AIDOS AND NEMESIS
in the works of Homer, and their
relevance to Social or Co-operative Values.¹

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There are two words whose significance I wish to examine in the works of Homer—aidos and nemesis. Since completing my original work on this topic, I have had my attention drawn to an article by Verdenius, Aidos bei Homer, published in Mnemosyne of 1945,² who though arriving at the same basic conclusion on aidos as the one I reach here, does so by different paths.

I shall begin by making my stand clear on one fundamental point—a point on which, again, I found myself and Verdenius in complete agreement. If the ancient Greeks use a single word which we find it necessary to render by several different ‘meanings’, it is essential to explore the usages of that word in order to discover the common element behind all the usages and to postulate this common element as the real ‘meaning’ of the word. This is the policy I have pursued in examining individual words in Homer and this is the point on which I take issue with von Erffa in his work on Aidos. Therefore I cite his work only on individual cases and ignore his overall conclusions.

The two concepts aidos and nemesis have been spoken of as if they represent in some way the equivalent of moral conscience.³ It is, therefore, important to discover whether this has any basis in the realities of the Homeric situation. In fact, it is very much a moot point just how far the Homeric hero can be said to have had a personal moral conscience in our sense of the term. “Damit ist die Frage, ob der homerischen Gedanken welt ein unserem Gewissen entsprechendes Gefühl überhaupt bekannt war, natürlich noch nicht beantwortet.”⁴ Behaviour was determined by a social convention so strongly instilled that it demanded automatic, instinctive, unquestioning conforming. It was not involved with the Kantian Moral Imperative, a debate of ‘should I, should I not?’ The concept of ‘I ought’ simply does not enter into the matter—anymore than if, when standing outside a neighbour’s house, we debate whether we ought or ought not to go in and have a bath. We have learned (mathon—II. 6.444) that this is ‘not done’ and it is now habit, an unquestioned piece of our behaviour. We act on it instinctively. When invited to a formal dinner, we sit on a chair and not on the floor, because we have learned this behaviour and thus our thumos (II. 6.444) or seat of instinctive emotions urges us to do it without any debate or inner tension being involved.⁵ We know what to do (oida—II. 11.488). This is how it was for the Homeric hero in his everyday life—and this, in the context of the heroic epic, includes his conduct on the battle field. As aristos, he fights bravely and in the front ranks, without questioning, debate or inner tension. There is no decision to be made. This applies also to normal situations at home for which also firmly established standards of behaviour exist.

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Where ‘ought I, ought I not’ decisions are involved there is also no room either for a moral conscience such as we know it. Where the Homeric hero did find himself involved in attempting to decide on a course of behaviour, he invokes *aidos*, (whose actual significance we shall be examining) and fear of what people will say—the *phatis demou*, which is the most powerful guide to conduct in the Homeric world and which leads Verdenius to speak of “Öffentlichkeit des Gewissens”, a sort of public conscience, in the Homeric world. Such a ‘public conscience’ is, of course, far from our personal moral conscience and corresponds to the picture of a shame rather than a guilt culture. *Aidos* has been described as ‘a feeling of reverence for certain conventions of gods and men’ which certainly comes close to the reality of the case, and it has also been labelled as ‘a sense of shame at wrong doing or disgrace’. This latter definition, since it fits satisfactorily only a few of the instances of *aidos*, should be ignored.

*Aidos* has been variously translated as ‘reverence’, ‘respect’ or ‘shame’. I intend to examine the manner in which *aidos* was experienced and thus to find out what is the common factor in ‘reverence’, ‘respect’ and ‘shame’, each of which can render one of the aspects of *aidos*. *Aidos* is felt by the prospective or actual doer of the deed, and *nemesis* by the onlooker, whether directly or indirectly affected by the deed. *Aidos* is relevant to some actions which are involved in the demands of *arete*-standards, but it also extends to cover action of a more purely social aspect. In eleven instances of the use of the noun *aidos* or the verb *aidesthai* in the Iliad, the context is the battlefield and *aidos* is expected—backed by the dominant code of behaviour of the time—to cause the warriors to fight bravely. Because it involves a demand that the heroes live up to their *arete*, many have interpreted *aidos* as meaning a ‘sense of duty’. I have already shown why I consider a ‘sense of duty’, a feeling of ‘I ought’, to be inappropriate in this society and, anyway, since this ‘meaning’ cannot cover by any means all the instances of *aidos*, I am sure we should look further.

On two occasions, the phrase used to spur the man on to battle is simply “*Aidos, Argives*,” which gives little indication of how *aidos* is experienced! Other somewhat longer passages provide some clues. Twice the phrase occurs “Set up *aidos* in your *thumos*.” The *thumos* is the seat of impulses, passions and feelings. *Aidos* is thus experienced emotionally, in the *thumos*. One passage adds a further detail: “Be men and set up *aidos* in your *thumos, aidos* before other men” (II. 15. 661–2) and another has the same first line and then continues, “Feel *aidos* before each other” (II. 15. 562). *Aidos*, then, is experienced before other men, not simply as a spontaneous personal emotion in isolation from one’s social environment. *Aidos* before one’s fellows leads one to rally and not to run away. In *II. 5. 529–32* Agamemnon urges on the *homilos*, the crowd (line 528), who cannot be expected to be *agathos*, one and all, to feel the demands of their *arete* as strongly as would the true *agathos*, and he therefore backs his appeal to *aidos* with an appeal to enlightened self-interest. The man who feels *aidos*, he says, is more likely to come through the battle with a whole skin. If he runs away, he not only loses his reputation—an entirely sufficient consideration for an
agathos—but also he has no means of defence left (line 532).

Aidos, then, is not sufficient on its own. For an agathos, the demands of his arete reinforce aidos and cause it to prevail even when it conflicts with self-interest, but aidos on its own, where the demands of the dominant social code are not felt to back it up, is not a strong force.

In the Odyssey, Telemachos says that Penelope is in two minds whether she will remarry, or refuse the suitors because she is feeling aidos for the bed of her husband and for the phatis demou, what people would say (Od. 16. 75). What people say is one of the main sanctions used to induce the agathos to maintain his arete unrelentingly. Aidos is clearly involved in this exercise of public opinion. Deos, fear for themselves, and aidos at II. 15. 656–8 held the men in their place in the battleline. And the reproaches of their fellows (line 658) are offered as an explanation for this effect of aidos. Aidos, then implies sensitivity to the vocal criticisms of other men. Immediately, the distinction between aidos and 'a sense of shame at wrong-doing or disgrace' is clear. The latter phrase would need much qualification. As it stands, it would imply a moral feeling (closer to guilt) induced by the very fact of "wrong-doing". In fact, shame is caused rather by other people's disapproving reaction to one's wrong-doing than spontaneously by the wrong-doing itself.

And in a results-culture such as then presented in the Homeric poems, other people's disapproval, if it is effective enough to reduce one's time, honour, would cause shame in the person disapproved of, whether his action was what we would regard as moral 'wrong-doing', morally neutral or morally justified. One must remember, however, that, to cause shame, the disapproval must be effective; otherwise it would simply be ignored; and it will be effective if it is felt by people powerful enough materially to affect the object of their disapproval—e.g. Odysseus' disapproval of the suitors' action in taking over his household. It is to be noted that others (Telemachos, Mentor) also disapproved; but they did not cause shame in the suitors as they could not materially affect the culprits. Disapproval will also be effective if the person disapproved of inwardly agrees with the standards being applied by the people disapproving—though, of course, a Homeric Greek would certainly not analyse the reasons for the effectiveness. Thus quite clearly disapproval of actions contravening the dominant social code of behaviour (the arete standards) is much more likely to affect an agathos than disapproval of breaches of purely co-operative values. A "sense of shame at disgrace" then would certainly be a valid emotion in the Homeric agathos; but it must be remembered that several stages must be present: firstly, an action; secondly, public and effective disapproval of this action, felt as disgrace; thirdly, a sense of shame at the disgrace. Yet I still cannot feel satisfied with this definition of aidos. It is a definition too analytical for a society still at the stage of the descriptive. I prefer the definition offered by E. R. Dodds in The Greeks and the Irrational (p. 18): "respect for public opinion". This removes the moral aspect and recognizes that aidos needs other people to impose it. It has already been observed that aidos has a weak force. A clear example of this is Agamemnon's attitude in II. 1.
Greeks urge him to *aideisthai* the priest Chryses, and accept the ransom he offered for his daughter, Chryseis (lines 22–3). Though *aidos* dictates this course of action, Agamemnon refuses, and thereby becomes *anaides*, without *aidos*, (lines, 149, 158), but not *kakos*, the really powerful word of condemnation in Homeric society. In this success-orientated society his behaviour can be effectively condemned only when it results in the failure of his activities round Troy. This is Achilles' only weapon to bring home to Agamemnon his, Achilles', wrongs. He cannot, by appealing to *aidos*, convince Agamemnon that his action in taking Briseis ought to be remedied, as to term him *anaides* carries little weight. An *agathos* can afford to ignore other people's opinions as long as he succeeds in his chosen course of action, as the suitors show in the *Odyssey*. Only when Agamemnon has been forced to realize that, without Achilles, he cannot win the war, does he feel his action in taking Achilles' prize to have been a mistake.

Obviously criticism and censure are based on the values of the critic, and these are, in most cases, going to be those of the society in which he lives. It is to be expected, therefore, that most of the usages of *aidos* will be consistent with the dominant values of society, and that those which do not fit in this way and yet are effective, must be taken as revealing a substratum of values and attitudes powerful enough to exert a strong emotional pull and yet not dominant enough to form part of the major *arete*-standards. It will be valuable, then, to examine the situations where *aidos* was felt as a force, especially where these lie outside the demands of *arete*.

There is a link between *aidos* and fear, the two often being experienced together. Yet *aidos* is not identical with a naked physical fear. A fear of criticism may induce a shrinking feeling within, but this is not the same as fear as such in the face of danger. The more powerful the man whom one is likely to offend, the stronger will be one's fear of his criticism. The greater his sphere of influence is, the greater and more widespread will be the disapproval resulting from action conflicting with his interests, and the more effective his measures against the offender. Thus *aidos* in many contexts tends to be equivalent to a respect for authority, in the human sphere, or a reverence for the gods, in relation to the divine, though the same fear of criticism, and, of course, reprisal, lies behind it. It is part of a man's *arete* that he keeps his place in society and behaves *kata moiran*, in accordance with his portion or station in this rigidly classified society. One has to look only at the handling of the Thersites episode in *Iliad* 2. 211ff., when a breach of the principle that one must keep one's place rouses the anger not only of those whose higher position was challenged (e.g. Odysseus, lines 244ff.) but also of the rank and file, who greeted Thersites' discomfiture with cruel delight (lines 265–70).

As one would expect, instances where *aidos* is felt for a man more powerful than oneself would also be cases where *aidos* may be associated with fear. The heralds at *Iliad* 1. 331–2 were afraid to tell Achilles their errand because they were physically afraid of his strength (line 331) and because they respected his
position as king and the protection it afforded him against their action. When Hermes is sent to guide Priam and Idaios to Achilles' tent, they mistake him for one of Achilles' followers and Priam offers him a gift if he will lead them to Achilles. He refuses to take a bribe because of fear of Achilles and because he feels *aidos* about 'robbing' him "in case some evil happens for me hereafter" (II. 24. 435-6). It would be his duty as a faithful servant of Achilles to guide them straight to him without looking for payment, so that the gift they had to offer would go to Achilles. Thus to accept a bribe is, in effect, to rob him. He feels *aidos* because of his respect for Achilles' position and the greater power of reprisal that it granted.

In *Odyssey* 17. 188-9, the swineherd, Eumaios, speaks of his *aidos* for his master, Telemachos, and specifies that it is his master's reproaches (*homoklai*) and anger that he fears, rather than using the vague phrase "something evil" as Hermes did.

Whereas servants or men in greatly inferior positions experience actual *deos*, fear, as well as *aidos*, an *agathos* will experience *aidos* alone for a fellow *agathos* who is in a somewhat superior position. The king, because of his standing in society is *aiditos*,23 deserving of *aidos*, and Diomedes at *Iliad* 4. 401-2, out of *aidos* for Agamemnon's position, refrains from answering back when he is reproached for slacking. The weakness of *aidos* in this situation, and the difficulty, without any proper social organisation, of maintaining distinctions in position between the various *agathoi* can be seen in the fact that the other *agathoi*, similarly rebuked, with impunity ignore the inhibition felt by Diomedes.

Another interesting example of *aidos* with reference to a respect for position occurs in *Iliad* 10. 235-9 when Diomedes chooses Odysseus to accompany him on his spying expedition and Agamemnon encourages him to make his choice. Here it is by ignoring *aidos* that he will choose the man who is *areios*, who has the greater *arete*. *Aidos*, therefore, does not accord with the *arete*-standards but would imply consideration of birth or power (line 239), regardless of the other fundamentally important aspects of a man's *arete* which make up his ability to maintain his position in life, his courage and prowess in battle. Book 10 is, however, generally agreed to be a late book and perhaps the implied division of hereditary position and actual ability is one sign of this. Yet this passage again shows the comparative weakness of *aidos* in that Diomedes can be praised for going against it. We might compare the incident when Odysseus says that it would be much better to return to his homeland "with his hands better filled" (line 359) as in that case he would be more *aidoitios* (would inspire more *aidos*) and would be more *philos* to everybody who saw him (*Od*. 11. 360-1). Likewise, in his lying story to Eumaios, Odysseus says of his supposed life in Crete: "Swiftly my household prospered and indeed thereafter I was *deinos*, an object of fear, and *aidoitios* among the Cretans" (*Od*. 14. 233-4). *Aidotios* implies that he is worthy of respect and consideration, and the reason that he is *aidoitios* is his wealth and the power it gives him.

The superior position which wins one *aidos* might also be a superiority in a
personal relationship. Although Achilles is younger than Patroklos, he is in a higher social position (II. 11. 786–9); thus Patroklos describes him as *aidoios* and also *nemesetos*, ‘one whose character it is to be angry at wrong’ (II. 11. 649).  

Members of one’s family may require such respect. If it is not the actual person who arouses *aidos*, it may be some emotionally central aspect of the relationship. Hekabe, begging Hektor not to go out to battle, bares her breasts and urges him to “feel *aidos* for these (breasts)” (II. 21. 82).

In *Odyssey* 20, Telemachos tells Agelaus and other suitors that he is not trying to delay his mother’s remarriage. In fact, he says, he is prepared to offer impressive bridal gifts to the man who wins her. But he will not force her to leave his house and accept one of the suitors, because he feels *aidos* about thrusting her out of the house (*Od.* 20. 343–4). At another point, he states more specifically the consequences he fears, which cause him to feel *aidos* at this contemplated action (*Od.* 2. 130–7). He will lose materially and in reputation. He will also offend against the spirits who protect such a hallowed relationship as that of son to mother. His father is elsewhere and therefore could not exact penalties, but Penelope’s father is at hand. The material disadvantages are placed before the damage to his reputation which is involved in *nemesis* (line 137) because the former are obvious evils but the latter could be defied, if he managed to pursue his chosen course of action successfully.

*Aidos* may be felt before the gods and before their priests. In a primitive society, the gods are felt to be both real and mysterious. Their presence is felt so strongly as to make them very real to the members of the society, yet there is also the touch of the ‘numinous’ which makes them something ‘other’. If such a society has a certain feeling about the required conduct in any given situation and this feeling cannot be supported by the demands of the society’s established code of behaviour, the situation may be placed under the protection of the gods and the feeling imputed to their demands. In order to be thus entrusted to the gods, the feeling must be a powerful one, so powerful that it demands recognition. This will be seen to be the case with respect to suppliants and guest-friends.

Without a claim to *aidos* based on one’s position in society, an appeal to *aidos* is a weak one. Lykaon begs Achilles not to kill him when they meet in battle, asking him to feel *aidos* for him and pity him. He claims to be “as it were, an *aidoios* suppliant” to him (II. 21. 74–5). He has no claim to *aidos* as a man, as a recognition of a man’s rights qua human being is an idea foreign to Homeric society. Although he is a son of the Trojan King, this does not give him protection in Greek society. He is simply a defeated enemy. He does not even lay claim to such rights as a suppliant may have, but merely says he is “in the position of a suppliant”, “a sort of suppliant”, presumably because the battle scene would render ridiculous the acknowledgement of a suppliant’s rights in anyone who begged for mercy.

Lykaon feels he may make this claim simply because, as he states, he has eaten Achilles’ bread when he was his prisoner before (II. 21. 76–7). The position of a
prisoner being kept alive for sale overseas is, however, vastly different from that of a guest who is offered hospitality; yet this weak claim is urged with all the force of desperation. "I have eaten your bread; thus there is some kind of peace-time relationship between us and I can therefore make a claim on you that normally has force only in peace-time contexts." By calling him *phile*, friend (line 106), Achilles recognises that Lykaon does have a claim of a kind upon him, though an irregular one, but even so (line 106), in his present mood, he cannot accept the claim. He tells Lykaon, then, that he must die.29

A suppliant, like the guest-friend, was under the protection of Zeus. Therefore, it is the respect due to Zeus upon which the suppliant will base his claim. One must keep in mind, of course, that the gods cannot be treated separately from the society that believes in them. The values placed under the protection of the gods must be those felt by the society to be worthy of such protection.30 Thus, Homeric society must have felt that in some sense the suppliant ought to be considered and that the homeless stranger should be reckoned with, as, in each case, he is an unknown quantity and his powers of reprisal or reciprocation are not known. Not only that but those encountering him might also be afraid of being found in the same position themselves. Circumstances might drive them to be a suppliant to someone else, or to ask for hospitality, as Odysseus had to do, without showing any visible means of being able to repay it. The element of fear of the unknown involved in the feeling about strangers would be represented, too, in legends of gods in disguise asking for hospitality, who, if turned away, would have had the means of taking a harsh revenge.

The *Odyssey* shows us the relationship between Zeus and suppliants. Arete, queen of the Phaeakians, tells her husband Alkinoos to get the heralds to bring wine for Zeus "who attends upon aidoioisin, deserving of aidos, suppliants" (Od. 7. 165). She has just rebuked Alkinoos for leaving Odysseus sitting as a suppliant in the dusty hearth. It must have been felt that atonement must be made to Zeus for neglecting the comfort of a suppliant whose interests were under his protection.31 Odysseus, making his plea for kindly treatment to the Kyklops, asks him to feel aidos before the gods and adds, "we are suppliants to you" (Od. 9. 269). It is aidos for the gods that will lead the Kyklops to treat them as suppliants.

A further example of the position of the suppliant shows how easily a dilemma could arise in the polytheistic Homeric society: hounded by the hostility of Poseidon, who is taking vengeance for the blinding of his son Polyphemos, Odysseus is carried by a stormy sea to a river mouth and he prays to the river to save him: "Hear Lord, whoever you are; fleeing the threats of Poseidon, I come from the sea to you, often besought in prayers. Whoever of men comes as a wanderer is aidoios also (or even) to the immortal gods—as I now also come to your stream and to your knees, having undergone many troubles" (Od. 5. 445–9). The situation, mention of prayers (line 445) and, especially, the naming of one of the main objects by which supplication was made, the knees (line 449),32 all show that Odysseus is a suppliant to the river. It appears that he may
claim the protection of Zeus, the god of suppliants, against his brother Poseidon! This shows the ambivalence in the Homeric concept of the moral attitude of the gods, where one god is a high-minded protector of the helpless, the other a vindictive persecutor of a man whose offending action was unavoidable. As one would expect, this accurately reflects the confusion in values among men. The Homeric agathos would have felt that, as a father, Poseidon was justified in avenging his son, whatever his son’s original offence. Homeric society as a whole was not concerned with moral responsibility for an action.\textsuperscript{33} The action itself and its obvious results were what counted. Yet, as individuals, members of that society would doubtless have felt the unfairness of suffering for an action that was necessary in the circumstances. And, while recognising Poseidon’s right to revenge, Homeric society would also have been aware of some force behind the plea to be recognised as a suppliant.

Varying accounts of the \textit{aidos} felt for suppliants can be seen in a comparison of the three examples cited from the \textit{Odyssey}. In the first, suppliants are \textit{aidoioi} in themselves. In the second, the Kyklops is invited to \textit{aideisthai} the gods and therefore the suppliants. In the third, suppliants and sufferers are \textit{aidoioi} also or even (\textit{kai} 447) to the immortal gods. A man experiences \textit{aidos} in the face of suppliants and thus suppliants are \textit{aidoioi}. He cannot find a sanction for this feeling in his own social code and he accordingly assigns the function of protecting suppliants to the gods. Therefore to \textit{aideisthai} the gods will be to \textit{aideisthai} suppliants. It is only one step from here to feel that just as Zeus is imposing \textit{aidos} for suppliants on the man himself and the other agathoi, he imposes it also on the other gods of Olympus.

The weakness of \textit{aidos} as a restraining influence on the agathos has been noted repeatedly. Gilbert Murray in \textit{The Rise of the Greek Epic} p.88–9 says of \textit{aidos}, “It was an emotion, the keener because it was merely instinctive and was felt by a peculiarly sensitive people. . . . Aidos is a mere emotion, and therefore incalculable, arbitrary, devoid of principle. A man may happen not to feel the emotion and then there was nothing to appeal to. Or again, if he has the emotion, there is no way of judging its strength.” This is undoubtedly true, but in the context of the Homeric society, it is perhaps better to say that some men felt powerful enough to ignore the feeling and to defy the implied or open criticism of their actions, and successful enough to ensure that society could not condemn them in any powerfully emotive terms—terms relevant to the dominant social code. The fact does still stand, however, that in this success-oriented society some scruples were felt about mishandling the suppliant, feelings, which, as they cannot be derived from the \textit{arete}-standards, were attributed to divine causation, being otherwise inexplicable.

The relationship between \textit{aidos} for suppliants and \textit{aidos} for the gods can be seen, too, in Priam’s speech to Achilles asking him to hand over Hektor’s body. He says, “But feel \textit{aidos} for the gods, Achilles, and pity for myself, remembering your father” (\textit{II.} 24. 503–4). He is in the position of a suppliant to Achilles and, therefore, Achilles is to feel \textit{aidos} before the gods on that account. Perhaps
another element comes into this claim to *aideisthai* the gods. Burial or cremation with proper rites was very important to the Greeks and they therefore felt some scruples about denying this to others. The Homeric *agathos* will commonly threaten to do so in the heat of battle. It is the chief dread of the man who fears or expects defeat. Gilbert Murray points out that probably in earlier epic poetry in the Homeric tradition, bodies were in fact mutilated and mishandled, but as society developed, scruples began to be felt about such actions, so that, by the time that the Homeric poems were co-ordinated, references to such behaviour were removed from the tradition. These scruples were so strong that, once again, the gods were called in to provide explanations for them. When Achilles maltreats Hektor's body in the *Iliad*, it is Apollo and the other gods who step forward in protest, experiencing *eleos*, pity, for the dead man (*II. 24. 18–23*). Apollo's reprobation of the act addressed to the other gods states that Achilles has no *aidos* in him (*II. 24. 44*). One could perhaps, in view of the earlier quotation from Priam's words, say with some confidence that *aidos* here, in Apollo's speech is also *aidos* before the gods rather than other men, as Apollo says later: "He should take care lest we feel *nemesis*, indignation, at him, though he is *agathos*; for in his wrath he is shaming the dumb earth" (*II. 24. 53–4*). It is for the *nemesis* of the gods that Achilles should feel *aidos*. The reason for the *nemesis* is given. In his furious actions, Achilles is bringing shame on the dumb earth, by mishandling a corpse. Again, it is linked to an unreasoning instinctive feeling that primitive man has—a reverence for the awesome elements of nature, that later develops into the sense of the numinous in religion. Here the society is still at the traditional stage. The primitive awe of primary elements is expressed by one of the anthropomorphic deities. Greek religion never wholly lost this awe but retains in its Pantheon the elements Ouranos and Ge, Heaven and Earth, giving them human form. An offence against Mother Earth strikes at the innermost feelings of a man and is therefore felt as an offence against a deity. Achilles, then, should feel *aidos* for the gods and, therefore, cease to offend against them by maltreating the corpse.

It is worth noting that in spite of his lack of *aidos* and general lack of what we might term religious scruples, Achilles is still *agathos* by Homeric standards (line 53) as he has not yet been proved to have failed because of his acts.

It can be seen that certain co-operative or non-competitive values were sanctioned by *aidos* and were given the greatest protection possible by being placed in the hands of the gods. But since the transgression of these values could not be condemned in effective terms, they lost much of their validity. They would be put into practice when they were felt, and when the one who felt them thought that he would not suffer by putting them into practice, but no rigid moral standard could enforce them when such feelings were lacking.

*Aidos*, as has been mentioned, is involved also in the relationship with one's *xenoi*, guest-friends, or one's *philoi*. Because of the predominantly war-time setting of the *Iliad*, only one instance can be seen—in the embassy to Achilles in Book 9, when Odysseus and Aias ask him to "feel *aidos* for your home; we are
under your roof. . . .” (II. 9. 639–40). As in the case when Hekabe exposes her breast, using an emotively strong feature of motherhood, so here they call upon Achilles to feel *aidos* for that which represents the fact that he is their host—his roof. Man has always tended to invest a symbol with an aura of the numinous which he feels belongs to some action or situation, and to feel before the symbol that awe which properly belongs to that which it symbolises. In fact, of course, it must not be imagined that early society consciously separated symbol and symbolised—this would imply far too elaborate and analytical thought patterns. It is worth noting, again, that this appeal to *aidos* fails to win over Achilles.

In the *Odyssey*, the *xenos*-relationship is frequently handled as Odysseus travels through foreign countries, relying on *xenia* for his sustenance. As he returns in disguise to Ithaka, he cannot immediately lay claim to his possessions and is thus still dependent on hospitality. In Book 21, the story of Herakles’ killing of his guest Iphitos is told, and the comment is made that he did not feel “*aidos* for the regard of the gods or for his table” (Od. 21. 27–8). A man’s obligation to his *xenoi* was strongly felt and is thus given the sanction of the gods’ protection. The shrinking back or inhibitory feeling of *aidos* is also felt before the emotive feature of hospitality—the table at which they had eaten. Zeus especially, as in the case of suppliants, is designated the protector of guests. It has already been mentioned that a fear of the unknown probably enters into the *aidos* felt for *xenoi*. One felt unable to maltreat a ragged *xenos* in case he turned out to be an *agathos*, temporarily distressed, who would, in fact, be capable of returning one’s hospitality or of returning with a force of armed men! The *aidos* is still that which is felt for a man in a powerful position, though the fear or awe involved would be increased by the uncertainty of the situation. This is not to say that motives of self-interest were always to the fore in a *xenas*-relationship. They probably account for the origin of the scruples felt in *xenia*, but once these scruples had arisen they would predominate in the minds of the *xenoi*, whether guests or hosts. Eumaios tells the disguised Odysseus that his hospitality is offered out of *aidos*, reverence, for the gods and out of a friendly impulse (*eleiston*) towards one in misfortune (Od. 14. 387–9). In Eumaios’ later statement of his contentment with the little he has, he says, “from that, I eat and drink and give to those who inspire *aidos*” (Od. 15. 371–3). Here the guests themselves inspire the *aidos* and they will possess this *aidos*, as we have seen, either from their position in life or because of the respect for the gods who protect them.

One’s treatment of one’s *xenoi*, then, was a combination of *philein*, to exercise a non-aggressive attitude or to entertain, and *aideisthai*. *Aidos* in the relationship between *xenoi* would naturally also enter into the attitude of the guest towards his host. Odysseus, speaking to Eumaios and expressing a desire for revenge on the suitors, says that they, acting out of *hybris*, contrive reckless acts in another man’s house nor do they have their due share of *aidos* (Od. 20. 170–1). *Aidos*, then, would lead a guest to behave with restraint in his host’s house. Odysseus, moved by the song of Demodokos, bursts into tears in Alkinoos’
house. Therefore, he covers his face, drawing his cloak over it, feeling *aidos* at weeping before the Phaieikians (*Od. 8. 86*). This was not something of which the Greek of that time was ashamed. It was not regarded as a reflection on one's manhood to weep. (Tears were Achilles' instinctive reaction on being deprived of his prize, Briseis (II. 1. 357).) However, the object of entertaining a guest is to make him content. To weep in the host's presence is thus a reflection on his hospitality. It is for this reason that Odysseus feels inhibition at showing his tears to the Phaieikians.

It has been seen that another person" or an emotive feature of some venerable relationship" may be the direct object of the verb *aideisthai*, to feel *aidos*. *Aideisthai* may also govern an infinitive which expresses an action that the subject shrinks from performing. It is high time to draw together the pointers as to the way that *aidos* was experienced. Since it has a link with a feeling of fear," it can be most reasonably identified with a shrinking feeling within. This feeling may be inspired by a fear of criticism from one's fellows or one's betters, by a sense of awe in the face of the numinous or a strongly perceived yet not immediately comprehensible scruple, or by a general shrinking from a certain course of action. An *agathos* may experience a shrinking sensation in the face of what may threaten him or of that which is mysterious. This is *aidos*, —a non-moral withdrawing, pulling back or shrinking back, experienced in the face of various situations. There is no genuine moral content in *aidos* because it is not perceived as a moral imperative. Where it is consistent with the demands of the *arete*-standards, it will, as we saw, be accepted without question. But where it conflicts with or simply does not correspond with these demands, *aidos* will in all probability be ignored. The weakness of *aidos* as a guide to conduct is perhaps never better illustrated than by the fact that it can be repeatedly labelled *ouk agathe*, not advantageous, in a particular context, and the man who experiences it under these circumstances is called *kakos*, a failure. This could, of course, never occur if *aidos* carried in any sense a moral imperative.

Telemachos sends a messenger to Odysseus who is disguised as a beggar, telling him to go round to all the suitors and beg earnestly; "*aidos* is not good (advantageous) when it is present in a needy man" (*Od. 17. 345-7*). The messenger, delivering the message, alters it slightly to: "He says that *aidos* is not good for a beggar-man" (*Od. 17. 352*). It is quite obvious that a fear of rejection and obloquy might well cause a beggar or suppliant to shrink from obtruding himself on those who might become his benefactors and it is equally obvious that this feeling is not to his advantage. It is *ouk agathe* because it does not allow him to get the most he can out of the situation in which he finds himself. It is noticeable that all these references to *aidos* as *ouk agathe* occur within a few hundred lines of one another and in all probability influenced one another. However, the fact remains that *aidos* can be referred to in this way.

Perhaps because of the predominantly peace-time setting of the *Odyssey*, the meaning of *aidos* does show some development between the times of correlating of the two epics. The restrictions that *aidos* is felt to impose have in general a
narrower significance and are less concerned with society at large. In all likelihood, this is due to the comparative isolation of the individual in a peace-time context as opposed to a war-time background where many of a man's actions will directly affect all those fighting alongside him. Snell\(^5\) shows us that, as Homer interpreted the inner workings of a man's mind on the analogy of his bodily functions, any concept which was inconsistent with the latter was regarded as being impossible for the former. The Homeric hero was not given to self-analysis. He had no means of distinguishing between feelings caused by external and by internal stimuli and thus he would treat them as belonging to the same category of experience. As all bodily pains were inflicted from without, so feelings were all produced by outside influence. Since \textit{aidos} is the word used to describe a feeling of shrinking from an action for fear of the reactions of other people, and since a sense of shyness would produce the same sensation of shrinking, bashfulness, too, is described as \textit{aidos} and is again regarded as being imposed from without. Shyness or bashfulness is, of course, non-moral and the fact that \textit{aidos} can be used to describe this sensation emphasizes the fact that \textit{aidos} itself is non-moral. \textit{Aidos} is induced by a fear of criticism, whether or not the criticism has any moral relevance or justification.

\textit{Aidos} with the sense of 'shyness' can be seen in the \textit{Odyssey} and is perhaps an indication of the later dating of the \textit{Odyssey}, bringing with it an increase in the self-consciousness of the individual, which finds its culminating expression in the lyric poets.

This aspect of \textit{aidos} can be seen most clearly in the tale of Ares' and Aphrodite's love-affair sung by Demodokos at the court of Alkinoos. When the pair were caught in the act by the dropping of the net, the gods stood around laughing, "but the female goddesses each stayed at home out of \textit{aidos}" (\textit{Od.} 8. 324). The goddesses themselves are innocent of any offence, actual or projected, but a kind of bashfulness keeps them at home.

In Book 6, Nausikaa is urged by Athene to go and do her washing because she may soon need clean linen for her marriage. She goes to ask her father for a wagon to take all her washing to the river mouth but she does not mention her marriage to him, giving instead an evasive reason for her request. "For she felt \textit{aidos} at mentioning to her father her luxuriant marriage" (\textit{Od.} 6. 66-7). When Penelope goes down among the suitors, she takes two maids with her; she says, "I will not go in alone among men; for I feel \textit{aidos}" (\textit{Od.} 18. 184). Shyness is here imposed by convention. As von Erffa points out, "Wie die Dezenz der aristokratischen Gesellschaft in der Odyssee mehr Raum hat als in der Illias, so auch die Sitte und Konvention.\(^5\)"

When Telemachos and Athene, disguised as Mentor, land at Pylos, Mentor urges Telemachos to go straight to speak to Nestor: "Telemachos, you have no longer need to feel \textit{aidos}, not even a little; because it was for this reason that you even sailed the seas. . . ." (\textit{Od.} 3. 14-5). A few lines later, Telemachos expostulates and, as he does so, explains the source of his \textit{aidos}: "Mentor, how am I to go to him, how am I to beg him? I have never yet tried long speeches; and there is \textit{aidos}
for a young man to question an older man" (Od. 3. 22–4). Social usage demands that the young respect the old and for Telemachos boldly to assail with questions the aged Nestor was a breach of social custom which caused him to feel *aidos*, a shrinking back. However, since this is the very purpose for which they have travelled to Pylos, Mentor, with quite good sense, urges that there is no need for Telemachos to feel the slightest qualm at approaching Nestor. But Telemachos still shrinks from it out of natural shyness. He lacks experience in making long speeches and fears to look gauche. This again causes him to shrink from the task. In each case, he fears criticism and *aidos* covers both reasons for experiencing the shrinking sensation, simply because each of them produces the same feeling in Telemachos.

Though, in the time of the Homeric poems, men were regularly bathed by women, whether servants or, perhaps, even free women, when Odysseus is cast up on the shore of Phaikia, all covered in salt and grime, and Nausikaa bids her women wash him, he asks her and her young women to go away while he washes himself: “For oil has for a long time been missing from my body. I would not wash before you; for I feel *aidos* at appearing naked, going among lovely-haired young women” (Od. 6. 220–2). Odysseus fears the girls’ scorn because he is not presentable and it is just for this reason that he shrinks from appearing naked in front of them.

It has been seen that, in the case of suppliants and family relationships, *aidos*, though not in essence a moral concept, may operate in a co-operative or social sphere. Further examples in the *Odyssey* show this aspect. When Telemachos asks Menelaos for news of his father, he says, “Do not out of *aidos* or pity for me soften your words at all but tell me exactly what rumours you have heard” (Od. 3. 96–7). He anticipates that Menelaos may shrink back from imparting bad news. If his anticipation was in any way justified, it is evidence of an interesting consideration of other people’s feelings.

* * * * *

Let us now turn to look at *nemesis*. A discussion of the operation of *nemesis* can be usefully prefaced with a remark of Gilbert Murray’s in *The Rise of the Greek Epic* pp.83–4: “*Aidos* is what you feel about an act on your own: *Nemesis* is what you feel for an act of another: or, most often, it is what you imagine others will feel about you.” *Nemesis*, then, acts partly as a sanction enforcing *aidos*. An act which a man would feel *aidos* at performing may cause *nemesis* in an onlooker who sees it done. *Nemesis* is derived from the verb *nemein* which implies to ‘divide, distribute or assign’. It is concerned with assigning to people and situations their correct due. It is concerned with maintaining the due order of things. Like *aidos*, then, it will on many occasions be consistent with the demands of the *arete*-standards which are themselves felt as part of the due order of things. These standards demand a rigid classification of men in accordance with their *arete* and any stepping outside such a classification rouses *aidos*—as
when Thersites, a commoner, dares to reproach and insult Achilles, Odysseus and Agamemnon (II. 2. 222–3). All the Achaians feel nemesis, not just the men directly affected by Thersites’ actions. Indirectly, any offence against the classified society is an offence against any member of that society, high or low, because it threatens the security of established arrangements.

Nemesis is experienced in the thumos or seat of feelings (II. 2. 223) as an emotion or impulse and is connected with what appears to be the cold anger of a long-lasting grudge (II. 2. 223) and also with flashing hot anger.

The suitors feel nemesis exceedingly strongly when the ‘beggar’ asked to be allowed to try and string Odysseus’ bow after they had all failed to do so: “fearing lest he might string the well-polished bow” (Od. 21. 286). If he managed the task, he would show himself stronger than the suitors who are agathoi and this is a cause for nemesis as it offends against the established order. Likewise, Antinoos feels nemesis when Leodes suggests that none of the suitors will be able to string the bow since he himself cannot. This is a reflection on the arete of the other agathoi (Od. 21. 168–71) and it is felt as an offence as it implies that Leodes feels himself to be the best among them.

Nemesis is felt also at a man who behaves in a manner unworthy of his high standing. Poseidon, urging on the Greeks, says: “nor would I quarrel with a man who, being weak, slacked off in battle; I feel nemesis at you in my heart” (II. 13. 117–9). Since they are not weak or cowardly, there is nemesis if they are slack in the fight, as they are failing to live up to their position as agathoi.

For an agathos to leave the body of a fellow agathos to be stripped of armour by the enemy is a cause of nemesis. This would be to fail his philoi and his own arete.

To run away from danger carries similar implications. In book 14, Agamemnon advises the Greeks to flee from the Trojans, arguing that there is no nemesis involved in running away from danger (kakon) (II. 14. 80). This is, however, an attempt at a ‘persuasive definition’ and the argument is instantly and angrily rejected by Odysseus. Considerations of future advantage are not felt to excuse breaches of the arete-standards, as we see from the dilemma of Menelaus in book 17. 90ff. and of Hektor in book 22. 99ff. Menelaus tries such a persuasive definition in his debate with himself. “Whenever a man wishes, against the wishes of the gods, to fight against a man whom a god honours, soon great trouble surrounds him. Thus none of the Greeks will feel nemesis against me if he sees me avoiding Hektor, when he is fighting with the gods’ support” (II. 17. 98–101). But by the process of ‘overdetermination’, the activities of the gods are not felt to explain fully men’s actions or to exonerate them from offences, including those against their arete. Menelaus does retreat but only to rally the other agathoi to assist him in performing what he knows to be his duty and necessary to avoid nemesis.

Once again, it is clear that, like aidos, nemesis is not a rigid moral concept. It is dependent on the emotional sensitivity of the individual and also on his concept of the due order, offences against which will cause nemesis. Unlike a
fixed morality, it will adapt to individuals and to circumstances. It is an emotional response anticipated in an onlooker of one’s actions. It is a psychological truism that the reactions anticipated in someone else are those which one would oneself experience in the given situation and thus, in a sense, nemesis is doubly dependent on unreliable emotional reaction. It is dependent not only on the reaction of the man who anticipates it but also on that of the man or men in whom he anticipates it, for their response may happen to be different. But uniformity of response to a situation can most readily be anticipated when conduct is laid down by the arete-standards.

Whatever is open to reasonable explanation is felt to be in accordance with kosmos, order, and, therefore, there is no nemesis.62 Odysseus says that, since the Greeks have been fighting away from home for nine years, he feels no nemesis that they feel disgruntled (Il. 2. 296). However, when the old men of Troy see Helen’s beauty, they say, “There is no nemesis that the Trojans and well-grieved Achaians should for a long time suffer pains fighting over such a woman” (Il. 3. 156–7)! When Helen’s beauty is assigned its due, there is no cause for anger that two armies should fight nine years over her!63

The gods, too, experience nemesis. A god feels this emotion if the side he supports in war retreats, presumably as this is a reflection both on their arete and on the power of his support (Il. 4. 505–8). They will also experience nemesis at this situation when it arises because another god is assisting the opposite side. This amounts to a challenge of their power and authority and hence is demanding of nemesis. When Ares is rampaging about the battlefield assisting the Trojans, Hera asks Zeus if he does not feel nemesis at Ares seeing that he is acting without due thought and not in accordance with kosmos, order (Il. 5. 757–9). The situation is a complex one. Zeus has decreed eventual victory to the Greeks but has for the moment promised Thetis, Achilles’ mother, to bring them to their knees in requital of Agamemnon’s insult to Achilles. A support of the Trojans is not, therefore, a challenge to his authority immediately. But for the god to take part in the battle and wreak great destruction is not in accordance with due order. As Hera says earlier to Athene, “In vain will be the promise we made to Menelaus that he would return home having sacked well-fortified Troy, if we allow destructive Ares to carry on in this mad course” (Il. 5. 715–7). Ares is going too far.64 Zeus clearly feels this as well, for he allows Hera to go down from Olympos and stop Ares’ activities.65

The gods resent the authority of Zeus when it is asserted over them.66 This, too, is labelled nemesis, though surely it is part of the now established order of things that Zeus is king among the gods. Perhaps this usage is intended simply to reflect the still chaotic aspect of authority among the gods which may be seen plainly at the beginning of book 8. It is noticeable that it is only Zeus’ brother, Poseidon, and his sister, Hera, who feel this nemesis. Perhaps the other gods, being of the next generation, found it easier to accept Zeus’ supremacy. Perhaps, however, as in so many respects, the disorder among the gods merely reflects the disorder among the Homeric heroes who accept supremacy of authority of
another agathos only with the greatest difficulty.

Just as nemesis is felt if an agathos behaves in a manner unsuited to his station, so nemesis would be felt if a god did not maintain his dignity before human beings. Hermes guides Priam to Achilles' tent, then refuses to enter with him. "There would be nemesis if an immortal god were thus to greet mortals face to face" (Il. 24. 463–4). He has just revealed his identity to Priam and would thus be facing them not in the guise of a human being but openly as a god.

Demeter accepts Metaneira's hospitality in the Second Homeric Hymn and Athene accepts Telemachos' hospitality in Odyssey 1. But in each case, the goddess was disguised and unrecognized and therefore this did not amount to an openly acknowledged confrontation.

Just as aidos could apply to the shrinking feeling of shyness as well as to a morally more justified shrinking back, so nemesis, too, entered into situations where there might appear to be little justification for it.

Helen refuses to obey Aphrodite's order to go and join Paris whom the goddess has just snatched out of harm's way in the battle. She says, "I will not go there—there would be nemesis—in order to share his bed; the women of Troy will all blame me hereafter" (II. 3. 410–2). The act of going to Paris would not be a wrong one, nor would it offend against the due order of things. Yet Helen would have to share the contempt laid on her husband whose arete has not yet been proved successful, quite apart from what must have already been virulent criticism aimed at the woman regarded as the cause of the war. Similarly in the Dios Apate in Iliad 14, Hera manages so to affect Zeus that he wants to lie with her there and then. Hera expostulates: "How would it be if one of the everlasting gods were to see us two sleeping, and going amongst them were to tell all the gods? I would not return to your house, having risen from the bed—there would be nemesis (II. 14. 333–6). Again, it is surely in accordance with moira and kosmos, the due order, that husband and wife should go to bed with each other. If their action were seen, it could, therefore, cause no righteous indignation—a translation that has been suggested for nemesis—but merely gossip with, perhaps, some criticism of their choice of time and place. This is, in fact, the only cause of nemesis. It is not in accordance with established usage for an agathos to sleep with his wife when he should be out fighting, or for anyone, gods or human beings, to sleep together out in the open. A reaction of shock to such an offence against convention would be a very similar feeling to that of anger at a more serious offence against the dominant code of behaviour or at any genuinely moral offence. To the non-analytical Homeric Greek, anyway, that distinction would be meaningless and since the emotions were perceived in the same way, to him they were identical and were described by the same term.

Like aidos, nemesis does bear some relation to co-operative values. It is interesting that Odysseus can tell Agamemnon that it does not cause nemesis for a king to make amends to a man "when he (the king?) first became angry" (II. 19. 182–3). These lines have been much discussed and annotated, as the usual meaning of apareskein is 'to be displeasing'. The scholiast, however, glosses the
word here with the meaning, in the middle voice, of 'to approve' or 'to appease'. The lines come straight after Odysseus has suggested that Agamemnon bring out his gifts of appeasement for Achilles and swear that he has never slept with Briseis. Odysseus then adds that, in acting in this way, Agamemnon will be more dikaios (II. 19. 181–2). Dikaios, in early literature, implies giving due and fair measure. Is it not possible, then, that the sense of the passage is rather “You will hereafter return measure for measure; for there is no nemesi in being disagreeable to a man who first became angry”? This would accord far better with the dominant values of the time. However, if one accepts the scholiast’s annotation, it implies that there will be no cause for nemesi if a king compromises his dignity by making amends to a man whom he has offended. It would amount to a support for the pursuit of co-operation, even at the expense of the maintenance of the rigid classification of society. In the case of Achilles on which Odysseus bases his statement, Agamemnon’s compromise with his dignity was made with the purpose of successfully pursuing his own arete, as he had discovered this could not be done without Achilles. Nevertheless, Odysseus’ generalised statement goes beyond this particular situation. It is perhaps doubtful how much force the statement would have had as a guide to a king’s conduct in the future, but it would be interesting that it could be said at all, granted the more co-operative interpretation of the words.

Another example occurs in Iliad 23. When Aias and Idomeneus are arguing about which chariot is in front of the chariot race, Achilles tells them not to “exchange angry words since it is not reasonable. And you feel nemesi at another man, whoever does such things” (II. 23. 492–4). It is not reasonable for them to get angry with each other over such a matter, presumably since their own arete is not involved, and Achilles therefore urges them not to quarrel. It is interesting that he also urges on them that they should not do themselves what would arouse nemesi in them if another did it. As a standard of conduct, if pursued, this would make a great advance on the arete-standard whose only criterion is whether or not one may succeed in adopting a particular course of action. It would involve a higher degree of co-operation and consideration of others. However, it must be remembered that demands sanctioned by nemesi are always subordinate to those of arete in terms of which alone a man can be effectively condemned.

Nemesi as the counterpart to aidos does come on other occasions within the sphere of social values. Just as one man feels aidos about mishandling a xenos, so others may feel nemesi at seeing a xenos mishandled. When Telemachos starts to tell Athene, disguised as Mentor, what he is suffering at the hands of the suitors, he begins by saying, “My guest, would you feel nemesi at me for what I say?” (Od. 1. 158). At first appearance, what he is doing is rudely criticising the behaviour of his guests. “All they are concerned about,” he says, “is the lyre and song—an easy thing, since they are with impunity eating up another’s livelihood . . . .” (Od. 1. 159–60). A good host should offer his guests entertainment and his guests are expected to eat of his livelihood. This, therefore, may appear to
be a studied affront not only to his present guests but also to Athene who is to become a guest. Thus he asks Athene not to feel nemesis and goes on to explain that the suitors are xenoi under false pretences.

One could also be too eager to entertain a xenos. This, too, causes nemesis, as it offends against the assigning to everything of its due, no more, no less. Menelaus says to Telemachos when he expresses a desire to be on his own again: “Telemachos, I at any rate certainly will not keep you here for a long time, when you are wanting to go home; I feel nemesis at any other host who is friendly to excess or is hostile to excess” (Od. 15. 68-71). Here, in the later Odyssey, is a genuine usage where the conduct one would demand in another is used as a guide to one’s own behaviour. As already mentioned above, this could have been a very valuable tendency, if only it were enforced as a general rule. But the weakness of nemesis as against the demands of the arete-standards militates against this.

In his lying story told to Eumaios, Odysseus relates how the Egyptian king protected him from the other Egyptians who wished to kill him: “But he held them off and had regard for the wrath of Zeus, the protector of xenoi, who feels very deep nemesis at kaka deeds” (Od. 14. 283-4). As in the case of aidos, the gods are felt to impose the sanction of nemesis in the case of xenoi—again, a sure sign of how powerfully the need to protect xenoi was felt. It is interesting, too, that Zeus emerges as one who feels nemesis at kaka, destructive, deeds done to the helpless. We have, it seems, advanced a step in morality from the pure application of the arete-standards. Yet it is already clear how weak is the force of nemesis when in conflict with the demands of arete. Provided the offender can successfully defy the anger felt against him, he remains agathos.

Nemesis, like aidos, is involved also in controlling the behaviour of guests. Just as it is said of the suitors that “they have no share of aidos” (Od. 20. 171) in that they misbehave as xenoi, so they are said by Odysseus to have no fear of the “nemesis of men” (Od. 22. 40). Nemesis appears to be the only sanction that can be invoked against them. Telemachos begs the Ithakans to feel nemesis themselves and aidos before their neighbours (Od. 2. 63-7) in the face of what the suitors are doing. Mentor, the disguised Athene, comments that any man who is sensible would feel nemesis at their action (Od. 1. 228). The real Mentor in the Ithakan assembly says that he feels nemesis at the Ithakans for not dealing with the suitors (Od. 2. 239). Nevertheless, nothing is done about them. One could reasonably transfer Murray’s comments on aidos, already quoted, to refer to nemesis. Nemesis “is a mere emotion, and therefore incalculable, arbitrary, devoid of principle. A man may happen not to feel the emotion and then you have nothing to appeal to. Or again, if he has the emotion, there is no way of judging its strength.” Of Leodes it is said: “To him alone were the outrages hateful and he felt nemesis at the suitors” (Od. 21. 146-7). His nemesis must be weak, though, for it does not lead him to take any action against the suitors or even to leave their company. It is interesting, however, that when Antinoos refuses to give anything to Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, and tells him to sit
quietly or else he will be thrown out of the house, the narrative continues: “They all felt nemesis strongly” (Od. 17. 481). All the other suitors feel nemesis at his mishandling of the beggar. Whether this is anger at his treatment of a suppliant or anger at his taking on himself the right of the master of the house to decide whether or not to throw a man out, (perhaps because it anticipates the outcome of their wooing!), it nevertheless indicates the ‘arbitrary’ nature of the emotion quite clearly. This minor infringement rouses their nemesis, but their own constant transgressions against social convention and the established xenos-pattern do not affect them. They do not to any meaningful degree feel the need to guide their own conduct by what they condemn in others. Probably, though, their anger was not so much at the offence against social codes as at Antinoos’ assumption at authority, which would amount to a premature anticipation that Penelope will choose him to succeed Odysseus and which therefore reflects on the other suitors.

Nemesis operates also, as does aidos, as a guide to behaviour within the family. It can operate as a sanction protecting the conventions of family life, and it may be felt also in other co-operative situations where aidos, too, is valid.

The main point that emerges from a study of aidos and nemesis, with reference to our theme, is that the Homeric Greeks certainly had a strong social sense, from whatever motives it arose, which guided their conduct towards other agathoi, suppliants and guests. The scruples involved in these relationships were sufficiently strongly felt for the gods to be brought in to account for them and to maintain them. Yet the sanctions provided by these emotions and scruples were not strong enough. They lacked the power effectively to condemn breach of the conventions surrounding these relationships. Effective deterrents and condemnations belonged to the dominant social code and its terminology. Wherever they were felt, aidos and nemesis could impose considerable co-operative sense. In essence, they are co-operative for they involve a consideration of other people’s opinions and a sensitivity to their criticism. But the essential weakness of these concepts is their inability to operate successfully without the backing of the demands of the arete-standards.

NOTES

1. I am using the terminology and framework of A. W. H. Adkins: Merit and Responsibility. A Study in Greek Values. London 1960. A man who is approved of is called agathos which basically means successful. The skills and qualities by which he achieves success are summarised in the term arete, which embraces wealth, birth and warlike skills. The epithet used for a man who is not successful, the derogatory term, is kakos. Since the emphasis is on success, however achieved, social, co-operative or quiet virtues will be valued only when they serve to advance success.

2. Verdenius: Aidos bei Homer. Mnemosyne 3rd series, vol. 12 1945 p. 48 ff. My thanks are due to my colleague, Mr. R. Consterdine, for his assistance in translating this article.

11. Il. 5. 787 (Hera); 15. 502 (Aias).
12. Il. 15. 561; 15. 661.
14. Verdenius: op. cit. notes that Aristotle lists aídos not among the aorist but among the pæhe, p. 49.
15. See too Hektor's explanation of why he will not stay in Troy but will go out to battle (Il. 6. 441-6).
16. Similarly Aias in Il. 15. 561-4 to the Argives in general and Il. 15. 656-8, linking aídos with fears for one's own safety as restraining influences in battle.
17. See passage cited in note 15; Il. 17. 91-5; 7. 92-3.
20. cf. e.g. B. Martin: Anxiety and Neurotic Disorders. New York. (Wiley) 1971. "The primary distinction between shame and guilt, then, is in terms of stimulus conditions that elicit the reaction i.e. whether other people as opposed to oneself produce the response." p. 47.
23. Penelope is an aídoie queen to her servants (Od. 18. 314). Menelaus shares some of the aídos due to his brother, perhaps because he is the focal point of the expedition to Troy, the man on whose behalf it was organised (Il. 10. 114-6—Nestor here intends to defy this aídos and anticipates anger (nemesis) from Agamemnon for this breach, though it will be on Agamemnon's behalf that he will be acting.)
24. Cf. Monro's note on Il. 11. 649 (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1980), where for this active use of a normally passive verbal adjective he compares epiüktois. Nemeseoûs, granted the active use here, would perhaps be closer to 'one who has a strong sense of nemesis, a strong sense of what is due to him.'
25. Wife (Od. 10. 11; Hom. Hymns 5. 44); father-in-law (Il. 3. 172); half-brother (Il. 21. 468-9).
26. Bards are also aídoies, probably because of their usefulness to society, (Havelock: Preface to Plato. Part 1. passim. Harvard University Press 1963) and because they are protected by the Muses (Od. 8. 481). Aídos is felt for someone instead of by someone in this passage. Von Erffa: op. cit. "Hier sehen wir zuerst den Übergang zur 'passivischen' Bedeutung des Substantivs, Aídos, die man jemand entgegenbringt, und aídos, die jemand erweckt oder erhält, gehen natürlich ineinander über" p. 12. See also Od. 8. 171.
27. Il. 24. 503; i. 23; Od. 21. 28; Hom. Hymns 4. 381; 28. 3; 6. 1.
28. Hektor anticipates failure of an appeal to Achilles (Il. 22. 123-5). Aídos for him as a suppliant would not be strong enough to turn Achilles from his wrath over the death of Patroklos.
29. The idea of a possible connection between the use of philos here and the claim to have eaten Achilles' bread I owe to a suggestion contained in a private letter from Prof. A. W. H. Adkins.

30. Von Erffa: op. cit. p. 43 quotes Wilamowitz (Gl. d. Hell. I S. 44) "Der Glaube an Götter hat die Menschen nicht zur Sittlichkeit erzogen. Sie ist in dem Verkehr der Menschen untereinander entstanden, also in der Gesellschaft, welche der Mensch angehörte".


32. Obviously, actual physical contact was not necessary at this stage in the development of society. Just the mention of the word was sufficient to establish the relationship, though doubtless at a more primitive stage the physical action was necessary.


34. E.g. II. 16, 556 ff.; 22. 335-6.

35. II. 4. 237; 15. 351; 18. 271; 22. 66 ff.; 24. 22.

36. The Rise of the Greek Epic p. 120 ff.


38. Cf. Adkins: op. cit. p. 38; his article 'Homeric Gods and the Values of Homeric Society' JHS XC11 passim shows that Homeric gods apply the same standards and judgements as mankind. See also A. A. Long: Morals and Values in Homer JHS XC p. 127 ff. for his discussion of this passage.


40. Od. 8. 544 and note 39.

41. There is another instance of aidois connected with xenia. In Od. 19, Odysseus tells Penelope a story of how he supposedly entertained Odysseus on his journey, gave him gifts and sent him away aidois, in such a manner as to inspire aidois, on a 'well-oared ship' 241-3. Von Erffa says of this passage: "Was der Gastgeber dem Gastfreund tun muss, tut er aidois, ... Ausserdem ist es die einzige Stelle der griechischen Literatur, wo das Adverb vorkommt." op. cit. p. 13. This is a possible explanation, especially as it is the only instance of the use of this adverb and as there is another clear instance of aidois used with an active meaning. (Od. 17. 578 and cf. von Erffa op. cit. p. 16). Otherwise, in this passage, aidois will refer to the feeling that would be roused by Odysseus, inasmuch as he is being sent off with plentiful possessions by the gift of his host.

42. Going beyond the due order of things—cf. Adkins: Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece.

43. II. 1. 23 (priest); 1. 331 (king); 5. 530 (one another); 24. 503 (gods); Od. 2. 65 (other men dwelling around).

44. II. 9. 640 (roof); 21. 82 (breasts); Od. 16. 75 (marriage-bed); 21. 28 (table).

45. II. 7. 93 (to refuse); 24. 345 (to rob); Od. 6. 66 (to mention by name); 6. 221 (to appear naked); 24. 145-6 (to mention by name).

46. Cf. note 22.

47. The swineherd tells the disguised Odysseus: "But a longing for Odysseus who is gone takes hold of me. I, stranger, feel aidois at mentioning him by name even while he is not present; for he has cared for me greatly and looked after me in his heart" (Od. 14. 144-6). This is a puzzling passage. Von Erffa: op. cit. says, "Ich muss gestehen dass mir das kai ou pareonta (denn kai zu onomazein zu ziehen, erscheint sprachlich unmöglich, schon wegen der Parallele zu kai noshti eont) unverständlich ist und ich auch in keinem Kommentar eine einleuchtende Erklärung finden konnte. Wilamowitz (Der Heimkehr des Odysseus S. 15) paraphrasiert einfach: 'Sein Name kommt mir nur schwer über die Lippen.'" (p. 19.) There are two possibilities. The reason he shrinks from mentioning his absent master is clearly not a moral one or because he will be criticised for doing so, but because, as he says, Odysseus used to look after his interests and take care of him. He is shrinking not from incurring blame or because of shyness, which will be seen to be involved in aidois, but because he does not want to cause himself pain. Yet this, too, would be experienced as a shrinking feeling and so it too would be aidois. Mentioning his name brings him vividly before Eumaios' eyes and would intensify his longing. He shrinks
from doing this. This does not, of course, help to explain the use of kai, even. I can only make the tentative suggestion that the implication is that one would expect to feel emotion in speaking of a long-lost person when they are at last present, and one might shrink from this pain; but Eumaios’ longing causes him to shrink back from the emotion even when Odysseus is not present. There is also a possibility that this use of aidos may relate to the feeling of primitive people that, if a man knows someone’s name, it gives him some mysterious power over him.

The use of a man’s name evokes the man himself and this makes him especially vulnerable if he is not on hand to protect himself. He is in any case diminished by the drawing off of a portion of himself and this gives one some power over him. Eumaios, granted this argument, perhaps the need for secrecy dictated the avoidance of using servants.

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48. Verdenius: op. cit. speaks of the “zurückhaltende Kraft” of aidos and adds “sie treibt nicht zum Handeln an, sondern sie hemmt den Schritt angesichts irgend einer imponierenden Macht.”

49. Cf. also Od. 17. 578, where a wandering man who is aidios is kakos. As von Erffa (op. cit. p. 13) points out, “Außer in der Adverbform hat aidios nur an einer jungen Odysseestelle aktívische Bedeutung erhalten.” It does not here signify a man for whom others feel aidos but a man who himself experiences the feeling.

52. OId. 4. 48; 10. 362. 9.; 19. 317 ff.; cf. also Stanford’s note on 3. 464.
53. OId. 4. 252. When Odysseus secretly enters Troy, Helen entertains and bathes him. But perhaps the need for secrecy dictated the avoidance of using servants.

54. See A. A. Long: op. cit. pp. 135 ff. on the importance of appropriateness.
55. Cf. also Od. 10. 115.
56. Cf. also II. 16. 544; 17. 254; 13. 119; Od. 1. 119; 2. 136; 4. 158.
57. II. 6. 335; 8. 407; Od. 23. 213.
58. E.g. Paris who has nemesis and many shameful reproaches from men for his slacking (II. 6. 351). When the disguised beggar has been revealed as Odysseus, Eurykleia urges him to change out of his rags as there would be nemesis that he should stand around in his own house dressed in such a manner (OId. 22. 499).
59. Cf. also II. 13. 292-3 and 10. 129-30 where Nestor, having heard that Menelaus is not slacking, says that therefore the Argives would feel no nemesis at accepting orders from him. If he were slacking, he would not be acting as an agathos and would not be entitled to obedience.

60. II. 16. 543-7; 17. 91-3; 17. 254-5.
62. Cf. note 54.
64. The importance of the idea of "going too far" for ancient Greek morality cannot be overemphasised. Cf. hybris and its implications and the later development of the idea of the ‘mean’. Cf. also note 54.
65. For other instances of gods feeling nemesis at assistance given to their opponents by other gods: II. 13. 15-6; 8. 198-204; 5. 872.
66. Poseidon tells the messenger Iris that, though feeling nemesis, he will yield to Zeus and stop helping the Trojans (II. 15. 211). Hera carries Zeus’ ultimatum to the other gods and delivers it, feeling nemesis at his assertion of authority over them all (II. 15. 103 ff.).
68. Cf. also Od. 1. 119-20.
69. In a results-culture, these kaka erga reflect on Telemachos himself rather than the suitors, on the man who suffers them rather than the man who does them. Cf. Adkins: op. cit. p. 42. To do kaka is not to be kakos; to be kakos is to be the sort of person to whom kaka may be
done with impunity since one cannot defend oneself; and it is this condition that is aischron, shameful. But see also A. A. Long: op. cit. p. 130–1. Clearly the speaker's intention is to criticise the conduct of the suitors even if, in the context of a results-culture, he cannot do so effectively.

71. When Penelope at last recognises Odysseus, she asks him not to be angry or feel nemesis that she did not give him what was his due, an instant eager welcome (Od. 23. 213). Cf. also Od. 2. 101; 2. 136; 2. 137–8; 6. 286–7.
72. Apollo says the gods felt nemesis at Achilles for maltreating Hektor's body—he is denying it its due, namely burial (Il. 24. 53–4; 24. 44–5).
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