

EVALUATION FORM: REACTION/RESPONSE PAPER

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Paper title or subject: Iliad - Reaction Paper – “The Indecision of Achilles”

Dimensions of Evaluation - (0 = unacceptably flawed, 1 = major and minor flaws limit success, 2 = one major or numerous minor flaws, 3 = perfection spoiled by minor flaws, 4 = superb

1. Presentation (titling and cosmetics) – 10% 4/4 = 10/10
2. Structure, sentence/paragraph level/continuity – 40% 3.5 /4 = 35/40
3. Insight – 25% 4/4 = 25/25
4. Support (logic, documentary references) – 25% 4/4 = 25/25

Overall, in Sum (5 points possible) 95/100 = 4.8 points

Narrative Response: Reaction paper #2 is similar to your first paper on that it is a “very good paper with an issue or two.” Happily, the issues are not the same. You have done a good job with sentence structure and there are fewer superfluous words. There are some very nice touches, particularly the title. Your title does everything a title should do. You echo Sheila Murnaghan’s characterization (in the introduction) of the theme of the poem as “The Rage of Achilles” while announcing a contrastive focus on indecision. It is a thesis sentence in miniature.

But there are some problems. There are a couple of instances of imprecise expression. Consider this sentence: “*The Iliad is, however, able to capture this contradiction whole and unblemished, and it does this through the indecision of Achilles.*” First off, the phrase “*whole and unblemished*” could be safely omitted. The real problem, however, is that Achilles’ indecision is not what captures the contradiction, it is Homer’s presentation of Achilles’ indecision. The Iliad portrays Achilles as indecisive.

Similarly when you address Achilles’ shifting priorities, you state, “*Later, however, his desire for material goods is eclipsed by his desire for a peaceful life.*” But you have not really indicated that he had a desire for material goods. Instead, you note respect, rewards, and honor. I admit that “rewards” could refer to material things but your language implies that what he really wants is gratitude and respect, non-material things. That means that your characterization of him as desiring material goods is imprecise. What I think you mean is that Achilles finds his need for honor, respect, gratitude, and the good opinion of his brothers in arms eclipsed by his desire for a peaceful life.

Your paper is nicely written and your analysis is excellent. Good work. Keep striving for greater precision of expression.