a goddess, I.280, XXI.24, 99: Schein 1984:91,

elsewhere only used of gods.¹⁴³ He is remarkable in his divine opponent, Skamander, and divine help from Athena, Poseidon, Hephaistos/Hera.¹⁴⁴ Schein has observed that however outstanding Akhilles' heroism is, Homer has suppressed all of the invulnerable and immortal characteristics usually associated with this figure in myth.¹⁴⁵ His flexible status as a mortal with special access to the divine is reminiscent of myths of the Golden Age, which are otherwise generally suppressed in Homer. Hera's memory of the gods attending Thetis' wedding hearkens back to Golden Age myths, when gods and mortals feasted together.¹⁴⁶ Iris' wish to join the other gods in the feast with the Eithopians whilst helping Akhilleus light the funeral pyre is a similar reminder.

§4.6.4 We may consider a few other examples of Akhilleus' isolation from normative ritual practice. For instance, the only *da-quia-dedi* prayer unanswered is his prayer to Zeus to save the life of Patroklos, XVI.233.¹⁴⁷ Pulleyn asserts that these prayers are uttered by people who would like to sacrifice, but are constrained by circumstance.¹⁴⁸ I argue that Akhilleus is specifically portrayed in a way that demonstrates his ritual deviance to the audience; so, in a context where sacrifice might be expected, he does not perform it or does so in a strange way that recalls Agamemnon's normative sacrifices as a direct contrast. When Akhilleus withdraws from society, he enters a liminal realm, no longer a functioning member of the community, but whom the others acutely need. He describes Agamemnon's treatment of him as that appropriate to a *μετανάστην*, IX.648, XVI.59, a word which has been variously translated, perhaps best as 'migrant', a foreigner living among others but outside the protection of the community.¹⁴⁹ (A condition Akhilleus creates upon his departure.) Aristotle cites this passage as evidence this Akhilleus was excluded from the civil privileges of the *polis*.¹⁵⁰ His relationships with others are no longer governed by the accepted ordering principles of society.¹⁵¹ Hammer believes that Akhilleus' behaviour is "articulating a notion of autonomy", as he strives for self-sufficiency.¹⁵² Schein believes that Akhilleus has withdrawn to an extra-cultural, semi-divine world.¹⁵³ It is interesting that we find Akhilleus in Book IX, the Book in which his withdrawal is directly challenged, performing a unique version of sacrifice, in direct

¹⁴³ Watkins 1977:187-209; Schein 1984:91.

¹⁴⁴ Schein 1984:81

¹⁴⁵ Schein 1984:91, defends the evidence for the invulnerability myth on the basis of vase painting, n.3.

¹⁴⁶ Scodel 1982 discusses allusions in Homer to "Golden Age" ideology.

¹⁴⁷ Pulleyn 1997:27. The other prayers of this type are I.37, 451, 503, V.115, VIII.236, X.278, 284, XV.372.

¹⁴⁸ Pulleyn 1997:29.

¹⁴⁹ Hammer 2002:94, citing Gschnitzer. West 1966:274, 276 gives a possible derivation for the word. Mackie 1996:139f draws comparisons between Akhilleus' language and the ideology of the poems of Hesiod.

¹⁵⁰ Arist. Pol. 1278a37. Hammer 2002:94-6.

¹⁵¹ Turner 1974:23-59 describes the 'liminal realm'.

¹⁵² Hammer 2002:96, Friedrich and Redfield 1978:285.

¹⁵³ Schein 1984:109. Similar opinions are expressed by Parry 1971, Redfield 1994:93, Nagler 1974:157-8.

contrast to Agamemnon's typical actions. In Book IX, after the animals have been butchered, cooked, salted and served, IX.205-17, Akhilleus commands Patroklos to throw *θηλαί* into the fire, IX.218-22,

αὐτὸς δ' ἀντίον ἴζεν Ὀδυσσεύος θείοιο
τοίχου τοῦ ἑτέροιο, θεοῖσι δὲ θῦσαι ἀνώγει
Πάτροκλον ὃν ἑταῖρον· ὃ δ' ἐν πυρὶ βάλλε θηλάς.
οἱ δ' ἐπ' ὀνειάθ' ἑτοῖμα προκείμενα χεῖρας ἴαλλον.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο,

"The face-to-face with his noble guest Odysseus
he took his seat along the farther wall,
he told his friend to make burnt offering to the gods
and Patroklos threw the first cuts in the fire.
They reached out for the good things that lay at hand
and when they had put aside desire for food and drink"¹⁵⁴

The verb, ἀνώγει, recalls Agamemnon's instructions, ἄνωγεν to the men to purify themselves at I.313, as we discussed in §3.4.2. No prayer or other ritual complement to the action of burning meat for the gods is listed. One may surmise that Akhilleus would like to honor the gods, but cannot offer animal sacrifice on the scale that Agamemnon routinely does because sacrifice is recognized demonstration of the social structure which is headed by Agamemnon. Schein has remarked that the poem can be divided into three stages which mark Akhilleus' movement towards his death and destruction: the *aristeia* of Diomedes, Patroklos, and Achilles, each of which are heralded by Achilles' quarrel, refusal to accept gifts, and decision to die if he can avenge Patroklos.¹⁵⁵ If we accept this model, we see that each of these stages is also marked by sacrifice: Agamemnon's sacrifices in Books I and XIX, and Akhilleus' attempt to recreate the social harmony provided by sacrifice and feasting Book IX. But, unlike Agamemnon, he cannot perform a full-scale, grand sacrifice, nor make prayer or perform other honorary actions towards the gods. Instead, he instructs Patroklos to throw "bits" into the fire, which are then entirely consumed by the flames, and not shared by the participants, such as the *splankhna* in Book II.427. The audience may be reminded of this in Akhilleus' use of spits, ἀμφ' ὀβελοῖσιν ἔπειρε, IX.210, which are only elsewhere used in reference to *splankhna*, I.465 = II.427. Also, the phrase κατὰ πῦρ ἐκάη, IX.211, probably deliberately recalls the expected κατὰ μῆρε κάη,

¹⁵⁴ I have replaced Fagles' translation of θῦσαι as "sacrifice" with "make burnt offering". I define and explore the use of this verb as "make a burnt offering" in chapter one, following Stengel 1910, Burkert 1966:103, and Kadletz 1984:101, echoed by Petropoulou 1986:137.

¹⁵⁵ Schein 1984:35 .

I.464 = II.427.¹⁵⁶ These verses combine the burning of the *mēria* with the tasting of *splankhna*, both actions which serve to honor the gods and bind the participants in the ritual action,

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ μῆρε κἀ καὶ σπλάγχνα πάσαντο I.464 = II.427.

The abbreviated nature of Akhilleus' sacrifice and the description of the offering as *thuelai*, a hapax legomenon, mark this scene as a contrast to the pattern established by Agamemnon. Akhilleus tries to re-create the atmosphere of the Akhaian camps for the embassy in a demonstration of his ability to function outside of Agamemnon's authority. This is made clear in a remark by Odysseus after the meal has been prepared, who says that they do not lack a share of the feast either in the hut of Agamemnon or in Akhilleus' hut, IX.225-6,

χαῖρ' Ἀχιλεῦ· δαιτὸς μὲν εἴσης οὐκ ἐπιδευεῖς
ἡμὲν ἐνὶ κλισίῃ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδῃο

"Your health, Akhilleus!

We have no lack of a handsome feast, I see that,
either in Agamemnon's tents, the son of Atreus,"

Akhilleus attempts to recreate the kind of sacrificial feast and counseling session which Agamemnon has done in Books II and VII, a positive display of his authority and harmony amongst the leading men in his army. However, Akhilleus cannot offer normative sacrifice, to which he is consistently thematically opposed as signal of his isolation and uniqueness; this unusual offering to gods and the remarks of Odysseus further clarify the pattern. The variation from the pattern proves the pattern.

Interestingly, modern scholars have overlooked Akhilleus' alienation from group ritual, as he is not a part of the community sacrifices, nor can or does he perform his own. The funeral of Patroklos is obviously his central ritual action, and it is certainly more significant to the central action than any one sacrifice of Agamemnon, but it is only performed after he is reintegrated into the community, with Agamemnon's approval, and it is a private affair, excluding the other members of the community. It is also an act of extreme savagery, described thus by Schein: "The greatest lapse into savagery in the *Iliad* is Achilles' sacrifice at the pyre of Patroklos of 12 Trojan youths...such deliberate savagery, however, really is not animalistic but distinctively human in its planned brutality and its perversion of an activity (sacrifice) that is supposed to bring humans closer not to animals but to the gods. Clearly Homer is portraying Achilles at this stage of the poem as beyond a boundary that humans in the *Iliad* normally do not cross."¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Stallings 1984:129.

¹⁵⁷ Schein 1984:79.

Akhilleus' superhuman status is part of his alienation from the group, compounded by his special knowledge gained from his mother, in turn influenced by her special relationship with Zeus. His abstention from and perversion of animal sacrifice, as represented from Agamemnon, is perhaps in part related to his more direct access to the gods via Thetis. He is fortunate in his priori knowledge of the will of the gods, still he and other characters constantly express their frustration with their lack of influence over their own lives, and sacrifice is a constant focus for their frustration.

Prayers and Vows

	Speaker	Addressee	Type of Discourse	Argument Function	Location of Sacrifice	Sacrificer	Recipient (Response)	Victim	Food for Gods	Food for Men
VIII.237-44	Agamemnon	Zeus	Prayer	<i>dedi ut des</i>	Altars en route to Troy	Agamemnon	Zeus	Bulls		<i>knise and meria</i>
IX.357	Akhilleus	Odysseus	Vow	Punish Agamemnon		Akhilleus	Zeus, Gods			
IV.101-3	Athena	Pandaros	Command for Vow	Break the truce	Zeleia	Pandaros	Apollo Lykegenos	Hekatomb of lambs		
X.283-94	Diomedes	Athena	Prayer	<i>dabo ut des</i>		Diomedes	Atrytone	Yearling, broad-browed, unbroken, unyoked heifer with gold horns		
VI.270-80	Hektor	Hekabe	Command Vow	Appease Athena	Temple	Hekuba	Athena	12 year old heifers		
VI.85-101	Helenos	Hektor	Command for Vow	Appease Athena	Temple	Hekuba	Athena	12 year old heifers		
I.40	Khryses	Apollo	Prayer	Vengance		I	Apollo	Bulls, Goats		<i>meria</i>
XV.367-78	Nestor	Zeus	Prayer	Get help	Argos	Us	Zeus	Bulls, rams		<i>meria</i>
VI.309	Theano	Athena	Vow	Get help	Temple	We	Athena	12 year old heifers		