Homeric Consistency:
Divine Justice and Character Development

by

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Abstract

This thesis deals with two aspects of homeric scholarship, divine justice and character development, that are ultimately inseparable and shape any reading of the *Odyssey* as a whole. In this thesis I defend the consistency of divine justice and argue against the idea of character development. Working from a position that does not accept fairness as an element of justice as it is exhibited in the *Odyssey*, I stress the importance Homer places on maintaining order in every aspect of divine and human existence as a guide to understanding how the odyssean pantheon is thoroughly consistent in the poet's representation. Concerning Odysseus' character, I find that the notion of the hero's moral awakening is an imposition on Homer's work that obscures more important themes in the poem. In the end, this thesis is concerned with defending the consistency of Homer's *Odyssey* against modern misconceptions, however appealing they may be.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Homer's gods are the guardians of order. Every aspect of the Homeric world is bound up with considerations of station, portion, allotment, measurement, and, ultimately, order. Poseidon avenges the Phaeacians for infringing on his share of honour; Helios demands the destruction of Odysseus' crew for attacking his property; and Zeus promises to send Odysseus home with more gifts than he was apportioned after Troy. The crew, Aigisthus, and the suitors all suffer beyond their measure, while the Phaeacians, Polyphemus and Odysseus suffer their assigned lot. When Aigisthus reaches beyond his station, he is destroyed, and the same happens to the suitors. Guarding order is the gods' business.

The dominant view of the *Odyssey* holds that Homer presents a new ethical conception of the world within the prologue. Specifically, Zeus' very first words at *Od.*1.32-34 are supposed to mark a development from the harsher world of the Trojan War. In the new conception, the gods do not seek to punish mortals unnecessarily; but if they are seen not to adhere to Zeus' pronouncement, then divine justice as a whole will appear to be flawed. Indeed, modern scholarship has taken the gods to task for the manner in which they maintain order. Are the gods just, and by whose standards?

In the debate over divine justice, Zeus' initial three lines at 1.32-34 have been identified as the key to the poem's ethical conception, and critics approach the rest of the *Odyssey* primarily in relation to these lines. By most accounts, the gods fail to behave consistently, because pitiful mortals suffer, and the tendencies that lead men to breach the bounds of justice are understandable. Such an approach measures justice in terms of anthropomorphic sympathy. But there are serious deficiencies with this conceptualization of divine justice, as one responsible for treating men fairly.

Homer does not write explicitly about justice, and while elements of what is understood as justice do appear in the prologue, sympathy towards men's suffering is absent. The idea of portion, measurement, lot, and thus order do appear in the prologue (*Od.*1-1-98) and shape the conception of justice that is presented in the *Odyssey*. Homer sets the boundaries of order and incorporates personal vengeance, apportioned lots of suffering, the disparity between personal and public concern, and the inborn right to rule, but he does not set one aspect of justice, including Zeus' theodicy, above the rest. The

underlying problem with the common perception of divine justice is that the poem is not a court of law, and justice as fairness or equity is not the main concern of the poet.[1] Justice as order is.

Another question emerges amid the allegedly troubled public policy of the Homeric pantheon concerning the success of Odysseus's return to Ithaca. To what degree does Odysseus owe his successful homecoming to his epithetic qualities and his positive association to the will of the divine? In other words, has Odysseus had to adapt to the supposedly new moral programme of the gods? The problem of Odysseus' character development necessarily follows the question of divine justice because both problems concern a progression of morality. If the poem's movement is one away from the iliadic mentality, then Odysseus must become the champion of the new morality. A development of character in that direction is an almost universally accepted position among scholars, and ultimately the question does not stand apart from considerations of divine justice.

Odysseus' narration of his travels from Ilium to Scheria creates a world separated from the rest of the poem temporally and dramatically. Considering the tendency to accept a general progression from *Iliad* to *Odyssey*, the books of Odysseus' narration (9-13) provide a convenient point, temporal and ethical, from which critics claim that the Trojan hero moves to the Ithacan paterfamilias. But the problem scholars have invented is the notion that Odysseus' character develops. The conviction springs from the same source as the problem of divine justice, where cosmic order is subjugated to a more humanistic conception of justice. Because of an unstable or developing conception of divine justice, goes the conception of character development, Odysseus must learn how to act appropriately in the new world order. But critics incorrectly mark the start and finish points of Odysseus' progression. The idea of a progression suits arguments that attempt to reconcile an inconsistent pantheon with the poem as a whole, but since Homer does not present an inconsistent divine justice, character development is unnecessary. Odysseus remains the Trojan warrior, but in the social context the *Odyssey* presents, he must

[1] Clay and Segal among others, for instance, dismiss the actions of the crew and Odysseus in separate episodes because they feel a court of law would not find them guilty.

embrace his role as king, the protector of social order, and for this task, Homer illustrates, he has always been suitably prepared.

The questions of divine justice and character development inform each other as the consistency of the ethical framework of the poem and the triumph of the divinely-supported Odysseus at certain points must coincide. Notions of divine inconsistency that are based on a misconceived conception of justice as fairness cloud a proper understanding of Homer's presentation of justice as order. Suggestions that Odysseus' character develops obscure Odysseus' affinity with iliadic qualities as well as the importance of his role as king. In this thesis I will defend the idea that divine justice is consistent within broader parameters than what is generally considered the basis of the moral programme, and argue that the idea of character development is an inappropriate imposition.

Chapter Two: Divine Justice in the *Odyssey*

i. The Problem of Divine Justice

At a basic level, homeric scholarship is concerned with consistency in all aspects. Whether the critic's objective is to demonstrate multiple authorship, the influence of different oral traditions, or the progress from *Iliad* to *Odyssey*, every argument depends on consistency or its lack. The debate surrounding divine justice is no exception. Critics analyze the coherence of the Olympian gods as a judicial body and the ethical framework that the poet presents through them. At stake in this debate is a conception of Greek religion and morality in which inconsistencies in Homer's portrayal of gods and their justice towards men would reveal an incomplete break from the conception of justice in the *Iliad*, an imperfect agglomeration of traditions, and ultimately a questioning of the gods.

Three approaches define the parameters of the divine justice problem. There are those who argue simple inconsistency; those who argue that there is a double theodicy at work in the poem; and those who attempt to salvage some consistency. All three positions take as the basis for their arguments three lines of the first book, which have come to be known as the theodicy.[2] All argue that the poet has Zeus present a moral programme that is significantly different from the view of divine justice offered in the *Iliad*.

In the final book of the earlier epic, Achilles describes the lot of man as a crapshoot at the mercy and whim of Zeus (*Il.* 24. 514-533). Zeus doles out good and evil gifts, but while some men are fortunate enough to receive some good, some men receive only evil and there is no way to alter this portion. While not all critics agree that the *Odyssey* discounts this notion of justice, most agree that the theodicy modifies the initial conception by granting men the ability to avoid more woe than is their appointed share. At line 32 of the first book, Zeus states:

> Ὦ πόποι, οἷον δή νυ θεοὺς βροτοὶ αἰτιόωνται.
> ἐξ ἡμέων γάρ φασι κάκ' ἔμμεναι – οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ

[2] Jaeger 1926 "Solons Eunomie," *SBBerl*: 69-85.

σφῇσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν [3] *Od.*1. 32–34)

Oh blast, really now – mortals are blaming the gods.
From us, they say evil comes to them when actually upon themselves
They bring suffering beyond measure by their own reckless crimes[4]

The problem of divine justice centres on how faithfully Zeus and the other Olympians adhere to the implications attendant upon the claim expressed at 1.32-34.

The argument for inconsistency is best presented by Bernard Fenik whose premise is that the theodicy does not relate to the rest of the action in the poem.[5] Fenik recognizes that Zeus' theodicy and his subsequent example of Aigisthus correspond directly to the suitors.[6] Zeus says men through recklessness bring undue woe upon themselves and then demonstrates how Aigisthus suffered at the hands of Orestes after he sued for Agamemnon's wife and throne, ignored a divine warning, and killed him upon his return from Troy. This paradigm is measured against Odysseus' return throughout the poem, and Fenik is right to insist on the clear connection between theodicy and action. But that is the extent to which Fenik allows for a consistent divine judicial programme. He finds that Helios, Poseidon, and even Zeus punish men for reasons and in circumstances that are not justified by the theodicy.

While Fenik admits that "there is no outright contradiction" between Zeus' theodicy and the Thrinakia and Cyclopeia episodes, he argues that there is certainly "a deep-seated disjuncture."[7] The Aigisthus parable displays a noble mortal who receives due warning and has every opportunity to avoid a crime that will bring suffering, as assured to him by Hermes. The Cyclopeia (*Od.*9), meanwhile, results in Poseidon's persecution of Odysseus which "shares no common moral ground with the punishment of Aigisthus or the suitors even though Odysseus gets into trouble, like them, by not following earlier warnings."[8] The Thrinakia episode, similarly, results in Helios' demand that the crew be punished for a crime which lacks, according to Fenik, "any well-planned

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[3] All references to the *Odyssey* are to *Homeri Opera* tomi III & IV, ed. Thomas W. Allen 1917. All references to the *Iliad* are to *Homeri Opera* tomi I & II, eds. David B. Monro & Thomas W. Allen 1902
[4] All translations are my own.
[5] Fenik 1974
[6] Fenik 1974: 209
[7] Fenik 1974: 211
[8] Fenik 1974: 211

crescendo from their first lapses to their final calamitous error."[9] In both cases, Fenik's argument depends on mitigating factors which ought to have alleviated the gods' wrath.

Despite the awareness that it is action, not intent, that counts in Homer's world, Fenik argues for inconsistency on the basis of unfairness.[10] Poseidon should not have punished Odysseus because Odysseus had no other means of escape but to blind Polyphemus. And, though the crew is not eager to stay in Polyphemus' cave, Odysseus does not receive a divine warning of the trouble attendant upon his error.[11] Poseidon's wrath "takes no note of extenuating circumstances."[12] Poseidon's wrath has not moved beyond Achilles' description of mortal suffering, for Fenik, since Odysseus' consequent suffering is beyond any proper measure.

Odysseus' companions are in even more dire straits, as they are apparently coerced by the gods into slaughtering the Sun god's prized flocks. The crew, unlike noble Aigisthus, do not receive a divine warning, but indirect warnings from their untrustworthy captain (he did not tell them about Aiolus' wind bag). They beach on Thrinakia because, as a common homeric nautical practice, they do not wish to sail at night, and an unfavourable wind detains them for a month. The decision to slaughter the cattle comes as a last resort and the crew promises every due sacrifice and honour to Helios upon their return to Ithaca. Moreover, the gods make Odysseus sleep at the very moment when his men attack the cattle. For Fenik, the crew acts sensibly, cogently and modestly, and in the end they are unfairly punished.[13]

The argument for inconsistency depends on a conception that the gods of the *Odyssey* are supposed to be more understanding of mortal hardship and more lenient towards error than in the *Iliad.* Because Zeus has pronounced that mortals bring woe upon themselves, the implication is that the gods will not add to that suffering unfairly. Since the Cyclopeia and the Thrinakia episodes do not conform to the Aigisthus parable, Fenik finds that the ethical framework of the *Odyssey* is flawed.

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[9] Fenik 1974: 212

[10] Fenik 1974: 217, "They pay for acts not morally culpable in themselves, or at least only mildly so, because divine justice is blind to anything but what is actually done."

[11] See Otto 1954: 69, "For the consequences of the deed it makes no difference whether it was intentional or involuntary, whether it was committed under duress or was self-willed. Everywhere, according to ancient belief, man must suffer for things he did not intend."

[12] Fenik 1974: 211

[13] Fenik 1974: 213

Rutherford is one critic who accepts Fenik's argument for inconsistency and who takes the flawed conception of the divine to a logical conclusion.[14] Rutherford insists that the divine framework of the *Odyssey* is nearly identical to that of the *Iliad.* He also calls attention to the "disturbing exceptions" of justice evident in the Thrinakia, Cyclopeia, and Phaeacian episodes, and argues that justice is mere favouritism, where the gods help their favourites and tough luck for the rest.[15] Rutherford argues that "the gods, like human kings and overseers, may show favour to certain selected mortals, and may at times even feel under some ill-defined obligation to step in and exercise their authority in support of the just cause, but that is not their formal or perennial preoccupation."[16] Implicit in Rutherford's position is the idea that Homer means to present the divine in this manner. By accepting the inconsistency argument but making it the poet's intention, Rutherford can safely suggest that confronted with the uncertain divine element, Homer gives the characters free will and control.[17] Rutherford's position suggests by the logical development of the inconsistency argument that Homer has dismissed the gods as relics of an outdated morality.

In addition to Rutherford's interpretation of inconsistency, there is another position that follows from Fenik's identification of instances where the theodicy is consistently upheld and where it is not: double-theodicy. Jenny Strauss-Clay and Charles Segal are two of the critics that can be placed at the head of the double-theodicy argument, so-called after a chapter from Clay's book, *The Wrath of Athena.*[18] Clay agrees with Fenik that the wrath of Helios and Poseidon is unjust. The main difference between the two camps is that Clay uses geography and time as the keys to separating the more primitive from the more ethically advanced Olympian gods.[19]

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[14] Rutherford 1986: 145-162
[15] Rutherford 1986: 148
[16] Rutherford 1986: 148
[17] Cf. Nagy's introduction to Segal 1994, where he states "No longer is it possible to assume that the will of the gods is actually the same thing as the plot of epic, as the *Iliad* seems to claim."
[18] Clay 1983: 213-239
[19] See Murnaghan 1987: 5, n 5, where she states "the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* belong to the same culture and tradition and can profitably be discussed together... Underlying this assumption is the belief that the differences the two poems display are primarily due to the differences between their settings. This hypothesis not only serves well in explaining specific points of difference, but it also coheres with one of the main thematic preoccupations of the epics themselves. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are both centrally concerned with the effects of different settings on different human experience."

Clay insists that the predominant view in homeric scholarship is that the *Odyssey* displays a more advanced conception of the gods and a more enlightened view of human responsibility than the *Iliad*.[20] Clay agrees that Zeus' theodicy is a direct response to Achilles' description of divine justice, and that a more enlightened portrayal should follow. Furthermore, she suggests that the iliadic wrath of the Olympians, Helios and Poseidon, which is still present in the *Odyssey,* displays a rift in the conception of a new morality. According to the double-theodicy argument there are two concurrent concepts of the gods in human affairs.[21] Through various characters, Homer presents a worldview in which humans are distrustful of the random malevolence of the gods, yet still believe in the divine maintenance of justice. That opposition, displayed throughout the poem, and taken in conjunction with the theodicy, allows Clay to suggest that what is not stated in the theodicy is as active as the statement itself. If Zeus responds to Achilles in the theodicy, he does not deny his definition - he adds a clause.

According to the double-theodicy Helios and Poseidon, as well as their wraths, are vestiges of the iliadic temperament who do not follow Zeus' theodicy and therefore are not consistent with divine justice. Like Fenik and Rutherford, Clay accuses Poseidon and Helios of being gods who "act with complete ruthlessness to protect their offended honour."[22] The companions have been trapped by cruel gods, and punished despite their fundamental innocence.[23] In the case of Odysseus and Polyphemus, Clay uses arguments similar to Fenik, stating that "Odysseus would be acquitted for the blinding of the Cyclops in any court of law on the grounds of self-defense and extenuating circumstances."[24] Ultimately the gods only display tendencies towards justice by acting in the mortal world in order to ensure that humans do not forget about them.[25] The double-theodicy argument stems from an accepted contradiction presented seamlessly: the gods do or do not follow the stated theodicy and the humans do and do not trust in the justice of the gods.

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[20] Clay 1983: 213
[21] Clay 1983: 220
[22] Clay 1983: 230
[23] Clay 1983: 230
[24] Clay 1983: 228
[25] Clay 1983: 238-239

Charles Segal develops Clay's argument by suggesting that Homer intentionally displays a discrepancy between Zeus' theodicy and the gods of the Thrinakia and Cyclopeia.[26] Segal accepts that there are two levels of divinity in the *Odyssey* and that the poem moves from Poseidon's primitive wrath towards the divine justice provided by Zeus' theodicy, which is mirrored by the development of Odysseus and his return to Ithaca. The critical point for Segal's argument is the placement of the Thrinakia and Cyclopeia in the wonderful, mythical space of the middle books.

Poseidon's wrath is still the main bar to a unity of divine justice, but Segal's developmental approach returns coherence to the poem that is not there in the strictness of Clay's double-theodicy. Segal argues that the Cyclopes and Phaeacians, Poseidon and Helios exist under a different and more primitive world order from that of Odysseus and Zeus. Zeus' world order and its implications governs the first four books of the poem and the final ten, but the middle books are governed by a lower level of divinity, and as Segal suggests the different spheres of divine influence reveal a gap between Zeus and Poseidon.[27] Poseidon is still the anthropomorphic and personally vengeful god who punishes the innocent Odysseus unfairly.[28] Unlike Fenik, Rutherford, and Clay, however, Segal does not see Helios as an equally vengeful god, although he is one of the less ethically aware gods.[29] Indeed Helios belongs very definitively to the group of primitive deities that appear only in these middle books.[30] But for Segal, where Poseidon's wrath is purely personal, Helios' is based firmly on the poem's theodicy, the crew indeed do deserve their punishment and therefore belong to the ranks of Aigisthus and the suitors.[31] Segal ultimately argues that Zeus allows this primitive vengeance based on divine genealogy and divine property, but only within the strict confines of the archaic world, one which is bracketed in the poem by Zeus' own world order.

Just as the gods of the middle books are not perfectly in line with Zeus' world order, the characters of these books also have a primitive, naïve understanding of justice. Segal contends that both the Cyclopes and Phaeacians rely too heavily on their divine

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[26] Segal 1992: 489-518
[27] Segal 1992: 516
[28] Segal 1992: 510, "pure wrath in a narrowly personal vendetta"
[29] Segal 1992: 511.
[30] Segal 1992: 490
[31] Segal 1992: 508-509

ancestry, an affinity that reveals itself to be insufficient when they are confronted with Odysseus, who has a different, more developed and cerebral relation to the divine. The Cyclopes and Phaeacians are descended from Poseidon, inhabit paradisiacal lands, enjoy peaceful existences, and are governed by a world order characterized by Poseidon-like justice. While the Cyclopes occupy a pre-civilized state, and the Phaeacians are super-civilized, both experience a calamitous collision with Zeus' world when they encounter Odysseus.[32] Their misplaced archaic belief in divine support is evident in their inability to respond to divine warning, presented as prophecy in both cases.

Segal argues that the encounter of two world orders, one pre-Olympian, provides a conceptual framework for Odysseus' own moral development. For Segal, Odysseus' account to the Phaeacians of his admission of error in the Cyclopeia characterizes the progression from an iliadic understanding of divine justice to the enlightened view of the *Odyssey*, which is seen in Odysseus' behaviour and with his misdirected charge of neglect against Zeus. According to Segal, the double-theodicy is structurally determined to show that the world of Ithaca and the *Odyssey* is not the world of the *Iliad*. But while the primitive world order is segregated, Zeus' necessary involvement and toleration of it means that the theodicy is often a "distant and precarious goal."[33] In the end the arguments for a double-theodicy, which seek to portray a conceptual whole, remain close to the arguments for inconsistency, which deny the consistency of the whole.

The third camp of critics variously argues for the consistency of divine justice in the *Odyssey*, encompassing arguments of inconsistency and double-theodicy.[34] The main proponent of consistency is Rainer Friedrich, and while a number of critics offer responses to the charges of inconsistency, most depend on Friedrich's work.[35] Friedrich responds to Fenik's charges of inconsistency and lack of uniformity by arguing that consistency does not require uniformity and that a lack of conformity does not equal inconsistency.[36] Friedrich makes this assertion on the basis that the polytheistic pantheon demands diversity and that it is quite acceptable for primitive gods to co-exist with

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[32] Segal 1992: 498
[33] Segal 1992: 518
[34] This camp includes critics like Louden 1999, Olson 1995, and Brown 1996.
[35] Friedrich 1987: 375-400
[36] Friedrich 1987: 381

ethically sound gods.[37] He agrees with most critics that Helios' anger is primitive and motivated solely by revenge and that Poseidon too acts out of sheer personal revenge.[38] While accepting these positions, Friedrich rebuts the charges of inconsistency by turning the whole question back onto Zeus, who pronounced the new moral programme, and who carries out Helios' revenge and sanctions Poseidon' revenge of both Odysseus and the Phaeacians.

Concerning Helios' anger, Friedrich accepts that the punishment does accord with Zeus' theodicy, while maintaining that it is motivated by revenge.[39] Once the Sun god petitions Zeus to defend his wounded honour, Zeus, Friedrich argues, must act in his capacity as the guardian of divine honour. Zeus and Helios are not acting inconsistently with the theodicy, since a compromise is reached between vengeance and justice where Helios' anger is neutralized.[40] However, when the discussion turns to Poseidon, Friedrich is no longer able to accept the solidarity argument.[41]

He returns the problem of divine justice to the relation between theodicy and subsequent action: "Zeus had repudiated men's mistaken view that the gods arbitrarily cause human suffering. He should therefore be least expected to show solidarity with a god whose actions amount to just that."[42] As the pantheon's diversity allows for the two gods to act differently towards mortals, the problem is now whether the same god acts in several ways towards men. In other words, is Zeus consistent? In order to demonstrate that indeed he is, and to save the poem's consistency Friedrich argues that Zeus and Poseidon are punishing Odysseus for two separate offences. The offence against Poseidon is straightforward; his son is blinded.

Zeus, meanwhile, allows Poseidon to harangue Odysseus because of the hero's display of hubris in his exchange with Polyphemus. Friedrich takes into account other arguments that locate hubris in one or another of the three parts of the exchange, but broadens the scope of Odysseus' hubris to the entire Cyclopeia. Odysseus decides to "test" the Cyclops, violates the code of hospitality himself, and finally demonstrates a

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[37] Friedrich 1987: 382, and 1991: 19
[38] Friedrich 1987: 398, and 1991: 16
[39] Friedrich 1987: 389
[40] Friedrich 1987: 399-400
[41] Friedrich 1991: 16
[42] Friedrich 1991: 16

moral pretension in ascribing the Cyclops' suffering to the will of Zeus. Friedrich argues that Zeus' displeasure is provoked by a mixture of heroic ambition and moral pretension.[43] It is an imbalance in Odysseus' character that he must overcome in order to prove successful at Ithaca. Zeus allows Poseidon's wrath to continue in order to prepare Odysseus and to lead him to a better awareness of the new moral framework. In other words, Friedrich actually accepts inconsistencies and establishes a new framework of consistency that depends entirely on a moral programme that is not textually based or defensible: character development. The only way that the gods act harmoniously is if in the end the gods are interested in making Odysseus a better person.

A number of other critics attempt to defend the consistency of the *Odyssey*'s divine justice, including Bruce Louden, who suggests that the key to consistency can be found through the narrative patterns Homer uses to develop the wrath of Helios, Poseidon, and Athena.[44] Helios' punishment of the companions, Poseidon's punishment of the Phaeacians, and Athena's punishment of the suitors all follow the pattern set down by Zeus' Aigisthus parable; conversely, the stories of Aigisthus, the companions and the suitors work towards the Ithacan sequence.[45] Louden argues that each episode of divine wrath, which he reads as three instances of threatened apocalypse, follows a traditional myth pattern wherein the one just man survives.[46] Apart from developing the reliance of the poet on traditional myth patterns, Louden generally relies on Friedrich's argument about the necessary diversity of the pantheon.[47]

Douglas Olson focuses on two sides of divine justice: benevolence and honour.[48] On the one hand and in response to Fenik, Olson goes to great lengths to juxtapose the attempts of the divine to warn mortals from committing crime and the wilful ignorance of men. The juxtaposition amounts to a positive view of the unfolding of the theodicy. Not only is Aigisthus given a warning, but also Odysseus and his crew are given timely

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[43] Friedrich 1991: 27
[44] Louden 1999:3, 69
[45] Louden 1999: 3
[46] Louden 1999: 69
[47] Louden 1999: 83-84
[48] Olson 1995: 205-223

warning or reasonable advice against crime or recklessness.[49] On the other hand, Olson counters Clay's claim that the divine need mortal attention by citing the numerous examples of the "more selfish reason that their personal favourites or family have been abused, their property attacked or their honours stinted."[50] Olson finds no discrepancy between theodicy and the rest of the poem because he understands the gods' defence of their honour to coincide with the theodicy's absolution of divine motive: "When one individual mistreats another who is as strong or stronger than himself or who can call someone more powerful to his aid, he can expect to be attacked in turn."[51] So the gods never worry about losing mortal attention, as mortals would be absolutely foolish not to attempt to curry favour, but personal honour and justice do sometimes coincide. Olson's defence of consistency is more a by-product of deflating the problem of divine justice, since there is no problem if justice is the defence of honour and the protection of the weak.

A position such as Olson's opens up the debate over the problem of divine justice by pointing beyond the theodicy to keys for the poem's moral consistency. Christopher Brown is one critic who embraces this opening. Brown calls the term theodicy unacceptable as a way of understanding Zeus' justification of the ways of gods to men.[52] Brown attempts to illustrate the force of what is left unsaid, which, as Clay pointed out, was the residual force of Achilles' description of justice. As an elaboration in the poem of this factor, Brown looks to the exchange between Zeus and Athena that follows Zeus' initial address. In that exchange Athena refers to Odysseus as *dúsmuros* (1.48): unhappy, unlucky, or with an unhappy portion.[53] Brown suggests that it is not as much due to any hubristic intent in the Cyclopeia or an inconsistency in the ethical framework that Odysseus suffers, but that quite simply he has to deal with an unhappy portion. Brown compares Odysseus's wanderings to the labours of Hercules: "they are his lot, not suffering [Odysseus] has earned through his own folly in his treatment of Polyphemus

[49] Olson 1995: 206-212. See 211, where Olson challenges Fenik's view that Odysseus does not tell the crew specifically of the danger with reference to *Od.*12. 275
[50] Olson 1995: 216
[51] Olson 1995: 217
[52] Brown 1996: 8
[53] Brown 1996: 13

(though the Cyclops' curse has clearly exacerbated the situation)."[54] When he confronts the Cyclopeia and the problem of Zeus' support of Poseidon's vengeance, Brown develops an argument similar to Segal: the Cyclops exists in a different world, governed by a different order than Odysseus is used to. The implications of Zeus' theodicy do not apply in the Cyclopeia, and Poseidon's wrath will not affect Odysseus' homecoming, so "Zeus has no obligation to support" Odysseus.[55] Brown's defence of the poem's consistency, like Friedrich's, results in and depends on the development of Odysseus' character. In a world that is not constrained by the same social limitations as the human world, the Cyclops is not obliged to honour the same laws as Odysseus. In the Cyclopeia, however, Odysseus does not honour the laws properly either and this amounts to an error in judgement, according to Brown, that results in Zeus' sanction of Poseidon's punishment.[56] The different gods may have their own spheres of influence, some iliadic and some post-iliadic, but in the end the moral and practical superiority of the post-iliadic, the world order of Zeus, must be recognized as the proper modality. The poem moves for Brown, as for Friedrich and Segal, from the darkness of the ancient realm towards the illuminated world of Ithaca. This progress leaves these important aspects of divine justice in an awkward intermediary phase, and while that seems to calm the problem of consistency in divine justice, it transfers a great deal of confusion to the perception of Odysseus: specifically, why he needs to develop.

These three positions provide the basic parameters of the debate surrounding the problem of divine justice in the *Odyssey*. The strongest and most persistent criticism remains Fenik's assertion that the gods do not uphold Zeus' theodicy uniformly. The double-theodicy argument reconciles that inconsistency by separating the divine pantheon into primitive and enlightened gods. The separation also reveals a need to bridge the gap, so the idea of a development within the poem arises. Finally, in order to defend the consistency of the gods, they are transformed into moral reformers whose actions can all be taken as ethically motivated. For the better part of the debate the lack of a consistent understanding of the theodicy fuels the different interpretations of the consistent presentation of the ways of gods to men. With Olson and Brown, the strict

[54] Brown 1996: 13
[55] Brown 1996: 24
[56] Brown 1996: 27

dependence that previous critics display on Zeus' theodicy is called into question and the deficiencies in the positions of those who contest the consistency of divine justice begin to appear.

ii. *Odyssey* 1.1-98: A Comprehensive Programme

If Homer offers an initial reference point to a conception of morality and a conception of the ways of gods to men, he does not do so merely in three lines. He offers a tripartite program: the proem (1.1-10), the interlude (1.11-26) and the divine assembly (1.27-98). Each part of the prologue offers a paradigm for the rest of the poem, and the interconnections between the three present a cohesive framework of divine justice.

Zeus' theodicy is generally considered to offer the most complete view of justice in the poem. At the same time, many scholars insist that the iliadic conception of justice, which is not directly stated, is still active. While Clay and Brown, two such critics, stress the importance of the unstated aspect of the theodicy, they do not locate this sentiment satisfactorily in the *Odyssey*'s prologue itself. The inevitable lot of man, though, makes its first appearance within the first ten lines of the poem. Indeed, while some critics have argued that the *Odyssey*'s proem is inferior to the *Iliad*'s, the later epic's introduction is no less programmatic.[57] Although there is no conflict between two individuals, as there is in the *Iliad*, there is an implicit conflict between Odysseus and his companions that introduces a basic tension of the poem: how is he able to return but not they?[58] It is worthwhile to reproduce the whole proem here:

> Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
> πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
> πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
> πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθων ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
> ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων.
> ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἱέμενός περ
> αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
> νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο

[57] Cf. Bloom, ed. 1988: 49, where C.M. Bowra insists that "The opening lines of the *Odyssey* are much less apt and less relevant than those of the *Iliad*."

[58] See Olson 1995: 44: "Homer's own interests are apparent already in the first ten lines of the epic, which are insistent on the fact that a central concern of this tale of Odysseus must be the fate of the men who accompanied him on his journeys but did not make their way back to Ithaca."

ἥσθιον. αὐτὰρ ὸ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
τῶν ἁμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν. (1.1–10)

Sing to me, Muse, of that crafty man, who
Suffered so much after sacking the walled cities near Troy;
Who came to see the towns of many men and came to know their ways;
The man who took such grief at sea and in his heart,
While he meant to safeguard the return and life of his companions.
But he could not save his companions. Though they were his
Charge, they were destroyed by their very own reckless crimes,
Fools, when they feasted on the cattle of the Sun god,
Helios – he took away the day of their return.
From any point therein goddess, daughter of God, tell us.

Questions have been raised regarding Homer's decision to spend four lines of the proem on the companions who appear in a relatively few number of books and play arguably a lesser role than a character like Poseidon.[59] While the Thrinakia might not be the *most* important episode of the poem, or as immanent as wrath in the *Iliad*, the opposition between the description of Odysseus and the disparate fortunes of the companions informs the rest of the poem as programmatically as the idea of wrath does in the earlier epic.

Homer creates a model of transgression when he introduces the explicit insult of a god by Odysseus' men. The poet tells us that Odysseus travelled from the walled cities near Troy, across the perilous sea. He was also at Thrinakia, and it is understood that the companions accompanied him suffering the same hardships. Odysseus, however, does not insult a god, and while he suffers, his day of return is not taken away.[60] The poet contrasts the fate of the companions with that of Odysseus in relation to the divine, specifically Helios, although later it is seen as sanctioned by Zeus as well. While the gods carry out their deaths, the episode is not presented as a consequence of Helios' vindictive tendencies, but as due to the *atasthalia* of the crew alone.[61] The use of this term becomes striking thirty lines later when Zeus uses it in the 'theodicy.' Clay, contrarily, argues that

[59] Friedrich 1987: 375; Clay 1983: 37-38; Louden 1999: 69f
[60] Considering that Odysseus through Autolycus is the great-grandson of Hermes, the one god who once successfully stole Helios' cattle without repercussion, Homer's decision to leave Odysseus out of the cattle-raid should probably be viewed as rather comical. For a consideration of Odysseus' character through Autolycanism, see Stanford 1963: 18f and Otto 1954: 104-108.
[61] See Brown 1996: 12 quoting West, that *atasthalia* "denotes behaviour for which men not only suffer but deserve to suffer, culpable recklessness implying a selfish disregard for the decencies of social life."

the connection between Homer's use of the term, *atasthalia*, in the proem and Zeus' is weak, claiming that the poet does not want the audience to absolve the gods of the companions' death.[62] Her claim turns on the position that *atasthalia* on its own carries no religious connotations, and that a reckless crime or folly is not necessarily an attack against the gods. But there is a significant difference between an isolated instance of crime and a contextualized instance where the wronged party is a god. When reckless crime is committed against a divinity it is a divine concern.[63]

The proem introduces this basic tension, between allotted suffering and self-inflicted woe. The crime against Helios is not simply the abuse of the god's property or a conflict with an ethically undeveloped deity. As the episode itself makes clear (*Od.*12.127-140), Helios' cattle represent the days of the year and when they are slaughtered, the natural order is breached and the transgressors have to be punished. Both Odysseus and the companions suffer, yet the companions are unable to avoid making a fatal mistake when they confront the divine. In other words, all men suffer, and many bring further trouble on themselves out of their own recklessness, although some do not.[64]

In the second part, the interlude between the proem and the assembly (1.11-26), Homer presents Odysseus in contrast to both paradigmatic transgressors. This contrast is first evident in the proem, where the description of Odysseus' suffering, including that of his men, is interrupted by the description of the destruction of those companions because of their *atasthalia*. That is the first mention of the disparate fortunes of the returning Ithacans. The idea is immediately taken up following the proem where there is a very brief description of two absentees, Odysseus and Poseidon. Odysseus sits stranded and

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[62] Cf. Clay 1983: 36, where she asks: "In the very opening lines of the poem, does the poet really want to stress the point that the companions of Odysseus perished deservedly, that they lost their lives through their own responsibility and *not* through the fault of the gods?" Contrary to Clays' suggestion this is exactly what Homer intends, and a negative response to the assertion betrays an unwillingness to allow the overriding principles of divine order and justice, of which the proem plays a large part.

[63] Cf. Clay 1983: 36-37, where she refers to two episodes of the *Iliad* (4.409, 22. 104) and one from the *Odyssey* (10. 437) each of which she points out are void of religious, divine confrontation but which still lead to destruction, as marked by the repeated ὄλοντο. Clay's point is well-taken: mortals can be destroyed for *atasthalia* without reference to the gods. But it would be wrong to dissociate *atasthalia* from divine transgression in every case, especially in the *Odyssey* when every instance but 10.437 is in the context of mortal crimes against the divine, and so in the case of the companions.

[64] At the end of the poem, even Odysseus comes close to misjudging the alignment of his personal concern with universal order.

weeping on the shores of Ogygia, while Poseidon feasts even further away with the Ethiopians. Odysseus has been with Calypso since before the suitors arrived at his house in Ithaca and overturned the social order there. Before there is social disorder, Odysseus' desire to return home is as negligible as Ogygia.

The two absences account for the divine counsel. Odysseus' absence causes Athena to request his return to Ithaca, an act that makes the most sense without Poseidon's presence. The Muse, given the choice, has decided to begin with Odysseus suffering in exile. His return towards Ithaca will coincide with Poseidon's return from Ethiopia, a coincidence that results in the final act of retribution by the stubborn god. These twenty-five lines serve to emphasize Odysseus' longstanding suffering; at this point it has only been contrasted with a different kind of suffering, and one that is self-inflicted. It is not so important that the details of Odysseus' conflict with Polyphemus and Poseidon are immediately apparent, but that already his position has been juxtaposed to that of his companions, and as the poem enters the divine counsel wherein Zeus elaborates his theodicy, that contrast must reflect back upon Odysseus' predicament. Odysseus' relation to divine justice is not the same as the companions', Aegisthus', or the suitors'.

Before the divine assembly at 1.27, Homer, in the proem, has already presented the two sides of mortal suffering that accord with the iliadic and odyssean conceptions of justice: within and beyond measure. Zeus' first words immediately fall into the poet's progressing outline of punishment and endurance. Zeus' theodicy introduces another paradigm of the poem, the Aigisthus parable. The charge that mortals bring suffering beyond measure upon themselves corresponds most directly to Aigisthus and the suitors, whose story elaborates the paradigm. The idea that mortals have an insufficient grasp of the relation between their actions and suffering, which Homer exposes through a continuously misplaced distrust of the gods, is evident throughout the poem. Zeus' charge is supported by what has come to be known as Jörgensen's law which states that "characters, lacking the omniscience of the narrator, often ascribe divine interventions to Ζεύς (in general), to an unspecified god (δαίμων, θεός, θεοί) or to the wrong god."[65] While Jörgensen's law certainly applies throughout the poem, it also isolates Zeus'

[65] de Jong 2001: xv

programmatic introduction as a definitive source of justice, just as the term 'theodicy' attests.[66]

The Aigisthus parable draws the connection between mortal recklessness and divine wrath. Aigisthus is the quintessential model in the poem for impropriety: the man who crosses a threshold of divine sanctity and consequently loses his life. This paradigm immediately recalls the companions of the proem and looks forward to the suitors of Book One. Aigisthus' misfortune also clarifies the behaviour of the gods by focusing an important aspect of self-incurred woe: the neglect of divine warnings. Aigisthus is a suitor who ruins Agamemnon's day of return, murders the king, upsets the social order by displacing Orestes, ignores the warning to desist and in the end is killed.[67] The parallels with the Ithacan situation are evident. But the story is also an elaboration on the term *atasthalia*, so the companions are implicated. The companions contravened divine order by taking Helios' cattle. Although they were warned to the contrary, the god was avenged and the criminals were punished.

The companions, the suitors, and Aigisthus all transgress order: each insults a higher authority, each disregards at least one warning, and ultimately all suffer for the attack on order. Odysseus, meanwhile, indirectly calls down divine wrath, but he is able to emerge alive, retribution fulfilled, while the Cyclops and Phaeacians disregard prophecy and emerge punished but alive as well. Odysseus, Polyphemus, and the Phaeacians do not interfere in affairs with which the gods are concerned; they make mistakes and suffer, acknowledging the errors, unlike the group of transgressors.[68] The details of Aigisthus' misfortune are few, but from 1.42 the audience will recognize an uncompromising will to disdain divinely sent commands that protect authority and order. The wrong committed by Aigisthus, the agitation of the Mycenaean kingdom, not only involves the murder of a king but the flouting of divine and universal order.

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[66] But the terms 'law' and 'justice' are impositions: Homer never uses the term justice (*diké*) in the prologue. The idea that divine justice appears in the introduction and is understood as such does not have a sound textual basis. Instead, the suggestion that mortals are constantly blaming the gods for every wayward bit of fortune they encounter is a recurrent theme, but so is the dichotomy of the proem and a number of other ideas that are raised in progressive unison within the first hundred lines of the *Odyssey*. Zeus' words 1.32-43 are important but should not be elevated above the rest of the introduction.

[67] Already in the Aigisthus parable Homer has Zeus include the idea of revenge as part of an acceptable course of action in the fulfillment of justice, which is the protection of order.

[68] In *Od.*24 the suitors do not acknowledge any guilt on their part.

The so-called theodicy and the Aigisthus parable make up the introduction to the first divine assembly.[69] There are five divine meetings in the *Odyssey*: Zeus-Athena, 1.27-98, 5.1-42, and 24.472-486; Zeus-Helios, 12.377-388; and, Zeus-Poseidon, 13.127-158. Each meeting follows a fairly regular structural pattern that is laid out in Book One following the Aigisthus story. First, a god makes a personal appeal to Zeus; second, Zeus responds to the personal appeal and addresses its relation to universal concern; next, a solution that is sanctioned by Zeus appears; and, finally the suppliant god, Zeus or Hermes sets out to address the problem. The divine meetings, not the 'theodicy', offer the most comprehensive approach to a conception of divine justice. Despite the personal interests of individual gods, a fundamental protection of order consistently takes precedence.

Zeus' introduction to the first divine assembly stands out because it ties human action inextricably to divine interest. While the proem offers the clearest case of mortal disobedience, as the companions literally destroy the property of a god, Zeus' lamentation over Aigisthus brings divine concern into a social context: the kingdoms of Greece. The battleground of the *Odyssey* is found within in the king's halls. The fate of the companions should not be separated from any considerations of the suitors and Aigisthus as their destruction informs the rest of the poem with a broader understanding of divine justice: transgressions against order and the divine are punished.

The personal appeal of the first divine assembly consists of Athena's complaint for Odysseus' return. She presents this request as one borne out of pity for her favourite: ἀλλά μοι ἀμφ' Ὀδυσῆι δαΐφονι δαίεται ἦτορ (1.48) / *But my heart breaks for wise Odysseus*. What follows is in fact the incorporation of the earlier description of Odysseus' isolation at Ogygia into a formal appeal for his release. Athena elaborates on what the poet had earlier presented by discussing Odysseus' divine captor (*Od.*1.49-57), which in turn is followed by a description of his desire to return to Ithaca (1.57-59). The final section of Athena's first speech is an address to Zeus which comprises the actual plea, in which she requests Odysseus' return if Zeus has any sympathy for the man (1.60-62). In a very personal manner, Athena's speech presents two sides of Odysseus, as a

[69] There are five divine meetings which consist of three assemblies (Athena and Zeus) and two dialogues (Helios, Poseidon and Zeus). Although they are generally separated as assemblies and dialogues, they still entail a single pattern.

displaced king (1.58-59) and a pious warrior (1.61-62). At the close of the initial plea, the potential for Odysseus' return is one man's fate and one god's concern. By the end of Athena's second speech the entire divine assembly and all of Ithaca will be concerned with Odysseus reaching Ithaca.[70]

Although Homer delays Zeus' approval of Odysseus' return until Book Five, his response to Athena does address both points the goddess raises and joins them in the more general concern of order. What becomes apparent is not only that Athena would like Odysseus returned, but that it is right that he returns – order demands it.[71] Athena begs her father to act on Odysseus' piety towards Zeus and accuses him of forgetting about the king. Zeus' response, which light-heartedly places Athena in the category of mortals who blame the gods, addresses Odysseus as universally pious.[72]

πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ θείοιο λαθοίμην,
ὃς περὶ μὲν νόον ἐστὶ βροτῶν, περὶ δ' ἱρὰ θεοῖσιν
ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν;
ἀλλὰ Ποσειδάων γαιήοχος ἀσκελὲς αἰὲν
Κύκλωπος κεχόλωται, ὃν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν
ἀντίθεον Πολύφημον, ὃου κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον
πᾶσιν Κυκλώπεσσι· Θόωσα δέ μιν τέκε νύμφη,
Φόρκυνος θυγάτηρ, ἁλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο μέδοντος,
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι Ποσειδάωνι μιγεῖσα.
ἐκ τοῦ δὴ Ὀδυσῆα Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων
οὔ τι κακακτείνει, πλάζει δ' ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης.
ἀλλ' ἄγεθ', ἡμεῖς οἵδε περιφραζώμεθα πάντες
νόστον, ὅπως ἔλθῃσι· Ποσειδάων δὲ μεθήσει
ὃν χόλον· οὐ μὲν γάρ τι δυνήσεται ἀντία πάντων
ἀθανάτων ἀέκητι θεῶν ἐριδαινέμεν οἷος. (1.65–79)

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[70] See Lloyd-Jones 1971: 29, "Odysseus enjoys the special protection of Athene, the closest of the gods to Zeus. This is because he fulfills the requirements of heroic virtue; he has made regular sacrifices to the gods, he is as kind as a father to the people they have given him to rule, and with consistent good sense he has avoided overstepping the bounds which the gods set to human action."

[71] Detienne & Vernant 1974: 20, treat the relation between divine intent and ultimate order similarly: "Zeus ne s'est pas contenté de s'unir en premier marriage à Mètis; en l'avalant, il s'est fait lui-même entièrement mètis. Sage precaution: après avoir conçu Athéna, Mètis aurait enfanté, si Zeus n'avait paré le coup, un fils plus fort que son père et qui l'aurait à son tour detroné comme il avait lui-même renversé le sien. Mais il n'est plus désormais de mètis possible en dehors de Zeus contre lui. Pas une ruse ne se trame dans l'univers sans passer d'abord par son esprit."

[72] If the sequence of events in the poem were taken chronologically instead of dramatically, Zeus' observation of Odysseus' long-standing piety would come *after* the Cyclopeia: Zeus is explicitly stating that Odysseus did not act impiously in the Cyclops exchange. That dramatically Homer presents these events inversely makes the same point: the poem approaches the Cyclopeia with an established view of Odysseus.

How can you say that I would forget pious Odysseus,
Who has the most wherewithal among mortals, who always gave
At the altars of the undying gods who rule wide heaven?
But Poseidon, the earth-shaker, still stubbornly fumes over
The Cyclops, whose eye he destroyed -
God-like Polyphemus, the mightiest strength of all
The Cyclopes; the nymph Thoasa bore him,
Daughter of Porcinis, guardian of the barren sea,
She lay with Poseidon in the hallowed caves.
Still, for that Poseidon the earth-shaker does not kill
Odysseus, but keeps him from his hereditary homeland;
Come now, let us all discuss as we wish
His homecoming; for Poseidon's wrath against him will loose;
After all, he cannot oppose all the undying gods on this
Alone.

The description of Odysseus' piety takes up three lines (1.65-67) and contains an important progression.[73] When Zeus asks how he could have forgotten about Odysseus, he uses the word *theos* at 1.65. Generally translated as 'god-like', the semantic field of *theos* also appropriately allows the interpretation of 'god-minded.' 'God-minded,' if its meaning is elaborated, comes to mean something like 'in harmony with the will of the gods', or 'pious.' The next two lines of Zeus' description of Odysseus support this definition by focusing on Odysseus' mind and his sacrificing habits. At 1.66, Zeus praises Odysseus: ὃς περὶ μὲν νόον ἐστὶ βροτῶν (1.66) / *Who has the most wherewithal among mortals*. Next, at 1.67, Zeus offers a tangible example of Odysseus' god-like mind and its excellence among mortals in citing his propriety in sacrifice:

περὶ δ' ἱρὰ θεοῖσιν
ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν (1.66–67).

who always gave
At the altars of the undying gods, who rule wide heaven

[73] See Bloom (ed.); 1988: 19, where Kitto writes, "First of all, it goes without saying that Odysseus is always the good, wise, and just king, and this is more than a simple characterizing of the hero... Under the government of a just king "the sheep never fail to bring forth their lambs nor the sea to provide its fish"; and such a king was Odysseus.' Ἀδίχια, lawlessness, is not a moral phenomenon only." Compare this description to descriptions of Menelaus, Nestor, and Alcinous' kingdoms.

In these three lines, Zeus has elevated Odysseus' return from a mortal longing for home to something that is a concern for every immortal. Before this exchange, the prologue had been focused on impiety, the transgressions of mortals against the divine. The companions were guilty, Aigisthus was guilty, and the suitors we find out shortly, are guilty too. While Homer begins his presentation of Odysseus with a mention of his suffering and endurance (1.1), ultimately he stresses his piety by having the supreme god himself attest to the man's diligent religious propriety.[74]

A large part of Zeus' response (1.68-76) is taken up with a reflection on Poseidon and his wrath against Odysseus. Zeus characterizes Poseidon's wrath as stubborn, *askeles*, a term that portrays little more than a personal vendetta. The god then offers a number of lines to the Cyclops' heritage. The lengthy presentation is somewhat similar to introductions made by contestants in traditional man-to-man confrontations. By alluding to this signal introduction, the poet, through Zeus, further emphasizes the relatively low degree of universal import Poseidon's wrath holds. It is almost equivalent to mortal antagonism. Following the comments on Poseidon's wrath, Zeus explains the justice of the Poseidon-Odysseus conflict. As a personal grudge that has no broader consequences, Poseidon's wrath has well-defined boundaries. His anger and means of punishment do not conflict with Zeus' support of Odysseus' piety.[75] At the same time, Zeus' respect of Odysseus by no means excuses him from his lot of suffering.[76] So, Poseidon's particular concern is taken up in the larger concern for the king's return. While Odysseus does not escape the suffering he incurs from Poseidon, the gods are favourably disposed towards granting his return. Odysseus' restoration to his role as king is more important to order than the particular honour of Poseidon.

Conversely then, it appears that any opposition to Odysseus' return is a slight to Zeus' will. The implication of Zeus' final words leads Athena to carry the thought to its immediately practical conclusions: setting Odysseus free of Calypso (1.83-97) and preparing Ithaca for Odysseus' return (1.88-92). However, Homer delays the definite approval of Odysseus' return until the next divine meeting in Book Five. Although the most surprising thing at this point would be if Zeus were to deny the return, the delay is

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[74] See Stanford 1963: 28
[75] Cf. Segal 1994: 197
[76] See the episode of Sarpedon's death in the *Iliad.*

dramatically and thematically important. Before Zeus can allow Odysseus to return, the poet presents the disruption of order at Ithaca and the models of order at Sparta and Pylos. Only when Odysseus' desire to return to his home can be seen to correspond directly to the necessity of restoring order at Ithaca, a problem that concerns the gods, can Zeus send Hermes to Ogygia to demand the king's release.

The first divine meeting, to which the proem, interlude, 'theodicy' and Aigisthus parable move, is the culmination of Homer's programmatic introduction to the poem and its ethical framework. Zeus' theodicy is far too narrow a basis; those lines depend on those that surround it, from the proem to Zeus' response to Athena. Treating them in this context produces a more comprehensive idea of divine justice and one that accounts for the divine adjudication of mortals in the *Odyssey*. The broader programmatic base subdues conceptions of justice as fairness by revealing the importance of order, propriety and allotment. Furthermore, it shows how Zeus' theodicy upholds the prominence of justice as order. The continual reference to Odysseus, and his contrast to the other characters, pushes a conception of justice beyond punishment to punishment, reward, and support. Primarily, the prologue of the *Odyssey* makes it clear that the fundamental role of justice is the protection of order: the companions flout it and die; Aigisthus neglects divine warning and dies; but Odysseus who maintains his piety throughout his continuous suffering and who represents social order as a king is the object of support by the divine pantheon – not even Poseidon argues that.

Chapter Three: The Consistency of Divine Justice in Four Episodes

The following are four brief treatments of selected passages chosen in order to demonstrate the consistency of the pantheon. While Friedrich and other are right to insist on the necessary difference that exists among Homer's gods, the implication that difference reveals level of importance is misguided. With the arguments of a double theodicy, as well as the attempts to defend the consistency of the gods, comes the idea that Poseidon's and Helios' world must be overcome in order to reach Zeus' realm. But for Homer Athena's concern for Ithaca, Helios' concern for the sun, and Poseidon's concern for his own honour receive due attention from Zeus and reflect the larger concern for order for all gods. The goal of these discussions is to reveal that in varied circumstances Homer variously but consistently illustrates divine justice and the ways of gods to men. The instance of Calypso receiving Hermes' warning differs from Polyphemus' and the Phaeacians' revelations of prophecy fulfilled; Helios' meeting with Zeus is not quite the same as Poseidon's. Each case is separately informed, yet with order, as social, natural or divine, at stake Homer develops his programme of divine justice as one ultimately concerned with propriety and measure.

i. Hermes and Calypso

Despite its brevity, the short passage at the beginning of Book Five is crucial to the consistent portrayal of justice. While there are many types of warning in the poem there are only three direct divine warnings. Aigisthus, Calypso, and Odysseus are all visited by gods and told to cease some disruptive act. The neglect of a direct warning and its consequence are presented in the Aigisthus story. The other two examples also occur at points where social order is in serious danger of being overturned.

These warnings differ from those offered the companions, suitors, Polyphemus and the Phaeacians. The companions are warned indirectly by Odysseus, who was warned on their behalf by Aiolus, Circe and Teiresias. Still, they disobey the higher authority of their captain and suffer. In the case of the crew, it is not merely social order that is in jeopardy as Odysseus' men continually disobey his orders, but the natural course of the sun that rests on the lives of the flocks. The suitors, meanwhile, are

consistently condemned. Warnings come thick and fast from bird omens, advice from Odysseus, Ithacan prophets and reprimands from the royal family, its servants and guests. These warnings, however, have more the character of chastisement. While dramatically, there are several critical points in the presentation of the suitors' transgression in the poem, from their first mention in Book One, the suitors have insulted divine order by insulting the king of their social order.[77] Polyphemus and the Phaeacians, meanwhile, are warned by prophecy, and though they are unable to heed the warnings, they do not suffer as the crew or suitors do.

Homer presents the three direct warnings in a meaningful sequence. The first is paradigmatic of the destruction that follows negligence; the second is a model for accepting forces outside one's control. Odysseus' reaction at the end of the poem, which marks the third direct warning, can be measured against the earlier two examples of conduct. The example he follows is that of Calypso, which occurs after the second divine meeting. There, through Athena's repeated concern about Odysseus' absence and after the poet has sufficiently displayed the disorder it has allowed, Zeus finally makes the king's return divine command and Hermes is dispatched to Ogygia to set in motion the final stage of Odysseus' wanderings.

The Hermes-Calypso episode is relatively brief, taking up approximately one hundred and fifteen lines. Forty of those lines are devoted to Hermes' distant travel. Hermes' observations about the distance offer insight into the negligible distinction between Olympians and the near-divine as opposed to their relation with mortals. Hermes states,

> Ζεὺς ἐμέ γ' ἠνώγει δεῦρ' ἐλθέμεν οὐκ ἐθέλοντα·
> τίς δ'ἂν ἑκὼν τοσσόνδε διαδράμοι ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ
> ἄσπετον; οὐδέ τις ἄγχι βροτῶν πόλις, οἵ τε θεοῖσιν
> ἱερά τε ῥέζουσι καὶ ἐξαίτους ἑκατόμβας.
> ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὔ πως ἔστι Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο
> οὔτε παρεξελθεῖν ἄλλον θεὸν οὔθ' ἁλιῶσαι. (5. 99–104)

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[77] *Od.*1.91-92 Athena condemns them for wasting Odysseus' property; 1.144f the suitors' impropriety is compared to the propriety of Telemachus; 1.232f Telemachus describes the intrusion of the suitors; 1.266 Athena-as-Mentor describes their imminent death; the assembly in Book Two displays the ineffectuality of a public assembly demonstrating the decay of social institutions in Ithaca with the suitors in charge. They repeatedly disrespect Odysseus' authority and the authority of his royal line.

> Zeus ordered me, though unwilling, to come here;
> Who would willingly cross over the briny, unspeakable water to
> Here? There's no mortal city nearby, where priests
> Perform sacrifice and choice hecatombs to the gods.
> Really, this is the will of aegis-bearing God –
> No other god would disregard or disappoint him.

Hermes' contempt for Calypso's distance from any mortal society suggests a major feature of 'the ways of gods to men.' The ability of mortals to maintain order is tenuous, and only the constant relation with the gods keeps men in line. After all, even Odysseus' alignment with divine order changes at the end of Book Twenty-Four. Calypso and the semi-divine figures enjoy a far more stable relation to order that is rarely in opposition to the Olympians, as the rarity of visits and the inflexibility of Calypso's adherence to Hermes' command suggest. The semi-divine as such do not depend as heavily as mortals on the guidance and monitoring of the divine, and do not need to offer sacrifice in turn. Homer depicts this isolated existence by placing these figures so far from mortal societies and the interest of Olympus. Hermes goes on in the exchange to describe the unnatural situation of Calypso's detainment of Odysseus, which amounts to a charge of gross misbehaviour. This description is a new variation on the warning model. On top of the order to release Odysseus and the threat to be more gracious towards the Olympian gods in the future, Calypso is provided with a detailed account of how she has been upsetting natural order.[78]

The placement of the episode is striking. First, it takes place directly after the divine counsel and before the release of Odysseus. It has a mediatory position that emphasizes the importance of Calypso's reception of Hermes and his instructions. Secondly, considering the substance of the divine counsel (Ithaca's need of Odysseus) any negligence of Hermes' demand will constitute a divine transgression. Keeping Odysseus from Ithaca will disrupt the social order there, and with the interest of the Olympians now tied to the king's return, his detention will further count as an attack against universal order.

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[78] See Lloyd-Jones 1971: 56, who discusses the episode in terms of Calypso's rapprochement because the gods discourage "the unions of goddesses with mortals. The gods might retort that they act not from common jealousy, but because such unions violate the order of the universe; this case is typical of many in which what the victims see as common jealousy appears differently to the gods who enforce the universal law."

The episode also stands in stark contrast to the first example of a direct divine warning. The pivotal point of the Aigisthus story is his rejection of Hermes' warning to cease the suit of Clytemnestra and the murder of Agamemnon. In Book Five, the tension builds up to Calypso's response to Hermes:

> τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ φίλεόν τε καὶ ἔτρεφον, ἠδὲ ἔφασκον
> θήσειν ἀθάνατον καὶ ἀγήρων ἤματα πάντα.
> ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ οὔ πως ἔστι Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο
> οὔτε παρεξελθεῖν ἄλλον θεὸν οὔθ' ἁλιῶσαι,
> ἐρρέτω, εἴ μιν κεῖνος ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει,
> πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον. πέμψω δέ μιν οὔ πῃ ἐγώ γε· (5. 135 – 140)
>
> I have cared for him – lovingly – and I have been expecting
> To make him immortal and youthful for the rest of his days.
> But, since this is aegis-bearing Zeus' plan for him
> No other god will disregard nor disappoint him,
> As he orders, if he himself urges and desires the man
> Upon the barren sea. I will send him hence at once.

Calypso provides an appropriately positive variation on the Aigisthus theme by presenting a model of compliance with divine will. She displays some expected misgivings over releasing Odysseus, but she also recognizes the futility in opposing her will against Zeus. Even when it means the loss of her mortal lover, Calypso does not trespass divine order. Odysseus' capitulation to Athena's warning in Book Twenty-Four will prove to follow this model rather than the model of Aigisthus.

ii. Polyphemus' Prophecy

The Cyclopeia is a central concern to any consideration of divine justice.[79] The episodes of Polyphemus and the Phaeacians present another variation on the Aigisthus theme. Both episodes have in their conclusion a reference to a prophecy that, in being fulfilled by an encounter with Odysseus, brings suffering. Prophecy as a type of warning has a different character from those given to Aigisthus and Calypso. The chief difference with prophecy is that what is prophesied is unalterable. Aigisthus and Calypso demonstrate the range of potential responses to warnings from disobedience to

[79] When the character of Odysseus is treated in the next chapter of this thesis, a fuller treatment of the Cyclopeia will appear. At this stage, only the revelation of the Cyclops' prophecy will be considered.

compliance, but what is offered to Polyphemus and Alcinous could not have been otherwise. Considering the presentation of the semi-divine in the middle books of the poem as extraordinarily static in behaviour, geography, and family, it is appropriate that prophecy, as invariable itself, is the type of warning delivered to the inhabitants of the wonderful middle books.[80] More so than warning, prophecy comments on the immutable nature of those prophesied to.

Prophecy does not bring with it the same degree of punishment, and considering the limited degree of creative response it allows this is fitting. Furthermore, by fulfilling the prophecies, neither Polyphemus nor the Phaeacians upset any divine, natural or social order. The Phaeacians might upset Poseidon, but it is a personal insult to that god's *timé* that derives from the nature of the people and the god. The closeness of the people to the god and the limitation Zeus puts on the punishment Poseidon suggests demonstrates the enclosed boundaries of the conflict. Odysseus and the semi-divine share a comparative similarity in their suffering at Poseidon's wrath. None of their actions threaten social, natural or divine order, and though they do not escape suffering, they are not killed either. Their mistakes are not at the same level as that of the suitors, companions, or Aigisthus and they are never referred to in these cases by Homer directly as *atasthalia.*

The first of the two prophecies is mentioned by Polyphemus in his exchange with Odysseus at the end of Book Nine:

> ὢ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δή με παλαίφατα θέσφαθ' ἱκάνει.
> ἔσκε τις ἐνθάδε μάντις ἀνὴρ ἠΰς τε μέγας τε,
> Τήλεμος Εὐρυμίδης, ὃς μαντοσύνῃ ἐκέκαστο
> καὶ μαντευόμενος κατεγήρα Κυκλώπεσσιν·
> ὅς μοι ἔφη τάδε πάντα τελευτήσεσθαι ὀπίσσω,
> χειρῶν ἐξ' Ὀδυσῆος ἁμαρτήσεσθαι ὀπωπῆς.
> ἀλλ' αἰεί τινα φῶτα μέγαν καὶ καλὸν ἐδέγμην
> ἐνθάδ' ἐλεύσεσθαι, μεγάλην ἐπιειμένον ἀλκήν,
> νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἄκικυς
> ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν, ἐπεί μ'ἐδαμάσσατο οἴνῳ. (9.507–516)

[80] The geography and cultures of the middle books are all described as static: perennially good weather and agricultural prosperity; inbreeding; ritual monsters; immortality; xenophobia; and even names as, for instance, the Phaeacians who other than the king and queen have names that relate directly to some aspect of ship-building or navigation. For a more complete treatment, see Olson 1995: 43-64, and Austin 1975: 130-178.

> Oh blast, a god-sent thing told me so long ago comes back:
> There was some prophetic man, brave and strong,
> Telemos, son of Eurimides, who excelled in prophecy
> And grew old prophesying to the Cyclopes;
> He told me all these things that would pass thereafter,
> That I would lose my eyesight at the hands of Odysseus.
> But always, against some great and supreme giant, did I expect
> To receive this, shrouded in great pain;
> But now, a small, worthless and powerless being
> Has destroyed my eye, when it overpowered me with wine.

Polyphemus' response to this realization is to curse Odysseus in his father's name, which of course results in Poseidon's wrath against Odysseus. Yet it does nothing to alleviate the Cyclops' suffering. Unlike the option afforded Calypso or Aigisthus, the realization cannot be reacted to in order to avoid suffering, because prophecy is not as direct as divine command or warning. Polyphemus, unlike Alcinous, does not reveal in his account of the prophecy a reason for his error that leads to improper action. He is simply told that he will, inevitably, suffer. Yet the prophecy may act as a warning. Despite the special character of prophecy, Polyphemus has been warned of the circumstances in which he will lose his eye. Moreover, as the later part of the passage shows, the Cyclops recognizes that his own ignorance played a large part in allowing the event to pass: he did not expect so small a foe.

Polyphemus' prophecy also lacks the critical part of every other warning that generates divergent responses: an explicit cause. Some critics like Segal claim that the Cyclops transgresses the laws of hospitality and for that Zeus allows his punishment.[81] Others like Olson and Brown claims the Cyclops is free of guilt because the event occurs outside of Zeus' realm of interest.[82] I suggest that there is another option wherein the prophecy stands alone in relation to Polyphemus' suffering without a need to search for a cause that is not provided by Homer. There is no further judicial insight save that he would fulfill the prophecy. This approach also leaves the self-inflicted woe of the Cyclops outside the realm of interest of the Olympian gods and sets it up simply as a result of the Cyclops' own ignorance. His mistake is his inability to conceive of a danger beyond his unchanging knowledge; his inhospitality does not lead to a divinely

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[81] Segal 1994: 201
[82] Olson 1995: 48-49 ; Brown 1996: 24

sanctioned punishment. His general impropriety and static nature reflect his inability, while the murders are not a threat against any divine order – nothing too important is lost with the crew.[83] His suffering, then, is a result of his limited capacity to understand the significance of the prophecy.

iii. The Thrinakian Episode's Divine Meeting

The debate surrounding the problem of divine justice brings up the contentious punishment of Odysseus' Ithacan crew. The point of contention consists of the possible unfairness of Helios' wrath, which would indicate a rift in the theodicy. Not even the staunchest defender of the inconsistency position, Fenik, could maintain that Helios' vengeance is not sanctioned to the letter by Zeus. Considering further that even the conception of a 'theodicy' is questionable, it is not worthwhile to discuss how the crew members caused their own downfall. What is worth discussing about divine justice is the manner in which Helios approaches Zeus to seek approval for his vengeance and the way that Zeus receives that appeal. The similarity between the Helios-Zeus meeting at *Od.*12.274-90 and the other divine meetings runs contrary to any suggestion that Helios is a morally undeveloped deity. Indeed, Helios' manner of appeal matches Athena's in structure, content and importance. The main difference is length. Odysseus, via Calypso via Hermes, describes the Olympian assembly at which Helios petitions against the insult done him. The whole exchange occupies a mere eleven lines:

> Ζεῦ πάτερ ἠδ' ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοὶ αἰὲν ἐόντες,
> τῖσαι δὴ ἑτάρους Λαερτιάδεω Ὀδυσῆος,
> οἵ μευ βοῦς ἔκτειναν ὑπέρβιον, ᾗσιν ἐγώ γε
> χαίρεσκον μὲν ἰὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
> ἠδ' ὁπότ' ἂψ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν προτραοίμην.
> εἰ δέ μοι οὐ τίσουσι βοῶν ἐπιεικέ' ἀμοιβήν,
> δύσομαι εἰς Ἄϊδαο καὶ ἐν νεκύεσσι φαείνω."
> τὸν δ'απαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς·
> "Ἠελι', ἦ τοι μὲν σὺ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι φάεινε
> καὶ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν ἐπὶ ζείδωρον ἄρουραν·
> τῶν δέ κ' ἐγὼ τάχα νῆα θοὴν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ
> τυτθὰ βαλὼν κεάσαιμι μέσῳ ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ. (12.377–388)

[83] ὑβρισταί, ἄγριοι, δίκαιοι (impropriety): *Od.*9.175

Father Zeus and other blessed gods who live forever,
Punish the companions of Laertes' son, Odysseus,
Unlawfully did they kill my cattle, in whom truly I
Delighted, while sitting in starry heaven, and
Whenever down to earth from heaven I'd descend.
If the cattle are not repaid me through fair equity,
I will go down to Hades and shine among the dead.
Cloud-gathering Zeus spoke answering him;
"Helios, Shine you here among immortals
And over mortal earth-walkers on the fruitful corn-land;
Let me by bright thunderbolt their ever-swift ship
Barely striking shatter amidst the wine-dark sea.

The exchange follows the structure set up when Athena requests that Odysseus' return be considered a matter of divine importance. Helios approaches Zeus with what is initially a personal grievance. Up until the first word of the fourth line (12.381) Helios' complaint appears to be strictly personal. Over the next four lines his concern unfolds and enlarges its province to heaven, earth, and Hades. In describing the cattle, the sun-god also describes the navigation of the sun. In his ascent and descent the cattle's existence appears to be the *raison d'être*. On Thrinakia, Helios' daughters, Phaethousa (Shiner) and Lampetia (Torchy), guard seven flocks of fifty cattle and sheep; or in other words, the moon and sun keep watch over the number of days of the year.[84] An attack on such cattle must be seen as an attack on the natural order in the most straightforward allegorical terms.

Zeus' response suggests that Helios' concern for his property is of the utmost importance to the gods and the natural order. The sequence of Zeus' reply demonstrates that his concern is with preserving order before addressing Helios' grievance. Even though Helios' property and the natural world are bound, Zeus' concern is primarily with preserving the natural course of the sun. There is, first of all, no mention whatsoever of replacing the cattle. The first two lines of the response (12.385-386) recognize Helios' essential place in the natural order of things, as Zeus orders the god to continue his cycle as always. The divine order shows the importance of Helios to immortal heaven and mortal earth and the consequent necessity of punishment. Helios cannot be allowed to go down to Hades and the companions cannot survive. Recalling the programmatic outline

[84] Austin 1975: 134

of justice in Book One, the companions' punishment in Book Twelve reveals the importance of its inclusion in the proem and its association with the Aigisthus model. It appears that the companions, like Aigisthus, are not warned simply so that they may avoid trouble, but so that cosmic order itself can be preserved.

iv. Poseidon and the Phaeacians

The conflict between Poseidon and the Phaeacians displays the unavoidable suffering that attends immutable characters of a shared nature in close proximity. Poseidon's anger with the Phaeacians is another episode that supposedly exhibits the inconsistency of divine justice.[85] By insisting on the subjugation of Poseidon's will to Zeus' command, this passage confirms the overriding principle of justice as the defence of order. The fate of the Phaeacians does not contradict the initial contrast signalled in the proem between the allotted suffering of Odysseus and his men and the particular self-inflicted destruction of the crew. In their manner of suffering, the Phaeacians are closer to Odysseus.

The fourth divine meeting goes furthest in addressing the personal and isolated concerns of individual gods. Athena was concerned with Odysseus and Ithaca, Helios with his sunburnt cattle, and Poseidon grieves over his own honour. The meeting in Book Thirteen exhibits the pantheon's diversity, but it also displays the pantheon's cohesiveness beyond a mere toleration of difference.

This assembly begins with Poseidon lodging a personal complaint, arguing that he does not receive due honour from immortals or mortals (13.128-130). He continues to argue that the safe conduct the Phaeacians have given Odysseus, from Scheria to Ithaca, is disrespectful and contrary to his designs:

> καὶ γὰρ νῦν' Οδυσῆ' ἐφάμην κακὰ πολλὰ παθόντα
> οἴκαδ' ἐλεύσεσθαι· νόστον δέ οἱ οὔ ποτ' ἀπηύρων
> πάγχυ, ἐπεὶ σὺ πρῶτον ὑπέσχεο καὶ κατένευσας.
> οἱ δ'εὕδοντ' ἐν νηῒ θοῇ ἐπὶ πόντοον ἄγοντες

[85] For a consideration of the questionable character of the Phaeacians, see Austin, 1975: 153-162; Reece 1993: 101-122; Rose 1969; and Olson 1995:43-64 among others who criticize the idea of the Phaeacians as wholly positive models (cf. Bloom, ed. 1988: 164, Fränkel).

κάτθεσαν εἰν' Ἰθάκῃ, ἔδοσαν δέ οἱ ἄσπετα δῶρα,
χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε ἅλις ἐσθῆτά θ'ὑφαντήν,
πόλλ', ὅς ἂν οὐδέ ποτε Τροίης ἐξήρατ'' Ὀδυσσεύς,
εἴ περ ἀπήμων ἦλθε, λαχὼν ἀπὸ λῆΐδος αἶσαν. (13. 131–138)

And even now – I wanted Odysseus to suffer many evils
As he went homeward; but not to take his return from him
Altogether, as you ultimately assented to and promised.
But while he slept on the swift ship, they led him over the sea and
Set him down on Ithaca, even giving him shining gifts,
Copper and gold, clothes and garments aplenty,
So much, more than Odysseus could ever have taken from Troy,
Even if he went unharmed allotted his portion from the spoils.

Poseidon's complaint about the Phaeacians makes reference to the divine assemblies in Books One and Five. The return of Odysseus has long spelled out conflict between the sea-god and the sea-farers. Already in Book One Zeus says that the Phaeacians will ferry Odysseus to Ithaca, after he reveals that Poseidon harangues Odysseus so long as he is away from Ithaca: the Phaeacians are implicitly doomed. The passage in Book Thirteen generally recalls both assemblies, but the second phrase 'Οδυσῆ'...ἐλεύσεσθαι (13.131-132) specifically hearkens back to Zeus' description of Poseidon's anger (1.74-74). The next two phrases νόστον...κατένευσας (132-133), while also recalling Zeus' proclamation that Poseidon cannot alone oppose the gods (1.78-79), also refer to the second assembly in which Zeus affirms Odysseus' return by Phaeacian ship (5.41-42). These two references allow the poet to demonstrate Poseidon's willing subjugation to Zeus' ultimate authority. Poseidon himself acknowledges the personal nature of his anger but recognizes the higher concern for order at Ithaca. Homer has Poseidon use Zeus' own words from Book Five at the end of the speech (13.135-138), a striking move, seeing as Poseidon was still in Ethiopia.

πέμψουσιν δ' ἐν νηῒ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε ἅλις ἐσθῆτά τε δόντες,
πόλλ', ὅς' ἂν οὐδέ ποτε Τροίης ἐξήρατ'' Ὀδυσσεύς,
εἴ περ ἀπήμων ἦλθε, λαχὼν ἀπὸ λῆΐδος αἶσαν (5. 37–40)

They will send him on ship to his dear fatherland,
Giving copper and gold and clothes aplenty,
So much, more than Odysseus ever could have taken from Troy,
Even if he went unharmed, allotted his portion from the spoils.

Homer is careful to present Poseidon's grievance in this manner, as the god does not blame Zeus, but immediately submits. By recalling Zeus' words he illustrates that the conflict with the Phaeacians has been inevitable, though the Phaeacians never blame the gods for unfairly punishing them. There is no attempt to make the transgression one of universal concern; it is a personal insult to his *timé*.

Following the structure of the other assemblies, Zeus' reply to Poseidon ought to bring some sort of sanction to the personal plea. In this case the assent most closely resembles that which Zeus gives to Helios' anger. There, however, Helios' personal concern was aligned with the natural order. Here, it remains explicitly a matter of Poseidon's honour and is never elevated to a higher interest.[86] But it would be a mistake to argue that because it is personal, Poseidon's anger is wrong or that he is a morally undeveloped god. These are not considerations permitted in the original programmatic conception of morality. Zeus accepted Poseidon's wrath against Odysseus and he does not dismiss the god's anger here, but, as in every divine meeting, he assents to the god's action (13.145).

In the final exchange (13.147-158) the two Olympians concur on a suitable punishment for the Phaeacians. The Phaeacian king recalls Nausithus' prophecy that his people would incur the stoning of the ship and the mountain at the city's edge as Poseidon's wrath due to their god-like seafaring. The prophecy occurs subsequent to the realization of Poseidon's wrath, just as Polyphemus only remembered his prophecy after he was blinded.

> ὢ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δή με παλαίφατα θέσφαθ' ἵκάνει
> πατρὸς ἐμοῦ, ὃς φάσκε Ποσειδάων' ἀγάσεσθαι
> ἡμῖν, οὕνεκα πομποὶ ἀπήμονές εἰμεν ἁπάντων.
> φῆ ποτὲ Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν περικαλλέα νῆα
> ἐκ πομπῆς ἀνιοῦσαν ἐν ἠεροειδέϊ πόντῳ
> ῥαισέμεναι, μέγα δ'ἦμιν ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψειν.
> ὣς ἀγόρευ' ὁ γέρων· τὰ δὲ δὴ νῦν πάντα τελεῖται.
> ἀλλ' ἄγεθ', ὡς ἂν ἐγὼ εἴπω, πειθώμεθα πάντες·

[86] Punishing the Phaeacians has no more divine interest than pacifying Poseidon. Unlike the crew whose crime threatened the natural world and the suitors who threaten the social world, the Phaeacians upset only Poseidon. Poseidon's personal honour is a matter of divine interest but not universal interest in this case, so Zeus does protect his brother's honour, but the whole conflict between Phaeacians and Poseidon is an isolated matter.

πομπῆς μὲν παύσασθε βροτῶν, ὅτε κέν τις ἵκηται
ἡμέτερον προτὶ ἄστυ· Ποσειδάωνι δὲ ταύρους
δώδεκα κεκριμένους ἱερεύσεομεν, αἴ κ'ἐλεήσῃ,
μηδ' ἡμῖν περίμηκες ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψῃ. (12.172 – 183)

Oh blast, some god-sent thing told me so long ago comes back:
My father who knew of Poseidon's annoyance with
Us, because we give all men safe-passage –
He said at some time the beautiful ships of Phaeacian men
Returning from delivery upon the wine-dark sea
He'd wreck, and with a great mountain the city he'd encircle.
So the old man foresaw; indeed now it's all happened.
Come on, as I should say, let's heed it all,
To stop delivering mortals, whenever one comes
Near to our city; bulls to Poseidon,
Let's sacrifice twelve choice ones – if he'll show mercy,
Maybe he'll not enclose our city with tall mountains.

Alcinous' words offer yet another variation on the Aigisthus model. Beginning with the signal first line, the passage recalls the Cyclops' passage. While it is very much aligned with the prophetic warning to the Cyclops, it is also slightly more complex. It involves an Olympian god and affords the Phaeacians more choice, and accountability. In this sense they are closer to Aigisthus, the companions and the suitors. And Alcinous recalls the exact form of punishment that was described in the warning. The chief variation on the pattern in this passage is Alcinous' response. The Phaeacians are unable to avoid upsetting Poseidon, but king Alcinous acts to protect his people from further destruction. In this respect the warning to the Phaeacians allows for a potential positive response just as with Hermes' warning to Calypso. Alcinous, unlike Polyphemus, becomes aware of the cause of suffering, witnesses the effects, and consequently reacts positively.

After Alcinous' response to Poseidon's wrath the poem offers no insight into whether or not the sacrifice is accepted, just as the fate of Polyphemus' sight is not revealed. This dispute is between the sea-faring people and the sea-governing god, and the transgression is not one that disrupts the kingdom internally, nor is there danger of Poseidon's withholding the sea, as Helios could do with the sun. As Alcinous' response to the prophetic fulfilment demonstrates, the order of his polis is his prime concern.[87] The

[87] Alcinous is a good king to *his* people. Cf. Rose (1969: 397) who argues that "Alcinous is basically kind and spontaneous; but ineptitude as a leader (remember Arete's status in this society) and an ignorance of

dispute falls under the auspices of the vanity of the sea-god and it is recognized as such by Zeus, who limits the punishment to a display of force.[88] The Phaeacians were always bound to this conflict with Poseidon due to the nature of each party; in this sense the Phaeacians suffer their allotted portion. The cause of their suffering is not *atasthalia*, which the poet has shown quite clearly denotes a wilful and reckless crime. The Phaeacian episode continues to illustrate the consistency of the poem by upholding and propagating the outline of justice set out in the prologue.

The pantheon may have different spheres of interest, but at a definitive level the interest of each god in his realm has to do with maintaining propriety. Athena, herself and sometimes through Hermes, desires peace at Ithaca through the return of the rightful king. Helios desires that nothing interfere with the course of the sun. Poseidon desires that his honour is not eclipsed by lesser beings. Of the four episodes considered in this chapter, Calypso stands between Athena and the completion of her wish; Odysseus' men do upset the course of the sun; and the Phaeacians do diminish Poseidon's glory. From mortals to immortals, conflict with the divine will is difficult to avoid. Calypso and the crew demonstrate opposite manners of responding to divine warnings, which characterize *atasthalia* and its avoidance, while Polyphemus and Alcinous demonstrate the inevitability of prophetic fulfillment, which characterizes apportioned suffering. There is no sympathy in these divine adjudications for intent or mitigating circumstances, and those who cross gods or who cannot avoid confrontation suffer. Justice as order, as the poem's prologue set out is fully intact.

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protocol (contrast Echeneos) are the traits which best explain his flawed hospitality." Although eliciting certain deficiencies in Alcinous' 'behaviour' positions such as this do not consider the relation of Alcinous' position to order. Rose, and others like Reece, place too much importance on hospitality, which while central to certain scenes is not the ultimate source of judgment; the suitors' poor hospitality is only part of the corruption they achieve and for which they suffer – in fact, no player dies simply for corrupting the structure of hospitality. More important than his initially poor reception of Odysseus is Alcinous' response to Poseidon's force: for Phaeacia, Alcinous is the proper king. For a discussion of the paradisiacal presentation of Scheria by Homer see Austin 1975: 153-172.

[88] It is unclear whether any Phaeacians actually perish because of Poseidon's wrath.

Chapter Four: The Character Development of Odysseus

i. The Problem of Character Development

Divine justice and character development are two closely associated aspects of homeric scholarship. Comparatively less debate surrounds the question of character development, but most critics who deal with divine justice, and who are thus interested in 'the ways of gods to men,' also discuss the specific relationship between Odysseus and the gods. Most critics support the assertion that at a certain level Odysseus undergoes a transformation between the first half of the poem and the second.[89] Such a development corresponds to the conceptions of divine justice put forward by critics who see a broad progression from *Iliad* to *Odyssey*, and within the *Odyssey* itself, wherein the later poem comes to portray a more civilized ethical framework.[90]

Character development is a modern imposition. As an inner process of moral and personal progress the notion of character development has no place in a world where only action counts. The inherent psychology of such a reading places, in homeric terms, intent above action and that is an anachronistic conception that shifts attention away from the external forces at work in the ancient perception of the world. Mortal suffering is always connected with mortal action; the suggestion that character amelioration is the key to acting properly, and harmoniously with divine will, is completely alien. Homer quite clearly marks *atasthalia*, reckless crime, as the measure of guilt for unnecessary action and for this reason explicitly do men suffer in the poem at the hands of the gods. The actions of Odysseus display a set character throughout the *Odyssey* who has not changed from the mischievous, cunning, but pious and obedient warrior of the *Iliad*. At the end of the poem, Odysseus is no more intelligent, cautious or likeable than the man who appears in the Cyclopeia. He succeeds and is nearly destroyed by actions that derive from the same set of characteristics that Homer presented in the *Iliad* and maintains throughout the *Odyssey*. While the idea that Odysseus owes his success to self-improvement is amenable to the modern novelistic mind, it is an idea foreign to the harsher, external ancient conception of success.

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[89] Among others see Brown 1996: 24, Friedrich 1991: 27, Rutherford 1986: 160, Bloom, ed., 1986: 47f (Horkheimer & Adorno), and Segal 1994: 204.
[90] Friedrich 1991, Segal 1994, Rutherford 1986

The idea of character development depends on Odysseus maturing beyond an inclination towards iliadic hubris, displays of which supposedly occur in the Cyclopeia (*Od.*9). Because of the trouble he incurs during the Cyclopeia, a reflective Odysseus learns from his self-inflicted woe and returns to Ithaca a humble and cautious man. At the point when Odysseus stops Eurycleia from openly rejoicing at the death of the suitors (*Od.*22.409-412), critics mark the completion of his personal development, which is a progression towards acting harmoniously with Zeus' theodicy. In both sections of the poem various critics locate the use of a theoxeny motif, which appears to be one of the more persuasive aspects of the character development idea.[91] Friedrich, for instance, argues that Odysseus puts himself into the god's position within a theoxeny at the start of the Cyclopeia, thus revealing a hubristic tendency evident throughout his encounter with Polyphemus.[92] This argument depends on slight evidence and bears insufficient proof with the episode. Reece argues that later on in the poem Odysseus appears in the god's role over the course of the Ithacan section, but that Homer uses a theoxeny motif to emphasize the legitimacy of Odysseus' impending slaughter.[93] In this case, the poet does employ the motif, but it is not for the purpose of revealing a development, but of revealing the difficult role of king instead.

The theoxeny motif, like the term justice, is not something the poet explicitly raises in the poem, nor is it the single base for a conception of character development. However, its recurrent invocation by various scholars who do support the claim of a progression makes it an appropriate point from which to argue against such claims. According to notions of character development, Homer presents Odysseus' hubris through a theoxeny in the Cyclopeia, and his piety through a theoxeny in the Ithacan section. First, he does not have divine support to condemn the criminality of Polyphemus, but later he punishes the suitors and chastises Eurycleia with full support. However, just as with the problem of divine justice, there are problems with the idea of character development. The chief flaw is a lack of textual evidence to support such a claim. The hubristic intent attributed to Odysseus' broad curiosity is untenable as such when

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[91] Friedrich 1991, Reece 1993. A theoxeny is a 'god-visit', where a god comes disguised to test the propriety and impropriety of mortals.
[92] Friedrich 1991: 26
[93] Reece 1993: 181-187. See also Reece 1993: 47-57 where he discusses Athena's visit in Book One as a theoxeny.

compared with similar passages elsewhere in the poem. Moreover, Homer's use of a theoxeny motif in the Ithacan section does not present a straightforward sanction of Odysseus' slaughter. The poem does not tie hubris together with theoxeny motifs. Without a display of hubris hanging over the question of character development, the Cyclopeia and the suitor-slaughter (*Od.*22) accord with the underlying consistency of the prologue's programmatic ethical framework. *Atasthalia*, not hubris, is the modus operandi in the *Odyssey*, and instead of character development, Homer presents a character who fulfills his role as king without committing *atasthalia* and without overcoming hubris. In the end (*Od.*24), Homer celebrates Odysseus' proper performance of his role as king and not his ethical development.

Vilification of iliadic characteristics is central to the idea of the *Odyssey*'s progressive ethics and to Odysseus' personal emerging concordance with Zeus' theodicy. In essence, this aspect of the debate comes out of an older critical debate concerning the nature of 'hero' in both homeric poems.[94] Achilles represents the defining morality of the *Iliad*'s worldview, while Odysseus does the same for the *Odyssey*.[95] Without exception, Achilles, the more traditional warrior, is portrayed as the greater hero. Accordingly, Odysseus' non-heroic characteristics, such as cunning and endurance, coincide with the ethically developed setting of the later poem, where passionate fighting and stubborn claims to honour are out of place.[96] Consequently, Odysseus should not act as an iliadic warrior because he is not genuinely like Achilles and because the context of the *Odyssey* does not demand such behaviour. Odysseus' wit trumps Polyphemus' might; Odysseus' story-telling wins him glory instead of heroic action; and Odysseus' Ithacan disguise, which conceals his heroic stature, subjugates the impatient warrior.

The influence of the Achilles-Odysseus dichotomy is evident in the scholarship dealing with the notion of character development. Rutherford, for instance, discusses Odysseus' evolution after building on the arguments for the inconsistency of divine

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[94] See Nagy 1979; Clay 1983: 96ff; Segal 1994; Stanford 1963; Finkleberg 1995; Schein 1984; Bloom, ed. 1988: 49 (Bowra); Lloyd-Jones 1973; and Bloom, ed. 1986: 163 (Fränkel).

[95] See Schein, 1984: 60 for a definition of hero: ἥρως "in the *Iliad* signifies a warrior who lives and dies in the pursuit of honour and glory... as a mortal who fights and dies with no afterlife as his reward save other than the glory of celebration in song."

[96] For differing views, see Murnaghan, 1987 *Disguise and Recognition in the Odyssey*, and Bloom, ed. 1988: 5 (Kitto).

justice set forth by Fenik.[97] Rutherford interprets Odysseus as a type of Stoic who must depend on and develop his mortal capabilities because the hero of the new morality cannot depend on divine favour.[98] What Odysseus specifically learns is the importance of self-control and moderation: he learns this through the Cyclopeia and applies it at Ithaca.[99] For Rutherford, while the uncertainty of the divine allows for Odysseus' development, the divine are not interested – only the poet is concerned with human triumph.

Friedrich, who defends the consistency of divine justice by claiming it rests on the inevitable ascendancy of Zeus' worldview, also accepts character development as an integral part of the poem's movement. In order to demonstrate the superiority of odyssean over iliadic justice and the maturation from Ilium to Ithaca, Odysseus, who begins as an iliadic warrior, must be brought into a proper relation with Zeus' theodicy.[100] Friedrich believes that Odysseus acts hubristically in the Cyclopeia, and thus Zeus allows Poseidon to punish Odysseus out of personal vengeance to teach him not to take divine support for granted. Supposedly, this lesson will prepare Odysseus for Ithaca.[101] Coincidentally, as Odysseus moves towards a more comprehensive understanding of Zeus' theodicy, the poem moves out of Poseidon's realm and into Zeus', emphasizing the ethical progression on a broader level than merely personal.[102]

The evidence for Odysseus' education is lacking. The development position hinges on Odysseus recognizing a serious error and mending it.[103] Douglas Olson, meanwhile, convincingly argues that Odysseus does not recognize any fault in his actions during his first-person narration.[104] Instead of reading Odysseus' narration as an apology, Olson treats the stories as a manipulative attempt to win Phaeacian favour. Odysseus wants safe conduct to Ithaca, so the narration of his travels carries a definitive motive: Odysseus must persuade the Phaeacians that he is a good, competent, and intelligent king

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[97] Rutherford 1986, Fenik 1974. See also Clay 1983: 132
[98] Rutherford 1986: 151
[99] For this approach see also Brown 1996, who argues for Odysseus' learning of caution
[100] See Friedrich 1991: 27f.
[101] Friedrich 1991: 27
[102] Segal also sees this progression from primitive to civilized morality through the geographic/religious relocation of Odysseus. See Segal, 1994: 22-23
[103] I will return to this point shortly.
[104] Olson 1995: 43-64, and 43-46 specifically

worthy of their sympathy and the passage they seem prepared to offer. For Olson, it would be counterproductive for Odysseus to present himself as hubristic. What Odysseus does is reveal himself to be the sole source of any success whatsoever during the wanderings, despite the unfortunate and often self-inflicted destruction of his crew.

When Odysseus recounts his encounter with Polyphemus he does admit to an error in judgment. Yet it is not measured ethically, but economically.[105]

> ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ου πιθόμην, ἢ τ'ἂν πολὺ κέρδιον ἦεν,
> ὄφρ' αὐτόν τε ἴδοιμι, καὶ εἴ μοι ξείνια δοίη.
> οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλ' ἑτάροισι φανεὶς ἐρατεινὸς ἔσεσθαι. (9. 228–230)
>
> But I was not convinced, though it'd've been far more profitable,
> So that I might see him, and if there was a guest-gift for me.
> It was not about to be a charming sight for my companions.

The error is one of lost profit, and Homer does not use the term *atasthalia*.[106] Conversely, Olson argues that the escape from Polyphemus' cave is described as being entirely a result of Odysseus' cunning.[107] Odysseus' ability to command obedience from his ever more disobedient men is the cause of their escape from Telepyle.[108] The responsibility for the loss of men at the Cyclopes' island is attributed singularly to Polyphemus' gross monstrosity.[109] Any mistakes and misjudgements Odysseus narrates are all satisfactorily engulfed in a larger concern for his men's welfare.[110] Ultimately, Odysseus' presentation of his wanderings suggests that the men became disobedient and brought destruction on themselves, which is in line with the divine structure and judicial thematics of the poem. Recurring over and again from Telepyle to Aiaia to Thrinakia is what Olson terms the "unfortunate tendency on the part of the companions to ignore Odysseus' natural

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[105] He recounts the encounter a second time to Penelope (*Od.*23.311f) but does not admit to error.

[106] See Olson 1995: 60: "Odysseus in fact expresses no retrospective regret for any of his decisions" See also Brown 1996: 12, and the 29th footnote where he discusses Eurylochus' charge of *atasthalia* against Odysseus: "this outburst is part of an unsuccessful bid to incite mutiny and is not ratified in any way by the rest of the ἕταροι. This passage prepares us for 12.339ff. where Eurylochus successfully precipitates a mutiny with dire consequences for his comrades."

[107] Olson 1995: 50

[108] Olson 1995: 55

[109] Olson 1995: 52

[110] Even when Odysseus feels compelled to taunt the Cyclops after escaping, and against the pleas of his crew, he has gone literally to impossible lengths in his attempt to avoid the Cyclops' missiles. That even this barely removes them from the Cyclops' range indicates more the level to which Odysseus consistently misjudges the Cyclops and not that he acted inappropriately.

superiority over them."[111] The neglect of the crew has been identified since the proem. Odysseus' narrative is not only concordant with the poem's outline, with the descriptions of allotted suffering and *atasthalia*, but also shows a man concerned foremost with his return, not with his moral development. Olson's argument deflates conceptions of an Odysseus who develops through the wandering books, but his approach also illustrates how Odysseus has no need to develop from any specific point in the poem.

Odysseus in his retrospective narrative does not present himself as ethically immature, or hubristic, and neither does Homer. The separate instances of a theoxeny motif, however, supposedly demark first the hubristic Odysseus and later the pious Odysseus. Steve Reece describes the form of a theoxeny as follows:

> A disguised god comes to the homes of mortals in order to test their hospitality. Some, usually the poor and humble, treat the god well and are rewarded. Others, usually the rich and powerful, treat him ill and are punished. This universal folktale motif is well attested in Greek and Roman myth.[112]

Friedrich's treatment of the theoxeny motif demonstrates the pitfalls of the notion of character development. He suggests that Odysseus unwarrantedly appoints himself to the god's role in order to put the Cyclops to an ethical test, and grounds the claim on the poet's use of the verb *peirazó* at *Od.*9.174-176.[113] The self-invested power informs the rest of the book, for Friedrich, so that when Odysseus claims Zeus' support for the Cyclops' blinding, that initial desire to test the inhabitants of the unknown island compounds Odysseus' hubris. But the force of the word Friedrich is able to read in Book Nine is questionable when considering the number of other episodes in which the same word, and in fact the identical passage, is used throughout the poem. Most notably, Homer employs the verb when Odysseus lands at Scheria (6.126). Moreover, on top of these two passages, Homer uses a similar passage when Odysseus lands at Ithaca (13.200-203), where he does not use the signal verb. The repeated lines are:

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[111] Olson 1995: 55
[112] Reece 1993: 182
[113] Friedrich 1991: 26

ἦ ῥ' οἵ γ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι,
ἦε φιλόξεινοι, καί σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής

Are they uncivilized and all roughians without lawful ones,
Or stranger-friendly, and with a mind for pious order

Although Odysseus uses *peirazó* to introduce his intention to learn about the men on each island, the verb does not necessarily connote a desire to pass moral judgement: it is far more likely an ornamental stock passage. While the verb *peirazó* may be taken as 'to test' or 'to pass judgement,' such a judicial reading in this context is problematic. Test and judgement require a consequence, but Odysseus' only conception of a potential outcome is the reception of gifts. Odysseus does not intend to inflict punishment or reward following a test of the ethical, religious, or cultural reality of the island peoples. The meaning of *peirazó* in these cases is far simpler.

Instead of displaying the presumptuousness of ethical, cultural, or religious superiority, Odysseus is simply stating the range of possible encounters he expects and that he intends to discover where the inhabitants fall within that range. In the Phaeacian case it turns out that the inhabitants are indeed stranger-friendly and are generally a pious people.[115] Despite the general xenophobia of the Phaeacians and their initial hesitancy to greet him properly, they return Odysseus to Ithaca with gifts. In the Cyclopeia, the inhabitants prove to be uncivilized roughians, and any hope that he will receive gifts is quickly dashed. Polyphemus' blinding is not due to his impiety or bucolic living, but as a direct consequence of his own actions, which are foreign and hostile to Odysseus. The retributive and practical act of blinding is initially unplanned and therefore is not a consequence of what *peirazó* entails as a verb of adjudication. The verb will be used again in *Od.*22 with the force of judgement, but in that case, when Athena demands Odysseus take heart, there is a direct and explicit consequence. In these cases of *peirazó*,

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[114] *hubristai* is used as the first word to describe the potential inhabitants of each island, and it is used in litany with words which carry the force of 'rough' and 'without laws,' terms which are opposed to 'stranger-friendly' and 'pious.' Hubris therefore falls into the group of terms which conjure disorder, undisciplined living and a lack of civilization. Later on, *Od.*17.487, *hubris* is opposed to *eunomia*, 'good-order' or 'propriety,' again put on the same side as impropriety and haughty. A lack of cultivation is the essential character of hubris in the poem, while *atasthalia* is always specific to willful crime borne out of neglect of propriety.

[115] The *theoudés* of the Phaeacians becomes evident in Alcinous' response to Poseidon's wrath and the prophecy's fulfillment.

it is more appropriate to approach the verb as 'to investigate' or 'to accumulate knowledge.' In this manner Odysseus' travels are consistent with their outline in the proem, which indicates that Odysseus came to know the ways of many men. If a theoxeny motif and a wilful hubristic corruption of the god's role are read into these passages it is a coincidence or a forced reading. The poet does not have any need to employ a god guest because there is no divine concern for the actions of the host, while there is a divine concern for the actions of the suitors.

While Friedrich imposes a theoxeny motif on the Cyclopeia, Reece focuses on the passage in which Homer does use the motif: Odysseus' disguised return in Ithaca. As an underlying theme of Odysseus' return, the theoxeny is introduced by Athena at *Od.*13.397-403 just before Odysseus encounters Eumaius. The alteration to the theoxeny motif is the same as Friedrich alleged in the earlier episode: Odysseus is the mortal substitute for a god. Ostensibly two categories of people are judged: those who receive Odysseus kindly and those who treat him badly, and this follows Reece's outline of the universal folktale. For instance, when Antinous insults Odysseus (17.446-487) the guilt fits the traditional structure of the theoxeny. The suitors have long been abusing the king's home, and throughout the poem their guilt and punishment are assured. With the motif, a simple and traditional structure, Homer emphasizes how inescapable the guilt is. Reece discusses the effect of Odysseus' homecoming as follows:

> It places Odysseus' actions against the suitors on an entirely different moral plane. In this "theoxeny", Odysseus is not presented simply as a vindictive hero wasting the lives of his countrymen in order to reciprocate for a personal affront. The denouement of the *Odyssey* is not primarily concerned with revenge; it is concerned with justice and the restoration of the basic institutions of civilized society. Odysseus, as an instrument of divine justice, has the divine apparatus behind him.[116]

Reece is right to assert that the restoration of justice at Ithaca is the main concern at the end of the poem. He is also right to assert that Odysseus has the divine apparatus behind him. However, this is not something that is novel to the part of the poem structured on a theoxeny. As the consideration of divine justice suggests, an interest in restoring Ithaca to a properly functioning kingdom is divinely sanctioned as universally important long

[116] Reece 1993: 186.

before Odysseus returns. Odysseus is not merely an instrument of divine justice; as king of Ithaca, Odysseus' concern for social propriety coincides with the divine desire for order. Although Reece is right to assert that at this point Odysseus is acting properly, he is wrong to suggest that there has been a different moral plane on which Odysseus was operating. The theoxeny motif used at the end of the poem does not establish a new function of the king; instead, it asserts a long-standing one.

Although the placement of Odysseus in the god's role in the motif represents the divine endorsement of his undertakings, Homer's use of a theoxeny is more complex. Odysseus is not just an instrument. Through a theoxeny, Odysseus' duty as king and that position's relation to the divine concern for social order is emphasized. For Odysseus, it is not so important that he is aligned with the gods, because he has been so stationed since the first divine assembly. In performing the role of a god in the motif, Odysseus recognizes his royal duty to be a representative of traditional propriety. Homer re-introduces the theoxeny when Athena stands beside Odysseus as the king is about to meet the suitors in his own halls:

> αὐτὰρ᾽ Ἀθήνη
> ἄγχι παρισταμένη Λαερτιάδην᾽ Ὀδυσῆα
> ὄτρυν᾽, ὡς ἂν πύρνα κατὰ μνηστῆρας ἀγείροι,
> γνοίη θ᾽ οἵ τινές εἰσιν ἐναίσιμοι οἵ τ᾽ ἀθέμιστοι
> ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ὥς τιν᾽ ἔμελλ᾽ ἀπαλεξήσειν κακότητος. (17. 360 - 364)
>
> Just then Athena
> Standing next to Laertian Odysseus
> Stirred him, as he began begging bread among the suitors,
> That he might recognize some as lawless ones,
> But that not any would be free of wickedness.

Athena tells Odysseus that there are some suitors who will appear lawful. The observation supports the prologue's outline of the two sides of mortal suffering as both the wilfully criminal and the passively cooperative suitors will both suffer. A theoxeny does not offer chance of redemption because it aims to expose. Odysseus' position in the theoxenic role is not merely an endorsement of the harmony between him and the Olympians; it promotes the ethical conception of the divine's relation to men and it

begins to expose the conviction a king must display for the protection of order. Still, Odysseus' role is a curious one.

As the king, who is the representative of universal law, he will accomplish the slaughter in a bid to restore order at Ithaca. Athena's words at 17.360-364 establish him as a man in a god's role without any choice: she does not offer him the opportunity to judge the suitors for himself. Since a theoxeny offers no surprise, the judgement has long been made and Odysseus may only observe and prepare for slaughter. What Athena prepares Odysseus to observe is that some of the suitors will not appear unlawful, but that he will have to kill them too. In Books 17 and 18 the most unlawful and lawful suitors appear and Odysseus wishes death to one and escape to another, but these appraisals count for nothing.

At *Od.*18.122-157, Odysseus meets Amphinomus, the most pathetic character in the poem. He represents the lawful suitors who cannot escape death, and for him Odysseus attempts the impossible – he warns him of the impending doom and wishes him a speedy and safe escape. But Odysseus while in the god's role is still a mortal and cannot cast such judgment on the young suitor's fate, a point Homer stresses by describing his inevitable death. In his speech to Amphinomus, Odysseus again presents the two sides of mortal suffering, allotted woe and self-inflicted harm and in attempting to tell the young man that one should avoid extra suffering, he sets into sharp contrast the fact that the suitor's death is inescapable.[117] Far from presenting Odysseus as hubristically assuming a divine role, Homer shows the king having to accept that his successful return depends on the total slaughter of the host of suitors.

The appearance of a theoxeny in the second half of the poem is not a response to a previous use, specifically in the Cyclopeia. In Book Nine there is no sense that Odysseus approaches the Cyclopes' island with a debilitating case of hubris, the treatment of which

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[117] This part of Odysseus' speech is very similar to the Sarpedon's speech in *Iliad* 12, which moves from general observation of the life of a warrior-prince to the acts in battle and view of death of the warrior: social to private, but always universal. See Parry, 1956 [Bloom ed. 1986: 110f). Odysseus' Book 18 speech similarly moves from a comment on the frailty of man to the immediate instance of mortal insecurity, the guilt of the suitors. Setting determines the different aspect of the speeches but they remain of similar import to the audience. Parry's comment on *Iliad* 12 pertains to *Odyssey* 18: "I need not add that most of Sarpedon's speech, particularly the first part, is made up of traditional formulae, and that the same thoughts, in the same words, appear in other places in the *Iliad.* The unity of experience is thus made manifest to us by a common language. Men say the same things about the same things, and so the world to them, from its most concrete to its most metaphysical parts, is one."

will set him on course to Ithaca. In the later stages of the poem the theoxeny serves to demonstrate the association between divine and king, not divine and man. Odysseus would not choose to kill Amphinomus, but that is inconsequential; his kingdom is in disarray and the gods are demanding a secure peace, so Odysseus must play the part of a king. Odysseus does not display a superior awareness of Zeus' worldview. Instead, he displays his traditional epithetic qualities of intelligence, endurance and piety all of which accord to the poem's outline and particularly his ability to suffer his share and Zeus' respect for his obedience to the gods.

ii. Odysseus and Polyphemus

At the end of Book Nine, Odysseus and Polyphemus engage in a heated exchange as the Greeks attempt to sail from the Cyclopes' island. This episode marks the end of the Cyclopeia and the point at which Odysseus incurs Poseidon's wrath. The problems the passage raises for the consistency of divine justice have been dealt with in so far as Zeus' support of Poseidon's vendetta is concerned. What is also at stake in the passage is how Odysseus incurs the wrath in the first place. Various critics view this exchange as the final stand of the iliadic warrior.[118] Segal sees a turn away from the heroic desire for *kleos* towards cunning and endurance, while Brown suggests that Odysseus misjudges the rules of conduct which makes him more cautious later on. It is here that Friedrich finds Odysseus' explicit hubris for which Zeus must allow punishment in order that Odysseus may learn to suppress his iliadic urges. While these positions all accept that Odysseus acts inappropriately, they also depend on various conceptions of development. For Segal, the move from *kleos* to intelligence parallels the move from *Iliad* to *Odyssey*; for Brown, Odysseus is unprepared in the Cyclopeia to deal with the situation at Ithaca as an iliadic warrior; and for Friedrich, the hero of the *Odyssey* cannot be hubristic. None of these positions give Polyphemus the due he deserves for winning the verbal contest. By insisting so strongly on Odysseus' error, Polyphemus' victory is overlooked and too much importance shifts to the iliadic qualities of Odysseus.

The exchange in Book Nine has a standard structure of six parts, three speeches each. This structure finds models in the *Iliad* and at least one similar episode in the

[118] Friedrich 1991, Brown 1996, and Segal 1994: 95-98, among others.

Odyssey. In *Iliad* One, Agamemnon and Achilles exchange three roughly equal length speeches before Nestor interrupts.[119] The Greek embassy and Achilles also exchange three speeches each in *Iliad* Nine. And in the *Odyssey*, Antinous and Odysseus-as-beggar engage in a similarly structured exchange.[120] The six parts allow for an escalating intensity to unfold and form an organic whole that should not be divided.

Those who argue that Odysseus displays hubris in his speeches to Polyphemus generally accept Friedrich's claim that all three of Odysseus' speeches are part of a typical boasting sequence, here conceived of as an inappropriate exultation. Friedrich writes, "Odysseus behaves as we expect Heroic Man to behave after victory: he boasts. Indeed, this address, and the other two as well, are reminiscent of the typical boast (*euchos*) with which the Iliadic hero, taunting his vanquished enemy, seals an *aristeia*."[121] While Odysseus' speeches in *Odyssey* Nine might appear to be reminiscent of traditional boasting from the *Iliad* there are some critical differences. In the *Iliad*, the taunting hero completes his *aristeia* over the dead bodies of victims. Polyphemus does not fit the category of a traditionally defeated warrior because Odysseus merely injures and escapes from him – he does not defeat him. Furthermore, the Cyclops, unlike the slain Trojans and Greeks of the earlier poem, maintains his role in the exchange to the point of placing a perfectly fulfilled curse on Odysseus. Ultimately, the Polyphemus-Odysseus exchange is not prefigured by battle sequences or *aristeia*, but by passages of verbal argument.

The three speeches Odysseus delivers to the Cyclops may at first glance appear similar to typical *euchoi* because of their hostility, but there is no mention of any form of the verb *euchomai* employed in this passage. Instead, the three speeches are introduced with fairly neutral expressions: προσηύδων κερτομίοσι, προσέφην, and προσέειπον.[122] Boasting over the vanquished enemy is not inappropriate in the *Iliad*, and were Odysseus to describe his exchange in similar terms while recounting his story to the Phaeacians,

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[119] *Il.*1.106-244
[120] *Od.*17.415-487. Less antagonistic exchanges generally have a two-part structure, like Achilles-Priam (*Il.*24), or Zeus-Athena (*Od.*1)
[121] Friedrich 1991: 23
[122] *Od.*9.474; 501; 521

that would be perfectly acceptable.[123] Neither the poet nor the poet's characters recognize this exchange as boasting. Moreover, a hubristic Odysseus ignores Polyphemus' role in the exchange, a role that is mirrored by both Achilles and Odysseus at other points in the homeric epics.

The first part of the exchange in *Odyssey* Nine begins with Odysseus:

> Κύκλωψ, οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλες ἀνάλκιδος ἀνδρὸς ἑταίρους
> ἔδμεναι ἐν σπῆϊ γλαφυρῷ κρατερῇφι βίηφι.
> καὶ λίην σέ γ' ἔμελλε κιχήσεσθαι κακὰ ἔργα,
> σχέτλι', ἐπεὶ ξείνους οὐχ ἄζεο σῷ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
> ἐσθέμεναι· τῷ σε Ζεὺς τίσατο καὶ θεοὶ ἄλλοι. (9. 475–479)
>
> Cyclops, you did not consider eating the companions of a
> Helpless man in your hollowed cave by cruel force.
> Verily, though, did you consider finishing awful work,
> Fool, since you did not pause in your home to eat
> Strangers; for this Zeus and the other gods punish you.

The final line is central for those who argue hubris. If Odysseus is claiming divine support for his action, an action that is not divinely motivated, he can be seen as overstepping his station. But such an approach is disconnected from the rest of the book and the poem. Zeus has no interest in the quarrel between Odysseus and Cyclops, as the arguments for separated realms of Olympian interest suggest.[124] Zeus attributes the blinding to Odysseus alone in Book One and passes no further judgment on the relative justice of that act. Any charge made by any player in the poem about divine agency must be measured against Zeus' original utterance, where he addresses this type of misappellation. At the end of Book Nine, Odysseus claims that Zeus denies his sacrifice and prayer.[125] Odysseus, however, never draws a connection between Zeus' alleged hostility and his own words at 9.479. If the poet or Odysseus were demonstrating

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[123] See Schein 1984: "The threats and battle mockery are intended primarily to deny or reduce the opponent's bravery and warcraft... A warrior who is killed has become in effect a subdued animal or a subjugated woman." See also Vermeule 1979: 101: "When taunting, the aim is to turn the opposing soldier into a female, or into the weaker animal role... In a duel, an isolated world inside the main battle, one soldier must be the female partner and go down, or be the animal knocked down. It is a role naturally marked by unwillingness to cooperate".

[124] See Segal 1994: 195-227, and Brown 1996: 23

[125] This claim is extremely problematic, but ultimately sacrifice and prayer are not binding to divine goodwill, Odysseus' piety is never questioned by Zeus, and since Poseidon's wrath does not deny Odysseus' return to Ithaca, which is the concern of Zeus, a positive response to Odysseus' prayer and sacrifice is unwarranted.

recognition of hubris or humility in the narration to the Phaeacians, there would surely be more indication of the line's importance.

Odyssey 9.475-479 is the first part of a six-part exchange and it has a different character than it would if it was in fact the first of a three part unfolding of hubris, as Friedrich proposes.[126] The mention of Zeus and the other gods as agents of punishment points back to the initial exchange between Polyphemus and Odysseus at 9.273-280. There the Cyclops claims disdain for the strength and power of the gods. It is quite reasonable considering the structure of the exchange and the nature of Odysseus that he would re-introduce this point of contention as a fitting taunt and conclusion to his introductory remarks. No character in the poem is punished for words directed at any god, and it is far less likely that Zeus would be interested in such an indirect mention.

Polyphemus' first response can also be seen as a direct acknowledgement of the first encounter at 9.273-280. The Cyclops does not in fact make a speech, but throws the head of a mountain out to sea in hope of sinking the Greeks, or at least causing them to return. The physical act is quite similar to the Antinous-Odysseus episode where Antinous, in the final part of their exchange, throws the stool at Odysseus. In that episode, however, Homer seals Antinous' loss of the argument by having an unnamed suitor make the sixth speech, always the winning one, and turning it against Antinous. In the Cyclopeia, Polyphemus progresses from silence and physical action to prayer, where the prayer makes up the final speech. Achilles in *Iliad* One and Nine has the final speech and within the context of those two arguments emerges victorious. With the lack of interest on Zeus' part and the recognizable structure given by Homer, Odysseus' final words in the first part of the exchange and Polyphemus' move away from physical violence are wholly appropriate to an argument the point of which is to conquer by speech.

Odysseus' second speech takes up the third part of the exchange and brings about the revelation of his identity:

> Κύκλωψ, αἴ κέν τίς σε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων
> ὀφθαλμοῦ εἴρηται ἀεικελίην ἀλαωτύν,

[126] Friedrich 1991: 22f

φάσθαι ᾽ Οδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι,
υἱὸν Λαέρτεω, ᾽ Ιθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί᾽ ἔχοντα. (9. 502–505)

Cyclops, if ever any one of the earth-walking men
Should ask after the shameful destruction of your eye,
Say that Odysseus the city-sacker put your eye right out,
The son of Laertes, who makes home in Ithaca.

Apart from ruining a terrific pun, Odysseus makes his second mistake in the episode. Odysseus has heard the other Cyclopes reveal Poseidon as Polyphemus' father. He is already well on his way to escape. Under the circumstances, this revelation is completely unnecessary. But while Odysseus might be pious he is never presented as perfect. He makes a mistake that arguably adds unnecessary suffering to his lot, but he is not punished for *atasthalia* in the manner of the crew, Aigisthus, or the suitors. Odysseus' error in the Cyclopeia occupies a middle ground between the reckless crime of the divine transgressors and the suffering of the Phaeacians and Cyclops. The misjudgement here becomes of interest to Poseidon for personal reasons but it does not register for Zeus as an offence against custom, order, or propriety.

While Odysseus' mention of Zeus at 9.479 lacks any hubris, his claim to responsibility at 9.504 is not problematic either, especially with Olson's contention that Odysseus is constrained in his narrative act to reveal himself as the main source of any success in the journey.[127] Furthermore, Odysseus' other revelations in the *Odyssey* indicate that his fault in the Cyclopeia is a momentary lapse, and not a telling trait of an immature or unprepared character.

In Book Four, Helen and Menelaus tell stories about Odysseus' exploits during the Trojan War that show he is a cautious man. When Helen describes Odysseus' foray in Troy (*Od.*4-235-264) the audience learns that he is quite capable of recognizing the proper moment at which to reveal himself (4.254): when he is sure his identity will not hinder his mission. Immediately thereafter, Menelaus describes the Wooden Horse episode (4.266-289), and conversely Odysseus appears to recognize when to keep himself concealed (4.284): when he is vastly outnumbered and his success depends on self-control. Evidently, the mistake with Polyphemus is a lapse and does not present an

[127] Friedrich 1991: 23 sees the second speech as evidence that Odysseus has lost all restraint: "in the second address already Odysseus proudly proclaims the deed as his very own."

inherent lack of caution from which Odysseus must learn and aim to overcome.[128] Other than this one unproductive revelation, Odysseus consistently demonstrates a formidable capacity to reveal himself at exactly the right moment: consider the revelatory scenes with Circe, the Phaeacians, Telemachus, Eumaius, the suitors, Penelope, and Laertes. In the context of these scenes and the context of the structured exchange, the revelation to Polyphemus is a misjudgement but it is not hubristic.

Much of Polyphemus' second speech, which is the fourth part of the exchange, is taken up with the realization that the old prophecy has been fulfilled. Only five lines contribute to the direct exchange with Odysseus:

> ἀλλ' ἄγε δεῦρ', Ὀδυσεῦ ἵνα τοι πὰρ ξείνια θείω,
> πομπήν τ' ὀτρύνω δόμεναι κλυτὸν ἐννοσίγαιον·
> τοῦ γὰρ ἐγὼ παΐς εἰμί, πατὴρ δ'ἐμὸς εὔχεται εἶναι.
> αὐτὸς δ', αἴ κ' ἐθέλῃσ', ἰήσεται, οὐδέ τις ἄλλος
> οὔτε θεῶν μακάρων οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων. (9. 517-521)
>
> Oh come here, Odysseus, that I might give you proper reception,
> I'll stir the earth-shaker to deliver a famous conduct.
> For I am his son, he claims to be my father.
> And he, if he should care to, can heal, not any other,
> Not of the blessed gods, and not of mortal men.

The Cyclops' response, while no set piece of rhetoric, does fit the escalating exchange appropriately. First, he refers to the guest-host relationship that the two play with throughout the episode. Next he reveals his own lineage in response to Odysseus' mention of Laertes and Ithaca. Finally, the Cyclops elaborates on the power of his father, thus also responding in speech to Odysseus' reference to Polyphemus' disdain for Olympian power, and attempts to threaten to undo Odysseus' victory by having Poseidon heal his wounded eye.

Odysseus responds to the Cyclops' speech with his third and final speech:

> αἲ γὰρ δὴ ψυχῆς τε καὶ αἰῶνός σε δυναίμην
> εὖνιν ποιήσας πέμψαι δόμον Ἄϊδος εἴσω,
> ὡς οὐκ ὀφθαλμόν γ' ἰήσεται οὐδ' ἐνοσίχθων. (9. 523–525)

[128] Cf. Brown 1996, Rutherford 1986.

If only I had the power to cause and send you down
For time and life to the wide house of Hades,
So that he could not heal the eye, not the earth-shaker.

Odysseus jumps on one point raised by the Cyclops and develops one he raised: safe conduct and divine lineage. Odysseus turns the Cyclops' ironic offer of conduct against him. As a response to the threat of having his own act undone, Odysseus states an impossible wish to send Polyphemus to Hades, where not even Poseidon would be able to heal the eye. The impossible wish is a hypothetical taunt entirely suitable to the exchange, and determined by the parameters of the exchange.[129] When Zeus refers to Poseidon's wrath against Odysseus, in Book One, the reason given for the wrath is the act of blinding, not any word delivered by Odysseus. Throughout the poem, the blinding is the only cause expressed for Poseidon's vengeance.

As the discussion of divine justice showed, the wrath of the gods is never arbitrary and unjust. Poseidon, who justly upholds a personal grudge, inflicts suffering on Odysseus as a result of this episode. Yet neither Poseidon nor Odysseus act against divine order; in Book Nine, Zeus' theodicy and the rest of the ethical programme is upheld and consistently portrayed.

The final part of the exchange, Polyphemus' last response, continues to focus on the idea of conduct and return:

Κλῦθι, Ποσείδαον γαιήοχε, κυανοχαῖτα·
εἰ ἐτεόν γε σός εἰμι, πατὴρ δ' ἐμὸς εὔχεαι εἶναι,
δὸς μὴ' Οδυσσῆα πτολίπορθον οἴκαδ' ἱκέσθαι
υἱὸν Λαέρτεω, ' Ιθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί' ἔχοντα.
ἀλλ' εἴ οἱ μοῖρ' ἐστὶ φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐϋκτίμενον καὶ ἐὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
ὀψὲ κακῶς ἔλθοι, ὀλέσας ἄπο πάντας ἑταίρους,
νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίης, εὕροι δ' ἐν πήματα οἴκῳ. (9.529–535)

Listen, earth-shaking dark-maned Poseidon;
If I am truly your son, my father as you claim to be,
Allow not Odysseus the city-sacker to return home,
Son of Laertes, who makes his home in Ithaca.
But if his lot is to see his friends and if he is ever to reach
His well-built home and to be in his familiar country,

[129] See Friedrich 1991:20 and Combellack 1981:115-119. The placement of this 'wish without desire' is very similarly placed to Odysseus' death wish for Antinous in *Odyssey* 17.

> Let him return wickedly late, without his companions – all destroyed –
> Aboard a foreign ship, and let him find heartache at home.

Homer reserves the final, victorious speech for Polyphemus. The Cyclops offers a prayer entreating Poseidon to make Odysseus' return as difficult as possible. Furthermore, prayer is a fitting means to conclude the exchange. When Achilles ends the quarrel with Agamemnon it is with an oath to remove himself from the Achaean ranks and to wish Hector's wrath on the Greeks. At the end of the embassy, he similarly restates his vow not to rejoin the ranks until Hector reaches the Myrmidon ships. The Cyclops ultimately fulfills the form of the exchange perfectly. Instead of reading hubris into this passage it is more reasonable to view the manner in which Odysseus' mistake and the Cyclops' exemplary performance are presented as the cause of Odysseus' suffering. While revealing his name is a mistake, it is not a hubristic one.

Alleged iliadicisms are either non-existent or not problematic. Hubris is not an issue in the Cyclopeia, and Odysseus revelation to the Cyclops does not consist of recklessness at the level of *atasthalia*. Without the charge of hubris, either in the speeches or an assumed theoxenic position, the Odysseus of the Cyclopeia is no different than the Odysseus of Ithaca, other than an accumulation of experience that does not seriously affect the way he behaves. There is no sound textual basis to support the idea that Odysseus is in any way less in tune with Zeus' worldview in the first half of the poem than in the second.

ii. Odysseus and Eurycleia

The argument for the character development of Odysseus rests on his alleged ethical progression and tighter affinity with the religious framework of the poem from the Cyclopeia to the suitor-slaughter. The end of this sequence supposedly manifests itself when the king prevents the nurse, Eurycleia from celebrating the deaths of the suitors.[130] The alleged progression, however, fundamentally contradicts the understanding of divine justice and Zeus' constant support of Odysseus that is presented in the poem's prologue. Odysseus suffers his inevitable allotment and displays a constant piety. He is the model of opposition to the crew, Aigisthus, and the suitors throughout the poem. From the first

[130] Friedrich 1991: 28

divine assembly when Athena raises her concern for Odysseus' return and the second assembly when Zeus elevates his return to a matter of divine concern, Odysseus is never portrayed as underdeveloped or as having completed a necessary development.[131] His triumph is not the realization of past hubris and an ethical re-adjustment expressed in censuring Eurycleia, but rising to Athena's demand that he fulfills the role he occupies as king of Ithaca.

Supporters of the view that Odysseus matures find evidence in his censoring of Eurycleia, as she observes the result of the suitor-slaughter. Homer's description of what the nurse sees is bound up with the subsequent prohibition by Odysseus.

> εὗρυν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆα μετὰ κταμένοισι νέκυσσιν,
> αἵματι καὶ λύθρῳ πεπαλαγμένον ὥς τε λέοντα,
> ὅς ῥά τε βεβρωκὼς βοὸς ἔρχεται ἀγραύλοιο·
> πᾶν δ' ἄρα οἱ στῆθός τε παρήϊά τ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν
> αἱματόεντα πέλει, δεινὸς δ' εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι·
> ὣς Ὀδυσεὺς πεπάλακτο πόδας καὶ χεῖρας ὕπερθεν·
> ἡ δ' ὡς οὖν νέκυάς τε καὶ ἄσπετον ἔσιδεν αἷμα,
> ἴθυσέν ῥ' ὀλολύξαι, ἐπεὶ μέγα ἔσιδεν ἔργον· (22.401–408)
>
> She saw then Odysseus surrounded by dead bodies,
> In blood and gore he was splattered, like a lion
> Who has come eating of wild bull;
> All over his breast and jaw in every way
> He is bloodied – it is awful to see his face;
> So Odysseus is splattered, both on hands and feet;
> And so when she saw the corpses and the endless blood,
> She was eager to cry aloud, for she saw a great work

Friedrich discusses this passage at length, and presents it in the context of other lion similes.[132] He suggests that lion similes, as the most heroic type of simile are of particular note when used in the *Odyssey*. Specifically, the simile at *Od.*6.130 recalls the typical heroic description in the *Iliad*. With some alteration at the end of that simile, the passage highlights Odysseus' sorry state on the shores of Scheria, by juxtaposing the glorious hero with his inglorious position. The simile at 22.401-408 does not undergo much alteration at all. The twist Friedrich points out is that the simile, unlike its usage in the

[131] Cf. Rutherford 1986: 152, 160, 162; Friedrich 1991: 27-28
[132] Friedrich 1981: 120-137

Iliad, appears directly after the battle instead of during.[133] In other words, it is not a natural part of the whole, and Friedrich argues that such placement and the description complete with blood and gore emphasizes the slaughter as a 'sad and ugly necessity.'[134] For Friedrich, the simile stresses the ambiguity of Odysseus' moral position as a retributive tool. He states, "Gone is the innocent and spontaneous delight in fighting and killing which can be felt in the unproblematic ἀριστεία of the *Iliad*."[135] No doubt the suitor-slaughter is, contextually, a different type of battle than those in the *Iliad*. The suggestion that Homer presents Odysseus in a lion simile in order to evince a remorseful reflection on the necessities attendant upon restoring order supports the view that iliadic tendencies are suppressed at the end of the *Odyssey*. But the suggestion depends on Homer's negative portrayal of iliadic qualities, which the poet does not do.

At 22.401-408 Homer is holding more steadfastly to typical descriptions than Friedrich allows, but it is not a criticism of an iliadic mode. The restoration of social practices at Ithaca does not require a new morality that accepts battle merely as a sad and ugly necessity, but the triumph over a new disorder of the long-standing ethical conception that inferiors respect their superiors and criminals are punished. The king must perform at home in the same manner as he was obliged to act while away at war, and although this is not Troy, it is still very much the world of heroes and battle. Descriptions of warriors in battle are most appropriate to the *Iliad* as determined by the context of the poem; a shift to the social arena of the same culture should not exclude similar actions in the *Odyssey*. As the poet resorts to traditional epic battle-type language the entire passage of the suitor-slaughter is elevated to an acutely conscious epic style. The iliadic mode does not end with Homer's description of Odysseus, as Friedrich contends, but remains until the end of the poem, when the Odysseus and his company

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[133] See *Iliad* 20.490-503, where Homer describes Achilles *after* a battle in a very similar passage to *Od.*22.401-408. Considering the placement of and description in that passage, it is unlikely that the lion simile carries as much significance as Friedrich attributes.

[134] Friedrich 1981: 130

See Schein 1984: 82: "The aim of war is to destroy a socially evolved human community just like the community that each Greek left behind him when he set sail for Troy. The price of individual self-assertion and self-fulfillment is social annihilation." In the case of the *Odyssey* meanwhile, the situation is the annihilation of corruption and the preservation of a socially evolved human community.

[135] Friedrich 1981: 131

nearly engage in another battle with some of the Ithacans, the end of which is Athena's warning to Odysseus to let go his bloodlust.

The lion simile is not the only detectable reference to the *Iliad*; in fact, Homer has Athena herself call for a return to iliadic battle in order for Odysseus to succeed:

> οὐκέτι σοί γ', Ὀδυσεῦ, μένος ἔμπεδον οὐδέ τις ἀλκή,
> οἵη ὅτ' ἀμφ' Ἑλένῃ λευκωλένῳ εὐπατερείῃ
> εἰνάετες Τρώεσσιν ἐμάρναο νωλεμὲς αἰεί,
> πολλοὺς δ' ἄνδρας ἔπεφνες ἐν αἰνῇ δηϊοτῆτι,
> σῇ δ' ἥλῳ βουλῇ Πριάμου πόλις εὐρυάγυια.
> πῶς δὴ νῦν, ὅτε σόν γε δόμον καὶ κτήματ' ἱκάνεις,
> ἄντα μνηστήρων ὀλοφύρεαι ἄλκιμος εἶναι;
> ἀλλ' ἄγε δεῦρο, πέπον, παρ' ἔμ' ἵστασο ἴδε ἔργον,
> ὄφρα ἰδῇς οἷός τοι ἐν ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσι
> Μέντωρ' Ἀλκιμίδης εὐεργεσίας ἀποτίνειν. (22. 226– 235)

> So no longer in you, Odysseus, steadfast force or any might,
> The same that for white-armed, well-fathered Helen
> Nine years unceasingly with the Trojans ever did you do battle,
> Many men you struck in the famous battle, and
> For you I sharpened the plan for Priam's wide city.
> Now, what, that you have reached your home and halls,
> You lament for there to be force against the suitors?
> But come you here, stand by me and see the ready work,
> So that you might yourself see there among the hostile men
> Mentor, son of well-doing Alkimides, killing.

The implication is clear: Odysseus is naturally stronger, divinely supported, and has nine years of battle in the most famous war as experience. In order to defeat the suitors, Odysseus must act at home as the warrior he was at Troy.[136] When victory comes about and Homer presents the king in the traditional depiction of an iliadic warrior at the end of

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[136] Cf. Segal 1994:46f, who argues that the return to Ithaca presents "the renewal of human Odysseus who has been ever reduced since Troy" and, 224, that "Athena and Zeus collaboratively insist that this is not the world of the *Iliad* nor the place for the *Iliad*'s unchecked surge of warlike violence and bloodlust" when he makes reference to the final lines of the *Odyssey*. As we will see in the conclusion, though, such a view comes from a misconception of order and justice in the poem.
Cf. Nagy 1979: 20f who conversely argues against the view that there is a traditional suppression of anything overtly Iliadic in the *Odyssey*.
Cf. further with Finkleberg 1995:1f "that circumstances exposed him to a life-experience in the face of which any conventional heroic response would have been out of place, with the result that there is no way in which Odysseus' behaviour throughout the *Odyssey* can be accounted for as heroic on terms of the *Iliad*." But see Murnaghan 1987:15: "The suitors represent a new generation that has arisen in his absence, and it is clear that he can only hope to defeat them if he is still as he was before he left for the Trojan War."

his *aristeia*, it is not a criticism of Odysseus but an appropriate and emphatic conclusion to a traditional battle sequence. Odysseus' reaction to Athena's chastisement-cum-encouragement, which is to say embracing the iliadic mode, marks the triumph of the human spirit in the *Odyssey*:

> Ἦ ῥα, καὶ οὔ πω πάγχυ δίδου ἑτεραλκέα νίκην,
> ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἄρα σθένεός τε καὶ αλκῆς πειρήτιζεν[137]
> ἠμὲν Ὀδυσσῆος ἠδ' υἱοῦ κυδαλίμοιο. (22. 236–238)
>
> So she did not yet fully give a decided victory,
> As still she tested the strength and force
> Both of Odysseus and his glorious son.

Athena actually withholds victory from her favourites until they bring the resolution she expects of a proper king and prince. They must show the desire to protect divine order. The entire slaughter is an epic battle scene.

Considering the propriety of the iliadic mode, it is problematic to assert that Odysseus' reprimand of the nurse reflects a revised and ethically developed attitude. His reprimand of Eurycleia follows directly the poet's description of Odysseus as a blood-spattered lion:

> ἀλλ'' Ὀδυσεὺς κατέρυκε καὶ ἔσχεθεν ἱεμένην περ,
> καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
> "ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυζε·
> οὐχ ὁσίη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάασθαι. (22. 409–412)
>
> But Odysseus stopped her and coming near held her still,
> Then he spoke winged flying words at her;
> "In your breast, old woman, rejoice but restrain and do not cry aloud;
> It is not lawful to boast over men's corpses.

In what sense can Odysseus, who thus far has been entirely consistent, censure the old nurse for boasting? Recalling the Cyclopeia, Odysseus does not boast over the Cyclops because he does not defeat him.[138] The poet also refrains from using any form of *euchomai*. Moreover, boasting is supposed to occur at the end of a warrior's *aristeia* and

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[137] This is another instance *peirazó* which does carry the force of 'to judge' with the explicit result of reward or punishment, victory in this case. Note that here it is the poet's voice and not Odysseus' narration.
[138] See Stanford 1963: 34 who treats Odysseus' refusal to boast against typical iliadic boasting.

if the slaughter is supposed to be Odysseus' then the poet is inverting the king's appropriate time to boast by making him deny boasting to another. At the same time, Odysseus employs aggressive language similar to iliadic vaunting during the slaughter.[139] Still, there is no form of *euchomai* used to introduce or follow representations of vaunting and there is no indication that these vaunts are inappropriate.

Of course, Odysseus censures Eurycleia before she boasts over dead bodies. But this still has an air of contradiction about it in the context of iliadic warrior behaviour. Just as no mortal incurs divine wrath by words alone, there is no sense in which warriors boasting over dead bodies incur wrath either. In the *Iliad*, boasting over dead bodies is no unusual occasion. Apollo is not angered with Achilles for any words he utters over Hector's body, but for defiling it. At *Iliad*.20.393 the poet describes Achilles boasting over the body of Iphition whom he has just slain: Ὣς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τὸν δὲ σκότος ὄσσε κάλυψε. / *So he spoke, boasting, as darkness covered the man's eyes.* In that case the poet does not mark the boast as a transgression, yet it is the very same verb Odysseus denies the nurse. Presumably, if boasting is unlawful it long would have been so. Odysseus is not retroactively judging his fellows at Troy either, and as we have seen he must return to an iliadic mode to conquer the suitors. It is proper for Odysseus to boast, but he stops Eurycleia, and this difference offers a resolution to the problem of Odysseus' reprimand.

Book Twenty-Two is the culmination of the king's return, where the slaughter of the suitors marks the possibility for the restoration of order to the disrupted house and kingdom. Considering that the entire poem is centred on proper and improper action according to one's station, the emphasis of Odysseus' reprimand of Eurycleia does not lie as much in the content but in the performance of the scolding. The introduction to 22.411 describes violent and abrasive physical action. Odysseus grabs the old nurse and demands that she keep quiet: the master exerts his authority over the slave.[140] A mere one hundred and fifty lines later, at the beginning of Book Twenty-Three, the poet offers an

[139] See *Od*.22.321-325, where Odysseus verbally assaults the prophet Agelaus before killing him.

[140] In Book Nineteen, when the nurse discovers the scar and is about to rejoice to Penelope, Odysseus grabs Eurycleia's throat to keep her quiet (19. 479-481), tells her to keep quiet (486), and threatens her should she speak out (487-490), and even after the nurse has assured him, Odysseus is still compelled to tell her to keep quiet one more time: ἀλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μῦθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσιν (19. 502). Note that in this passage as well the gods are invoked, as if in prayer for support. See Olson 1995: 6: "Eurykleia, who is immediately and brutally silenced when she learns more than she ought to (xix.479-90, 502)".

extraordinarily similar passage. There, Penelope censures the old nurse for celebrating the return of Odysseus, unwarrantedly in her cautious opinion. The structure and diction of the two passages presents a definitive manner of interaction between the king and queen and the nurse.

In the first lines of each address to Eurycleia, there is an imperative not to express her content aloud, but to rejoice inwardly:

> ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυζε·
> οὐχ ὁσίη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάασθαι. (22. 409–412)
>
> In your breast, old woman, rejoice but restrain and do not cry aloud;
> It is not lawful to boast over men's corpses.
>
> μαῖα φίλη, μή πω μέγ' ἐπεύχεο καγκαλόωσα. (23. 59)
>
> Dear grandma, don't boast greatly in over-exultation yet.

Both passages present a desire for the nurse not to express herself too openly, but indication in the text is lacking that these commands reflect back on the speakers. What is the force of *hosia* at 22.410, and in what way is it improper for the nurse to boast if it is proper for Odysseus? Penelope's censure has no connotations of a proper oral procedure, yet the form of *euchomai* in Book Twenty-Three goes a long way towards dismantling the force of the form used by Odysseus in the preceding book. Odysseus is not telling Eurycleia not to gloat, but he is telling her not to boast aloud. The impropriety lies in the servant's act of boasting in this circumstance.

Following these introductory reprimands, both Penelope and Odysseus proceed sombrely to explain that the suitors brought death and destruction upon themselves through their own *atasthalia*. These are divine-like insights that do not bring down any charges of hubris the way critics falsely allege Odysseus' first speech to the Cyclops does.[141] The structure and language is too similar not to consider Odysseus' and Penelope's speeches together:

> τούσδε δὲ μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε θεῶν καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα·
> οὔ τινα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,

[141] See Adam Parry's observation that these repeated formulaic lines display a unity of experience and consistent world view as part of the epic mode.

οὐ κακὸν οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ὅτις σφέας εἰσαφίκοιτο·
τῷ καὶ ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐπέσπον. (22. 413–416)

Wicked deeds called down the fate of the gods against them;
For they honoured none among earth-walking humans,
Not evil nor good, whosoever encountered them;
And here for the reckless crimes a shameful death arrives.

οἶσθα γὰρ ὥς κ' ἀσπατὸς ἐνὶ μεγάροισι φανείη
πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί τε καὶ υἱέϊ, τὸν τεκόμεσθα·
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅδε μῦθος ἐτήτυμος, ὡς ἀγορεύεις,
ἀλλά τις ἀθανάτων κτεῖνε μνηστῆρας ἀγαυούς,
ὕβριν ἀγασσάμενος θυμαλγέα καὶ κακὰ ἔργα.
οὔ τινα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,
οὐ κακὸν οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ὅτις σφέας εἰσαφίκοιτο·
τῷ δι' ἀτασθαλίας ἔπαθον κακόν· αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
ὤλεσε τηλοῦ νόστον Ἀχαιΐδος, ὤλετο δ' αὐτός. (23. 60–68)

When I have seen that welcome sight in all the
Halls, and especially my son, whom we produced;
But this story is not true, as you claim,
But one of the immortals slew the noble suitors,
Wondering at impropriety and the wicked, painful deeds.
For they honoured none among earth-walking humans,
Not evil nor good, whosoever encountered them;
They suffered wickedly here for their reckless crimes; while Odysseus
Destroyed the Achaean return far away, himself destroyed.

Odysseus' words recall the poem's introduction, the divine support for the slaughter, and every subsequent charge against the suitors from the mouths of his family and loyal servants. His attribution of the deed to the divine is tied to the theoxeny motif. There the poet presented the idea that in order for Odysseus to regain his throne and securely return to his family he was forced to accept Athena's decision that every suitor would die, and that he would have no judgement. When Odysseus seems to falter in Book Twenty-Two, Athena again calls on him to prove his desire to regain home and security. The death of the host of suitors restores Odysseus to power and returns him to his family. His attribution to the divine here is an affirmation of the inextricability of his piety and kingship. Odysseus has long known that every suitor must die and that his successful return, piety and natural gifts are bound. The attribution is not an original, extempore realization. Rather, his personal concern for return is subsumed into the duties of king,

representative of social stability. Penelope's attribution of the retributive slaughter to the gods reveals her similar piety, but hers is couched in a long-standing position that the suitors must be removed and that Odysseus will never return. For Odysseus and Penelope to describe the suitors' fate in terms of divine justice poses no problem.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The notion that Odysseus must develop in order to succeed at Ithaca is untenable. His success does not rest on closing some ethical gap between a display of hubris and Zeus' theodicy. Odysseus accomplishes his duty by utilizing his traditional qualities appropriately: sufferer, trickster and warrior. In the end, Odysseus is a king and his ability to adhere to that responsibility determines his success.[142] The natural excellence of his epithetic qualities allows Odysseus the superiority over other men that all proper kings enjoy, but his piety and obedience allow him to succeed. In the poem's conclusion, Homer celebrates Odysseus' return and restoration of order at Ithaca, not any ethical development.

The poet achieves this celebration by aligning Odysseus' success with Achilles', and contrasting the two to the disgrace of Agamemnon's death. Throughout the poem, certain characters have made reference to the propriety of kings dying at battle.[143] The importance of such deaths is twofold. First, every comrade celebrates the warrior-king's life in death, and second, consequently, his royal line wins, maintains, or has transferred to it honour and recognition. Achilles presents this royal economy in Book Eleven when Odysseus approaches him in Hades (11.467-540). After Odysseus praises him for being the best of the shades, Achilles disdainfully responds by insisting that death in Hades is not the place for honour. Achilles quickly turns the question of honour properly to the fate of his own son and father. Achilles knows that the death that brought such glory to his name should also mean glory for his son and hopefully respect for Peleus, all of

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[142] See Lloyd-Jones 1971: 27: "Like men the gods also have their king, whose attributes are based on those of human rulers. He is, as earthly kings should be but often are not, able to dominate his subjects by the threat of force; he is able to settle disputes among them and impose his will. Being father of gods and men, he rules over men also. To men living in their own communities he gives justice through their kings; strangers, who fall outside these communities, are under his protection in his capacity of Xeinios. His concern to punish offenders against justice originates from the concern to punish offenders against his particular *time* that is felt by any god. He defends the established order (*dike*) by punishing mortals whose injustices disturb it and at the same time by sternly repressing any attempt of men to rise above the humble place where they belong."
See also the Ithacan assembly, called by Telemachus, at the start of *Odyssey* 2, where the absence of the king and the lack of respect for the king's representatives display the total corruption of civil order.

[143] Telemachus and Achilles, for instance, make identical speeches concerning Odysseus and Agamemnon at 1.234-241 and 24.28-34 respectively.

which amounts to order in his kingdom.[144] While Achilles does win glory and honour for himself and his kingdom, death in battle is not the only proper course of action for a king. Of more import to Achilles, and in fact by virtue of achieving glory, is the proper order of his home, which is precisely what Odysseus' return accomplishes.

Achilles has the most glorified death, and in Book Twenty-Four, Homer has Agamemnon spend fifty-eight lines (24.36-94) describing Achilles' death and funeral at Troy.[145] Odysseus' return and slaughter of the suitors is given an equal description at 24.121-190. The alternative to dying gloriously is returning gloriously, but the underlying importance points to the duties of the king and the protection of his kingdom.[146] After the passage in Hades at the start of Book Twenty-Four, Odysseus visits Laertes as if to satisfy the same concern as Achilles' that the honour the son achieved extends to respect for the father. Despite the restoration of social normality in Ithaca, Odysseus has not changed.

Indeed at the very close of the poem, when the gods are satisfied with the stability of Ithaca and Odysseus' original desire to return is accomplished, Odysseus and the gods are no longer in concert. The action of the poem that is resolved between Books Twenty-Two and Twenty-Four was raised by Athena in Book One. While Zeus has always supported Odysseus as a king and pious man, the matter of his return is only brought to the attention of the divine counsel when the situation at Ithaca requires the return of Odysseus. The king had been absent for almost twenty years, but the suitors were only suing for three or four. The poet presents Odysseus' desire to return before the first divine meeting, and the gods agree to support his return, but it is a full four books before Homer reports that Hermes travels to Ogygia. In the intermediary lines, the king's return is made a matter of divine concern: Athena's visit in Book One and the ineffectual assembly in Book Two expose the neglect of regular social institutions in Odysseus' kingdom; and Telemachus' travels to Pylos and Sparta reveal two well functioning kingdoms under the

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[144] Cf. Segal 1994: 45 where he argues that Odysseus' "tenacious attachment to the human ties on Ithaca, conciliatory spirit, and adaptability all separate him from the harsher ideals of the doomed heroes of the *Iliad* and begin to shape a heroism of another kind."

[145] See Bloom ed. 1988 (Thornton): 40-42

[146] See Sarpedon's speech in *Il.*12.

governance of competent kings.[147] A distance of four books separates Odysseus' longing to return and the elaborated importance of the king's return. Without the association between Odysseus' desire and the necessity of the king's return, there is no reason to believe that Odysseus might not still be at Ogygia. Odysseus' desire and the divine concern for order remain consistent throughout the poem and are finally achieved. But after forty-eight books of homeric verse, the same iliadic anger that appeared in the first line of the first poem persists in the last lines of the last book.

In the end the human triumph is once again attested as the ability to heed divine caution, to avoid *atasthalia*, and to recognize appropriate action. As Odysseus was successful by asserting himself as the iliadic warrior when Athena demanded it, he is able to control himself when Zeus and Athena demand it. This final act of the poem is consistent with his ability to act with propriety in almost every situation, and it is consistent with Calypso's reaction to Hermes, Achilles' ability to stay his anger in *Iliad* One, and with Phoenix' description of what men must be capable.[148] Achilles displayed an ability to act appropriately in words and action when necessary in assembly and battle, and Odysseus does the same. Just as with Achilles' final act, Odysseus' is an act of piety recognizing the inevitability of order.

When the basis for an ethical framework of the poem shifts from holding the gods accountable for the 'unfair' treatment of men to recognizing the divine as protectors of order, a more complete understanding of Odysseus as king of Ithaca takes over. Odysseus' return is sanctioned only because he is the king, the absent head of a society fallen apart. Subsequent to the decision to return him, Odysseus demonstrates how he is naturally superior in cunning, endurance and strength. His triumph comes out of reasserting his position as king through a display of force. The idea of character

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[147] See Reece 1993: 59-99 (chapters 3 & 4) who treats the Pylos and Sparta episodes as models and variations on the hospitality structure that informs the rest of the poem. For instance, p.59: "Telemachus finds in Pylos a stable and well-ordered society, whose ruler takes great pride in his scrupulous observation of every detail of these rituals. Nestor is exceptionally pious". Most of Reece's observations are taken up with discussing the over-zealousness of Nestor and the guest-retention of Menelaus, leading to what he deems improper guest-reception by the Phaeacians, all in order to show how Homer presents Odysseus' return to Ithaca as the resolution to hospitality tension. While the treatment is interesting it does not do enough to emphasize the 'stable and well-ordered' societies and natural surroundings of these kingdoms with a proper king. Odysseus' return certainly is the resolution, but it does not diminish the positive models provided in the Telemachy. See Brown 1996: 21: "the social chaos on Ithaca is made intelligible by the pointed comparison with the impressive social order of Nestor's Pylos".

[148] 'To be a man of words and a man of action too' *Il.*9.443

development, as overcoming a moral or religious deficiency, runs counter to the constant depiction of Odysseus as pious, obedient, patient, and a good king. Despite scholarship suggesting that Odysseus displays hubris, when Odysseus suffers it is his allotted suffering; and finally his success is but a public restoration of order, not a personal realignment with the gods.

The question of the character development of Odysseus is closely interwoven with the problem of divine justice. The idea that Odysseus needs to develop comes directly out of the supposed inconsistency of divine justice. When the gods are not seen as a harmonious whole, or when the gods themselves are in a state of progress, it is reasonable that Odysseus too must change. But Homer does not present an inconsistent pantheon nor does he present a need for Odysseus to adapt to that inconsistency.

Homer offers a broader textual basis for the programmatic ethical conception of the poem than a reading that elevates the theodicy alone to the status of singular law allows. There are two distinct sides to mortal suffering: allotted and accrued; and two models for reckless transgression: the crew and Aigisthus. Zeus claims that not all woe is divinely planned and he also sanctions revenge. The ethical framework of the *Odyssey* is a varied hierarchy of interest where gods and men are not expected to act equally and in the end the poet's main concern is showing the propriety of accepting one's allotted fate, in measure of suffering or social station. Charges of inconsistency lack a comprehensive view of divine justice. Even defences of consistency are untenable when they rely on overcoming inconsistency.

Justice in the *Odyssey* is not amenable to the demands of fairness. Divine justice is concerned with maintaining order in the world. Whether that translates to respect for Poseidon or submission to a mortal king, nowhere are men given the opportunity to decide what is just. Odysseus understands this and from the proem to Athena's final warning he maintains a proper relation to divine justice. Odysseus does not develop as a character because the gods in their ways towards men are consistent.

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