

Abstract: The aim of this study is to introduce the idea of fate present in Homer's Iliad. By „idea“ is meant what gives the unity to apparently incoherent views (1) of fate as death and life's content; (2) of fate as a given lot and a power; (3) of fate as what is shaped by men, and what meets them. This triple polarity of meaning is explored on two levels: (a) the level of construction of the epic (how the fates are represented in the poem) and (b) the level of the Homeric expressions for fate (how the characters and the narrator talk about it). Both subjects have been treated many times and from various perspectives in the existing secondary literature. That's why this study does in neither case aim at an exhausting analysis. As for the construction of the epic, it focuses on the role played in its structure by *decision*, and especially on how the various decisions of different characters are integrated into the unity of narration. Among the expressions that are standardly envisaged it treats in some detail only the two most important, i.e. μοῖρα and αἴσα, although at the same time it considers also two verbs, τεύχω and τυγχάνω, to which the due attention has not yet been paid. Exploiting the results of formal-literary studies of the last decades this study returns back to a question formulated in the 19th century concerning the “unique nature” of the Homeric fate. In contrast to historical approach of the “analytical” exegesis, dominating in the 20th century, and to the attempts to eliminate all fate in Homer, this study assumes and tries to show that in the background of the apparently conflicting views we find in Homer a unique and consistent idea of fate, characterized substantially just by the fact that it appears both as content of life and as death, both as something given and as a power on its own, both as what is shaped by man and what meets him.