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*Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration as Applied to Homer's Analysis*

*In memoriam Ewa Lif-Perkowska*

(...) nous sommes étonnés quand nous rencontrons un sentiment  
à peu près pareil à ceux que nous éprouvons chez un héros d'Homère (...)  
Marcel Proust

## Introduction

As shown by the research results and analyses of Homeric texts<sup>1</sup>, feelings form by Homer (IX/VIII) a world unfurled on many levels. In antiquity multilevel (i. e. hierarchical) approach to psychic occurrences was elaborated among others by Plato (427–347) (e. g. *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*)<sup>2</sup>. In this day and age the concept of multilevelness in the area of feelings was adapted and described more thoroughly in philosophy by a German phenomenologist Max Scheler (1874–1928), and in psychology by a Polish existentialist Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902–1980).

According to Scheler, there are *four well-delineated levels of feeling*: (1) sensible feelings, or „feelings of sensation”, (2) feelings of the lived body (*as states*) and feelings of life (*as functions*), also known as *vital feelings*, (3) pure psychic feelings (*pure feelings of the ego*), and (4) spiritual feelings (*feelings of the personality*)<sup>3</sup>. For Dabrowski *the most significant aspect of human development is emotional development*<sup>4</sup>, and *multilevelness*<sup>5</sup> is the pivotal concept by the depiction of development.

Modern researchers apply freely the psychological analysis to the examination of contents in *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. I shall give only three examples. Georges Devereux showed similarities between the behaviours described in *Iliad* to those from World War Two<sup>6</sup>. Jonathan Shay on the other hand has linked the PTSD syndrome (post-traumatic stress disorder) observed by American combat veterans of the Vietnam War to the text of *Iliad*: *Homer has seen things that we in psychiatry and psychology have more or less missed*.<sup>7</sup> Let the third example be an article by T. F. Carney, in which the author shows parallels between the way *Iliad* influences the listener and what is taking place in

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<sup>1</sup> For bibliography see my *La crainte et le courage ...*, pp. 53–70.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also W. Lutoslawski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic ...*

<sup>3</sup> M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics ...*, pp. 332 sq. Different by W. James, *What is an emotion?*, p. 205, who uses the term *pure psychic emotion*.

<sup>4</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> G. Devereux, *Achilles' 'suicide' in the Iliad*.

<sup>7</sup> J. Shay, *Achilleus in Vietnam ...*, p. xiii. Cf. also J. Shay, M. Cleland, J. McCain, *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* [forthcoming].

psychosynthesis<sup>8</sup>.

In this paper I want to take note of the *presence* of Homer in Dabrowski and the *presence* of Dabrowski in Homer. Both approaches are possible, although not identical. Something different is the application of methods and modern psychology concepts, in that case the Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration, to Homeric psychology, and something different the verification of modern psychology by the use of tools, the Homeric psychology, on the basis of texts of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, seems to be constructed by.

In my text I give examples of understanding four concepts present by Kazimierz Dabrowski and their appliances to Homer's texts. They are: *klisis* & *ekklisis*, ambivalentencies & ambivalences, *subject-object in oneself*, multilevelness.

### ***Klisis and ekklisis***

The contrast of feelings, expressed by the terms *klisis* and *ekklisis* was introduced by C. von Monakow and R. Mourgue. On the lowest level the first is the synonym to desire, the second to disgust. *Klisis* is expressed in *the amalgamation with the desired object. The amalgamation may relate either to defined objects or to abstract ones. (...) In ekklisis (...) the thing is in the opposite process, that is refusal, protection, and also as a following reflex, defense even to aggression*<sup>9</sup>.

Dabrowski, who uses the distinction of *klisis* – *ekklisis*, has performed a certain modification upon it. In his theory *klisis* is a *subject-orientated tendency, a tendency of relaxation, arousal, and even attack, as opposed to the stance of contraction, ebbing, flee*<sup>10</sup>. Generally speaking, the Homeric depiction confirms Dabrowski's understanding, according to which aggression and attack is a klitical motion. Of course by Homer there are no technical terms *klisis* and *ekklisis*, although there is the verb *klinein* (LSJ: *lean*), and moreover verbs *anaklinein* (*lean one thing upon another*), *apoklinein* (*turn off*), *epiklinein* (*put to*), *kataklinein* (*lay down*), *metaklinein* (*change about*), *paraklinein* (*bend*), *proklinein* (*lean forward*), *hypoklinein* (*bend under*). Although there is no *ekklinein*, there may be *aps klinein* put onto its place. Here are some examples.

Little Astyanax's father wants to hug him, but Astyanax takes fright. He is afraid of his father's appearance (VI, 468: *patros filou opsin*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *dismayed at his dear father's aspect*), and precisely his plume (VI, 469: *lofon hippiochaiten*, Chapman: *the horse-haire plume (...) Nodded so horribly*, Pope: *nodding*

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. T. F. Carney, *Homeric Epic and Psychosynthesis*. This author too uses the term of *multilevelness*: *Obviously, there are different levels of insight into words and their ways in the Iliad corresponding to the different levels visible in the epic (...)*. T. F. Carney, *Homeric Epic and Psychosynthesis*, p. 115.

<sup>9</sup> *La klisis (...) nous incite à nous unir avec un objet désiré. Cette union peut se rapporter à des êtres concrets et abstraits. (...) Dans l'ekklisis (...) il s'agit du processus opposé, c'est-à-dire du refus, de la protection et, comme réaction ultérieure, de la défense, jusqu'à l'agression. (...)*. C. von Monakow, R. Mourgue, *Introduction à l'étude ...*, pp. 287–288.

<sup>10</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Tezy o charakterze narodowym Polakow i metodach jego przekształcania*, p. 113.

crest, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *horse–hair crest (...) nodding*<sup>11</sup>), that is currently subsiding onto the little boy. The boy leans over to his nurse’s breast: *aps d’ ho pais pros kolpon eudzonoio tithenes / eklinthe iachon* (VI, 467–468<sup>12</sup>, Chapman: *he clingd backe to his nurse and cride*, Pope: *The babe clung crying to his nurse’s breast*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *But the child shrunk crying to the bosom of his fair–girdled nurse*).

Feelings and somatizations of Astyanax’s were described in detail: the backward body movement, accompanied by a cry (*aps (...) eklinthe iachon*), the terror and fright (*atuchtheis / tarbesas*) etc.

Second scene comes from *Odyssey*. Old Euryclea touches Odysseus’ scar and recognizes him. She moves back. She is overcome by joy and ache, her eyes fill with tears and her voice gets stuck in her throat: *aps d’ heteros’ ekliithe (...) ten d’ hama charma kai algos hele frena, to de hoi osse / dakruophin plesthen, thalere de hoi escheto fone* (19, 470–472<sup>13</sup>, Chapman: — *Joy and griefe together / Her brest invaded, and of weeping weather / Her eyes stood full; her small voice stucke within / Her part expressive (...)*, Pope: — *Smiles dew’d with tears the pleasing strife express’d / Of grief and joy, alternate in her breast. / Her fluttering words in melting murmurs died*, Butcher – Lang: —<sup>14</sup> *Then joy and anguish came on her in one moment, ans both her eyes filled up with tears, and the voice of her utterance was stayed*).

What are the reasons of *ekklisis* (*aps klisis*) in both cases? Parallels between them may be described on three levels:

<i>aps ekli(n)the</i>	Astyanax	Euryclea
expression: somatic level	cry	tears and silence
context: emotional level	terror and fright	joy and pain
cause: intellectual level	lack of recognition	recognition

Another example: Ctesippus throws a calf leg at Odysseus, but the latter turns his head away, so that the leg misses him and hits the wall: *eka paraklinas kephalen* (20, 301<sup>15</sup>, Chapman: *Ulysses, who his head / Shrunke quietly aside*, Pope: — , Butcher – Lang: *But Odysseus lightly avoided it with a turn of his head*).

Last example: Helen turns her eyes towards Alexander, who has escaped the battlefield, and rebukes (attacks ?) him with her words: *osse palin klinasa* (III, 427<sup>16</sup>, Chapman: — , Pope: *she turn’d away / her glowing eyes*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *with eyes turned askance spake*). That motion is an echo of her rapid conversation with Aphrodite (cf. III, 414–418) and her fear (cf. III, 418–420) and portends an ambivalent

<sup>11</sup> Cf. also Astyanax had earlier „screamed and shrunk back” from the extended hands and helmeted face of his fiercely armored father. The child’s nonverbal behavior transmits an age–based, infantile feeling: *uncomprehending fear* (...). D. Lateiner, *Sardonic smile ...*, p. 58.

<sup>12</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>13</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>14</sup> Interesting, that all three translations I have consulted omit the ekklitic motion (*aps ekliithe*).

<sup>15</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>16</sup> My emphasis.

speech directed to Alexander (cf. III, 428–436).

### **Ambitendencies & ambivalences**

That very speech of Helen's, in which she encourages him to returning to fight and orders him to stay at her side, is an example of Helen's feelings ambivalence. She addresses Alexander as follows: *Go now to fight (...) but I am ordering you to stop the fight* (III, 432–436: *all' ithi nun prokalessai (...) alla d' egoge pauesasthai kelomai*, Chapman: *Go once more, and advance (...) Shun him*, Pope: *Go now, once more thy rival's rage excite, / Provoke Atrides, and renew the fight: / Yet Helen bids thee stay, lest thou unskill'd / Shouldst fall an easy conquest on the field.*”, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *But go, now, challenge Menelaos (...) Nay, but I, even I, bid thee refrain*).

Scene describing the situation in which Helen suddenly changes her mind (III, 433), has evoked suspicion among many philologists. At first Arystarch wanted to remove the whole scene (III, 432–436), because five verses *are too prosaic, with no meaning and incoherent to the argument: at the same time he says alla' ithi nun prokalessai, and then he adds: alla s' egoge pauesasthai kelomai, as if Helen worried about him*<sup>17</sup>. At this day and age G. S. Kirk found justified to state that *The truth is that the whole address is of a piece, bitterly sarcastic and hostile; what she actually feels is hard to divine, although it seems to include resentment and even contempt; she will succumb quite soon to his logic and his charms, but perhaps even that makes undiluted contempt at this point more dramatically effective*<sup>18</sup>. Another given explanation says that this contradiction might be the outcome of contradictory influences of various gods upon Helen.

In my opinion though, this contradiction is seeming, if we assume that Homer describes in the quoted fragment the occurrence of *feelings ambivalence*. Here is its definition by Dabrowski – *Ambivalences: Changeable or simultaneous feelings of like and dislike, approach and avoidance, inferiority and superiority, love and hatred. Fluctuations of mood, alternations of excitation and inhibition*<sup>19</sup>.

The context of ambivalence and ambitendency may as well be spread upon adjacent verses, for in III, 428–429 I read: *you are returning from fight; should you have died* (Chapman: *O would to God thy life / Had perisht*, Pope: *O hadst thou died*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *would thou hadst perished there*), however in verse III, 447: *[Helen] followed her husband* (Chapman: *With this, he went before, / She after, to the odorous bed*, Pope: *Him Helen follow'd slow with bashful charms*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *So saying he led the way to the couch, and the lady followed with him*). Even here Kirk, as I presume, simplifies, when he states that *The poet does not attempt to explore Helen's motives; her acquiescence, conveyed in three formular words, is at first hearing shocking, but then seems almost inevitable*<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted after critical apparatus of P. Mazon.

<sup>18</sup> G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. 1: Book 1–4*, p. 327.

<sup>19</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary. ....*, p. 329.

The example shows that the use of a technical term for describing a psychic occurrence known, as it seems, to Homer, enables to solve the apparent difficulty of the text, and to avoid overinterpretation or athetizing it. One can of course give examples of comments, in which their authors proceed towards psychological interpretation<sup>21</sup> or commentators, who use the term *ambivalence*, but in a different to Dabrowskian meaning<sup>22</sup>.

An example of a more intricate ambivalence, in a more condensed context, is a scene from the sixth volume of *Odyssey*. Odysseus is afraid of touching the knees of Nausicaa, whom he admires and by whom he is put into apprehensive awe<sup>23</sup>: *hos se, gunai, agamai te tethepa te, deidia d' ainos / gownon hapsasthai* (6, 168–169, Chapman: *admiration strikes me, joynd with feare / To do a suppliant's due and prease so neare / As to embrace thy knees.*, Pope: *With reverence at the lofty wonder gazed: / Raptured I stand (...) Awed from access, I lift my suppliant hands*, Butcher – Lang: *even in such wise as I wonder at thee, lady, and am astonied and do greatly fear to touch thy knees, though grievous sorrow is upon me.*). In fact, he fears not the touch of her legs itself, but to offend Nausicaa with his gesture. Odysseus' ambivalence is one of the reasons for his pain, if this is the way for possible understanding of the word *penthos* (6, 169).

### **Subject-object in oneself**

By Homer one can point out a certain number of scenes, which are subject to commentators' special attention. It is most of all the formula *agitated he spoke to his great heart* (XI, 403 = XVII, 90 = XVIII, 5 = XX, 343 = XXI, 53 = XXI, 552 = XXII, 98 = 5, 298 = 5, 355 = 5, 407 = 5, 464: *ochthesas d' ara eipe pros hon megalatora thymon*, Chapman: *uttering to his heroike conceit*<sup>24</sup>, Pope: *Thus to his soul he said*<sup>25</sup>, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *And sore troubled he spake to his great heart*<sup>26</sup>) along with following soliloquies (XI, 404–410, XVII, 91–105, XVIII, 6–14, XX, 344–352, XXI, 54–55, XXI, 553–571, XXII, 99–130, 5, 299–312, 5, 356–364, 5, 408–423, 5, 465–473), and verse 9, 302: *my second heart has withheld me (heteros de me thymos eruken,*

<sup>21</sup> E. g. F. Robert, *Homère*, p. 18 writes: *On montrerait aisément que les propos tour à tour doux et violents échangés entre Hélène et la déesse traduisent les états d'âme d'Hélène, le combat intérieur qui se livre en elle. La puissance divine se confond ici avec la puissance de la passion.*

<sup>22</sup> Cf. M. Nilsson, *Götter und Psychologie bei Homer*, p. 363, who uses the term *labilen Zustand des psychischen Gleichewichts*. R. Newton, *Poor Polyphemus ...*, pp. 137–138 for describing ambivalent feelings evoked by Homer's text itself he announces: *ambivalent feeling (...) emotional ambivalence (...) ambivalent emotional state Homer has engendered.*

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also *thunderstruck paralysis of tethepa (...)*. D. Lateiner, *Sardonic smile ...*, p. 46.

<sup>24</sup> So for XVIII, 5, i. e. in XI, 403: *He thus spake to his mightie mind*, XVII, 90, XX, 343, XXI, 53: [he] said etc.

<sup>25</sup> So for XVIII, 5, i. e. in XI, 403: *And questions thus his own unconquer'd soul*, XVII, 90: *And thus explored his own unconquer'd mind*, XX, 343: *Then thus, amazed*, XXI, 53: [he] said etc.

<sup>26</sup> So for XVIII, 5, i. e. w XI, 403: *Then in heaviness he spoke to his own great-hearted spirit*, XVII, 90: *sore troubled he spake to his great heart*, XX, 343: *in trouble spake unto his proud soul*, XXI, 53: *then in wrath spake Achilles to his great heart* etc.

Chapman: *But that rash thought, more staid did countermand, Pope: but wisdom held my hand, Butcher – Lang: But my second thought withheld me*) and finally the famous Odysseus' *kradie de hoi endon hulaktei / stethos de plexas kradien (...)* *tetlathi de, kradie (...)* *en stethessi kathaptomenos filon etor* (20, 13 & 17–23, Chapman: *His heart did barke within him (...)* *He chid his angry spirit, and beate his brest, / And said: 'Forbear, my minde (...)* *This discours did breath / The fiery boundings of his heart, Pope: His heart with rage this new dishonour stung, / so wrath compress'd / Recoiling, mutter'd thunder in his breast. / „Poor suffering heart! (he cried,) support the pain (...)* *Thus anchor'd safe on reason's peaceful coast, / Tempests of wrath his soul no longer toss'd, Butcher – Lang: Then the heart of Odysseus was stirred within his breast, and much he communed with his mind and soul (...)* *Then he smote upon his breast and rebuked his own heart, saying: 'Endure, my heart' yea, (...)* *So spake he, chiding his own spirit within him, and his heart verily abode steadfast in obedience to his word.*), which drawn Plato's attention in *Phaedo* 94 d 8 – e 1, and later on in *Republic* 390 d 4–5 et 441 b 6. There is no place for discussing relative comments<sup>27</sup>, out of which the notable most follows the trail devaluating Homeric psychology<sup>28</sup>. Yet it appears that Dabrowski's *subject-object in oneself* formula and its conceals, comes useful by explaining Homeric descriptions of soliloquies dynamics presented in *Iliad* and *Odyssey*<sup>29</sup>. By the use of this term Dabrowski named *the conscious interest of an individual in his own psychic life and the ability to broaden and deepen his or her penetration of it*<sup>30</sup>. The formula itself proves that it relies to *one and the same individual*<sup>31</sup>. Dabrowski emphasises that *this dynamism is the key enabling an individual to open his own psyche for himself*<sup>32</sup> and that: *The character and genesis of this dynamism show (...) that between it and the introspective method in psychology exist significant (...) differences.*<sup>33</sup> This dynamism is a result of *repeating acts of „prise de la conscience de soi-même"*<sup>34</sup>.

Described by Homer particular scenes introduced by means of the quoted formula and in quoted spots may be interpreted as pictures of acts *prise de la conscience de soi-même*. As an example please apply following Dabrowski's profile: [*Level II*] *With positive progress of unilevel disintegration one can observe an increase in the role of psychological factors, such as beginnings of reflection, even precursor forms of subject-object in oneself, attempts at control of fears and anxieties, also some growth of*

<sup>27</sup> Cf. R. Zaborowski, *La crainte et le courage ...*, pp. 12–21.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. e. g. (...) *it is generally held that the Homeric conception of man is poor in vocabulary denoting the 'self' or whole person (...)*. J. Russo, M. Fernández-Galiano, A. Heubeck, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey. Volume III: Book XVII–XXIV*, p. 109.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. K. Dabrowski, *Les dynamismes principaux de la désintégration à niveaux multiples*, pp. 231–232. About adapting this term to Homer's work cf. R. Zaborowski, *Sur la méthode descriptive ...*, p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Osobowosc i jej kształtowanie poprzez dezintegrację pozytywną*, p. 99.

<sup>31</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Osobowosc i jej kształtowanie poprzez dezintegrację pozytywną*, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Osobowosc i jej kształtowanie poprzez dezintegrację pozytywną*, p. 99.

<sup>33</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Osobowosc i jej kształtowanie poprzez dezintegrację pozytywną*, p. 100.

<sup>34</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Osobowosc i jej kształtowanie poprzez dezintegrację pozytywną*, p. 101.

sensitivity to fears experienced by others.<sup>35</sup> to one of the Homeric soliloquies mentioned above, e. g. o, *alas, what do I suffer? great evil if I flee / fearing the crowd, yet worse when I am caught alone* (...) (XI, 404 sq., Chapman: *What doth my state sustaine? / If I should flie this ods in feare, thus thus comes clustring on, / Twere high dishonour: yet twere worse to be surprisd alone.* (...)) Why do I tempt my mind so much? (...), Pope: *„What further subterfuge, what hopes remain? / What shame, inglorious if I quit the plane? / What danger, singly if I stand* (...), Lang – Leaf – Myers: *„Ah me, what thing shall befall me! A great evil it is if I flee, in dread of the throng; yet worse is this if I be taken all alone* (...)).

### Multilevelness

The category of multilevelness is the main description pivot for the development depiction of the psychic world<sup>36</sup> and is used to capture its hierarchical disposition. While reading *Iliad* and *Odyssey* it is easy to notice, that the world of feelings is described by the poet in the vertical, hierarchical and multilevel perspective.

An example for this may be laughter and smile. Alas I searched the overall interpretation of laughter and smile in Homer's eposes to no avail, so I cannot refer to it at the moment<sup>37</sup>. Here is my personal attempt to apply distinction upon levels of laughter, carried out by K. Dabrowski to the texts of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Laughter changes depending on the level it is referring to. And so the laughter of Tersytes' army at its leader, who had been beaten by Odysseus (II, 270: *hedu gelassan*, Chapman: *laught delightsomely*, Pope: —, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *laughed lightly*) I would put on the first level, which is described by Dabrowski as follows: (...) *Laughter is primitive, loud, brutal, physiological. It is frequently evoked by watching someone's misfortune or humiliation* (...) *Laughter has the character of a collective release of primitive emotions*<sup>38</sup>.

Sardonic laughter of Odysseus after Ctesippus had tried to hit him with a calf leg (cf. above) (20, 301–302: *medeise de thumo*<sup>39</sup> / *sardanion mala toion*, Chapman: *A laughter raising most Sardanian*, Pope: *The chief indignant grins a ghastly smile*, Butcher – Lang: *smiled right grimly in his heart*) may be situated on the second level: *Laughter becomes calmer and less coarse. It is more psychological and often subdued.*<sup>40</sup> (...) <sup>41</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 52. My emphasis.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. e. g. K. Dabrowski, *Les dynamismes principaux de la désintégration à niveaux multiples*, K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*.

<sup>37</sup> D. Lateiner in his *Sardonic smile* ... apart from 20, 301–302 omits the four other scenes quoted by me below.

<sup>38</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, pp. 55–56.

<sup>39</sup> *thumo* = *in his heart*, meaning hardly visibly.

<sup>40</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 56.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. D. Lateiner, *Sardonic smile* ... , p. 194: (...) *I cannot explain Homer's unique sardonic smile to my own satisfaction* (...).

Laughter of Hector and Andromache evoked by their son's fright (cf. above) (VI, 471: *ek d' egelasse*, Chapman: *Laughter affected*, Pope: *With secret pleasure each fond parent smiled*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *Then his dear father laughed aloud, and his lady mother*) would suit the third level by Dabrowski: *Laughter becomes more differentiated, quiet and subtle. There is a distinct kind of smile which begins to predominate over loud laughter. The smile reveals a history of grave experience and an increasing introvertization. (...) experiences of shame and guilt, concern for responsibility, and desire for reparation in relation to someone who was, or could have been, harmed and hurt (...)*<sup>42</sup>.

Laughter of Hector looking in silence for the last time at his son (VI, 404: *meidesen idon es paida siope*, Chapman: *Hector, though griefe bereft his speech, yet smil'd upon his joy.*, Pope: *Silent the warrior smiled*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *So now he smiled and gazed at his boy silently*) may again be compared to the fourth level in Dabrowskian model: *Collective laughter disappears; it is replaced by subtle individual laughter and most often by an individual smile which is moral, esthetic, a smile toward the ideal, a smile of mutual understanding in the most subtle things. The past history of suffering and agony can be clearly discerned in such empathic smile.*<sup>43</sup>

Finally the laughter through tears of Andromache (VI, 484: *dakruoen gelasasa*, Chapman: *his mother, whose faire eyes fresh streames of love's salt fire*, Pope: *She mingled with a smile a tender tear*, Lang – Leaf – Myers: *smiling tearfully*) refers to the highest level: *Smile is autonomous and authentic (...) It is a smile of the highest empathy in recognizing and appreciating the existential unrepeatability of „I” and the unrepeatability of „Thou”. (...) a smile (...) is both existential and transcendental. (...) But it can also be a smile that radiates joy, yet not without the awareness of and compassion for human sorrow.*<sup>44</sup>

Another example of behaviour on various levels of development given by Dabrowski is anxiety<sup>45</sup>. It is sufficient to note that in this case too the Dabrowskian distinction applies conveniently to the multilevelness of anxiety in *Iliad* and *Odyssey*<sup>46</sup>.

And there is one more convergence. According to Dabrowski *Though this approach [meaning one where multilevelness is a leading concept] we may discover that there is less difference between the phenomenon of love and the phenomenon of aggression at the lowest level of development than there is between the lowest and the highest level of love, or the lowest and the highest level of aggression (at which point*

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<sup>42</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, pp. 56–57.

<sup>43</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 58.

<sup>44</sup> K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, pp. 58–59. *Laughter through tears* is thus the expression of a *smile autonomous and authentic*, not, as written by F. Mawet, *un état d'émotivité intense qui, par la violence du sentiment éprouvé, se mêle pour ainsi dire de chagrin (cf. le phénomène «pleurer de joie»)*. F. Mawet, *Recherches sur les oppositions ...*, p. 188.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions: Fear, Dread and Anxiety*, pp. 51–55.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. R. Zaborowski, *La crainte et le courage ...*, especially tables p. 245 and pp. 326–327.

there is no aggression but instead empathy for the opponent).<sup>47</sup> Personally analyzing the texts of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in context of fear and courage, I noticed that *contradictory levels of anxiety are remote from each other, as are contradictory levels of courage. They differ so much from each other, that one can wonder whether the distance between them is not larger than the one between anxiety and courage on the same level*<sup>48</sup>.

### Conclusion

My text is an attempt of applying K. Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration to ancient literature, in this case to Homer's eposes<sup>49</sup>. It appears that one can speak of a pertinent use of Dabrowski's theory to Homer's work – the modern psychological theory to reading ancient literature – to bring out elements seemingly hidden in it, explain elements seemingly contradictory. Dabrowski confirms the observations and literary record of Homer and shows the absurdity in correctors' interventions. On the other hand this comparison shows that it is possible to find sources of modern psychology in Homer's works.

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. K. Dabrowski, *Multilevelness of Emotional and Instinctive Functions*, p. 10.

<sup>48</sup> R. Zaborowski, *La crainte et le courage ...*, p. 329.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. also (...) *dans les épopées anciennes (...) des Indes, de l'Égypte ou de la Grèce, la déchirure de la réalité en est toujours l'élément primordial. [Elles] sont une tentative de transcendance de la réalité de niveau inférieur vers l'atteinte d'une vision de plus en plus concrète de la réalité supérieure.* K. Dabrowski, *Psychonévrose et créativité*, pp. 7–8.

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