from Babylon to fix the dates of Gaugamela and Alexander’s entry into Babylonia, and so to relate events in the occupation of Persepolis to Agis’ war. This leads to the final conclusion that when Alexander destroyed Persepolis he was unaware that Agis had been defeated, and the destruction of Persepolis marked a revival of the ‘Hellenic Crusade’. Alexander may have been delayed in Babylon while the slower units caught up with him, but that does not materially affect the case for thinking that Alexander sacked Persepolis while waiting for news of the war in Greece.

The volume includes a consolidated bibliography at the end, a brief general index, and a list of Hammond’s major publications (books and periodical articles, but not reviews and contributions to encyclopaedias and the Cambridge Ancient History volumes). The book has been well edited by Ian Worthington and carefully produced, except that the quality of the plates is disappointing. The maps are particularly poor; in this age of Geographical Information Systems and means of enhancing hazy images it should be possible for a press to produce maps that are clear and legible.

This is a splendid collection of meaty articles on important topics, with a good measure of new ideas. All in all a fitting tribute to Nicholas Hammond.

John Atkinson

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Every so often a book on a Classical subject but written by a non-Classicist appears that throws a remarkable amount of light on what is often overworked ground. Some examples which spring to mind are Brian Vicker’s Towards Greek Tragedy (1973), Ian Johnson’s The Ironies of War: An Introduction to Homer’s Iliad (1988) and (more controversially) Martin Bernal’s Black Athena (1987). Now, in 1994, we have Shay’s Achilles in Vietnam, a ground-breaking piece of work with much of intense interest to say about the oldest masterpiece of Western literature.

Achilles in Vietnam is a study of Combat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as exhibited and described by (on the one hand) Vietnam veterans undergoing psychotherapy and (on the other) Homer’s Achilles. The author is a

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psychiatrist for the Boston Department of Veterans’ Affairs Outpatient Clinic who has also acquired, by way of good modern translations and some important secondary sources, an impressive acquaintance with the *Iliad*. He has been heavily involved in treating Vietnam combat-veterans for severe, chronic PTSD; and he observes early in the introduction how he was ‘struck by the similarity of their war experiences to Homer’s account of Achilles in the *Iliad.*’ (p. xiii). This simple starting-point has led Shay to produce something unique about (or mostly about) the *Iliad*—and that is a work which looks at Homer’s poem not only from a practising psychotherapist’s point of view but also through the eyes of battle-shattered soldiers who have survived an appalling modern war.

This perspective has led Shay to conclude that Achilles’ behaviour in the *Iliad* can most successfully be explained not in terms of supposed heroic codes prevailing in early Greece but in terms of the more or less common experiences of soldiers who have been through the physical, emotional and moral hell of combat. From this perspective, most of Achilles’ startling, often horrifying behaviour suddenly makes total sense: his fury at Agamemnon’s ‘betrayal’ of what was clearly regarded as the right and proper way to behave, his terrible grief and guilt over Patroclus’ death, and his monstrous orgy of berserk blood-sheding culminating in the mutilation and abuse of Hector’s corpse. Many of Shay’s chapter headings are eloquent: ‘Betrayal of “What’s Right”’, ‘Shrinkage of the Social and Moral Horizon’, ‘Grief at the Death of a Special Comrade’, ‘Guilt and Wrongful Substitution’, ‘Berserk’ and ‘Dishonouring the Enemy’.

This book is not ‘about’ the *Iliad*; it is about Combat PTSD. However, the *Iliad* provides a large number of its ‘case-studies’. The remainder consists of transcripts of statements and other utterances made by severely traumatised Vietnam veterans during therapy sessions. Both sets of case-studies constitute what can only be called an extended shout of pain ringing across some twenty-eight centuries, so piercing as to be one of the most passionate anti-war protests ever encountered by this reviewer. The intensity of the protest is, if anything, enhanced by Shay’s lucid, systematic, highly-controlled deployment of his material. In fact, from almost any viewpoint, this is a very impressive book: it has been painstakingly researched, carefully planned, superbly structured and presented, and it concentrates on matters of immense human importance. A measure of Shay’s respect for completeness and his scrupulous avoidance of merely superficial similarities can be seen in the title of chapter 7: ‘What Homer Left Out’.

*Achilles in Vietnam* is essential reading for any serious scholar of the *Iliad* and for almost anyone concerned with the horrors of war, with its desperate and often misunderstood aftermath in later years, and with both the toughness and the fragility of the human psyche.

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