
56-7 “Sarpedon, however, then adds a comment that lays bare the true nature of heroic activity and thus undercuts the previous statement:

‘Supposing that you and I, escaping this battle, would be able to live on forever, ageless, immortal, so neither would I myself go on fighting in the foremost nor would I urge you into the fighting where men win glory. But now, seeing that the spirits of death stand close about us in their thousands, no man can turn aside nor escape them, let us go on and win glory for ourselves or yield it to others’ (*Il.* 12.322-28).”

57 “Heroic striving has its roots in the will to escape aging and death, however ‘inevitable’ they may be, and leave them both behind. Death is overcome when it is made welcome instead of merely being experienced, and when it makes life a perpetual gamble and endows it with exemplary value so that men will praise it as a model of ‘imperishable glory.’”