

PHOENIX AND THE ACHAEAN EMBASSY

I

The duals in Iliad I 182–198, which is supposed to describe the coming of *three* Achaean envoys to Achilles, have, since ancient times, caused a great deal of lively discussion and proved to be an unresolved problem to contemporary Homeric scholarship¹). It seems to me that often we look for an answer in the wrong direction by treating the Iliad as a piece of *scholarship* which, we all know, it is not and unless we treat it as *poetry*, which it really is, we cannot hope to achieve a better understanding of the poet and his work. It is in the light of this personal conviction²) that an interpretation is attempted here of Phoenix's role in the embassy and so of the use of the duals in question.

In an emergency council of the Achaean chieftains following a recent defeat of the army Nestor advises Agamemnon

1) In his review of D.L. Page's book, *History and the Homeric Iliad* (Berkeley 1959) H. Heubeck said (*Gnomon* 33, 1961, 119) that the "entscheidende Wort" on how to understand these duals was not yet spoken. Prior to this date the subject has been discussed by: C. Rothe, *Die Ilias als Dichtung* (Paderborn 1910) 229 ff.; J. A. Scott, "Phoenix in the Iliad", *AJP* 33 (1912) 68 ff.; F. Boll, "Zur homerischen Presbeia", *Zeitschr. f. Öster. Gymn.* 68 (1917/18) 1 ff., and "Noch einmal zur homerischen Presbeia", ad loc. 69 (1919/20) 414 ff.; H. E. Sieckmann, "Bemerkungen zum neunten Buch der Ilias" *BPhW* (1919) 424 ff.; W. Schadewaldt, *Iliasstudien* (Leipzig 1938) 137 f.; M. Noé, *Phoenix, Ilias und Homer: Untersuchungen zum neunten Gesang der Ilias* (Leipzig 1940) 1–124; P. Mazon, *Introduction à l'Iliade* (Paris 1948) 176 f.; F. Focke, "Zum I der Ilias", *Hermes* 82 (1954) 258 ff.; P. V. der Mühl, *Kritisches Hypomnema zur Ilias* (Basel 1952) 168 f.; W. W. Jaeger, *Paideia II* (Oxford 1954) 25 ff.; A. Lesky, *Anz. Alt.* 8 (1955) 154; C. H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge Mass. 1958) 344 n. 25. A few more discussions of the problem appeared in the last decade: K. Reinhardt, *Die Ilias und ihr Dichter* (ed. U. Hölscher, Göttingen 1961) 233 ff.; G. S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer* (Cambridge 1962) 218; M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad II* (Leiden 1964) 258 ff.; A. Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature* (London 1966) 33; C. Segal, "The Embassy and the Duals of Iliad 9. 182–98" *GRBS* 9 (1968) 101 ff. More bibliography in subsequent notes.

2) On this point see my papers, "The Achaean Wall and the Homeric Question", *Hermes* 97 (1969) 129 ff., and "The Achaean Embassy and the Wrath of Achilles", *Hermes* 99 (1971) 257 ff.

that a delegation be sent to Achilles to make amends (I, 163 ff.), and goes on to nominate the men for the mission, who are Phoenix, Ajax and Odysseus (168f.), adding that two heralds, Odius and Eurybates, accompany them (170). His advice is accepted and the necessary preparations follow (173–181). Then the poet continues thus:

τὼ δὲ βήτην παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
πολλὰ μάλ' εὐχομένω γαιήοχῳ ἐννοσιγαίῳ
ἔηιδίως πεπιθεῖν μεγάλας φρένας Αἰακίδαο.
Μυρμιδόνων δ' ἐπί τε κλισίας καὶ νῆας ἰκέσθην,
τὸν δ' εὔροον φρένα τερόπυρον φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ,
καλῆ δαιδαλέῃ, ἐπὶ δ' ἀργύρεον κτλ.
τὼ δὲ βήτην προτέρω, ἤγειτο δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
στὰν δὲ πρόσθ' αὐτοῖο· ταφῶν δ' ἀνόρουσεν Ἀχιλλεύς
αὐτῆ σὺν φόρμιγγι, λιπὼν ἔδος, ἔνθα θάασσεν.
ὄς δ' αὐτῶς Πάτροκλος, ἐπεὶ ἶδε φῶτας, ἀνέστη.
τὼ καὶ δεικνύμενος προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς·
χαίρετον ἢ φίλοι ἄνδρες ἰκάνετον, ἢ τι μάλα χρεῶ,
οἷ μοι σκνυζομένῳ περ' Ἀχαιῶν φίλτατοὶ ἔστον.

Puzzled by the occurrence of duals in this passage Alexandrian scholars suggested that it is possible that the dual number, which here refers to Odysseus and Ajax, replaces the plural in which case both Phoenix and the heralds may be included in the company of the two men³). Following Noé Page has rejected this explanation on the ground that the dual does not, as a rule, stand for the plural but the parallels quoted though illuminating do not supply conclusive evidence⁴). Page's own solution however is not unquestionable and it is not new either⁵), it is

3) Cf. *Schol.* A on 182 *ὑπέλαβον δὲ τινες ταῦτα τὰ δυνικὰ εἰληφθαι ἀντὶ τῶν πλεθοντικῶν* (ed. H. Erbse). Cf. also *ὅτι ἐπὶ Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ Αἴαντος τὸ δυνικόν*.

4) *Op. cit.* 299 n. 1. Yet cf. P. Chantraine, *Grammaire Homérique II* (Paris, 1963) 28f. Page quotes Noé (*op. cit.* 15) with approval: "für die Menge von Dualen im I eine solche Verständnislosigkeit des Dichters anzunehmen, daß er nämlich die Formen nicht etwa mit Pluralen verwechselt, sondern sie gar bewußt als Dualformen für den Plural gebraucht hätte, geht nicht an." But who is accusing the poet of "Verständnislosigkeit"?

5) Cf. T. Bergk, *Griechische Literaturgeschichte I* (Berlin 1872) 595 n. 128; W. Theiler, *Die Dichter der Ilias*, Festschrift f. E. Tièche (Bern 1947) 127, and "Noch einmal die Dichter der Ilias", *Thesaurismata*, Festschr. f. I. Kapp (München 1954) 126; W. Leaf, *The Iliad I* (London 1900) 384; F. Bethe, *Homér: Dichtung und Sage I, Ilias* (Leipzig und Berlin 1914) 76f.; E. Drerup, *Das Homerproblem in der Gegenwart* (Würzburg 1921) 350 n. 4.

only newly framed: "There is only one way out: the text is a combination of two things, *an embassy without Phoenix, and an embassy with him*. The special introduction of Phoenix is immediately followed by a passage which presupposes that no such person has been mentioned at all. An embassy of two and an embassy of three stand side by side in the text: but the one is incompatible with the other; and the only way of producing such a result is by superimposing the one upon the other, and then omitting to make the proper adjustments. A serious omission, no doubt; but an inconceivable commission. Our first proposition is securely established: Phoenix has been introduced at a later stage into an embassy which consisted of Ajax and Odysseus only"⁶).

Yet this argument is premised on a proposition that seems to be refutable by the Iliad text itself. If some one failed, as we are told, to "make the proper adjustments" in an introduction of Phoenix into "an embassy of two", how can the fact be explained that the same man, whoever committed such a startling error, succeeded in linking Phoenix's name with the rest of the embassy members at a crucial point of the story, namely in Odysseus' report to Agamemnon? He says (688 ff.):

... εἰσὶ καὶ οἶδε τὰδ' εἰπέμεν, οἳ μοι ἔποντο,
 Αἴας καὶ κήρυκε δύω, πεπνυμένω ἄμφω.
 Φοῖνιξ δ' ἀϋθ' ὁ γέρον κατελέξατο κτλ.

We can rest assured that our "man", if we cannot live without him, was quite knowledgeable of his job throughout.

More recently C. Segal has, following F. Boll⁷), argued that the heralds are the real subject of interest to the poet, "at least as far as line 196"⁸). The form *ἐπέσθων*, said of them in v. 170, could be a dual "and if so it would prepare for the later duals

6) Op. cit. 298. Cf. also G.P. Shipp, *Studies in the Language of Homer* (Cambridge, 2nd. ed. 1972) 267, "the duals of 182-97 belonged originally to a version of the embassy without Phoenix". Page also rejects the view held by Schadewaldt (op. cit. 138 f.), Mazon (op. cit. 176 f.), Focke (op. cit. 260 ff.) and others that Phoenix needed not be considered along with the other ambassadors on account of a "special position" he was given. This interpretation may not be very illuminating or convincing but it should not be reduced to an "absurdity" (300).

7) His view of an analogous use of the duals to that of Iliad A 327-347 has been criticised by Schadewaldt, op. cit. 138, and Von der Mühll, op. cit. 168 f.

8) Op. cit. 101 f.

at 182 ff.⁹⁾). But even an undisputed dual here would of course not necessarily suggest that the heralds were given a special position; on the contrary, it can be observed in numerous instances that the person or persons referred to by this verb play an insignificant and subordinate role in the action and receive no special attention by the poet or by major *characters*¹⁰⁾. Homer used "the heralds as subject in order to point up as vividly as possible the connection with Book I"¹¹⁾ but the poet's purpose in doing so is not easily conceivable and a few trivial similarities in the description of two different events do not help us much and in any case they can be understood within their contexts.

Although a *τώ...βάρη* formula (A 327) may at first be thought to be here at work irrelevantly of the context this appears unlikely in view of the fact that the dual is repeatedly used in the immediate context, which means this is done purposely. Yet those who suggest that the duals refer to the heralds as the duals in A 327 ff. do seem to overlook the fact that there the heralds go all alone to carry out an order of Agamemnon, whereas here they accompany other leading personages and that Homer does not, as a rule, focus attention upon minor *characters*, such as servants, attendants, crew and others, when major *characters* are present. In Z 495, for example, the servant nurse attending Andromache receives no attention at all¹²⁾ though she played some role in a previous scene (399 ff.). Another official mission concerning the return of Chryseis (A 430 ff.) must have consisted of picked men and authorized personnel, including perhaps heralds, and yet no special mention is made of them; only the role of Odysseus is emphasized. Characteristic is also herald Idaius' position in king Priam's mission. In the libation ceremony, prior to setting out for the Achaean camp, the herald is barely noticed except when he is standing with Priam (Ω 281 f.) sharing his anxiety over the dangerous journey. A dual in Ω 330 f. is intended simply to remind us that only two men, Priam and Idaius, take part in the mission but a little later Idaius is given the sole noticeable role—a speech of four lines describing his reaction to a stranger's approach (354–357). After Hermes

9) Ad loc. 104.

10) Cf. esp. K 194; A 472; Ω 327; N 690 f.; B 542.

11) Op. cit. 105. Yet cf. Focke, op. cit. 257 f.

12) Notice that in I 145, for example, *ἕκαστον* is applied both to Helen, a major *character*, and to her servants; yet later no further notice is taken of them.

joins in the small company (360ff.) the herald is completely forgotten until both Priam and Hermes are gone (470)¹³).

Similarly it can be shown that the embassy heralds do not enter the field of the poet's attention. It is a fact that they do not participate in the action as the "envoys proper"¹⁴ do. They give royal dignity and sanction to the Achaean petition and witness the event¹⁵; they come, in other words, to make official the character of a visit to Achilles and are hardly the protagonists of Iliad A 327-347 as we shall further see.

II

To understand better the duals in the above passage it is important that we first consider Nestor's words concerning his choice of the embassy members (168-170):

Φοῖνιξ μὲν πρότιστα δίφιλος ἡγησάσθω,
 αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' Ἄϊας τε μέγας καὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς·
 κηρύκων δ' Ὀδῖος τε καὶ Ἐὐρυβάτης ἄμ' ἐπέσθω.

The key word here is ἡγησάσθω. Alexandrian critics took it to mean that Phoenix was meant to go ahead of the others as he was not considered an ambassador¹⁶) and Eustathius shared this view¹⁷) which has won supporters in modern times¹⁸). As a teacher and close friend of Achilles Phoenix, it is suggested, is honored by the Achaeans and goes along with them in the recon-

13) Worth noticing are the verses 447 and 457, where Hermes is reported to lead *Priam and his gifts* as though the herald were not there. Cf. also n. 42 below.

14) This is how D. B. Monro, *Homer, Iliad, Books I-XII* (Oxford 5th ed. revised 1963) 344, calls Odysseus and Ajax but does not elaborate.

15) For this very reason Odysseus quotes them in his report to Agamemnon and the Achaean council (v. 689). Of course they are intelligent (Segal, 111); this precisely serves the speaker's purpose. That the heralds come along as functionaries is also suggested by the *scholia*. Cf. T on 170: *ἵνα δηλωθῇ ὅτι δημοσία ἢ προσβεία*.

16) Cf. *Schol.* A on 168: *ὅτι ὁ Φοῖνιξ προέρχεται καὶ οὐ συμπροσβέυει τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσεά, ὥστε μὴ συγχεῖσθαι διὰ τῶν ἐξῆς τὰ δυνικά*. Cf. also *Schol.* T quoted below, p. 200.

17) Cf. his comments (744, 44ff.) on 167f., esp. *διὸ καὶ ὑπεξαιρεῖ αὐτοῦ τὸς δύο προσβείας ὁ ποιητὴς ἐν τῷ, κτλ.*

18) Cf. Sieckmann, op. cit. 425. Cf. also P. Von der Mühll, op. cit. 169, "Aristarchs Deutung von 168 scheint mir die richtige zu sein". Yet cf. also Schadewaldt, ad loc. (n. 6 above).

ciliation scheme to help them out. The point is sound and valid but has never been argued at length and was, as a result, overlooked or misunderstood¹⁹). The verb form in question has created some ambiguity which Alexandrians tried to clear up by linking it with the equally ambiguous adverbs *πρώτιστα* and *ἔπειτα* which Aristarchus explained thus: *τὸ ἔπειτα Ἀρίσταρχος ἀντὶ χρονικοῦ παραλαμβάνει, ἀντὶ τοῦ μετὰ ταῦτα, ὡς καὶ “Ἐρμείας μὲν ἔπειτα”* (κ 370). *βούλεται γὰρ πρῶτον τὸν Φοῖνικα ἀπεληλυθότα εἰς τὸ σκῆνωμα εἶτα τὸν Ὀδυσσεά καὶ τὸν Αἴαντα ὡς προεσβέοντα* (*Schol. A* on 169). Page rejects this interpretation, “there is no suggestion that any interval of time elapses between the “first” and the “then”; it is a matter of precedence, not a sequence in time”²⁰) and quotes *Iliad B* 404–406:

*κίκλησεν δὲ γέροντας ἀριστῆρας Παναχαιῶν,
Νέστορα μὲν πρώτιστα καὶ Ἴδομενῆα ἄνακτα,
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ’ Αἴαντε δύω καὶ Τυδέος υἱόν.*

But *κίκλησεν* is not a verb of motion though as *ἡγησάσθω* and so the adverbs can only suggest “precedence”. If a speaker (here Agamemnon calls out the Achaean elders) wants to give preference to some people over others he has no other way of making known his feelings but by mentioning some “first” and some others “next”. It would appear then that the application of these adverbs in this context does not constitute an exact parallel²¹). One might, for instance, quote *II* 445 ff.:

*αἶ κε ζῶν πέμψης Σαρπηδόνα ὄνδε δόμονδε,
φράζεο, μή τις ἔπειτα θεῶν ἐθέλῃσι καὶ ἄλλος
πέμπειν ὄν φίλον υἱὸν ἀπὸ κρατερῆς ὑσμίνης.*

If Zeus sends Sarpedon home, other gods may, afterwards, decide to send their sons away from the battlefield. It is clearly

19) Cf. for example M. van der Valk, *op. cit.* 258 n. 774, “The whole interpretation of Arist. is incorrect”.

20) *Op. cit.* 298 n. 3.

21) The same is also true of *N* 491 referred to by Page. The “precedence” is suggested by the context, not by an application of *ἔπειτα*. So for instance *γ* 57f.:

*Νέστορι μὲν πρώτιστα καὶ νιάσι κῶδος ὅπαζε
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ’ ἄλλοισι δίδου χαλεσσάν ἀμοιβήν*

Athens should bestow glory upon Nestor and his sons first and then upon other people. The idea of “precedence” is thus suggested by the speaker’s desire.

suggested here that one action would follow another in the course of time²²). In Z 259 f. Hecabe says to Hector:

ὡς σπείσῃς Διὶ πατρὶ καὶ ἄλλοις ἀθανάτοισιν
πρῶτον, ἔπειτα δὲ καὐτὸς ὀνήσῃαι, αἶ κε πῆρσθα.

Hector is asked to make libation to Zeus and other gods *first* and *then* to drink up. The time sequence of the two actions is thus clearly indicated by the adverbs²³).

Aristarchus' interpretation is backed up by numerous passages of the Iliad. Page argues, "ἡγεῖσθαι is confined to contexts in which two or more persons are in movement, and the verb is applied to that one of the persons who takes the lead"²⁴) but there are always nuances²⁵), especially here in view of the position of the adverbs in question. It has not been clearly understood, I think, that though ἡγησάσθω specifically refers to Phoenix in v. 168 the same verb is to be supplied in the next verse since a verb is required here; we have a verb ellipsis²⁶) in 169 but not in 170, where ἐπέσθων speaks for itself. But the adverbs are supposed to clarify the application of ἡγησάσθω: Phoenix's departure is to take place prior to that of Ajax and Odysseus, who are to be followed by the heralds. Phoenix is Nestor's top choice for the business ahead (he mentions him first and gives him the verb too) but what is his reason? The key to the solution of our problem lies in the answer to this question and we must remember poetry is life and its creator does not always interpret it for us.

It has been indicated above that the explanation the *scholia* give for Phoenix's role is rather cryptic and has lent itself to

22) Cf. further A 440 and Z 426.

23) Cf. also Σ 478. Focke, op. cit. 259 understands the adverbs differently.

24) Op. cit. 297 n. 3.

25) Il. A 71 quoted by Page as an illustration of ἡγεῖσθαι in the sense to "show the way" is, for instance, a case in point: in actual fact Calchas neither "showed the way" nor "acted as a guide". The Achaean ships were steered safely through the open sea to Troy by experienced mariners, as we all can see, and so Calchas "guidance" or "leadership" was of a different nature.

26) On this syntactical phenomenon in Homer see esp. P. Chantraine, op. cit. 6f. On the subject in general see H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Rev. by G. M. Messing, Cambridge Mass. 1956) 262 and 674 ff.; R. Kühner-B. Gerth, *Griechische Grammatik* II (Hannover 1955) 565. A line is hard to draw between an ellipsis and a brachylogy.

misinterpretations: *πέμπεται οὖν ὁ Φοῖνιξ οὐχ ὡς προεσβευτής ... ἀλλ' ἵνα τοῖς προεσβευταῖς συλλάβηται* (Γ on 168). Though *συλλάβηται* suggests “to aid” it is not clear in what sense²⁷) and how this justifies or explains an early departure of Phoenix at Nestor’s request²⁸). It seems to me that good old Nestor does not want to let Achilles know of Phoenix’s personal involvement in an affair that concerns Agamemnon, his sworn enemy; the reaction of a hot-tempered man like Achilles could, in this case, be unpredictable. How would he take it to see Phoenix, a Myrmidon, coming together with the others as an official spokesman for Aga-

27) Page, op. cit. 299, following Noé (op. cit. 8) has ascribed to Aristarchus the view that Phoenix’s “business” was to “prepare Achilles’ mind for the interview” but I do not see how this can be inferred from this *scholion*; this notion is rather modern; people around the conference table need a briefing of the business ahead. But not Achilles; his surprise at seeing the Achaeans (cf. p. 204f. below) is sufficient indication that he was not briefed by Phoenix in any way on their coming. Eustathius’ comment on Phoenix’s role (745,2) is not much clearer either: *αἰδέσεται γὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς τὸν διδάσκαλον ἰκετεύοντα*. By virtue of his relationship to Achilles Phoenix may be able to exert some favorable influence upon him but we are not told how and when exactly.

28) It should be noticed that Alexandrian scholars also tried to pinpoint the verse indicating when Phoenix left Agamemnon’s tent. According to A on 180: *ὅτι παρόντος τοῦ Φοῖνικος ἔτι ταῦτα ὁ Νέστωρ ποιεῖ· διὸ καὶ ἀμόσσει τὸ ἐξ ἑκαστον πληθυντικῶς εἰσηγηγμένον (καὶ οὐκ εἰς ἑκάτερον, ὅπερ ἐπὶ δύο τίθεται) καὶ τὸ μάλιστα ὑπερθετικῶς εἰρημένον*. Ingenious though this observation is, it does not clarify completely the situation since *ἑκαστον* might be used even without Phoenix being present, with a view perhaps to the heralds as well. Though minor *characters* are, as a rule, dropped off the picture they are occasionally referred to, along with major *characters*, with the same terms (cf. p. 196f. and n. 12 above). According to another interpretation (A and T ad loc.): *οὐ γὰρ παρῆν Φοῖνιξ, ἐπει κατασχόνεται διὰ τοῦ Ὀδυσσεῦ δὲ μάλιστα*. But one cannot see how Phoenix would feel insulted by Nestor’s attitude after his role was defined in v. 168. This remark in v. 180 attributed to Nestor, the mastermind behind the whole enterprise, may just indicate only that Odysseus was the chief representative of the Achaeans as he in fact turns out to be. He states the official reason for the embassy and Agamemnon’s terms (225 ff.) and he also reports to the commander-in-chief (673). The objection to Ajax’s nodding to Phoenix in v. 223 (cf. Bergk, op. cit. ad loc.; M. van der Valk, op. cit. 229) is not serious (cf. Scott, op. cit. 75 f.; Sieckmann, op. cit. 426). Ajax apparently thought the time had come for Phoenix to speak but in Odysseus’ better judgment the situation required that he make his move. With a persuasive tongue was combined in Odysseus a sagacious mind (cf. also Eustath. 745, 6f.). On *ἤγγεῖτο* in v. 192 cf. below n. 36. It is, in other words, hard to determine at what point Phoenix went off; perhaps he did not participate in the libation ceremony (174–176) as he needed some time to reach Achilles’ tent before the others and make it appear as natural as possible.

emmon, the man he hated most of all living creatures²⁹)? Would he not suspect Phoenix's feelings and whatever else he has gotten to say on a reconciliation with Agamemnon? And would a suspicion of Phoenix's role not put in jeopardy the mission? Nestor must have worried about Achilles' reaction to his friend's participation in an Agamemno-Achaean business and indeed Achilles did not, in spite of Nestor's precautions, fail to notice at an advanced stage of the ambassadors' talk that Phoenix showed more emotional attachment to Agamemnon than was expected of him (612 ff.):

*μή μοι σύγχει θυμὸν ὀδυρόμενος καὶ ἀχεύων,
Ἄτρεΐδη ἦρωι φέρων χάριν· οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ
τὸν φιλέειν, ἵνα μή μοι ἀπέχθῃαι φιλέοντι.*

But what would happen if the wrathful Achilles realized from the very beginning the whole truth about Phoenix's involvement?

Nestor's plan was, I think, to trick Achilles into believing that Phoenix was not aware of the forthcoming event in order that the latter would appear, in the eyes of Achilles, an objective and disinterested observer or participant so that Achilles might perhaps listen to his advice or argument; Phoenix's role was very delicate because of his relation to Achilles and should be played with diplomacy. The Phoenix-Agamemno-Achaean partnership should be kept secret. There are strong indications that Achilles did not allow his men, after the quarrel and subsequent withdrawal from the fighting (B 771 ff.), to associate openly with his enemy and to have dealings with him. Patroclus, for instance, was very anxious to hurry up back to Achilles when after coming to Nestor's tent at Achilles' request to find out a wounded man's name he was asked to take a seat; he refused to stay longer than he thought necessary for his business pointing out that his lord was *νεμεσητός* (A 649). What does this show? Later Patroclus begs Achilles to allow him and the Myrmidons to join the fighting (II 38 f.):

*ἀλλ' ἐμέ περ πρόες ὄχ', ἅμα δ' ἄλλον λαὸν ὅπασσον
Μυρμιδόνων, ἦν πού τι κτλ.*

Patroclus' reaction on these occasions brings out the essential

29) Cf. esp. I 312, 378 and 387.

point that the wrath of Achilles was feared by his own men who had to put up with him³⁰).

It is therefore unthinkable that the Myrmidons would be at liberty to go about co-operating with Agamemnon and his men. Yet some of them concerned for the fate of the Achaean expedition or prompted by personal reasons³¹ seem to have found some way to keep up their contact with Achilles' enemy. Phoenix's presence in Agamemnon's tent proves the point³²). Achilles viewed with suspicion Phoenix's stand on the reconciliation issue but he seems not to have envisaged what actually had happened prior to Phoenix's visit and the arrival of Agamemnon's envoys³³).

30) Notice Patroclus' words in *II* 29 f.:

... σὺ δ' ἀμήχανος ἔπλεν, Ἀχιλλεῦ.
μὴ ἐμέ γ' ὄν οὐτός γε λάβοι χόλος, ὄν σὺ φυλάσσεις

31) That leading Myrmidons desired, in spite of their loyalty to Achilles, to serve the Achaean cause is best illustrated by Patroclus' attitude. In *A* 809 ff., on his way to the Myrmidon camp, he comes across the wounded Eurypylos and at the risk of occurring Achilles' indignation (in v. 838 f. he seems to be at a loss as to what to do) he carries off the man to his tent. Cf. also his heartfelt words in 816 ff. Phoenix must have witnessed from afar the recent major defeat of the Achaean army (Θ 336 ff.) and realized the grave danger (cf. also *Schol.* T on 168; Eustath., 744, 50 ff.).

32) Some took offence at Phoenix's being with Agamemnon instead with Achilles (Page, op. cit. 298; Noé, op. cit. 19 f.; W. Leaf-M. A. Bayfield, *The Iliad of Homer* I (London 1962, repr.) 446). Scott, op. cit. 74, protested aloud, Phoenix was not "a bodyguard of Achilles"! Scott may be right that Phoenix was not required to stay with Achilles all the time but Scott seems to overlook the fact that Achilles and Agamemnon are at daggers drawn, which was bound to have some effects upon the Myrmidons as regards their activities and general attitude to Agamemnon. It is not remarkable that Phoenix "has not previously been mentioned in the *Iliad*" (Leaf-Bayfield); on the contrary, it is natural and understandable since as a Myrmidon Phoenix could not participate in the fighting after Achilles withdrew his men (*A* 306 ff.; *B* 771 ff.). Phoenix is supposed to be a familiar *figure* to those with whom he was fighting side by side against the Trojans before the cursed quarrel started and the fatal split in the Achaean army occurred.

33) His words to Phoenix in v. 617 do not throw light on this point:

οὔτοι δ' ἀγγελέονσι, σὺ δ' αὐτόθι λέξεο μύμων

Odysseus and Ajax are going to announce his decision to Agamemnon; they are his ambassadors as far as Achilles is concerned. But Phoenix too came to his place and unless he asked him to stay longer or spend the night there, he would leave sooner or later, and so Achilles turns to him at the same time he asks indirectly the others to be going.

III

The sage counselor of Agamemnon seems to have manipulated the embassy and especially Phoenix with a view to Achilles' emotional condition at the time as a result of the split between the two men³⁴). Let us now see what the poet does with the ambassadors after Phoenix is gone and whether there is any further indication in the passage under discussion that Phoenix did not walk up to Achilles together with his fellow Achaeans though he was with them in their effort to win Achilles over to give up his wrath. By using the dual Homer focuses attention upon the two heroes, the real representatives of the Achaeans, and moves the heralds into the background. The burden of a difficult mission rests upon their shoulders and since the outcome is vitally important to them personally they are likely to give signs of their concern, anxiety or restlessness, if any; everything they may do or even say on their way over to Achilles is of interest to the poet who watches them very closely. So, we are told, they pray to Poseidon as they walk along the sea-shore³⁵); they need additional divine support³⁶) to bring about the desirable outcome of their mission, which really suggests how they feel about their encounter with the proud Achilles. When the two draw near Odysseus is said to be leading (*ἡγεῖτο*) and this fact should have some significance³⁷).

34) It is possible that Achilles held a grudge against other Achaean chieftains as well for what happened to him though he seems not to have given free vent to his feelings. His remark in his address to Agamemnon (A 321, *οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις*) is certainly worth noticing; also his wish that Achaeans be destroyed or made to suffer (A 409), and perhaps his bitter hint in I 334f. The warm welcome he gives his friends should not mislead us.

35) Segal's objection to Leaf's interpretation ("Poseidon is both chief patron of the Achaean cause, and lord of the element by which they are walking", p. 385), "Poseidon refuses to help the Greeks in 8.200-11 against Zeus' command" (p. 104 n. 16) puzzles me. How could Poseidon oppose the godhead to aid the Achaeans?

36) Notice that they, along with others, prayed to Zeus at Nestor's request (172). People in modern Greece pray to Christian God but also to Saints as the need urges them and the occasion arises (I can only refer to my unpublished research on the religious belief of man in Homer).

37) Cf. Eustath. (744, 61 f.): *Ὀδυσσεὺς μέντοι αὐτὸς ἡγεῖται προῖδὼν τῆς εἰς τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα εἰσόδου ἢ διὰ θεομότητα ψυχῆς κτλ.* There may be, in other words, psychological reasons for Odysseus' "rush". Grammatical application of a term alone does not always in poetry help us much to understand a situation. Very often one hears the complaint "this" or "that" is not told, is not in the text and so does not exist (for a typical illustration of

At the sight of the two Achaeans Achilles leaped up in astonishment (*ταρῶν δ' ἀνόρουσεν*)³⁸) and greeted them cordially (196f.). The dual he uses indicates that he addressed two men and his surprise indicates that he did not know anything about their coming, which further indicates that Phoenix, having called on Achilles a little earlier, held back what he knew about the embassy³⁹). It is true that Achilles fails to name the men he welcomes but there should be little doubt he means Odysseus and Ajax, not the heralds. First of all, his affectionate address (*Ἀχαιῶν φίλτατοι*) bears no resemblance to the formal greeting of the heralds elsewhere⁴⁰). Segal says however, "These differences stress the changes both in Achilles and in the situation which have occurred since Book A; and they also show us an Achilles who is more in command of the situation, yet simultaneously more reasonable and more open to the warmth of human ties"⁴¹). But in the ensuing discussion in his tent Achilles shows that he is no "more reasonable and more open to the warmth of human ties" than he was in the first Book. On the other hand, the heralds, like minor *characters*, play a subordinate role and in the presence of major *characters* they are ignored⁴²).

Taken by surprise Achilles reacts spontaneously in response only to those who stirred him up, momentarily overlooking the

this attitude see Page, op. cit. 300). Sieckmann, op. cit. 426, has aptly said, "Daß da vieles nicht gesagt ist, was gesagt werden konnte, gebe ich gern zu; aber das findet sich oft bei Homer. Poesie ist contractio, manchmal sogar abbreviatio der Natur und Wirklichkeit; der Dichter muß es nur verstehen, so zusammenzuziehen und zu kürzen, daß er unserer Phantasie genug Anhaltspunkte für eine möglichst eindeutige Ergänzung gibt".

38) The expression appears to be formulaic (*A* 777) but *τὼ καὶ δεικνύμενος* in v. 196 (cf. *δ* 59) seems to support the meaning of Achilles' reaction and to add color to it. Compare the English, "Look who is here!"

39) This reaction has been interpreted to the effect that "the picture in the poet's mind is not of an Achilles who has just received a preparatory visit from Phoenix" (Page, 299), but the idea of a "preparatory visit" has never been suggested explicitly by the *scholia* (cf. p. 199f. above) and even if it has it is still open to criticism.

40) Cf. *A* 333: *χαίρετε, κήρυκες, Διὸς ἄγγελοι ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν*. Notice *κήρυκες* as compared to *φίλοι ἀνδρες*.

41) Op. cit. 108.

42) Cf. p. 196f. above. Cf. also *Γ* 263:

τὼ δὲ διὰ Σκαιῶν πεδίωνδ' ἔχον ὠκέας ἵππου

Reference is made to Priam and Antenor but not to the heralds who go along also.

others. In a number of situations Homeric *characters* may be found to react in a similar manner which is too human to be unintelligible. In Z 326ff., for instance, Hector, looking for Paris to scold him for his irresponsible inaction away from the battlefield, rushes in to tongue-lash him paying no attention to Helen or, for that matter, to the servants who are all present. When Hector calms down however he turns to Helen (360ff.) who spoke to him first (343). Had now Hector come to pay a social call he would undoubtedly have greeted both Paris and Helen⁴³) though he would still have ignored the servants. Achilles' reaction to Phoenix's coming is kept off the record presumably because he was a familiar sight to Achilles⁴⁴); the poet is doing well to concentrate on the two Achaeans in his narrative (182–196)⁴⁵) and to describe Achilles' feelings towards them.

Let us read Homer as a *ποιητής* who knows human psyche; we may then realize there are fewer problems in his work.

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43) In K 141f., for instance, Odysseus addresses both Agamemnon and Nestor, though it was the latter alone who awakened him (138f.). Yet in K 164ff. in the presence of Odysseus and Agamemnon Diomedes addresses Nestor alone. His desire to answer the man who taunted him is stronger than consideration of the others present. When upset, we sometimes fail to be polite.

44) The reason should be obvious. Phoenix's relation to Achilles and his family is made clear in I 480ff. He is one of Achilles' chiefs of staff (II 196ff.) but their intimacy is perhaps best illustrated by Achilles' request that he spend the night in his tent (I 617f., cf. n. 33 above).

45) The reference to Patroclus in v. 190, who is listening to Achilles' song, does not necessarily suggest that nobody else is around (cf. also *Schol. A* on 190, *καὶ γὰρ Ἀντομέδων ἐπὶ τῆς κλισίας ἦν, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ Φοῖνιξ*). The truth is the poet sometimes for some reasons focuses upon a person or some persons but not upon others present on the scene as I have tried to show above.