

*You better respect this essay , it took me longer to do it than you will...!

Pride in the Iliad

The period in which the events in The Iliad took place were different than the times of today. Back then, the most important aspect of life for a person was to be a hero and to be remembered. One's pride would come before everything else. In the present day, this concept would be thought of as illogical or foolish. This is certainly true. But, that is how life was in that time- peoples' beliefs were to be the death of them. Pride was the downfall of all characters in Homer's epic poem, The Iliad.

Hectors fatal mistake was that he chose pride over his own well being in the battle with Achilles. He could have taken safety within the walls of Troy, or disappeared into a mass of his comrades, but Hector chose to stand his ground and confront Achilles. "Ah for a young man all looks fine and noble if he goes down in war...he lies there dead...but whatever death lays bare, all wounds are marks of glory." If Hector had salvaged his pride and retreated to safety, he would have lived to defend Troy. Therefore, the possibility arises that he could have stopped the onslaught of the Achaeans altogether, and won the war for the Trojans. The result of Hectors pride was his death and the betrayal of his fellow warriors and friends.

Another person within the Iliad whose pride was the downfall of his character, was Patrocleus. Patrocleus was a great warrior, friend, and asset to the Achians. But, he made

foolish choices on account of his pride. For instance he chose to wear Achille's armor into battle when Achilles refused to fight. This was only for his self-glorification. "...Once you have beaten off the lethal fire, quick, come back to the ships-you must not battle Hector!" After going into battle brandishing the armor, Patrocleus becomes overzealous and places himself at the enemy's disposal. If Patrocleus would have thought logically, and not acted on pride, he would of remained alive.

In addition to Hector and Patrocleus, the main character in The Iliad - Achilles, was also brought to ruin by his pride. For example, he was too proud to fight in the war when Agamemnon took his woman. "But now that he's torn my honor from my hands, robbed me, lied to me...he'll never win me over!" So, he sat and sulked when his fellow Achaeans needed him most. Achilles made another immoral resolution based on pride when he granted Patrocleus the use of his armor. He thought that this would preserve his egotism, but still allow him assist his companions. If Achilles would have made his decision based upon sound reasoning, he would not have sent his friend into danger, or create a downfall of his character.

Pride was the downfall of all characters in Homer's The Iliad. This was proven through the actions of Hector, when he stood his ground against Achilles; Patrocleus, when he asked to employ Achilles' armor; and through Achilles, when he gave permission for Patrocleus use his armor. By studying the Iliad and this period in time, we can learn from the mistakes of these characters, and compose our choices based not upon some self-centered rationalization, but to look at the whole picture, and arrive at a decision that is right for everyone.
