"The Long Day Wanes"
Old Age in Homer

by

Nicholas Maes

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
Graduate Department of Classics, in the
University of Toronto

ISBN 0-315-92719-4

Canada

Name NICHOLAS MAES

Dissertation Abstracts International is arranged by broad, general subject categories. Please select the one subject which most nearly describes the content of your dissertation. Enter the corresponding four-digit code in the spaces provided.

CLASSICAL LITERATURE
SUBJECT TERM

0294
SUBJECT CODE

U·M·I

Subject Categories

THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS
Architecture 0729
Art History 0377
Cinema 0900
Dance 0378
Fine Arts 0357
Information Science 0723
Journalism 0391
Library Science 0399
Mass Communications 0708
Music 0413
Speech Communication 0459
Theater 0465

EDUCATION
General 0515
Administration 0514
Adult and Continuing 0516
Agricultural 0517
Art 0273
Bilingual and Multicultural 0282
Business 0688
Community College 0275
Curriculum and Instruction 0727
Early Childhood 0518
Elementary 0524
Finance 0277
Guidance and Counseling 0519
Health 0680
Higher 0745
History of 0520
Home Economics 0278
Industrial 0521
Language and Literature 0279
Mathematics 0280
Music 0522
Philosophy of 0998
Physical 0523
Psychology 0525
Reading 0535
Religious 0527
Sciences 0714
Secondary 0533
Social Sciences 0534
Sociology of 0340
Special 0529
Teacher Training 0530
Technology 0710
Tests and Measurements 0288
Vocational 0747

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS
Language
- General 0679
- Ancient 0289
- Linguistics 0290
- Modern 0291

Literature
- General 0401
- Classical 0294
- Comparative 0295
- Medieval 0297
- Modern 0298
- African 0316
- American 0591
- Asian 0305
- Canadian (English) 0352
- Canadian (French) 0355
- English 0593
- Germanic 0311
- Latin American 0312
- Middle Eastern 0315
- Romance 0313
- Slavic and East European 0314

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND THEOLOGY
Philosophy 0422
Religion
- General 0318
- Biblical Studies 0321
- Clergy 0319
- History of 0320
- Philosophy of 0322

Theology 0469

SOCIAL SCIENCES
American Studies 0323
Anthropology
- Archaeology 0324
- Cultural 0326
- Physical 0327

Business Administration
- General 0310
- Accounting 0272
- Banking 0770
- Management 0454
- Marketing 0338

Canadian Studies 0385
Economics
- General 0501
- Agricultural 0503
- Commerce-Business 0505
- Finance 0508
- History 0509
- Labor 0510
- Theory 0511

Folklore 0358
Geography 0366
Gerontology 0351
History
- General 0578
- Ancient 0579
- Medieval 0581
- Modern 0582
- Black 0328
- African 0331
- Asia, Australia and Oceania 0332
- Canadian 0334
- European 0335
- Latin American 0336
- Middle Eastern 0333
- United States 0337

History of Science 0585
Law 0398
Political Science
- General 0615
- International Law and Relations 0616
- Public Administration 0617

Recreation 0814
Social Work 0452
Sociology
- General 0626
- Criminology and Penology 0627
- Demography 0938
- Ethnic and Racial Studies 0631
- Individual and Family Studies 0628
- Industrial and Labor Relations 0629
- Public and Social Welfare 0630
- Social Structure and Development 0700
- Theory and Methods 0344

Transportation 0709
Urban and Regional Planning 0999
Women's Studies 0453

THE SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
Agriculture
- General 0473
- Agronomy 0285
- Animal Culture and Nutrition 0475
- Animal Pathology 0476
- Food Science and Technology 0359
- Forestry and Wildlife 0478
- Plant Culture 0479
- Plant Pathology 0480
- Plant Physiology 0817
- Range Management 0777
- Wood Technology 0746

Biology
- General 0306
- Anatomy 0287
- Biostatistics 0308
- Botany 0309
- Cell 0379
- Ecology 0329
- Entomology 0353
- Genetics 0369
- Limnology 0793
- Microbiology 0410
- Molecular 0307
- Neuroscience 0317
- Oceanography 0416
- Physiology 0433
- Radiation 0821
- Veterinary Science 0778
- Zoology 0472

Biophysics
- General 0786
- Medical 0760

EARTH SCIENCES
Biogeochemistry 0425
Geochemistry 0996
Geodesy 0370
Geology 0372
Geophysics 0373
Hydrology 0388
Mineralogy 0411
Paleobotany 0345
Paleoecology 0426
Paleontology 0418
Paleozoology 0985
Palynology 0427
Physical Geography 0368
Physical Oceanography 0415

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
Environmental Sciences 0768
Health Sciences
- General 0566
- Audiology 0300
- Chemotherapy 0992
- Dentistry 0567
- Education 0350
- Hospital Management 0769
- Human Development 0758
- Immunology 0982
- Medicine and Surgery 0564
- Mental Health 0347
- Nursing 0569
- Nutrition 0570
- Obstetrics and Gynecology 0380
- Occupational Health and Therapy 0354
- Ophthalmology 0381
- Pathology 0571
- Pharmacology 0419
- Pharmacy 0572
- Physical Therapy 0382
- Public Health 0573
- Radiology 0574
- Recreation 0575
- Speech Pathology 0460
- Toxicology 0383

Home Economics 0386

PHYSICAL SCIENCES
Pure Sciences
Chemistry
- General 0485
- Agricultural 0749
- Analytical 0486
- Biochemistry 0487
- Inorganic 0488
- Nuclear 0738
- Organic 0490
- Pharmaceutical 0491
- Physical 0494
- Polymer 0495
- Radiation 0754

Mathematics 0405
Physics
- General 0605
- Acoustics 0986
- Astronomy and Astrophysics 0606
- Atmospheric Science 0608
- Atomic 0748
- Electronics and Electricity 0607
- Elementary Particles and High Energy 0798
- Fluid and Plasma 0759
- Molecular 0609
- Nuclear 0610
- Optics 0752
- Radiation 0756
- Solid State 0611

Statistics 0463

Applied Sciences
Applied Mechanics 0346
Computer Science 0984
Engineering
- General 0537
- Aerospace 0538
- Agricultural 0539
- Automotive 0540
- Biomedical 0541
- Chemical 0542
- Civil 0543
- Electronics and Electrical 0544
- Heat and Thermodynamics 0348
- Hydraulic 0545
- Industrial 0546
- Marine 0547
- Materials Science 0794
- Mechanical 0548
- Metallurgy 0743
- Mining 0551
- Nuclear 0552
- Packaging 0549
- Petroleum 0765
- Sanitary and Municipal 0554
- System Science 0790

Geotechnology 0428
Operations Research 0796
Plastics Technology 0795
Textile Technology 0994

PSYCHOLOGY
General 0621
Behavioral 0384
Clinical 0622
Developmental 0620
Experimental 0623
Industrial 0624
Personality 0625
Physiological 0989
Psychobiology 0349
Psychometrics 0632
Social 0451

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY
MANUSCRIPT THESIS - DOCTORAL
AUTHORITY TO DISTRIBUTE

NOTE: The AUTHOR will sign in one of the two places indicated. It is the intention of the University that there be NO RESTRICTION on the distribution of the publication of theses save in exceptional cases.

(a) Immediate publication in microform by the National Library is authorized.

Author's signature _____ Date April 6, 1994

- OR -

(b) Publication by the National Library is to be postponed until _____ 19____ (normal maximum delay is two years). Meanwhile this thesis may not be consulted in the University Library except with written permission on each occasion from me.

Author's signature _____ Date _____

This restriction is authorized for reasons which seem to me, as Chair of the Graduate Department of _____, to be sufficient.

Signature of Graduate Department Chair _____

Date _____

BORROWERS undertake to give proper credit for any use made of the thesis, and to obtain the consent of the author if it is proposed to make extensive quotations, or to reproduce the thesis in whole or in part.

Signature of borrower	Address	Date

1989

"The Long Day Wanes" - Old Age in Homer
Doctor of Philosophy - 1994
Nicholas Anthony Maes
Department of Classics
University of Toronto

THESIS ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to determine the status and role of the elderly within the Iliad and Odyssey. Homer's description of the poems' older population is therefore examined in detail. It is observed that, although the poet lays emphasis upon his older characters' piteousness and dependency upon their children, he also frequently asserts that the elderly are the product of an age more heroic than that of the Trojan war, and that they are in general wiser and more co-operative than their juniors. Indeed, the conclusion reached is that Homer's overall conception of old age is very positive: on occasion, it is true, old age appears to involve great suffering, but closer inspection reveals that these negative qualities are purely circumstantial and are by no means inherent in old age itself.

In addition to studying senescence on a general level, this thesis discusses Nestor's role in the Iliad and Odysseus' attitude to old age in the Odyssey. Of the former, the argument is made that Achilles' withdrawal from the fighting prompts a change in tactics on the part of the Achaeans. Their campaign becomes a defensive one. This change in strategy in turn requires a new sort of leadership which Nestor, through the virtues which his age confers upon him, is pre-eminently qualified to assume. As far as the Odyssey's Odysseus is concerned, this thesis contends that Homer creates the dual impression that his hero on the one hand is most anxious to achieve his nostos, yet at the same time is uncomfortable with the prospect of retirement that awaits him back on Ithaca. Odysseus' decision to return to Agamemnon from Tenedos, his year long stay on Aeaea, his hesitation to disclose his true identity to his philoi, and a number of other details suggest an unwillingness on his part to settle down and submit himself to the sheltered

comforts of geras. This reluctance of his, however, is not to be interpreted as a criticism of old age and the elderly, but must be viewed instead as a reaction peculiar to a character of Odysseus' nature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank M.J. O'Brien, M.B. Wallace and J. Grant for their helpful criticisms and the promptness with which they responded to the different drafts submitted to my thesis committee. I was most fortunate, too, to have Robert Rabel as my external examiner: his participation at my defense was both engaging and enthusiastic. Above all, however, I am most grateful to Emmet Robbins, my thesis supervisor, for his guidance, availability, encouragement and insights, from the inception of my thesis straight through to its conclusion. I could not have found a supervisor more supportive than him. Inspiration for this project has been fivefold: my wife Deborah has seen me through the more discouraging moments with her love and patience and has been a most astute sounding-board for many of my ideas; my son Gershom has awakened me each day with his radiant smile; Joe Brabant, the first and best of my Latin instructors, originally instilled in me the desire to pursue the Classics; and Sarah Shuster and Nathan Gold have revealed to me the true virtues of the elderly through their own exemplary behaviour and characters.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Although one often associates a doctoral dissertation with a highly specialized topic of research, old age in Homer, the subject of this thesis, is in actual fact not quite so narrow an area of investigation as it first might appear. Elderly characters, for example, play a crucial role in some of the Iliad's most important and memorable scenes. The poem opens with an old man's supplication of the Achaean army and closes with an old king's reconciliation with the killer of his son. An old man makes the longest and most emotional appeal to Achilles in the Embassy of Book Nine and, when the latter refuses to relent and allows the army to be routed by the Trojans, it is yet another old man who induces Patroclus to save the Achaeans from the enemy's rampage. And as far as the Odyssey is concerned, not only do elderly characters appear consistently throughout the course of the poem, but for the length of ten books Odysseus himself assumes the disguise of an aged beggar. It is in fact no exaggeration to say that Homer is constantly bringing old men and the subject of old age to the attention of his audience.

Commentators, on the other hand, have not shown nearly the same degree of interest in old age and the elderly as the poet himself. Jungclaussen observes at the start of his monograph 'Ueber das Greisenalter bei Homer', "Ueber diesen Gegenstand [die Alterstufen bei Homer] liegt, so viel ich weiss, bis jetzt keine Monographie in der reichen homerischen Literatur vor" (1870, 1). And more than a hundred years later Falkner and De Luce can observe in the preface to their Old Age in Greek and Roman Literature, "... so little work has been done in studying old age in relation to Greek and Latin literature, a tradition in which discussion of

old age and images of the elderly are so abundant as to suggest a cultural preoccupation with the subject" (1989, vii). A review of the literature, then, that has been written on the treatment of old age by Homer, not to mention other authors of antiquity, produces rather disappointing results. That is not to say, on the other hand, that the topic has been completely neglected. Let us survey briefly the material which is relevant to our thesis.

One of the earlier general studies of old age in Greek antiquity is Richardson's work, Old Age Among the Ancient Greeks (1933). In an attempt to describe the status of the elderly, their appearance, responsibilities and treatment at the hands of their contemporaries, Richardson examines a vast quantity of source material, both literary and iconographic. The book, however, is very thin on analysis and, apart from drawing conclusions of a very general nature, has little to contribute to a detailed understanding of Homer's treatment of geras. Kirk's article, 'Old Age and Maturity in Ancient Greece' (Eranos - Ib 40 [1971]), traces the change in attitude toward the elderly, from the Greeks of Homer's day to those of the Classical period. Kirk stresses, quite rightly, the intellectual fitness which Homer ascribes to his older characters and, in spite of the broad range of his survey, pays some attention to the Iliad's Nestor and the Odyssey's Laertes. The former's role as chief advisor to Agamemnon is discussed, his effectiveness is called into question and his reminiscences, a sign of the old man's garrulity in Kirk's opinion, are thought to represent relics of a local Pylian epic tradition. Laertes, on the other hand, is said to embody the pathetic quality of age, indeed suggests neglect "... by a society that no longer has specific use for the old" (1971, 132). These observations are helpful but at the same time somewhat superficial and in need of some fine-tuning. Schadewaldt's 'Lebenzeit und Greisenalter im frühen Griechentum' (Hellas und Hesperien [1960]), although primarily concerned with Solon's outlook on aging as revealed in Diehl 19, does devote some space to a consideration of Homer's views. Schadewaldt's chief contention is that Homer

assumes youth and old age to be accompanied by different advantages and deficiencies: as one's physical strength wanes, one's intellectual capabilities grow in stature. This is one reason why the young do not fear the prospect of growing old, while the elderly do not mourn the passing of their more vigorous years. When the poems make reference to the wretched condition of mankind then (e.g. Il. 17.446ff., 21.464ff., Od. 18.130ff.) it is not the misery of old age which is being alluded to but rather the misery of mortality itself. This rather positive conception of old age distinguishes Homer from the lyric poets, in Schadewaldt's estimate. On the whole, Schadewaldt's arguments are consistent with the description of old age which Chapters One and Three of this thesis will present. Minois, too, in his work Histoire de la Vieillesse en Occident de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance, emphasizes the counselling function of the elderly in the Homeric epics, but minimizes its impact: "le gouvernement [of the Iliad and Odyssey] est plus monarchique que sénatorial, et le conseil plus aristocratique que gérontocratique" (1987, 76). Overall, the Homeric world belongs to the young heroic combatants who render the role of the elderly more honorific than anything else. This conclusion does not do justice to the facts, however, as should become clear in the first and second chapters of this dissertation. The last of the general works we shall mention here is Garland's The Greek Way of Life (1990). Garland attempts nothing less than a full investigation of the Greek life cycle, from conception and pregnancy to the onset of senescence. His chapter on old age, then, investigates such topics as life expectancy, menopause, contemporary medical accounts of the elderly, their physical and economic plight, second marriages, legal safeguards and the like. Although he tends to concentrate on the Classical period in Athens, he does nonetheless comment very helpfully from time to time on certain issues that pertain directly to the elderly in Homer. The formula ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ is discussed, for example, and in the section entitled 'Representations of old age in literature', Nestor's position in the Iliad is touched upon: Garland observes that, his garrulity

notwithstanding, Nestor "... performs an important and even vital function within the structure of the poem" (1990, 265). Like Schadewaldt, Garland feels the elderly's ability to offer sound advice lends them a dignity and usefulness which the lyric poets tend to deprive them of.

In addition to the more general studies of old age in Greek antiquity, there is a small number of works which devote a fair amount of attention to old age in the Homeric poems. Byl (1977), for example, has compiled a number of references to the debilitating effects of old age in Homer and with these in mind he concludes, uncritically in our view, that Homer's outlook on the elderly was very pessimistic. Stahmer (1978) unfortunately follows a similar line of argument, but does, on the other hand, raise the interesting point that age was not venerated in and for itself but was respected rather if it were accompanied by wisdom or a conspicuous record of past achievements. A much more meticulous disquisition on the subject is Jungclaussen's 'Ueber das Greisenalter bei Homer' (1870). After analyzing at length the characteristics peculiar to four age groups - child, young man, adult and geron - Jungclaussen concludes that the elderly are compensated for the disappearance of their vigour with a new found strength of mind and spirit. The advantages of this intellectual preeminence are such that Homer's elderly population prefer the advantages of age over youth. And wisdom implies honour: the elderly are widely respected throughout the poems. Even the negative epithets with which Homer occasionally qualifies geras - lugron, oloon and the like - refer only to the physical frailty of the elderly and not to the condition of old age in its entirety, or describe the particular circumstances of a singularly wretched character. Finally, in answer to Ameis' contention that the seer Amphiaraos does not reach the threshold of old age because the gods love him and wish to spare him from the vicissitudes of aging, Jungclaussen reasons that if old age is truly abhorrent to Homer then he must look upon a short life as a positive godsend. This is by no means the case. On the contrary, it is old age that

stands out in both poems as an out and out blessing. Jungclaussen's close attention to detail and compelling logic make many of his conclusions impossible to refute. The same could be said of Preisshofen's Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Greisenalters in der frühgriechischen Dichtung (1977). In his lengthy chapters on the Iliad and Odyssey, Preisshofen contends that the elderly are viewed by Homer as a fully operative part of the population. They are by no means alienated from the younger generation, but are instead commended for their wisdom and experience. Indeed, the elderly often wield an authority greater than their juniors' and for this reason have control over their households more often than not. Problems arise, however, when the parent is deprived of his children and therefore of his chief source of sustenance. When the elderly's physically weakened condition is further exacerbated by the absence of children on whom they can depend, old age becomes a most pitiful and harrowing condition. The quality of one's old age is, in other words, very much a function of circumstance. Preisshofen goes on to observe, moreover, that the fundamental principles of old age in the Iliad hold true of the Odyssey as well, with some minor variations. The authority of the elderly in the Odyssey is not quite so pronounced as it is in the Iliad, and the Iliadic function of old age, as guarantor of wisdom and sound advice, is in fact downgraded to the more modest implications of a geras liparon. Both Preisshofen and Jungclaussen present arguments which Chapters One and Three of this thesis will agree with in many respects. On the other hand, neither author discusses in detail the older population's relationship with the past, nor does he comment much on the degree to which Homer focusses on his older characters as suppliants and parents. And little is said of specific old men and their function in the poem as a whole. Despite the excellence of their work, then, there still remains a great deal to investigate.

Querbach (1976) is somewhat at odds with both Jungclaussen and Preisshofen. His contention is that the Iliad presents its audience with something

of a generation gap. The elderly, in his view, Nestor in particular, offer counsel which is either obvious or ineffective. Unable to point to their prowess or wisdom, they instead refer to their age as a means of bending their juniors to their will, and hence provoke frustration within the younger generation. This line of argument, however, is based upon a narrow subset of events in the poem and, in our opinion, often interprets episodes in a manner which the text itself does not wholly support. In his article 'Homeric Heroism, Old Age and the End of the Odyssey' (1989), Falkner too disagrees in key respects with Jungclaussen and Preisshofen, but argues his case much more skillfully than Querbach. On the one hand he acknowledges counsel as the special prerogative of the elderly and recognizes that "In Homer the elderly are the visible link of the present generation with the past and share in the reverence given the ancestral traditions" (1989, 27). The fact, however, that geras is regularly associated with certain negative epithets in both epics indicates, in Falkner's view, that "At odds with the heroic deference to old age is an underlying disdain and even contempt for it reflected at a number of levels" (ibid.). And "Old age becomes despised as marking the beginning of the process whereby the hero loses what he most values, and as the harbinger of death itself' (1989, 35). Chryses is a helpless old man, Nestor's performance is ineffective overall, and Priam's kingship is largely honorific. It is at this stage in his argument that Falkner focusses his attention on Odysseus and his nostos. He feels, quite rightly, that by the end of the Odyssey Odysseus is destined to an old age "... which takes him irretrievably beyond the heroic world and locates him in one that is post-Iliadic and post-heroic" (1989, 23). Old age's incompatibility with the heroic ethic is bridged, however, through the figure of Laertes. "In the Laertes episode we have a fusion of the warrior and the farmer, which redefines the λιπαρὸν γῆρας and links the heroic and the post-heroic worlds"(1989, 52). Laertes' work in the orchard has produced magnificent results and will, in Falkner's estimate, serve as something of a paradigm for Odysseus' twilight years. Odysseus will become a

geron but that does not mean that his heroism must be compromised. Although Falkner argues persuasively at times, he overestimates the implications of the negative epithets which Homer applies to geras and seriously underestimates the contributions which Nestor makes to the campaign. Certainly his arguments will require close attention further on.

But what are the exact objectives of this thesis? It is perhaps a wise idea to state unequivocally at the outset of this dissertation that what follows is by no means to be confused with a work of social history. Our intention here is instead to re-examine the poet's own attitude to the elderly in the light of the discussions which we have mentioned above, and at the same time to determine how this attitude influences his depiction of the poem's elderly characters. We will also attempt to explain why Homer gives the elderly such prominence as he does and how he integrates both them and the idea of aging into the narrative and different themes of his poems. But let us be more specific and advance a general scheme of our arguments.

We should mention first that Homer does not give us any numbers to work with, as far as determining the gerontes' average age is concerned. We assume therefore that a character is a geron either when Homer or another character refers to him as such or, less certainly, when he appears to have the same characteristics as the other old men in the poems. If one is to ascertain, moreover, with any degree of precision Homer's attitude toward these older characters, one must obviously first measure as accurately as possible the true dimensions of these greybeards' deficiencies and virtues. Chapter One therefore investigates the general attributes of the elderly in the Iliad, but in a manner that attempts to set these attributes within the context of their occurrence. Homer, for example, often states that the physical condition of the aged deteriorates over time, but does this observation in itself imply that aging is, in Homer's eyes, a gruesome process? Context in conjunction with other positive characteristics ascribed to the elderly -

wisdom, objectivity and an association with the rough-cut heroes of more primitive times - might possibly suggest otherwise. And the same may well be true of the negative epithets employed in Homer's description of geras and of his depiction of the older men as helpless suppliants. Circumstances, in other words, may very well play a crucial role in determining the nature of the old age to which a character is subjected. At the same time this chapter will argue that Homer exploits the potential piteousness of the elderly when he casts them as suppliants or emphasizes their emotional and physical dependency on their children. As a means of proving our different assertions, we shall examine to a varying degree all of the old men mentioned in the Iliad, with the exception of Nestor who will be the subject of the second chapter.

Nestor is easily the most neglected character in the Iliad. Despite his high visibility in the poem - he delivers four speeches of considerable length and dominates the councils of Books One through Eleven - no in-depth study has been written on him. He is, admittedly, mentioned in passing in many general secondary sources, and Segal (1971), Schofield (1986) and Falkner (1989) discuss his presence in the poem to some degree, but the attention which he has received is by no means commensurate with his prominence as a whole. For this reason Chapter Two, making use of the conclusions reached in Chapter One, will attempt to explain this conspicuousness of his, and explore the effect of his age on the poem's narrative. To accomplish this task effectively, however, we will be forced on occasion to consider certain issues which have little immediate bearing on the topic of old age. It is hoped that the results obtained will justify these different digressions.

Chapter Three is, in essence, a repetition of Chapter One only its focus is old age and the old men in the Odyssey. Once again we will attempt to determine the general attributes of the elderly and Homer's perception of old age in the poem. We will, of course, pay close attention to the change of climate from the

Iliad and investigate simultaneously the extent to which the poems correspond with each other in their presentation of the aging process. As in Chapter One, all of the older characters who appear in the Odyssey will be scrutinized to some extent, although we will reserve a full analysis of Odysseus the aged beggar for the chapter that follows.

Chapter Four is, in many respects, the most hypothetical segment of this dissertation. Our point of departure is the somewhat obvious premise that Odysseus' nostos implies the onset of his old age and retirement. We then investigate Odysseus' reaction to his impending senescence and, to the extent that Homer divulges it, examine the effects of this reaction on Odysseus' adventures both abroad and on Ithaca. One problem, however, is that while from one perspective Odysseus appears receptive to the aging process and therefore acts in a manner which is consonant with the conclusions reached in Chapter Three, he does, when viewed from the perspective which we will be dwelling on, seem to be somewhat at odds with this same set of conclusions, not to the extent that he calls the validity of our results into question but certainly in a way that marks him off as an exception to the general rules. Our disquisition, in addition, is often highly speculative and frequently wanders far afield from the topic in hand. If there is any substance to our inquiry, however, it may well influence the general interpretation of the poem quite profoundly and, moreover, serve to illuminate just how powerfully the theme of aging colours Homer's narrative.

Before we proceed to the main body of our text, we must warn the reader of certain features of this work. First, our study is self-contained. We evaluate Homer's treatment of old age by looking to the poems themselves. Hesiod, Mimnermus, Anacreon and other poets have many interesting things to say about old age, but their comments are unhelpful as far as an elucidation of Homer's own perception is concerned. Moreover, although the title of our thesis is 'Old Age in

Homer', the elderly female figures of the poem have been virtually ignored. This is not because such figures are insignificant in themselves. We felt, instead, that a consideration of both genders would have involved a lengthy preliminary exploration of the different roles of male and female in the poem, and this would have proved too much of a distraction from our overall purpose. We can perhaps further excuse ourselves by observing that Homer presents us with a greater number of old men than of old women, and that the former tend to play a more important role in the poem's events than their female counterparts. We are confident that our results will therefore not be inordinately compromised by this omission. Finally, like many recent commentators, we essentially ignore the 'Homeric question' of unitarians and analysts, and proceed with the working assumption that the Homeric epics are, to all intents and purposes, the product of one hand.

On a purely technical note, it should be observed that the Greek that follows has been taken from Allen's text of the Iliad and Odyssey, and that the abbreviations used for periodicals are to be found in l'Année Philologique.

CHAPTER ONE

This chapter describes the general characteristics of old age as Homer presents them in the Iliad. Our purpose in investigating these characteristics is twofold. First, we hope to lay the foundation for certain arguments we shall be putting forth in our analysis of Nestor, the most prominent geron of the Iliad. More immediately, however, we hope to reach an understanding at chapter's end of Homer's overall evaluation of old age; that is to say, whether Homer views old age as an abominable condition or sees in it compensating features which make it just another stage in a human's development, one no less meaningful than the periods preceding it.

1. Physical Attributes of the Elderly

It is perhaps a good idea to start with something relatively basic and uncontroversial, the physical appearance of the elderly as a whole. Edwards observes (1987, 92), "Direct descriptions of the appearance or personality of characters are not common in Homer," and this is pretty much true of Homer's depiction of the elderly as well (Byl 1977, 236). Throughout the poem old characters occupy the limelight regularly, but little is said of their external features. In Book One, for example, when Chryses makes his plea before the Achaeans, no detail is mentioned that would conclusively mark him off as a senior; it is only when Agamemnon specifically refers to him as a geron (1.26) that we get a clear picture of Chryses' approximate age. And, again in Book One, when Nestor rises to address Agamemnon and Achilles, Homer does stress Nestor's advanced years (1.250-1), but his appearance is passed over completely. The same

silence is applied to virtually every other senior, with a few exceptions which are worth touching upon.

In Book Three the Trojan demogerontes are likened to cicadas which are seated on a tree in a forest and are busily chirping away (3.151-2). The comparison evokes, "...the ceaselessness of the old men's talk," (Kirk 1985, 284) but, through the suggestiveness of the insect's delicacy, must allude in part to the physical fragility of the old agoretai.[1] And then there are various references to one of the most conspicuous features of age, the whitening of one's hair: Hector urges (8.518ff.) that a proclamation be issued to the youths and grey-haired seniors (πολιοκροτάφους τε γέροντας) that they keep watch on the city's walls; Priam addresses Hector in Book Twenty-two and speaks of the shame that dogs work upon the grey head and chin of an old man (πολιόν τε κάρη πολιόν τε γένειον, 22.74); and, when his speech is done, he starts wrenching the grey hairs from his scalp (πολιὰς δ'ἄρ' ἀνὰ τρίχας ἕλκετο χερσὶ/ τίλλων ἐκ κεφαλῆς, 22.77); Priam's hoariness surfaces a third time when, in Book Twenty-four, Homer reveals how Achilles pities the old man's greyness (οἰκτείρων πολιόν τε κάρη πολιόν τε γένειον, 24.516). Surely it is not coincidence that by far the most piteous of the Iliad's older characters is the only one to have this obvious attribute emphasized, although even he retains enough of his majestic bearing to stir Achilles' admiration in the poem's last book.[2]

Interestingly enough, the impairments of old age are on several occasions associated with Idomeneus. Although he is not as old as Phoenix or Nestor, his hair is starting to turn grey (μεσαιπόλιος, 13.361), while his feet are no longer steady enough to follow up on the cast of his spear (οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἔμπεδα γυῖα ποδῶν ἦν ὁρμηθέντι, 13.512). In Book Twenty-three, moreover, he is savagely berated by Oilean Ajax on account of his claim to be able to see that Diomedes is foremost in the chariot race: Ajax insinuates that Idomeneus' age should preclude him from discerning details more sharply than his younger companions can (23.476).[3]

Nestor's physical debilitation is adverted to as well, albeit much more generally. Various characters, including Nestor himself, observe that his strength is no longer steadfast (Agamemnon 4.314ff., Diomedes 8.103ff., Nestor 7.157ff., 11.670ff., 23.629ff.). Nestor elaborates on his weakness somewhat when he professes in Book Twenty-three that his limbs are no longer firm and his arms no longer dart from his shoulders as lightly as they used to (23.627ff.).

If Homer's description of the elderly is rare, his ridicule of them or criticism of old age's inconveniences is non-existent. No older character in the Iliad is so ravaged by time that he cannot move or perform the tasks that are expected of him.[4] Nestor is unusually energetic (as Diomedes is quick to point out at 10.164ff.), but Chryses, Priam, Phoenix, the herald Idaeus and, indeed, the poem's aged population in general, act with vigour within their own sphere of responsibilities. Nestor and Phoenix (16.196) even participate to some extent in battle, though this is far more the exception than the rule. We see no one on his sick bed or evincing the slightest sign of senility.[5] Even the charge of prolixity which some commentators[6] would like to level against Nestor is, as we shall see, unjustified. Indeed, as Preisshofen observes (1977, 23), when a warrior performs poorly in battle, he can be compared by his peers to a child or a woman, but is never likened to an old man, presumably because such a comparison would not be insulting enough.[7]

2. Old Age and Death

On two occasions in the poem the phrase ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ is mentioned (22.60 and 24.487 where ὀλοός qualifies γῆρας). As Garland comments, "The precise meaning of this expression is unclear, since the threshold in question may either be that which leads towards old age or that which leads from it to death" (1990, 250-1).[8] The confusion stems from the fact that the expression, as it occurs

in the Iliad, suggests a frightening proximity to death, whereas its usage in the Odyssey (23.211ff. in particular) creates the impression that this threshold and death are, to some degree, removed from one another. Falkner's conjecture, that old age itself is denoted by the phrase, old age "...conceived as a threshold between life and death..." (1989,33)[9] is quite attractive, so long as one is prepared to acknowledge that this threshold can in some circumstances be of a lengthy duration.

Having emphasized the liminal nature of old age, Falkner goes on to argue that it is seen as a kind of transition, that Homer in fact conjoins old age and death in the same negative conceptual nexus and thereby associates one with the other closely in the poem (1989, 28, 35). There is some strength to Falkner's assertion, that "...the heroic temper sees it [old age] as a passing away from real life and a diminuition of its fullness" (1989, 34), but at the same time Homer never links geras and death together explicitly. A Nestor may complain that his strength has vanished, but he is never seen to reflect upon or fear even remotely the end which is stealing upon him. There are two obvious occasions when an older character is said to be on the brink of dying, but the prime cause of death in these instances is not attributed to old age but rather to the adverse circumstances in which the character in question is situated.

In Book Nineteen Achilles says of his father (19.334-37):

> ἤδη γὰρ Πηλῆά γ'ὀΐομαι ἢ κατὰ πάμπαν
> τεθνάμεν, ἤ που τυτθὸν ἔτι ζώοντ' ἀκάχησθαι
> γήραΐ τε στυγερῷ καὶ ἐμὴν ποτιδέγμενον αἰεὶ
> λυγρὴν ἀγγελίην, ὅτ' ἀποφθιμένοιο πύθηται.

As Achilles sees it, the old man's age has either carried him off or has eroded him to such an extent that little of his life remains. And yet Peleus' condition is not exclusively a consequence of his advanced years, but is intimately connected with his grief for his absent son as well. Awaiting the arrival of bad

news - an ἀγγελίην that is λυγρήν, just as old age can be λυγρόν - has come to exhaust the old man. These four lines of Achilles are in fact a reiteration of his belief that constant mourning threatens to put an end to his father: just a few lines earlier, in the very same speech, Achilles has commented (19.322-24):

> οὐδ' εἴ κεν τοῦ πατρὸς ἀποφθιμένοιο πυθοίμην
> ὅς που νῦν Φθίηφι τέρεν κατὰ δάκρυον εἴβει
> χήτεϊ τοιοῦδ' υἷος·

The relative clause is intended to explain exactly why Achilles might learn that his father has died. Separation from his son has weakened the old man's resistance. And it is because Peleus' fragility is more a function of distress than of senescence that Priam, further on, can on the one hand compare Peleus' situation to his own (both are ὀλοῷ ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ and both are being harried in the absence of their sons to protect them) but hypothesize, on the other, albeit ironically (Edwards 1991, 274), an immediate improvement in Peleus' frame of mind when he comes to welcome Achilles on his return from the war (24.384ff.).

Priam too alludes to his own death when he makes his appeal to Hector from the wall in Book Twenty-two (59-61):

> πρὸς δ'ἐμὲ τὸν δύστηνον ἔτι φρονέοντ' ἐλέησον
> δύσμορον, ὅν ῥα πατὴρ Κρονίδης ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ
> αἴσῃ ἐν ἀργαλέῃ φθίσει....

Again he speaks of the 'threshold of old age,' but, as in the case above, he considers old age to be merely a concomitant factor at work in his end: death itself, he predicts, will come in the guise of a sword-thrust from some warrior (22.67-68). His advanced age, instead, will have enabled him to witness the κακὰ πόλλα which he then proceeds to list: sons slaughtered, daughters dragged off, houses broken into and children dashed against the earth (22.62ff.). He is, by his own reckoning, someone who has lived too long. He gives voice to this same sentiment further on when, with Hector dead and the prophecies of 22.66ff. now closer to

realization, he prays that, contrary to his own premonitions, he will not be forced to observe the upcoming horror (24.244-46):

αὐτὰρ ἔγωγε
πρὶν ἀλαπαζομένην τε πόλιν κεραϊζομένην τε
ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδεῖν, βαίην δόμον Ἄϊδος εἴσω.

Old age for Priam, then, is not the harbinger of death, but instead exposes him incidentally to the dreadful consequences of the city's conquest and destruction. It is interesting to note, moreover, that Priam, like Peleus, is so worn with sorrow that he states it will be grief that finally dispatches him to Hades (22.424-26):

τῶν πάντων οὐ τόσσον ὀδύρομαι ἀχνύμενός περ
ὡς ἑνός, οὗ μ'ἄχος ὀξὺ κατοίσεται Ἄϊδος εἴσω,
Ἕκτορος·

Men are clearly mortal in the Iliad,[10] and no doubt Homer expects his audience to assume that a Nestor or a Phoenix is indeed well into his twilight years. On the other hand, Homer by no means equates old age with death or establishes a close relationship between the two. Grievous circumstances can make old age miserable and, indeed, overwhelm the old man to the point of death, but, when his situation is not so patently traumatic, the Homeric senior is by no means preoccupied with his impending end.

3. Old Men as Suppliants

On four pivotal occasions in the Iliad, Homer has an older character entreat someone younger than himself. In three of these instances, the supplication is unsuccessful. At the heart of each entreaty, moreover, is the relationship of the older suppliant with his child. The act of supplication, Gould tells us (1973, 94), expresses self-abasement, defencelessness and an abnegation of any claim to τιμή. This fact, coupled with the absorption of the different parents with their children,

suggests very strongly that Homer, by casting these old characters as suppliants, is deliberately emphasizing the pathos and helplessness that can accompany old age.

At the start of the poem Chryses begs the Achaeans, the Atreidae in particular, to accept ransom for his daughter Chryseis. As Kakridis observes (1971, 217), the priest's request is set forth with great modesty. Indeed, Chryses goes so far as to avow that he hopes the gods will allow the Achaeans to sack the city of the Trojans. A statement such as this, regarding an allied city,[11] seems most unusual: clearly Chryses is desperate but will say anything to advance his chances of winning his daughter back.

Although the army as a whole assents, Agamemnon not only refuses but dismisses the priest ignominiously. His scornful appellation, geron (1.26), and his needless allusion to the role of concubinage which awaits the priest's daughter (1.31) serve as a mocking demonstration of the old man's utter powerlessness.[12] The fillets of the god, which Chryses displays so prominently as his sole means of eliciting respect, are completely useless. Agamemnon is making a terrible mistake,[13] but for the moment all Homer presents us with is an old man who is not able to protect his daughter, indeed who is on the brink of being separated from her permanently and suffering all that such separation entails (to be discussed in the following section). Scorned and humiliated, Chryses wanders off by himself along the shore,[14] in silence (ἀκέων, 1.34) the poet informs us. This last detail is picked up tellingly further on in the book. When Achilles provides his mother with a report of the events that have led up to his estrangement from the army, he speaks of the snub Chryses has suffered and adds that the priest went off in a rage (χωόμενος δ'ὁ γέρων πάλιν ᾤχετο, 1.380).[15] This slight variation between the two accounts, Chryses ἀκέων and Chryses χωόμενος, is perhaps Homer's way of subtly illustrating the varying outlook of old and young: Achilles, in ascribing

anger to the old man, is imagining how he himself would react in similar circumstances. Chryses' age and isolation naturally preclude such a response.

Chryses prays for vengeance from the god and does in fact have his standing vindicated eventually. His prayer to Apollo is a last resort, however; through his necessity of having to turn to an agency outside himself to effect the release of his daughter, Chryses reveals once again the helpless state to which he has been reduced. Homer's depiction of the old man as a suppliant, then, has the effect of casting the priest in a light that is unrelievedly piteous (Griffin 1980, 107; Taplin 1992, 53).

The presentation of Phoenix is somewhat similar. That he, Odysseus and Ajax are entreating Achilles is clear from his remarks about the Λιταί and how men can cause the gods to bend with supplication (λισσόμενοι, 9.501)[16]; from his observation that Achilles should yield because Agamemnon has offered gifts and sent the best of the Achaeans to plead with him (ἄνδρας δὲ λίσσεσ' ι ἐπιπροέηκεν ἀρίστους, 9.520); and finally from the comparison he draws between the present embassy and the different friends and relatives who beseeched Meleager (9.581ff.). He is identified tacitly, in fact, with Meleager's father and the piteous entreaty which he presents to his son (πολλὰ δέ μιν λιτάνευε γέρων ἱππηλάτα Οἰνεύς, 9,581 and γέρων ἱππηλάτα Φοῖνιξ, 9.432).[17] Diomedes, too, describes the embassy as an act of supplication when he complains, on Odysseus' and Ajax' unhappy return, that Agamemnon should never have approached Achilles to begin with (μὴ ὄφελες λίσσεσθαι ἀμύμονα Πηλεΐωνα, 9.698): his brief speech has a condemnatory air about it, as though Agamemnon and the army as a whole have disgraced themselves somewhat.[18] To the extent that the embassy does involve piteousness and humiliation, however, Homer centers these effects on Phoenix more than anyone else.

In addition to his evident friendship with Achilles, Odysseus has been chosen to participate in the assembly, Tsagarakis argues convincingly (1979, 233), on account of his shrewdness, wise counsel and abilities as a leader.[19] His speech to Achilles, "...is a model of skillful, well-constructed, persuasive oratory" (Edwards 1987, 221). However, the thrust of his argument is that, "They [the Achaeans] need his [Achilles'] help, that is all. He will be well paid for it" (Edwards 1987, 222).[20] Ajax, on the other hand, has been chosen for his bravery and, in consequence, the respect he might command in Achilles' eyes (Tsagarakis 1979, 235). Such respect enables Ajax to make φιλότης the essential basis of his plea (Schein 1984, 114). When both of these characters have spoken and received their answers, they leave, unsuccessful, true, but with their heroic integrity intact. The same cannot be said of Phoenix.

On hearing Achilles' complicated response to Odysseus, Phoenix in his fear for the ships bursts into tears (9.433), a possible indication of his piteousness.[21] He then goes on to address the possibility of abandonment which Achilles raised at the end of his speech (9.427ff.). Given Achilles' insistence further on that Phoenix ought not to side with Agamemnon against him (9.613ff.), his claim that he will not force Phoenix to accompany him back to Phthia is his way of saying that the father-son relationship they have enjoyed thus far is now in jeopardy.[22] Straightway, then, Phoenix is put on the defensive. He is in danger of losing his 'son' and suffering all that such a loss entails (again, to be discussed in the following section). He therefore describes his past services to Achilles as a means of reassuring him that their close bond is still intact.[23] At the same time, however, he exploits his long history with Achilles as a means of inducing him to pity his tears and to accept the army's embassy. When he speaks of his own strife with his father, his consequent impotence and his dotage on Achilles as a child, he is arguing that, just as he tended Achilles in his helplessness, so Achilles, as surrogate son, should respect his foster father and tend him in his helplessness in

turn: ἀλλὰ σὲ παῖδα, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, ποιεύμην, ἵνα μοί ποτ' ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμύνῃς (9.494-95). Perhaps there is a personal element in his tale of the Λιταί as well. These daughters of Zeus are lame, wrinkled and squinting (χωλαί τε ῥυσαί τε παραβλῶπές τ'ὀφθαλμώ, 9.503). These are, of course, typical features of the elderly.[24] Is it possible that Phoenix is alluding to his aged self and his own petition through these hapless goddesses? And in his narration of the tale of Meleager, Phoenix, as we have mentioned above, draws a parallel between himself and the knight Oineus. The latter, as Phoenix describes him, beseeches his son piteously (λιτάνευε), shaking his doors (σείων κολλητὰς σανίδας, 9.583) and entreating him (γουνούμενος, 9.583). Phoenix, therefore, seeing himself in the same abject condition, is emphasizing just how desperate and dependent on Achilles he is.[25]

Phoenix' appeal is by far the most emotional of the embassy's speeches (Tsagarakis 1979, 227; Edwards 1987, 225). He refers constantly, both directly and indirectly, to the act of supplication[26] and to his own helplessness. Like Chryses, however, Phoenix fails to achieve what he is after.[27] Achilles' answer to him, though not nearly so brutal as Agamemnon's to the priest, bristles with impatience (9.612-14). True, Achilles' position has changed somewhat - instead of insisting that the Myrmidons will embark next day as he did at the end of his speech to Odysseus, Achilles now creates the impression that his departure is subject to debate[28] - but the fact that he signals Patroclus to have a bed strewn for his old foster father (9.620ff.) is a clear representation of Phoenix' marginality and general lack of influence. If, indeed, there is substance to our argument and Phoenix strikes the suppliant's posture to a much greater degree than anyone else in Book Nine, then the sense of failure at book's end is attributable more to the rejection of his suit than that of the embassy's other representatives.

Something must be said, in addition, of the two scenes in which Priam plays the suppliant, in Books Twenty-two and Twenty-four respectively. Throughout the poem Homer has recounted the deaths of Priam's sons, introducing them and killing them off in a steady stream that finally culminates with Hector.[29] The magnitude of such a personal loss, his years and the constant attrition which he sees his city suffer all combine to make the old king by far the poem's most piteous character.[30] This wretchedness of his becomes most obvious when he launches his supplications.

In Book Twenty-two, when Hector is awaiting the onrush of Achilles outside the Trojan walls, Priam begs his son to come within the city and so preserve his life. Not only does Homer make Priam the first to see Achilles rushing forward from a distance (22.25), but he has us see Achilles through the old king's eyes (Edwards 1987, 291). The effect of this is to underline, from Priam's perspective, Achilles' destructive capabilities, and so intensify the urgency of the old man's plea: he alone can foresee how disastrously the encounter between Achilles and his son must end. His position on the wall adds to the situation's pathos: it not only provides Priam with a front row seat for the upcoming spectacle, but it defines his maddening physical proximity to his son and, and the same time, the enormous gulf that stands between them. Homer touches neatly upon Priam's frustration, fear and desperation in a brief preamble to his speech (22.33-35):

> ὤμωξεν δ'ὁ γέρων, κεφαλὴν δ'ὅ γε κόψατο χερσὶν
> ὑψόσ' ἀνασχόμενος, μέγα δ'οἰμώξας ἐγεγώνει
> λισσόμενος φίλον υἱόν·

What follows is a graphic description on Priam's part of the city's overthrow, his own death at the sword-point of some warrior and his corpse's subsequent mutilation. All of this will come about, he prophesies, if Hector should persist in his intention to engage Achilles in combat. This speech -

"exaggeration of a pathetic and rhetorical kind" (Kirk 1971, 137) - takes supplication to its absolute limit. Priam is not begging for his life alone, nor for Hector's, but for the world which his royal position makes him the ostensible defender of.[31] The proof of his arguments is so vividly in front of him: Polydorus and Lycaon are missing, the Trojan army is catching its breath, huddled in the city like fawns (22.1ff.), and still he is faced with his son's intractability.[32] His wife's exhortation to her son, complete with the baring of her breast, "...the archetypal gesture of a mother supplicating her son...," (Edwards 1987, 291), only reinforces the frantic pitch of Priam's delivery.[33] When Hector is finally dispatched - the most blatant sign that Priam and Hecuba's supplications have been refused - Homer again heightens the old man's impotence by having him pray to the Trojans around him that they allow him to present yet another supplication, this time one before his son's murderer (22.416ff.). Pathetic as such an avenue is, it is the only one left to the hapless old man.

This brings us to the scene in Book Twenty-four,[34] where Priam does entreat Achilles with success, and persuades him to return the corpse of his son. Before doing so, however, he must be rescued from his abject state: from the moment of Hector's death till Iris' arrival with the message from Zeus that he is to deliver Hector's ransom to Achilles personally, Priam has been immobilized with grief.[35] With the possibility of suing for Hector's corpse temporarily denied him, Priam has had no alternate course of action but to grovel in the dung without eating or sleeping (24.637ff.). And his journey to the camp of the Achaeans, though a respite from his near inhuman disconsolateness back at Troy, again embroils the old king in circumstances that give him a sustained air of utter powerlessness.[36] He is travelling at night, his sole companion is an old man, and the army as a whole is hostile to him (24.650ff., 24.683ff.). Priam, moreover, is wholly dependent on Hermes to see him safely to Achilles' tent and back (24.563ff.). On entering Achilles' tent, Priam first clasps his knees, then augments

this typical gesture of supplication by kissing Achilles' hands (24.478ff.), the very agents of his sons' destruction (Edwards 1987, 309). On catching sight of the old king, Achilles and his companions react with the stunned amazement of a rich man's household that has been approached by a man responsible for murdering someone (24.480ff.). The purpose of this analogy surely is to depict Priam as someone who has become isolated from all that is familiar to him and who has therefore no one but strangers to turn to.[37] The insinuation is that Priam must be mad to approach the butcher of his son like this (Macleod 1982, 126-27). In his appeal to Achilles, Priam then compares himself to Peleus, and winds up concluding that, although neighbours may be taking advantage of the latter's helplessness (24.488), Achilles' father is nonetheless more fortunate than he. Achilles does pity Priam, but his acquiescence, we are later told, has little to do with Priam himself; instead Achilles is surrendering Hector's body because the gods have commanded him to (24.560ff.). Indeed, "Achilles knows his anger could flare up again; that is why he dwells on the divine will... which is to curb himself as much as it is to reassure Priam" (Macleod 1982, 136).[38] Finally, throughout this episode Homer has spoken repeatedly of Priam the γέρων, not Priam the king.[39]

As in Book Twenty-two, then, Priam's piteousness and personal tragedy are drawn to a point here in his visit to Achilles. Homer exploits the helplessness implicit in an act of supplication and, in both Priam's case and that of Chryses and Phoenix, associates it tellingly with the pathos which these characters' advanced years would naturally tend to suggest.

4. The Elderly as Parents

With the exception of Phoenix and the odd old slave or two, the elderly in the Iliad are invariably parents. Indeed, just as the supplications discussed above were always concerned with the old suppliant's child, so almost every appearance of an older character in general is somehow or other related to that character's

offspring.[40] It is this relationship with their children, in fact, that predominantly defines the role of the elderly to begin with.[41] And Homer in turn exploits this parental bond to characterize, once again, his older characters' vulnerability and pathos. He accomplishes this by alluding to either a father's inability to protect his child or the different implications, all of them disastrous, which a child's death entails for the parents.

We have already seen that Chryses cuts, in part, a pathetic figure because there is ostensibly nothing he can do in the face of Agamemnon's threat that Chryseis will be carried off to serve as his concubine. In a similar vein we learn in Book Five of Abas and Poluidos whom Diomedes kills and of whose father, the prophet Eurydamas, the comment is made: τοῖς οὐκ ἐρχομένοις ὁ γέρων ἐκρίνατ' ὀνείρους, (5.150). Following Leaf's translation of these lines (as quoted by Kirk 1990, 73ff.), "He did not interpret dreams on their behalf when they were coming (sc. to Troy)", the impression is created that the father's prophetic vision has failed him, that his skills have not enabled him to safeguard his sons.[42] And when Paphlagonian Harpalion is killed (13.650ff.), his father Pylaemenes [43] follows after his bier, shedding tears and - given the statement that immediately ensues, ποινὴ δ'οὔ τις παιδὸς ἐγίγνετο τεθνηῶτος (13.659) - unable to compensate himself even partially by exacting vengeance for his son.[44] Perhaps, moreover, the poet's likening of the son to a worm or maggot in death (σκώληξ, 13.654), besides its descriptive function, is a reflection of the debasement which death has brought about in the father's eyes. And, although it is risky to compare the behaviour of a Homeric man to that of a Homeric god, Zeus himself betrays his anguish and sense of helplessness when, in Book Sixteen, his son Sarpedon is on the verge of dying at Patroclus' hands.[45] Glaucus' remark in his prayer to Apollo some time after Sarpedon has been killed, that Zeus has not protected his son (16.522), is perhaps intended as an amplification of Zeus' 'tragedy': on the blind assumption that Zeus could have saved his son if he had wanted to, Glaucus criticizes him for

not having done so, unaware of course that Zeus has not been indifferent to his son at all. The strict attention which the god pays to the struggle over his son's body (16.644-45), and the care which he ensures is lavished on the corpse (16.667ff.) are signs of his affection for his son and of the loss he has sustained. Finally, we catch a glimpse of Peleus' helplessness as well to guarantee his son's return from the campaign. In Book Twenty-three Achilles addresses the river Sperchius and observes how his father's promise that Achilles would shear off his lock and offer a hecatomb to the river on his safe arrival home was a vain one (23.144ff.). Peleus' efforts to enlist the river's protection has failed miserably, in other words.[46]

The death of their children can pose serious material consequences for the Iliad's old fathers. "The old, however great their wisdom, lack the strength for those deeds which assert the validity of usage. They thus become dependent on the young for their livelihood... and their status" (Redfield 1975, 111-12).[47] When Simoeisius is killed by Telamonian Ajax (4.473), the poet immediately remarks οὐδὲ τοκεῦσι/θρέπτρα φίλοις ἀπέδωκε (4.477-78) which heightens the sad fact of the warrior's foreshortened life, but also points to the material hardship which his death will bring about for his parents. The same is true of Hippothous' death (17.288), where again the poet observes that the θρέπτρα have not been repaid and further emphasizes the gulf between parents and son by adding the detail that the latter has fallen τῆλ' ἀπὸ Λαρίσης ἐριβώλακος (17.301).[48] In Book Twenty-four, Priam envisages Peleus being hard-pressed by his neighbours (24.488-89), now that he is long past his prime and his son is not available to protect his interests.[49] Phoenix tells Achilles baldly ἀλλὰ σὲ παῖδα, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, ποιεύμην, ἵνα μοί ποτ' ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμύνῃς (9.494-5). And again, as we have seen, in the scene of Priam's plea to Hector, the old king tries to persuade his son to come within the walls by painting a horrific picture of the city's fall and his own grisly death, which he argues will occur if Hector is no longer at hand to protect the population.

Parents and children share a bond of common property moreover. "The cooperative relation between father and son is an outgrowth of the special character of inheritance in the Homeric world. Inheritance secures the continuity of the household which is the fundamental social institution" (Redfield 1975, 111). A son's death therefore implies the absence of a meaningful heir and a breakdown in the transmission of one's property from one generation to the next. This is why Phainops' loss of his two sons, Xanthus and Thoon, to Diomedes is described so poignantly (5.152ff.). Homer goes out of his way to observe that this father, who is worn away with mournful age (5.153), now has no one left to inherit his possessions (5.154); indeed, Homer briefly looks ahead to a moment beyond the war: the old man has not welcomed his children home and, on his subsequent death, distant kin have divided his property (5.158).[50] The same perhaps is true of Dolon who, the only male of six children (10.135), tells Diomedes and Odysseus that his father would ransom him most willingly (10.380). More obviously, a certain Phorbas, a rich man through the benevolence of Hermes (14.490-91), has one sole child Ilioneus who dies a very violent death at the hands of Peneleos (14.489ff.). Though Homer does not speak of the loss of an heir directly, the fact that Phorbas is wealthy combined with the fact that he has only one son clearly suggests that Homer is dwelling here on the dissolution of the chain of inheritance.

Finally, we observe that Homer constantly touches on the sheer worry and emotional attachment of an aged parent for his/her children. Though the Trojan demogerontes figure very briefly in one scene alone, they admire Helen's beauty only to express the wish that she would disappear and no longer pose a threat to themselves or their children (3.159-160). Hephaestus pities his priest Dares and saves one of his two sons from destruction, to prevent the old man from becoming utterly forlorn (5.24). Merops tries to hold his sons back from the campaign - he is

a pre-eminent prophet and presumably foresees the fate that awaits his children - but he fails to dissuade them (11.328ff.).[51] Priam, like Merops, forbids his youngest son Polydorus to take part in battle, but the young soldier, through his foolishness, loses his life to Achilles' spear (20.407ff.). And then there are those characters who beg to be ransomed and promise that their fathers will willingly pay a handsome price if they should only learn that their sons are still alive (Adrestus: 6.49-50, Dolon: 10.380-81, Peisandros and Hippolochus: 11.134-35). Priam, too, again in his address to Hector, says that he cannot see Polydorus and Lycaon amidst the routed Trojan army, but if they should happen to be alive, he will surely offer a fine price for them (23.49ff.). As the scholiast comments of the old king here, ἐλεεινὴ λίαν ἡ ἄγνοια τοῦ πατρός.

The old, then, are to a very great extent defined by their children. Virtually every gesture of theirs is made on their children's behalf. But this dependency of theirs marks their inherent vulnerability, and it is through the threat of bereavement that Homer depicts their pitiable condition most pointedly.

5. The Past versus Homer's Heroic Present

Thus far we have reviewed either neutral characteristics of the elderly or ones that portray them in an unheroic light. These shortcomings notwithstanding, age is set within a more complimentary context. On numerous occasions, for example, Homer alludes to a time that predates the Trojan campaign and insinuates, by his descriptions of outstanding deeds or fantastic opponents overcome, that the men of that epoch were in general more noteworthy than Agamemnon and his contemporaries.

We see a vivid example of this in Book One, when Nestor, as a means of persuading Agamemnon and Achilles to listen to him, describes his involvement in the war against the centaurs, alongside the likes of Peirithous, Theseus and

others (1.260ff.). "This reference to men who 'fought with the mountain beasts,' probably an allusion to the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, summons up a picture of a half-savage world of warriors far more powerful and cruder than those in the Iliad's heroic age" (Schein 1984, 135 and see Nash 1978, 14). Tellingly Nestor comments of his companions back then κείνοισι δ'ἂν οὔ τις/τῶν οἳ νῦν βροτοί εἰσιν ἐπιχθόνιοι μαχέοιτο (1.271-72). The old man also speaks, further on, of the fantastic number of kills he once scored in a one-time battle against the Eleians (11.668ff.): he managed to capture fifty chariots and destroy the two-man team of each, a feat unparalleled in the fighting before Troy.[52] Similarly, when Glaucus recounts his lineage to Diomedes, he speaks of his grandfather Bellerophon who killed the Chimaera, fought against the Solymi and Amazons and butchered, down to the last man, an ambush set for him by Proetus' father-in-law (6.187ff.). The mythological stature of his opponents and his sheer indomitability mark Bellerophon out as somewhat superhuman in contrast with the generation campaigning about Troy. Tydeus, too, has his feats described and praised by Agamemnon (4.370ff.) who asserts that Tydeus was a better warrior than his son. Sthenelus protests against this asseveration (4.404ff.) and argues that the earlier generation is inferior to his present one because Thebes was taken by the latter, not the former, and with fewer numbers involved. Part of his statement (κεῖνοι δὲ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο, 4.409) seems especially applicable to his own father Capaneus (Aeschylus Septem 423ff., Euripides Phoenissae 1172ff.). One way or another, his criticism is partially deflected by Diomedes, who roundly tells his companion to be quiet, and then, in the following book, contradicted by Athena who, like Agamemnon, reports, in part as a means of encouraging Diomedes, that he does not measure up to his father's capabilities (5.800ff.).[53] There are, moreover, some passing references to Heracles throughout the poem. His labours are mentioned (8.363, and the transportation of Cerberus in particular, 11.689ff.), as is the sea-monster which he confronted at Troy (20.144ff.), his battle

with the Pylians (11.689ff.) and the outrage committed against Hera (5.392) and Hades (5.395).[54] Again the greatness and folkloric strangeness of these feats cast him as a hero the likes of which the world will never see again. And Peleus' marriage with a sea-goddess, whose wedding the Olympians themselves attended (24.62ff.), is an event which, although Homer does not say as much explicitly, belongs exclusively to a past that will never again repeat itself. Finally, there are several references to stones which men of Homer's own time would be unable to lift but which the heroes of the Iliad toss about easily (5.302ff., 12.380ff., 12.447ff., 20.285ff.). The poet remarks in each of these passages οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσι, emphasizing once again the qualitative difference between earlier and later generations.[55]

If the past pre-dating the Trojan war does consist of personalities who are 'larger' than the heroes of the Iliad, the prestige of the elderly in the poem is enhanced. Being old, these characters have had direct contact with a world more competitive and demanding than the challenges facing the Trojan hero. When Nestor speaks of centaurs and his escape from the heavy-handed onslaught of Heracles, or Priam mentions his own role in a war against the Amazons (3.189), or Peleus is said to have received his spear from Cheiron (16.143), the implication is that these heroes have experienced situations more trying than the war which their children are embroiled in, and for this reason should be respected and listened to.[56]

If Homer has his characters emphasize that the generation prior to their own was somehow superior and more heroic, he also has them assume that the different generations are, nonetheless, part of a continuum. Fathers and sons, indeed a family member and his distant relatives, are cut of the same material. As Nash comments on the exchange between Glaucus and Diomedes in Book Six, "Homeric comparison stresses continuity and cycle, death and birth, birth and

death. Glaucus questions the question [Diomedes' inquiry into his lineage] as it were, because the details of his past are unnecessary in that the quality of his ancestry should be self apparent: one generation grows out of another and shares its characteristics" (Nash 1978, 2).[57] There may be a difference in prowess between Glaucus and his grandfather Bellerophon, but their heroic tempers are fundamentally the same, or are expected to be, as Glaucus' father's parting advice to his son suggests: αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων, νηδὲ γένος πατέρων αἰσχυνέμεν (6.208-09).

The same expectations hold true of Diomedes. Being the son of Tydeus, he inevitably provokes comparison with his father if he should appear to deviate from the heroic model as exemplified by the latter (4.370ff., 5.88ff.). And yet the son is happy to identify himself with his grandfather: Oineus' obligations as a guest-friend to Bellerophon are readily adopted by Diomedes with regard to Glaucus. By this gesture of hospitality, Diomedes is in fact defining his position with respect to Oineus just as concretely as Glaucus has defined it with respect to his ancestors. Aeneas, too, sets himself firmly within the constraints of his genealogy (20.213ff.). He lists his ancestors to Achilles, establishing the fact that the gods have always shown an interest in his family as a whole (Ganymedes, Tithonus, Anchises, Laomedon), but at the same time carefully distinguishing his line from that of Laomedon's who, we learn (21.450ff.), once cheated his two divine benefactors (Edwards 1991, 314). Achilles argues to similar effect when he announces to the corpse of Asteropaeus (21.184) that someone who draws his descent from a river must inevitably suffer defeat when locked in competition with someone who can claim descent from Zeus (21.190-91):[58]

> τῷ κρείσσων μὲν Ζεὺς ποταμῶν ἁλιμυρηέντων
> κρείσσων αὖτε Διὸς γενεὴ ποταμοῖο τέτυκται.

And Achilles has been conducting the campaign in his father's armour and with his father's spear and horses, a fact that further lends the impression that Achilles

is a true representative of his forebears. In Book Two the possessors of Agamemnon's sceptre are listed (2.104ff.) as a means of connecting Agamemnon's kingship with previous monarchs in his pedigree and, thereby, vindicating his rule's authenticity. And when Hector takes Astyanax in his arms and prays on his son's behalf (6.466ff.), he expresses the wish that his own heroic attitude be transmitted to his child (6.477-78). Indeed, the very presence of the patronymic (Πηλεΐδης, Ἀτρεΐδης, Τελαμωνιάδης, Τυδεΐδης, Νεστορίδης among others) must serve, in part, to identify a character with a father - or grandfather - whose qualities have some formative effect on his offspring.[59]

Despite their different capabilities, then, young and old are essentially united in purpose. Arising from the type of stock that it does, the Iliad's generation of heroes is immediately ashamed, for example, when Nestor denounces its cowardice and cites how Peleus[60] too would be appalled (7.125ff.). There is no generation gap in the Iliad, in other words.[61] As Preisshofen sees it, Homer refers to ἠμὲν νέοι ἠδὲ γέροντες (2.789, 9.36, 258) as a means of indicating a group in its totality: youth and age simply stand side by side, and cooperate to achieve a goal which both approve of mutually (1977, 28).

6. Wisdom of the Elderly

"...Almost all traditional cultures provide roles in which the elderly serve as wise counsellors to the community, as judges, advisers, teachers and story-tellers" (Falkner 1989, 24). The Iliad is no exception to this rule. In numerous instances the Iliad's characters assume that age confers greater wisdom[62] and merits obedience and respect from the young. The poem also expresses the view that the elderly tend to be more reliable, more co-operative and more objective than the young, whose impulsiveness and bravado, though positive boons on the battlefield, are nonetheless misplaced in the council.

In Book One Nestor advises Achilles and Agamemnon to listen to him because they are both younger than he (1.259). He uses words to the same effect when he amplifies a speech of Diomedes (9.57ff.).[63] And Menoetius, according to Nestor, tells Patroclus that he is in a position to give Achilles sound advice on account of his greater age (11.787ff.), while Odysseus urges Achilles to follow his suggestions because he is older and therefore speaking soundly (19.216ff.). The same equation of 'age equals wisdom' is maintained by Poseidon in his confrontation with Apollo in the θεομαχία (21.440).

In the examples above, we see older characters asserting the superiority of their intellect to younger ones. This could suggest that their claim is artificial, that objectively there is no difference between the abilities of young and old to offer counsel, and yet there are instances in which the young themselves are proponents of this idea. Thus Menelaus in Book Three insists that Priam superintend the taking of oaths because (3.108-10):

> αἰεὶ δ'ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν φρένες ἠερέθονται·
> οἷς δ'ὁ γέρων μετέῃσιν, ἅμα πρόσσω καὶ ὀπίσσω
> λεύσσει, ὅπως ὄχ' ἄριστα μετ' ἀμφοτέροισι γένηται.

Antilochus speaks to similar effect in Book Twenty-three, when he apologizes to Menelaus and asks that his impetuousness be overlooked on the grounds that Menelaus, the older and better man (23.588), is fully aware how light (λεπτή) a young man's μῆτις can be (23.590).[64] And in the impromptu council of Book Fourteen, Diomedes takes Agamemnon up on his invitation for someone to propose an effective plan, but "... apologizes for his boldness as a young man in doing so" (Schofield 1986, 23).[65] Homer himself comments of Zeus and Poseidon that the former is older and knows more than the latter (an echo of Poseidon's claim to Apollo in Book Twenty-one, as Willcock (1984, 213) observes). Pandarus regrets that he ignored his old father's advice, when the latter proposed on his son's preparations for the campaign that he take horses and a chariot with him

(5.197). His speech amounts to an admission that his father's wisdom is greater than his own and, indeed, is seen by Kirk (1990, 79) to be "... part of his characterization - unusually deliberate for the Iliad - as self-pitying and shallow-minded". On account of his tender years, Polydorus is not permitted by Priam to participate in combat, but this youngest son, in his foolishness, shows off his fleetness of foot and, in doing so, gets himself killed by Achilles. Homer's use of the word νηπιέῃσι (20.411)[66] emphasizes Polydorus' lack of good sense.[67]

In addition to their superior wisdom, Homer attributes to the elderly a larger measure of objectivity and impartiality. "The physiologically enforced inactivity of old age leaves time for the contemplation and broad perspective which together make up sound judgement" (Nash 1978, 13). Moreover, an old man's removal from the need to compete enables him to adopt a more objective stance in counsel. "As wise counsellors, the elderly argue not for their own advantage, but for the common good, advising the leaders and charting a course through the selfish interests of the other basileis..." (Falkner 1989, 27, and see Preisshofen 1977, 22). How exactly is this manifested in the Iliad?

The word euphroneon is often used to describe a speaker's state of mind when he is on the brink of delivering a speech that is full of sound advice. It not only implies "good sense or benevolence" (Kirk 1985, 123) but, given its contexts, often suggests that the counsellor who is euphroneon is so interested in promoting the common good that he is prepared to venture advice which he knows may upset the listener who is being counselled.[68] In Book One, Nestor is euphroneon and embarks on the unenviable task of interceding between the bickering Achilles and Agamemnon. In Book Nine (95ff.), again euphroneon, "Nestor seems to be nervous, and is slow to reach the point. He wants Agamemnon to apologize to Achilleus, and this can hardly be suggested without at least implied criticism of Agamemnon's behaviour" (Willcock 197[illegible], 272). Odysseus, too, is said to be

euphroneon when he addresses the troops at the time of their near desertion (2.283). His task is difficult as it involves accusing the army of disloyalty and infantile behaviour (Kirk 1985, 146). Calchas, again euphroneon (1.73), announces that the prophecies he is going to disclose will anger 'someone in authority.' And Poulydamas' chore (18.253) is to inform Hector of the risks involved in another night of bivouacking outside the walls, a chore which, given the tongue-lashing he received earlier, he must realize will provoke yet another reprimand. Nonetheless, euphroneon as well, he proceeds with his recommendations.

The word euphroneon appears four more times in the Iliad: at 2.78 and 7.326 (both in reference to Nestor), at 7.367 (in reference to Priam) and at 15.285 (in reference to Thoas). It is noteworthy that, in all of these instances except that of Poulydamas[69] and possibly Calchas,[70] the speaker referred to is either old or middle-aged. Priam and Nestor are obviously gerontes, while Odysseus is omogeronta (23.791) and of Thoas Janko comments (1992, 259) that he "... is a respected older figure below the first rank...."

Besides this feature of being 'well-intentioned,' there are instances in the poem when the elderly are chosen to oversee competitions or a solemn transaction, the implication being that their age will prevent them from breaking the 'rules' or showing favour unduly. They can be trusted to maintain their impartiality. Only Priam, for example, can represent the Trojans when the oaths are being taken in Book Three: his sons, and the young in general, might act with presumption (ὑπερβασίῃ, 3.107), a weakness to which the elderly would appear to be immune. In Book Seven, in the scene of the second duel, between Hector and Ajax, the heralds Idaeus and Talthybius are clearly overseeing the contest, and the former, at least, is getting on in years (24.149, 368). He refers to the two contestants as παῖδε φίλω and, though this appellation may in fact be shocking (Kirk 1990, 271), it perhaps demonstrates just how objective and unprejudiced the old herald

may be.[71] And Phoenix is chosen by Achilles to act as umpire in the chariot race of the funeral games (23.359-61), again because his age implies a certain level-headedness (Preisshofen 1977, 22). The gerontes in the city at peace on Achilles' shield are represented as themistes (18.503), though admittedly the term is ambiguous here and might possibly represent the city's leaders as a whole (Jeanmaire 1939, 19, 26).[72] The elderly, however, have an obvious prominence in the religious domain.[73] Chryses is a priest of Apollo, Calchas a seer, Merops a prophet (2.831-2), Eurydamas a reader of dreams (5.149), Dares a priest of Hephaestus (5.10) and Onestor a priest of Zeus (16.604). The elderly Trojan women, moreover, accompany Hecuba to the citadel of Athena to supplicate the goddess and put an end to Diomedes' rampage (6.296ff.). Theano is Athena's priestess, and the fact that she has full-grown children (5.70ff.) and is the wife of Antenor, who is sitting with the Trojan elders in the teichoskopia, is a possible indication that she, too, is of advanced years.

On the other hand, religion need not be a function of seniority per se (Falkner 1989, 32). The Trojan Helenus is an augur (6.76) and, as one of Priam's sons, must be a rough contemporary of Hector. Poulydamas, too, although no religious function is specifically ascribed to him, does interpret the meaning of an omen involving an eagle and a snake (12.210), and enjoys the protection of Apollo (15.521-22). However, given the preponderance of elderly characters as priests/priestesses, religious observances would appear, in the Iliad at least, to be more the responsibility of the old than the young.[74]

7. Homer's Evaluation of Old Age

In a number of instances Homer qualifies geras with the following adjectives: lugron (5.153, 10.79, 18.434, 23.644), oloon (24.487), stugeron (19.336) and chalepon (8.103, 23.623). In addition, geras is made the subject of teirein (4.315) and opazein (4.321, 8.103), verbs which patently suggest an enfeebling

effect on their patients. Indeed Falkner comments (1989, 28), "These epithets and associations locate old age within a conceptual nexus almost uniformly negative: death, disease, wrath, grief, Ares, the Erinys, and so on..." and that "... old age is simply wretched, so that these adjectives suggest an irreducible essence of old age." Acknowledging that old age brings some compensating advantages with it, Redfield nonetheless asserts (1975, 111) that, "In a culture where physical strength and beauty are so important, old age can only be hateful...." Garland's assessment is also far from positive: "The ultimate rejection of Achilles of an old age devoid of fame in favour of an early death that brings eternal glory suggests, as it is clearly intended to do, the Homeric hero's standard contempt for longevity" (1990, 251, and see Falkner 1989, 36). Do these statements sum up Homer's general evaluation of old age and the elderly?

We have argued thus far that, a full participation in battle excepted, Homer does not dwell on the debilitating effects of age, nor does he (pace Falkner) pointedly associate old age and death. The elderly, moreover, are products of an age more heroic than that of the Trojan war, and are noteworthy for their possession of wisdom and impartiality. And, although the abilities of young and old differ, their outlook is the same in essentials, the latter having inherited their heroic attitude from the former. In addition to these considerations, however, there are two further reasons for maintaining that Homer's view is not quite so condemnatory as the commentators above would make it appear.

First, there is the issue of kleos. "The hero chooses to make life not long but meaningful, and finds in his prowess of war and kleos aphthiton a partial escape from death. Old age becomes despised as marking the beginning of the process whereby the hero loses what he most values..." (Falkner 1989, 35). It is true that the elderly cannot further their kleos by performing gloriously on the battlefield, or by taking first prizes in athletic games. For this reason Nestor wishes he were young

again and in a position to enhance his reputation (e.g. 23.625ff.). On the other hand, there is presumably nothing that prevents an older character from continuing in his possession of kleos once it has been acquired, even if he himself is enervated. Peleus, for example, survives to a ripe old age, but still Nestor can use him as an exemplary model of heroic conduct (7.125ff.), just as he points on occasion to his own past performances as an outstanding warrior and athlete. Indeed, though he regrets his inability to perform personally at Troy, he is respected nonetheless (as we shall see in the next chapter) because he has such a conspicuous record of achievement. "Every value, every judgement, every action, all skills and talent [in the Iliad] have the function of either defining honour or realizing it. Life itself may not stand in the way" (Finley 1978, 113).[75] This statement may be true enough, but the Iliad still has room for survival with honour: in time a Diomedes will turn into a Nestor with his reputation firmly intact.

But what of Achilles and his choice between a long life without distinction and a short one full of undying glory? Does his decision to die at Troy represent, as Falkner and Garland argue above, a rejection on the part of the Homeric hero of longevity in general?

First, it is well worth pointing out that we are nowhere told in the poem that Achilles scorns old age and its comforts. He does opt for a short life with distinction, but he does not reach this conclusion by weighing the benefits of one alternative reflectively against the other. Instead, he is so infuriated by the death Patroclus at Hector's hands, that the question of a long life as opposed to a short one fades into the background.[76] His prime motivation for re-entering the war is vengeance (18.90-93):

ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἐμὲ θυμὸς ἄνωγε

ζώειν οὐδ' ἄνδρεσσι μετέμμεναι, αἴ κε μὴ Ἕκτωρ

πρῶτος ἐμῷ ὑπὸ δουρὶ τυπεὶς ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὀλέσσῃ,
Πατρόκλοιο δ'ἔλωρα Μενοιτιάδεω ἀποτείσῃ.

That said, if we set aside Achilles' furor and concentrate purely on his statement of alternatives, what are we to conclude? Achilles is disillusioned (9.318-20):

ἴση μοῖρα μένοντι, καὶ εἰ μάλα τις πολεμίζοι·
ἐν δὲ ἰῇ τιμῇ ἠμὲν κακὸς ἠδὲ καὶ ἐσθλός·
κάτθαν' ὁμῶς ὅ τ'ἀεργὸς ἀνὴρ ὅ τε πολλὰ ἐοργώς.

No doubt it is in part on account of this disappointment of his that Achilles views old age in a more tolerant light. The obvious antithesis and tension between his two choices, however, imply that each has genuine benefits to offer and, in choosing one over the other, Achilles must inevitably cheat himself of something desirable. The selection Achilles must make would seem to have a tragic air about it: he is doomed one way or the other. And yet, if old age is incompatible with Homeric values as a whole, then the tragedy implicit in Achilles' having to decide on one course or another would have to be completely ignored. Why would Achilles even mention this choice of his if it involved in truth distinguishing between something valued and something despised? Instead, when Achilles speaks of enjoying wealth which awaits him in Phthia (9.400) and taking to himself a wife whom his father shall select for him (9.394ff.), in other words, when he speaks of settling down and enjoying the advantages of peace, he is describing possibilities which any peer of his would agree possess an intrinsic value. In Book Twenty-four, as well, he speaks with regret that he is not by his father's side and seeing to the old man's comforts and protection (24.540ff.).[77] Indeed, as Schein observes, "By temporarily setting aside Achilles and the events of the poem [in the description of Achilles' shield in Book Eighteen] and describing the greater world beyond the plain of Troy, Homer clarifies the terrible disparity between the full

range of human life and the transcendent yet pathetically limited heroism of the hero who carries the shield into battle" (1984, 142).[78]

The argument above can be applied to the poem as a whole. As Griffin has shown,[79] Homer uses pathos extensively in the Iliad. The deaths of young men in their prime, their abrupt removal from the normal expectations of life, are exploited again and again for their tragic resonances. Polydorus is the youngest son of Priam (20.409); Achilles is fated to a short life (1.417, 18.458); the souls of Hector and Patroclus abandon their manhood and youth plaintively (22.363, 16.857); Protesilaus has left behind a wife in tears and a house that is only half finished (2.700ff.). These details, and all the examples of warriors and their bereaved fathers discussed earlier, disclose Homer's intense preoccupation with the stark and lamentable fact of man's mortality. And yet this pathos can only be effective if one accepts without question that for a hero to die young and have his expectations reversed is disastrous;[80] or, the converse, that longevity, for all the debilitation that it poses, brings many advantages in its wake. What is to be mourned, otherwise, when a warrior is cut down long before his time? "Das Alter [in the Iliad] mag so trübe und widrig sein wie es will - und um dies recht zu verstehen, denke man daran, wie noch heute der Bauer auf dem Altenteil altert - aber nicht daß das Alter kommt, gilt als Unheil, sondern 'nicht ins Alter kommen', 'vor der Zeit sterben', einem 'schnellen Lose' unterworfen sein wie Achilleus" (Schadewaldt 1960, 116).

But if old age is in fact valued by the characters of Homer's world, why does it appear at times in such an unenviable light? Why are the elderly cast as suppliants and why are they so piteously dependent on their children? Not surprisingly, "It is in war that the status of old age becomes most marginal" (Falkner 1989, 37). The Iliad is a poem whose predominant setting is the battlefield

where "... physical prowess and the needs of war are in large part the determinative factors of the age distinction..." (Nash 1978, 6). Once the fighting starts, the elderly must stand on the side-lines, themselves powerless to influence the outcome of combat and, given their own emotional and circumstantial dependence on their children, unable to guarantee themselves their own security. War in part strips the elderly of their integrity, in other words, and in this sense especially old age is lugron, oloon, stugeron and chalepon.[81] This is not to deny the disadvantages that tend old age, but to stress that, as soon as matters hang entirely on the sword, powerlessness can become the determinative feature of the elderly and not the wisdom and objectivity which are their distinguishing characteristics in council or in times of peace. It is for this reason, as we shall see in our examination of the Odyssey, that the negative epithets which qualify old age in the Iliad all but disappear. War can accentuate the hateful conditions of senescence, but it is still possible to detect in the very thick of the Trojan campaign a reverence for the elderly which is typical of more peaceful times.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER ONE

1. Stanford (1969, 4) is doubtlessly correct to stress the auditory aspect of the simile, but dismisses without explanation its visual component.

2. αὐτὰρ ὁ Δαρδανίδην Πρίαμον θαύμαζεν Ἀχιλλεύς
εἰσορόων ὄψίν τ'ἀγαθὴν καὶ μῦθον ἀκούων

   Macleod comments of this passage: "In Book Twenty-four as a whole Priam is as much the hero as Achilles is; so here he shares Achilles' stature and beauty..." (1982, 142).

3. Although, as Whitman comments, "[Idomeneus] is represented as slightly aging but still effectively deadly on the battlefield" (1958, 165).

4. Garland comments optimistically, "The majority of Greeks who reached advanced years were no doubt active and vigorous until their final illness which in the overwhelming majority of cases would have been mercifully brief, painless and uncomplicated" (1990, 255).

5. No doubt this is the case both because of Homer's respect for his older characters and the fact that he "...is never, in any sense, to be with truth called prosaic; he is never to be called low. He does not rise and sink with his subject; on the contrary, his manner invests its subject, whatever his subject may be, with nobleness" (Arnold 1896, 38).

6. For references, see page 86 in the following chapter.

7. The one exception might be the incident involving Phoenix and his father's concubine (9.451ff.). Phoenix' mother urges her son to sleep with the concubine so that her husband will become contemptible in this woman's eyes (9.452). The underlying assumption of this scheme must be that the aging Amyntor does not have the same sexual potency as a younger man.

8. "Nun stützt sich die Metapher γήραος οὐδόν auf die Vorstellung, daß das Alter ein Durchgangsraum ist, in den man eintritt, den man durchschreitet... und den man später durch die gegenüber liegende Tür verlässt"(Kakridis 1971, 512-13).

9. Richardson argues to similar effect, in his comment on Il. 22.60: "Since Priam is already an old man γήραος is most probably a defining genitive, 'the threshold consisting of old age', implying that old age is itself seen as a transitional stage between life and death" (1993, 112). Jungclaussen's quotation of Jacob Grimm is helpful as well: "ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ (in limine senectutis) wird gewöhnlich vom Eintritt in das Greisenalter, zuweilen auch schon von dem höchsten Ziel, von der Schwelle, die das Leben

vom Tode scheidet, verstanden" (1870, 11).

10. "The overwhelming fact of life for the heroes of the Iliad is their mortality which stands in contrast to the immortality of the gods" (Schein 1984, 1). Vermeule puts it more glibly: "Mortals, βροτοί, are etymologically destined to be eaten..." (Vermeule 1979, 94).

11 By the way in which he phrases his question, the scholiast clearly indicates that he believes Chryses is betraying his friends or relations: διὰ τί ὁ Χρύσης κατὰ τῶν οἰκείων ηὔχετο? (on Il. 1.18).

12. "The priest is himself an enigmatic figure; he is a cultural specialist who stands outside the status order. Or, to put that another way, he is a low status person with special powers. Agamemnon sees no reason why he, as a powerful man, should give way to someone insignificant and weak" (Redfield 1975, 94). And "Agamemnon does not see before him a priest whom he must respect, as the Achaeans do (23); he sees a weak contemptible old man (26)" (Kakridis 1971, 130).

13. "At the least he [Agamemnon] is guilty of a serious error of judgement which leads directly to the death of many of the λαός" (Taplin 1990, 80).

14. Kakridis sees in the old man's solitude his abandonment by all men (1971, 132).

15. As Rabel (1988, 476) and Robbins (1990, 3) observe, Achilles assignation of anger to Chryses can be seen as an attempt on Achilles' part to identify his own injury at Agamemnon's hands with the priest's.

16. Hainsworth observes that Phoenix, by using this language, "...is laying the foundation for the allegory of the Λιταί and at the same time puts the action of the Achaeans in a wholly new light.... This is the language of supplication (1.502, 21.98), or at least, humble request, to which Agamemnon said he would not stoop at 1.173-4 and which Akhilleus anticipates with a certain relish at 11.609. It is one thing to reject an argument, quite another to refuse a suppliant, especially a suppliant bearing gifts..." (1993, 127).

17. "It is noticeable that skill in driving chariots is associated particularly with those who did their fighting in the previous generation, such as Nestor... Phoinix... Peleus... Oineus..." (Willcock 1978, 279).

18. Scodel comments of the situation here that, "In Diomedes' view, Achilles' reentry into battle will depend entirely on Achilles and the appropriate god. Since Achilles has shown himself incapable of being persuaded, and indeed has become more hostile as the result of attempts to mollify him, there would certainly be no point in further attempts to

convince Achilles to fight. Diomedes believes that the attempt to persuade Achilles has only increased Achilles' arrogance" (1989, 98).

19. Hainsworth agrees (1993, 81).

20. And, as Whitman points out, Achilles reacts as if he has been offered a bribe (1958, 193). Tarkow agrees (1982, 30), although he argues at the same time that, "[Odysseus'] petition is tactfully geared to remind Achilles of his public and private responsibilities and carefully intended to demonstrate the extent to which Agamemnon has gone to amend his earlier actions which caused Achilles to withdraw from battle..." (1982, 29). Hainsworth, on the other hand, remarks that, "...it is clear that Odysseus is not made to show much faith in the efficacy of either reason or bribery in dealing with Akhilleus, but appeals to his sense of pity and love of glory" (1993, 94).

21. When Patroclus cries on account of the Greeks' disastrous position, Homer comments that Achilles pities him (16.5).

22. Although it is possible at the same time, as Arieti notes, that, "Deep as is Achilles' love for Patroclus, it is not adequate to compensate him for his loneliness and alienation. Achilles wants Phoenix, too, for Phoenix, as his teacher and foster-father, will, by accompanying him, sanction Achilles' internal and personal alienation and its rejection of human values" (1986, 16).

23. As Held observes, "Phoinix intends his autobiographical account not primarily to supply reasons why Achilleus should grant his major plea, but rather to make a different and separate plea, a plea that Achilleus resume his previous role as son to Phoinix in effect, a plea that he should give Phoinix back his son" (1987, 248).

24. Although Willcock comments, "It is not easy for an offender to apologize; his handicaps are symbolically transferred to the Litai" (1978, 280). Hainsworth, on the other hand, observes, "The description of the Λιταί clearly must be pathetic, so that their παραβλῶπες ὀφθαλμώ does not express suspicion (as παραβλέπω does in classical Greek) but apprehension and a sense of helplessness" (1993, 129).

25. These observations are by no means intended to invalidate Rossner's contention, that Phoenix's autobiographical account parallels the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles (1987, 315ff.), that the allegory of the Λιταί parallels the embassy in Book Nine as a whole (1987, 319ff.), and that the Meleager parable serves as an exemplum for Achilles' abandonment of his wrath (1987, 322ff.).

26. Rossner observes that supplication is one word, along with several

others, that holds Phoenix' speech together (1987, 317 n.10).

27. Brenk argues that, "The speech [of Phoinix] fails at least in part because Phoinix does not understand the power of Achilleus' nostalgic desire for home and family.... Phoinix plays upon the horror of childlessness... compares Peleus' love for his to that of a father toward 'an only son, the last of the line'... and speaks of the great happiness the infant Achilleus brought him.... These images would have to disturb Achilleus, who is in fact the child of Phoinix' simile, and will both leave Peleus without an heir, and will leave no heir to himself" (1986, 83-84).

28. Sheppard (1922, 80); Bassett (1938, 199); Eichholz (1953, 141); Whitman (1958, 190); Tarkow (1982, 28); Schein (1984, 113).

29. Democoon (4.499), Echemmon and Chromius (5.160), Doryclus (11.489), Cebriones (16.737), Polydorus (20.407ff.), Lycaon (21.34ff.).

30. "Priam is an important character, whose function is to lose his sons and lament over them..." (Griffin 1980, 126). See also Macleod (1982, 128) and Taplin (1992, 270).

31. "Priam particularly imagines his dogs humiliating his grey head and genitals, that is; the authority of the king and the hope of the dynasty..." (Vermeule 1979, 106).

32. "Befehlen kann er nicht, nur - wie Hekabe bitten, da sein Sohn sich nicht dem sicher verhängnisvollen Kampf stellt" (Preisshofen 1977, 29).

33. "Hecuba's formula - aideo kai m'eleeson (XXII.82) - is that of a captive appealing for mercy on the battlefield" (Redfield 1975, 249 n. 14). See also Pedrick (1982, 130) and Taplin (1992, 233).

34. A scene which, in Whitman's view, answers the scene with Chryses in Book one structurally (1958, 190).

35. "Priam is virtually dead" Schein says of the old king at this juncture in the Iliad (1984, 159).

36. Preisshofen speaks here, in this portrayal of Priam, of "...die ehrfurchtgebietende Grösse der hilf- und wehrlosen Schwache des alten Menschen" (Preisshofen 1977, 28).

37. It also "...reinforces the dominant position of Achilles by placing him in the position of the rich man whom the suppliant of the simile approaches" (Edwards 1987, 309). Moreover, "Achilles, moved now by thoughts of Peleus, fulfills the legacy of his father [i.e. of receiving suppliants like Phoinix and Patroclus into his home] by uplifting the

suppliant [Priam] before him, and with profound compassion, grants his request" (Schlunk 1976, 209).

38. Owen, too, observes of this passage, "But we have not been wrong to fear for Priam, we have lost nothing of Achilles; he is not changed; all of him is here. He is as fierce and dangerous as ever" (1946, 243).

39. "Priam is described with γέρων, γεραιός or γῆρας 44 times in Book XXIV..." (Falkner 1989, 57 n.29).

40. Nestor is the sole exception to this rule. We shall discuss his case further on.

41. "In Homeric society the relationship between father and son was fundamental. The patriarchal household was the basic unit of society, and communal institutions were shaped in the image of the household (Finlay 1980, 268).

42. Griffin, too, says of this incident, "A father may fail to be prophetic when he ought to be." He speaks of "...the pathetic ignorance of their father who should have known their fate" (1980, 125-26). Fenik adds, "It is clear why the priest or soothsayer fathers are so popular: their warnings to their sons, or their failure to warn them, are a ready source of pathetic irony" (1968, 24).

43. The same Pylaemenes who was killed in Book Five (573-76) by Menelaus.

44. "To the son's disgrace and the father's grief is added the fact that there is no revenge on his killer..." (Janko 1992, 127).

45. "Even the king of the gods must share the lot of the bereaved fathers whose grief is a leitmotif in the poem. His protest against fate does not prove he can reverse it..." (Janko 1992, 375).

46. Achilles' death has a profound effect on his mother as well: "Thetis is the paradigm for the image of bereavement conjured up with the fall of each young warrior for whom the poem reports that the moment of his death leaves his anguished parents forlorn" (Slatkin 1990, 85).

47. For similar observations see Kirk (1971, 133), Preisshofen (1977, 24) and Finley (1981, 14).

48. "Here the poet has added two more of his most pathetic motifs: 'short life' and 'bereaved parents'" (Griffin 1980, 108).

49. Consistent with this portrait is Achilles' anxiousness in the Nekuia of

the Odyssey to learn whether his father is managing without him (Od. 11.494ff.).

50. As Kirk observes, Phainops himself is heir to an ironic legacy of κήδεα λυγρά which Diomedes has left him, a legacy "...that prevents him from leaving one to his own natural heirs..." (1990, 74). Hainsworth, following Strasburger, speculates that "...the focus of interest in the incident is the plight of the father not the fate of the sons" (1993, 262).

51. On the other hand, because of the phrase κῆρες γὰρ ἄγον μέλανος θανάτοιο presumably, Griffin says of this passage, "Here the force of the motif is that his (Merops') foresight was vain, destiny doomed his sons..." (1980, 125).

52. Querbach argues of the elderly in the Iliad, "To compensate for the emotional consequences of their reduced usefulness in battle and to assure the younger men as well as themselves that they were once valorous, the elders love not only to recount their former deeds of glory but also to assert that these deeds required a strength and courage which far surpassed that demonstrated by their younger counterparts" (1976, 55). We shall examine Nestor's motivation for his reminiscences further on. For now it is enough to observe that more often than not it is not the actual performer of past deeds who describes his own former valour, but an outside party, often young enough to fight, and who is therefore not burdened with a need to compensate for his inactivity.

53. "Note that Agamemnon is serious when he criticizes Diomedes, but Athena is only playing" (Fenik 1968, 76).

54. Of these and similar incidents (Otus and Ephialtes, Druas and Dionysus) Schein comments, "In the Iliad, such sufferings and battles of the gods are a thing of the past which no longer occur, though they are occasionally recalled..." (Schein 1984, 50).

55. As Clay comments, "On several occasions, Homer contrasts his heroes to men of his own day.... Men of the present differ from the heroes not only in strength and martial accomplishment but also in their relations with the gods. The gods no longer join men in feasting nor do they beget children on mortals" (1983, 172). Hainsworth, moreover, offers an interesting explanation for this attitude: "All the Greek stories had one thing in common: they were set on the further side of a deep political and social discontinuity, the collapse of the Mycenaean world and the subsequent migrations. Discontinuities of this kind set the present in contrast with the past and give rise to the theme of οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσι" (1993, 40).

56. "In Homer the elderly are the visible link of the present generation with

the past and share in the reverence given the ancestral traditions..." (Falkner 1989, 27). And, "Nestor, of course, is the chief access to pre-Trojan times in the Iliad" (Nash 1978, 14).

57. And see Griffin (1980, 76).

58. Richardson, however, observes of Achilles' speech to Asteropaeus that, "It is a superb piece of rhetoric, but seriously miscalculated, for Akhilleus himself will soon prove to be no match for Skamandros, whom he dismisses so boldly at 192-3" (1993, 68).

59. "[The patronymic epithets]... suspend the dimension of time, and involve Peleus, Laertes, and Tydeus in the lives of Achilles, Odysseus, and Diomedes. Thus the epithets make the victory of the Achaeans a glory to the nation both past and future, and even increase the sense of affinity with the Achaeans that was surely very strongly felt by the epic audience" (Whallon 1961, 130).

60. Why Nestor makes mention of Peleus in his parainesis is touched on by Kirk (1990, 251).

61. Querbach argues, on the other hand, that, "Two types of such (generational) conflict exist, one which emanates from the view of the elders that they were at one time superior to their younger counterparts in strength and warlike spirit and one that invokes the idea that elders are superior in wisdom by virtue of their old age." Querbach goes on to admit that, "...the young warriors for the most part desire to emulate the conduct and values of the preceding generations" (1976, 55).

62. On the wisdom of the elderly in the Iliad: Richardson (1933, 16), Jeanmaire (1939, 20), Kirk (1971, 125), Preisshofen (1977, 22), Nash (1978, 5), Falkner (1989, 26), Garland (1990, 266).

63. On the other hand, Nestor is hardly patronizing Diomedes. As Hainsworth argues, "Nestor's point is that Diomedes has spoken to the Lord of Men frankly but as a young man should, not in the insolent and provocative manner favoured by Akhilleus in book 1" (1993, 67).

64. "...he [Menelaus] is unusually conscious of himself as a middle-aged man.... This feature of his character is connected with his great susceptibility to moral outrage" (Parry 1972, 18).

65. However, Querbach comments, "He (Diomedes) is defensive (in Book Fourteen) and insists that his status and lineage should entitle him to counsel his elders despite his youth..." (1976, 55). Diomedes finds, in Querbach's opinion, that 'discrimination' is at work in situations such as this. We shall investigate this view further on.

66. Vermeule discusses the various implications of νήπιος (1979, 113-14). Of adults who are said by Homer to be nepios Edmunds comments, "They are... disconnected from the past and, especially, from the future. As in the case of children who are nepios, this disconnection is both mental (they do not have foresight) and social (their lack of foresight almost always has fatal consequences: it disconnects them from the fellowship of the living). Their lack of foresight is sometimes the result of what we would call simple ignorance; sometimes it is a matter of being out of touch with the wishes or plans of the gods" (1990, 60). And see de Jong (1987, 86ff.).

67. "The elderly clearly have no monopoly on wise counsel" (Falkner 1989, 32). The word πεπνυμένος, for example, though applied to Antenor (3.148, 3.203, 7.347) and the old herald Idaeus (7.276, 278), is also used of Eurypulos (11.822), Meriones (13.254, 266), Poulydamas (18.249), Antilochus (23.586) and Diomedes (9.58). Overall, however, Homer does create the impression that the elderly bear the brunt of the councils (as we shall see in the next chapter) and that judgement and discretion are better left in their hands.

68. This statement must not be considered inconsistent with Schofield's view that, "... a heroic counsellor aims to solve the problem in hand. A successful solution is the intended result of his advice... but insofar as he and others see his counsel as a display of prowess, its real goal is something else; the honour accorded to someone who exhibits the appropriate excellence in his advice - preeminently spirit and... wisdom" (1986, 15). However, it is questionable whether we are to see in each and every encounter in the boule a competition of this type taking place. Both Calchas and Nestor are, as mentioned above, very reluctant to speak their minds, even though the advice is obviously sound.

69. Poulydamas is not to be considered the Trojan counterpart of Nestor as Schein suggests (1984, 185) so much as a figure "...who will dramatize the hero's [Hector's] relation with himself... he functions as Hector's alter ego, the voice in his ear of warning or restraint" (Redfield 1975, 143). Poulydamas' character and qualities exist strictly in contrast to Hector, and therefore it is not surprising that, for all his wisdom, he is Hector's exact age (18.251). Moreover, "Nestor's counsel is... heroically preoccupied with honour and glory; Polydamas unheroically urges caution" (Schofield 1986, 16).

70. One might possibly expect Calchas to be old on account of his expertise and helplessness in Book 1, but he is not called a geron, as Jungclaussen observes (1870, 13). On the other hand, for what it is worth, "...on an Etruscan mirror which belongs to the 5th century B.C. in a style rooted in the Greek art of the 5th century, the seer Calchus is represented as an

elderly man with long wavy hair on head and beard but thinning above the brow..." (Thornton 1970, 25).

71. Further along in the same book (7.385ff.) when asked by Priam to present the Achaeans with a Trojan proposal for peace, Idaeus does so with some embellishments of his own - the wish that Paris had died before he had led Helen to the city, for example. Clearly the herald does not view the conflict from the Trojan perspective alone.

72. Collins, on the other hand, obviously assumes the themistes are elderly (1988, 81). However, Schofield observes, "...equally they [Homer's chieftains] are boulephoroi, counsellors, and gerontes, elders, so called not (at least on the Greek side) with much regard to their age but because they are the men 'for whom it is fitting to advise counsels'" (1986, 10).

73. This is not to be confused with the fragmentary assertion of Hesiod εὐχὰς γερόντων (see Kirk 1971, 125-26).

74. This is in agreement with Kirk's general observation "Apollo chose the elderly as his vessels because of their venerability and consequent credibility" (1971, 123). Finley on the other hand observes, "Prophecy was a gift of the gods to a small number of individuals, in each instance for a particular reason which had nothing to do with age or venerability" (1981, 9-10).

75. And see Schein (1984, 68).

76. Although, as Edwards sees it, Achilles' choice between a long life and a short one was never a true option to begin with (Edwards 1991, 101). Claus moreover comments, "... his [Achilles'] reiteration of the choice given him by Thetis states obliquely that men of his stature fight by choice, and not necessity, however impossible it may be as a practical fact to define a society apart from battle in which Achilles could live" (1975, 24).

77. "Sitting with Priam in the last book, he [Achilles] still sees the war in an unheroic light.... At the point from which Achilles speaks now, glory has shrunk to an inconsiderable thing. Priam reminds him of his own father, old and unhappy, and he sees himself making pointless war, no good to either side" (Griffin 1980, 100).

78. "...on the whole the scenes [on the shield] are those of prosperous settled societies at peace, representing the Homeric picture of the good life. But the shield is a microcosm, not a utopia, and death and destruction are also there, though in inverse proportion to the rest of the Iliad... the city on the shield puts the Iliad itself into perspective within the world as a whole. On the shield the Iliad takes up, so to speak, one half of one of

the five circles..." (Taplin 1980, 12). And see Bassett (1938, 99).

79. Homer on Life and Death, Chapter 4. A number of the examples that follow are discussed in this work.

80. "The death of Achilleus becomes symbolic of part of the human condition on a broad scale - the desire of the young, or the demand of their society, that they find fulfillment in essentially destructive activity, thus causing the waste of magnificent young lives in wars which have become meaningless" (Brenk 1986, 86).

81. Jungclaussen comments on these epithets as follows, "Betrachtung der Stellen ergibt, daß diese Beiwörter entweder, wo sie den Charakter des Alters selbst bezeichnen, nur auf die leibliche Hinfälligkeit desselben sich beziehen, oder in den speziellen Schicksalen der Personen, von welchen die Rede ist, ihren Grund haben, in den Sorgen und Leiden derselben, die zu dem Alter hinzukommen und auf dieser Lebensstufe allerdings schwerer empfunden werden" (1870, 16).

CHAPTER TWO

In the discussion of the elderly in the previous chapter little was said of Nestor, the Iliad's most conspicuous gerontocrat. In spite of his advanced age, this character is a very busy one. Besides offering advice and cooling tempers, he musters troops, takes the initiative in council, visits the battlefield and harangues the troops when necessary. σχέτλιός ἐσσι, γεραιέ· σὺ μὲν πόνου οὔ ποτε λήγεις Diomedes comments of the tireless old man in grudging admiration (10.164). Yet, "That a superannuated hero should be present at Troy, much less participate in combat, is anomalous by Homeric standards..." (Falkner 1989, 30)[1] and clearly, if we are to understand Homer's treatment of old age, Nestor's advanced years must be reconciled with the heroic dynamics of the poem.

This chapter will argue that Nestor's prominence is due to a general state of crisis in the Greek camp, a crisis that has been generated by Achilles' refusal to continue his leading role in the campaign. Much of the Greek effort throughout the first half of the Iliad consists, we shall see, of stop-gap measures to minimize the consequences of Achilles' withdrawal: in the wake of the decline in the Greeks' fighting strength a great deal of importance is attached to counsel and stratagem. It will be demonstrated, moreover, that Nestor is best suited to take command of this new defensive initiative because of the standing he enjoys and, more relevantly, because his age equips him with the qualities and latitude which are necessary for soundness of counsel. To substantiate this last point we will briefly contrast Nestor's character with those of the other Greek agoretai. Finally, one of Nestor's best known (and most criticized) traits is his tendency to reminisce at great length. We hope to explain

the function of his digressions' function and prove their effectiveness in the light of our argument as a whole.

1. Nestor's Prominence and Achilles

To explain the apparent anomalousness of Nestor's presence in the campaign and the inordinate influence he seems to wield, it is perhaps a good idea for us to start with his appearances in the poem as a whole and see whether there is a general pattern to them.

Nestor's major appearances occur in Books 1, 2, 7, 9-11 and 23, while he figures briefly in 4, 8 and 14. Most of these books either revolve around the council or certain scenes in which important debates appear. It therefore comes as no surprise, once Nestor's credentials for good sense have been established,[2] that his role in these scenes should have the importance that it does. His participation in the epipolesis also makes sense, given the attention which he has received in Books 1 and 2: Homer has portrayed him as a leader of some significance and therefore he must have his moment in the muster along with all the other chieftains. The episode of Nestor's rescue by Diomedes in Book 8 can perhaps be interpreted as an emphasis on the Greek army's reversal. And if the funeral games in Book 23 function "... as an opportunity for each of the major Achaeans to make some sort of 'curtain call'" (Taplin 1992, 253),[3] then Nestor's attendance is again perfectly intelligible.

The events of some books are such that Nestor is precluded by necessity. We would hardly expect to see much of Nestor when Homer is describing the war at its fiercest,[4] or when the narrative focusses on a specific individual. Understandably, then, little or nothing is said of him in the battle books (8, 12-15, 17) or those books with conspicuous aristeiai (5, 16, 20-22). And much of Book 6 is set in Troy, while Book 24 thrusts everyone else aside for the reconciliation between Achilles and Priam.

With Nestor's entrances and exits mapped out very generally above, we are now in a position to observe that the treatment of his presence undergoes a marked change in the latter half of the poem. Up until the start of Book 14, Nestor is always hovering about in the background and, though nothing might be seen of him in one particular book or episode, the audience can expect him to resurface once the dust from some battle-scene or aristeia has settled. This is not true of Book 15 and what follows. With the exception of Book 23, Nestor all but disappears from the last ten books of the Iliad. True, of these last ten books, some are exclusively concerned with battle, while others are centered on Achilles' vengeance, and therefore Nestor is left with little space to occupy. And yet Nestor's absence from Book 3, for example, is not like his absence from Book 17. In the former, one anticipates an eventual return; given the continual erosion of the Greek position, the impact of the gerontocrat, as gleaned from the first two books, is too penetrating and influential to allow him to disappear without further notice. In the case of Book 17, however, the sudden rekindling of Achilles' battle spirit dislodges Nestor's strategy and machinations from the limelight. As soon as the best of the Achaeans begins to stir himself again, we forget about the old advisor entirely.

Indeed, one can say of Nestor in general that he comes into prominence while Achilles is inactive, and, conversely, when Achilles is at the center of attention, he becomes more or less eclipsed. Thus the Iliad starts with Achilles in a position of command: he summons the host to the place of gathering (1.54) and recommends that a seer be consulted.[5] Nestor plays no part in the proceedings here. It is only after Achilles has turned his back on his public responsibilities (1.225ff.) that Nestor is introduced and tries to calm the quarrelling parties. And from that point on, until Book 14, Nestor, though formally subordinate to Agamemnon, is chiefly responsible for the defensive tone which the Greek campaign assumes. By Book 16 the balance starts to

change. Achilles permits Patroclus to succour the Achaeans in his place and, on his friend's death, resumes the war himself. Nestor, for his part, virtually vanishes but for his speeches at Patroclus' funeral games, where he acts purely in a private capacity.

And prominent as the two characters might be, they have very little contact with each other. They exchange words on two occasions, in Books 1 and 23, and in the case of the former Achilles does not offer any direct response to Nestor's exhortation. This infrequency of communication is not for want of opportunity. There are at least two episodes in which Achilles and Nestor might have participated side by side.

Nestor is the prime instigator of the embassy in Book 9. He is the one who advises Agamemnon to make amends to Achilles (9.111ff.) and, when Agamemnon agrees, not only selects the ambassadors personally (9.167ff.), but primes them on the arguments they are to present (9.179ff.). Having involved himself so conspicuously, however, Nestor thereupon takes a seat on the sidelines and leaves it to the ambassadors to win Achilles over. "The Iliad seems to leave a gap. Having been shown the persuasive power of Nestor, the audience might well expect him to be the only hero capable of convincing Achilles to rejoin the battle. But this ideal confrontation of generations never occurs" (Martin 1989, 80).[6]

Similarly, in Book 19, on Achilles' resumption of the war, everyone flocks to the place of gathering, even those who in times past would ignore the summons and remain near the ships (19.42ff.).[7] Homer specifies, moreover, that the other Achaean agoretai, Odysseus, Diomedes and Agamemnon, are present at this rapprochement (19.47ff.). Curiously enough, Nestor goes unmentioned. And in the series of speeches which ensues, Nestor is completely silent. To be sure, Agamemnon and Achilles are the leading characters in this exchange, but why, when Achilles insists that the army

proceed to battle immediately (19.146), is Odysseus the one to answer him that the troops must have their breakfast first (19.155ff.)? In fact, throughout the course of this book, all we are told of Nestor is that he is one of a number of elders who comfort Achilles in his sorrow (19.311). When one thinks back on Nestor's predominance in all of the earlier Achaean assemblies,[8] this sudden obscurity of his comes as something of a shock.

Not only would Nestor's prominence, then, seem to be inversely related to Achilles', but Homer could well be keeping these two characters apart or, phrased differently, might be separating their respective spheres of influence. Why would this be the case? Two reasons spring to mind. First, there is good reason to believe, as we shall see in the two following sections, that Nestor's actions in the poem are essentially reactions to the catastrophic events which Achilles' departure brings about. A weakening in the Greek offensive precipitates a strengthening in the Trojan one and, to compensate for their sudden disastrous loss of manpower, the Greeks are forced to adopt defensive measures which Nestor, it would appear, specializes in. Nestor rarely consorts with Achilles because the two men embody the defensive and offensive aspects of warfare, respectively. A second reason, and one we shall discuss here briefly, is that Nestor's character has little or no thematic bearing on the tragedy of Achilles.

As Achilles himself reveals, he must choose either to win kleos and die young, or sail home and live to an inglorious old age (9.410ff.). "Achilles is led away from a hero's usual preoccupation with what he can do or win to a most atypical, but characteristically Achillean consideration, what he can't do: both live to old age and win imperishable glory..." (Schein 1984, 106). Nestor, on the other hand, plays no part in this tragic equation: he has reached a ripe old age and, according to his reminiscences, has achieved a fair measure of glory as well.[9] Even his age, as we shall see further on, does not oppress him in the

same way that it constrains the other senior characters of the poem. He is not at all a figure of pathos: the loss which binds Achilles and Priam together in Book 24 is something which Nestor has not experienced, as far as his portraiture in the Iliad is concerned. The shadow of death barely seems to touch him and, in his own way, he represents a type of success which Achilles cannot possibly hope to achieve.

Furthermore, Achilles' response to the embassy in Book 9 seems to betray his disillusionment with or alienation from his peers and the general tenor of their heroic values.[10] Certainly his request to his mother, that she supplicate Zeus and persuade him to abet the Trojans so the Achaeans will come to realize the shabbiness with which they have treated their champion, reveals at this stage a greater preoccupation on his part with personal redress than with the welfare of the army. And it is this preoccupation or self-absorption, as it were, that separates him further from a character with a temperament like Nestor's. Without compromising his heroic integrity,[11] Nestor is more objective and cooperative than the other Greek chieftains. He is, as we have seen, euphroneon, prepared to advise the assembly on the most trenchant means of conducting the war, even when his words might cause offense. And as a diplomat who "... never loses his temper" (Bassett 1938, 79), he stands far removed from the awful menis of Achilles. He is, in other words, "... not the man to grasp Achilles' fierce and uncompromising individualism" (Segal 1971, 98).[12] Although, as noted, we are denied any confrontation between these two personalities in Book 9, we nonetheless get an inkling of the chasm that exists between them. Odysseus' speech, as we shall see further on, is probably representative of Nestor's frame of mind.[13] Achilles' impassioned rejection of the proposal is a conclusive measure of how significantly his outlook diverges from Nestor's and, indeed, of just how little the two characters share. Their respective world views are poles apart. But it is this

very difference, as we shall see presently, that enables Homer to underline the alteration which the campaign undergoes when Achilles decides to retreat into his tent.

2. Achilles' Influence

From the beginning of the poem Homer emphasizes the importance of Achilles' leadership and contribution to the campaign. The success which the Greeks have enjoyed thus far is attributed entirely to Achilles' fighting prowess, the implication being that the latter's disaffection with the army will occasion a serious reversal in the fortunes of the war. Even before the actual fighting between the two armies erupts and the Greeks are eventually beaten back, Homer has us anticipating a complete breakdown in the Greek position.

In the very first line of his poem, though Homer is doubtless "... attracting the attention of his audience and showing them what the poem will be about and what it will be like" (Griffin 1980, 118), he is also stressing the inordinate influence of Achilles on the outcome of events. Clearly the man whose wrath can cause such devastation is a figure of tremendous power and authority.[14] Whatever comes to pass, we expect this Achilles to be a character of preponderating ability.

Sure enough, a mere fifty-four lines into the poem, we see Achilles, on the suggestion of Hera, call an assembly of the Achaeans to deal with a plague that has been raging in their midst for the last nine days. In acting thus Achilles evinces an "... equality with, and... superiority to, Agamemnon, even though Agamemnon is his chief and a greater king" (Arieti 1986, 22); he also demonstrates a much greater concern for the troops' welfare.[15] Achilles' competence is especially impressed upon us because it comes in the wake of the obvious self-regard and brutishness of Agamemnon some thirty lines earlier. At the same time Homer creates the impression that this initiative of

Achilles and his subsequent promise to protect Calchas against reprisals (1.85ff.)[16] set him at odds with Agamemnon and, indeed, reflect an enmity between the men reaching back into the past.[17] This feeling is reinforced when Achilles complains further on that he never receives a reward that is commensurate with his performance (1.161), and Agamemnon in turn retorts that, of all the kings, Achilles is the most hateful to him (1.176). These two characters are evidently giving voice to thoughts which have been weighing on them for some time now.[18]

Achilles also reveals how the campaign has been conducted until the scene of that quarrel: he himself[19] has borne the brunt of the war (ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολύαϊκος πολέμοιο/ χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ', 1.165-66) while Agamemnon has been abstaining all these years both from the general melee and the rigours of the raiding party (1.225ff.).[20] Nestor lends weight to these considerations when, on attempting to intercede in the dispute, he says: αὐτὰρ ἔγωγε/ λίσσομ' Ἀχιλλῆϊ μεθέμεν χόλον, ὃς μέγα πᾶσιν/ ἔρκος Ἀχαιοῖσιν πέλεται πολέμοιο κακοῖο (1.282-84). He is, in fact, alluding here to the possibility that the war, until now a reasonably successful offensive, may well become a matter of defense if not an all-out struggle for survival. "... Nestor's words in 283-84 evince a more accurate grasp [than Agamemnon's] of the situation: it is in fact a matter of defense, not offense, of staving off defeat themselves when they are deprived of the great bulwark against evil war" (Segal 1971, 101). His statement, at the outset of his speech, that Priam and the Trojans would rejoice if they were to learn of this fracture in the Achaean leadership (1.255ff.), is a pointed reference to the hard-pressed circumstances which the enemy has been experiencing up until now. As we learn from subsequent books, the Trojans have been penned within their city all these years and have not dared to venture into battle so long as Achilles has been fighting in the front ranks.[21] A quarrel among the chief Greek leaders is the best stroke of luck they could hope for. Finally, in

contrast with Agamemnon's insulting talk of Achilles' divine descent (θεοείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, 1.131), "... Nestor treats Achilles' divine parentage with the dignity which it deserves" (Segal 1971, 99). As the scene with Achilles and Thetis will show, the best of the Achaeans is instrumental to the Greek cause not only by way of his martial prowess, but also through his close connections with the gods. The Olympians obviously care for Achilles[22] and, through his mother, herself a goddess who can claim favours of Zeus and Hephaestus, he can influence their attitudes somewhat to the war.[23]

In the first book of the poem, then, Homer draws a general outline of the essential role which Achilles has had in the Trojan campaign. He does this to heighten his audience's presentiment of doom, to instil the conviction that when Achilles leaves, the Greek forces will be seriously compromised. Indeed, it is the contention of this chapter that by the end of the first book, the Greek leadership is in a state of crisis. We hope to show through a brief review of the events that follow that Homer has changed the earlier dynamics of the Greek strategy. The Greeks are now faced with situations which would never have arisen had Achilles not turned his back on them, and talents which were formerly ignored now come into an importance of their own. In circumstances where the Achaeans lack the requisite strength to drive the enemy back, someone must take command and deal with the new dangers, either by organizing the Achaeans' lines more defensively or by haranguing them when necessary or by devising means to persuade their champion to resume the war.[24] Nestor, as we shall see, is pre-eminently suited for such a role, both on account of his age and his heroic past. But let us establish first that the Greeks are compromised by Achilles' withdrawal. We shall do so by showing that many of the events that come in the wake of the quarrel are consequences of Achilles' refusal to campaign further, and that Nestor brings his own genius to bear in an effort to solve them.

3. The Effects of Achilles' Withdrawal

The logic binding the second book to the first one is not entirely straightforward. As Schofield comments, "The whole of Book 2, as has often been remarked, is irrelevant to the development of the plot..." (1986, 24).[25] The difficulty lies in aligning the visit of the dream to Agamemnon with the peira which then ensues and the furious rhetoric of Thersites. Although a basic awkwardness to the development of the plot cannot be denied,[26] there is nonetheless, we contend, a thread common to all three episodes, one which connects this book intelligibly to the previous one. The assembly is held in the wake of Achilles' retreat, and it is his wrath in fact that causes events to unfold as they do.

Zeus' decision to delude Agamemnon with the dream's false prediction of victory is easily understood. To fulfill his promise to Thetis, Zeus must somehow induce the two armies to confront each other.[27] Achilles has informed us, moreover, that Agamemnon has never personally led the army into battle (1.226ff.), and therefore we might expect that nothing short of a heaven-sent message will persuade the king to take the reins of command.[28]

Agamemnon reports the dream's message to a gathering of the chieftains, and Nestor declares that were anyone else to make such a claim they would consider it a fabrication (2.79ff.).[29] Doubtless Nestor is in part bolstering Agamemnon's authority, as he so often does.[30] But exactly what is he referring to here when he states ψεῦδός κεν φαῖμεν (2.79)? Is he professing that dreams are to be discounted in general, that they hardly qualify as the basis of sound strategy?[31] Or is it perhaps the dream's prediction more than anything else that strains his credulity? After all it was Nestor who warned Agamemnon at the time of the quarrel that he was unwise to estrange the herkos of the Achaeans. Advice like this would suggest that Nestor is expecting certain hardships to

arise now that Achilles refuses to fight. Yet Agamemnon then informs him of the dream's incredible claim. It is the news, therefore, that the nine year struggle is about to meet with a victorious end, just when the army's champion has retreated into his tent, that is responsible for Nestor's skepticism here. And, although his nature is such that he will defer to Agamemnon, he nonetheless ends his speech with the faint-hearted exhortation ἀλλ' ἄγετ', αἴ κέν πως θωρήξομεν υἷας Ἀχαιῶν (2.83). He does not seem to be convinced that the troops are going to respond to a call to arms enthusiastically.[32] Although Homer does not tell us so directly, he creates the impression that Achilles' absence is weighing heavily upon the army's spirits.

At the end of his speech describing the injunction of the dream, Agamemnon avows an intention to test the troops with words (πρῶτα δ'ἐγών ἔπεσιν πειρήσομαι, 2.73).[33] Thalmann comments, "In every council scene in Homer, a proposal meets with disagreement and debate. This scene presents a glaring exception. No one opposes the plan to test the army, which will turn out to be very nearly disastrous. Nestor, the only one to comment on Agamemnon's speech, ignores the idea, and he is revered as the most trustworthy in council" (Thalmann 1988, 9). Thalmann's first sentence is not quite accurate. In Book 7 Nestor proposes the construction of the wall, and everyone immediately assents (7.344). Similarly in Book 9, when he proposes that sentinels be posted (9.66ff.) and that Agamemnon prepare a feast for the gerontes (9.68ff.), again he meets with the gathering's approval. That Nestor does not address Agamemnon's decision to test the troops need not imply that the idea is being ignored or that "... the kings fail to do their job" (Thalmann 1988, 9). Indeed, the silence of the assembly may be an indication of the proposal's basic reasonableness. Agamemnon is leading the troops out for the first time; in view of Achilles' absence and the malaise at large in the camp, the king must ensure that his forces are willing to follow him.[34] The uncertainty

of Agamemnon's leadership at this point is, in fact, accentuated when Nestor leads the chieftains from the boule thereafter (2.84). "... We should normally expect Agamemnon to be the first to leave, and also expect ποιμένι λαῶν [2.85] to refer to him... rather than to Nestor" (Kirk 1985, 124), but that in a way is exactly the point. Agamemnon so lacks confidence at this juncture that he allows Nestor to assume his kingly prerogatives in effect. Achilles' withdrawal has turned the normal conventions upside down.[35]

The Achaean host hastens to the place of assembly. Homer's description of its movement, its chatter and emotional uproar is very detailed and impressionistic (2.86ff.). As Sheppard remarks, "This [the gathering of the army in Book 2] is no ordinary stock description of a meeting of the Achaean assembly. It represents an army already restive, likely to be easily demoralized" (Sheppard 1922, 28). Exactly what could be responsible for the army's nervous disposition? The only other occasion in the Iliad where we observe a similar excitement in the assembly, though differently described, is in Book 19, when Achilles abandons his wrath and steps into public view to effect a reconciliation. Could it be that Homer intends us to assume in Book 2 that the common soldiery are in a state of turmoil because the thought of Achilles' withdrawal is disquieting them?

Certainly Agamemnon's address to the troops (2.190) can be construed as a comment on the quarrel of the day before. He claims that Zeus has bound him in ate (2.111), an assertion which he will repeat verbatim at 9.18ff. and give voice to in Book 19 as well, where he will state unequivocally that ate was responsible for his high-handed treatment of Achilles (19.88ff.). Segal believes the ate in Book 2 is different from the ate mentioned in Books 9 and 19: "By this ate [in Book 2]... he [Agamemnon] means not his maltreatment of Achilles, but his failure to sack Troy despite Zeus' promise" (Segal 1971, 95).[36] And yet why does Agamemnon conclude precisely at this juncture that his

plans to take Troy have come to nought? He does speak of the casualties which the Greeks have sustained (2.115), but only as a means of emphasizing the utter shame of sailing home without victory,[37] not to buttress his contention that he and the army have been beaten. The Greeks of course have been unable to capture Troy all these years, but still the question remains, from the perspective of the troops at least, why their king's admission of defeat should have crystallized only now. The most economical explanation is to assume that Agamemnon is addressing the fears which Achilles' withdrawal has given rise to. He is testing the troops, after all, and such a test must be in reference to some recent incident which has called their willingness to fight into question. In their sharp exchange of the day before neither Achilles nor Agamemnon ever suggested that the army was discouraged at that very moment, or that a test was needed to measure its mettle. Achilles, in fact, promised (1.127-29)

αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ

τριπλῇ τετραπλῇ τ'αποτείσομεν, αἴ κέ ποθι Ζεὺς

δῷσι πόλιν Τροίην εὐτείχεον ἐξαλαπάξαι...

the implication being that he simply assumed the fighting was going to carry on as usual - 1.240ff. is another such example. Something has happened between one day and the next, in other words, an occurrence which, as Homer would have it, both justifies a peira and makes sense, as far as the army is concerned, of Agamemnon's sudden avowal that the time has come to pack up and go home. When the king

speaks of ate, therefore, he is touching in the most general way possible on the outcome of the quarrel and the anxiety which it has engendered. His reluctance to speak of Achilles by name and address the issue squarely is quite sensible: contrary to appearances, he must be trying to inspire the troops and this aim can hardly be achieved if he openly stresses the merits of the champion who is

responsible for leaving them in the lurch.[38]

Thersites speaks and corroborates this interpretation that the absence of Achilles has been the narrative's point of focus all along. He accuses Agamemnon of rapaciousness in words that vividly call to mind the speech of Achilles in Book 1.[39] Why would this be the case? The complexity of his character notwithstanding,[40] Thersites clearly wishes to discredit Agamemnon[41] and persuade the troops to turn themselves to the ships again. His decision, then, to recapitulate Achilles' grievance of the previous day and apply it to himself and the Achaeans as a whole (2.227ff.) must reflect an awareness on his part (and Homer's) that his audience is most likely to be swayed by this line of approach. Thersites is a demagogue (2.213ff.) and can be expected to exploit any issue that will further his ends. That he speaks of Agamemnon's unjust treatment of Achilles must mean that the quarrel, in his eyes, has the soldiers downcast.[42] "The speech [of Thersites] represents the demoralization of the ordinary soldiers after the withdrawal of Achilles and his Myrmidons and illustrates their lack of confidence in Agamemnon as commander" (Postlethwaite 1988, 135).[43]

Once Thersites has been muzzled, Odysseus and Nestor reassure the assembly. We shall review these performances of theirs further on. Of interest here are the last lines of Nestor's speech, where he advises Agamemnon to divide the army into tribes and phratries (κατὰ φῦλα, κατὰ φρήτρας, 2.362). Kirk feels the advice is "... almost too obvious" (1985, 154),[44] while Andrewes observes that it is "... momentary in its effect and is forgotten as quickly as any other attempt to organize the essentially formless homeric army" (1961, 131).[45] And yet the very timing of Nestor's advice is perhaps significant. The panic which the peira has brought about has been quashed with considerable difficulty. The army is about to array itself for battle, the first time it has done so without being under Achilles' tutelage. Perhaps, then, Homer has Nestor

advise the king as a means of accentuating, once again, the relative novelty of this situation. Perhaps we are to feel that in times past, when Achilles was in command, it was not necessary to pay strict attention to the troops' organization, or that Agamemnon's inexperience of war is of such magnitude that he must be advised with regard to details of this sort. Certainly Agamemnon praises Nestor lavishly for his recommendation (2.370). And it is perhaps because he is in such obvious need of guidance that he is moved to confirm candidly the sad state of affairs which the quarrel with Achilles has brought about (2.375-80).[46]

Fighting ensues and the consequences of Achilles' withdrawal become progressively more obvious. After the duel of Book 3, the give and take of 4, Diomedes' brilliant aristeia in 5 and Hector's visit to Troy in 6, Homer presents us with two episodes, the duel between Hector and Ajax and the construction of the wall, which seem designed to prepare us, the latter especially, for the reversal which the Achaeans will begin to experience in the books that follow.[47]

On his return to the battlefield after visiting his wife, Hector challenges the Achaean chieftains to a one-on-one combat. Given his staging of the first duel in Book 3, Homer would appear to be introducing this second one cursorily.[48] If he does have a purpose in presenting this scene, what might it be? There is, to begin with, an element of coherency in Hector's speech: the oaths of Book 3 were not fulfilled (7.67), Zeus is contriving something against one side or the other (7.70-72), let champions from both sides determine who exactly is at fault (7.73-75).[49] More meaningful than any argument of Hector's, however, is the sheer fact that he is challenging the Achaeans to begin with. In Book 5 Hera called to the Achaeans (5.788-90):[50]

ὄφρα μὲν ἐς πόλεμον πωλέσκετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,

οὐδέ ποτε Τρῶες πρὸ πυλάων Δαρδανιάων
οἴχνεσκον· κείνου γὰρ ἐδείδισαν ὄβριμον ἔγχος·

And, as far as Hector himself is concerned, we will learn further on that up until now he has never ventured farther than the Scaean gate because he was intimidated by the presence of Achilles (9.304ff., 9.352ff.). His bravado here in Book 7, therefore, confronts the Achaeans with a situation which they did not have to deal with in the period before Achilles' disaffection. Hence the chieftains' shame and consternation (7.92-93). The consequences of Achilles' absence are, in other words, very telling here.[51] And, although it cannot be denied that this episode does possess a certain structural clumsiness, it does on the other hand, through the momentary lapse of nerve it reveals in the Achaean leadership,[52] provide motivation for Nestor's proposal which follows soon after.

In his discussion of the Achaean wall, Page argues that the reasons for its proposed construction are completely inconsistent with the success which the Greeks have experienced up until that point.[53] Page points to the aristeia of Diomedes in particular, observing that his successes have been wonderful, that "... Troy is in utmost peril (Z.73ff.); not even Achilles had ever shown such prowess or been so terrible to the Trojans (Z.98ff.); only the gods can save the city now" (1966, 321-22). First we note that Helenus' assertion to Hector (6.98ff.) is indeed "...an extreme and personal view and exceeds anything in the rest of the poem, where Akhilleus is always supreme" (Kirk 1990, 168). Perhaps Helenus' hyperbole, besides its rhetorical function of inducing Hector to leave the field at a time when the Trojans are sustaining heavy losses, is a result of this very first large-scale encounter between the two armies: the Trojans have not experienced the results of an aristeia in a long time and consequently overestimate Diomedes' prowess and achievements. Achilles' aristeia further on, at any rate, will certainly prove Helenus' contention wrong. And mighty as

Diomedes' feats may be,[54] it is not as though his efforts continue straight up till the duel in Book 7. On the contrary, Homer seems to defuse Diomedes' murderous onslaught at 6.119ff., where Glaucus and the latter enter into a long exchange. Hector's visit to Troy immediately follows and, though he does tell his mother to gather the Trojan women and pray to Athena to put an end to Diomedes' rampage (6.269ff., and 6.281), the very fact the narrative has drifted away from the scene of carnage and Diomedes no longer occupies the lime-light creates the impression that the worst of the aristeia has passed.[55] Book 6 ends in fact with an exultant Paris catching Hector up (6.503ff.) and Hector's prayer that Zeus allow the Trojans to drive the Achaeans from their city (6.526ff.). Book 7, moreover, starts with the reinvigorated Hector and Paris appearing to succour the Trojans. Three Greeks are killed in quick succession (7.8-16).[56] Athena is moved to propose the duel to Apollo. Clearly the dust from Diomedes' aristeia has settled.[57]

The significance of the wall, then, may well lie in the fact that Nestor proposes its construction despite the feats of Diomedes in Books 5 and 6. In addition to the damage they have inflicted on the Greeks (7.328ff.),[58] the Trojans have managed to recover from Diomedes' aristeia to the degree that Hector feels confident enough to challenge the chiefs of the Achaeans to a duel. A situation like this does not bode well for the future. As Tsagarakis puts it, "Judging from the army's condition at present [Book 7 after the duel] Nestor seems to reckon with the Achaeans gradually moving into the defensive. He foresees the extreme danger and to avert it he proposes the building of a defensive wall round the camp for the protection of the ships and men..." (1969, 130). Moreover, Antenor's proposal to the Trojans in an assembly-scene which follows immediately upon Nestor's advice (7.345ff.) may again be an attempt on Homer's part to describe the confidence of the Trojan position. Although Antenor advises the Trojans to return Helen and the stolen treasure

now that they have broken their oaths (7.348ff.), the very fact that he feels the Greeks would be satisfied with such an offer is perhaps to be taken as a sign of faltering on the latter's part. Indeed, he makes no mention of the recompense which Agamemnon adverted to when oaths were being sworn for the duel in Book 3 (3.285f.). It would appear that the Trojan position is now strong enough to advance an offer of restitution on a much diminished scale.

The prime motivation for the wall, however, is alluded to further on in Book 9. In his response to Odysseus, Achilles observes (9.348-50):

> ἦ μὲν δὴ μάλα πολλὰ πονήσατο νόσφιν ἐμεῖο,
> καὶ δὴ τεῖχος ἔδειμε, καὶ ἤλασε τάφρον ἐπ' αὐτῷ
> εὐρεῖαν μεγάλην, ἐν δὲ σκόλοπας κατέπηξεν·

These words of his are steeped in sarcasm. The Greeks have built themselves a wall without his help, yes, but the insinuation here and in the lines that follow (9.352ff.) is that if he were back in action such a contrivance would not be necessary to begin with. It is true, as Leaf observes,[59] that Nestor does not specifically mention Achilles' absence as a reason for the wall's construction. The poem, however, has observed on numerous previous occasions that Achilles' disappearance has been the fundamental inspiration for the Trojans' sortie. When Nestor warns μή ποτ' ἐπιβρίσῃ πόλεμος Τρώων ἀγερώχων (7.343), he must be referring to Achilles' retreat and the vulnerability it has exposed in the Greeks' defenses. "[The episode of the building of the wall] belongs to the main narrative as the natural and inevitable consequence of Achilles' wrath which has resulted in the death of many Achaeans. To avoid total destruction the Achaeans built that defensive wall round their camp. It has been indicated in the poem that with Achilles' wrath there would have been no need for such a wall" (Tsagarakis 1969, 131).[60]

From Book 8 on, it is so obvious that Achilles' absence is the determining cause of the Achaeans' reversals that very little need be stated

here. On account of the Trojan bivouac outside the city's walls, Agamemnon speaks of defeat at the start of Book 9 and, pressed by Nestor, acknowledges that the situation is desperate because Achilles is not fighting (9.116ff.). This precipitates the posting of sentinels and, more important, the embassy. And Agamemnon's continuing apprehensions lead to the night council of Book 10 and Diomedes' and Odysseus' raid. The battle resumes in Book 11. Agamemnon, Diomedes and Odysseus are wounded, and the Achaean rout verges on the catastrophic. Patroclus approaches Nestor's tent and the seeds of his downfall, and the rescue of the army, are sown. From bordering on the near disastrous, the Achaeans' well-being is restored the instant Achilles decides to embroil himself in the conflict again.

4. Nestor's Effectiveness

It is high time that we investigated Nestor's personal contribution to the series of events we discussed in the preceding sections. We have put forth the theory that Nestor's role is essentially that of a strategist who tries to compensate for the state of emergency which Achilles' withdrawal has given rise to. To prove this, we have argued thus far that the events in Book 2 and following are indeed consequences of the quarrel of Book 1. It remains now to demonstrate that Nestor does seize the slackened reins of command and deals with the Achaeans' predicament productively, or at least to the degree that circumstances allow. And, having shown that Nestor is in fact effective, we must try to explain how this effectiveness of his has come about.

There is no denying that Homer casts Nestor as a figure of influence. In Book 1 he alone of the Achaeans tries to intercede between Agamemnon and Achilles.[61] When Agamemnon reports his dream in Book 2, Nestor is again the only Greek to address the issue.[62] When the test goes awry, Nestor caps

Odysseus' speech with an exhortation of his own and prompts Agamemnon to marshall the host. In Book 4 we see him organizing his own troops actively (4.293ff.), while in Book 7 he not only harangues the chiefs until one of them is induced to face Hector in single combat, but thereupon recommends that the dead be buried and a wall constructed. The posting of sentinels (9.66ff.)[63] and the embassy of Book 9 are, of course, organized entirely by him (9.111-13, 9.165ff., 9.179ff.) and, again, he is responsible for the nocturnal raid in the Doloneia (10.204ff.). Book 11 marks his most important contribution by far: it is Nestor who, through his advice to Patroclus, puts into effect a chain of events which will end up returning Achilles to the conflict. In every instance, then, when Achilles' absence generates difficulties, Nestor is the one who either introduces stop-gap measures or takes action to win Achilles back.[64]

Nestor is very much appreciated for his good will and wisdom. His advice and integrity are often praised by the poem's different characters or by Homer himself. When he is first introduced Homer describes him as ἡδυεπής (1.248) and states that his speech is sweeter than honey. Several lines later Homer tells us he is euphroneon (1.253 and again 2.78, 7.326 and 9.95), a tribute to his commitment to the army's general welfare. When the dream visits Agamemnon in the guise of Nestor, Homer comments that he is one whom Agamemnon honours most (Νέστορι, τόν ῥα μάλιστα γερόντων τῖ' Ἀγαμέμνων, 2.21). We see proof of this when Agamemnon reacts ecstatically to Nestor's counsel that the troops be arranged according to tribes and phratries (2.370ff.), and again when they meet in the epipolesis. And although Menestheus is praised in the Catalogue of Ships for his ability to marshall troops, Nestor alone is said to be his equal in this respect (2.553ff.). And Homer comments in Book 7, when Nestor is on the verge of addressing the assembly: Νέστωρ, οὗ καὶ πρόσθεν ἀρίστη φαίνετο βουλή (7.325 and again 9.94). The Achaeans obey him readily when he advises the posting of sentinels (9.79), and, after he appoints

Phoenix, Ajax and Odysseus ambassadors to Achilles, we are told his words find favour with everyone (9.173). Similar reactions accompany his proposal of the construction of the wall and his response to Agamemnon's description of the dream (7.344 and 2.85 respectively), while Patroclus' heart is stirred at the conclusion of Nestor's reminiscence in Book 11 (11.804). Agamemnon announces to Menelaus in Book 10 that he is off to consult the 'heavenly' (dios) Nestor (10.54, and the same epithet is applied to Nestor at 2.57 as well). A few lines later Homer refers flatteringly to Nestor as the poimen laon (10.73),[65] and explains in the following book that Nestor possesses the maidservant Hecamede because the Achaeans wished to reward him for the excellence of his counsel (11.626-27). Patroclus, too, compliments him with the title ouros Achaion (11.840; Homer describes Nestor as such on three further occasions, 8.80, 15.370 and 15.659), a significant reminder of the crucial defensive role which Nestor plays while Achilles withholds himself from the fighting.[66]

The reactions of some commentators to Nestor, on the other hand, has been unenthusiastic. "Nestor is not such an unqualified success. Though introduced as venerable, well-intentioned and eloquent, he utterly fails to heal the dispute [in Book 1] because he defers too much to Agamemnon. The false dream takes his form.... He is the only elder to speak in the boule and there he once again fails to prevent a difficult development by allowing Agamemnon too much respect. After Odysseus' calm, urgent speech, Nestor supplies emotive bluster [at 2.336-68]..." (Taplin 1992, 90). Similarly Falkner states, "... Nestor's record as a wise counselor at critical moments is mixed, and his advice can be empty, ignored or tragically off course. In Iliad I, his recommendations to Agamemnon and Achilles are disregarded. It is Nestor who suggests the failed embassy to Achilles... and Nestor who suggests to Patroclus that he do battle in Achilles' armor. It is ironic that the 'Evil Dream'

which suggests the disastrous assembly of Iliad II takes his form and is seconded by him (II, 79-83). Nestor's futile diplomacy in Book I is echoed in the comic parody of the quarrel on Olympus, with the officious and lame Hephaestus almost a burlesque of Nestor" (1989, 31-32). Finley feels that with the exception of Nestor's proposal to construct the wall, "Nestor's talk was invariably emotional and psychological, aimed at bolstering morale or soothing overheated tempers, not at selecting the course of action" (Finley 1979, 114-15). And Querbach argues, chiefly with respect to Nestor, "Often in the Iliad advice which is uncontroversial is also quite obvious and trivial and as such unobjectionable to the younger men" (1976, 59), one implication being that much of what Nestor says is discountable. What are we to make of such criticism? Let us treat the objectionable instances one by one.

The situation facing Nestor in Book 1 is far from enviable.[67] Each of the contestants has worked the other up to a furious pitch. Achilles has threatened to withdraw (1.169ff.), and Agamemnon has told him to be on his way once Briseis has been surrendered (1.173ff.). Achilles, in turn, has come within a hair's breadth of killing the king (1.193-4) but, at Athena's prompting, has curbed himself and hurled a string of choice insults instead (1.225ff.). He has capped his strong words with an oath: he will not fight again until the Achaeans are hard pressed (1.233ff.). Homer comments at the conclusion of Achilles' speech: 'Ατρεΐδης δ'ἐτέρωθεν ἐμήνιε (1.247). Only now does Nestor step forward to intervene. Far from showing too much deference to Agamemnon, as Taplin argues in the quotation above, he "... attempts to resolve the budding conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles by according each his own sphere of excellence.... Nestor's reference to a distinctly royal τιμή and κῦδος reminds Achilles that a king's status is not a mere reflection of his achievements. On the other hand, Nestor makes it clear that Agamemnon is disregarding δασμός etiquette by taking back a rewarded prize, and implies the crucial importance of

Achilles in battle" (Collins 1988, 89).[68] If Nestor's language with Agamemnon is too tame, that is because in circumstances such as these, "... the strong language of moral denunciation is just inappropriate" (Schofield 1986, 29). Infatuated as Agamemnon might be,[69] he must be persuaded to give in and not be coerced. And even if Nestor were to adopt a different, more abrasive tone, Homer has depicted a situation that is so out of control that, "By the time Nestor gets the floor it is too late" (Redfield 1975, 14).[70] The telling point of this episode, in other words, is that in spite of the efforts of a character as commendably sensible as Nestor, the quarrel concludes on a disastrous note: Agamemnon's selfishness and the towering dimensions of Achilles' heroic temper are such that no amount of diplomacy can smooth over the disturbance.[71] Nestor's efforts, on the contrary, are completely vindicated by the disastrous rout that ensues. And it is precisely because he did try to intervene that Nestor, by stressing the fact that his advice in Book 1 was not followed, easily persuades Agamemnon to make some attempt at a reconciliation in Book 9. Nestor's failure to resolve the argument in Book 1, then, is not to be taken as a sign of ineffectiveness on his part.[72]

There does appear to be a parallel between Nestor's efforts with Achilles and Agamemnon, and Hephaestus' with Zeus and Hera, as Falkner observes. But does Homer intend his audience to interpret Hephaestus' admittedly comic exertions as something of a burlesque of Nestor's attempts to intervene? The tone of Achilles' and Agamemnon' exchange is deadly serious. The consequences of a withdrawal on Achilles' part are potentially catastrophic, as Nestor himself recognizes. Is it likely, then, that in his presentation of the Olympian quarrel and restoration of peace through the doddering Hephaestus Homer is commenting adversely on Nestor's performance and perhaps trying to provoke a smile at the gerontocrat's expense? Nestor's task was hopeless from the start, we have argued, and his failure gives rise to nothing but

tragedy. There is nothing comic about Nestor's failed diplomacy in Book 1, then. Instead, by contrasting the dispute on earth with a celestial one, Homer surely "... dramatizes the gulf between the urgency and finality of human affairs and the almost comic triviality of divine" (Segal 1971, 91).[73]

In Book 2 the deceitful dream which Zeus dispatches to Agamemnon assumes the guise of Nestor. Are Taplin's and Falkner's suppositions correct, that the dream's treachery is somehow an ironic comment on Nestor's performance as a whole? Surely not. Homer states (2.20-21):

στῆ δ'ἄρ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς Νηληΐῳ υἱῖ ἐοικώς
Νέστορι, τόν ῥα μάλιστα γερόντων τῖ' 'Αγαμέμνων·

The effect of the relative clause here is to explain exactly why the dream masquerades itself as Nestor rather than some other personality. By placing his report in the mouth of Agamemnon's most trusted advisor, the baneful dream makes its incredible claim seem all the more believable.[74] That Nestor is chosen as the dream's vehicle is, in fact, a compliment of sorts to the gerontocrat's wisdom and rectitude.[75]

Once Odysseus has managed to drive the unruly soldiers back to the assembly in Book 2, both he and Nestor address the men in an attempt to rekindle their enthusiasm. Davison regards Odysseus' oratory here as "... the finest speech ever composed for such an occasion..." (1965, 17). Does Nestor's speech, on the other hand, amount to 'emotive bluster' as Taplin contends? Does the episode gain nothing from his contribution? Certainly the tone of the two speeches is very different, and this very fact suggests that the one is possibly to be interpreted as the complement of the other. Odysseus starts with a reprimand but mitigates its harshness by addressing his remarks to Agamemnon rather than to the troops themselves (2.284ff.). Immediately thereafter, having denigrated them in the third person as children and widows (2.289), he evinces sympathy for the men and acknowledges how hard it is to be

separated from one's family for a space of nine years. He then calls them 'friends' (philoi, 2.299) and, to persuade them to endure, reminds them of the portent at Aulis. His final statement ἀλλ' ἄγε, μίμνετε πάντες, εὐκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοί,/ αὐτοῦ, εἰς ὅ κεν ἄστυ μέγα Πριάμοιο ἕλωμεν (2.331-32), has a cajoling, friendly ring to it, one which is free of any intimidation and suggests that the men are free to make up their minds as they please. But, although Odysseus' performance is truly brilliant and powerfully affects its audience (2.333ff.), he has not re-established Agamemnon's authority; in fact, by appealing to the troops themselves to refrain from desertion of their own free will, he seemingly violates his earlier prescription of good government: οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,/ εἷς βασιλεύς (2.204-5).[76] He has, in other words, dealt with only part of the task in hand. This is perhaps why Nestor takes a harder line.[77] He sails directly into the host and endeavours "... to bring home to the Greeks the seriousness of the commitments which underpin their assembly before Troy, and which should govern its conduct..." (Schofield 1986, 12). There is meaning in synthesiai and orkia, he insists (2.339). Thereupon he turns to Agamemnon and enjoins him to take his place at the head of the army (2.344ff.), dealing with an important matter which Odysseus' speech left unfinished. His mention of a favourable omen - Zeus' lightning to the right of the ships (2.348ff.) - is perhaps intended to supplement Odysseus' description of the portent at Aulis, and need not necessarily imply that he is ignoring the latter.[78] Nestor then tells the men that they owe it to themselves to stay and exact payment for their exertions (2.354ff.), yet at the same time does not pretend that the decision to soldier on rests with them alone. Any further attempts at departure will be punished with death (2.357ff.). Finally, again fixing his attention on Agamemnon, he advises the king to marshall the army (2.360ff.). This enables Agamemnon to address the host himself - for the first time since his feigned proposal that they pull up stakes - and take practical

measures to prepare his men for battle. Despite the fundamental role which Odysseus has played, then, it is only after Nestor has spoken and reinstated Agamemnon as the army's commander-in-chief that the turbulence created by the test reaches its end.[79]

In the rout of Book 8, Nestor experiences difficulties with his team and faces death at the hands of the onrushing Hector (8.80ff.). Sheppard comments of this scene, "It amuses us that this should happen to Nestor, who has shown himself so proud of his chariot tactics, so anxious to show us that his age does not discount the values of his lectures on that theme" (1922, 62). Certainly Diomedes' speech to Nestor (8.102ff.) creates the impression that the old man has overreached himself. And yet one must not underestimate the effect of Nestor's presence on the battlefield. When the old man approaches the three wounded kings in Book 14, his absence from the fighting causes something of a panic (πτῆξε δὲ θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν, 14.80).[80] Agamemnon, in fact, immediately supposes that Hector is now going to make good his threats (14.42ff.), a reaction which credits Nestor with some importance to the actual fighting. And even Diomedes' rescue of the impotent Nestor in Book 8 perhaps contributes to the portrayal of Nestor's overall consequence to the Greek war effort. As Hector's horses are closing in on the hapless greybeard, Homer recounts (8.90-91):

> καί νύ κεν ἔνθ' ὁ γέρων ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὄλεσσεν
> εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὀξὺ νόησε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης·

Fenik comments of such contrary to fact constructions in the Iliad, "... it is a regular stylistic feature for a situation to be carried to the extreme and the inevitable consequences then averted only by some intervention, either human or divine" (Fenik 1968, 221). The outcome narrowly avoided in instances such as these are almost always very serious: the Greeks would have abandoned the war had Hera not taken notice (2.155ff.); Paris would have met

his end had Aphrodite not come to his rescue (3.373ff.); Troy would have been taken had Helenus not advised Hector and Aeneas (6.73ff.); Menelaus would have been killed by Hector had Agamemnon not dissuaded his brother from accepting Hector's challenge (7.104ff.); the Trojans would have been penned inside their city and suffered incurable disaster had Zeus not intervened (8.130ff.); Hector would have set the ships on fire if Hera had not roused the Achaeans (8.217ff.); the Achaeans would have fled to their ships and experienced terrible losses had Odysseus not rallied Diomedes (11.310ff.); Troy would have fallen to the Greeks under Patroclus' leadership had Apollo not helped the Trojans out (16.698ff.). This scene, then, where Nestor almost dies but is saved by Diomedes is part of a series of disastrous potentialities. If Nestor had fallen to Hector, the construction implies, the entire drama of the poem would have taken a significant turn. Nestor's brush with death, then, is far from comic; on the contrary it emphasizes Nestor's essential place in the Iliad's scheme of things.[81]

And what are we to make of Nestor's involvement in the embassy? He is the one who orchestrates its details, appoints the characters who are to compose it (9.168ff.) and the arguments that are to be employed (9.179ff.). In fact, the tack Odysseus follows with Achilles is the one which Nestor himself has judged to be most promising, but it is also the one which Achilles reacts most adversely to. Is it not to Nestor's discredit, then, that he proposes the embassy to begin with and exacerbates the situation by sponsoring the line of argument that finds least favour in Achilles' eyes? Certainly this is Falkner's insinuation.

The idea of dispatching an embassy to Achilles is, in actual fact, very reasonable at this juncture. Book 8 ended with the terrifying spectre of a thousand campfires glowing on the strip of plain between the ships and the river Xanthus (8.560ff.). In the first lines of Book 9, Homer embarks on a

detailed description of the utter panic that has struck at the heart of the Greek camp (9.1-8). Agamemnon is utterly despondent (9.9ff.). Diomedes, it is true, inspires the troops briefly with his bravado, but his speech serves more to reject Agamemnon's pitiful recommendation, that the army flee while it can, than to propound a course of action which will deal with the Trojans' unnerving propinquity. After the rout of that day and the threat of heavy casualties on the morrow, it is clearly time for the fundamental problem to be addressed. Hence Nestor's declaration to Agamemnon, that the king was wrong to estrange Achilles (9.104ff.), the implication being that matters will not improve until the Greek champion dons his armour again.

Agamemnon accepts this rebuke. However, in answer to Nestor's proposition - φραζώμεσθ' ὥς κέν μιν ἀρεσσάμενοι πεπίθωμεν/ δώροισίν τ'ἀγανοῖσιν ἐπεσσί τε μειλιχίοισι (9.112-13) - Agamemnon lists the indemnity he will pay in great detail, but fails to mention anything about conciliatory words. In fact he concludes his lavish inventory with the remark καί μοι ὑποστήτω, ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι/ ἠδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὔχομαι εἶναι (9.160-61).[82] This attitude of Agamemnon's sets obvious limits on the reparations which Nestor can effect. A full, unqualified apology is out of the question. Given the fury of Achilles' reaction to Odysseus' citation of the gifts, however, one assumes he was expecting an avowal of fault from Agamemnon as well, if not a visit from the king in person.[83] Material compensation is certainly insufficient on its own.[84] And if Nestor has backed the wrong horse, so to speak, has concentrated more on Odysseus' formal delivery than the personal appeals of the other two ambassadors, his mistake is due to his inability to grasp the dynamics of Achilles' personality. As we have seen in an earlier section, Achilles and Nestor stand at opposite poles. Entrenched as he is in the heroic code, Nestor assumes the quarrel can be breached by means of gifts and healing words. What else is there to offer? Achilles himself does not necessarily know, but his

uniqueness among men and his strange clarity of vision, it would seem, leave him with a yawning sense of dissatisfaction.[85] Nestor was bound to fail, in other words, both because of Agamemnon's intransigence and the impossibility of appeasing Achilles in accordance with the traditional redress in keeping with the heroic code. If the embassy has not succeeded,[86] it is not his fault. There is no swaying a temperament of unearthly proportions.[87]

As far as Finley's assertion is concerned, that Nestor merely bolsters morale and does not influence Achaean policy, one need only examine Nestor's record to verify that this appraisal does not do justice to the facts. It is Nestor who browbeats the chieftains into accepting Hector's challenge, who recommends the embassy and the night foray of Book 10, and who sways Patroclus to petition Achilles for his Myrmidons and armour.[88] And the advice which influences the poem's events so decisively is hardly trivial, as Querbach contends. In all of the instances listed above, Nestor propounds solutions which have eluded the other Greek chieftains, or compensates for their momentary lack of command. So effective, in fact, is the old man's initiative that it is only on Achilles' return that the poet allows him to become eclipsed.

If Nestor is indeed an Achaean counsellor of influence, why is it that he enjoys this status to begin with? As we have seen in the previous chapter, the elderly, though respected for their wisdom and objectivity, are at times objects of scorn on account of their inability to compete in athletic games and battle and through the vulnerability which attends them once their children are unable to safeguard their interests. How is it, then, that a Nestor has escaped the abject condition of a Chryses, a Phoenix and, more tellingly, a Priam? How has Homer managed to cast him in something of a heroic light? What, in other words, is the absolute foundation of Nestor's authority? The answer lies

partly in the fact that Homer has deliberately downplayed the negative characteristics of senescence in Nestor's case,[89] and partly in Nestor's heroic performances in times past.

We note first one obvious difference between Nestor and the Iliad's other aged characters: the poet says point-blank of him ἐπεὶ οὐ μὲν ἐπέτρεπε γήραϊ λυγρῷ (10.79). Unlike the rest of his age-mates, Nestor is a regular participant on the battlefield.[90] He is clearly to be distinguished from the Trojan elders, for example, who, Homer tells us, ἥατο δημογέροντες ἐπὶ Σκαιῇσι πύλῃσι,/ γήραϊ δὴ πολέμοιο πεπαυμένοι (3.149-50). Of all the older characters, he alone is expressly said to equip himself with arms (10.75ff., 14.9ff.). And, in addition to all the descriptions of his appearances in council and on the perimeter of the fighting, Homer adds a charming example of the old man's undying vigour: he alone can effortlessly lift his magnificent cup when full (11.636ff.).

More to the point, Homer downplays Nestor's relationship with his sons. Though Thrasymedes and Antilochus appear quite frequently throughout the poem, the latter especially, Nestor's contact with them is minimal. In Book 17 we are told that Thrasymedes and Antilochus are fighting at a distance from the front in accordance with their father's dictates (17.381ff.), and in Book 23 Nestor advises Antilochus on the tactics he is to adopt if he hopes to meet with victory in the chariot race (23.306ff.). In the first instance we encounter the reverse of a common motif. Lycaon, Polydorus and Hector die because they have neglected the advice of their fathers. In a similar vein, events in Calydon reach a near catastrophic climax because Meleager refuses to hearken to his father (among others), while the Greeks themselves are suffering deplorably because both Achilles and Patroclus have ignored their fathers' parting counsel (9.252ff., 11.765ff.). Thrasymedes and Antilochus, on the other hand, do in fact observe Nestor's injunction - they have deliberately confined themselves to a quadrant of the field where the fighting is less

threatening - and thereby spare their father the tragedy which follows in the wake of a son's willfulness.[91] Nestor's dealings with Antilochus in Book 23 are a different matter. We learn from the Odyssey (3.111-12), the Aethiopis and Pindar's Sixth Pythian (30ff.) that Nestor does in fact lose this son to Memnon later on in the campaign. It is possible, as we shall argue presently, that the scene of the father advising his son in Iliad 23 alludes to Nestor's upcoming loss.[92] This foreshadowing, however, occurs at a stage in the poem when Nestor has been ousted, so to speak, by Achilles' return. His insuperability, as far as his age is concerned, is no longer an important consideration as it was when he was substituting for Achilles, so to speak. The vulnerability, then, which would appear to be a consequence of parenthood in the Iliad, does not encumber Nestor to the same extent as it does the poem's other aged parents, at least not while Nestor is in active command.

Unimpeded by dependents and with an aspect which is not quite so frail as that of his compeers, Nestor, not surprisingly, never appears in the poem as a suppliant. Homer spares him the humiliation of begging someone stronger than himself for a personal favour. Whereas Priam, Chryses and Phoenix are characters with whom the audience sympathize to some degree, there is nothing piteous or abject about Nestor.

The greatest difference between Nestor and the other old men of the poem, however, is his possession of a heroic past. Priam, Chryses and the others do not, according to what Homer has told us, appear to have achieved heroic stature in their youth. All that is revealed of Priam's past, for example, is that he was once an ally in the war against the Amazons (3.182ff.). There is not a single detail that would suggest his performance in times past was extraordinary. The same is true of Phoenix. Though he does supply us with a brief synopsis of his personal history (9.447ff.), he never lays claim to the feats which a champion might accomplish. Peleus is in fact the only other senior

whose war record might bear comparison with Nestor's, but nothing direct is seen of this character and, unlike Nestor, he would seem to have surrendered himself to the erosive features of old age.

Nestor, on the other hand, not only speaks of an active past, but recounts feats whose magnitude would easily put him on a par with the greatest Achaean chieftains before Troy. "The deeds Nestor claims here," Pedrick observes of Nestor's reminiscence at 11.670ff. for example, "are all typical of the battles fought elsewhere in the Iliad.... Close inspection reveals that his deeds are not common. They are the feats of the greatest warriors during that moment of inspiration and valour known as an aristeia" (1983, 63). He seems to leave no heroic context unmentioned: not only is it the general melee he has excelled in (11.670ff.), but he triumphed as well in the one-on-one duel (7.133ff.), the athletic competition (23.630ff.) and, given the nature of the quarry (φηρσὶν ὀρεσκῴοισι), in something of a hunt as well (1.266ff.). His achievements are of the same magnitude as those of Tydeus whom both Agamemnon (4.372ff.) and Athena (5.801ff.) seem to point to as the model epic warrior: the games and slaughter recounted at 4.370ff. bear easy comparison with Nestor's speeches of Books 11 and 23.

The last point furnishes an important clue to our understanding of Nestor's prominence. "At the point of social development depicted in the Iliad position without standing [based on authority] is an almost impossible conception..." (Donlan 1979, 53). This standing, as Phoenix suggests (9.439ff.), is based on the Homeric character's capabilities as both a competent speaker and a competent warrior. Nestor fits this prescription perfectly, as he "... presents himself not as a speaker, but as a heroic performer of both words and deeds. His narrative of personal experience is convincing because it calls for evaluation, even challenge" (Martin 1989, 82). Nestor is entitled to address the assembly as he does because, besides the obvious soundness of the advice

which he puts forward, he can lay claim to a past that is every bit as distinguished as the present record of the younger Achaean counsellors.[93] And this is one of the reasons why Homer has him take such pains to recount the valorous conduct of his youth. With every one of his reminiscences Nestor reminds his audience that his standing in their company is easily vindicated.[94]

5. The Uniqueness of Nestor's Contribution

We have argued thus far that a great part of the Iliad revolves around the problems that arise as a result of Achilles' estrangement from the army. On account of the wisdom and objectivity which his advanced years promote and the complementary prowess of his youth, Nestor is able to initiate stratagems that compensate in part for the sudden breakdown in the Achaeans' position. But why Nestor? What about the other Greek agoretai, Agamemnon, Diomedes and Odysseus? Do they lack the essential characteristics that allow Nestor to intervene as he does? Necessary as Nestor's contribution is, is it in addition unique? Let us briefly contrast Nestor with each of the above-named personalities.

We need not argue at length to establish Agamemnon's deficiencies as a leader. Homer has depicted the Achaean commander-in-chief's faults so glaringly that commentators are virtually unanimous in their assessment of his character. Agamemnon is "... magnificently dressed incompetence without spirit or spiritual concern" (Whitman 1958, 162), "... is a brute, a bully, an incompetent" (Davison 1965, 18 n.18), "... fights brutally,... criticizes indiscriminately,... is incapable of apologizing with any warmth or nobility..." (Taplin 1990, 79), "... is utterly selfish, craven, ignoble" (Bassett 1938, 97), "... occupies a social role which is... too big for him" (Redfield 1975, 93), and "... more often than not employs the threat of violence to achieve his way"

(Martin 1989, 114). Even Donlan, who feels Agamemnon has been roughly handled by his critics, admits "... the king's sense of responsibility to his people conflicts with his obsession over position and dignity, and, ultimately, it is the latter that dominates" (1971, 111). If Nestor is in fact making up for a sudden imbalance in the Greek leadership, then Agamemnon is a part of the problem with which he is forced to contend. The very temper that has alienated Achilles from the army to begin with clearly cannot be expected to behave diplomatically when diplomacy is called for. And a temperament so easily prone to defeatism and discouragement only exacerbates the critical conditions confronting the Achaeans and, obviously, is bound to be ineffective as far as devising solutions is concerned.

And yet, the very nature of Agamemnon's defects makes him amenable to a character like Nestor's. He may berate Menestheus and Odysseus (4.338ff.) and Diomedes (4.370ff.) and, in his address to Teucer, refer tactlessly to the latter's bastardy (8.283ff.),[95] but his language with Nestor is always respectful and appreciative, even when he himself is being criticized (e.g. 1.286ff., 2.370ff., 4.313ff., 9.115ff.). This polite tone is elicited from Agamemnon by several characteristics which Nestor brings to bear simultaneously. He is, to begin with, uncompetitive. Agamemnon's dispute with Achilles, for example, centres on the issue of whether the latter's "... standing has greater social value than the king's position" (Donlan 1979, 53). Both Diomedes and Odysseus, moreover, call Agamemnon's capabilities into question, the first by asserting that Zeus has granted Agamemnon a formal sovereignty over other men but at the same time has withheld honour from him (9.38-39), the second by reviling him heatedly as one who does not deserve his position of command (14.84-87). Agamemnon's earlier rebuke of these same two characters in Book 4 may well signify his fear that their standing is somehow weightier than his own.[96] Nestor alone causes him no anxiety in this respect. His age precludes him from

the Homeric hero's general struggle for honour - Redfield's zero-sum system in which "... time awarded to one must in effect be withdrawn from others" (Redfield 1975, 33) - and therefore he can advise and even chastise the king without fear of an outburst or vindictive reprisal. At the same time, however, Nestor's impressive background guarantees him sufficient standing so that, in yielding to the aged counsellor, Agamemnon does not feel he is submitting to an inferior, as was the case when he was requested to yield to Chryses and perhaps Calchas as well. When events prove too daunting for Agamemnon's limited reserve of confidence, Nestor's soundness of wisdom and boundless tact both provide the king with a policy which temporarily helps him out of the impasse, and allow him to entertain the notion that he himself is still in command. Nestor's competence and Agamemnon's inadequacy enjoy a certain symbiosis, strange as it might seem. The king's vanity and defeatism bring a counsellor like Nestor and only like Nestor to the fore.

Diomedes and Nestor, on the other hand, are in some sense reflections of each other.[97] In two of his reminiscences, Nestor stresses the rawness of his years at the time of his exploits γενεῇ δὲ νεώτατος ἔσχον ἁπάντων, 7.153; οὕνεκά μοι τύχε πολλὰ νέῳ πολεμόνδε κιόντι, 11.684). Diomedes similarly observes that of all the chieftains he is the youngest (14.122). And just as Nestor's relationship with his sons is downplayed, so Diomedes is without a father, as he himself tells Glaucus (6.222ff.). Indeed, Homer seems to toy with the idea of a surrogate father/son relationship between the two. At 9.57ff. Nestor perhaps hints at his availability as a parent when he observes to Diomedes that the latter is young enough to be his son. And, more to the point, the rescue scene in Book 8, where Diomedes saves Nestor from the ravages of Hector, has been interpreted as a variation on the rescue in the Aethiopis of Nestor by his son Antilochus.[98] Certainly the interaction of these two characters is unusually warm here, as it

is again when Nestor wakes Diomedes in Book 10 (10.157ff.).[99] Both Nestor and Diomedes, moreover, share a common measure of success: throughout the Iliad, in spite of Nestor's vulnerability in Book 8 and Diomedes' wounds in Book 5 (95ff.) and 11 (373ff.), neither character suffers setback in his particular sphere of excellence. Predominance in the council comes as readily to Nestor as victory in battle falls to Diomedes in Book 5.[100] Both are supremely confident of their ability to take command. And neither of them labours under a pall of oncoming tragedy[101]. Diomedes, like Nestor, has little in common with the short-lived, brooding Achilles. Like the gerontocrat, Diomedes is kept quite separate from the best of the Achaeans: he comes into prominence only after Achilles' withdrawal and, with the exception of his appearance in the funeral games, virtually vanishes after Achilles' re-emergence. In fact, "In the poem as a whole... Diomedes can be seen as an Achilles-figure, representing that hero's power and divine protection in a pre-wrath context" (Hinckley 1986, 216).[102] Again like Nestor, then, Diomedes' function in the poem is to play something of a substitute for the absent champion.

As much as they share in common, however, Diomedes and Nestor express themselves very differently. In keeping with his bold, aggressive display on the battlefield, Diomedes speaks his mind in council without any attempt to mince his words. He evinces no tact, no diplomacy. Martin views him as "... the model of the young Greek male initiated into forceful speaking" (Martin 1989, 23), while Nestor acts as something of his instructor. Their exchange in Book 9 illustrates this well. In response to Agamemnon's craven suggestion that the army make a run for the ships, Diomedes states categorically that the king can sail home if he so desires but the rest of the army is determined to fight on. He goes on to say that, even if no one else will abide, he at least will persevere with Sthenelus (9.42ff.). His exhibition of valour, though commended by the army (9.50-51), is a far cry from the sound advice of

an objective counsellor. He has not addressed the threat which confronts the Achaeans at this juncture, but has instead merely articulated his own determination to soldier on regardless of the risks. The blindness of this resolution will be exposed when Diomedes himself is forced to retire in Book 11 and the Achaeans come to hover on the brink of annihilation.[103] It falls to Nestor to recommend a viable remedy to the impasse here and sure enough, with his characteristic delicacy, he supplements Diomedes' speech with proposals of his own.[104] Diomedes' youthful bravado and competitiveness have prevented him from advising the Greeks objectively here. His words, he informs Agamemnon, are in part prompted by the harangue he received earlier in Book 4 (9.34ff.). And when the embassy returns empty-handed, Diomedes' immediate impulse is to berate the king a second time for having offered Achilles gifts to begin with and confirmed him in his haughtiness (9.697ff.): the embassy's supplication of Achilles has involved him personally in a loss of face. True, "Diomedes grows in rhetorical ability through the rest of the poem. By Book 14 we see that he has learned to construct an impregnable speech..." (Martin 1989, 25), but certainly throughout the poem's earlier books he is too self-absorbed with his personal honour and the waging of an offensive campaign to turn his attention to a more defensive strategy. The proposal to construct a wall and dispatch an embassy would be inconsistent with his forceful character. His youth precludes him, then, from counselling the Greeks as the crisis dictates.

Odysseus' case is somewhat different. Unlike Diomedes, he plays a role somewhat similar to Nestor's on several occasions. He conducts Chryseis back to her father (1.430ff.), restrains the troops when Agamemnon's test goes awry (2.182ff.), adopts something of a Nestorean tone in the embassy to Achilles, rebukes Agamemnon when his nerve fails him in Book 14 (14.83ff.), and

insists that Achilles allow the troops to breakfast before leading them out onto the battlefield (19.155ff., 216ff.).[105] Like Nestor, Odysseus is said on one occasion to speak euphroneon, with that general good intent which is, we have argued, the mark of an objective counsellor (2.283).[106] It is certainly true, therefore, that "In style... Odysseus resembles the ideal of Nestor" (Martin 1989, 121). What is it about the old counsellor, then, that makes him more prominent and commanding than Odysseus?

It is worthwhile pointing out that Odysseus' craft, rhetorical skills and diplomacy are often employed in situations which require a certain physical exertion on his part. In Book 1, for example, the return of Chryseis necessitates travel and sacrifice. When the troops take Agamemnon's words too literally in Book 2, Odysseus must run to and fro to restrain them. And the craft that recommends Odysseus to Diomedes in the night foray of the Doloneia (10.246-47)[107] is to be employed in a rigorous, albeit brief, military excursion. Needless to say, these are activities which Nestor could not take part in realistically. Odysseus, then, does not so much encroach upon the old man's operations as extend his policy of deliberation and tactfulness into circumstances which Nestor's infirmity bars him from.

This observation does not hold true of the embassy in Book 9, however. Nestor could easily have accompanied Odysseus and the others to Achilles' tent and petitioned the latter personally to rejoin the army. Why then is Odysseus called upon to represent him in his absence? This is in part due, as we have argued, to Homer's desire to keep Nestor and Achilles separate. But it is also possible that the poet is reluctant to depict the aged Nestor suffering an obvious reverse. We observed in an earlier section that, of all the ambassadors' speeches, Odysseus' is most influenced by Nestor.[108] Just how great Nestor's impact has been becomes clear when Nestor appeals to Patroclus further on in Book 11. This speech echoes much of Odysseus' performance: both characters

begin with a description of the disasters besetting the camp (Odysseus: 9.228-46, Nestor: 11.656-64); each then advises Achilles to stave off ruin from the army before it is too late (Odysseus: 9.247-51, Nestor: 11.664-68); both mention the visit to Phthia at the time of the muster, and recall the advice of Peleus and Menoetius to their sons, respectively (Odysseus: 9.252-59, Nestor: 11.765-90); finally, each ends his speech with an alternative suggestion, Odysseus that Achilles should fight for the sake of the soldiers if not for Agamemnon (9.300-06), and Nestor that Patroclus should don Achilles' armour if the latter is evading the outcome of some omen (11.794-803). Presumably, then, had Nestor himself appealed to Achilles, his words and arguments would have been almost identical with Odysseus'. "Achilles' response [to Odysseus]... is a long and furious outburst of feeling..." (Edwards 1987, 222),[109] and, on the assumption that Nestor would have met with no greater success than Odysseus had he spoken in place of the latter, Achilles' fury would have been directed at him. Given Homer's respectful treatment of the gerontocrat in the books preceding 9, it seems inconsistent with the old man's portraiture that he should suddenly undergo a reviling of this sort. Although Achilles does virtually ignore Nestor's advice in Book 1, he appears so respectful of the poem's older characters as a whole that it is difficult to imagine him refusing outright the petition of a senior, not to mention subjecting him to the near insulting remarks he hurls at Odysseus (9.312ff.). By participating in the embassy, then, Odysseus is not so much displacing Nestor as removing him from the line of fire of a discrediting reverse.

For all his talents, Odysseus does not cut enough of a brilliant figure, in final analysis, to assume the initiative as Nestor often does. Unlike Nestor's past accomplishments, Odysseus' exploits on the battlefield never verge on the spectacular. In Book 8, for example, he continues to flee in spite of Diomedes' harangue to him (οὐδ' ἐσάκουσε πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς Homer explains (8.93),

the second time Odysseus' ears have failed him when he has been summoned [see 4.331]).[110] Diomedes, moreover, does the dirty work in the Doloneia, and Odysseus' aristeia in Book 11 is very brief and claims only six lives of the enemy (11.419ff.);[111] even Teucer manages to score nine kills in his moment of glory (8.273ff.). Tellingly, the Greeks pray that the lot fall on Ajax, Diomedes or Agamemnon when a champion is being chosen for the duel in Book 7, not on Odysseus (7.179-80). And "Nestor's exploits are removed in time, and so he can expatiate, using the past epic combats as paradigms for his audience; Odysseus, on the other hand, is in the process of making a reputation" (Martin 1989, 122). It is therefore hard to imagine Odysseus involving himself in the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles. He does not possess the same standing as Nestor and therefore could not justify an intervention of this sort. His active involvement in battle also precludes him from scolding the army when its nerve fails. At the time of the duel, for example, "The other Achaeans still need spurring into action; Nestor is the obvious person to do it, especially since he cannot take up the challenge himself" (Kirk 1990, 251). It may be significant as well that, alongside the ninety ships Nestor can lay claim to (2.602), the eighty ships of Diomedes (2.568) and the hundred ships of Agamemnon (2.576), Odysseus contributes a measly twelve (2.636ff.). One way or another, as wise and objective as Odysseus may be, there are still a number of instances when, like Diomedes and Agamemnon, he is unable to take a stand in council as effectively as Nestor can.

6. Nestor's Reminiscences

On four occasions in the poem Nestor speaks at considerable length (1.254-84, 7.124-60, 11.656-803, 23.306-48). In each instance he delves into his past and recounts in copious detail the heroic feats of his youth. This propensity of his to ramble on has coloured some commentators' vision of Homer's

presentation of his character. Finley, for example, comments, "He [Nestor] is garrulous to the point of boredom" (Finley 1981, 164). Leaf writes, "The character of the garrulous old man is obviously suitable for interpolation of such inappropriate episodes [viz. 11.664-762]; and we frequently have occasion to suspect speeches put into his mouth" (Leaf 1902, 214). In a more kindly vein Willcock observes, "[Nestor] has an old man's tendency to digression and reminiscence of the past, but there is usually some point in it" (Willcock 1978, 308).[112] What critics such as these are reacting to is not so much the length of Nestor's speeches in itself: Achilles' response to Odysseus in Book 9 is one hundred and twenty-one lines long, and of it Willcock says most appropriately, "This is the most powerful speech in the Iliad" (Willcock 1978, 276).[113] Instead it is the circumstances surrounding Nestor's delivery that have elicited such negative reactions. The quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, Hector's challenge to the Achaeans,[114] and Patroclus' obvious desire to return to his impatient taskmaster[115] describe contexts which seem, at first sight, unsuitable for unwieldy digressions into an old man's past. What bearing, moreover, do the Lapiths and Centaurs and the Epeians and Pylians have on their respective circumstances? The content of Nestor's speeches, at first sight, would seem to have very little thematic meaning for the narrative framework in which they arise.[116]

And yet there are two points to consider. First, as far as Nestor's longwindedness is concerned, "In paradigmatic digressions the length of the anecdote is in direct proportion to the necessity for persuasion at the moment. The more urgent the situation, the more expansive the speech and its illustrative paradigm" (Austin 1966, 306). Martin adds, "Performance time - the number of lines allotted to a given speech - is the single most important 'narrative' sign in Homer's system for marking the status of a hero or a god" (Martin 1989, 50).[117] There are, moreover, two important functions which

Nestor's rhetoric must serve. As a character whose right to address the assembly is not immediately apparent, as it is in Agamemnon's case or in the heroic Diomedes', Nestor must remind his audience of the feats that have brought him to his position of influence. His second purpose is, of course, to steer his addressees toward a specific course of action that will, in his estimate, benefit the Achaean army as a whole. In Book 1 it is to prevent a rupture in the Achaean leadership; in Book 7 to induce someone to take Hector up on his challenge; in Book 11 either to persuade Achilles, through Patroclus, to return to the battlefield or convince Patroclus to fight in Achilles' stead. "The digressions of Nestor," Austin writes, "are both hortatory and apologetic. As apology they establish his position in the Greek hierarchy as the wisest counsellor; as exhortation they offer a challenge to the younger men to live up to the heroic ideal as embodied in his person" (Austin 1966, 301).[118] These two functions of Nestor's reminiscences obscure, on the surface at least, their immediate relevance to the events which they purport to address. But on closer inspection, as this section hopes to demonstrate, a close correspondence can be detected between the digressions and the drama that encompasses them in each case. Let us examine briefly Nestor's speeches one by one.

In Book 1 Nestor looks back to the time when he was invited by a band of heroes to help them in their war against the centaurs. Though this band consisted of the formidable likes of Peirithous and Theseus, it was wise enough to listen to and follow Nestor's advice. The message of his speech here, then, is straightforward enough: "The strongest men listened to me, therefore you two should as well." But exactly why does he mention the battle of the Lapiths and centaurs? Is the myth introduced solely as means of providing Nestor with examples of heroes whom he can use to browbeat Agamemnon and Achilles into submission? Perhaps his speech veils a different admonition.

The Catalogue of Ships tells us of Polypoetes (2.742-44):

τόν ῥ''ὑπὸ Πειριθόῳ τέκετο κλυτὸς Ἱπποδάμεια
ἤματι τῷ ὅτε Φῆρας ἐτείσατο λαχνήεντας,
τοὺς δ'ἐκ Πηλίου ὦσε καὶ Αἰθίκεσσι πέλασσεν·

The vengeance here referred to is, of course, the attempted Rape of Peirithous' wife Hippodameia, the same outrage surely that was responsible for the battle which the Lapiths were so anxious to involve Nestor in. In speaking of the Lapiths and centaurs, then, Nestor is drawing a tacit comparison between the near rape of Hippodameia and the war which that insult led to, and Agamemnon's threatened seizure of Briseis and the possibility of as disastrous an outcome. Achilles' language, before Nestor decides to intervene, perhaps points in this direction as well. At 1.225 he calls Agamemnon, among other things, oinobares. A variant of the same word is mentioned in the Odyssey, in reference to the centaur Eurytion who, by working evil in the house of Peirithous, was the instigator of the war between the centaurs and mankind (Od. 21.303-4):

ἐξ οὗ Κενταύροισι καὶ ἀνδράσι νεῖκος ἐτύχθη,
οἳ δ'αὐτῷ πρώτῳ κακὸν εὕρετο οἰνοβαρείων.

Achilles' use of oinobares, in other words, could be an illusion to the drunken folly of Eurytion, which Nestor then follows up on in his own reminiscence.[119]

Nestor's digression in Book 7 is the most comprehensible of all his speeches. In this reminiscence he describes Ereuthalion who stood forth as the champion of the Arcadians and challenged the best of the Pylians to a duel when these two peoples were fighting before the city of Pheia. Just as the Greeks fear the Trojan champion (αἴδεσθεν μὲν ἀνήνασθαι δεῖσαν δ'ὑποδέχθαι, 7.93), so the Pylians trembled at the sight of Ereuthalion (οἱ δὲ μάλ' ἐτρόμεον καὶ

ἐδείδισαν, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη, 7.151). "... The challenge by Ereuthalion to all the Pylian chiefs (150) looks suspiciously like the situation facing the Greeks at this point in the Iliad" (Willcock 1978, 252). The tale does seem to run off on a tangent when Nestor starts recounting the story of Areithous and Lycurgus. His description of the mace man, however, of Lycurgus' ploy and Eurythalion's prodigious dimensions re-creates an old world brutishness and thus emphasizes the danger of the challenge which was overcome. The cumulation of details allows the old man to insinuate that, as fearsome as Hector's challenge may appear, he himself had seen worse yet managed to persevere.

Nestor's speech to Patroclus in Book 11 is by far his most lengthy and complicated. The scene is of great importance in that it will lead Patroclus to rout the Trojans and die, and so precipitate Achilles' return to arms. This does not, however, fully explain Nestor's reasons for narrating the Pylian/Eleian campaign in such detail.[120] Willcock suggests Nestor is "... softening up Patroclus in preparation for an important and definite suggestion at the end of his speech" (1978, 308),[121] while Austin feels the gist of Nestor's message is "... Achilles does nothing; if only I were as strong as when I fought the Eleians" (Austin 1966, 306).[122] Nonetheless, it is difficult still to see an obvious application of events within the digression to the situation of Nestor's addressee, either Achilles or his surrogate Patroclus.[123] Pedrick feels that Nestor at this juncture is primarily interested in demonstrating his own excellence as a warrior and "This effort to establish his own value accounts for the absence of the customary paradeigmatic signals linking his story to Achilles" (1983, 65).[124] Nestor certainly does justify his standing in greater depth in Book 11 than elsewhere in the poem, but is the demonstration of his own valour the main purpose of his digression here? Of all the occasions when Nestor intervenes in public affairs, this one would appear to be a

situation where he is least called upon to explain himself. Unlike the settings of his addresses in Books 1, 7 and 23, Nestor is not speaking before a crowd, but rather is engaged in a tête-à-tête with Patroclus, and only Machaon is a witness to their conversation. True, besides those characters of his who are Achaean chieftains, Homer must make his audience aware of what Nestor's authority is based on. Yet the relatively secluded circumstances of the gerontocrat's discourse here would, one assumes, diminish Nestor's need to vindicate his intrusion, not magnify it. What, then, are we to make of the contents of his speech?

If the digression has such little detailed bearing on Achilles' situation, perhaps he is not the only character it is intended to address. Pedrick observes, "The lesson from Nestor's youthful exploits is clearly meant for Achilles. The complaints which frame the example make that clear. Furthermore... Achilles' indifference and the need to persuade him dominate Nestor's thinking throughout, even when he addresses Patroclus directly" (1983, 59). Doubtless Achilles is to some extent the target of Nestor's paradigm. But the language of the old man at the same time betrays misgivings on his part that Achilles can be persuaded to bend. To begin with, Patroclus' words to him are revealing (11.653-54):

> εὖ δὲ σὺ οἶσθα, γεραιὲ διοτρεφές, οἷος ἐκεῖνος
> δεινὸς ἀνήρ· τάχα κεν καὶ ἀναίτιον αἰτιόῳτο.

By stating himself in such a way, Patroclus signals, knowingly or not, that Achilles is as obdurate as ever. We ourselves know, in fact, that far from being disquieted by the Greeks' reversal, Achilles is almost gloating over the army's disaster because he is certain that the Greeks will have to supplicate him now (9.609-10). And Nestor does not seem to entertain too many illusions about Achilles' pliability. At 9.664ff. he declares: αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς/ ἐσθλὸς ἐὼν Δαναῶν οὐ κήδεται οὐδ' ἐλεαίρει and, further on, he adds more revealingly (11.762-64):

αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
οἷος τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀπονήσεται· ἦ τέ μιν οἴω
πολλὰ μετακλαύσεσθαι, ἐπεί κ'ἀπὸ λαὸς ὄληται.

Nestor posits that Achilles will lament not if but when the host meets with destruction. Evidently he is almost convinced that, despite his own efforts to the contrary, Achilles will continue to stand idly by as the Achaeans get worsted. He does admittedly encourage Patroclus to counsel his companion (ἀλλ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν/ τοῦτ' εἴποις Ἀχιλῆϊ δαίφρονι, αἴ κε πίθηται, 11.790-91), but he has his doubts about the success of the outcome (τίς δ'οἶδ' εἴ κεν οἱ σὺν δαίμονι θυμὸν ὀρίναις/ παρειπών, 11.792-93). Patroclus, moreover, having announced his intention to Eurypylus to convey Nestor's message to Achilles, does indeed paraphrase Nestor's arguments closely - without mentioning the Pylian campaign or the old man's visit to Phthia - but makes no direct appeal to Achilles that he succour the Achaeans. Indeed, again like Nestor, he assumes that Achilles is intractable.[125] But the fact that he is reporting Nestor's discourse and neglects even to hint at an exhortation to the effect that Achilles should return to battle suggests, perhaps, that any such exhortation was not the essential thrust of Nestor's speech to begin with.

Believing Achilles to be the proper subject of Nestor's speech, Pedrick concludes that "The wrong person is listening to the paradeigma..." (1983, 59). But this paradeigma, by Pedrick's own admission, is poorly suited to Achilles' situation (1983, 60) and, as we have argued above, Nestor is highly dubious that Achilles can be swayed. Instead, from the start, Nestor has had one eye fixed on Patroclus and the possibilities he represents. His tale of the Pylians and Eleians is a paradeigma which, though a rough fit round the edges, is applicable to Patroclus' circumstances.

Patroclus reveals his potential inadvertently when he tells Nestor, in a line we have already seen, εὖ δὲ σὺ οἶσθα, γεραιὲ διοτρεφές, οἷος ἐκεῖνος/ δεινὸς

ἀνήρ (11.653-54). Presumably Patroclus assumes that Nestor knows how deinos Achilles is from the very predicament the Achaeans now find themselves in. He is, then, criticizing Achilles indirectly for his behaviour and disassociating himself from his friend's terrible wrath. Nestor can be rest assured that his visitor is sympathetic towards the Achaean cause.

Nestor's tale begins. Although it contains many details which have no meaning outside the story's narrative, there is, perhaps, a series of motifs that parallel Patroclus' eventual excursion roughly. To begin with, just as Nestor is in some sense subject to the will of his father Neleus, so Patroclus is subject to the will of Achilles. Although there are obvious differences in their circumstances, both Achilles and Neleus have been cheated, the former by Agamemnon, the latter by Augeias the Eleian king who has robbed Neleus of his team of racing horses (11.701ff.). These same two characters are also enraged at the injustice which they have been subjected to. When the spoils from Nestor's cattle raid are being divided out, moreover, we learn that many Pylians have debts owing to them because Heracles, in a campaign pre-dating the Eleian skirmish by some years, killed the bravest of the Pylians (11.690ff.) and so deprived them of their champions. When the Eleians attack Pylian Thryoessa to exact revenge for the raid on their flocks, Nestor is therefore the only champion left in Pylos to respond to this aggression. Patroclus, similarly, is the only champion the Achaeans have left in the face of the Trojan attack on their ships: the best of the Greek chieftains have been routed or wounded and Achilles himself will, of course, not intervene. Both Nestor and Patroclus cannot march into battle on their own but, ostensibly, require permission first: Patroclus must ask leave of Achilles to borrow his armour and lead the Myrmidons into the fray, while Nestor is forbidden by his father to arm himself when the Pylians muster to engage the invading Eleians (11.717ff.). Neleus does not allow his son to participate in the campaign because he is

uncertain that the young Nestor has any experience of war (οὐ γάρ πώ τί μ'ἔφη ἴδμεν πολεμήια ἔργα, 11.719); in a similar fashion Achilles prays to Zeus that he embolden Patroclus' spirit so that Hector may learn whether Patroclus is invincible in himself or only when Achilles is nigh (16.241ff.). Neither Patroclus nor Nestor, then, has been fully tested on the battlefield. Neleus hides Nestor's team from him in fact (11.718), but, undaunted, Nestor kills the Eleian Mulius and helps himself to his chariot (11.737): he and Patroclus, in other words, are fighting in equipment that does not properly belong to them. And, finally, Nestor not only manages to rout the Eleians from Thryoessa, but drives them on to the walls of Buprasium (11.755), the stronghold of the Eleians (23.631); likewise Patroclus, having chased the Trojans from the the ships, passes on to the walls of Troy (16.684ff., 698ff.), albeit at the loss of his life.

These parallels are, to be sure, somewhat untidy. There is, however, perhaps enough of a correspondence between these two episodes to conclude tentatively that Nestor's reminiscence does in fact act as a paradeigma for Patroclus' actions in Book 16. By recounting this tale of his youthful prowess in Book 11, Nestor provides Patroclus with a model he can follow, more or less, further on. This is not to say that Nestor has abandoned all hope that Achilles himself can be enticed back into the struggle - some of the old man's remarks are clearly intended to get back to the best of the Achaeans - but Patroclus is, first and foremost, the object of his inspiring tale from times past.

Before considering Nestor's final reminiscence, his speech to Achilles in Book 23, we ought to take a brief look at the old man's words of advice to his son. The situation is as follows. Antilochus is about to compete in the chariot race which is part of Patroclus' funeral games. His team, however, is not as strong as the other participants'. Nestor therefore takes his son aside and explains to him that cunning (metis) often takes one farther than brute

physical force (bie). He then advises Antilochus to approach and round the track's turning-point strategically, an act that will enable him to outstrip his competitors. The exact intention of his counsel does not concern us here[126] so much as the reasons for the address to begin with. It appears to serve two purposes. First, just as the other contests at Patroclus' funeral games have been interpreted as foreshadowings of events at Troy outside the scope of the poem,[127] so Nestor's conversation with his son perhaps anticipates the episode of the latter's death at the hands of Memnon. Pindar's Sixth Pythian (30ff.) and, indirectly, Iliad 8.80ff. present the circumstances of Antilochus' death: one of his father's horses has been shot by Paris and he is slain by Memnon while defending the old man. In Iliad 23 the subject of conversation between father and son centres on the proper way to drive an inferior team to victory. Although Antilochus more or less follows his father's advice, he winds up being embarrassed by Menelaus once the race has been concluded. He is forced to admit that his tactics were underhanded. His father's words of wisdom, then, have brought about this discomfiture of his. The intimate tone of the exchange, the talk of horses and Nestor's partial responsibility for the reversal which his son undergoes look ahead perhaps to conditions surrounding Antilochus' end. If this is the case, it is noteworthy that only now, after Achilles' return and the diminution of Nestor's public responsibilities, does Homer introduce a more pitiable dimension to Nestor's career and character.

If Nestor is in fact partially responsible for the upbraiding Antilochus receives from Menelaus, how does the unsoundness of his advice fit in with his effectiveness throughout the first half of the poem? The answer to this lies in a second possible purpose to his speech. His espousal of metis, in conjunction with his avowal of athletic bie in his reminiscence further on, serves as a commentary on the relative efficacy of counsel and brute force.[128] Throughout the length of Achilles' withdrawal, Nestor has compensated for

the sudden loss in fighting power with his different stratagems. Although he has been instrumental in forestalling catastrophe, the Greeks are only saved in final analysis because Achilles rejoins the army and beats the Trojans back by force of arms. Similarly, Nestor's promotion of metis, though legitimate in that it enables Antilochus to compromise Menelaus, does not win his son first prize as promised (εἰ γάρ κ'ἐν νύσσῃ γε παρεξελάσησθα διώκων,/ οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅς κέ σ'ἕλῃσι μετάλμενος οὐδὲ παρέλθῃ, 23.344-45), but instead embroils him in an allegation of unsporting behaviour. When Nestor addresses a speech to Achilles further on, moreover, he describes his remarkable performance as a young man at the funeral games of Amarynceus of Buprasium: he won every competition except the chariot-race which the Actoriones, through an apparent act of trickery, beat him in (23.638ff.). By dwelling on his bie of old in his address to Achilles, and acknowledging that he himself was cheated of first prize in the chariot race through a ploy of some sort, Nestor could well be admitting that there is a limit to the success metis guarantees.[129] Taken together, his speeches illustrate that "... in the Iliad, metis unsupported by bie is doomed to failure" (Dunkle 1987, 4).[130]

There is further significance, moreover, in this exchange between Nestor and Achilles, and the prize awarded by the latter to the former. Of Achilles' gift to Agamemnon further on (23.890ff.) Willcock comments, "Achilleus brings the Games to an end with a compliment to Agamemnon, thus completing the reconciliation which occurred under tension in Book XIX" (1984, 311).[131] The meaning behind the urn which is presented to Nestor may be similar. Achilles' comments are revealing (23.618-20):

> τῇ νῦν, καὶ σοὶ τοῦτο, γέρον, κειμήλιον ἔστω,
> Πατρόκλοιο τάφου μνῆμ' ἔμμεναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' αὐτὸν
> ὄψῃ ἐν Ἀργείοισι· δίδωμι δέ τοι τόδ' ἄεθλον....

By his advice to Patroclus in Book 11, Nestor was in part responsible for his

foray out into the battlefield and, consequently, for his death. When Achilles bestows the urn on Nestor, then, and describes it pointedly as a souvenir of Patroclus' burial, he is perhaps absolving the old man of his culpability. Nestor's recollection of his former prowess, besides being a tacit admission of the superiority of bie over metis, is set forth as a means of justifying his pre-eminence which in turn enabled him to advise Patroclus as he did. And the tail-end of his speech seems to express both relief and gratitude that Achilles has decided to disregard the role he played with such devastating results (23.646-48):

> ἀλλ' ἴθι καὶ σὸν ἑταῖρον ἀέθλοισι κτερέϊζε.
> τοῦτο δ'ἐγὼ πρόφρων δέχομαι, χαίρει δέ μοι ἦτορ
> ὥς μευ ἀεὶ μέμνησαι ἐνηέος, οὐδέ σε λήθω....

Redfield observes, "... the games would be the less if he [Nestor] were somehow not involved in them" (Redfield 1975, 209). Certainly Nestor's performance at the time of Achilles' withdrawal and his involvement in Patroclus' death are not issues the poem can ignore without appearing to be in some minor sense incomplete. And the conciliatory colloquy of Nestor and Achilles here paves the way for the encounter between Priam and Achilles in the following book.[132]

Summary

A brief summary is in order. A vacuum in the Greek leadership has been created by Achilles' withdrawal. There is need for stratagem and sound advice. The elderly are sometimes in a position to fill such a vacuum by virtue of the fact that age confers wisdom and a certain selflessness. Not all old men, however, can perform as Nestor does, because advice on its own is not enough: heroic standing, which includes a freedom from the physical and moral debilities of old age, is required to lend weight to one's words. Through the fact

that he has held fast to the heroic ethic he practiced with such success in his youth, Nestor embodies all the positive effects of age and has been left untrammeled by its more debilitating properties. This combination of elements, the cooperative instinct and wisdom of old age, and the clinging vestiges of his heroism from days gone by, render Nestor a more effective counsellor than any of the other Greek agoretai. Because his reputation is rooted in the past, however, he must continually remind the army of the feats which entitle him to take an authoritative stand in the assembly. These reminiscences tend to obfuscate to some degree the exact point of his speeches, but retain a general thematic relevance.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER TWO

1. "Nestor is an anomaly among the Achaeans; old men do not belong in the camp of an invading army" (Kirk 1971, 133).

2. Of the full description that accompanies Homer's first mention of Nestor Edwards comments, "Nestor, ceremoniously introduced to give his words weight and to give us the same relief that his readers must feel" (1987, 182). Kirk, too, feels that Homer may be emphasizing the old man's persuasiveness and venerability (1985, 79), as does Willcock (1978, 192).

3. Bassett (1938, 176), Owen (1946, 235), Whitman (1958, 262) and Willcock (1973, 3) all make the same observation.

4. "Despite ambiguities of designation, generational identity (stage of life) is easily recognizable in ancient Greece, for the ages have a distinctive character and set associations. Youth, for example, is a time of action, while contemplation and counsel are for the aged" (Nash 1978, 5).

5. "Achilles is the leader of men: he calls for and addresses the only two assemblies in which he takes part..." (Bassett, 1938, 188). See also Owen (1946, 5) and Mcglew (1989, 289 n.15). We shall expand upon this point further on.

6. Sheppard, on the other hand, believes Nestor was in Achilles' tent at the time and witnesses the entire exchange. The fact that he kept silent is somehow significant (1922, 86).

7. "The importance of this assembly is underlined by the presence of even the lowly non-combatant personnel..." (Edwards 1991, 240).

8. Arieti speaks of "Nestor's dominant role in every key decision made in the first half of the poem..." (1986, 4).

9. "Nestor, by his participation in pre-Trojan, Trojan, and post-Trojan events, stands for heroism and time itself" (Nash 1978, 3).

10. Parry (1956) argues this point extensively, as does Arieti (1986). Schein too refers to Achilles' isolation (1984, 98, 99, 105, 107), and Edwards argues that Achilles feels, at the end of Odysseus' speech, that his friends are on Agamemnon's side (1987, 224). Eichholz speaks of Achilles' perception of a "plot against him" (1953, 145). Claus (1985), however, disagrees with these views.

11. Whitman refers to Nestor as "... the embodiment of the rules of the heroic game" (1958, 174), while Nash speaks of him as "... the touchstone

for heroic standards..." (1978, 6).

12. One page earlier (1971, 97) Segal observes, "By his very commitment to the established order of things Nestor is bound to be ineffectual in affirming the justice of Achilles' position."

13. Arieti conceives Odysseus' speech in 9 to be the brainchild of himself and Nestor (1986, 5). And of course Homer tells us (9.179-80):
τοῖσι δὲ πόλλ' ἐπέτελλε Γερήνιος ἱππότα Νέστωρ,
δενδίλλων ἑς ἕκαστον, Ὀδυσσῆι δὲ μάλιστα.

14. "Elsewhere in the Iliad and in archaic Greek poetry generally, menis is used specifically of wrath felt by a god usually towards humans who fear and avoid it. Menis suggests something sacred, a vengeful anger with deadly consequences. Achilles is the only mortal in the poem of whom this word is used..." (Schein 1984, 91).

15. "The plague must last nine days ... for two reasons: it must continue long enough to show that it is a heaven-sent scourge, and it must also make clear to the army that Agamemnon, the commander-in-chief, will do nothing to remove it" (Bassett 1938, 43). Owen (1946, 5), Segal (1971, 96ff.), Schein (1984, 99) and Taplin (1992, 80) argue very much the same point.

16. "...Achilles' outspokenness within the assembly is regarded by Agamemnon as inappropriate to a spearman (290ff.). In fact, his calling of the assembly possibly usurps the function of a king..." (Collins 1988, 100). And "Achilles, in calling the assembly and opening it as he does, presents himself as a threat to Agamemnon's position" (Redfield 1975, 96). McGlew agrees (1989, 289 n.15).

17. Kirk says of Achilles' reference to Agamemnon in 1.90 that it is "... a gratuitous addition... and mildly insulting, the beginning of trouble" (1985, 69).

18. "For Achilles' φιλοκτεανώτατε πάντων, we learn, is based partly upon a store of old grievances (163-68), and Agamemnon's words (176-77) equally reveal a long resentment against his arrogant vassal, and suggests that Achilles has not borne these past grievances as patiently as he himself made out" (Owen 1946, 7).

19. Davison observes that Odysseus' epithet πτολίπορθος, which he possesses as early as 2.278, might suggest that he had a hand in the Achaeans' operations at this stage. On the other hand Davison adds (1965, 10 n. 7) that the epithet might anticipate Odysseus' involvement in the capture of Troy.

20. Austin comments, "... it is well to remind ourselves of how scanty the information on the War is" (1966, 298). True enough, but Homer does tell us something of the earlier years of the campaign, the conduct of which has been centered entirely on Achilles. Besides having cowed the Trojans all these years, Achilles has effected the destruction of some twenty-three cities, twelve by sea, eleven by land (9.328ff.). Among these, as we glean from elsewhere in the poem, are Tenedos (11.625), Hyperplakian Thebe (1.366f, 3.691, 6.414ff.), Lyrnessus (2.690ff., 19.60, 20.92) and Pedasus (20.92). The impression that his hands alone have sustained the shock of war (1.165ff.) is further impressed upon us by the lack of any mention of the other chieftains' influence on the campaign in its earlier years. Odysseus and Menelaus visited the Trojans on a mission of diplomacy (3.204ff.), and Diomedes and Sthenelus visited destruction on Thebes along with the rest of the Epigoni (4.404ff.) but absolutely nothing is said of any hero's martial feats at Troy before the time of the wrath. Hostages like Lycaon were taken (23.34ff.), and Aeneas once had to run for his life (20.188f), but all of this was Achilles' doing.

21. Hera in the guise of Stentor lambasts the failing Achaeans and declares (5.788-80):

> ὄφρα μὲν ἐς πόλεμον πωλέσκετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,
> οὐδέ ποτε Τρῶες πρὸ πυλάων Δαρδανιάων
> οἴχωεσκον· κείνου γὰρ ἐδείδισαν ὄβριμον ἔγχος·

Achilles speaks to the same effect (9.352-54, 16.69ff.), as does Poseidon (13.99ff., 14.366ff.). Hector tries to explain his inactivity in the years predating the wrath (15.719ff.) and, when advised by Polydamas to return the army to the city because Achilles is obviously on the warpath again (18.254ff.), asks scornfully ἦ οὔ πω κεκόρησθε ἐελμένοι ἔνδοθι πύργων (18.287).

22. See Schein's discussion (1984, 93ff.)

23. "In itself the absence of the leading warrior is enough of a threat to Agamemnon and the Achaeans, but Achilles' pre-eminence as a warrior reflects his divine parentage, through which he now finds an alternative source of time. Thus the Achaeans not only miss his valour; his influence with the gods brings about an immediate change in the Achaeans' fortunes" (McGlew 1989, 288).

24. "[In situations like that of the embassy in Book 9] words are the only weapons left; the fighters cannot win without Achilleus, but their warrior skills are powerless to bring Achilleus back into the war. Only the skills of the orator have any chance of success" (Austin 1966, 306).

25. Kirk does not go so far but instead warns the reader of the book's structural problems (1985, 142). Leaf, too, in speaking of the book's scene in the assembly, says its "... connexion with the main story remains a

hopeless puzzle" (1892, 66). And Mazon, commenting on the relation of the onieros to the peira, observes, "Le malheur est qu'il y a un désaccord profond entre ces deux thèmes" (1948, 146).

26. It is not our purpose here to contradict baldly Kirk's statement, "Behind the paradoxes and confusions of the testing motif in its present form one is probably right to detect other versions, in the earlier tradition or in the monumental poet's own repertoire, which omitted the test, or the test together with the council, or even the deceitful Dream itself" (1985, 125).

27. Leaf (1892, 66-67), Bassett (1938, 183-84), Mazon (1948, 146) and Thalmann (1988, 9) all make the same observation.

28. Owen seems to ascribe to the dream a realization on Agamemnon's part that Achilles' absence may bring about disaster: "... the dream is his sense of the folly of his conduct expressing itself in terms of his desire..." (1946, 22).

29. "Nestor has little to say [at 2.79ff.], admittedly, but then someone has to express agreement or disagreement with Agamemnon, and Nestor is the obvious person to do so..." (Kirk 1985, 123).

30. As Schofield observes (1986, 29).

31. It is of course possible that the chieftains would distrust anything related to a dream. And yet when Achilles describes the visitation of the dead Patroclus (23.103ff.), his listeners appear to take him seriously (23.108ff.).

32. Kirk refers to these lines as uttered by Agamemnon at 2.72, as "... a manner of speaking which does not necessarily imply any real doubt about their [the chieftains'] ability to do so..." (1985, 122). Context, however, would seem to corroborate Willcock's translation of αἴ κέν πως: "if by any chance" "in the hope that" (1978, 198). And McGlew observes, "Nestor's remark at the close of the meeting of the elders ("Come then, if we can somehow arm the sons of the Achaeans" 2.83) and Agamemnon's own deceptive speech argue that the troops can weigh and resist their king's commands" (1989, 286).

33. That Agamemnon should propose this test without any forewarning in advance has perplexed commentators (Knox and Russo quote a number of adverse reactions [1989, 351-2 n.2]). Mazon's criticism that Agamemnon tests the troops instead of revealing his dream to them (1948, 147) is partially alleviated by his own observation that Nestor's skepticism warns the king that the troops may be even more incredulous (1948, 148). Russo and Knox argue similarly, "The men's confidence in the deity summoning them to battle is inextricable from their confidence in the veracity of the leader reporting the deity's will,

and in this regard it was noticeable (79) that not even Agamemnon's best supporter, Nestor, believed easily in his dream" (1989, 355 n.9).

34. Owen comments, "Before attacking without the aid of Achilles, as he [Agamemnon] is resolved to do, he wishes to ensure his own position..." (1946, 21). Knox and Russo share a similar point of view: "Agamemnon is the commander of an invasionary force that for nine years has been virtually confined to its initial beachhead. He [Agamemnon] will now go into battle without Achilles, and he means not to lose another man" (1989, 354).

35. Sheppard feels that Nestor's abruptness in leaving the council is his way of commenting on the unsoundness of the king's plan (1922, 27-28).

36. Wyatt seems to feel the same way, although he states himself ambiguously (1982, 250).

37. This statement of Agamemnon's lends partial support to McGlew's belief that "Agamemnon's peira seems designed to force the Achaeans to commit a shameful act" (1989, 285).

38. Van Erp Taalman Kip argues "... a peira like the one described here would be a highly dangerous experiment for a general who was really in doubt about the morale of his soldiers" (1971, 257). The experiment may in fact be dangerous, but is necessary nonetheless because Agamemnon cannot be sure that his soldiers will respond to his command that they muster.

39. Of 2.228 Leaf comments, "Thersites purposely alludes to Achilles' words, as again in 242" (1892, 65). Willcock says of Thersites that "... he speaks rather like a parody of Achilleus in the quarrel in Book I" (1978, 200). Meltzer agrees with this view though he adds that Thersites is parodying Agamemnon as well (1990, 267). Postlethwaite, however, sees Thersites' words not as a parody of Achilles, but "... as a comment upon, a support for the case which Achilleus made" (1988, 128). Mazon observes, "Sans doute la colère d'Achille est evoquée par Thersite..." (1948, 147).

40. The character and rhetoric of Thersites have been examined in considerable detail (See Rankin [1972] and Thalmann [1988] for bibliography). It is not our purpose here to reflect upon Thersites' general function in the poem, but rather to demonstrate the much smaller point that his speech to Agamemnon is in some sense a reaction to Achilles' absence.

41. "Literal-minded critics [e.g. Mazon (1948, 147-48)] have objected that Agamemnon himself had proposed retreat and therefore it is a serious inconsistency for Thersites to talk as though he had opposed it; but it is

not hard to understand Thersites as inferring from Odysseus and the other kings having prevented the launching of the ships, that Agamemnon had in fact been deceiving the troops. It is not necessarily an inconsistency, therefore..." (Kirk 1985, 140-41).

42. Meltzer adds, "Yet the effect of the episode [of Thersites] is to preempt the criticism of Achilles as petulant, since it comes from such a self-serving, disreputable source" (1990, 271).

43. Davison describes Homer's recitation of events from 2.48ff. as "...a clear account of the disastrously low morale of the Achaean army in general, faced at last after nine years of almost complete military inactivity with the appalling idea that now, at the very moment when Achilles and the Myrmidons... have suddenly withdrawn from the alliance, they should go out and fight the Trojans who will, ex hypothesi, be going all out for victory, in the hope of disposing of the other Achaeans while the only serious obstacle to their success is temporarily off the field" (1965, 17).

44. "... it will be noticed that it is singularly out of place for Nestor thus to offer elementary advice about the organization of an army of veterans after ten years' consecutive service" (Leaf 1892, 77).

45. "Nestor ends his speech with advice to Agamemnon about the battle order of the army. This prepares the way for the 'Catalogue of Ships'..." (Willcock 1978, 202).

46. Segal observes, however, "... though Agamemnon has to grant that "he was the first to get angry" (2.378), his avowal of responsibility for the quarrel remains incomplete and half-hearted" (1971, 95).

47. "The problem of Book VII is to bridge the gap between the victorious displays of Diomedes in V and VI and the sudden worsting of the Greeks in VIII" (Whitman 1958, 131).

48. Kirk (1990, 231). Leaf feels that the two duels were never meant "...from the first to stand side by side in a poem composed with a view to unity of effect" (1892, 149). He proposes that the duel in Book 7 is the older of the two and served as the model for the duel in Book 3 (1892, 150). Mazon deems the episode of the combat between Hector and Ajax "... le plus deplacé, le plus in- opportun, le plus invraisemblable qu'on puisse imaginer." (1948, 171). He adds, "Le combat... apparaît donc ainsi, du point de vue de la composition, comme un élément étrange à l'Iliade..." (ibid.).

49. This is a condensed paraphrase of Kirk's reconstruction of his argument (1990, 242).

50. And Tsagarakis says of Apollo's words at 4.152ff., "... the reference to the absence of Achilles from the battlefield is intended to show that the Achaeans have been now more than ever exposed to the Trojan danger" (1969, 129).

51. "The whole question of the outcome of the war arises again in Book 7 when Hector offers to stand in single combat against one of the Greeks. Achilles is not there, and no one of the Greeks feels like assuming the challenge.... Is Hector really superior to the Greeks? How can they, admitting to this, ever hope to take Troy?" (Parry 1972, 16).

52. "... the shilly-shallying of the Achaean heroes, until Telamonian Aias is finally chosen by lot to be their representative..., is the clearest possible evidence that Achaean morale is again at a low ebb..." (Davison 1965, 19).

53. Page (1966, 321ff.). Page also argues that, "Thucydides goes out of his way to quote the Iliad as evidence that the wall was built at the beginning in the first year of the war" (1966, 316), and contends further on that Nestor's words at 7.332ff. are evidence of an Athenian interpolation (1966, 322ff.). We shall not discuss these two arguments but simply observe that Davison (1965), West (1969) and Tsagarakis (1969) have treated them at length.

54. Although, as Davison points out, Diomedes' "... success is far from unbroken..." (1965, 18).

55. As M.L. West observes "...preparation for a Trojan recovery begins at vi.73" (1969, 258). He goes on to argue, however, that this fact in combination with others suggests that, "Homer, while writing vi, has the events of xi in mind as the immediate sequel" (ibid.).

56. Davison comments of the action at this juncture, "...and now the tide turns again and begins to run strongly against the Achaeans..." (1965, 19).

57. "Aside from motivating Hector's journey to Troy in the next book, Diomedes aristeia has no effect on the war, and his enormous thunderings gradually fade away until he is wounded in Book 11" (Whitman 1958, 168).

58. "... eighteen Achaeans 'of name'... have died at the enemies' hands, and the troops have perished in uncounted heaps..." (Davison 1965, 19).

59. "... if we inquire into the motives which led the Greeks to build it [the wall] at this late period of the siege, it is curious that the very one which we should expect to be prominent - the withdrawl of Achilles from the fight - is conspicuously absent from the speech of Nestor" (Leaf 1892, 151).

60. Willcock makes the same point (1978, 257), as does Davison (1965, 19). Davies, on the other hand, feels that Nestor's speech in Book 7, "... is best understood if we set aside realistic criteria [e.g. the losses sustained by both sides] and approach it in the light of Homer's manipulation of time, his wish to make the poem the story of the entire Trojan war..." (1986, 75). Davies feels, in other words, that the episode with the wall has much in common with the teichoskopia, represents the projection of an occurrence belonging to an early stage of the campaign to the time of the events in the Iliad. But Homer is not deliberately creating the false impression that the fighting in the Iliad either marks or reproduces the fighting at the start of the Greek invasion, as Davies believes. He is, instead, assuming that the Greeks and Trojans have not fought against each other for a long, long while, that the Trojans have remained safely ensconced behind their walls, and that Achilles' absence has now brought a dramatic end to this stalemate.

61. "... Nestor aged, respected, calm and reasonable is the inevitable choice, probably the only possible choice" (Segal 1971, 93).

62. See note 29 of this chapter.

63. "With a good practical sense of the strategic crisis... [Nestor] also proposes an efficient system of watches" (Taplin 1992, 149).

64. "All these schemes are recommended by Nestor, and all are treated as significant by the poet" (Schofield 1986, 26).

65. This is one of three applications of the epithet to Nestor (2.85, 23.411), not two as Kirk contends (1985, 124). Would this cause him to revise his view that Aristarchus was correct in athetizing 2.85 on the grounds that ποιμὴν λαῶν is used inappropriately of Nestor?

66. Finley comments, "The modern reader may be mislead by the numerous formulas which, in one or another variant, speak of a man of counsel. For us counsel is deliberation, wise counsel deliberation based on knowledge, experience, rational analysis, judgement. But Homer pointed less to the reasons than to the decision itself, and hence to the power of authority" (1979, 115). This argument may have some bearing on Agamemnon or Achilles (examples Finley cites further on), but what about Nestor? Where does his authority come from? Surely it is established in part by the soundness of his advice. We shall examine this question below.

67. "To intervene between two angry, powerful and violent kings is no task to be assumed lightly..." (Segal 1971, 93).

68. Lloyd-Jones makes this same point (1971, 13).

69. As Sheppard observes (1922, 27-28).

70. Redfield attributes the quarrel in part to Achilles' lack of skill in handling such delicate matters (1975, 12).

71. Segal adds, "The failure of Nestor's mediation has a still greater significance for the position of Achilles. It confirms his total isolation. Even the wise, respected counselor, the most authoritative spokesman for whatever is orderly, traditional and honourable in the society can do nothing to prevent an outright wrong in an open assembly of all the Achaeans" (1971, 104).

72. "The failure [of Nestor in Book 1] does little to detract from the esteem Nestor wins from every reader... for his splendidly serviceable intervention" (Schofield 1986, 15).

73. Schein (1984, 51), Edwards (1987, 185-86), Meltzer (1990, 271) and Taplin (1992, 133) argue to similar effect. And see Griffin's brief discussion of the heartless laughter of the gods (1980, 183).

74. "It [the Dream] assumes Nestor's likeness in order, presumably, to give itself credibility, but also, perhaps, as Shipp suggests ... to anticipate and help establish Nestor's emphatic role in this Book; the formular description "Neleus' son" adds both information and importance" (Kirk 1985, 116).

75. McGlew argues that, "The stress on military virtue is a consistent feature of Nestor's character.... It is not surprising, then, that the dream appears to Agamemnon in Nestor's form..." (1989, 294 n.28).

76. "When Odysseus has saved the situation, Agamemnon's self confidence has disappeared completely. It is only after Nestor's intervention that he is once more able to take command" (Van Erp Taalman Kip 1971, 257).

77. "Odysseus' speech has been successful in pleasing the crowd and distracting them from taking to the ships. Nestor can now afford to be tougher and more critical" (Willcock 1978, 202).

78. As Kirk argues (1985, 151).

79. This is not to deny, on the other hand, that Nestor's speech contains slight anomalies nor contradict Kirk's hypothesis: "It is conceivable that earlier versions of the tale [in Book 2] had either a speech by Odysseus or one by Nestor, not both, but that the monumental composer decided to

have both together" (1985, 151).

80. The intended meaning of this line is clear, though it has created some difficulties See Edwards (1987, 155).

81. For a general discussion of if-not situations in the Iliad see de Jong (1987, 68ff.).

82. "Characteristically, he [Agamemnon] partly spoils the effect [of his gifts] by demanding in conclusion that Achilles acknowledge his superiority; this is the wrong time for this, and not at all what Nestor meant by 'soft words'" (Edwards 1987, 218). Bowra believes, however, that Agamemnon has absolved himself of all guilt by his munificent offer (1930, 18), and Sale too thinks that Agamemnon is behaving decently, within the confines of the heroic code (1963, 88).

83. This would seem to be one possible implication of Achilles' observation οὐδ' ἄν ἔμοιγε/ τετλαίη κύνεός περ ἐὼν εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι (9.372-73). Edwards feels that Achilles may well be expecting the embassy to ask him to kill or supplant Agamemnon, and is disappointed that they do not express their condolences for the insult he has suffered at Agamemnon's hands (1987, 224).

84. Indeed, as Redfield argues, "By the offered terms of settlement Agamemnon would convert Achilles into his dependent.... Achilles knows that he is being asked to submit..." (1975, 16).

85. So Arieti argues (1986, 2, 6ff.). Schein puts forth a similar view: "Achilles is the highest expression of quality in the world of the poem, but for him at this point there is no longer any quality left in the world, only the quantities that Agamemnon offers and the newly understood value system provides" (1984, 106). Sale too feels the geras-time-arete relationship has been violated in Achilles' eyes and therefore he has no reason to fight (1963, 92ff.).

86. Although Bassett argues that the embassy has in fact induced Achilles to stay at Troy but to refrain from battle until Hector draws near his ships (1938, 201).

87. We have obviously limited ourselves here to a very narrow consideration of a very complicated episode in the poem.

88. See Schofield's remarks as directed against this observation of Finley's (1986, 26-27).

89. "Homer alludes to the fact that the powers revealed by Nestor are his own... and not the common property of all who have reached that

period of life" (Richardson 1933, 23). And "One quality of the elderly is prominent in other Greek literature, yet excluded from the composite picture of Nestor. That is the pathetic quality of age, its misery rather than its saving virtues" (Kirk 1990, 131).

90. Homer does tell us that Phoenix heads one of the Myrmidon contingents (16.196), but we see nothing further of the old man on the battlefield. At 17.555, it is true, Athena does liken herself to Phoenix, but instead of demonstrating that he is a regular combatant, this disguise is doubtless chosen "... because with Antilokhos still waiting in the wings and Automedon and Alkimedon driving off in a chariot no other close associate of Akhilleus and Patroklos is available" (Edwards 1991, 116).

91. Fenik comments on the other hand, "Its [Antilochus' and Thrasymedes' notice of Patroclus' death] chief purpose seems to be to arouse the emotions by depicting the pathetic ignorance of certain persons on whom the terrible news is about to descend" (1968, 179).

92. See Willcock (1973, 8) and (1984, 261)

93. "Authority of age rests on more than special sagacity of the old, for the authority of age has an immediacy arising out of the active participation in the deeds of the past" (Nash 1978, 13). And Pedrick: "Nestor's heroic performance in battle, even in the dim past, validates his counsel" (1983, 66).

94. "Nestor... spends most of his time recalling his exploits when he was young, which was the reason why he should be respected and his advice should be followed" (Schein 1984, 171). Edwards (1987, 182) and Falkner (1989, 31) observe the same.

95. Kirk refers to Agamemnon's words with Teucer as "... fulsome praise... winning less than whole-hearted gratitude from the recipient" (1990, 322).

96. Martin (1989, 71).

97. Despite his reservations about Nestor's capabilities and his belief that the relationship between Nestor and Diomedes is somewhat strained, Querbach does comment of the two, "They share the same status and the same ideals and can boast of similar achievements in battle" (1976, 61).

98. Kakridis observes that the scene in 8.80ff. is the only exception the older separatists allow as an example of an episode in the Iliad which "... must have been written on the model of the scene in the Aethiopis - or the Little Iliad - ..." (1971, 94). Fenik makes the same observation (1968, 233).

99. Hainsworth observes that Diomedes' "... exasperation is a comic pretence" (1993, 170).

100. Fittingly the two of them sail together in the Odyssey and manage to arrive home quickly and without mishap (Od. 3.165ff.). Whitman comments, "Diomedes' safe passage home can almost be foreseen in his easy success in the chariot race" (1958, 264).

101. "As a personality, rather than as a traditional hero, he [Diomedes] is one of Homer's greatest creations; an altogether loveable and admirable ideal of heroic youth. But he has no tragic value: he merely holds the center of the stage while the hero [Achilles] is absent" (Bassett 1938, 217). See Whitman (1958, 222), Willcock (1973, 3) and Taplin (1992, 135) for a similar assessment.

102. This view is also espoused by Bassett (1938, 216), Edwards (1987, 8, 198) and Taplin (1992, 135). Sheppard (1922, 99) and Owen (1946, 47) argue that Diomedes is a 'foil' to Achilles: by his exemplary heroic behavior he shows Achilles' intransigence up. On the topic of Diomedes' substitution for Achilles, there is the neoanalysts' contention to consider, that Diomedes' wounding by Paris (11.369ff.) is somehow connected to the killing of Achilles by Paris in the Aethiopis (see Kullmann [1984, 313 n.14] for bibliographical references).

103. And "Diomedes' pinpointing of Agamemnon's inadequacy as a leader is unseemly before a general assembly of the troops, and Nestor intervenes to end it, not denying Diomedes' good sense but implying that an older man might show more tact" (Edwards 1987, 217).

104. "[Diomedes'] crude emotional appeal [in Book 9]... is followed by a vastly more subtle exercise in counsel from Nestor" (Schofield 1986, 14). Jeanmaire (1939, 14-15) and Edwards (1987, 217) argue to the same effect. Querbach, on the other hand, comments, "[Nestor] in effect asks Diomedes to yield place to him in addressing the assembly [in Book 9] because he is older" (1976, 63) but age is only relevant here in that Diomedes through his youthful impetuosity has failed to address the central issue effectively.

105. Of Odysseus' advice to Achilles in Book 19 Rutherford comments, "It is striking that what moralising Odysseus does offer in the earlier poem, in book xix, is, and seems meant to appear, trite and insensitive..." (1986, 149).

106. Tellingly, Nestor observes in the Odyssey (3.126-29):

ἔνθ' ἤ τοι ἦος μὲν ἐγὼ καὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
οὔτε ποτ' εἰν ἀγορῇ δίχα βάζομεν οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ
ἀλλ' ἕνα θυμὸν ἔχοντε νόῳ καὶ ἐπίφρονι βουλῇ
φραζόμεθ' Ἀργείοισιν ὅπως ὄχ' ἄριστα γένοιτο.

107. Nash aptly describes Odysseus as "... the calculator of stealth to Diomedes' reckless action" (1978, 7).

108. Despite their similarity in years, Phoenix does not set forth the speech which Nestor would have delivered himself had he been present at the deputation. Phoenix instead has been chosen as a delegate "... because of his particular relation to Achilles as his personal advisor, as one of his commanders, and as the man whom he most trusted" (Tsagarakis 1979, 237).

109. Arieti argues that Achilles still asserts the ethos of the heroic code when the embassy arrives: the proof of this is that he is singing klea andron (9.189) when they enter his tent. But "Somewhere between that point and the end of Odysseus' speech he crosses the line between separation and alienation" (1986, 5).

110. See Kirk (1990, 306) for an assessment of Odysseus' behavior here. Willcock tactfully refers to Odysseus' prudence in this episode (1978, 262).

111. "... Odysseus never quite fit in among the great heroes: his background left something to be desired; he referred with pride to his son rather than to his fathers ... and his greatest exploit was the Doloneia, a slightly distasteful nocturnal raid of questionable heroic stature" (Clay 1983, 184).

112. And see Scott (1917, 421), Stanford (1954, 71) and Hainsworth (1993, 295).

113. Leaf concurs: "For passionate rhetoric the reply of Achilles to Odysseus is above praise..." (1892, 172).

114. "Nestor, indignant at their [the chieftains' in Book 7] hesitation, rises, and it is with some humour, surely, that Homer makes us now listen to his telling the story he had not time for earlier in the day (IV. 319)" (Owen 1946, 76).

115. "... Homer has made us see the hurried manner of Patroclus, how anxious he is to get away, in order to give some comic point to Nestor's procedure" (Owen 1946, 116).

116. "To the Iliad's modern audiences, compelled by the urgent momentum of the poem's action and absorbed in the inexorability of its progress and the frontal intensity of its character portrayal, the epic's digressions [including the speeches of Nestor] from the imperative of its plot can seem to be a perplexing distraction..." (Slatkin 1986, 107).

117. Kirk quite properly observes on the other hand, "... the length and

complexity of Nestor's paraineseis do not for the most part correspond with differing needs for emphasis on their particular contexts, but vary according to their own interest and internal associations" (1990, 251). But Austin's assertion seems valid nonetheless, insofar as the poem's lengthier speeches are in fact almost always delivered when the narrative is at its most tense.

118. Schein (1984, 171) and Edwards (1987, 182) agree with the former point; Owen (1946, 115) and Schofield (1986, 16) with the latter.

119. Collins observes: "Achilles' abusive epithets for Agamemnon underline the exploitative profitability of the kingship for Agamemnon. Oinobares is related by Eustathius (89.43 and 90.21) to Agamemnon's role as chief of feasts, in turn related to his surpassing wealth, expressed, in fact, as an abundant storehouse of wine (I.71)" (1988, 94). Oinobares may well describe Agamemnon's wealth but this does not preclude it from adverting simultaneously to the king's foolish behavior, behavior reminiscent of a drunken centaur. After all, the Odyssey recounts the blinding effect of wine on Eurytion: ὁ δὲ φρεσὶν ᾗσιν ἀασθεὶς/ ἤιεν ἣν ἄτην ὀχέων ἀεσίφρονι θυμῷ, while Achilles, in his speech to his mother, describes a similar state of mind on Agamemnon's part (1.411-12):

> γνῷ δὲ καὶ Ἀτρεΐδης εὐρὺ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων
> ἣν ἄτην, ὅ τ'ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτεισεν.

Agamemnon, too, as we have seen, will himself admit he was overcome with ate.

120. As Edwards (1987, 239) and, as we have seen, Austin (1966, 306) maintain.

121. Sheppard makes a similar point (1922, 107).

122. An interpretation with which Whitman concurs (1958, 193). Though she presents a more complicated argument, as we shall see, Pedrick too believes that Nestor's "... appeal was to be a challenge from a mighty hero, and the example a glorious aristeia, to recall the human truth about valor - that it cannot be saved without grief" (1983, 67).

123. The apparent irrelevance of this material is one reason why Leaf, among others, deemed 664 to 762 an interpolation (1892, 213). Another reason was the language of the passage, although Fenik observes, "Nestor's description of the battle between the Pylians and the Epeians is given in typical style..." (1968, 113).

124. Pedrick also argues that given the Greek need just then for a champion to adopt their cause, it is ironic that the only aristeia they can claim that day is one belonging to the past. "His [Nestor's] aristeia is intoxicating, but it only underscores how desperate the Greeks' plight is" (1983, 66).

125. σὺ δ'ἀμήχανος ἔπλευ, Ἀχιλλεῦ./ μὴ ἐμέ γ'οὖν οὗτος γε λάβοι χόλος ὃν σὺ φυλάσσεις, αἰναρέτη (16.29-31), and νηλεές, οὐκ ἄρα σοί γε πατὴρ ἦν ἱππόται Πηλεύς, οὐδὲ Θέτις μήτηρ· γλαυκὴ δέ σε τίκτε θάλασσα/ πέτραι τ'ἠλίβατοι, ὅτι τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής (16.33-35).

126. The meaning of Nestor's strategy is discussed at length in Gagarin (1983).

127. "... the panorama of the Games foreshadows the future in certain details, and draws into the scheme of the Iliad hints of the traditional events later told in the Little Iliad, The Sack of Troy, and the Returns" (Whitman 1958, 124). See also Willcock (1973, 5) and Hinckley (1986, 210).

128. A general assessment of this sort would not be out of place in a book that offers "... a [final] panorama of the army" (Whitman 1958, 262).

129. Dunkle comments, "The old hero perhaps has realized that he had overemphasized the importance of metis and thus unintentionally led his son astray" (1987, 9).

130. However, "... the conflict embedded in the epic tradition between reliance on bie, 'force', represented by Achilles, and reliance on metis, 'guile', represented by Odysseus, is resolved in the Odyssey in favor of metis" (Murnaghan 1987, 10). See also Nagy (1979, 45-49) and Clay (1983, 102, 105).

131. And see Richardson (1993, 165-66) for a similar view.

132. "... in Akhilleus' respect for Nestor's great age there is a foreshadowing of his attitude to Priam in book 24" (Richardson 1993, 236).

CHAPTER THREE

It has often been observed that the Odyssey does not make any bald allusion to specific events in the Iliad. The Trojan war has, in fact, not only been brought to a conclusion as far as the Odyssey is concerned, but the heroic struggles which the campaign involved have become the working materials of a Demodocus or a Phemius and for the most part lie outside the bounds of its characters' experiences. Although the world still poses threats of different kinds - piracy, sea travel, cattle raids and the like - the poem assumes the age of the great campaign and its heroic proponents has disappeared.[1] The essential setting of the Odyssey is instead a stable world of work, leisure and domestic routines, a world the Achaean heroes left behind with the hope that they would return to it some day, a world glimpsed interstitially through similes in the Iliad.[2] What is the condition of the elderly in this new environment?

In the first chapter of this thesis the conclusion was reached that old age in the Iliad is generally portrayed in a positive light. Although the majority of the poem's elderly characters are exposed on occasion to threatening or demeaning circumstances, their misery and piteousness are due primarily to the conditions of war that prevail in the poem and not to their superannuation in itself. It is the contention of this chapter that, when allowances are made for the change of context, this view of old age is generally consistent with its depiction in the Odyssey.[3] Indeed, to the extent that the Odyssey describes a post bellum world, its elderly enjoy all of the positive characteristics which the Iliad attributes to the old, without having to endure the privations which a world at war naturally gives rise to. To establish this

point effectively, we shall examine the old men of the Odyssey according to the same general categories we employed in our treatment of the Iliad's elderly characters.

1. Physical Appearance of the Elderly

For the sake of completeness we shall begin again with the relatively uncontroversial topic of the elderly's physical appearance in the poem. In contrast to the Iliad, the Odyssey's description of the external signs of aging is considerably more detailed,[4] perhaps because the disguise of Odysseus as an old man, once he has returned to Ithaca, is such an important component of the Odyssey's plot. Certainly his transformation is portrayed quite graphically (13.398-401):

> κάρψω μὲν χρόα καλὸν ἐνὶ γναμπτοῖσι μέλεσσι,
> ξανθὰς δ'ἐκ κεφαλῆς ὀλέσω τρίχας, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαῖφος
> ἔσσω ὅ κε στυγέῃσιν ἰδὼν ἄνθρωπος ἔχοντα,
> κνυζώσω δέ τοι ὄσσε πάρος περικαλλέ' ἐόντε....

One can also infer the effects of age by reversing the rejuvenation process which Athena exposes Odysseus to when she wishes to disclose his identity to his son (16.173-76):

> φᾶρος μέν οἱ πρῶτον ἐϋπλυνὲς ἠδὲ χιτῶνα
> θῆκ' ἀμφὶ στήθεσσι, δέμας δ'ὤφελλε καὶ ἤβην
> ἄψ δὲ μελαγχροιὴς γένετο, γναθμοὶ δὲ τάνυσθεν,
> κυάνεαι δ'ἐγένοντο γενειάδες ἀμφὶ γένειον.

The Iliad of course never mentions withered skin, dull eyes or a blanching of one's colouring in connection with senescence, nor does it allude to baldness, as the following passage does (18.354-55):

> ἔμπης μοι δοκέει δαΐδων σέλας ἔμμεναι αὐτοῦ

κὰκ κεφαλῆς, ἐπεὶ οὔ οἱ ἔνι τρίχες οὐδ' ἠβαιαί.

Homer also mentions in passing that the venerable Aegyptius is stooped with age (ὃς δὴ γήραϊ κυφὸς ἔην ,2.16) and that Laertes' hair has turned grey (κεφαλῆς πολιῆς, 24.317). A telling detail about Laertes is also revealed shortly after, when Odysseus has announced his true identity to his father: the old man faints (ἀποψύχοντα, 24.348), on account of the shock on his frail physique, one assumes.[5] Laertes points up an interesting feature of Homer's technique, in addition, as does Odysseus in the passage above (16.173-76) and elsewhere in the poem. When Odysseus observes his father in secrecy, the following is said of the old man (24.227-31):

ῥυπόωντα δὲ ἕστο χιτῶνα
ῥαπτὸν ἀεικέλιον, περὶ δὲ κνήμῃσι βοείας
κνημῖδας ῥαπτὰς δέδετο, γραπτῦς ἀλεείνων,
χειρῖδας τ'ἐπὶ χερσὶ βάτων ἕνεκ' · αὐτὰρ ὕπερθεν
αἰγείην κυνέην κεφαλῇ ἔχε, πένθος ἀέξων.

Homer pays a great deal of attention to the old man's clothing, but mentions nothing specific about his physical disintegration. We do not learn here that Laertes is stooped, for example, or grey-haired or dull about the eyes. And yet, in the lines immediately following this passage, the poet states (24.232-33):

τὸν δ'ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε πολύτλας δῖος 'Οδυσσεὺς
γήραϊ τειρόμενον, μέγα δὲ φρεσὶ πένθος ἔχοντα....

It would appear that Odysseus grasps his father's eroded state in part through the fact that the latter is so miserably attired. The wretched dress is, in this instance at least, as revealing a characteristic of age as grey hair or wrinkles or any other typical trait.[6] And this is perhaps why ragged clothing plays such a prominent part in Odysseus' disguise (13.399-400, 16.173-74). Although his shabby garments are undoubtedly supposed to make a beggar out of Odysseus, at the same time their squalor somehow complements the other withering

effects which Athena's intervention gives rise to.[7] Irus, for example, confidently bullies the disguised Odysseus because he assumes his victim is an older man (18.10, 27), yet as soon as Odysseus' disguise is partially removed, so that his stout limbs and real age are discernible (18.66-67), Irus realizes very quickly that he has jumped to conclusions. The subject of Odysseus' transformation in the Odyssey is, however, somewhat problematic,[8] and we will have more to say about the nature of Odysseus' disguise in the next chapter. For now it is enough to observe that wretched dress, in both Odysseus' and Laertes' case, represents the weight of years with which each is burdened.

2. Old Age and Death

In Chapter One we examined Falkner's contention that "...old age is seen as a kind of transition, and so associated as much with death as with life..." (1989, 34), and because geras is qualified by negative epithets - stugeron, lugron and the like - therefore "...it is old age itself which is dreadful and not the particular circumstances in which the elderly find themselves" (ibid.).[9] We argued that the exact opposite holds true of the Iliad - that old age in itself is neutral if not positively desirable, but that circumstances can colour the experience of one's geras to a great degree. The same holds true of the Odyssey, as well, as we shall see.[10]

It is perhaps worth observing first, though the point is of little consequence, that when Homer speaks of age and death in one and the same breath, he seems to conceive of them as separate quantities or agents. It is man's lot both to age and to die, but the offices of one do not seem to blur into the offices of the other. Thus, for example, Teiresias announces at the end of his prophecy (11.134-36):

θάνατος δέ τοι ἐξ ἁλὸς αὐτῷ

ἀβληχρὸς μάλα τοῖος ἐλεύσεται, ὅς κέ σε πέφνῃ
γήρᾳ ὕπο λιπαρῷ ἀρημένον·

The prophet's phraseology here[11] suggests that thanatos is a force that comes upon a man externally and does not well up from inside as an incidental concomitant of geras. When Odysseus is old, death will fall upon him from without. A more concrete illustration of the disjunction between old age and death, however, is in the formula ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως, (5.136, 128, 7.94, 257, 23.336). The phrase contains no redundancy: "...agelessness and immortality are not simply synonyms, as the tale of Tithonus recounted in the Hymn to Aphrodite reveals" (Clay 1981, 112). By extension the effects of aging, though they undeniably involve a physical degeneration, cannot be entirely identified with the process that brings one's life to an end. In a sense, Homer presents us with a full range of permutations: there are those who are ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως (the gods, Odysseus if he accepts Calypso's ministrations, Menelaus and Helen perhaps[12] and the gold and silver watchdogs of Alcinous' palace); those who are immortal and grow old (Tithonus);[13] those who are mortal and grow old (Nestor et al.); and, finally, those who are mortal and unaging (the dead - the figures of a bygone age, the heroes of mythology - are recognized immediately by Odysseus in the underworld). Old age conveys mortals to the very threshold of life and death, but geras in itself does not seem to be the agent of their destruction. Perhaps this would explain why a Homeric character can often be seen to fear the prospect of an immediate death - Odysseus and his men, for example, shrink back in terror when they catch sight of the Cyclops (9.236ff.) - but never give voice to a fear of old age. And, more to the point, the elderly neither express a fear of death nor behave as though they were set within the boundaries of its shadow.[14]

Old age is, as a matter of fact, occasionally referred to as an out and out blessing in the Odyssey (1.217-18):

ὡς δὴ ἐγώ γ'ὄφελον μάκαρός νύ τευ ἔμμεναι υἱὸς
ἀνέρος, ὃν κτεάτεσσιν ἐοῖς ἔπι γῆρας ἔτετμε.

The ἀνήρ described here is not μάκαρ merely because he has managed to retain his possessions in his old age, but because his possessions are still his to enjoy and he has reached an advanced age as well. The attainment of a ripe old age is a component in its own right of a man's blessed state, as Telemachus sees it. Eurycleia implies the very same when, in reference to Odysseus' past piety and the prayers he would utter while sacrificing to Zeus, she declares (19.365-68):

οὐ γάρ τις τόσσα βροτῶν Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ,
πίονα μηρία κῆ' οὐδ' ἐξαίτους ἑκατόμβας,
ὅσσα σὺ τῷ ἐδίδους, ἀρώμενος ἦος ἵκοιο
γῆράς τε λιπαρὸν θρέψαιό τε φαίδιμον υἱόν·

Odysseus' hope that he would live to a λιπαρὸν γῆρας expresses his desire to enjoy a certain prosperity, yes, but also to survive to an advanced age. He is not asking, as Falkner would presumably have it, that his old age, a dreadful prospect in itself, be mitigated by the advantages and comforts inherent in the concept liparon.[15] Age itself is what is being sought here, along with circumstances that would make retirement reposeful and secure.[16] Menelaus' words to Peisistratus, that Nestor is fortunate, in part, because Zeus has granted a sleek old age (4.209-10), are to be interpreted in exactly the same vein. That the gerontocrat has lived so long is a substantial part of Zeus' favour to him. If this were not the case - if Nestor's blessings consisted more in his prosperous condition than in anything else - he might not be regarded as one so fortunate, as he has left his son Antilochus behind him on the Trojan plains. As it is, his prosperity, his large family and his longevity together serve to portray him as blessed in Menelaus' eyes. Teiresias' description of Odysseus' final days (11.134-36) is also clearly intended as a piece of news that will delight its

recipient; with its reference to a geras liparon again, it promises him exactly what he wished for when he prayed to Zeus in times past (19.365-68).[17] And, finally, the thrust of Achilles' speech to Odysseus in the underworld (11.488ff.) is that his preference for kleos over life was, from the vantage point of hindsight, over-zealous to say the least. Presumably if he were in a position to reverse his decision and return to Phthia inglorious and unknown, he would do so, such is the enticement of life, even life as a senior.[18]

There are instances in the Odyssey, however, when old age would seem to be a little more problematic, especially as far as Odysseus himself is concerned. In his guise as an aged beggar, Odysseus cuts a wretched figure, and it is not just his destitution that makes him an object of ridicule. Eumaeus is very quick to warn his guest, in response to Odysseus' proposal that he try his luck with the suitors in town, that only the well-dressed young act as servants to the suitors (15.326ff.). And sure enough Eurymachus mocks Odysseus for his baldness (18.354-56) and, by extension, for his advanced years.[19] At first glance, then, Odysseus' misery as a superannuated beggar can be attributed in part to the fact that he is old. Interestingly enough, however, whenever Odysseus lists the reasons for his miserable condition, he holds the hardships which he has suffered responsible and not the fact that he is getting on in years. He remarks to Eumaeus that the strength of his youth has all but disappeared in the wake of his innumerable hardships (14.215), and explains to Antinous that it is on account of his experience of defeat and servitude in Egypt that he has reached Ithaca in such a state of distress (17.145ff.). Penelope renders an elegant account of the stranger's condition when she states: αἶψα γὰρ ἐν κακότητι βροτοὶ καταγηράσκουσιν (19.360).[20] Clearly, then, in the case of the persona which Odysseus has assumed, the conditions of his senescence are the primary cause of his unhappy state and not some dreadful property inherent in geras itself.

But what of the other older characters who are miserably off in the

poem? Peleus, for example, though he is mentioned only once, would appear to be swamped by the very same problems that engulfed him in the Iliad. Certainly Achilles dwells on the possibility that his father might be hard pressed by his neighbours because his son is not present to succour him in the frailty of his twilight years (11.494ff.). More tellingly, Laertes has been particularly hard hit by a geras that seizes (marptein, 24.390), distresses (teirein, 24.233), and is both chalepon (11.196) and lugron (24.249-50). In fact Eumaeus tells Odysseus (15.353-56):

> Λαέρτης μὲν ἔτι ζώει, Διὶ δ'εὔχεται αἰεὶ
> θυμὸν ἀπὸ μελέων φθίσθαι οἷς ἐν μεγάροισιν·
> ἐκπάγλως γὰρ παιδὸς ὀδύρεται οἰχομένοιο
> κουριδίης τ'ἀλόχοιο δαΐφρονος....

Kirk argues that "...the description of Laertes is developed at great length partly as a typical treatment of the rejected and pathetic aspects of old age" (1971, 132), and that "In this whole Laertes passage there is an implication of neglect, partly intentional self-neglect but also neglect by others, by a society that no longer has a specific use for the old" (ibid.).[21] These two seniors, however, are by no means typical of the elders in the Odyssey as a whole. Indeed, both are in some sense relics of the Iliad. Like the pathetic fathers of that poem, both Peleus and Laertes have lost their sons - or so the latter assumes after twenty years of futile waiting - and are in consequence subject to the agonies which befall the parents of fallen warriors.[22] Once again circumstances alone - the fall-out from the Trojan campaign - are responsible for the unenviable plight of these characters.[23] As was the case with Priam in the Iliad (22.59ff.), Laertes, when he prays that Zeus remove the life from his limbs, is essentially expressing the thought that he has lived too long, that his longevity has merely exposed him to the tragic loss of his wife and son. And, of course, once the wretchedness of his circumstances are reversed to some degree and he is reunited with

Odysseus, his temperament and overall condition improve markedly. His kingly appearance is restored, and he proves his mettle on the battlefield. His age, in other words, was not the primary cause of his decrepitude and alienation.

It is surely significant that the negative epithets which Homer used regularly of his description of geras in the Iliad, appear in the Odyssey exclusively in connection with Peleus and Laertes. Only the geras which they experience holds, seizes, distresses and is difficult and mournful. As distant victims of the Trojan war, it is appropriate that the old age which attaches itself to them be described in the same language which characterized the precariousness of old age in the war-torn Iliad. Old age is still a threshold in the Odyssey (15.246, 348, 23.212), but it is that alone and not the destructive (oloos) threshold which a Priam finds himself poised upon (24.487).

3. Fathers and Children

It is in their relationship with their children that the elders of the Odyssey are most different from their peers in the Iliad. Because the climate of the Odyssey is for the most part a non-martial one, the fathers in this poem need not run the risk of losing their children to the ravages of war. Their children's comparative security in turn implies that parents need not adopt the role of suppliant as Chryses, Phoenix and Priam were required to do. The elderly, moreover, will have their comforts and securities seen to - the threptra that went unpaid in the Iliad when a child fell on the battlefield will be forthcoming, one assumes - and the continuity of the family will be maintained.

In contrast to the shattered families which he alludes to in the Iliad, Homer presents us with a number of households in which parents and children live prosperously side by side. In Book 2 we are briefly told of

Aegyptius, who, though he mourns one son whom he has lost to the turbulence about Troy, has three others, one of whom has joined the suitors while the other two tend the family farm δύο δ'αἰὲν ἔχον πατρώϊα ἔργα (2.22). The word πατρώια here has a comforting ring, suggesting as it does both a source of sustenance and an inherited and inheritable piece of property that will bind one generation to the next. Nestor's household enjoys a more obvious domestic felicity. The old king is very well off and surrounded by his sons and sons-in-law who are models of politeness (3.34ff.) and work cooperatively together (3.439ff.).[24] Menelaus' court, superficially at least, also exhibits its fair share of peace and domesticity. For what it is worth, Menelaus and Helen are back together again,[25] and a double wedding ceremony is being celebrated (4.3ff.). And Odysseus encounters harmony and tranquillity in the courts of Aeolus and Alcinous. Both kings - the former especially[26] - are heads of sumptuous households. The children of Aeolus feast perpetually in their father's company (10.8ff.), while Alcinous' sons, besides dining with their parents, seem to spend their days exercising, dancing and taking baths (8.246).[27] And the little that we see of Dolius and his sons - minus Melanthius and his daughter Melantho[28] - again suggests that a felicitous concord reigns between the two generations: just as Nestor leads his sons from the gathering by the seashore (3.386), so Dolius leads his sons to gather stones for the wall of a vineyard (24.225). Later, when they sit and eat with Odysseus the children arrange themselves beside Dolius in good order (24.411).[29] And Telemachus and Odysseus themselves, once they have been reunited, immediately evince affection for each other, and the former dutifully follows where his father leads him.[30]

The frequent allusions to weddings and marriage in the Odyssey also serve to differentiate the lot of the parents in the Odyssey from that of their peers in the Iliad. In a world where the young no longer have to prove

themselves upon the battlefield, marriage assumes a greater importance and the older generation can assume that its children will perpetuate the family line. Besides the courtship of the suitors themselves, then, we learn that all of Nestor's sons are married with the exception of Peisistratus (3.401),[31] and that he has sons-in-law as well. When Telemachus reaches Menelaus' court, he discovers that twin wedding ceremonies are being celebrated (4.3ff.),[32] and further on, in Book 15, Helen will complement her husband's gifts with a gown to be worn on the wedding day of Telemachus' bride (15.125). In Book 6, Athena appears in Nausicaa's dream and chides her for having forgotten that she is to be married soon (6.25ff.). The theme of an incipient wedding is then repeated several times (6.66, 180, 244, 7.313)[33] and plays an important role in the sequence of events that leads up to Odysseus' introduction to Phaeacian society. And, again, when Odysseus encounters Aeolus and his children, Homer informs us that the six sons are married to their sisters (10.5ff.)[34]. Odysseus, moreover, promises to Philoetius and Eumaeus, who observed earlier in the poem that his master's absence has deprived him of a wife (14.61ff.), that he will see to it they both marry in the event the suitors are vanquished (21.213ff.). Finally, as a means of concealing the death of the suitors, Odysseus bids his household array itself as though a wedding were being celebrated (23.130ff.). These festivities can, in some sense, be associated with the reunion of Penelope and Odysseus which follows shortly after.[35]

It should be mentioned that marriage and weddings are often alluded to in the Iliad as well, but the poet's intention is clearly different. The marriages of Nestor's sons, for example, suggestive of prosperity and fecundity perhaps, stand in marked contrast to the dramatically foreshortened unions of the heroes about Troy. Griffin comments, "We have observed that the Homeric warrior is characteristically seen as young, and that the widowed wife is a natural figure of Homeric pathos. A pathos still more intense is produced by

combining the two ideas" (1980, 131). Griffin then goes on to list (131ff.) those warriors who at the moment of their death are presented against the backdrop of their newly formed marriages or prospective nuptials (Othryoneus Iliad 13.381ff., Alcathous 13.428ff., Imbrius 13.171ff., Protesilaus 2.698ff., and Iphidamas 11.221ff.). More obviously, Hector's little family, too, labours under the shadow of an upcoming disaster. But, once again, the change of climate from war to that of peace frees marriage in the Odyssey of such tragic overtones.[36]

Finally, something must be said of Odysseus and Laertes. Odysseus' apparent displacement of his father as head of the household and his seemingly vindictive treatment of Laertes (24.235ff.) have led Stanford to posit that a latent father-son antagonism is operative between these two characters (1954, 60ff.). Are there strong grounds for believing that this is in fact the case?

We shall reserve our examination of the recognition scene in Book 24 for the next chapter, but shall observe for the moment that, contrary to appearances, Odysseus' behavior at this juncture is not quite so unfeeling as many commentators make it out to be. The abdication of Laertes is, on the other hand, unusual. Doubtless there is some truth to Clarke's speculation that "...old Laertes has been made unfit for kingship, presumably through infirmity" (1967, 31),[37] but the old man's vigour in his garden and slaying of Eupeithes at tale's end tend to suggest that this cannot be the only explanation.[38] Jones' argument, that Laertes has been shifted to the side so that Telemachus and his problems will occupy the spotlight (1989, 13), has some merit as well, but does not explain why Odysseus ruled before his departure for Troy.[39] As in the case of Peleus, for example, Homer could have had Laertes in control of his affairs at the time of his son's debarkation, and brought about his lapse subsequently, through the absence of his only son. And yet, though the situation cannot be explained to one's complete satisfaction,[40] this last detail,

that Odysseus is an only son, marks him off from the other potential 'heirs' in the poem, with the exception of Achilles. Nestor, Alcinous, Halitherses and Dolius are in command of their households - and in the case of the first two, of their 'kingdoms' as well - yet have a multitude of sons.[41] And in addition to his lack of brethren, Odysseus appears to have displayed, for what it is worth, an unusual precocity in 'affairs of state': at 21.16ff. we are told that Laertes and the other gerontes of Ithaca sent Odysseus forth when he was a youth (παιδνὸς ἐών, 21.21) on an embassy (ἐξεσίην, 21.20) to collect a debt. Nowhere else in either the Iliad or the Odyssey are the young entrusted with such responsibilities. And, again unlike the other prospective heirs and sons of the Odyssey, Odysseus is getting on in years. As is clear from Antilochus' words in Iliad 23, Odysseus was already approaching middle-age in the tenth year of the Trojan campaign (23.790-91). Nestor's son Thrasymedes, on the other hand, is in charge of the band of youths who are posted outside the Achaean ditch in Book 9 of the Iliad. And Laodamas, Alcinous' son, addresses Odysseus as ξεῖνε πάτερ (8.145), again clearly indicating the wide gap between their years. These different features do not explain, admittedly, Odysseus' rule in place of his father, but they do serve to invalidate any comparison that might be drawn between Odysseus' circumstances and those of the poem's other sons.

It is possible, then, that Odysseus' 'usurpation' of power is not as anomalous as it might seem at first. Unusual or not, it need not imply by any means that Odysseus is somehow at odds with his father. Anticleia tells Odysseus (11.196) that Laertes is pining away for want of his son, and this idea is repeated further on by Eumaeus (15.355) who, in the book before, had mentioned that Laertes, in addition to Penelope and Telemachus, is hanging on his son's return (14.173). And the affection between father and son on their reunification is undeniable: Odysseus sheds tears when he first espies his father's decrepitude (24.234), both embrace furiously (24.320, 347) and Laertes

faints (24.348). The restorative effect, moreover, that Odysseus' return has on his father's disposition and physique precludes any suggestion of an Oedipus complex.[42] Instead, sons and fathers are natural complements of each other, and when Odysseus finally has his father in his arms, his nostos is complete.[43]

4. Heroic Age and Continuity of Generations

In the first section of this thesis, we saw that the Iliad refers to a pre-Trojan past on occasion and promotes the notion that the men of that earlier epoch were for the most part more heroic and admirable than the soldiers involved in the Trojan campaign. Although the Odyssey does not look back to the distant past nearly so frequently, it does nonetheless suggest a similar contention, that the men of its present somehow fail to live up to the heroic standards of previous generations. In a sense the deterioration over time in the two poems roughly parallels Hesiod's parable of the five progressively inferior ages (Works and Days, 109).

Having assumed the guise of Mentor, Athena approaches Telemachus and, before advising him on the measures he must adopt to set his travels in motion, makes a general observation (2.276-77):

> παῦροι γάρ τοι παῖδες ὁμοῖοι πατρὶ πέλονται
> οἱ πλέονες κακίους, παῦροι δέ τε πατρὸς ἀρείους.

The obvious implication of this statement is that the further one retreats into the past, the more admirable become the characters whom one encounters. Odysseus, too, subscribes to this rule. After he has vanquished the Phaeacians in the discus contest, he boasts at length about his prowess. In addition to boxing, wrestling and running, he describes his proficiency with the bow, and adds that of the Achaean warriors only Philoctetes was a more competent archer. He then continues (8.223-25):

> ἀνδράσι δὲ προτέροισιν ἐριζέμεν οὐκ ἐθελήσω

οὔθ' Ἡρακλῆϊ οὔτ' Εὐρύτῳ Οἰχαλιῆϊ,
οἵ ῥα καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἐρίζεσκον περὶ τόξων.

Odysseus' words here suggest that the competition with the gods referred to is a feat - or an act of hybris - which only men of an earlier generation could rise to. In consequence he, the second best archer of his own time, would not presume to strive with these figures of old.[44]

The descent into the underworld in Book 11 provides us with an even closer glimpse of bygone characters and their achievements. Having consulted the prophet Teiresias and wept over the spirit of his mother, Odysseus then confronts the more celebrated denizens of Hades. First a crowd of departed women approaches, and Odysseus interviews the likes of Tyro, Alcmene, Leda and Iphidameia, all of whom once received the attentions of various immortals and gave birth to the heroes of the mythological past. Further on, Odysseus espies a host of male legendary figures, Minos, Orion, Tityos and Heracles among others. Indeed, it is no exaggeration that "...the hero comes face to face with the whole Greek heroic world, and beyond that, with the whole of departed humanity" (Reinhardt, as quoted in HH, 91). At the same time we need hardly observe that these subterranean celebrities have long been absent from the ranks of the living and represent a level of human capability that is far removed from the potential of the suitors and their contemporaries. In fact, the Phaeacians are especially interested in Odysseus' recitation as they are in some sense - as we shall see in the next chapter - doubly removed from the virtues and feats of old.

Odysseus also encounters his former mess-mates of the Trojan war. Though this generation of warriors is not to be compared with the Dioscuri or a Heracles, their confinement in the underworld nonetheless testifies that their grandeur too, though comparatively reduced, has vanished from the ranks of men, never to be seen again. This view is corroborated by the fact that

the trials and achievements of the Trojan campaign have passed into the repertoire of the Odyssey's bards. Phemius sings of the expedition's nostos (1.326ff.), while Demodocus entertains the Phaeacians first with the tale of a quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus (8.73ff.) and, further on, with the story of the Trojan horse and the sack of Troy (8.500ff.). That these incidents should now be part of the klea andron, mere components of a good night's entertainment, suggests their removal from the audience's immediate sphere of experience.[45] Heroic song, by its very nature, focusses on the events of times past.[46] And it is significant as well that Nestor, whose words in the Iliad refer continually to a bygone era, concentrates in the Odyssey on the sufferings endured by the Achaeans at Troy, introducing his long account with the observation that Priam's city was where the best men of the army were slain (3.108). One irretrievable past, in other words, has been substituted for another. Just as Nestor drew upon a time distant from his audience in the Iliad, so now he focusses on a set of events which, though of more recent occurrence, is equally removed from his listeners in the Odyssey.[47]

It could be argued that both the heroic and the mythical worlds are, contrary to our assertions above, still operative within the time-frame of the poem. Do we not see the heroic ethos continually at work in Odysseus' personality, and does he not confront the exotic and fantastic on his post-Trojan journeys? There are two quick points to be raised in connection with this question. The first is that, with the exception of his sojourn on Calypso's island, all of Odysseus' 'fairy-land' adventures are narrated in the poem by Odysseus himself - his so-called Ich Erzählungen. True enough, "A direct, third-person, account of Odysseus' experiences in this territory would have been a departure from the conventions of epic composition, and would also have impaired the work's internal equilibrium" (HH, 3).[48] But, besides enhancing the narrative structure of the poem and allowing for the

compression of ten years of adventures into four swift-flowing books, the first-person narrative characterizes Odysseus as a bard-substitute. "Odysseus is referring to himself in his comment that only an ordered and peaceful society can accord the bard his rightful place (9.5ff.). Odysseus' story, which will rival the tale of Demodocus, will be sympathetically received by the Phaeacians" (HH, 12).[49] But if Odysseus is indeed acting out the role of bard when he recounts his adventures, he is, from the viewpoint of his audience, speaking of something that is, once again, at odds with its experience. As far as Alcinous and his court are concerned - and Penelope as well in Book 23 - Odysseus' escapades are on a par with the feats which a Phemius or a Demodocus gives voice to in his songs. Indeed, the ease and peace of mind with which the Phaeacians navigate the seas only serve to remove them further from Odysseus' tribulations and increase the distance between the tale told and the listeners' personal reality.[50] The second point is more straightforward. When the Phaeacian ship responsible for Odysseus' conveyance is turned to stone by an irate Poseidon (13.162ff.), and Alcinous, recollecting the prophecy of his father (13.172ff.), bids the Phaeacians to refrain from conducting strangers in future (13.179ff.), the door to the fantasy-world which Odysseus has been circumnavigating for the last ten years is effectively being closed on ordinary mortals. "Their [the Phaeacians'] disaster thus breaks the last link with the untroubled phantasy realm..." (Segal 1962, 31) and "This past, with its phantasy-world, is thus closed forever" (ibid.).[51] Thus, Odysseus has experienced both the world of the archaic warrior and the world of strange monsters and happenings and his ordeals in both cases are in the eyes of the people back on Ithaca vestiges of an era that will never repeat itself. As was true of the Iliad, the circumstances and characters of the past are greatly distanced from the post bellum conditions and population of the Odyssey.

In spite of the disjunction between the poem's heroic past and its less virtuous present, Homer assumes, as he did in the Iliad, that the different generations are still part of a continuum. Though sons may, in most cases, fall drastically short of their fathers' stature (2.276-77), they nonetheless often manifest qualities which are characteristic of their origins. And, besides underlining a son's physical tie with his father, Homer also stresses periodically the importance of the transmission of a family's wealth and power.

On several occasions different characters comment on Telemachus' resemblance to Odysseus. Thus Mentes/Athena (1.208ff.) and Helen and Menelaus (4.141ff.) observe how Telemachus and Odysseus have certain physical qualities in common, while Nestor is amazed by the similarity of their speech (3.124).[52] Homer says of Hermione moreover ἡ εἶδος ἔχε χρυσέης Ἀφροδίτης, a description which vividly calls to mind the beauty of her mother.[53] When Telemachus and Peisistratus first arrive at Menelaus' court, the latter's squire, Eteoneus, informs his master that two men, like unto descendants of Zeus (4.27), are standing outside. And Menelaus himself, having offered Telemachus a chariot and three horses only to have his gift refused, states with a smile, Αἵματος εἰς ἀγαθοῖο φίλον τέκος, οἵ' ἀγορεύεις (4.611). In both cases the families' aristocratic blood shines through.[54] And again, when Peisistratus tells Menelaus that supper-time is not the occasion for mourning (4.193ff.), Menelaus immediately answers that Peisistratus' sense of proportion marks him off as a true son of his wise old father (4.204ff.). Achilles, too, when he inquires after his son Neoptolemus (4.492-93), is clearly pleased to learn that he has followed in his father's footsteps and, indeed, has proven to be a leader in war.[55] Odysseus evinces the same anxiety that his son should not compromise the family's honour (24.506ff.), repeating in part, as Heubeck observes (RFH, 415), the advice Hippolochus gives to his son Glaucus

(Il. 6.208-9):

αἰεν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,

μηδὲ γένος πατέρων αἰσχυνέμεν....

As we argued in Chapter One in connection with this statement, despite the difference in capability between Telemachus and his forebears, his temper is expected to be just as heroic. And he has in fact given an indication earlier that his abilities fall within the province of his father's. In Book 21, we are told that he comes very close to stringing the bow and in fact would have succeeded had Odysseus not signalled to him to break off (21.125ff.). As Dimock observes, "The result [of Telemachus' efforts to string the bow] is that we are satisfied that he is worthy to take his father's place..." (1989, 281).[56]

Encouraged by Athena in the guise of Mentor, Telemachus calls an assembly in Book 2. Once the Ithacans have gathered, Telemachus appears and occupies his father's seat. The elders, we are told, yield to him (2.14). And in Book 3 we see Nestor awaken and make his way to a set of polished stones upon which his father Neleus used to sit (3.404ff.). Both scenes suggest very vividly the hereditary nature of each character's position, the inherent right of each to assume the prerogatives of the previous generation.[57] Alcinous, too, it would appear, rules the Phaeacians because, congenitally, the right to do so belongs to him. Such is the implication at least of the genealogy with which Athena supplies Odysseus at 7.54ff. And when Achilles asks after his father Peleus (11.494ff.), his inquiry, according to Heubeck, "...is really also a question about the kingship..." (HH, 107). The son wants to determine, presumably, whether the throne of Phthia still remains in his family's hands.[58] Although Odysseus disavows any knowledge of Peleus (11.505), he seems to answer all of Achilles' inquiries at once when he informs the dead warrior that his son is a champion: if Neoptolemus is really so formidable, then Peleus has someone to safeguard his interests and the 'kingship' of Phthia must still be within the

family's control. Perhaps this explains why Achilles walks off joyfully at interview's end. The transmission of property from one generation to the next is also assumed to play a role in a family's continuity. When Odysseus approaches Arete and the Phaeacian court, he wishes for the feasters present that the gods grant them a blessed life and that they in turn hand down their possessions and honour to their children (7.148ff.). Telemachus desires the same situation for himself when, in a passage we have already examined, he expresses the wish (1.217-18):

> ὡς δὴ ἐγώ γ'ὄφελον μάκαρός νύ τευ ἔμμεναι υἱὸς
> ἀνέρος, ὃν κτεάτεσσιν ἑοῖς ἔπι γῆρας ἔτετμε.

If Odysseus were comfortably ensconced in Ithaca, then Telemachus would not have any doubts about his parentage - doubts which he has expressed at 1.24ff. - and with his identity secure would in turn feel sure that he was going to inherit this same wealth. As it is he is faced with the worry that the suitors will eat him out of house and home. Without his father present to ratify in some sense the authenticity of his claim to the family property, the continuity of inheritance falters and the tie of one generation to the next is jeopardized.[59]

5. Wisdom of the Elderly

The Odyssey, like the Iliad, assumes that the elderly are intellectually more capable than the young. Though the latter can on occasion exhibit prudence and good judgement, they do so exceptionally, as if the tenderness of their years poses a natural barrier of witlessness which only the precociously sound character can overcome. In addition to being wise, moreover, the elderly are more aware of the common good and act as models of the proper way to behave. They play, at times, a supervisory role for a younger generation which either lacks experience or is too unruly to conduct itself appropriately. Indeed, to a much greater degree than in the Iliad, the potential disruptiveness

of the young in the Odyssey is set in opposition to the modesty and cooperativeness of the poem's senior characters,[60] and thus something of a generational conflict is produced.

When Telemachus calls an assembly in Book 2, it is noteworthy that the old man Aegyptius, whose experience is fathomless (2.16),[61] addresses the gathering first.[62] The tone of his speech expresses a certain satisfaction that at last, after a long interval of twenty years, a public institution has been resurrected. Why else would he compliment the assembly's instigator so lavishly (2.33), and express the desire that Zeus allow the same man to prosper (2.34)?[63] And further on, in response to an omen sent by Zeus, the γέρων ἥρως Halitherses, unsurpassed by men of his age in augury (2.159), advises the Ithacans, the suitors in particular, to bring an end to their ways or suffer the consequences (2.161ff.). He lays emphasis upon the fact that he is not inexperienced (2.170). True enough, as Preisshofen observes, the young men do not recognize Halitherses' authority - in contrast, he feels, to the authority which the gerontes wield in the Iliad (1977, 33-34) - but this lack of respect is, once again, an indication of the chaos that prevails in the wake of Odysseus' absence. The soundness of Halitherses' advice and the disregard on the part of his listeners is in fact strongly reminiscent of Nestor's speech to Achilles and Agamemnon in Book 1 of the Iliad. In both instances events prove that the aged counsellors' perspective is far sounder than that of their juniors. We see Halitherses address the Ithacans a second time in Book 24, where Homer says in tribute to his wisdom ὁ γὰρ οἷος ὅρα πρόσσω καὶ ὀπίσσω (24.452).[64] On this occasion he berates the Ithacans for having ignored him when he first counselled them, and again advises them to restrain themselves. The response to this speech is much more positive: more than half the assembly stands and shouts assent (24.463ff.). Those who decide to follow Eupeithes instead[65] will, of course, end up getting worsted. Clearly, therefore, Halitherses

is presented as a character whose words are to be attended to. The Phaeacian elder Echeneus, moreover, is presented in a very similar light. Odysseus' sudden appearance in Alcinous' palace surprises the gathering to the point of paralysing them (7.154). Echeneus, who is προγενέστερος (7.156), alone keeps his head - according to Homer he is pre-eminently wise - and advises Alcinous on the proper course of action (7.157).[66] And when, four books later, Queen Arete proposes that the Phaeacians supplement their previous gifts with additional ones, Echeneus speaks up and ratifies this suggestion, so to speak, though at the same time, in the diplomatic spirit of Nestor, he avows that the final decision rests with Alcinous (11.344ff.).[67] Finally, after Penelope has learned of the suitors' plan to ambush Telemachus, the thought that immediately enters her mind is to send word to Laertes of his grandson's danger, with the hope that the old man will be able to 'weave a device' (4.739) and approach the citizenry of Ithaca. To be sure, that Penelope would even think of pinning her hopes on her despondent father-in-law may well be a sign of her helplessness, as Jones suggests (1989, 44). On the other hand, that Laertes should be expected to devise a solution in a pinch is perhaps an indication, once again, of the wisdom which the elderly are assumed to have at their command.

We should also note in passing that the word euphroneon, examined in some detail in Chapter One, appears on six occasions in the Odyssey. In five of these instances it is applied to an older character: Halitherses (2.160 and 24.453), Mentor (2.228),[68] Echeneus (7.158) and Nestor (24.53). As in the Iliad, the word suggests a more objective outlook on the part of its speaker, a greater concern for the common good as a whole, and a determination to speak one's mind in spite of hostile circumstances. Thus both Halitherses and Mentor upbraid the Ithacans in Book 2, even though the suitors are present and are clearly inimical to Telemachus' cause. Though he does not seem to do so at risk to himself, Echeneus does nonetheless reprimand Alcinous when he reminds him of the

general requirements of a host (7.159).[69] And according to Agamemnon's description of events, Nestor was faced with something of a mutiny when Thetis and a crowd of sea nymphs appeared at Achilles' funeral (24.49-50). Only his timely intervention prevented the Greeks from scattering.[70] And, again, Halitherses is faced with the task of telling the Ithacans, who have been bereaved of their sons, that the fault lies with them and that the vendetta should proceed no further (24.454ff.).

Besides casting the elderly in a flattering light as far as their judgement is concerned, Homer also stresses on numerous occasions the potential weakness of a young person's wits. When Eteoneus asks whether Menelaus wishes to entertain Telemachus and Peisistratus or send them packing (4.28ff.), Menelaus retorts irritably that Eteoneus is exhibiting the foolishness of a child (4.31ff.). Penelope, too, on discovering Telemachus' absence, states that her boy is still a child and knows nothing of toil or the assemblies of men (4.818). More tellingly, Odysseus observes baldly to Alcinous that young people tend to be thoughtless (7.294). And it is the youngest of Odysseus' companions, the luckless Elpenor, who foolishly forgets his whereabouts one morning and falls to his death on awakening (10.552ff.).[71] The swineherd Eumaeus, when conversing with Odysseus, reveals to the latter (14.59-61):

> ἡ γὰρ δμώων δίκη ἐστὶν
> αἰεὶ δειδιότων, ὅτ' ἐπικρατέωσιν ἄνακτες
> οἱ νέοι.

Why exactly servants live in fear is not explained, but clearly either youth's deficiencies or excesses are responsible.[72] We also see in the same book the difference between the older swineherd's ethic and that of the young men who work with him. The latter spend the night within the hut, while the former, concerned for the boars' welfare, goes outside and sleeps beside the sties (14.523ff.).[73] Homer stresses the fact that the other labourers are young (ἄνδρες

κοιμήσαντο νεηνίαι, 14.524), perhaps with a view to explaining this remissness of theirs.[74]

That is not to say that young people, in Homer's view, are completely devoid of wisdom. Homer often describes Telemachus as pepnumenos,[75] and this assignation of good sense is further complemented by the young man's upright attitude towards strangers and characters who are older than himself.[76] This wisdom, however, may have something to do with Telemachus' lineage - we do not expect the son of Odysseus to be utterly witless even in his adolescence - and, despite his precociousness, Telemachus inadvertently shows his inexperience from time to time, especially at the poem's beginning.[77]

In Amphinomus, too, we find many traces of a sensible character. Indeed, Homer states explicitly that his intellect is sound (16.398) and, immediately after, reveals that he speaks euphroneon (16.399), with that same good intent as the elders mentioned above. To be sure, the speech that follows is commendably prudent: in contrast to Eurymachus who disregards Halitherses' interpretation of the eagle in Book 2, Amphinomus answers Antinous' proposal, that the suitors kill Telemachus and divide his property among themselves (16.364ff.), with the useful advice that the gods be consulted first (16.402ff.).[78] He will also toast Odysseus graciously on the latter's conquest of Irus (18.122ff.) and, in response, Odysseus, having complimented Amphinomus on his discretion (18.125ff.), will attempt to persuade him to abandon his courtship of Penelope. It is this speech which discloses holes in Amphinomus' wisdom. Odysseus' words are clearly cast as the advice of an elder to his junior and, although he acknowledges the young man's capability, he warns him at the same time that he is too inexperienced to realize just how dramatically a man's fortunes can be overturned (18.130ff.). For all his diplomacy and tact, then, Amphinomus lacks a larger understanding of life's precariousness, and it is this shortcoming of his which will prove his

undoing.[79]

As one would expect of the children of Nestor and Alcinous[80] respectively, Peisistratus and Nausicaa also demonstrate good sense on occasion. When Peisistratus recommends to Helen and Menelaus that the supper hour is not a fitting time for lamentation (4.190ff.), he is praised by Menelaus for this sound observation of his. In fact, Menelaus states that Peisistratus has spoken like one beyond his years (4.204ff.), the implication being that the acumen which Peisistratus has exhibited is normally not to be found in a man as young as him. Similarly, in Book 7, when Odysseus is explaining to Alcinous and Arete how he happened to arrive on Scherie and, more important, why he is dressed in clothes belonging to their household, he says of Nausicaa (7.292-94):

> ἡ δ'ο"θ τι νοήματος ἤμβροτεν ἐσθλοῦ,
> ὡς οὐκ ἄν ἔλποιο νεώτερον ἀντιάσαντα
> ἐρξέμεν·

Again, her display of good judgement is exceptional for one of her years.[81] That wisdom is not, generally speaking, a common trait among the young is underscored, as we have seen, by the words that immediately follow Odysseus' praise of the young maiden: αἰεὶ γάρ τε νεώτεροι ἀφραδέουσιν (7.294). It is the suitors above all, however, who most epitomize the failings of youth. Homer presents them in such a way that one cannot suppose they are merely corrupt in themselves but rather that the tenderness of their years is in part responsible for their arrogance and many transgressions. Indeed, Odysseus' attempt to reestablish himself in the face of the suitors' belligerence seems to resemble something of a generational conflict at times.[82] To some degree the 'wrong' and 'right' of the situation in the last half of the poem - as well as in the assembly scene of Book 2 - can be represented by the folly of youth and the experience of age respectively.

The suitors are, as a group, unquestionably portrayed in a very poor light. A sympathetic trait emerges every now and then - Amphinomus' diplomacy or a general cry to respect the laws of hospitality lest the stranger in disguise turn out to be a god (17.483ff.) - but overall the high-handedness of the suitors is continuously adverted to. They are arrogant (ἀγήνωρ, 1.106, 144, 2.235, 299, etc.), shameless (ἀναιδής, 1.254, 13.376, 20.386, etc.), insolent (ὑπερφίαλος, 1.134, 4.790, 14.27, 15.315, 16.167, etc.), and practice violence, (ἔργα βίαια, 2.236; βίαι, 17.540; βίη, 15.329, 17.565, 23.81, etc.), hubris, (1.378, 4.321, 4.627, 16.86, etc.) and wanton actions (ἀτάσθαλα, 18.143). Besides such references their deeds, of course, speak loudly for themselves.[83] They are courting Penelope without regard for the proper form, they pay little heed to their obligations to strangers, and they plot to murder Telemachus. Alongside Homer's very positive portraiture of the elderly, such behavior would appear to belong almost exclusively to the domain of youth, and sure enough, not satisfied with a suggestive contrast alone of the two different age groups, Homer stresses time and time again the fact that the suitors are young. They are νέοι (13.425, 18.6, 20.361, 21.179, 21.184), κοῦροι (2.96, 17.174, 19.141, 22.30, 24.131) and, in a common epithet that sets their youth in close association with their haughtiness, they are νέοι ὑπερηνορέοντες (2.324, 331, 4.769, 14.425, 17.482, 20.375, 21.361, 401). Although the topic is one that is beyond the scope of this thesis, perhaps it can be argued that the suitors' shortcomings, βίη, ὕβρις and the like, are essentially the pitfalls of a younger temperament. Be that as it may, Homer does create the impression that there is a close relationship between the suitors' age and their disgraceful behavior.

As far as a generational conflict is concerned, it is true that we do encounter right-minded youths in the poem, Telemachus, Peisistratus and Nausicaa for example, and that Telemachus is as hard pressed by the males of his own generation as his father is. Nonetheless, when the suitors act

obnoxiously with the Ithacan elders in Book 2 and the disguised Odysseus in the latter half of the poem, Homer does seem to make the disparity in years a subject of some contention. Eurymachus' speech to Halitherses, for example, calls attention to the old seer's advanced years (γέρον, 2.178, 192; γεραιέ 2.201) and insinuates that he is pressing home the advantage of his age and wisdom to dupe the young Telemachus into giving him gifts (2.185ff.). And although Leocritus does not allude directly to Mentor's senescence further on, the generally threatening tone of his words suggests he is availing himself of the suitors' youth and numbers and using these to great effect against the old man's frailty.[84] By concluding, too, that Halitherses and Mentor will see to Telemachus' proposed journey (2.253), he appears to define Telemachus' champions according to their age: they are, he observes, friends of Telemachus' father (2.254) and therefore belong to the previous generation.

More tellingly, the suitors' youth is contrasted with Odysseus' age on a number of occasions in the last third of the poem. After he has struck Odysseus with a footstool, Antinous tells the disguised beggar to sit and be quiet (17.479-80):

> μή σε νέοι διὰ δώματ' ἐρυσσωσ', οἳ' ἀγορεύεις,
> ἢ ποδὸς ἢ καὶ χειρός, ἀποδρύψωσι δὲ πάντα.

His emphasis on νέοι serves to differentiate Odysseus from his persecutors. In Book 18 Irus addresses Odysseus as γέρον (18.10), likens him to the equivalent of an old fish-wife (γρηῒ καμινοῖ, 18.27), and asks him how he dares to contend with someone younger than himself (18.31).[85] Odysseus, too, speaks of himself as a γέρων (18.21) and, in response to Antinous' proposal of a boxing match, acknowledges that the old man faces difficulties when physically confronted by a younger opponent (18.52-53). When Odysseus girds himself for the contest, the suitors then admire the stout legs of the old man (18.74), and Antinous tells Irus that he is better off dead if he fears a man of Odysseus' advanced age

(18.79ff.). Again and again in this episode, then, age is presented as the factor that distinguishes Odysseus from his adversaries. Eurymachus will continue this theme when he mocks Odysseus for his baldness further on (18.354-55). Odysseus' refusal to have his feet washed by the younger maidservants serves as yet another illustration of the division between young and old: the young servants would only insult him, Eurycleia observes (19.370ff.), while she, being older, sympathizes fully with his lot.[86] And when Odysseus expresses the wish to try his hand at the bow, he is sternly reprimanded by Antinous and warned not to compete with his juniors (21.310). Finally, in the thick of his battle against his penned-in adversaries, Odysseus urges Mentor/Athena to join his side of the dispute. His appeal is noteworthy (22.208-9):

> Μέντορ, ἄμυνον ἀρήν, μνῆσαι δ'ἑτάροιο φίλοιο,
> ὅς σ'ἀγαθὰ ῥέζεσκον· ὁμηλικίη δέ μοί ἐσσι.

In addition to requiting favours of the past, Mentor is asked to adopt Odysseus' cause because he is Odysseus' contemporary and members of the same age group should band together.[87] To be sure, the suitors are a degenerate lot but, once again, instead of focussing solely on their transgressions and corrupt manners, Homer consistently differentiates them from Odysseus by pointing to their youth above all.[88]

Summary

In conclusion, Homer's treatment of old age in the Odyssey is generally consistent with his description of it in the Iliad. The elderly still have something of a monopoly on wisdom, good advice and diplomacy, and promote the common good in their respective societies to a greater degree than their juniors. Earlier generations are assumed to be more impressive than later ones and, by extension, an Odysseus' or a Nestor's contact with a bygone age implies their greater worth alongside their juniors and contemporaries. Age

still debilitates, of course, but in the absence of war, the aged are rarely subject to scorn, and when they are, their antagonists are blameworthy in the eyes of the community at large. Indeed, with the shift from the privations of war to the ease and stability of society at peace, geras, in itself a natural and at the very least a neutral condition, becomes only more desirable and is valued as compensation for the turbulence of one's earlier years. As Penelope states (23.286-87):

εἰ μέν δὴ γῆρας γε θεοὶ τελέουσιν ἄρειον
ἐλπωρὴ τοι ἔπειτα κακῶν ὑπάλξιν ἔσεσθαι...

words which, despite their obscurity, "...express her [Penelope's] wish for a peaceful old age" (Katz 1990, 190).

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER THREE

1. "...the Odyssey is an epic that... concerns a sorrowing and tattered survivor of heroic society who has to learn how to function in a new and quite different world that has collectively forgotten heroism, except as history, and has acquired a new concern for the bourgeois values of stability and ease" (Stewart 1976, 20). And see Falkner (1989, 21).

2. "The use of similes [in the Odyssey] is much reduced, for the real world, not a stylized one, enters freely into the narrative itself and does not have to lurk in little digressions" (Fränkel 1975, 86). And "The similes thus let us - indeed make us - look through the war to the peace that lies behind it, to the peace that the warriors have abandoned and which many of them will never know again. The similes make us see war as wasteful and destructive, the blight of peace and pleasure" (Taplin 1980, 15).

3. "Die Grundmotive in der Auffassung des Greisenalters, die sich aus der Ilias ergeben haben, gelten auch für die Odyssee, teils identisch, teils weitergeführt, 'differenzierter' und durch neu hinzutretende Aspekte verwandelt" (Preisshofen 1977, 33). Falkner comments in a similar vein, "In the posterior and domesticated world of the Odyssey, the prospect of old age is somewhat brighter - it is only here that the concept of a λιπαρὸν γῆρας is raised as a possibility - but the tensions between heroism and old age are very much present" (1989, 38).

4. "Als charakteristisch für die äussere Erscheinung des alten Menschen in der Odyssee ergeben sich folgende Motive: weisse Haare (Kopf und Bart), bzw. Kahlköpfigheit (ς 355), ausgedörrte Haut, (Runzeln), Trübung der Augen. Dazu kommen die Beobachtungen, daß der Körper vom Alter gebeugt wird (β 16) und dass ganz allgemein die Körperkräfte abnehmen. Nur das erste und letzte Motiv sind in der Ilias nachweisbar" (Preisshofen 1977, 38). And see Whitman (1958, 293).

5. "...[The scholia] say that Odysseus addresses him [Laertes] with a deceptive speech: ἵνα μὴ τῇ ἀφνιδίῳ χαρᾷ ἀποψύξει ὁ γέρων, ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ κύων ἀπώλετο
(Od. 24.240)" (Richardson 1983, 228).

6. In keeping with this observation is Fenik's comment, "For Homeric society what a person wore represented in a real, not just a symbolic sense, what he was. A king without his proper raiment is not a king" (1974, 61).

7. This relationship between squalor and old age perhaps parallels the rejuvenation that often seems to accompany a bath. Athena magnifies Odysseus' appearance after he bathes in Book 6 (229ff.) and in Book 23

(156ff.), and does the same for Laertes in Book 24 (359). Just as dirt can magnify one's age, so bathing seems to diminish it occasionally.

8. See Page (1955, 88ff.).

9. It should be noted that Falkner does recognize the desirability of a λιπαρὸν γῆρας which, in his words, "...represents a particular kind of old age spent in comfort, prosperity and security..." and "...represents an ideal completion of the heroic life..." (1989, 28). Nonetheless, in his view, old age is still a part of "...a conceptual nexus almost uniformly negative: death, disease, wrath, grief, Ares, the Erinys and so on" (ibid.).

10. This is Garland's contention as well (1990, 251).

11. We translate ἐξ ἁλός here as 'away from the sea' rather than 'from the sea'. See Hansen's discussion (1977, 42ff.) and that of Nagler (1980, 92ff.).

12. Although Proteus does not mention anything about growing old to Menelaus when he prophesies to the latter that he will be transported to the Isles of the Blessed instead of dying - thereby suggesting that Menelaus will be ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως all his days - Menelaus himself speaks of living his life on earth out to its end: he expresses the wish that he could settle Odysseus near him so the two could enjoy each other's company until death enfolds them (4.174ff.).

13. Homer does not speak of Tithonus' fate explicitly in the Odyssey, yet it may not be entirely coincidental that the one book in which he is referred to by name (5.1) is the same one in which we see Odysseus and Calypso together.

14. At 13.59, it is true, Odysseus does address Arete as follows:

> Χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ βασίλεια, διαμπερές, εἰς ὅ κε γῆρας
> ἔλθῃ καὶ θάνατος, τά τ'ἐπ' ἀνθρώποισι πέλονται.

Falkner observes that "... the hero wishes continued joy to Arete... pairing the gloomy realities that signal life's decline" (1989, 34). In this instance alone it would appear that death and old age, though not necessarily identical in effect, do operate in close conjunction with each other. As we shall see in the next chapter it is significant that Odysseus is the speaker of these words, as this statement reflects the attitude of a soldier and wanderer positioned in a world that no longer knows anything about war or adventuring. Certainly this statement by itself does not discredit Homer's overwhelmingly positive portraiture of geras.

15. Heubeck observes that this word is almost synonomous with 'rich' or 'wealthy' (HH, 86). Similarly, Falkner writes, "The λιπαρὸν γῆρας (which exists as a concept only in the Odyssey) represents a particular kind of old

age spent in comfort, prosperity and security, sleek as though it glistened with oil" (1989, 28). On its own, however, the word bears no suggestion of longevity. When feet are described as liparoi, for example, it is almost always a young man's feet that are being referred to (2.4, 13.225, 17.410, 20.126); 4.309 is the sole exception, and even then the feet concerned belong to Menelaus. When liparon is applied to geras, however, the impression created is that of longevity combined with a preservation from the more detrimental consequences of age through the restorative effects of wealth, security and children.

16. Garland observes of this passage, "The fact that Odysseus himself prayed that he himself would reach 'sleek old age' demonstrates... that length of years, given comfortable circumstances, was indeed an estate to be desired" (1990, 251).

17. Preisshofen does comment, "An dieser Stelle ist eine Einzelheit interessant: einerseits ist das Alter λιπαρόν, anderseits entkraftet es (ἀρημένον). Vergleicht man dies mit Σ 434/5 (uber Peleus) ... wird der differenzierte Aspekt, unter dem das Alter in der Odyssee erscheint, deutlich zwar entkraftet das Alter, wird aber doch im ganzen als λιπαρόν angesehen" (1977, 36).

18. "Achilles' violently angry response [11.488f]... is all the more surprising since the expression of an unconditional preference for life appears not to be in keeping with the attitude expressed by Achilles when alive.... It is, however, quite in character, for in Hades the perspective has dreadfully changed. Now that Achilles is dead, his spirit yearns for life with the same vehemence with which it had once embraced death" (HH, 106). Stewart goes further than this: "With these lines [11.488-91] a complete transformation of values takes place. Achilles, the quintessential hero of the Iliad, of the whole epic tradition, is changed in the Odyssey into a remorseful, bitter ghost who in four climactic lines turns the whole heroic image and premise over into the dust" (1976, 60).

19. We will explore this point in greater depth further on.

20. Rutherford writes of this passage, "This implies that the beggar is older than Odysseus would be naturally (as opposed to being aged by suffering and travels)" (1992, 179). But the beggar is the ὁμήλικα of Odysseus (19.358). Penelope knows that he, like her husband, has wandered far and suffered for it. Her comment, then, is applicable to both men and not just to Odysseus.

21. Falkner, too, provides a very fine description of Laertes' predicament (1989, 40ff.).

22. Nestor, it is true, has lost his son Antilochus, and Aegyptius, an Ithacan

elder, mourns a son of his who accompanied Odysseus to Troy and, unknown to his father who infers his death from his interminable absence, has been eaten by the Cyclops (2.17ff.). Homer does not set these characters in the same category as a Laertes, however, because, most probably, they have more than one son. Finley, however, thinks of Nestor as a "kind of surviving Priam" (1978, 144).

23. Falkner recognizes this, in part, when he writes, "Laertes' condition also illustrates the situation of those in old age who are bereft of their children and denied the θρέπτρα or parent-support on which their well-being depends" (1989, 42ff.) He also argues however that Laertes, in being hard-pressed by the suitors, is being victimized to some degree by the heroic values which the suitors embody. But, as we shall argue in the next chapter, the suitors are heroic only in the most superficial sense.

24. "... Nestor's Pylos and Menelaus' Sparta, visited by Telemachus in books 3 and 4 and showing him, and us, a proper re-established oikos to contrast with Ithaca and Mycenae; and even more the Phaeacia of Alcinous which serves for Odysseus as the transition and model between the remote disordered worlds of his wanderings and his disrupted home" (Taplin 1980, 4). And as West observes in her Introduction to Book 3, "We move from the lawlessness and near anarchy of Ithaca to the pious, well-ordered life of Nestor's Pylos" (HWH, 158). And see Finley (1978, 146).

25. "Menelaus... acquits his wife of all blame and appears to display nothing but the deepest reverance and affection for her. The quality of this homonoia is such, or so it would appear, that not even open discussion of Helen's notorious past can adulterate the tranquil harmony that pervades their home life" (Garland 1990, 230). Clarke agrees (1967,36). On the other hand, "...[the mood in Sparta] is one of melancholy remembrance... and domestic strife beneath the surface" (Schmiel 1972, 470). For views similar to this see Maniet (1947, 40), Taylor (1963, 75), Mariani (1967, 47), Dimock (1989, 49) and Olson (1989, 391).

26. Aeolus is immortal but "It is interesting to note that the portrayal of Aeolus emphasizes his human aspects: his palace stands in a city... and he himself is imagined as a king who, like other kings, is a favourite of the gods..." (HH, 43). And see Austin (1975, 99).

27. "It is not... surprising that the life which Alcinous says is dear to the Phaeacians is made up in part of precisely those activities that in the eyes of the Greeks symbolized a peaceful existence" (Dickie 1983, 254). And see Segal (1962, 27).

28. "With regard to Melanthius and Melantho, there is no reason why in

life or in letters a good father should not have wicked children" (Stanford 1959, 420).

29. Autolycus and his sons, too, according to the digression on Odysseus' scar, embody a domestic stability (19.418ff.).

30. Stewart argues strangely of the reunion scene in Book 16, "In this exchange, Telemachus... shows respect, intelligence, and attention towards this strange man... but at first he seems unable to show any real affection for the man as his father" (1976, 92). And yet the exchange between father and son is very emotional (16.213ff.), and Telemachus' delight in his father's return is nicely illustrated at book end when, avoiding the gaze of the swineherd, he smiles and glances at his father instead (16.477).

31. As West points out, Zenodotus athetized 3.400-1, possibly on the grounds that he suspected the couplet had been added to introduce homosexual overtones in the relationship between Peisistratus and Telemachus (HWH, 185).

32. Schmiel comments of the wedding, however, "... the son is not Helen's child (4.12) and his name is Megapenthes, 'Great Grief' (4.11). Hermione will be leaving home to marry Neoptolemus, not an unusual occurrence to be sure, but an occasion for tears as well as joy" (1972, 464).

33. "Throughout the episode, while Nausikaa is present, her marriage keeps coming up in one way or another" (Lattimore 1969, 89).

34. "The six sons given in marriage to the six daughters of Aiolos, coming together in the palace for daily feasting, imitate the winds issuing from their respective poles and converging at the center" (Austin 1975, 99).

35. "The improvised wedding celebration is the formal background to the imminent reunion of Odysseus and Penelope, and not only meets the immediate need of postponing the reckoning with the suitors' aggrieved families but also represents the re-enactment of the marriage ceremony celebrated twenty years before by Odysseus and Penelope..." (RFH, 326). See Harsh (1950, 3), Mariani (1967, 160-1) and Katz (1990, 168).

36. The Iliad on occasion does make reference to Priam's fecundity and the marriages of his sons (e.g. 6.242ff., 24.543ff.). The prosperity and tranquillity suggested are perhaps reminiscent of the world of the Odyssey but belong to a period pre-dating the Achaean invasion. In addition, "... the peacetime Troy is glimpsed, subliminally almost, throughout the poem in the formulaic epithets: the city is spacious, well built, with fertile lands..." (Taplin 1980, 14). Troy is destined to fall (Il. 6.447ff., 7.401ff.) and therefore the domesticity adverted to within the

immediate time-frame of the Iliad is a foreshadowing of the destruction which the war will ultimately bring about.

37. Finley comes to much the same conclusion: "It is idle to guess the circumstances which brought Odysseus to the throne in place of Laertes. The statement must suffice that long before the days when he could only drag himself in his vineyard Laertes had proved unable to rule iphi, by might. And so, somehow, the rule passed to his son" (1979, 87).

38. "No doubt physical as well as mental vigour is needed for the exercise of power in the heroic world; but a chief who is supported by a loyal and competent son could, like Nestor and Priam, retain his position until an advanced age, and we may be puzzled to account for Laertes' retirement, particularly since he is still active, despite the lapse of a further twenty years and the austerities to which he has subjected himself" (HWH, 101).

39. Thus, for example, Telemachus declares to the assembly he has convened (2.46-47):

τὸ μὲν πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἀπώλεσα, ὅς ποτ' ἐν ὑμῖν
τοίσδεσσιν βασίλευε...

and Mentor reprimands the same gathering because they have forgotten the gentleness of Odysseus' former rule (2.233ff.).

40. As Kirk comments, "The dynastic situation in Ithaca is complicated and does not respond to any simple institutional explanation" (1971, 131).

41. This is true as well of the Cretan household Odysseus describes in one of his lies: the father dies and only then do the sons divide the estate. Achilles, on the other hand, speaks in Iliad 9 of sailing home to Phthia and enjoying his father's possessions (9.400).

42. "Stanford reaches for a psychological problem that raises more problems than it solves. This supposed and, if real, very interesting father-son antagonism would stand isolated and alone within the confines of a single scene, unconnected to anything preceding or following, without preparation and without consequence" (Fenik 1974, 48).

43. We shall examine this point in greater detail in the following chapter.

44. Stanford comments: "Heracles... and Eurytus belonged to a previous generation of heroes; so, by the principle laid down in the note on 2,276 [that of heroic degeneration over time] they were unmatchable in the Homeric age" (Stanford 1958, 337).

45. Both Helen (3.125ff.) and Achilles (9.189) it is true recreate the 'deeds of men' through weaving and song respectively, but the world perspective and objectivity of these two characters is unique. See Schein (1984, 23ff.)

and Redfield (1975, 36).

46. "Not only is the setting of heroic song removed from that in which the events take place, but the bards who sing it and the audience who listen to it are marked by their distance from heroic life and action" (Murnaghan 1987, 151). See also Redfield (1975, 31ff.) and Segal (1962, 23).

47. Stewart's observations are similar, only he would apply the last point to Helen and Menelaus as well (1976, 20). See Mariani (1967, 48) and Falkner (1989, 21).

48. And, as Segal comments, "Whatever the symbolic associations of the adventures themselves, their presentation in the first person as a recollected totality can be taken as what the inner man has acquired - like the gifts of the outer man - in passing through a rich multiplicity of experience, a formed and crystallized whole which cannot be communicated literally or objectively, but only in the strangeness of its own terms" (1962, 24).

49. Suerbaum (1968, 166ff.), Finley (1978, 90) and Austin (1975, 199) also view Odysseus' recitation as one that parallels the efforts of a Demodocus. Moreover, as Rutherford observes, "... both the praise that he [Odysseus] receives and the effect that he has on his audience are expressed in terms suited to poetry..." (1985, 142).

50. "The Trojan war is now far in the past, a subject of song; and even his post-Trojan adventures are seven years removed, a removal emphasized by the fact that they are presented as a tale and Odysseus, in telling them, likened to a bard..." (Segal 1962, 23).

51. As Germain observes, "Les Phéaciens vont tenter et apaiser Poseidon et le récit avec habileté laisse ignorer s'il y sont parvenus, tout en diminuant notre espoir de retrouver jamais un pays déjà peu accessible (1954, 298). Finley agrees (1978, 91).

52. West comments, "... the resemblance on which Nestor remarks lies in their way of speaking, though the idea is rather confusingly expressed (and wholly unconvincing in the case of a young man who has not seen his father since he was an infant)" (HWH, 167). Perhaps it should come as no surprise, however, that Nestor, pre-eminent counsellor that he is, should notice Telemachus' speech pattern, while the beautiful Helen should pay more attention to Telemachus' exterior. The fact that Telemachus does speak like his father, and this in spite of Odysseus' long absence, only serves to emphasize the importance and influence which Homer ascribes to the inheritability of family traits.

53. As West points out, "... the same formula is used of Helen herself in [Hesiod] (fr. 196.5)' (HWH, 195).

54. Austin says of Telemachus in general, "It would be a strange thing indeed if, with Autolykos for a great-grandfather, Odysseus for father, Penelope for mother and Athena for divine patron, Telemachus should grow to manhood without a trace of the congenital proclivity for deception, or if we prefer, for artful invention. The evidence does not disappoint us.... [The strategies of Telemachus] are sufficient in variety and number to assure us that in this respect Telemachus will prove himself no illegitimate son" (1969, 46). Thornton argues to similar effect (1976, 68).

55. Heubeck comments of Od. 11.538-40, "Achilles departs without a word, his earlier passion driven out by joy over his son's achievements" (HH, 109).

56. It is not the intention of this thesis to broach the very complicated problem of kingship in the Odyssey (as described in Halverson's article G&R 33 [1986]). The point we would like to establish here is that some type of authority would seem to be Telemachus' due, as the instance above implies as well as Antinous' statement to Telemachus: μὴ σέ γ'ἐν ἀμφιάλῳ Ἰθάκῃ βασιλῆα Κρονίων/ ποιήσειεν, ὅ τοι γενεῇ πατρώιόν ἐστιν (1.386-87). See Hainsworth's sensible comments (HH, 342).

57. It is with these two scenes in mind that Rose observes: "... the poet never misses an opportunity to stress the theme of continuity of royal status from generation to generation (1988, 200-1).

58. Even a wastrel like Antinous would seem to be a chip off of the old block of his father Eupeithes. Defects of character too, then, would seem to be inheritable.

59. "In Homeric society, property can hardly be distinguished from possessions; the householder's economic status depends on his authority over dmoes, 'servitors', and dependent smallholders, and these latter respect his authority out of personal loyalty and the habit of obedience. Under these conditions the transfer of property is secure only when it occurs inter vivos, so that the father can use his authority to establish the authority of the son. This pattern gives us three roles for males of the propertied class: the son who has not yet inherited, the active householder, and the father who has retired from his possessions - Telemachus, Odysseus, Laertes" (Redfield 1975, 111). And see Stewart (1976, 45).

60. Pace Preisshofen who maintains, "Nicht mehr die Funktion des Alters als Bürge für Wissen und rechten Rat steht dabei im Vordergrund,

sondern das selbstgenügsame γῆρας λιπαρόν " (1977, 36).

61. West argues that μυρία ἤδη denotes "... experience, rather than wide general knowledge" (HWH, 130).

62. Although Jones feels that it is his family's "deep involvement with Ithaca past and present" (i.e. his son's participation in the Trojan campaign) that prompts Aegyptius to speak first (1989, 20).

63. West states, however, "The fact that no assembly has been held for nearly twenty years indicates that the poet regarded the institution as peripheral to the political organization of Ithaca" (HWH, 131). Halverson agrees (1986, 120). The association of the assembly with Odysseus (2.27) and the general insubordination of the suitors, depicted graphically in Book 1 and in the dialogue about to follow, suggest on the other hand that the infrequency of public assemblies is yet another consequence of Odysseus' absence and the resultant breakdown of good order.

64. Heubeck comments, "At 452 the prophet's gifts are characterized in true Homeric fashion: he is not credited with supernatural mantic powers but with wisdom and clear understanding which enable him to draw conclusions about the future from the past" (RFH, 409).

65. Eupeithes, it is true, is old and behaves rather badly - though, as Heubeck acknowledges, "... [Eupeithes'] projected vengeance is quite within the normal and legal bounds of convention ..." (RFH, 407). Eupeithes' character, however, could well have been inferred from his son's, Antinous', and if Laertes is to have an aristeia, he must presumably prove himself against someone who is roughly his own age, which would make Eupeithes a foil of sorts.

66. Rose comments of this scene, "As if to emphasize this related lapse of Alcinous - abdication of his role as the one who must greet the newcomer - Homer clearly establishes the credentials of Echeneus as the wisest of the Phaeacian men, as the one who knows what to do" (1969, 395). Hainsworth, for his part, sees Echeneus as a "Nestor of the Phaeacians, privileged by his years to pontificate in moments of general perplexity..." (HWH, 331).

67. "Notably it is Echeneos, again the most elderly, who is the first to respond to Arete's suggestion that Odysseus should be furnished with gifts before his departure for Ithaca..." (Garland 1990, 265).

68. The geronti of 2.227 refers to Mentor and not Laertes as some commentators (e.g. Thornton 1976, 115) feel. See West (HWH, 145).

69. "Echeneos' rebuke is direct and unsoftened...," Rose observes of the old man's intervention (1969, 395).

70. "The role given to Nestor here exactly corresponds to the way he is presented in the Iliad" (RFH, 365).

71. "It is appropriate... that it should be the luckless Elpenor... who is the one to fall from the roof of Kirke's palace upon waking from his drunken slumber, since he is in fact the youngest of Odysseus' companions..." (Garland 1990, 266).

72. Stanford comments of these lines, "Young lords and masters were proverbially harsh" (1959, 218).

73. A scene similar to this is Mentor's/Athena's insistence that he return to the ship and hearten the crew, as he is the only older man in that company (3.360ff.). There is again a suggestion here that the young require the guidance and reassurance of someone who is older.

74. Austin, on the other hand, feels that Eumaeus' industriousness is in general to be contrasted with the helplessness of Telemachus and Laertes (1975, 166).

75. "πεπνυμένος denotes one who observes the courtesies of life especially in speech.... It is seldom used of the great heroes... but is a regular description of youthful or subordinate characters" (HWH, 372-73). Austin observes that the epithet is closely associated with heralds in both the Iliad and the Odyssey (1975, 75).

76. His kind behaviour toward the disguised Athena in Book 1 and Theoclymenus in Book 15 are examples of the former; his reticence before Nestor and Menelaus (3.24 and 4.158ff. respectively) and his insistence that the disguised Odysseus keep his seat (16.44ff.) are examples of the latter.

77. Scott observes, "In the earlier scene of the poem, Telemachus is one of the least heroic of actors, a big boy grown up under the control of women and still attended by the very same nurse who had watched over his infancy..." (1917, 421). See also Miller and Carmichael (1954, 58ff.), Clarke (1963, 130ff.) and Austin (1975, 164).

78. Commenting on the apparent peculiarity that Amphinomus should want to consult the gods on the subject of murder, Stanford writes: "...homicide of anyone except a relative or someone like a suppliant or guest, was not regarded as a social crime or a religious transgression in the Heroic Age" (1959, 277).

79. Of Amphinomus Woodhouse comments appositely, "In Amphinomus we see a misguided youth... in whom evil communications have corrupted good manners. He has a lingering sense of decency, and something attractive about him" (1930, 204). And see Jones (1989, 148).

80. In his first reference to Alcinous, Homer states of him 'Αλκίνοος δὲ τότ' ἄρχε, θεῶν ἄπο μήδεα εἰδώς (6.12). Commentators' assessment of the king differ radically. With the above-quoted passage in mind, Austin argues, "...their [the Phaiakians] monarchs are especially recognized for their intelligence" (1975, 193) and goes on to write, "Alkinous' intelligence shows itself in intuition and discretion" (1975, 194). Rose speaks of his ineptitude as a leader (1969, 397). Tebben acknowledges that the Phaeacian king is slow to act, but argues that he alone "has the power which makes him responsible for the protection of his people in danger" (1991, 30). De Vries feels he is not equal to a crucial situation but states that Rose's charge of ineptitude is unfair (1977, 121). Woodhouse sees the king as something of a buffoon (1930, 59). Nausicaa, however, can still lay claim to intelligence on her mother's side (7.73).

81. When Athena visits Nausicaa in a dream, however, her first words are Ναυσικάα, τὶ νύ σ'ὧδε μεθήμονα γείνατο μήτηρ (6.25). And Belmont says of both Telemachus and Nausicaa that "...they represent a simple universal human type: aristocratic youth ripening into maturity" (1967, 2). The young maid's childishness, moreover, emerges from her charming interactions with her father. See Fenik (1974, 224).

82. "In the conflict between the Odyssean household and the suitors, there are intimations of conflict between a younger and an older generation, between town and country, and between their respective value systems" (Halverson 1986, 189). For a detailed study of the tensions between town and country in the Odyssey see Edwards (1993).

83. Thornton comments, "This theme [that outrageous actions are punished by the decree of Zeus] is not only worked out in the action of the epic when the Suitors are punished with death, but it is constantly kept to the fore in the characterization of the Suitors. The key words are 'insolence' (hybris) and 'violence' (bie)" (1976, 2).

84. In her comment on the ambiguous ἀργαλέον δὲ/ ἀνδράσι καὶ πλεόνεσσι μαχήσασθαι περὶ δαιτί (2.244-5), West states, "This should probably be interpreted as a threat to Mentor; an old man like him cannot hope to achieve anything against the suitors; even Odysseus would find the odds against him too great" (HWH, 146). Fenik concludes of both Eurymachus and Leocritus' words, "The suitors' refusal to listen to the words of elders and seers is thus of fundamental importance; this is what burdens them with guilt and justifies their slaughter" (1974, 210). Halverson, too, speaks of the suitors being "markedly anti-pathetic to the elders"

(1986, 189).

85. Levine argues that, "...Iros' character and behaviour reflect the suitors', and his downfall foreshadows their upcoming doom" (1982, 204). If this is so, there is even greater reason to feel that Homer concentrates on the age discrepancy between Odysseus and Irus as a means of alluding to the same discrepancy between Odysseus and the suitors.

86. The young servants' squeamishness here in tending to an older guest parallels the suitors' disinclination to have anyone but the young see to their needs (15.330ff.).

87. The same preference for members of one's own peer group appears again, perhaps, in Odysseus' description of Eurybates (19.244ff.). The herald, we are told, was slightly older than Odysseus himself, yet he was favoured above the rest of the companions ὅτι οἱ φρεσὶν ὄρτια ᾔδη (19.248).

88. Falkner argues that the suitors espouse heroic values and it is this heroism of theirs that stands in opposition to the norms of Ithacan society and, in particular, to the elderly and their quiet practices (1989, 38). This view is to a great extent a valid one, but, as we shall see in the following chapter, the suitors vis a vis Odysseus are hardly heroic. The antagonism that subsists between them and the beggar is instead due to the difference in age.

CHAPTER FOUR

Within the first twenty lines of the Odyssey, Homer alludes to Odysseus' nostos on no fewer than five occasions (i.5, 9, 12, 13, 17). Without equivocation the poem's audience is informed that the poem concerns itself with Odysseus' return, and Odysseus himself is portrayed as a travel-weary veteran who has nothing more in mind than the realization of his nostos, which eludes him through his companions' folly, Calypso's concupiscence and other circumstances that lie outside his control.[1] Odysseus' commitment to his homecoming is, indeed, so strong and single-minded at times that only the most obtuse critic would deny that nostos lies at the very core of the poem. On the other hand, as the narrative progresses, this theme is occasionally contradicted. Contrary to our expectations, episodes arise in which Odysseus could make his way home steadily and yet does not avail himself of the opportunity. Homer also presents certain adventures in such a way that they appear not as obstacles to Odysseus' return, but as vagaries which Odysseus himself, impelled by his inquisitive nature, his heroic enterprise and, less admirably, his acquisitiveness,[2] chooses to embark upon. In one instance, moreover, he forgets his return and lingers on in one locale an entire year. Are these examples of Homer nodding, or is he fine-tuning the general premise of his poem?

It is the contention of this chapter that, although Odysseus' return is clearly the driving force behind the poem, the implications of nostos are at the same time to some degree at odds with the Odyssean temperament, and that Homer reflects this discrepancy by manifesting in Odysseus an occasional

reluctance to settle down. When Odysseus does finally re-establish himself in his ancestral home, he must accept the fact that his new peaceful surroundings will disarm him of his heroic impulse. No longer will there be new sights to see, new impressions to record, unexpected dangers to surmount. When Teiresias informs Odysseus about his future, for example, he tells him about the journey he must make inland and the sacrifice he must offer to Poseidon, then passes on immediately to the subject of Odysseus' death. The reason why the prophet jumps so abruptly from the ordeals which await Odysseus to the description of his end is that there is no intervening event of importance to report. Like Nestor and Menelaus, Odysseus will, once his wanderings have been brought to a conclusive end, arrange his son's marriage, superintend sacrificial feasts and, in general, occupy himself with the typical pastimes of the elderly. Odysseus' nostos, in other words, will mark the start of his retirement, and Ithaca will be the setting of his old age.[3]

As we argued in our last chapter, geras is not a dreadful prospect in itself, and certainly Odysseus, again according to Teiresias' prophecy, can expect his retirement to be a comfortable one.[4] To the extent that Homer does adhere to his basic story-line, that Odysseus is a man desperate to return home but is prevented from doing so by hostile forces which he cannot overcome, the peace and security of old age are to be seen as a well-deserved reward for the turbulent decade of Odysseus' travels. On the other hand, once again the line of argument which this chapter will pursue, Homer has posited such versatility, cunning and curiosity of Odysseus that the well-to-do quietude of Ithaca and the comforts of geras, attractive as they would appear to be in general, define an environment which a man of Odysseus' calibre cannot settle in all that easily. Even Nestor, despite the fact that he is prosperously off on Pylos, is subtly at odds with his domesticity. To the extent that Odysseus cuts a more prepossessing figure, how much more will he chafe at the tranquillity

which awaits him once he has achieved his nostos! And Ithaca is not alone in posing this problem. Most of Odysseus' ports-of-call between Troy and Ithaca confront him with the same dilemma. The Lotus Eaters, Ogygia, Aeaea and Scheria have much stability and comfort to offer, and could in fact serve as alternate locations for Odysseus' retirement. When Homer has Odysseus refuse to settle in each one of these, therefore, perhaps he is making a comment on Odysseus' inability to 'drop anchor' in general, is insinuating that peace and its concomitants, whether on Ithaca or elsewhere, are not in keeping with the temperament of someone who is essentially dynamic and polumetis. And perhaps this same point is being expressed when Homer has his hero fabricate false histories for himself back on Ithaca and reveal himself to his philoi only with the greatest reluctance. Odysseus postpones reunion with his wife and father possibly because he is apprehensive about his place on Ithaca and, once recognized, will be drawn into retirement perforce. The Odyssey, so our argument will run, is in part a study of an aging hero who has difficulty subjecting himself to the narrow, docile practices of the peaceful life awaiting him back home.

In an attempt to prove these assertions, we shall first examine Odysseus' character and show how it is indeed incompatible with the quietude of an Ithaca. We shall then pass on to four of Odysseus' adventures - the Lotus Eaters, the sojourn on Ogygia, the encounter with Circe and the visit to Scheria - and demonstrate how each is an anticipatory reflection of Odysseus' potential reaction to his home. Ogygia and these other 'fairyland' islands betray some similarities to Ithaca, we hope to reveal, and serve in part to forewarn us of the hardship which Odysseus will experience when the prospect of being drawn back into Ithacan life becomes a reality. We shall see, moreover, that his lies contain truthful elements which again portray his disinclination to entrench himself in Ithaca's settled routines. We shall also deal with the meaning and

dynamics of Odysseus' disguise, then finally show how the sequence of the recognition scenes and the delay with which Odysseus unmasks himself to his friends and loved ones are further indications of the validity of our contention as a whole.

1. The Character of Odysseus

In the first line of his poem, Homer addresses the Muse and asks her to tell him of the man who is polutropos. Whether this word is translated as 'much-wandering' or 'of many devices' - its exact meaning is ambiguous[5] - the poet is surely adverting to the complexity of character which the vicissitudes and variations of travel bring to the fore: adventurers have adventures, and only the most versatile among them survive to tell the tale. The epithet polutropos, then, "...emphasizes not only the multiplicity of Odysseus' wanderings and sufferings, but also the multiplicity of his mind" (Clay 1983, 31).[6] Homer establishes right from the start the complicated tenor of the man who is going to be the subject of his verses.[7]

The emphasis on Odysseus' multi-facetedness is maintained throughout the course of the poem. Odysseus is consistently described as polukerdes (of his noos, 13.255), polutlemon, polumetis, polumechanos and the like. Stanford, in fact, counts sixteen polu-compounds that attach themselves to Odysseus, fourteen of which are unshared by any other hero (1950, 109). With this observation in mind he concludes, "Clearly, Homer did not regard versatility as typical of any hero except Odysseus" (ibid.).[8] In fact, one of Odysseus' most obvious qualities, his metis,[9] is particularly suggestive of his mental dexterity and multifariousness. Detienne and Vernant observe that Homer pictures metis as being, "...not one, not unified, but multiple and diverse..." (1978, 18), hence its qualification by the adjective poikilos, which in itself refers to a "...many-coloured sheen or complex of appearances [that] produces an effect of

irridescence, shimmering, an interplay of reflections which the Greeks perceived as the ceaseless vibration of life" (ibid.). Both metis and by implication Odysseus, in that he is its most assiduous practitioner, share a field of application which is "...the world of movement, of multiplicity and of ambiguity" (1978, 20).

We see Odysseus' intellect in full operation at various stages in the poem. In the episode with the Cyclops, Odysseus wisely tells the monster that he and his men have suffered shipwreck (9.283ff.) and foresees that if he kills Polyphemus with his sword, he will die on account of the vast stone blocking the cave's exit. Then there is the ruse with his name (outis/metis), and his eventual escape through the use of the Cyclops' flock. And whereas his companions sail their ships incautiously into the harbour of the Laestrygonians, Odysseus alone anchors his without. On Ithaca, too, he conceals his identity by concocting a series of complicated lies. Alongside these ploys of his, we see evidence of his curiosity:[10] it is this characteristic which involves him in the imbroglio with the Cyclops to begin with, induces him to send half of his men to reconnoitre Circe's habitation, to interview different eidola in the underworld, and to tune into the Sirens' song. Odysseus is, in addition, suspicious of everyone and everything. He refuses to explain the contents of Aeolus' leather bag to his crew, insists that Calypso swear an oath to the effect that she will not bring about his ruin, and calls Leucothea's intentions and advice into question.

In conjunction with his wide-ranging intellect, the heroic impulse forms an essential component of Odysseus' character. We see evidence of this impulse not only in his past exploits at Troy - the wooden horse, his penetration of the city as a spy - and his attack upon the Cicones,[11] but in his confrontation with the world in general. Thus when Polyphemus falls asleep after the first of his cannibalistic feasts, Odysseus' first thought is to run him

through with his sword (9.299ff.).[12] On extricating himself and his men from the Cyclops' cave, Odysseus gives into his heroic pride - "Odysseus' heroic ego reasserts itself...", as Friedrich describes it (1987, 130) - and he foolishly announces his real name to the monster. And in spite of Circe's impatient assertion that arms and fighting are futile against immortals - tellingly she comments: σχέτλιε, καὶ δὴ αὖ τοι πολεμήϊα ἔργα μέμηλε/ καὶ πόνος (12.46-47) - Odysseus does gird himself for battle when he and his companions are in the vicinity of Scylla and Charybdis. Back on Ithaca, moreover, when taunted and kicked by Melanthius, his first thought is to kill the herdsman (17.235), just as further on, when a fight with Irus becomes inevitable, he deliberates whether he should kill the man flat out or merely knock him to the ground (18.90) and, on perceiving his maid-servants' wantonness, he ponders whether he should punish them on the spot or postpone his vengeance (20.10ff.). In each of these three instances his first reaction is to follow through on his heroic impulse and employ deadly force. The fact that he does not says much about Odysseus' forbearance,[13] of course, but we see nonetheless how ineradicable a part of his temperament this heroism of his is.

Besides being a reflection of his powerful mind, Odysseus' curiosity is an expression of his heroism as well. As Friedrich argues, "His intellectual curiosity does distinguish Odysseus from the traditional heroes as the Iliad presents them: Odysseus is different. But this, by itself, does not render him less heroic. His intellectual curiosity may be uncommon in Heroic Man, but the way in which Odysseus pursues his interest in fresh knowledge is of a piece with the traditional heroic attitude and bespeaks the hero" (1987, 123-24). His decision to confront Polyphemus, then, even in the face of his companions' apprehensions, is a consequence in part of his heroic attitude, as is his determination to listen to the Sirens' song.[14] Indeed, as a survivor of these strange encounters and as a visitor to the underworld in particular,[15] Odysseus

can expect to win himself a share of kleos no less noteworthy than the glory he has won from his strictly military accomplishments. Again as Friedrich observes, "...Heroic Man has only exchanged traditional warfare for adventurous seafaring, the one requiring as much prowess and steadfastness as the other..." (1987, 126).

It should be mentioned that commentators have argued that Odysseus' heroic character changes in response to his different adventures both outside Ithaca and on the island itself. Thus Reinhardt views Odysseus' carelessness with the Cyclops as a sign of his unfamiliarity with the norms of the fantasy world which he has just begun to explore (1960, 53). Rutherford similarly maintains, "In these early adventures he [Odysseus] is still something of a dashing buccaneer; he has yet to become the brooding, deep-thinking planner and almost Stoic moralist whom we see in the making during the Phaeacian books and in action in the second half of the epic" (1986, 151).[16] And Segal speaks of Odysseus reclaiming his humanity and accepting his mortality after his experiences in the underworld and his lengthy detention on Calypso's island (1962, 20).[17] In her comments, moreover, on the simile which compares Odysseus to a widow of war (8.523ff.) Foley observes how this simile "...suggests how close Odysseus has come in the course of his travels, and in particular on Calypso's island, to the complete loss of social and emotional function which is the due of women enslaved in war" (1978, 20).[18] Despite an apparent change in his demeanour, however, Odysseus retains a firm grip on his heroic ethos to the poem's very end. As harrowing as his experience at sea and his sojourn with Calypso may have been, Odysseus nonetheless displays the competitive spirit of the traditional hero in the athletic games of the Phaeacians and, though he manages to restrain himself in his dealing with Irus, Melanthius and his maid-servants, vents himself upon the suitors explosively. The very last scene of the poem, in fact, describes Odysseus falling on the suitors'

relatives with all the savagery and remorselessness of a high-flying eagle. Perhaps his warrior's impulse is thwarted momentarily at different stages of the poem, but overall the heroic temper is an unquestionable part of Odysseus' dynamic.[19]

Having developed a character with such a wide-ranging intellect and heroic disposition, Homer runs the risk of painting himself into something of a corner. The climax of his poem will be achieved when Odysseus has dispatched the crowd of suitors, gained recognition from his wife and father, and reasserted his authority over his domain. And then what? Post bellum Ithaca is, to be sure, comfortable, prosperous and tranquil, but once its tensions have been resolved, is it the type of environment which we, Homer's audience, can watch the complicated Odysseus settle in, without questioning the compatibility of the man and his locale? Homer has defined his protagonist's character against a backdrop of uncertainty, menace and hardship. Can he realistically consign this same protagonist to a world which will no longer offer him a venue for his agility of mind nor provide him with an opportunity to demonstrate his heroism further?[20] Murnaghan comments for example, "The role constructed for Odysseus on Scheria does not entirely match his many-sided and widely experienced nature. He has certain distinctive characteristics that are not recognized by the Phaeacians, and the poem acknowledges this discrepancy, although it does not emphasize it" (1987, 101).[21] But if this is true of Scheria, why would it not apply with equal force to the rather humdrum routines of Ithaca? As Segal observes, "...the young stay-at-homes [on Ithaca] have no sense of the experience of loss and recovery through which Odysseus has lived and voyaged" (1962, 47). The attitude and ethos of the soldier, so profoundly entrenched in Odysseus' character and both compounded and fortified by his restless intellect, are incongruous with the

manners of the civilian population back on Ithaca and raise the possibility that, wherever he does finally decide to drop anchor, Odysseus will have some trouble reconciling his character to the preoccupations of a society at peace.[22] To illustrate this point, let us examine briefly part of Odysseus' behaviour back on Ithaca, digressing first to glance at Homer's depiction of the Odyssey's Nestor who, to a small degree, exemplifies the problem we have described above.

Nestor's post-Iliadic circumstances are, as we argued in the previous chapter, secure and prosperous, and in fact serve as something of a paradigm for Odysseus' household if its former master should ever return. At the same time, however, the old king appears somewhat out of place. Clarke maintains that, "The Nestor of Book III [Odyssey] does not quite sound like the Nestor of the Iliad, who so often compared the debased present with the glorious past of his own manhood..." (1967, 37).[23] To be sure, Nestor's character has not undergone any significant change. He is still assertive and very much in command of the people around him. His reputation for wisdom, too, is still perfectly intact. Athena says of him μάλα γὰρ πεπνυμένος ἐστί (3.20), while Telemachus observes περὶ οἶδε δίκας ἠδὲ φρόνιν ἄλλων (3.244). Homer refers to him still as the οὖρος Ἀχαιῶν (3.411) and Agamemnon, in a retrospective glance back to the funeral of Achilles describes him as πολλά τε πολλά τε εἰδώς (24.51). But Whitman's criticism, that Nestor - along with Menelaus and Helen - "...active once, are now only receptacles of memory, glorious or sorrowful of the deeds at Troy..." (1958, 309), has a certain ring of truth to it.[24] The problem confronting Nestor is that his energy seems misplaced, almost out of all proportion to the simple tasks that lie at hand. The same vigour and intelligence that brought the wall and trench around the Greek camp into existence and persuaded Patroclus to join the battle in Achilles' stead, must now confine itself to organizing sacrifices and providing guests with

comfortable accommodations. Nestor has arrayed nine companies of five hundred men each on the shore - a force exactly reminiscent of his contribution to the Trojan campaign if one assumes fifty men to each ship he provided[25] - and just as he led the way from a council of Achaeans in the Iliad (2.84), he still leads the way from his lavish sacrifice (3.386); given the comparatively trivial tasks that now require his attention, however, his industriousness here appears somewhat ludicrous, to the audience, at least, familiar with his commanding presence in the Iliad. His reminiscences also underscore the change his surroundings have undergone. Within the bountiful setting of his homeland, the old man speaks of woes which he could not exhaust if he were to describe them for five or six years continuously (3.115); indeed, twice he suggests that he is only embarking upon this sad tale of the past because Telemachus has called it to mind (ἐπεί μ'ἔμνησας οἰζυος, 3.103; ἐπεὶ δὴ ταῦτά μ'ἀνέμνησας καὶ ἔειπες, 3.210).[26] His recitation of events no doubt serves to answer Telemachus' inquiry in part, and also explains, as far as Nestor's outlook is concerned, how the old king came to achieve his nostos when others met with great upsets, but it also juxtaposes the earlier dangers which he had to confront with the open-ended tranquillity of his final years. The old king certainly does not miss those old days of crisis, but as one-time 'warder of the Achaeans' he is at a loss in this serene environment of his and appears as a shadow of the Iliad's Nestor. His heroic temperament, in short, has too little to latch itself onto.

The Odyssey ends before we can catch a glimpse of Odysseus in his well-earned retirement, and therefore we see nothing of a 'cardboard' Odysseus that would parallel the 'cardboard' Nestor on Pylos. On the other hand we are presented with the large difference in temperament that yawns between Odysseus and the suitors - and by extension between Odysseus and the citizenry of Ithaca as a whole. In spite of the fact that we hear Agamemnon describe the

suitors as the best men a city has to offer (24.107-8), they fall far below the standard of heroism which Odysseus embodies.[27] To begin with, they are obviously too young to have participated in the Trojan campaign and, indeed, nowhere mention their experience of war of any kind.[28] To be sure they show an interest in athletics, but the impression created by this single heroic pursuit of theirs is in turn diminished by their endless feasting and leisure, which stand in marked contrast to the suffering that Odysseus has undergone. The impression, in fact, created by the scene in which Odysseus challenges Eurymachus to a contest with scythes, plows or weapons (8.366ff.) is that the young nobleman has never worked nor fought in his life.[29] Eurymachus' violent response suggests Odysseus has in fact touched a sensitive nerve (18.389). It is in the contest of the bow, however, and the fight which follows that we see the real difference emerge between Odysseus and his adversaries. The latter, of course, cannot string the bow let alone shoot an arrow through the axe-rings. And when Odysseus finally embarks upon his vengeance, the suitors' resistance to him is by no means impressive. Their chief instigator, Antinous, dies ignominiously at the supper table and, on discovering at last the identity of the beggar, Eurymachus, the second leader, immediately sues for peace (22.45ff.).[30] When Odysseus refuses to reach a compromise, Eurymachus attacks and, like Antinous, is dispatched with an arrow. The two prime antagonists are therefore killed summarily before everyone else - a development which never occurs in the Iliad, where heroes of great stature meet their death-blow only after an intensification of the struggle.[31] A few of the suitors do manage to make something of a stand (22.241ff.), but they are quickly killed and the rest are driven into panic. Of the first of the two similes which Homer uses to describe their rout - he likens the suitors to cattle being driven by a gadfly (22.299ff.) - Clarke argues, "...[this simile] may hint at the animality of their lives, but it is more suggestive of the helplessness of their

plight and the piteousness of their death" (1967, 21).[32] The sheer volume of the corpses, moreover, belies any effectiveness on the part of these young men. Homer employs yet another simile, to describe this time the suitors scattered round the halls in heaps, and he likens the corpses to fish drawn up from the sea and lying in the sun, expiring (22.383ff.). This image implies the aftermath of a whole scale massacre and not a heroic struggle.[33]

It goes without saying that some action against the suitors was required on Odysseus' part. But in his exaction of justice - if that is what his retaliatory strike amounts to[34] - Odysseus has exhibited the full ruthlessness of the battle-frenzied soldier. In addition to his rejection of Eurymachus' peace proposal, he has refused the supplication of the delicate Leodes, who always disapproved of the suitors' hybristic ways (21.146ff.). Such mercilessness is reminiscent of the harsh behaviour of Achilles towards Lycaon in Book 21 of the Iliad and Agamemnon toward the son of Antimachus in Book 11 of the Iliad, and appears, in spite of the suitors' villainy, to be incongruous with the general climate of Ithaca as a whole. When Mentor chides the Ithacans in the assembly of Book 2, in contrast, he does not expect them to use force to drive the suitors off, but instead to discourage the young men with words (2.239ff.). The complacent citizenry, then, the wasteful feasting of the suitors and even the violence plotted against Telemachus are distantly removed from Odysseus' gruesome aristeia.

When Eurycleia approaches Odysseus after the suitors have been felled, she finds a man whom Homer likens to a lion that has just finished feeding off an ox (22.402ff.).[35] This simile fulfills Menelaus' prediction in Book 4 - where he states that Odysseus will return home like a lion entering its den and discovering the fawns of a doe within (4.333ff.) - and parallels the imagery of Penelope's dream, in which her twenty tame geese are slaughtered by an eagle that hails from the mountains (19.536ff.).[36] The combined effect of these

metaphors is to portray Odysseus as a wild beast attacking the domesticated produce. Perhaps he dispatches his enemies with justice, but this brutality of his is clearly portrayed as a force that stands in opposition to the norms of settled life. Imagery so strong does not suggest a man on the brink of retirement.

This impression is only reinforced in the last scene of the poem: with Eupeithes dead, Odysseus and Telemachus are falling on the foremost ranks of the suitors' relatives when Athena bids both sides desist (24.531ff.). Although his enemies are clearly terrified - the weapons have fallen from their hands - Odysseus gives a terrible shout and swoops upon them with all the ferocity of an eagle. Only a thunderbolt from Zeus and further remonstration from Athena cause him to rein himself in.[37] Peradotto observes of this passage, "...if in Book 1 Odysseus is not, as his name suggests, the object of Zeus' anger, here at the end he shows himself to be the kind of man who could be" (1990, 166-67). Again, then, the final image of Odysseus which Homer leaves us with is that of the soldier prepared to wreak as much havoc as circumstances will allow him to. Odysseus' behaviour here is clearly excessive and hardly promotes the notion of a man settling down to the comforts of his old age. And that this should be our <u>last</u> glimpse of Odysseus is surely significant. Homer almost seems to be commenting directly that the fulfillment of his <u>nostos</u> has not diminished Odysseus' vigour and heroic outlook even remotely.

2. <u>Odysseus' Travels</u>

Odysseus' travels are so rich in imagery and present such diverse possibilities of interpretation that a full treatment of their implications and significance is clearly beyond the scope of this thesis. In examining Odysseus' adventures, we shall therefore restrict ourselves to material that falls within

the range of our argument, our contention being that in conjunction with his exposition of Odysseus' nostos, undeniably the poem's central theme, Homer comments on or alludes to a certain ingrained restlessness on Odysseus' part which on occasion works against the fulfillment of his nostos and, if pressed to its logical conclusions, sabotages in a sense any possibility that such a character will finally settle down.

Odysseus' different ports-of-call are, to be sure, stumbling blocks to the achievement of his return.[38] The episode of the Laestrygonians and, to a lesser degree, that with Polyphemus almost bring about the annihilation of Odysseus and his crew. At the same time, however, certain stops are obstacles not because they threaten to deprive Odysseus of his nostos, but because they can provide him with an alternative nostos of sorts, one which would dislodge his real nostos from his memory. This new nostos of course would not reunite him with his home and family, but would settle Odysseus in a peaceful environment and, like Ithaca, strip him of the need to exercise his heroism and formidable intellect. Each locale could conceivably serve as the setting of his old age, in other words. But if this is the case, these 'fairyland' stopovers perhaps serve as a commentary of sorts on the nature of Odysseus' true nostos. When Odysseus refuses to consign himself to the land of the Lotus Eaters, Ogygia, Aeaea and finally Scheria, perhaps Homer is insinuating that the hero will entertain similar reservations when faced with the prospect of confinement on Ithaca. We shall see, at least, that when Odysseus does reject Ogygia and the like, he does not do so merely because these places are not Ithaca and will not reconnect him with his family. These paradisiacal islands, instead, have much in common with post bellum Ithaca, and so when Odysseus turns his back on the former, there is the possibility that he might find life on his own island just as tiresome.

Before we discuss Odysseus' more exotic travels, let us glance briefly at his departure from Troy and the first of his adventures, his attack on the Cicones. Nestor informs Telemachus in Book 3 that, after the sack of Troy, a serious disagreement arose between Menelaus and Agamemnon. The former urged the army to return home immediately, while the latter insisted on detaining the host so that sacrifices might be offered to Athena and her wrath be appeased. Nestor and Odysseus, among others, followed Menelaus' resolve, but Odysseus, experiencing a change of heart on Tenedos, returned to Agamemnon (3.162ff.). This detail is a strange one. Perhaps indeed Odysseus was suddenly struck by "...belated qualms about setting off without making further efforts to propitiate Athena..." as West suggests (1988, 169), or "...showed his loyalty by rejoining Agamemnon..." as Finley argues (1978, 45).[39] But in the face of his general determination to sail home as quickly as possible, these rationalizations seem somewhat inadequate.

Is it possible that Agamemnon was not merely set on placating Athena's anger? Nestor's description of the public meeting in which Menelaus and Agamemnon disagreed with one another hardly paints the picture of a band of men intent on acting piously. The Achaeans were called to the council 'wantonly' (μάψ, 3.138), in a disorderly fashion (οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ,3.138) and were heavy with wine (3.139).[40] And not only was the exchange between the two Atreidae a harsh one (3.148), but the faction of each harboured grudging thoughts against the other (3.150). When Odysseus descends to the underworld, moreover, and questions the shade of Agamemnon, he asks the great king how he met his death, whether he was drowned at sea at the hands of Poseidon or

> ἦέ σ'ἀνάρσιοι ἄνδρες ἐδηλήσαν' ἐπὶ χέρσου
> βοῦς περιταμνόμενον ἠδ' οἰῶν πώεα καλά,
> ἠὲ περὶ πτόλιος μαχεούμενον ἠδὲ γυναικῶν. (11.401-3)[41]

Odysseus assumes, in other words, that Agamemnon drowned during his attempt to gain his homeland or was killed in a raid on some city. What sort of raid? Perhaps one that was part of Agamemnon's extension of the campaign after the fall of Troy. Perhaps - and admittedly the evidence allows for mere conjecture - the central issue of Agamemnon and Menelaus' heated debate was whether or not the host was to be kept under arms for further incursions and profiteering.[42] It is possible, then, that Odysseus returned to Agamemnon, not so much to propitiate Athena - an enterprise which Nestor deemed hopeless (3.146) - nor to prove his loyalty to the king, as to join him on his expanded range of operations and, simply put, to enrich himself further. It is within this context that Odysseus' tale of the attack on the Cicones is to be understood. Thracian Ismarus is considerably out of the way for someone attempting to sail home from Troy to Ithaca, and a raid at this stage in Odysseus' fortunes hardly expedites the return which he is said to be so set upon,[43] nor for that matter is it consistent with any desire on his part to conciliate a goddess. When viewed against his decision to rejoin Agamemnon's faction, however, whose essential intent was to accumulate more spoils of war, Odysseus' motivation becomes much more intelligible. And this preference on his part for spoils over the immediate completion of his nostos should come as no surprise as he exhibits the same behaviour on subsequent occasions as we shall see.

It is worthwhile pointing out that, even if the above argument appears over-speculative, Homer does at the very least compromise his premise that Odysseus is desperate to return home. The first concrete information that we learn of Odysseus in the poem is that, contrary to our expectations, he did not make a bee-line for his hearth when he had the opportunity to, but instead disregarded the advice of the army's wisest counsellor - a pious man to boot - and deliberately retreated from the goal of his nostos. It could be that, like

Menelaus, Odysseus might not have arrived home safely even if he had stuck with his original intention - he was after all, in Finley's words "...marked out for fuller knowledge" (1978. 45). But his determination to rejoin Agamemnon was, according to Nestor's presentation of the facts, unnecessary if not foolhardy and implies that certain circumstances were able to override his single-minded pursuit of home and family. This does not mean that we are to take his desire to return home any less seriously, but that Homer is surely advising us that Odysseus' motivation is not as straightforward as it appears.

When Odysseus encounters the Lotus Eaters, he has at last entered the boundaries of a supernatural world: "Das Land der Lotophagen markiert eine Grenze des Bewußtseins; jenseits dieser Grenze beginnt die mythische Welt" (Reuchner 1989, 29). Far from being physically threatened, however, Odysseus' scouts receive a hospitable welcome from the country's denizens (9.92-3).[44] Indeed, the portrait of this simple world is utopian. The Lotus Eaters appear to spend their days feasting on their flowery food - perhaps a distant parallel with the eternal feasting of Aeolus and his children (10.8ff.) and the continuous banquet which Odysseus and his men enjoy on Aeaea (10.467-68).[45] As a flower (ἄνθινον εἶδαρ, 9.84)[46] their food presumably lies easily to hand, has not been sown or harvested and requires no preparation. And to judge by the effects that the lotus has on Odysseus' men, this flower robs its consumer of his goals and initiative,[47] a deplorable outcome as far as Odysseus himself is concerned, but one that is not altogether unpleasant: his scouts cry on being separated from the lotus and must be dragged back to the ships perforce (9.98ff.). The sweetness of the lotus and perhaps the state of mind which it induces (μελιηδέα καρπόν, 9.94) are enticing enough to supplant the attractions of a sweet homecoming (the νόστον μελιηδέα Teiresias speaks of at 11.100). If the Lotus Eaters themselves experience similar symptoms from this diet of

theirs,[48] then one can perhaps infer that their society as a whole, as brutish and unenterprising as it might be, is at least free of hardship, suffering and sorrow.[49]

But what does it mean that Odysseus and his men will forget their nostos (9.97, 102) if they should surrender themselves to this bewitching drug?[50] We note first that there are occasions, as we shall see further on, when Odysseus' nostos is endangered yet he does not act as precipitately as he does here. No doubt this is in part because, despite the Lotus Eaters' friendly offer of the fruit and apparent willingness to have Odysseus and his crew settle in their midst,[51] the consumption of the food will mean an instantaneous confinement among this population. Once the lotus is swallowed, the crew's volition to sail on will immediately dissolve, and this effect will never be reversed. Although the Lotus Eaters are not overtly menacing in themselves, then, this episode as a whole has a threatening tone because the consequences of the flower are permanent.

More significant, however, is Odysseus' response to this strange locale. His actions strongly suggest that he fears the flower and its properties to a much greater degree than the other members of his fleet. He himself leads the delirious scouts back to the ships, restrains them with ropes (9.98-9) and orders the remainder of his companions to return to their benches μή πώς τις λωτοῖο φαγὼν νόστοιο λάθηται (9.102). Despite the threat which the lotus poses to the Ithacans' nostos, Odysseus cannot be sure that his men will in fact scrupulously avoid the flower. The sight of the screaming scouts has evidently not affected them as powerfully as it has their captain. In fact, although Homer does not say as much, we can perhaps assume that Odysseus, who is polumetis, ptoliporthos and has just arrived from a campaign of his own instigation, is especially put out by the prospect of becoming an unthinking, unheroic Lotus Eater - the verb used of their eating, ereptomenoi, suggests something close to a

cattle-like existence[52] - hence his peculiarly vehement reaction. To be sure, he does not wish to be deprived of his nostos, but he reacts with unusual vigour here in part because he is horrified by the possibility of being transformed into the exact antithesis of himself. His companions are somewhat more laissez faire, because they are not of Odysseus' intellectual or moral calibre and consequently do not have as much to lose.

If this is indeed the case, are we to infer anything further? Taylor observes that, "The eater of the lotus becomes like an infant who is well-fed and contented, for the environment supports him without demanding anything in return" (1963, 88). This same comparison could be very roughly drawn between a Lotus Eater and someone who is well on in his years. Nestor and Aegyptius are a far cry from the Lotus Eaters, but both are sustained through the labour of their families. Laertes has expended a great deal of energy on his garden, but Odysseus tells him, as a general rule, that old men should eat and bathe and sleep softly: ἡ γὰρ δίκη ἐστὶ γερόντων (24.254ff.). In general it would appear that the elderly stand far removed from the day to day labour that maintains a community,[53] just as they almost always have nothing to do with campaigning and heroic deeds. To this extent, the rhythm of their lives has something vaguely in common with the Lotus Eaters' practices. Although no overt comparison has been drawn between Ithaca and Lotusland, when Odysseus rejects the lotus and the stupor it induces, one can at least ask whether his behaviour in this episode is at all indicative of his future reaction to retirement and its accompanying inactivity. In this segment of the poem, then, the issue of Odysseus' disinclination to settle into a peaceful climate is alluded to subtly, and marks, as far as the chronological sequence of Odysseus' adventures is concerned, the start of a theme which, on being sounded at successive stages, finally comes to resonate noticeably at tale's end.

Calypso's island again confronts Odysseus with utopian circumstances, ones more appealing and complex than the simple realm of the Lotus Eaters.[54] Homer describes in lavish detail the material richness of her paradise, constructing "...the Greek notion of an idyllic spot... - shade, water and exotic medley of luxuriant vegetation..." (HWH, 262). Food, clothing, shelter and sexual gratification are, moreover, Odysseus' for the asking. And Calypso, by her offer of immortality and her own desire to take the place of Penelope as Odysseus' wife, is proposing her island with its advantages as a substitute for Ithaca, is in fact presenting Odysseus with an alternative to his nostos. The question we are concerned with in this episode is why Odysseus rejects Ogygia and the unusual prospect of eternal youth, and whether or not this refusal of his has any bearing on the attainment of his real nostos.

Consistent with his emphasis on the thematic centrality of Odysseus' return, Homer tells us explicitly in Book 5 that Odysseus is miserable on Calypso's island because he yearns continuously for his own home (5.153).[55] But is this the only reason for his disenchantment? Homer has deliberately placed his hero in a setting which, apart from minor differences, is the virtual equivalent of Elysium.[56] Are we to assume that because Ogygia is not Ithaca and Calypso is not Penelope that Odysseus therefore turns his back on this paradise? Without question his separation from Penelope weighs heavily on Odysseus' spirits - Calypso herself assumes that Odysseus is leaving her because he misses his wife (5.209ff.) - but Homer at the same time implies that there is another dimension to this malaise of Odysseus, that he and the toil-free climate of Ogygia are in fact incompatible.

We note to begin with that numerous commentators have argued that Ogygia, in spite of its superficial appeal, confronts Odysseus with the spectre of death. Thus, for example, there is Guntert's well-known contention that Calypso is a death-goddess[57] - her name signifies her capacity to conceal - and

the lush description of her island is designed to call to mind motifs which are frequently associated with the underworld. In numerous respects this episode parallels the tale of Persephone's abduction by Hades in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter: the strict separation, for example, of the foods which Odysseus and Calypso consume at 5.196ff. is an inverted reflection of the pomegranate seeds which Persephone eats with such disastrous consequences to herself (Hymn to Dem., 371ff.).[58] Frame observes, moreover, that Calypso resembles Hesiod's description of Styx and argues that she is a free imitation of the latter (1978, 169).[59] One must not, on the other hand, overemphasize Ogygia's funereal aspects. Although the island is a closed, remote environment, the overall impression which Homer creates in his description of its ecology is one of boundless fertility and peace,[60] a welcome contrast to the endless stretch of sea which both Odysseus and Hermes have had to traverse. When at the end of his catalogue of the island's contents Homer concludes ἔνθα κ'ἔπειτα καὶ ἀθάνατός περ/ ἐπελθὼν θηήσαιτο ἰδὼν καὶ τερφθείη φρεσὶν ἦσιν (5.73-74), he is surely adverting to an atmosphere which is more uplifting than chthonic.[61] And a positive domestic tone is struck when he speaks of the aromatic smoke rising from Calypso's hearth and the goddess weaving and singing to herself (5.59ff.). Finally, if Ogygia can indeed be compared to the Elysium which Proteus refers to in connection with Menelaus, then something of a true eternal life is being promised to Odysseus, to judge by the words Proteus employs (4.561-64):

> σοὶ δ'οὐ θέσφατόν ἐστι, διοτρεφὲς ὦ Μενέλαε,
> Ἄργει ἐν ἱπποβότῳ θανέειν καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν,
> ἀλλά σ'ἐς Ἠλύσιον πεδίον καὶ πείρατα γαίης
> ἀθάνατοι πέμψουσιν....

At worst, Calypso's enclave is, in the words of Crane, an ambiguous paradise (1988, 15).

On the other hand, as other commentators have observed, Odysseus' permanent sojourn on Ogygia would involve the dissolution of his identity. As Slatkin phrases it, "...Kalypso... wants by sequestering Odysseus to offer him immortality; but this would inevitably mean the loss of his goal, the impossibility of completing the travels, the denial of his identity. From a perspective that is as intrinsic to the Odyssey as to the Iliad, it would mean the extinction of heroic subject matter, the negation of epic" (1990, 42-3). Taylor, too, insists that "...with Calypso he can no longer be Odysseus the hero. If he accepts Calypso's offer he will be no more than the consort of a minor goddess" (1963, 90), while Whitman speaks of Odysseus' "...utter submission of identity, save for bare consciousness and the sex-locked will" (1958, 298).[62] The underlying supposition of these three comments is that, to return to our initial assertion, a temperament like Odysseus' is somehow out of place in Calypso's tranquil retreat, to such an extent that his confinement in an asylum such as this inevitably entails the sublimation of his defining characteristics. But exactly how is Odysseus at odds with the ongoing serenity which Calypso puts at his disposal?

As we learned from Calypso's account to Hermes (5.130ff.), and Odysseus' explanation to Alcinous and Arete (7.252ff.), Odysseus arrives on the nymph's island destitute of everything. His food and clothing are provided for by her (5.135ff., 7.256ff.) and each night, though much against his will, he takes shelter in her cave by her side. His dependence on the goddess is, in other words, absolute.[63] And nothing is required of him. His food, shelter and security can be taken for granted and this fact, coupled with the absence of a surrounding population, implies an utter lack of activity with which he might keep himself amused. Certainly there is no reason for him to make a show of his heroism, and his intellect likewise has no subject which it might apply itself to. Odysseus, in a word, is beside himself with boredom.[64] He has

exhausted the island's potential, as Homer himself tells us when he comments: ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι ἥνδανε νύμφη (5.153).[65] At one time, so runs the suggestion, the attentions of Calypso had some appeal, but the predictability of this paradise has finally come to pall. This is why he now spends his days gazing out to sea (πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον, 5.158), a wistful posture that may reflect his yearning for home, for escape across the deep or, translating ἀτρύγετον as 'restless', for the perpetual change which the sea is subject to. If Calypso is, as some commentators have speculated, a creation of Homer[66] it is perhaps significant as well that, being able to provide her with any genealogy he pleases, the poet chooses to describe her as the daughter of Atlas. To be sure this genealogy may have been intended to explain nothing more than the goddess' remoteness from both gods and men.[67] On the other hand, perhaps some connection is to be drawn between Atlas' inertia - he holds the pillars which keep the heavens and earth separate and is, presumably, constrained by them in turn (1.52ff.) - and the paralysis, so to speak, which his daughter wishes to inflict upon her visitor. The never-ending ponos of the Titan is perhaps to be taken as a comment of sorts on the eternal confinement with which Odysseus is threatened.

Be that as it may, when Odysseus is eventually given an axe and allowed to build himself a raft, we sense, through the detail which the poet lavishes on his description of Odysseus' labours (5.243ff.), that some essential component in the hero has been revitalized. "How refreshing after seven years of inactivity is all this cutting and doweling and fitting! Human art and skill, useless in Kalypso's paradise, now come into their own" (Dimock 1989, 69). Odysseus' relationship with Calypso has all along been predicated, we soon realize, on the state of lethargy which she has tried to impose upon him. As soon as he is in a position to assert something of his old industriousness, his association with the nymph virtually comes to an end. This is why Homer sets

the farewell scene between Odysseus and Calypso - supper, conversation and the habitual round of intercourse - before Odysseus sets to work on his raft. Once Odysseus is felling trees and fitting them together - a process that takes four days all in all (5.262) - we hear nothing further of his contact with Calypso, apart from the fact that she bathes and clothes him just prior to his departure (5.264). It is possible that Calypso and Odysseus did continue to bed down together,[68] but by avoiding any concrete reference to any extended contact of theirs, Homer creates the impression that Odysseus, by throwing himself headlong into his efforts, has finally managed to free himself of his dependency upon his hostess.[69]

It is worthwhile pausing a moment to say something of Calypso's and Odysseus' final conversation as well. The nymph tells Odysseus that if he knew of the difficulties that lay ahead of him, he would change his mind and abide on Ogygia (5.206ff.). She also makes a reference to Penelope and, while acknowledging Odysseus' desire to return to his wife, implies that he is acting foolishly by preferring a mortal woman to her immortal self (5.209ff.). Her arguments reveal the degree to which she does not understand her guest. In answer to her first objection, Odysseus observes (5.223-24):

> ἤδη γὰρ μάλα πολλὰ πάθον καὶ πολλὰ μόγησα
> κύμασι καὶ πολέμῳ· μετὰ καὶ τόδε τοῖσι γενέσθω.

By this statement he lays emphasis on the fact that his rightful place is in a world that imposes hardship upon its inhabitants, unpleasant as these may prove to be. He rejects the indolence which is characteristic of Ogygia and which Calypso has assumed all along would persuade him to relinquish his ties with Ithaca. As far as Penelope is concerned, again it would be foolish to deny that she is to a great degree responsible for Odysseus' anxiousness to leave Ogygia. The central theme of the poem is Odysseus' dogged pursuit of his nostos, in spite of certain delays which he sometimes brings upon himself.

Nonetheless, if Odysseus had no wife and home to return to, he would still be miserable on Calypso's island, his character being what it is. It is not merely the prospect of home that causes him to cry daily on Ogygia's shore.

Our arguments above serve to show that, again, the dynamics of the episode here have some bearing on Odysseus' nostos. Odysseus' experiences on Ogygia are in a way very close to the routines which he will have to submit himself to once he is safely ensconced back in Ithacan society. To be sure, there are differences. Calypso's isle is virtually uninhabited: there are no activities to pursue, as opposed to a few back home which might possibly keep Odysseus distracted. And, of course, Odysseus' family is absent. Nonetheless, if one compares Ogygia to the different milieus with which Odysseus the warrior and cunning adventurer is acquainted, one discovers that very few similarities arise, far fewer similarities, in fact, than exist between Ogygia and post bellum Ithaca. But if there is any truth to our hypothesis, that Odysseus forsakes Calypso and her paradise in part because the setting is too unchallenging and predictable to accommodate a character like his, then again the question immediately suggests itself: will Ithaca itself be able to contain this complicated warrior when the comforts of Ogygia have proved most unsatisfactory? Again we see the problem Homer has created for himself. His protagonist must prove himself bold, restless, clever and ruthless to achieve his homecoming and grow old in the shadow of his loved ones, but by evincing these qualities, which are part and parcel of his character, Odysseus appears to cut the figure of a man who will never know long-lasting contentment in an atmosphere of peace and domesticity. The hero's rejection of Ogygia signals, in other words, that he is not suited for senescence.

This last statement, within the context of the Calypso episode, is paradoxical to say the least. Has not Calypso offered not only to make Odysseus deathless but to keep him from aging as well? And by rejecting this proposal,

has not Odysseus deliberately opted to grow old?[70] The fact is that, although on the one hand Odysseus is certainly being portrayed in an admirable light for preferring hardship and mortality to eternal indolence, he is not directly choosing age over agelessness but is instead responding to the immediate tedium of Calypso's paradise. Indeed, in a sense, her offer of eternal youth is ironical to an extreme: physically he will not age, but the closest analogue to the environment which he will be permanently trapped in is the comfortable, but limited, subset of society which the Odyssey's elders populate. Contrary to first appearances, then, Odysseus' departure from Ogygia represents his retreat from old age and not his acceptance of it.

Odysseus' adventures on Aeaea have much in common, at first glance, with his sojourn on Ogygia. Like Ogygia, Aeaea is remotely situated - the implication of 10.189ff. - and is presided over by a female deity. Although not as overtly paradisiacal as Ogygia, Aeaea nonetheless serves as something of a νῆσος μακάρων with the endless feasting which it allows its visitors to enjoy.[71] The similarities, too, between Calypso and Circe are again at first glance striking:[72] both live in isolated circumstances, both are euplokamos and doloessa, the homes of each are detected by the smoke escaping from their hearths, and each is first spied singing at her loom. When each has been 'mastered', Calypso by Hermes' message from Zeus, and Circe by Odysseus' evasion of her ploys, they are both called upon to swear an oath to the effect that they will not attempt to harm Odysseus further. Both goddesses, moreover, invite Odysseus to their beds. And just as Calypso and the ambiance of her island have some associations with death and concealment, so too Circe, it would appear, calls to mind some aspects of a death goddess.[73] The Ogygian nymph is even argued to have been modelled closely on the figure of Circe, so great is the likeness they ostensibly share.

Once again it is not our intention here to investigate the many intriguing issues that have been raised in connection with the complex figure of Circe. We shall instead focus our attention on one significant detail which Homer raises in this episode. He tells us, or rather Odysseus informs his Phaeacian hosts, that he and his men remained on Aeaea a year, during which time they feasted continuously. Finally his companions approached him and complained (10.472-74):[74]

> Δαιμόνι', ἤδη νῦν μιμνήσκεο πατρίδος αἴης,
> εἴ τοι θέσφατόν ἐστι σαωθῆναι καὶ ἱκέσθαι
> οἶκον ἐϋκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

Exactly why is it that Odysseus here has to some extent forgotten his nostos? If Calypso and Circe are indeed so close in character, why is it that Odysseus should fall in with Circe's rhythm when that of Calypso has failed? And if Odysseus has in fact succumbed to Circe, does this not contradict our general assertion that Odysseus' character is not entirely suited to a tranquil environment?

One possibility, albeit a weak one, is that insufficient time has passed for Odysseus to tire of Circe's diversions. We know it took him a while to lose interest in Calypso and Ogygia - that at least is the insinuation of the ouketi at 5.153. Perhaps this 'honeymoon' period lasted a couple of years, or at least some time longer,[75] than the single year which Odysseus has spent in Circe's company. Segal has argued on the other hand that "Homer may well have thought that one difficult extrication from a clinging goddess' toils was enough" (1968, 423). And then there is Dimock's proposal that Odysseus, far from having forgotten his nostos, has been waiting for his companions to convalesce sufficiently that they might agree to continue on their way (1989, 131).[76] Reuchner, for his part, contends that Circe, through her complete mastery of transformation, is able to assume the guise of all women and thus

satisfy Odysseus' 'Don Juan-like' proclivities, hence his willingness to linger a while (1989, 49). None of these explanations, however, does full justice to the subtle differences which mark Circe off from Calypso and indeed go some way in elucidating Odysseus' reluctance to quit Aeaea.

Despite their surface similarities, Calypso and Circe are in actual fact distinct in character. Calypso's attraction is essentially sexual.[77] She and Odysseus are separate during the day - she is busy at her loom and Odysseus cries plaintively on the beach - and when they do come together at night, they do so to have sex. Circe, too, is a sensual creature. Once Odysseus has outmaneuvered her, she invites him to her bed (10.333ff.). Interestingly enough, however, Odysseus at first evinces fear at having intercourse with her (10.341ff.), a fear which is never manifested with Calypso as far as their connubial relations are concerned. And although he does finally consummate his relationship with Circe, continuous sexual union is not so obviously referred to as it is in the case of Calypso. Concupiscence, then, is but one small facet of Circe's character.[78] One can assert in general, in fact, that whereas Calypso is presented in a relatively unambiguous light - she cares for Odysseus and, contrary to the hero's suspicions, intends him no harm whatsoever - Circe is, on the other hand, a sophisticated polytropic character shrouded in mystery and far more demonic than her Ogygian counterpart.[79]

From the beginning, before Circe herself is even introduced, the tone of this episode is markedly different from that of Book 5. Odysseus and his men are lost. Odysseus arms himself for a reconnoitering expedition (10.145) and, from a height, espies across a length of dense forest[80] (δρυμὰ πυκνὰ καὶ ὕλην, 10.150), the smoke rising from Circe's hearth. Odysseus decides to turn back and, en route to the ship, comes across an enormous stag which he promptly dispatches (10.158ff.). The impression created in this part of the narrative is that Aeaea is fairly large and, with its dense forest, somewhat inhospitable and

overall not nearly so well ordered as the Ogygian landscape.[81] In the latter, Calypso leads Odysseus to the boundaries of the island when he is in search of trees suitable from his raft's timber (ἄρχε δ'ὁδοῖο/ νήσου ἐπ' ἐσατιῆς, ὅθι δένδρεα μακρὰ πεφύκει, 5.238). The wilderness is more the exception than the rule on Ogygia, in other words, while the exact opposite holds true of Aeaea. And Odysseus' killing of the stag proves that the opportunity, if not the need, still exists for a hero to flex his muscles on Circe's isle.[82]

We note, too, that Circe's surroundings are more opulent, more worldly than Calypso's. Whereas the latter has her home in a cave, Circe lives in a stone palace (2.210ff.). The chair Calypso offers Hermes and subsequently Odysseus is shiny and bright (θρόνῳ... φαεινῷ σιγαλοέντι ,5.86), as compared to the splendid piece of furniture which Circe sets at her guest's disposal: θρόνου ἀργυροήλου,/ καλοῦ δαιδαλέου· ὑπὸ δὲ θρῆνυς ποσὶν ἦεν (10.314-15). Then there are the many fine possessions of silver and gold which Circe's handmaidens arrange for the bed, for supper and for Odysseus' bath (10.348ff.).[83] No such splendour is mentioned in connection with Calypso. Ogygia's furnishings, then, appear primitively rustic when contrasted with Aeaea's obvious wealth.

Circe's mysterious ways, moreover, are immediately adverted to in the lions and wolves which she has bewitched (10.212ff.) and in her subsequent transformation of the companions into swine (10.233ff.). Calypso never exercises such magic, uses no potions and does not enter and exit invisibly, as does Circe, who ties a ram and a black ewe to Odysseus' ship without appearing to him or his crew (10.571ff.). When Odysseus himself confronts her and, with the aid of the moly and Hermes' advice, eludes the goddess' ploy, her identification of him - ἦ σύ γ' Ὀδυσσεύς ἐσσι πολύτροπος (10.330) - is significant. The man before her must be polytropos to have escaped the complicated trap which she had planned for him. His guile and versatile intellect are an echo, in fact, of the polymechanie which he attributes to her further on (23.321). We

can imagine the pleasure with which Circe taught Odysseus' complicated knot of 8.448, and the delight with which Odysseus absorbed this lesson.[84]

Homer also portrays Circe in such a way that she appears to know much more than Calypso, indeed has more of a divine perspective of geography and events. Thus, as we have seen, she instantly guesses Odysseus' identity, can tell the crew that she is aware of all the hardships which they have suffered (10.456ff.) and when Odysseus announces his intention to leave Aeaea, can inform him that he must visit Hades first (10.488ff.). She even provides him with directions to the underworld, and describes something of its geography (10.504ff.). And when Odysseus is on the verge of embarking for Ithaca, Circe can supply him with detailed information on the route he is to take and how he is to behave (12.37ff.). The only 'privileged' information which Calypso is privy to is the conversation that Zeus had with Helios when the latter discovered that his cattle had been slain and eaten by Odysseus' men, and this she knows not by divination but through her chat with Hermes (12.389ff.).

Again perhaps there is significance in the fact that Calypso is the daughter of Atlas, while Circe is the daughter of Helios. Atlas, though he has knowledge of all the depths of the sea (1.52-3) is, as we have argued, fixed in one spot. Helios, on the other hand, roams heaven and earth (12.380-81). Perhaps the essential condition of each god has been passed down to his daughter and is reflected in their relationship with Odysseus.[85] Calypso wishes to bind Odysseus to Ogygia, Circe on the other hand, readily accepts Odysseus' decision to depart,[86] equips him with the equivalent of tourist information,[87] and even recommends the means by which he can satisfy his curiosity and listen to the Sirens' song. She understands Odysseus, recognizes the demands which his intellect sets upon him.[88] Perhaps this is why she displays no regret, no trace of infatuation - in contrast to Odysseus' boast at 9.31ff.[89] - and makes no offer of immortality.[90] From the start the tacit understanding is that

Odysseus and company will feast and rest until they catch their breath back (εἰς ὅ κεν αὖτις θυμὸν ἐνὶστήθεσσι λάβητε, 10.461), and then presumably will continue on their way. "The story on Aeaea becomes an extended convalescence, which Circe initiates with her sympathetic words" (Crane 1988, 42).[91] This is why Odysseus can approach Circe, after he has reached his decision to embark, and remind her of her promise (10.483).[92] Completely in character, she immediately assents to his request.[93]

It is our contention, then, that Odysseus does not manifest on Aeaea any of the malaise which he was obviously suffering from on Ogygia because Circe's complicated ways, her dolos, polymechanie and wide knowledge of the world, are a perfect match for Odysseus' curiosity and deep-rooted intellect. Far from confronting Odysseus with the predictable routines of retirement - the monotony which Calypso is promising and which, without being alluded to overtly, is possibly awaiting him on Ithaca - Circe presents Odysseus with a situation so varied and mysterious that his powerful mind and heroic temperament are continuously exercised. It is no coincidence that tame mountain lions occupy her courtyard (10.212): her talent and demonic power are such that she can bend wild forces to her will. Likened to a λέων ὀρεσίτροφος (6.130) Odysseus too has his wild side accommodated on Aeaea, does not fawn upon Circe necessarily but experiences none of the boredom which Calypso's warm but uncomplicated manners expose him to. Circe, in a word, is more Odysseus' type.[94] His sojourn with her is truly an adventure and bears little in common with the domesticity awaiting him in Ithaca.

Like Ogygia and Aeaea, Scheria too is something of a utopia, but one now populated with humans whose institutions and outlook are, though idealized, recognizably Greek.[95] To be sure, the Phaeacians are not immortal, but the climate they live in, the consequences of which are most evident in the

fertility and splendour of Alcinous' garden, mirrors the balmy atmosphere of the Elysian plains.[96] They communicate openly with the Olympians (7.200ff.), they know nothing of war (6.201ff.), their stores of food are unfailing (7.117ff.) and their ships sail the seas magically, without running the risk of ruin (8.557). The magnificence of Alcinous' palace surpasses even that of Menelaus', and the routine of the population consists, according to Alcinous' words, in bathing, dancing and feasting, with some hazard-free seafaring interspersed (8.246ff.). Familiar on the one hand, utopian on the other, this island[97] serves as something of a bridge from the 'fairyland' which Odysseus has been caught in these last ten years, to the 'real world' of Ithaca and the completion of his nostos.[98] What does it mean, then, that he does not accept Alcinous' offer that he marry Nausicaa and settle down on Scheria?

We note that Odysseus makes much less of Alcinous' proposal than he has made of the temptations posed by both Calypso and Circe. For a while life on Ogygia was pleasant, and Circe actually managed to make Odysseus forget his nostos for a year. On Scheria, on the other hand, Alcinous merely expresses the wish that a man of Odysseus' calibre might accept his daughter's hand in marriage and consent to make Scheria his home (7.311ff.).[99] Without awaiting Odysseus' reply, he then immediately continues ἀέκοντα δέ σ'οὔ τις ἐρύξει/ Φαιήκων (7.315-16). When Odysseus responds to this speech, he leaves the king's offer wholly unaddressed and only prays to Zeus that Alcinous will follow through on his promise (7.331ff.). The issue is never raised again. True enough, Odysseus does suggest further on that he would be willing to abide on Scheria a year, but his purpose in doing so would be to enrich himself further (11.359)[100] and would only be undertaken with the understanding that Alcinous would eventually conduct him home (11.357).

No doubt the sheer proximity of Odysseus' nostos after all these years of postponement is partially, if not primarily, responsible for the near

indifference with which Alcinous' offer is received. His excitement is movingly illustrated through his distraction from the feast and Demodocus' songs and his eagerness for the sun to set so that he and his escorts may finally cast off (13.24ff.). At the same time, however, Homer has again deliberately stressed the incongruity of Odysseus' presence among the Phaeacians, to such an extent that, although Odysseus does not at any time comment upon the proposal that he take Nausicaa's hand in marriage, we nonetheless feel that such commentary is unnecessary: the Phaeacians and Odysseus are so disparate in temperament that it goes without saying that he cannot settle among them.

From the start the difference is made obvious: while Odysseus is of a heroic bent and has suffered untold woes, the Phaeacians are so acclimatized to their prosperous, peaceful conditions that they stand far removed both from heroic capabilities and human suffering in general.[101] In his encounter with Nausicaa, for example, he approaches the maiden and her servants like a mountain-lion (6.130ff.). "This lion," Magrath observes, "is obviously prone to violence, driven by maddening hunger, desperately in search of flesh-meat. While the simile is appropriate to Odysseus' shipwrecked, famished condition, it also finds close relatives in the Iliad where lions may at times be 'terrible to behold...', 'confident in strength' and 'mountain bred'..." (1982, 207).[102] Nausicaa's assertion, a little further on, reveals how far the savage, independent condition of Odysseus 'the lion' is removed from Phaeacian society (6.201-3):

> οὐκ ἔσθ' οὗτος ἀνὴρ διερὸς βροτὸς οὐδὲ γένηται
> ὅς κεν Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἵκηται
> δηϊοτῆτα φέρων· μάλα γὰρ φίλοι ἀθανάτοισιν.

If the population has no enemies, then they cannot have any experience of war and a man as hard-pressed as Odysseus 'the lion' simply would not exist within their fold. And this initial impression is sustained throughout the

episode. The Phaeacians prefer their oars to the bow and quiver, Nausicaa reveals later on (6.270ff.). In contrast to Odysseus' tale of shipwreck, the loss of his companions, the destruction of his raft and his own hard efforts to reach the shore of Scheria, Alcinous describes the effortlessness with which his people sail the seas (7.325ff.). When Demodocus recounts in song the contest between Odysseus and Achilles, Odysseus bursts into tears while the Phaeacians so enjoy the entertainment that they demand a repeat performance (8.83ff.). The same result occurs when Odysseus asks Demodocus to sing of the Trojan horse (8.521ff.). Alcinous and his people are so untouched by the horror and suffering of war that these tales are amusing distractions and nothing more.[103] It is in the athletic games, however, that the true dimensions of the Phaeacians are most tellingly revealed. When Alcinous proposes the competition he does so with the hope that Odysseus will be able to report to his friends back home that the Phaeacians excel all other men in boxing, wrestling and the like (8.101ff.). After some goading, Odysseus himself is induced to enter the lists. He triumphs effortlessly over the Phaeacians. As Reuchner comments, "Es ist im Grunde kein quantitativer, sondern ein qualitativer Unterschied zwischen seiner Leistung und der seiner Konkurrenten von den Phaiaken" (1989, 104).[104] Alcinous is forced to retract his former boast and admits his people are incompetent boxers and wrestlers, but that they instead excel at running and sailing.[105] He concludes (8.248-49):

> αἰεὶ δ'ἡμῖν δαίς τε φίλη κίθαρίς τε χυροί τε
> εἵματα τ'ἐξημοιβὰ λοετρά τε θερμὰ καὶ εὐναί.

As Clarke observes tersely of this passage, "This is not the stuff of which heroes are made" (1967, 56).[106] Odysseus' heroic dynamic, then, sets him apart from Scheria's general population. If he were to adopt this island as his home, he would be required, one assumes, to content himself with feasting, songs and dance, and to divest himself of his more rough and tumble ways. He would, in

a sense, have to become a character different from the Odysseus whom we have observed through all the events of Books 5 to 12. "[The Phaeacians'] life has no promise, no potentialities, no dynamism; to remain with them would drain Odysseus of his heroism by depriving him of any chance or need of action. It would be a living death" (Clarke 1967, 54).[107] Odysseus left Calypso because Ogygia offered no outlet for his complex personality. Though Scheria is populated and evinces the complex structure of a civilized society, the same dead-end conditions prevail nonetheless, and Odysseus is only saving himself from a tedious existence when he steers clear of the island's prosperous tranquillity.[108]

If Odysseus is indeed completely at odds with the general tenor of Phaeacian society, does Homer expect us to draw any inferences from this fact? Of all the different environments which Odysseus encounters in his travels, that of the Phaeacians is most like the world he is attempting to return to. Indeed, apart from its fairyland properties - magical ships, a consistent climate and open dealings with the gods - Scheria serves as a model for the way in which Ithaca ought to operate,[109] and <u>will</u> operate once Odysseus has regained his former control. "...the societies Odysseus passes through on his way home, and in a lesser way those his son visits at Pylos and Sparta, are paradigms for the restitution of order there" (Austin 1975, 162). One assumes that once the suitors and their relatives have been dealt with and Odysseus' expiatory journey with the winnowing-fan has been completed, Odysseus will occupy on Ithaca a position similar to that of Alcinous on Scheria: he will feast and oversee athletic competitions, and listen to the nightly recitations of a bard,[110] enjoying the produce of a garden which, though assiduously cultivated, is virtually as splendid as its Scherian counterpart.[111] In Penelope he will have his Arete, in Aegyptius or Halitherses his Echeneus, and the docile Ithacan population at large will, with allowances made for the exaggerated blessedness

of Scheria, reflect man for man the unheroic Phaeacian masses. By dwelling on the incompatibility of the Phaeacians and Odysseus, then, Homer is again suggesting, inadvertently perhaps, that Ithaca too might prove to be just as impossible a milieu for Odysseus to retire to. The settled world may possibly have very little to offer the man of action.

While we are on the subject of Odysseus' travels, it is worthwhile dwelling for a moment on the journey which awaits Odysseus once affairs on Ithaca have been dealt with satisfactorily. It is surely significant, from a narratological perspective, that Homer does not allow Odysseus to settle in his home after the slaughter of the suitors. Perhaps, as Teiresias suggests, Poseidon must be propitiated, but Homer's real intention, we suspect, is to suspend Odysseus' nostos indefinitely and thereby leave his audience feeling that Odysseus is by no means on Ithaca to stay. As we argued earlier, Homer has painted himself into a corner by both creating a character who is polytropic to an extreme and by endowing that same character with a powerful yearning to make his way home: post bellum Ithaca offers insufficient scope for Odysseus' mercuriality and heroism. Homer, it would appear, overcomes this gross discrepancy by returning the hero to Ithaca on the one hand, yes, but by implying at the same time, through Teiresias' prediction, that Odysseus' future is open-ended. Odysseus himself stresses this last point. Once he and his wife have had their fill of weeping, Odysseus announces that he has much work ahead of him still: ἀλλ' ἔτ' ὄπισθεν ἀμέτρητος πόνος ἔσται (23.249). Indeed, on being pressed to explain himself further, he asserts that these new travels will take him to the cities of many men (23.267-8). These two statements of his are exaggerations of Teiresias' declaration. The prophet neither spoke of 'measureless toil' nor even suggested to Odysseus that his final mission would expose him to a wide variety of populations. By having Odysseus speak in this

fashion, however, Homer is again laying emphasis on the continuation of his hero's journeys and dispelling the notion that Odysseus can ensconce himself in peaceful circumstances. As Whitman comments, "...in some sense the Odyssey, overshadowed by the prophecy of Teiresias, never really ends" (1958, 290)[112] and this fact, coupled with the poem's final image of Odysseus as the insatiate warrior, creates the impression of endless possibilities.

3. Disguise

After twenty years of struggling, Odysseus at last finds himself back on Ithaca. In his joy to be home, he immediately stoops and gives his native soil a kiss (13.354). We of course do not expect him thereafter to thrust himself forward and claim his rightful possessions openly. Not only are we well aware of the suitors' brutal intentions - Leocritus has disclosed the young men's willingness to butcher Odysseus should he in fact put in an appearance (2.246ff.) - but Agamemnon's shade has in addition advised him to approach Penelope cautiously (11.441ff.), and Athena, too, has warned him of the suitors' hostile presence (13.375ff.). Odysseus therefore adopts a disguise, or, more accurately, has one thrust upon him by the solicitous Athena, and thus sounds out the conditions prevailing in his palace with a view to preparing his final vengeance (Fenik 1974, 154-55).[113] But why Odysseus' particular disguise? Of all the different aspects he could be made to assume, why is he transformed into an aged mendicant? We shall argue that Odysseus' apparent senescence prevents him from being discovered because, more than anything else, it conceals his heroic potential. The disguised Odysseus may still bear a surface resemblance to his true self, but with the sublimation of his essential attribute, his heroism, there is no recognizing the beggar for who he really is.

Before we demonstrate this contention of ours, let us digress first and discuss briefly a problem raised in the previous chapter (page 119), the

mechanism of Odysseus' disguise. Page, as we have seen, observes, "In the Thirteenth Book (429ff.), Odysseus is transformed by supernatural means into the shape of an entirely different person" (1955, 88) but, "there is abundant evidence from the Sixteenth Book onwards, that Odysseus is simply altered by the passage of time and disguised by his dress" (1955, 89).[114] Is this criticism a valid one?

Although Athena's transformation of Odysseus is described along the lines of a magician's trick - she brings it about by giving Odysseus a tap of her wand (13.429) - the change effected is in itself superficial. "If one subtracts the props - the dirty rags, the worn deerskin, and the beggar's staff - the physical changes involved in Odysseus' transformation consist of only three things: skin, hair and eyes" (Clay 1983, 163).[115] Clay goes on to argue that, "These same three items... are generally singled out for description in the context of divine beautification, which suggests that the same mechanism is at work here" (ibid.). In other words, Athena does not conjure up Odysseus' disguise from out of the thin air, but instead works with the material at hand and ages Odysseus in a way which is consonant with the type of appearance he might have in his later years.[116] For this reason he still resembles something of his old self and can in fact trigger a recollection of the real Odysseus in his nurse Eurycleia (19.379), although true to Athena's word that she would make him agnostos to all mortals (13.397), he is not recognized by Eurycleia until his tell-tale scar is discovered unexpectedly. And, more tellingly, when Athena causes Odysseus to revert to his normal appearance in Book 16, Telemachus still discerns something of the old beggar in the vigorous hero who has re-entered the hut (16.181ff.): he does not mistake the younger man for a second stranger who has just arrived, but is instantly aware that this character is a rejuvenated version of the old man whom he was talking to but minutes earlier. Clearly, then, the beggar and the real Odysseus bear some resemblance to each other, a

resemblance which, pace Page, Athena's intervention was never intended to conceal.

But if the beggar resembles Odysseus, why is it Eurycleia does not recognize him? Having changed Odysseus into an old and contemptible figure, Athena has in effect obscured his strength and heroic demeanour, and because Odysseus is fundamentally heroic in his nurse's eyes and in the eyes of the Ithacans in general, therefore he cannot be identified. And that he does cut an unprepossessing figure, when his rags conceal his powerful build at least, is clear from his reference to his 'stubble' (καλάμην, 14.214): despite its suggestion of vigour in bygone days, his appearance cannot be all that impressive if it can indeed be described so unflatteringly. Melanthius, too, speaks contemptuously of strengthening Odysseus' thighs with hard labour and a diet of whey (17.223-25), while Irus assumes that the old mendicant is easily intimidated. As a poverty-stricken senior far removed from the protection of his Cretan family, the disguised Odysseus occupies one of the lowest rungs in Homeric society and appears to be the exact opposite of the enterprising warrior whom Penelope, Eurycleia and others remember.[117] Perhaps, indeed, it is no accident that Odysseus is discovered by the nurse through his scar. Although it is of course a personal identification mark, at the same time the scar is the result of a fierce encounter with a boar and therefore serves to define the beggar as a character who, in contrast to the implications of his broken down appearance, is, or at least was at one time, of indubitable heroic stature. Having grasped through the scar that this man is capable of heroic enterprise, then, Eurycleia can conclude that this miserable stranger, who merely looks like Odysseus, is in fact heroic and therefore must be Odysseus.[118] And because any intimation of heroic prowess undoes the work of his disguise, Odysseus tries to keep himself concealed from Penelope in Book 19 by creating a history for himself that is in keeping with the frailty he projects. No longer is he the hard-boiled

veteran of his tale to Eumaeus in Book 14 - we shall discuss below why he assumes this persona with the swineherd. Instead he casts himself as a Cretan nobleman who, in contrast to his brother Idomeneus, did not participate in the Trojan campaign. Blind to his latent heroic dimensions, Penelope is unable to see through to the beggar's core.

If Odysseus' heroic aspect is to some degree obscured through his disguise as a senior, there are perhaps several inferences one might draw. First, a conclusion that comes as no surprise given our arguments in the previous chapters, it would appear that old age must impose certain restrictions on, if not nullify completely, Odysseus' heroic practices, or so at least we are led to believe. The beggar's disguise prevents people from seeing the hero in Odysseus, and therefore the assumption of Homer and his characters must be that old age precludes heroics. But this would in turn suggest that Odysseus, who through his nostos is himself on the verge of entering the ranks of the elderly - such at least is the implication of Penelope's final speech in the poem (23.286-87) - will have to turn his back on his former dynamic and become, like Nestor, a hero emeritus. On the other hand, the fact that Odysseus' seniority is only part of a disguise lays emphasis upon his true heroic dimensions: if he were not essentially adventurous then he would not have to resort to such a disguise to begin with. Indeed, "Through his adoption of a disguise, Odysseus is portrayed as capable of transcending normal human limits, as being like the gods for whom the experience of mortal limitations is a form of playacting" (Murnaghan 1987, 14). Penelope might assume that her husband's 'Golden Years' are right around the corner, but Homer refuses to leave us with a conclusive picture of an old and domesticated Odysseus. Odysseus' intellect and enterprise are unalterable components of his personality and, just as he has shrugged off the constraints which his disguise imposed upon him temporarily, so perhaps we are to understand, particularly

in the light of Teiresias' prophecy, that his return to his household and subjection to retirement will not contain his natural properties too long.

4. Lies

To defeat the suitors and re-establish his control over his household, Odysseus must of course test the loyalty of the different characters whom he encounters. In the course of his conversations with them, he is naturally asked to give an account of himself. True to his character, he effortlessly concocts a fictional history for himself. These lies and his disguise mark, we feel, a disinclination on his part to return to Ithaca conclusively. This point will be discussed in detail in the following section, on the poem's recognition scenes. Under the present rubric we would like to examine one small passage in the story which Odysseus narrates to Penelope in Book 19, and some aspects of the complex tale recounted to Eumaeus in Book 14. The former, we shall argue, supports our contention that Odysseus has not dedicated himself completely to his return, while the latter, it would appear, once again casts his attachment to the benefits of peace in a debatable light.

It should first be observed of the lies in general that they consist of a mixture of falsehood and truth.[119] Indeed, Odysseus uses his own adventures as a source for much of the material of his tall tales.[120] In the story to Eumaeus, for example, both Odysseus and his Cretan persona have participated in the Trojan campaign; the attack upon the Egyptians runs roughly parallel to the sack of Ismarus (Walcot 1992, 58);[121] Odysseus' seven year sojourn in Egypt corresponds to his seven years on Ogygia (Segal 1962, 25; Walcot 1992, 58); his year with the Phoenicians parallels his year with Circe; both the beggar and Odysseus experience shipwreck at the hands of Zeus (West 1981, 171); Odysseus' arrival on Scheria and subsequent reception by the Phaeacians is very similar to the Cretan's experience with the Thesprotians (Fenik 1974, 168-

69); and finally the consultation with Teiresias is comparable to Odysseus' fictitious visit to Dodona (Fenik 1974, 169). And in his lie to Penelope, the beggar makes mention of the real Odysseus' disastrous visit to Thrinacia (19.273ff.), and claims quite rightly that the hero is returning with a vast quantity of wealth. Not that these parallels are strictly accurate. The Cretan in the tale to the swineherd, for example, appears hesitant to attack the Egyptians, while Odysseus sacks Ismarus without a second thought.[122] And the feminine archetypes - Calypso, Circe, Nausicaa - found in the true adventures are replaced by masculine equivalents in the false ones - Pharaoh, the Phoenicians, Pheidon's son respectively.[123] The lies, too, not only contain material derived from Odysseus' own adventures but perhaps occasionally resemble the experience of other characters as well. Thus Fenik comments, "The νόστοι of Menelaus and Odysseus have a strange, prophetic likeness: each makes it as far as Cape Maleia, where he is driven off course... and then detained for many years in foreign lands before he returns, laden with treasure" (Fenik 1974, 26).[124] And Rutherford argues that the lie told to Eumaeus "... has many similarities with the true life story of Eumaeus himself, which he narrates to his guest in 15.351-484" (1992, 70).[125] Nonetheless, the point remains that, far from being pulled from the thin air, a great part of Odysseus' lies is intimately connected with his real character and experience. When he is fabricating stories about himself, therefore, one can often assume that he is communicating some truth about himself simultaneously.

One such truth arises in the course of the disguised Odysseus' story to Penelope. He comments at one stage (19.282-84):

καί κεν πάλαι ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεὺς
ἦην· ἀλλ' ἄρα οἱ τό γε κέρδιον εἴσατο θυμῷ
χρήματ' ἀγυρτάζειν πολλὴν ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἰόντι·

Although he seems to be making excuses for the real Odysseus here, the beggar in truth articulates a fact which Homer has been adverting to subtly all along. As we observed earlier, Odysseus' return to Agamemnon at campaign's end was entirely voluntary, as was his attack upon the Cicones. His deviation to the Cyclops' cave, although it involved no delay of any great length, was likewise entirely optional. And he was free to leave Circe's island any time he pleased, yet chose to remain with her a year. With his nostos right in front of his eyes, moreover, he was still willing to abide yet another year on Scheria.[126] In all of the cases above, except that involving Circe, Odysseus' motivation for postponement of his return was, simply put, profit. The beggar, then, is in fact describing the situation with some degree of accuracy when he reveals that the real Odysseus would have been home sooner but preferred to stop along the way and amass more wealth for himself. Again Homer, without necessarily contradicting his general assertion that Odysseus is desperate to regain his home and family, reveals a certain disposition on Odysseus' part that works against the immediate fulfillment of his nostos. Well might Griffin comment in connection with Odysseus' willingness to extend his visit to Scheria by a year, "We think of Penelope, weeping in her lonely room, and the speech [19.355ff.] strikes rather chill" (1992, 25).

Keeping this statement of Odysseus' to Penelope in mind, let us digress briefly and glance at Odysseus' interaction with his mother's shade in the underworld. To be sure, the reunion of mother and son is very affectionate. As Clarke comments, "...there is something very touching, almost sentimental, about a hero who learns of trouble from as austerely an official source as a prophet and then turns to his mother with the same question, asking this time not for information but for the comfort and consolation a son can expect - and here gets - only from his mother" (1967, 61). And yet perhaps there is an insinuation that Odysseus has in some way acted improperly, selfishly. It is

not so much that he keeps his mother from the blood until Teiresias has finished speaking: "He [Odysseus] knows that the safety of both his companions and himself depends on what Teiresias predicts. The common weal must take precedence over private affections: prudence must prevail over emotion" (Stanford 1954, 61).[127] And although Odysseus does betray a certain egoism when he asks his mother how she met her death,[128] and then, without pausing to hear her answer, presses on to inquire about the security of his kingly position (132), this too does not worry the reader unduly. Anticleia's response however - ἀλλά με σός τε πόθος σά τε μήδεα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ,/ σή τ'ἀγανοφροσύνη μελιηδέα θυμὸν ἀπηύρα (11.202-3) - though perhaps delivered without a view to recrimination,[130] nonetheless necessarily attributes some degree of culpability to Odysseus for his over-extended absence. "[Anticleia] represents... a real loss due to wandering" (Segal 1962, 42), and this loss must be accounted for. When his mother explains how she died for want of Odysseus' company, one cannot help but remember that up until this stage Odysseus has been kept from Ithaca through his own impetuousness and infatuation for the most part. Indeed, the fact that he is visiting the underworld from Circe's island, where he has been feasting a year of his own free will, sets his mother's suffering and death in a particularly damning light.

When Odysseus is seated in Eumaeus' hut in Book 14 and is asked to reveal something about himself, he tells a long, involved story of a man who, having returned from the Trojan campaign, embarked shortly after on what would prove to be a series of adventures. We have already pointed out that a good number of the details in this tale are derived from Odysseus' own experiences. It is possible to go one step further and observe that, in portraying his assumed <u>persona</u> as a man attracted to war and sea travel, Odysseus is surely alluding none too subtly to his own character.[131] "Der Kreter in der

Lugengeschichte des Odysseus war immer aktiv, immer auf der Suche nach neuen Gelegenheiten und Abenteuern" (Reuchner 1989, 28).[132] The veteran of the Trojan war who sails off on a new campaign sounds very much like the Odysseus who doubles back to Agamemnon, sacks Ismarus, ducks into the Cyclops' cave, listens to the Sirens' song and girds himself for battle against Scylla even though he has been advised that such resistance is useless. The restlessness and acquisitiveness of the one is perfectly reflected in the other: "...in character the Cretan and Odysseus share much in common: the Cretan cannot settle at home but must venture abroad in search of booty - his return home was short-lived and not the end of his tribulations, and Odysseus, if we may trust the prophecy of Teiresias... had not concluded his adventures after the struggle of the suitors" (Walcot 1992, 59). It is indeed to the advantage of Odysseus, in his guise as a wandering beggar, to lay claim to a likeness in temperament to the real Odysseus. Eumaeus has, after all, made it clear by this time that he is exceptionally fond of his master. The beggar can therefore fairly assume that the swineherd will respond with greater sympathy and warmth if he learns his guest is a facsimile of the real Odysseus.[133] The beggar is therefore concealing nothing of his true personality.

If Odysseus and the Cretan do bear more than a passing resemblance to each other, what does this say about Odysseus' conception of the settled life? In spite of the difficulty with which he has finally achieved his return to Ithaca, Odysseus is already giving voice here to the suspicion that home and all its attractions may not be all that desirable in the eyes of someone who is set in his travel-weary ways. Like the Cretan, he may be tempted to quit his homeland and embark on his travels again. Certainly the beggar's/Odysseus' antipathy to work and household chores (14.222-23) and preference for ships, wars, spears and arrows (14.224-26), suggest that Ithaca, once cleared of the suitors, will hardly be able to accommodate his tastes.[134] Both characters belong in a climate

of strife, not peace. At the very least, then, the Cretan story exposes a problematic side to Odysseus' nostos.

5. Recognitions

The dangers facing Odysseus on his immediate arrival in Ithaca are such that his assumption of a disguise, for the purpose of exploring his environment before initiating his revenge, is a virtual necessity.[135] But must he hide himself from everyone? To be sure, the suitors must not penetrate his disguise prematurely, and there are servants, we learn, who cannot be trusted.[136] But what of Penelope, Eurycleia, Eumaeus and Laertes? Does Odysseus have good reason to suspect the reliability of these characters as well? When he finally discloses himself to Penelope, for example, is not the climax of their reunion somewhat compromised by Odysseus' suspicions or, if his suspicions have not been groundless, by the possibility that Penelope could have been unfaithful? Without doubt Homer wishes to portray Odysseus in a cautious light, and his audience is therefore led to believe Odysseus' hesitation is not without reason. At the same time, however, it is our contention that, by having Odysseus reveal himself only with the greatest reluctance to his loved ones, Homer is once again alluding to a certain hesitancy on Odysseus' part to retire from his adventures and involve himself in his household's routines.

There is a pattern to Odysseus' disclosures of his identity. He begins with the character he is least familiar with, Telemachus, then proceeds to a figure with whom he is better acquainted, and continues thus until he reaches his father, who in fact knows Odysseus most intimately.[137] It could be argued that Homer arranges the recognition scenes in this fashion to maximize the poem's dramatic tension, and no doubt this is true to some extent. The reunion of Odysseus and Penelope, for example, contains great emotional potential which the poet will not want to waste by having husband and wife fall into each

other's arms prematurely. And once Odysseus has been reunited with his wife, any lesser recognition scene to follow between Odysseus and his servants or Odysseus and his son would appear to be comparatively trivial and would therefore lose much of its inherent force. On the other hand, Homer cannot postpone a crucial recognition scene too artificially without causing his audience to question and criticize the reason for any such delay. We hope to show that, while we feel a climax is achieved within the sequence of the recognition scenes, Odysseus' ostensible grounds for concealing himself from his loved ones - to prevent himself from being betrayed or becoming endangered - are too weak to explain in themselves Homer's long suspension of the different recognitions that occur. We are instead to understand that, the suitors' presence notwithstanding, the recognition of Odysseus by Penelope and Laertes implies a full reintegration of the hero into his household. When his wife and father accept the fact that he has returned, Odysseus is no longer a warrior and intrepid explorer of the high seas so much as a son and husband who has estates to manage and domestic responsibilities awaiting him. We have argued, however, that settled conditions are not entirely to Odysseus' liking, and it is in part as a means of reintroducing himself to the unfamiliarity of this peaceful climate gradually that Odysseus puts off a 'conclusive' recognition and instead first reveals himself to characters of lesser consequence. He assumes, or recreates,[138] his former status incrementally, revives the less binding aspects of his past and then gradually advances to the more fundamental relationships which, once reactivated, will signal the full completion of his nostos. Let us review each recognition scene and see if there is any strength to this hypothesis of ours. Before doing so, however, we must digress briefly and glance at a preliminary stumbling-block which the prophecy of Teiresias poses to our argument here.

At the end of his prophecy in Book 11, Teiresias informs Odysseus, as we have seen, that he will be required to embark upon an expiatory journey once he has dealt with his household's troubled affairs. One can therefore argue plausibly that Odysseus is aware, even as he approaches his servants and family in the guise of an aged beggar, that he will not be remaining on Ithaca that long. But if this is the case, what has Odysseus to fear from a rekindling of his relationships with his philoi? How can he believe that his recognition by Penelope, for example, will in fact mark his full return and threaten him with old age and retirement, as we contend, when he knows from Teiresias' report that, far from settling down, he will be resuming his adventures very soon? Does the background presence of Teiresias' prophecy, then, invalidate our interpretation of the various recognition scenes?

Despite the logical possibility that Odysseus may be reacting to his philoi with Teiresias' words firmly in mind, this does not appear to be all that likely. Apart from his reference to Thrinacia and its potentially fatal aftermath, Teiresias, unlike Circe, does not provide Odysseus with practical information which, when put into effect, will facilitate his journey home.[139] Whereas the sorceress advises Odysseus to avoid Charybdis and not battle with Scylla, for example, the seer, once due warning of Thrinacia and its perils has been given, mentions the suitors and their destruction only in passing and then presses on immediately to the inland trip which Odysseus must undertake to propitiate Poseidon. Teiresias, in other words, does not really comment on events central to the poem, but extends his vision further, "... is more concerned with the ultimate, the mysterious, the cosmic" (Podlecki 1967, n.1).[140]

What we are trying to establish here, in point of fact, is that Teiresias' prophecy is intended more for the poem's audience than for Odysseus himself. One reason for this prophecy, as we argued earlier, is to postpone Odysseus' nostos indefinitely and to reassure the audience thereby that, contrary to the

suggestion of rest inherent in his reunion with his family, Odysseus will continue to roam the world. Homer's purpose in addressing his audience through Teiresias, however, does not concern us as much as the bearing which this address has on our interpretation of the different recognition scenes. If Teiresias' speech is directed more at the audience than at Odysseus himself, then it is reasonable to assume that Odysseus does not approach his family members with the prophet's words in mind. An immediate corollary to this is that Teiresias' promise of adventures to come does not prevent Odysseus from worrying that the disclosure of his identity to Penelope and others will subject him to retirement and the quietude of senescence.

But is there any concrete reason to suppose that Odysseus has taken the prophecy of Book 11 to heart, apart from the fact that he is in a position to do so? After visiting the underworld, Odysseus refers directly to certain details in the prophecy on only two occasions: at 12.266ff., as he and his men approach Thrinacia, Odysseus recalls the warning with which both Teiresias and Circe have provided him; and at 23.264ff. Odysseus describes to his wife the final journey which the seer asserted will be required of him. We note, however, that these two instances involve events which Teiresias adverted to in considerable detail, and we therefore expect some allusion to the prophet; indeed, had Odysseus said nothing at all about Teiresias at 12.266ff. or 23.264ff., the omission would have been a glaring one. The near repetition of Teiresias' words in Book 23, moreover, is in all likelihood again directed more at the poem's audience than at Penelope herself: Homer must take especial pains to remind his listeners that Odysseus is fated to wander still, as the reunion with Penelope may have lured them into believing that the hero's adventures have come to an end.

The references to the prophecy in Books 12 and 23 are, in truth, far more the exception than the rule. Through the course of Books 13 to 22 we hear

nothing of Teiresias' words and are never led to suspect that Odysseus is brooding on them in secret. In fact, Odysseus occasionally responds to certain situations in a way entirely incommensurate with the information which he received in the underworld. When Poseidon unleashes the fury of the sky and sea against him in Book 5, for example, Odysseus is sure his destruction is near (5.305ff.). Although he will only visit Teiresias in Book 11, this encounter with Poseidon occurs long after the nekyia, at least as far as the chronological scheme of the poem is concerned. Odysseus should know, therefore, that he will survive this hurricane. His certainty that he is bound to die suggests that Teiresias' forecasts have been forgotten temporarily. The same conclusion can be drawn from the meeting between Athena and Odysseus in Book 13. The goddess advises Odysseus to consider how he is to deal with the suitors who are ravaging his household. Odysseus responds (13.383-85):

> Ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο
> φθίθεσθαι κακὸν οἶτον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔμελλον,
> εἰ μή μοι σὺ ἕκαστα, θεά, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες...

words which strongly suggest he did not suspect these dangers at all. Teiresias has, of course, informed him of the suitors (11.115ff.). And, again, at 20.24ff. Odysseus appears to doubt his abilities to overcome the suitors and, even after Athena has reassured him on this point, still suffers from such a lack of confidence that he prays to Zeus to provide him with signs (20.98ff.). Similarly, in the thick of the battle against his adversaries, Odysseus' heart melts when he sees a number of them donning armour taken from the storage room (22.147ff). And yet he ought not to fear: did not Teiresias assure him that victory was guaranteed? Odysseus, however, is not thinking of the prophecy here and, by extension, one can assume that the prophecy is far removed from the hero's thoughts when he confronts Penelope and the other members of his family. Odysseus' fear of retirement, as represented by his gradual reintegration

into the household, is by no means mitigated, then, by the prophecy which he learned in the underworld. With this point established, we can now proceed to a review of each recognition scene.

On Athena's prompting (16.167ff.), Odysseus makes himself known to Telemachus long before he does so to any other household member. Why is this the case? Several reasons have been adduced. Murnaghan comments for example, "He [Odysseus] encounters Telemachus when he has still made very little progress toward the achievement of his return and because Telemachus needs the assurance of his presence relatively little and is more in a position to help his father than to be helped by him" (1987, 33). At least as much could be said of Eumaeus, however. In fact, whereas Telemachus and Penelope are "...trapped by their indecision and both awaiting the miraculous epiphany of Odysseus to deliver them from evil" (Austin 1975, 164), the swineherd, in contrast, "...holds firm, stalwart paradigm of order and a quiet reproach to his less industrious masters" (1975, 166). Murnaghan's second contention is more helpful: "Because these relationships [between Odysseus and Eurycleia, Eumaeus and Penelope] are not based on any natural tie but are artificial social constructs, their continuity over time is generally subject to question as the continuity of indissoluble kinship of father and son is not" (1987, 38).[141] There is undoubtedly some truth to this assertion,[142] but one wonders why if the bond between father and son is so unassailable, Odysseus does not seek immediate help from his father. Again Murnaghan argues, "Odysseus encounters Laertes only after his victory over the suitors is complete because Laertes' recovery is so thoroughly dependent on his return and because he does not need Laertes' help very much" (1987, 33). It is certainly true that a man of Telemachus' age would prove to be a more helpful ally than one of Laertes'. And yet given the effectiveness of Laertes' aid further on in the clash

with the suitors' relatives, Odysseus could conceivably have approached his father, enlisted his support and that of Dolius' family, and then exacted vengeance from his enemies. His father even professes regret that he was not present to participate in the destruction of the suitors (24.376ff.). This invocation of consanguinity in the case of Telemachus, then, points to a problem in Laertes' exclusion from the chain of events throughout Books 13 to 23. And the same objection could be raised against Olson's conjecture, "The male bonds of trust between master and servant, father and son are ultimately accepted as more important - or at least more secure - than those between husband and wife" (1989, 393). Again Laertes' absence is left unaccounted for. How then are we to explain Odysseus' decision to approach Telemachus first?

We note that, because of Odysseus' departure from Ithaca soon after Telemachus' birth (4.144), father and son are strangers to each other. When Athena, disguised as Mentes, approaches Telemachus in Book 1 and asks him if he is in fact Odysseus' son or not, Telemachus vacillates and answers that he is not sure (1.214ff.), so estranged is he from his father. Obviously, then, the pair share no significant common history, and for this reason Odysseus would least associate Telemachus with a return to his former domain.[143] And this fact is, we feel, in part responsible for Odysseus' willingness to unmask himself to his son before anyone else. No doubt Telemachus, as a full-blooded relative, can be trusted implicitly with the secret of his father's presence, but more important, by admitting his son into his confidence, Odysseus has rekindled only an insignificant part of his previous standing. He was barely a father when he left his son and set sail for Troy, and by reintroducing himself to Telemachus, therefore, he is not resurrecting a relationship in which his role and responsibilities are well-defined. Telemachus may well accept the fact that the beggar is his father, but Odysseus is, emotionally at least, as far removed as ever from his past and the stability of his household.

Odysseus thereafter is 'reintroduced' to his servants, Eurycleia first and then Eumaeus and Philoetius. In the case of the latter two, Eumaeus especially, again why is it that Odysseus takes such an inordinate amount of time to disclose his presence to them? To be sure, the loyalty of his servants is questionable, and Odysseus, suspicious by nature to begin with, cannot confide in any of them before each has been sufficiently tested. From this point of view, however, his reluctance to unveil himself to Eumaeus makes very little sense. The swineherd has received his guest most hospitably and has expressed unambiguously both his low opinion of the suitors (14.89ff.) and his deep affection for his absent master (14.133ff.). By the end of Book 14, then, Odysseus must know for a fact that Eumaeus can be depended upon to stand by him through thick and thin.[144] And yet he will not admit the swineherd into his plans until the twenty-first book. Why is this?

Rose suggests that, "...Odysseus must not merely test Eumaeus' loyalty, which is easily done, but must be tested in turn. He must win the affection and respect of one who is, on the one hand, his steadfastly loyal slave, but also a flawless host and a stern judge of the suitors and other slaves - in short, a moral paradigm" (1980, 286). And for this reason, "...the poet neither allows Eumaeus himself to recognize the beggar's identity nor permits the beggar to reveal it at this time" (ibid.). But surely Odysseus has wormed himself into Eumaeus' good graces by the end of the fourteenth book or, at the very least, by the end of the fifteenth. It is through the course of these two books that the interaction of swineherd and beggar is at its most intimate. Between Books 16 and 21, the setting of their recognition scene, very little occurs that would further prove Odysseus' worth in the swineherd's eyes. And if Homer's intention is indeed to subject Odysseus to the judgment of the swineherd, why would he not do so as well in the case of Philoetius? This goatherd meets

Odysseus but once in the twentieth book and, in a second encounter one book later is promptly taken into his master's confidence. Odysseus has not had the opportunity to prove himself to this character.[145] One may wonder as well whether Odysseus must truly be tested in the fashion Rose envisages. What if Odysseus had revealed his identity shortly after his arrival in the swineherd's hut? Would he have had his claim frankly rejected or would the swineherd have denied him his help because his moral character was still unclear? One imagines that Odysseus would only have to divulge himself, and his appearance on its own would satisfy the swineherd's high standard of conduct.

Homer does tell us, on the other hand, that Athena keeps Odysseus' identity a secret from Eumaeus μή ἐ συβώτης/ γνοίη ἐσάντα ἰδὼν καὶ ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ/ ἔλθοι ἀπαγγέλλων μηδὲ φρεσὶν εἰρύσσαιτο (16.457-59).[146] But perhaps this is where the example of Eurycleia is relevant. Upon penetrating Odysseus' disguise, Eurycleia's first instinct is, true enough, to inform Penelope of her husband's return (19.476ff.). Odysseus then enjoins her to silence, threatening her with death if his secret should escape (19.482ff.). Eurycleia in turn replies indignantly that he ought to know how steadfast her spirit is (19.492ff.) Clearly Odysseus has nothing to fear, and in fact he never betrays any worry further on that Eurycleia may perhaps publish her discovery. The relative ease with which the danger of detection is repressed in this instance, then, suggests Athena is being somewhat over-cautious in Book 16. Were Eumaeus to learn of Odysseus' presence, he too could be sworn to secrecy: his feelings of loyalty towards Odysseus are obvious and, as far as Penelope herself is concerned, the swineherd gives the impression that he has become somewhat alienated from his mistress (15.374ff.)

Again, it is our contention here that the timing of the recognition scene between Odysseus and Eumaeus, and of those between the former and his servants in general, signals Odysseus' reluctance to resume the peaceful

routines of his household. Eurycleia and Eumaeus, unlike Telemachus, have known Odysseus all his life. Recognition by them entails a resurrection of an important aspect of his life history. Once again he is a man with a childhood - this is a second implication of his scar - and the master of both slaves and property. Both servants have a strong impression of their master. Odysseus' piety stands out clearly in Eurycleia's mind, and by her words to Autolycus in the digression of the scar, she obviously regards Odysseus as the heir to the family's estates. Eumaeus, for his part, explains to the beggar how Odysseus would have provided him with a house and a wife if he had grown old at home (14.62ff.). Through these expectations of theirs, therefore, Eurycleia and Eumaeus draw Odysseus ever closer to reintegration into the society which he has been estranged from for the last twenty years when they affirm that the beggar is indeed Odysseus. This is why, in the final analysis, Homer has Odysseus discovered by Eurycleia against his will,[147] and postpones the epiphany to Eumaeus until the very last moment. Odysseus, as it turns out, has nothing to fear from these servants of his, but in view of the fact that their identification of him substantiates his nostos to some degree and promises to incorporate him back into the stable routines of domestic life, he hesitates to expose himself to them.

And what of Penelope? Again the question that interests us is why Odysseus is so slow to reunite himself with his wife.[148] The story of Agamemnon and the treachery he met with at the hands of Clytemnestra has, of course, been reverberating throughout the course of the poem. Indeed in Book 11, as we mentioned earlier, the shade of the king specifically advises Odysseus:

> κρύβδην, μηδ' ἀναφανδά, φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν
> νῆα κατισέμεναι· ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι πιστὰ γυναιξίν.

And once Athena has given a brief account of the suitor's aggressiveness, Odysseus replies (13.383-85):[149]

> ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο
> φθίσεσθαι κακὸν οἶτον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔμελλον,
> εἰ μή μοι σὺ ἕκαστα, θεά, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες.

When one dwells upon the dream which Penelope describes to the disguised Odysseus (19.536ff.), she would appear to have some fondness for the suitors as well,[150] a fact which only encourages one to believe that the fate of Agamemnon is in fact responsible for Odysseus' caution around his wife.[151]

There are, however, problems with this interpretation. As a general principle, the reunion of husband and wife will be seriously compromised if Penelope's behaviour should resemble Clytemnestra's even remotely. Odysseus cannot realistically express satisfaction to be back in the arms of his spouse if she has truly been capable of betraying him to his enemies. And thus, although Homer does create a parallel of sorts between the situations of Agamemnon and Odysseus, he simultaneously downplays the suggestion that Penelope could in fact act like a Clytemnestra. Agamemnon urges Odysseus to keep his distance from his wife, but he also comments (11.444-46):

> ἀλλ' οὐ σοί γ', Ὀδυσεῦ, φόνος ἔσσεται ἐκ γε γυναικός·
> λίην γὰρ πινυτή τε καὶ εὖ φρεσὶ μήδεα οἶδε
> κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο, περίφρων Πηνελόπεια.

And the confusing passage in Book 13 where Odysseus states he would have died the death of Agamemnon had Athena not warned him of the suitors' improprieties in advance, does not necessarily point to betrayal on Penelope's part, as Katz asserts.[152] Athena ends her account of the suitors with the following three lines (13.379-81):

> ἡ δὲ σὸν αἰεὶ νόστον ὀδυρομένη κατὰ θυμὸν
> πάντας μὲν ἔλπει καὶ ὑπίσχεται ἀνδρὶ ἑκάστῳ,

ἀγγελίας προϊεῖσα, νόος δέ οἱ ἄλλα μενοινᾷ.

Penelope mourns Odysseus' absence and, despite her promises to the suitors, has other intentions in mind: clearly the goddess is referring here to Penelope's abiding loyalty. These same three lines occur in Book 2, in Antinous' speech to Telemachus, where the context demonstrate that the hopes which Penelope is giving rise to are in fact part of the doloi she deploys to postpone the day of her eventual remarriage (2.85ff.). Having learned of his wife's loyalty and use of stratagem, Odysseus cannot be suggesting at 13.383ff. that Penelope was on the verge of entrapping him. The line of thought from Athena's speech to his own outburst would be grossly inconsistent. When he avows, therefore, that he almost met with the end which Agamemnon suffered, he must be thinking only of Agamemnon's slaughter at the hands of Aegisthus, and not of Clytemnestra's complicity. And Penelope gives a very clear idea of where her own loyalties lie in her conversation with the beggar further on. She speaks of her sorrow in the absence of her husband, how the suitors woo her against her will, how she pines away for Odysseus and puts the suitors off by means of different stratagems (19.127ff.). Her tearful response (19.203ff.), too, to the beggar's talk about her husband speaks well of her intentions towards Odysseus, as does her answer to the beggar's assertion that Odysseus will be home within the course of a month (19.309-11):

αἴ γὰρ τοῦτο, ξεῖνε, ἔπος τετελεσμένον εἴη·
τῷ κε τάχα γνοίης φιλότητά τε πολλά τε δῶρα
ἐξ ἐμεῦ....

It is possible to interpret her dream about the geese and the eagle in such a way that she appears to take some pleasure in the suitors' company.[153] On the other hand Russo, while acknowledging that Penelope's grief is so emphatically presented, "...that we may fairly infer that her unconscious mind is considerably less hostile to the suitors than her often-voiced conscious

attitude" (1982, 9), conjectures that, "The small pleasure she [Penelope] takes in the attentions of the 'geese' pales before the intensity of the very idea of her husband's return" (1982, 10). Marquardt feels Penelope grieves only for the geese in themselves and is thereupon comforted by the eagle when it informs her that her pets are safe and the dream really betokens the death of the suitors (1985, 43).[154] One way or another, any possible attachment on Penelope's part to her suitors is alluded to so enigmatically and is more than counterbalanced by her bald attestation of loyalty and love for her husband, that Odysseus cannot possibly be thought, by the end of Book 19 at any rate, to harbour suspicions about his wife's integrity. Indeed, as Olson argues, the story Helen tells in Book 4, how a disguised Odysseus made his way into Troy and revealed his identity to her once he had extracted an oath that she would not betray him (4.235ff.), "...raises the expectation that 'the stranger' will admit his identity to Penelope.... The attack on the suitors would thus be undertaken with her covert consent and approval... as an act of cooperation between husband and wife" (1989, 391).[155] Odysseus does not hide himself from Penelope, then, for fear that she will play him false.[156]

But our question still has not been answered: why does Odysseus keep his identity a secret from Penelope for such a long time? Once again, we feel the answer lies in the fact that recognition of Odysseus by his wife represents the near completion of his nostos. His reunion with Penelope will situate Odysseus at the heart of his household and signals an eventual resumption of his domestic responsibilities. Being uncertain of his place in such an unheroic world, Odysseus is loath to commit himself to it overhastily and consequently postpones a disclosure which, the presence of the suitors notwithstanding, would signify the reality of his return. His character being what it is, Odysseus cannot embrace his homecoming without reservation but necessarily evinces some trepidation.

This argument is perhaps substantiated through the bewildering fact that Penelope does not immediately accept Odysseus' claim to be her husband. Odysseus is faced with a paradox: having been so careful to keep his identity from his wife, he is unable to convince her that he is indeed her husband when he finally does decide to unmask himself. Even when he has bathed, changed his clothing and had his normal appearance restored by Athena,[157] Penelope still stubbornly refuses to acknowledge him. Why is this the case?

As soon as Odysseus has demonstrated his knowledge of the marriage bed, Penelope breaks down and provides a reason for her former intractability (23.215-17):

> αἰεὶ γάρ μοι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν φίλοισιν
> ἐρρίγει μή τίς με βροτῶν ἀπάφοιτο ἔπεσσιν
> ἐλθών·

Given the context - Penelope's desire to explain to her husband why she did not recognize him instantly - this statement of hers must mean, as Roisman argues,[158] that she was worried she might be 'sweet-talked' into surrendering herself to a man who falsely claimed to be Odysseus. This excuse of hers, however, does not address the situation accurately.[159] Penelope has not merely been presented with a stranger's profession that he is Odysseus, but has instead been confronted with arresting proof of such a claim, the beggar's tell-tale scar and his eradication of the suitors. She is also aware of the fact, from her interrogation of him in Book 19, that this character has true, personal knowledge of her husband. All of the evidence which Odysseus musters to support his contention, in other words, is very solid, almost conclusive, a far cry indeed from the vague claim which Penelope adduces as the cause of her obduracy.

We note, indeed, that when Penelope first approaches the befouled, ill-clad Odysseus in Book 23, Homer says of her that she pondered

ἦ ἀπάνευθε φίλον πόσιν ἐξερεείνοι,
ἦ παρστᾶσα κύσειε κάρη καὶ χεῖρε λαβοῦσα. (23.86-87)

"The expression φίλον πόσιν clearly shows she thinks there is a distinct possibility that Eurycleia's news may indeed be true" (RFH, 321). The phrase μάλα δ'εὖ οἶδ' οἷος ἔησθα (23.175), too, with its verb in the second person singular, suggests that she is aware of the true identity of the man before her. If she were not, she would undoubtedly say 'I know well what sort of man he was'.[160] It is tempting, then, to conclude that Penelope, contrary to her assertion, has in fact recognized Odysseus before her strategic reference to their marriage bed. As Mariani contends, "... one might venture to say that she recognizes him mentally but not yet emotionally at this point, or (to put it somewhat differently) that she acknowledges the social fact of him, Odysseus as the true descendant of his family line and the rightful lord of his estate, the Odysseus known to others as well by the 'manifest signs' of his scar and the slaughter of the usurpers, but that he is not yet for her the Odysseus of her intimate knowledge" (1967, 148-49).[161]

If this seems an exaggeration, it cannot be maintained on the other hand that Penelope is wholly unaffected by the facts confronting her. One cannot suppose that whereas the beggar's expertise with the bow, his defeat of the suitors, his cunning,[162] his scar, his obvious familiarity with the real Odysseus and his acceptance by Eurycleia and Telemachus have little or no weight in Penelope's eyes, his knowledge of the wedding-bed on the other hand dispels by itself all of Penelope's uncertainties. If this were the case, Odysseus' struggle and defining characteristics would appear in a trivial light. His intellect and heroism would not be the qualities which mark him off as Penelope's husband, but he would instead enjoy such status merely through his acquaintance with their marriage bed. Obviously his successful treatment of this token is a necessary condition for his reception by Penelope, but not a

sufficient one. Consequently, we must assume that Penelope is impressed by the evidence that Eurycleia brings to her attention and, if not entirely convinced that her husband has returned, is unwilling to admit that the beggar is Odysseus only because he has not defined himself completely as she wishes him to.[163] He is heroic, yes, he is cunning, yes, he bears a physical resemblance to her husband and is marked with the tell-tale scar, but one detail is missing still. Hence the importance of the marriage bed.

On one level, of course, the function of the bed is straightforward enough. Apart from one servant, only Penelope and Odysseus know of the bed's immovability, and when Odysseus describes its original rootedness, he thereby proves he is in truth Penelope's husband. At the same time the very fact that the bed is still fixed in place is an indication that Penelope's chastity is intact.[164] But the bed perhaps operates on a deeper level as well. By expressing concern for the olive stump which holds the bed solidly to the earth, Odysseus suggests that a settled life is of some importance to him.[165]

Significantly Penelope declares to Odysseus, immediately after he has given an account of his construction of the bed (23.210-12):

θεοὶ δ'ὤπαζον ὀϊζύν,
οἳ νῶϊν ἀγάσαντο παρ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντε
ἤβης ταρπῆναι καὶ γήραος οὐδὸν ἱκέσθαι.

The use of νῶιν underscores the fact that Odysseus is not the only one who has suffered dreadfully through the twenty-year period of his wanderings; Penelope, too, has experienced her share of misery.[166] Odysseus' long absence, the tale of his delay to gather more booty for himself and his reluctance on Ithaca to reveal himself to his wife have given rise to an apprehension within Penelope that even if this man is her husband, as she herself strongly suspects, his return does not necessarily preclude further absences and instability in future. Both Telemachus and Odysseus, exasperated with Penelope's obstinacy

and suspicions, ask her how she can remain aloof from her husband (23.101-2, 169-70)

ὅς οἱ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας

ἔλθοι ἐεικοστῷ ἔτεϊ ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

But this twenty-year absence is in fact the very cause of the distance she maintains. She answers Odysseus' rebuke with the declaration that she is neither proud nor scornful but rather (23.175-76)

μάλα δ'εὖ οἶδ' οἷος ἔησθα

ἐξ Ἰθάκης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἰὼν δολιχηρέτμοιο.

Perhaps this statement of hers means she knows what Odysseus was like when he sailed away:[167] he was an adventurer, someone who would allow himself to be distracted from his homecoming on the slightest pretext.[168] She then orders Eurycleia to set his bed outside the bridal chamber,[169] both a fitting indication that, in her eyes, he is a wanderer still, and a ploy designed to test his reaction to the suggestion that his position is unfixed. Central to a meaningful recognition of Odysseus by his wife, in other words, is the issue of Odysseus' willingness to remain on Ithaca permanently in future. This is the final 'sign' Penelope has been hanging on.

Odysseus does not disappoint his wife. By acknowledging his bed's former stability and rootedness, Odysseus is in some sense expressing his consent to be situated just as firmly from that time on. Having received this 'token', Penelope instantly accepts the beggar as her husband. A simile ensues, in which Penelope is likened to a ship-wrecked sailor and Odysseus to a strip of land which she thankfully sets foot upon (23.233ff.).[170] Once Odysseus has indirectly communicated to her, through his response to the supposed violation of his bed, that he is home to stay, Penelope has been finally rescued from her analogous 'wanderings' as well.[171] "The brilliance of the simile's reversion to Penelope lies in the parallel which it thus implies between her

own experience and that of Odysseus. The terror and weariness of the struggle with the sea has throughout the poem been an image for Odysseus' experience.... Landlocked in her twenty years of misery in Ithaca, world without event, Penelope, the image suggests, has kept pace with his sea-tossed, shipwrecked wandering, his desperate swimming - has had in effect a struggle with the same sea" (Mariani 1967, 156-57).[172] Having triggered this recognition between husband and wife, the bed acts as a guarantee of sorts that in future their relationship will be as firmly rooted as its olive-trunk post.

And yet it would appear that we have contradicted our central argument here. If Odysseus' heated reaction to the pretended mutilation of his bed is in fact an avowal on his part that he will set his sailing days behind him, has he not then accepted the prospect of retirement in Ithaca? Not necessarily. To prove his familiarity with the bed, Odysseus gives a rather detailed account of its construction. In doing so he is no doubt giving vent to his perplexity, how a bed constructed in this fashion could be moved, as Heubeck postulates (RFH, 333). Homer, too, might be emphasizing how "...anything made, with energy, skill and passion is an exercise of a man's particular arete, and a shaping of the materials of his world to his own will and his own design" (Mariani 1967, 172). At the same time, however, there is in this passage more than a passing echo of the description of Odysseus' fabrication of the raft in Book 5. "Not surprisingly, some of the same details are involved in the carpentry project of Book V and Book XXIII... and occasional lines or phrases are almost identical..." (Mariani 1967, 175). It is possible, then, that Homer, while effecting the recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope, is at the same time reminding his audience that activity of this sort, doweling and boring and the like, led to further wandering on Odysseus' part in the earlier book. The poet could be signalling, in other words, that the interest Odysseus shows in stability here is not to be taken too seriously.

This interpretation, which is admittedly speculative, again receives strong confirmation in the scene that follows shortly after. Through Athena's lengthening of the night, Odysseus and Penelope are allowed to give full vent to their weeping (23.241ff.). Odysseus then abruptly announces the further trials which the prophet Teiresias has predicted for him (23.248ff.),[173] and creates the impression that these trials will be even more difficult than Teiresias himself implied. It is odd that at this moment of triumph he would mention and exaggerate these labours, only to dismiss them out of hand with the proposal that he and Penelope retire for the night (23.254-55).[174] As we observed earlier, Homer is in actual fact addressing his audience here. Realizing that Odysseus' oblique promise not to wander in future situates him here in his household to an excessive degree, the poet supplements the impression of repose he has created with the suggestion that Odysseus has by no means brought his odyssey to a close at this juncture. Through a clever sleight-of-hand, Homer resolves two contradictory themes in the poem. He has brought his hero home, has reunited husband and wife, and suggested, through the symbol of the marriage bed, that a peaceful, prosperous future awaits the couple, but at the same time he has accommodated Odysseus' inborn restlessness and left his audience with the impression that the hero will continue to follow his natural adventurous bent.

And finally there is Laertes. With the suitors dead, and his presence on the island about to become common knowledge, Odysseus has no reason whatsoever to keep his identity from his father any longer. His decision to do so has occasioned severe criticism from a number of commentators. "Odysseus' treatment of his father has a certain bald heartlessness about it without any humorous or sympathetic ironies to mitigate its harshness" (Fenik 1974, 49). "...he [Odysseus] indulges in an aimless and heartless

guessing-game" (Page 1955, 112). "It has long been seen that there is no reason for Odysseus not to reveal himself at once and spare his father so much agony. Where is our 'moral' hero, or even moderately affectionate son, now?" (Rutherford 1986, 161).[175] But what would his purpose be in approaching his father in such a questionable fashion? And why has he waited such a long time to unmask himself? And, in final analysis, is Odysseus' testing of his father really so despicable?

A number of reasons have been put forward to explain but not necessarily justify Odysseus' behaviour with Laertes. First there is the purpose which Homer ascribes to Odysseus, that he will test his father to see αἴ κε μ'ἐπιγνώῃ καὶ φράσσεται ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,/ ἦέ κεν ἀγνοιῇσι πολὺν χρόνον ἀμφίς ἐόντα (24.217-18). Heubeck comments appositely on these lines, "The subsequent narrative... shows that although Odysseus carries out the πεῖρα as announced, the purpose is actually quite different from that given: the ostensible reason stated turns out to be only a (necessary) pretext, as Odysseus cannot and does not wish to reveal the true purpose of his πειρᾶσθαι to his companions" (RFH, 384). Rutherford, for his part, speculates that Odysseus acts the way he does because concealment has become second-nature with him - a view Fenik shares (1974, 50) - or because he is still smarting from the fact that Penelope outwitted him and therefore wants to get his own back by exacting one more triumphant deception (1986, 161). As far as the first point is concerned, Homer tells us that, far from merely following through on a habitual, behavioural pattern, Odysseus debates quite carefully with himself - μερμήριξε δ'ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμὸν (24.235) - whether he should immediately embrace his father or 'test' him first. Mere force of habit is clearly not at work here.[176] And Odysseus has nowhere suggested that he is angry because Penelope has outwitted him. Even if he were upset, what relevance would any such anger have on his relationship with his father? Thornton in turn suggests that,

"...through being tested, Laertes is brought back to life and to a passionate concern for what is happening..." (1970, 118).[177] But the old man, surely, would have been revitalized if his son had announced himself without prevarication. And the news of the suitors' destruction would, again, have proven to be of great interest to Laertes regardless of whether he had been tested or not. But what of Clarke's contention that, "The truth must be learned by suffering if it is to be appreciated, just as the return to Ithaca cost Odysseus many a heartache" (1967, 25)? Is Laertes, who would seem to have had his fill of suffering, truly more appreciative of his son's homecoming because he has groaned and grovelled in the dust first? He does move from disappointment to elation, but one can easily imagine that his appreciation of his son's arrival would have been just as intense if he had foregone Odysseus' deception. Similarly Walcot's proposal, based on practices found in present-day Greek communities, that "...an inferior [the dilapidated Laertes alongside the triumphant Odysseus] is vulnerable and must be taught to protect himself, and this process of education is not always pleasant" (1992, 62), does not fully explain Odysseus' test of his father as it is difficult to grasp exactly what Laertes must protect himself from.

Dimock's observation on the other hand is more illuminating: "He [Odysseus] wants to experience more of his father than simply revealing himself is likely to produce" (1989, 328). The fact that Odysseus is testing his father would strongly suggest that he is hoping to expose some quality which would otherwise remain concealed. Dimock unfortunately does not specify exactly what it is Odysseus is hoping to catch sight of. Mariani, in a long and sensitive examination of this recognition scene, recommends that "We ought... to consider the encounter of Odysseus and his father as a concentrated and somewhat stylized element in the dramatic realization of the hero's identity which is a continuous action throughout the poem, the necessary

completion of a more or less formal pattern" (1967, 210). Odysseus cannot simply resume relations with his family, but must recreate them, and this in turn entails the adoption of a disguise and the telling of lies with each and every one of them (Mariani 1967, 212). Odysseus, for his part, does come to understand more fully, through the anguish which he causes his father, what he himself means to Laertes, and to this extent he recreates an important dimension of the father-son relationship. As far as Laertes himself is concerned, however, nothing is gained by this rehearsal of his grief, as he believes his son is as far removed from him as ever. True enough, Odysseus will recreate himself in his father's eyes when he recites in detail the different trees which his father at one time promised to him, but this proving of himself occurs only after he has declared his identity and might well have been required of him whether he had revealed himself straightway or not. Like Dimock, Mariani is clearly pointed in the right direction but has not explained the episode completely. What, then, are we to conclude?

We must first understand why Odysseus approaches his father only after Penelope, Telemachus and the servants. Laertes, it is to be noted, plays a very prominent role in defining Odysseus' position in Ithaca. Odysseus has encountered, we have argued, personalities who reflect in an ascending scale of importance his earlier association with his home and life-history on Ithaca. That Laertes should be the last figure whom he discloses himself to is not surprising, then, because his father, more than anyone else, defines Odysseus' status on the island.[178] By readmitting Odysseus to the marriage bed, Penelope has re-established him in his household, but this act pales before Laertes' reintroduction of his son to his estates, the family's local authority and, overall, the legitimacy of his tie to Ithaca.[179] The 'kingship' of Ithaca, Odysseus' essential link with the island, is not Penelope's to confer, but instead belongs by right to the blood-line of Arceisius,[180] a fact which again

underscores the close association of father and son. Long before he is the husband of Penelope, or the father of Telemachus for that matter, Odysseus is Laertes' son. For this reason his meeting with Laertes represents a climax of sorts within the sequence of the recognition scenes.

Perhaps we are now in a position to address the puzzle of Odysseus' decision to test his father. Because Laertes determines Odysseus' identity above everyone else, the reunion of father and son marks Odysseus' return to Ithaca more conclusively. By exposing himself to his father and by enumerating the trees which were once bequeathed to him, Odysseus reanimates his bond with his father and, in truth, with the Ithacan soil as a whole.[181] As soon as recognition from his father has been won, Odysseus will be fully reintegrated into the scheme of his past. But if there is any weight to our contention, that Odysseus is in some sense reluctant to establish himself in circumstances that would domesticate his heroic propensities and searching intellect, then this final recognition scene is more significant than any similar scene which has preceded it. Although Homer insists, through Teiresias' prophecy, that Odysseus will press on with his travels, the hero is at the same time on the brink, in effect, of abandoning his adventuring and embracing the quiet practices of civilian life. He is, in fact, on the verge of consigning himself to the ranks of the old. For this reason he hesitates to approach his father openly, decides in fact to test the old man, with a view to witnessing for himself perhaps exactly what effects his absence has given rise to in Laertes. This is why Laertes is questioned on his appearance and, immediately after, on the whereabouts of his son. Until the moment Laertes breaks down completely and strews his head with handfuls of dust, Odysseus is not quite sure he is prepared to entrench himself back into the world he left behind for the Trojan campaign. Of course there is no question that Odysseus will fulfill his nostos in the end, but the differences between the role he is leaving - wanderer and

man of the world - and the one he is adopting - father, husband, son, future stay-at-home - must be accommodated somehow, and so Homer depicts through the testing of Laertes Odysseus' reluctance to cross the threshold from one way of life to its polar opposite.

And because this testing by its very nature requires deception of some kind, the outcome on Laertes is bound to be severe: it is through his provocation of his father that Odysseus will be moved to announce his presence. Thus Odysseus conducts his test with κερτομίοις ἐπέεσσιν(24.240). An exact translation of this phrase is difficult, but any adverse connotation can be attributed here, in our view, to the effects Odysseus' speech has on his father and not to the intent with which he examines him.[182] Even before he has been accosted, the old man causes Odysseus to cry at the sight of his worn appearance (24.232ff.). This reaction and Odysseus' impulse to embrace and kiss his father bespeak affection and pity on Odysseus' part.[183] Moreover, as Mariani observes, "What Odysseus actually says to his father... is subtly and deeply painful, but comparatively gentle, even compassionate and respectful" (1967, 215). The harshness at first sight implicit in κερτομίοις, then, cannot be ascribed to Odysseus himself, who evinces nothing but warmth for his father and concern for his eroded condition, and therefore must refer to the grief-stricken response which this test inevitably evokes. Odysseus' last scruples dissolve in the face of his father's devastation and, in a burst of emotion which can only betoken a loving son (24.318ff.), he brings about the last of the recognitions, thereby laying to rest, albeit not completely, the poet's insinuations that his hero has not the frame of mind to settle down.

As something of an addendum to our discussion of Laertes, we should mention and examine briefly an interesting line of speculation which Falkner has set forth. In a quote we have already seen[184] Falkner states, "In the postwar

and domesticated world of the Odyssey... the tensions between heroism and old age are very much present (1989, 38). He goes on to argue that Laertes offers "...an alternate model of old age more appropriate to the post-heroic nature of the poem and its hero" (1989, 40). As an old man Laertes has been able nonetheless to tend his orchard with impressive results, and this diligence of his serves as an example which his son will follow in his old age. In future Odysseus' excellence will be expressed in the agricultural domain. And in returning to the cultivation of the land, Odysseus is merely re-entering a "... rich agricultural tradition, one characterized specifically as an alternative to heroic warfare" (1989, 45) which the heroic line of Laertes has always practiced. By beating his sword into a ploughshare, then, Odysseus can give full vent to his heroic character and thereby achieve a smooth transition from the world of the Iliad and his wanderings to the peaceful climate of postwar Ithaca.

Although Falkner's argument is appealing and in many respects persuasive - our curt summary above does little justice to his article - there is a major problem nonetheless. Once Odysseus has rescued his father from his squalor, Homer nowhere states or even implies that the old man is one day going to return to his menial service in the garden. Indeed, apart from the orchard's well-ordered appearance, every reference to Laertes' self-imposed exile to the orchard has only served to emphasize the old man's intense misery.

In Book 1 we are told, for example,

> τὸν οὐκέτι φασὶ πόλινδε
> ἔρχεσθ', ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἐπ' ἀγροῦ πήματα πάσχειν
> γρηῒ σὺν ἀμφιπόλῳ, ἥ οἱ βρῶσίν τε πόσιν τε
> παρτιθεῖ, εὖτ' ἄν μιν κάματος κατὰ γυῖα λάβῃσιν
> ἑρπύζοντ' ἀνὰ γουνὸν ἀλωῆς οἰνοπέδοιο. (1.189-93)

The old man is obviously working the land in this description, yet his pathetic

aspect is brought out most forcefully. Homer stresses, in fact, Laertes' lapse into a serf-like existence. Thus we learn at 4.735ff. that Dolius is the one who normally tends the garden, and at 16.139ff. that Laertes at one time supervised the fieldwork: ὃς τῆος μὲν 'Οδυσσῆος μέγ' ἀχεύων/ ἔργα τ'ἐποπτεύεσκε. We are also led to believe that the old man is unaware of the developments that have taken place within the sphere of his domain: Eumaeus has not only built himself a forecourt for the swine without the old man's knowledge (14.7ff.), but has also bought himself a servant (14.449ff.).[185] Most revealing, however, is the fact that Odysseus, in accordance with his story that he is a stranger to Ithaca, makes the natural assumption that Laertes is someone's slave (24.257).[186]

It therefore seems reasonable to assume that once Laertes has been bathed and has exhibited something of his former mettle, by dispatching Eupeithes with a toss of his spear, he is not going to regress back to his previous doddering in the garden. Laertes' industriousness, its fruitful outcome notwithstanding, is in Homer's eyes the hallmark of a servant and as such would hardly serve as a paradigm for Odysseus in his retirement. Indeed, in his fictitious autobiographical account to Eumaeus - an account in which Odysseus comes very close to telling the truth about himself - the beggar claims that fieldwork was never to his liking, but that he has always hankered after ships instead and wars and spears and arrows (14.222ff.). It would seem that this assertion draws a firm distinction between farmers and warriors or, at the very least, between farmers and Odysseus, and only strengthens our contention here that, with all due respect to Falkner, Odysseus cannot replace his more heroic ventures with toil in the fields and remain satisfied.[187] As strong as the pull of home has proven to be, perhaps we are to conclude that the pull of Odysseus' restlessness and polytropic ways prove even stronger.

Summary

Let us recapitulate our argument briefly. Homer casts Odysseus as the battle-weary traveller who is desperate to return to his home and family. At the same time great emphasis is placed upon Odysseus' searching intellect, and situations are described in which Odysseus either procrastinates unduly or allows himself to be diverted from his nostos by his curiosity and acquisitiveness. He visits a series of paradisiacal islands and, though he is made most welcome and is invited to settle in each if he so desires, he eventually abandons each in part because its atmosphere is too tame and predictable for a temperament like his. Only Aeaea seems to captivate him, but Circe is a figure of such mystery and guile that Odysseus is quite naturally taken with her charms. Far from insisting on his essential premise, then, that Odysseus is single-mindedly devoted to the achievement of his nostos, Homer insinuates that the hero is, at heart, an indefatigable adventurer, and forewarns us, through his protagonist's rejection of the comforts of Ogygia and Scheria, that Odysseus might have difficulties settling back into the quietude of Ithaca. In fact, when Odysseus does finally land on Ithaca, he holds himself back from his family and servants because he is not entirely sure that he wants to involve himself in any strict domestic setting. He recreates his past relationships only gradually, revealing himself first to characters who mean comparatively little to him, as far as his former domesticity is concerned, and then advancing progressively on to those who are of greater weight and influence. Reunion with his wife and, more important, with his father does finally commit him to his hearth and home to some degree, but by depicting Odysseus in the poem's last scene as an insatiable warrior and, what is more, by adverting to future labours and travel through the prophecy of Teiresias, Homer leaves his audience with the impression that Odysseus is a figure who, by nature, cannot remain settled in any one place too long.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 4

1. "The Odyssey is principally the story of a return. A man has spent ten years fighting a war in a distant country and another ten years against all kinds of obstacles and distractions to get home to his wife and family" (Podlecki 1961, 12). And see Clarke (1967, 67).

2. As Stanford points out (1978, I 356).

3. Segal argues, "The Return of Odysseus can be regarded as a return to humanity in its broadest sense: a return to the familiar, man-scale realities of Ithaca, but also renewal of the basic human relations with parents, wife, son, friends and retainers and country" (1962, 20). All of this is undoubtedly true, but at the heart of Odysseus' nostos lies the stark fact of his retirement. When he decides to leave Calypso's island, the most obvious consequence of his decision is that he will be subjected to the aging process. Penelope's last words are consistent with this point (23.286-87).

4. "We see Odysseus... in transition, moving toward the old age prophesied to him and away from his heroic past" (Falkner 1989, 22). Falkner goes on to observe, "...the Odyssey presents a hero embedded in the world of time for whom the prospect of old age... is an attractive one" (1989, 49).

5. Both Stanford (1978, I 206) and Kakridis (1921, 290-91), for example, take ὅς δὲ μάλα πολλὰ/ πλάγχθη as epexegetic and prefer 'much-wandering' to 'much-changing'. West, on the other hand, argues, "... that πολύτροπος is equivalent to πολύπλαγκτος and glossed by the following clause... is less attractive. Such exegesis is out of place here, and alien to the rather summary style of the proem; moreover, Odysseus' travels result from accident rather than Wanderlust, and a reference to something genuinely characteristic of him is more appropriate" (HWH, 69).

6. "The 'many turns' of his circling return from the siege of Troy through the marvels and troubles of the Adventures to his besieged native home are hardly separable, in Homer's first epithet for Odysseus, from the many turns of his complex return" (Mariani 1967, 2).

7. "...polytropos [in Odyssey 1.1] accomplishes the very opposite of a name, for instead of fixing its referent, as a name would, in an identifiable location within the social matrix or locking him into a narrative destiny manifest in the name, it suggests polymorphism, mutability, plurality, variability, transition, the crossing of borders, the wearing of masks, the assumption of multiple roles" (Peradotto 1990, 116).

8. Clay reaches a similar conclusion: "All these adjectives [polymechanos, polymetis, etc.] refer to the quality of Odysseus' mind. It is characterized

not so much by wisdom, or even by intelligence as such, but by the multiplicity of mind, by mental dexterity, by what the Greeks called metis" (1983, 31).

9. Clay, for example, argues, "Here [in the Cyclops episode], and preeminently here, we find him the quintessential man of metis" (1983, 113).

10. "...in the land of the Lotus-Eaters, the Cyclops, and the Laestrygonians, it is his [Odysseus'] curiosity, not need, which prompts exploration... and it is the same in the case of Circe.... Odysseus is driven to these places, but it is he who chooses to explore them" (Whitman 1958, 299). And see Stanford (1954, 7) and Rutherford (1986, 150).

11. Rutherford comments, "Here again [in Odysseus' description of his attack on the Cicones] his narrative betrays a breezy, heroic bravado" (1986, 150). And Friedrich: "With the attack on the Cicones, the Sacker of Cities simply continues on a smaller scale what he has been doing during the previous decade" (1987, 126).

12. "Odysseus' first impulsive plan... is that of a warrior. The epic elements in this episode [with the Cyclops] are of course unparalleled in the folklore material and serve to characterize Odysseus as a true hero of the Trojan war" (RFH, 30).

13. Schein, for example, comments of the Cyclops episode, "The expression ἕτερος θυμὸς [of 9.302] is unparalleled in Homer, but is a catachresis of traditional language for the sake of describing Odysseus' unique intelligence and resourcefulness" (1970, 78). And see Jones (1989, 86).

14. Whitman (1958, 299).

15. In his visit to the underworld, Odysseus meets the εἴδωλον of Heracles who speaks of his own earlier descent as the most demanding of his ἄεθλοι (11.617ff.). Odysseus' presence in Hades, then, is clearly to be understood as a measure of his own heroic enterprise.

16. And further on he states, "Odysseus survives [his travels] not because he is pious or guiltless or devoid of vices, nor even because he does not make mistakes, but because he is able to learn from them to adapt, to use what help he can get from others and stay on top. He learns slowly and painfully, to curb both his heroic impulses... and his more dangerous, more idiosyncratic quality, his curiosity" (1986, 153).

17. And see Clay (1983, 214).

18. Foley also argues for a change in Odysseus' sensibilities: "Once

conqueror of Troy, Odysseus now understands the position of its victims; and it is as such a victim, aged, a beggar, and no longer a leader of men, that he reenters Ithaca" (ibid.) This show of sympathy is also reflected in his speech to Amphinomus and in his admonition to Eurycleia when she shouts exultantly over the fallen suitors.

19. Rutherford himself admits, "The philosophic Odysseus never totally displaces the older, wilier Odysseus; rather, the moral side coincides with and controls his instinctive sense of curiosity (as in the testing scenes), his greed... and his vanity..." (1986, 160). And see Mariani (1967, 7-8).

20. As Stewart contends, "...the Odyssey is an epic... that... concerns a sorrowing and tattered survivor of heroic society who has to learn how to function in a new and quite different world that has collectively forgotten heroism, except as history, and has acquired a new concern for the bourgeois values of stability and ease" (1976, 19-20). Schmoll argues to similar effect (1987, 25).

21. And Stewart: "Even in the toy society of the Phaeacians, Odysseus finds it nearly impossible for himself to reconstitute the normal functioning bonds a man has with his, or any, society of fellow men. He is morally and socially arthritic if not paralytic" (1976, 63).

22. Bassett suggests, "The reward of the Odyssey completely satisfies the requirement of the theme. Resourcefulness, put to the test in countless different ways at home and abroad, on land and sea, demands an end of the ordeal: a green old age, amid a happy people, and a gentle death 'away from the sea', not fame - for he has already won this - but peace" (1938, 177).

23. Preisshofen makes a similar observation: "Nestor ist vom aktiv wirkenden, überall bestimmenden Greis zu einem alten Mann geworden, der sein Alter ruhig genießt" (1977, 42).

24. Falkner goes further: "His [Nestor's] punctilious religiosity and smothering hospitality seem ostentatious, and his rhetoric of the heroic past more like garrulity and self-aggrandizement. His continued dominance of his oikos may suggest that, like his extended service in the battlefield, he is reluctant to transfer his authority" (1989, 39). See Stewart (1976, 46) and Clay (1983, 184).

25. West (HWH, 160-1).

26. The apparent reluctance on Nestor's part to dredge up the past and the pointed relevance of everything he says, should invalidate the charges of garrulity which numerous commentators launch against the old man

- e.g. Stanford (1954, 253), Finley (1978, 144) and Falkner (1989, 39).

27. Falkner maintains, "The suitors at any rate espouse heroic values, and their delight in feasting, song, and athletic competition are within the context of normal heroic practices" (1989, 38). This may be true, but their heroic posturing becomes irrelevant in the face of Odysseus' attack.

28. "Allusions to personal achievements by any of the suitors in war or through travel are conspicuous by their absence. At the same time, the poet focusses relentlessly on their corrupt life-style, a daily routine consisting of a bit of sport... and a great deal of feasting and dancing" (Rose 1992, 199). Nash comments generally, "[The tales of the sons of those who sacked Priam's city] are tarnished in comparison to the brilliance of the Trojan struggle [e.g. Orestes murders his mother].... Their tales betray a general disorientation of the heroic role in the disillusionment of the post-Troy years. Even Telemachus' heroism... has its weird culmination in the hanging of the women servants" (1978, 3).

29. "Implicit in the statement [of Odysseus at 18.361ff.] is the social ideal that one should be both a good warrior and good at peasant tasks, perhaps a folk motif from the tradition of the 'little people as opposed to the ruling class'" (RFH, 70-71).

30. Fernandez-Galiano says of his speech that it "...combines toadying, flattery, a rapid calculation of practical cost, and the ill-natured calumny by which the dead Antinous is blamed for the greater part of the wrongs committed" (RFH, 228).

31. Fenik comments, "Appropriately, they [Eurymachus and Antinous] are the first two suitors to be slain and their deaths are painted in full, lurid colours" (1974, 198).

32. Moulton comments that, "This picture of a herd of cattle, which will eventually be slaughtered, may be more confidently related to the stark comparison used twice for the slaughter of Agamemnon, whose homecoming serves in the Odyssey as a repeated, thematic contrast to the homecoming of Odysseus" (1977, 141).

33. "The sheer exaggeration of his [Odysseus'] victory against such odds tells against our taking the battle with much seriousness. While a hero in the Iliad may be a match for three, four, or five ordinary men, the odds in this case - sixty or so to one - are comic in conception" (Stewart 1976, 101).

34. Allen notes quite correctly that, "Homer repeatedly asserts, by one means or another, that the suitors are wicked men who will come to no

good end, and especially through the agency of prophecy, he proceeds from vague foreshadowings to definite foretelling" (1949, 107). Whitman, on the other hand, contends that the slaughter of the suitors amounts to nothing more than a massacre perpetrated by a man possessed (1958, 305ff.). Segal, too, argues that "... the deed is hardly an heroic exploit on the Iliadic scale" (1983, 147-48).

35. As Magrath observes, the placing of this simile calls to mind the lion simile that is used of Polyphemus in Book 9, when the Cyclops embarks on the first of his cannibalistic feasts (1982, 209-10).

36. Moulton comments, "This image is the grim fulfillment of the humorous misconception of Nausikaa and her maids when they first see Odysseus naked on the shore in Scheria, and tremble as before a ravening lion" (1977, 140).

37. Both Heubeck (RFH, 417) and Dimock (1989, 335) feel that the thunderbolt is a reminder to Athena from Zeus to carry out the plan as agreed. Given Athena's address to the warring parties some lines before and her warning to Odysseus that Zeus will become angry with him if he does not desist, this interpretation seems unlikely. However that may be, Heubeck does state that Athena's efforts as a whole "...have brought about a state of affairs which she and Zeus had not considered: Odysseus is on the point of ruthlessly massacring his opponents" (RFH, 417).

38. "Far from being an observer of his own encounters, Odysseus becomes fully involved in each, his safety is generally threatened, and he must apply every mental and physical resource to extricate himself from the dangers" (Rose 1969, 398). See Heubeck (HH, 7-8).

39. Clarke argues, "He [Nestor] praises Odysseus for his good sense, tells how, out of piety and allegiance, Odysseus stayed behind at Troy with Agamemnon" (1967, 35).

40. Stanford comments of 3.138: "...it [the council] was hastily summoned at a late hour when the Greeks, being off duty, were fuddled with wine after their evening Meal" (1978, I 254). Perhaps the drunkenness of the Achaeans is instead intended to reflect the overindulgence of an army in the wake of victory - parallel to the great quantity of wine imbibed by Odysseus' companions after the initial rout of the Cicones (9.45).

41. Arguing against Aristophanes' and possibly Aristarchus' athetization of these lines, Heubeck comments, "...excision of the lines would leave Odysseus with only two lines, which could scarcely form the basis for such a long reply from Agamemnon" (HH, 101). In addition, Agamemnon phrases his response (11.407-8) just as though he had been

asked these very same questions by Odysseus. Why would he bother otherwise to explain how he did not die before providing the real reason for his premature demise?

42. "Wir befinden uns [in the episode of the Cicones] hier noch ganz in dem Umfeld der Ilias; wie die Achaier in dieser die Zeit der Belagerung von Troja mit der Plünderung von Inseln und kleinen Städten ausfüllten, so setzen sie diese Praxis auch nach der Zerstörung der ilischen Veste fort. Die Beute von Troja genügt ihnen nicht; sie sind unersättlich" (Reuchner 1989, 27).

43. "From Troy Odysseus and his companions sailed to Ismarus, land of the Cicones, in Thrace. Although this is out of the way for someone travelling from Troy to Ithaca, it is intelligible as an act of piracy for the purpose of gaining treasure and as an act of vengeance against allies of Troy" (Thornton 1970, 24). And see Heubeck (HH, 8).

44. Clarke's contention that, "Food is... the Lotus-Eaters' weapon against Odysseus and his men..." (1967, 15), suggests an air of intentional menace which this episode does not obviously contain. Heubeck's remarks are much closer to the mark. He speaks of Odysseus' "...acceptance of normal hospitality from a people who are in most respects entirely ordinary, and not in the least maligned. The offer of the lotus to their honoured guests is not intended to weave any magic spell. Indeed the very name 'Lotus-eaters' is itself intended as a link with the real world..." (1989, 18). And see Rousseaux (1971, 340).

45. For a discussion of the theme of the eternal feast, see Crane (1988, 40ff.).

46. For a discussion of the lotus as a fruit or a flower see Rousseaux (1971, 337ff.). For the identification of the lotus see Page (1973, 11) and Germain (1954, 221ff.).

47. "Ils [Odysseus' scouts] étaient donc sous l'emprise d'une force qui, sans leur ôter la mémoire de ce qu'ils étaient et auraient dû rester, les privait de la volonté de surmonter leur faiblesse" (Rousseaux 1971, 344). The effects of the lotus are probably more encompassing than this, to judge by the tears Odysseus' scouts are reduced to and the fact that the flower is eaten like an animal's fodder, as Rousseaux himself points out.

48. Germain, for example, argues, "...le lôtos ne parait exercer d'effet que sur les Achéens. Les indigènes en font leur nourriture habituelle et rien ne permet de supposer qu'ils en aient l'esprit ordinairement troublé" (1954, 225). Further on, however, he appears to assume that the Lotus-Eaters too fall into an oblivious state which the flower engenders (1954, 227).

49. "...[the consumers' of the lotus] desire... to live like vegetarian animals

and resist being brought back to the world of human hardships and responsibilities" (Taylor 1963, 88).

50. There would seem to be an echo in this episode of the common folktale motif of the food of the dead and its detaining effect on a living consumer (Page 1973, 15). "Homer takes the motif from folktale," Page concludes, "and transplants it into a quite different soil. He is, as usual, at pains to suppress, or at least to minimize, the unreal elements in the folktales from which he freely borrows" (1973, 20).

51. "Hätten Odysseus und seine Gefährten insgesamt vom Lotos gegessen, sie wären friedliche Bewohner dieser mythischen Welt geworden" (Reuchner 1989, 29).

52. "Lui [the participle ἐρεπτόμενοι] est par contre embarrassant à force de précision; car il se dit... des animaux et en particulier du bétail, qui broute un herbage, avec une nuance d'avidité; ce qui se dégagerait de la racine du mot, s'il faut le rapprocher du rapere latin" (Rousseaux 1971, 341).

53. The servant class are an exception to this rule of course.

54. "She [Calypso] offers Odysseus much more than the lotus can: not only an escape from physical suffering but lovely sexuality and eternal life as well.... Not only will the environment nurture him like an infant in the womb... but, unlike the infant, he will retain his identity as a male and be able to share the pleasures of sexual differentiation with the goddess" (Taylor 1963, 89-90).

55. We learn this, in fact, as early as the thirteenth line of the poem.

56. As Crane contends, "Ogygia was for Odysseus as much an island of the Blessed as Leuke was for Achilles..." (1988, 15). He goes on to observe, "When Odysseus turns aside the offer of immortality, he also turns aside from the path that any hero would have followed" (ibid.). Hainsworth agrees (HWH, 269), as does Anderson (1963, 79).

57. See, for example, Chapter 15 (Die Toteninsel) of his book Kalypso. Austin quite rightly observes however that, "Kalypso is a deity and her landscape has idyllic perfection, but her divinity means only that she has the human attributes in a more potent, idealized way" (1975, 150), and that her personality is, "...that of a sensitive and aesthetic human" (Ibid.). Delebecque agrees: "...Homère la [Calypso] gratifie d'un caractère de femme beaucoup plus que de déesse" (1980, 116).

58. See Crane (1988, 167ff.) for a detailed comparison.

59. Then there is Anderson's view: "In the case of Calypso's Isle, the immortality offered to Odysseus contains many suggestions not of eternal life, but of eternal death" (1963, 81). Clay concurs: "[Calypso] may offer Odysseus immortality, but for him it means death, as the many examples Calypso cites... demonstrate" (1983, 185). And so too Newton (1984, 11).

60. In sharp contrast with Hades which is "...a sterile and infertile realm without generation" (Vermeule 1979, 34).

61. As Frame observes (1978, 169). One also thinks of the very opposite reaction which the underworld is said to provoke from the Olympians in Book 20 of the Iliad: οἰκία [Hades] δὲ θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι φανείη/ σμερδαλέ' εὐρώεντα, τά τε στυγέουσι θεοί περ (20.64-65).

62. And Segal: "Perhaps as dangerous [as physical death] is the spiritual death or suspension which he undergoes on Calypso's island. Here his rational faculties are paralyzed; he is totally helpless until the gods interfere, at Athena's instigation" (1962, 44). See as well Murnaghan (1987, 100-1) and Dimock (1989, 63).

63. "Der sonnst so souveräne Odysseus in der Rolle des abhängigen Geliebten ist eine fast komische Vorstellung; diese Rolle paßt sicherlich nicht in sein patriarchialisches Weltbild hinein" (Reuchner 1989, 84). Heubeck also speculates that "... by linking her [Calypso] with a malign giant in the depths of the sea the poet effectively evokes a sense of incalculable menace" (HWH, 81).

64. As Stewart acknowledges (1976, 48). Hainsworth comments, "...all that life means to a hero, activity, struggle, achievement, has been taken from him [Odysseus] in exchange for eternal indolence and pleasure. We seem for a moment to confront the fallacy of Utopia..." (HWH, 269). He concludes, however, that Homer might not have seen Odysseus' predicament in this light, on the grounds that Ogygia would normally be infinitely appealing to any toiling mortal (ibid.). And yet perhaps it is his rejection of Utopia that separates Odysseus from the typical human being. "Calypso's mistake was to think that a man like Odysseus could ever be happy among the violets and vines of Ogygia" (Stanford 1954, 51).

65. "That little word ouketi conveys a world of meaning. We see Odysseus at the crucial moment; behind that lie seven years which have apparently only gradually produced this decisive state of mind.... We would not be wrong in assuming that the habit [of nightly cohabitation] implies an original mutual ardency" (Anderson 1963, 83). See Belmont (1962, 108) and Delebecque (1980, 105).

66. Woodhouse (1930, 51), Delebecque (1980, 113), Hainsworth (HWH, 260) and Heubeck (HWH, 81). Frame argues that Calypso is an invention of the epic tradition, but one modelled on the example of Styx (1978, 168).

67. "Man könnte vielleicht vermuten, daß Kalypso als Tochter des Atlas in dessen Umkreis wohnt, also da, wo dieser die Säule der Welt trägt" (Reuchner 1989, 82). Thornton, on the other hand, envisages Atlas as the sky pillar or cosmic mountain and Odysseus' encounter with Calypso as a shamanistic quest (1970, 29ff.).

68. "Quatre jours signifient quatre nuits encore, au terme desquelles Calypso baigne Ulysse et le revêt d'habits à la douce senteur. N'est-ce pas suggérer que ces quatre nuits suprêmes avant la séparation furent des nuits d'amour" (Delebecque 1980, 106).

69. Hainsworth, on the other hand, remarks, "The poet handles only one topic at a time, in accordance with the principle of archaic composition ...and is now about to pass on to the boat-building" (HWH, 273).

70. As Falkner argues, "... when the hero declines Calypso's offer to make him 'deathless and ageless' he also accepts old age, setting him off from the Achaean heroes for whom such a prospect is a matter of indifference" (1989, 50). And see Mariani (1967, 24).

71. "Aeaea is certainly modelled, in some fashion, after a νῆσος μακάρων" (Crane 1988, 34).

72. "At first sight Calypso and Circe seem to have much in common: ... But when Homer has developed the characterization of each and has painted in the details of their environment, a strong contrast emerges, a contrast between darkness and light, between prototypes of the femme fatale of sadistic romance and the gentle Solveig of Ibsen's Peer Gynt" (Stanford 1954, 46).

73. "If Calypso is related to Persephone, Ogygia to the underworld, and if Calypso is as a type difficult to distinguish from Circe, then a connection between Persephone and Circe becomes especially possible" (Crane 1988, 33). Germain, on the other hand, disagrees (1954, 274).

74. Whitman comments of this passage, "When one thinks of Odysseus' tenacity of purpose, it is well to remember that, in this one case, he had to be reminded by his companions that he was on his way home" (1958, 300).

75. Although one does not want to press Homer's chronology too strictly, Odysseus' discontent must have started at least as early as the fourth year after his arrival on Ogygia. Proteus has, after all, informed

Menelaus that Odysseus is miserably trapped on Calypso's isle (4.555ff.). This is the seventh year of Menelaus' travels, and therefore it is the fourth year of Odysseus' confinement on Ogygia.

76. Eisenberger makes a similar argument (1973, 160).

77. "L'amour éprouvé par Calypso est avant tout celui du corps" (Delebecque 1980, 117).

78. Pace Segal who stresses the sensual nature of Odysseus' sojourn on Aiaia (1968, 425; 1962, 40), and Finley, who, although he argues that there are differences between Circe and Calypso, views Circe's charm nonetheless as predominantly sexual (1978, 107). Reuchner argues in a more general vein that Circe's transformation of the men brings about their sexual dependence on her and concludes "Sie ist die Verkörperung der Natur in der Form weiblicher Sexualität..." (1989, 45).

79. "...Circe embodies in concentrated form the complex ambiguity of the Odyssean female. If not yet la belle dame sans merci, she is still never quite free of the awesome, non-human or even subhuman distance of a demonic power" (Segal 1968, 419). And see Stanford (1954, 46), Germain (1954, 272-73) and Heubeck (HH, 51).

80. "The remote forest surrounding Circe's house conveys her mystery and secrecy" (Finley 1978, 67). There is also Carpenter's argument, that the story of Odysseus is based on the 'Cult of the Sleeping Bear' which has its roots in a thickly forested, European setting. The dense forest on Circe's island is therefore a reflection of the Odyssey's non-Mediterranean origins (1946, 112ff. and see 144 in particular).

81. Austin comments, "The growth on her [Calypso's] island is luxuriant but not unbridled. All is symmetrical" (1975, 149).

82. Reinhardt comments, "...doch ist das Vorspiel [Odysseus' killing of the stag]... diesmal ein heroisches Idyll. Der Hirsch, der er zur Tränke geht, stürzt wie ein Held der Ilias..." (1960, 80). Schmoil, too, speaks of the passage's military language and even comments, "... Odysseus is not simply encountering a stag, he is pitted against a warrior in panoply of horn and hoof" (1987, 22).

83. Eisenberger observes, "Die Beschreibung der wunderfeinen Zurüstungen zur verlockenden Mahlzeit zielt darauf ab, daß Odysseus diese nicht... soll aber auch das kultivierte vornehme Milieu hervorheben" (1973, 158).

84. Calypso is, admittedly, described as doloessa, but the sole manifestation of her dolos is the various lies, small in themselves, which she tells

Hermes and Odysseus (see Delebecque 1980, 117). Even in her last supper scene with Odysseus, where as we have seen there is possibly a first reference to the binding effect that results when one has eaten food forbidden to one's species, Calypso does not 'pull a Hades' on her lover. See Vermeule (1979, 131).

85. Austin, on the other hand, argues that the parents of these two goddesses are "...an indication that both sun and sea play an equal role in this tale" (1975, 152).

86. "She [Calypso] actually wants to replace Penelope... as Circe never intends to do..." (Segal 1968, 424).

87. "...Circe's knowledge has no prophetic content but is purely visual knowledge, such as might suit a daughter of Helios" (Clay 1983, 153).

88. "Circe... seems to understand her man better than did Calypso" (Segal 1968, 424).

89. Delebecque comments of this passage, "S'il se montre ainsi sous des traits de séducteur, c'est peut-être parce qu'il à du plaisir a se faire valoir physiquement aux yeux de ses auditeurs..." (1980, 110).

90. Pace Stewart, who groundlessly concludes, "...Circe like Calypso promises Odysseus stoppage of time and the aging process if he should consent to remain with her" (1976, 53).

91. He goes on to say that, "...convalescence and sympathy do not appeal to the poet: only two lines describe the stay itself" (ibid.).

92. Eisenberger agrees: "Er [Odysseus] erinnert sie an ein Versprechen des Heimgeleits... das vorher nicht expressis verbis geäußert worden ist" (1973, 160). Perhaps this answers Page's complaint that Circe has made no such promise (1955, 29). Heubeck also argues that because Circe has formally recognized the Greeks as guest friends, she is obliged to facilitate their journey home (HH, 68).

93. Segal asks whether Circe's readiness to send Odysseus on his way does not betray, "...the keen, practical intelligence of a consistent and determined hedonist, quick to scent the end of a pleasurable affair" (1968, 424).

94. "Circe... embodies both the destructive and creative aspects of the feminine, and Odysseus profits from the latter. It is scarcely surprising that he finds her exotic knowledge and complex sexuality more interesting than Calypso's ease" (Taylor 1963, 91).

95. Scheria is the paradigm of the ideal community, in which human craftsmanship is united with natural advantages. Tebben speaks of the Phaeacians as, "...an ideal state blessed with some qualities of a golden age" (1991, 36 n.21). See Reuchner (1989, 99) and Mariani (1967, 153).

96. "Presque termes pour termes [7.118 and 4.567], le texte reproduit ici l'indication du climat miraculeux réservé aux Bienheureux, selon la prophetie de Protée a Ménélas..." (Germain 1954, 296-97).

97. Germain argues, somewhat strangely, that Scheria may well be on the mainland (1954, 291).

98. Segal argues at length that Scheria is a stepping-stone from one world to the next (1962, 22 et al.). Rutherford concurs (1986, 154-55).

99. Although both Taylor (1963, 92) and Mariani (1967, 58) feel that Odysseus, in his opening address to Nausicaa, wishes the maiden to think of him as a potential 'catch'.

100. "...für die Griechen bewährt sich die Person, indem sie vom Auszug in die Fremde Beute oder Geschenke mitbringt. Erfolglosigkeit reduziert den Wert der Person, mindert ihren Anspruch auf gesellschaftliche Anerkennung" (Reuchner 1989, 106). And see Dimock (1989, 156).

101. "...the utopian setting of Phaeacian life tends to vitiate the need for heroism" (Taylor 1963, 92). "It is hard to see how the Phaeacians belong to the Heroic Age despite the superficial resemblance of their society to those of Ithaca, Pylos, and Sparta. For there is no stress, no challenge in their lives" (Clarke 1967, 53-54). And see Stewart (1976, 67).

102. Although Rose (1969, 203) and Dimock see something comic in the simile of the lion here, the latter does comment "...this confrontation is the beginning of the major conflict of the Phaeacian episode. There is something basically incompatible between Odysseus' world and Nausicaa's..." (1989, 77). And Mariani: "With its ferocity, its terror, its faint sexual overtones, the simile seems excessive, at most only superficially and momentarily applicable.... Yet there is a sense in which the simile is imagistically true of Odysseus in Scheria" (1967, 42).

103. "Odysseus and the woman in the simile (8.523ff.), because they have actually experienced a city's fall, both know something that the Phaeacians with their essentially playful and aesthetic approach to life will never know..." (Dimock 1989, 104). See Segal (1962, 27) and Reuchner (1989, 102) for similar views. Moulton argues, "The more generalized tableau of the comparison, of a woman grieving for a lost husband and subjected to indignity, accords with Penelope herself. Thus, the simile for Odysseus in Scheria indirectly brings to mind Penelope on

Ithaca, all but convinced that her husband has perished" (1977, 131).

104. The Phaeacians crouch to the ground when Odysseus throws his discus (8.190ff.). Dickie comments of them, "Their conduct... in crouching on the ground while the discus is in the air betrays a distinct hint of unmanliness which the poet plays up by grandiloquently referring to them as they cower as 'men of the long oars, famed for their ships'" (1983, 251). And see Whitman (1958, 289).

105. Of Odysseus' acknowledgment that he might well meet his match in a running race (8.230ff.), Dickie comments, "His concession is, however, double-edged, since running is the least war-like of all the events of the games" (1983, 252).

106. Dickie, too observes, "But the next three practices that are dear to the Phaeacians, change of clothing, warm baths, and beds mark them out as a people whose devotion to the pleasures of a peaceful existence has descended into a life of self-indulgence and luxury,... a way of life that to the Greek mind is diametrically opposed to the exertion (πόνος) and endurance (καρτερία) of those who are committed to the pursuit of ἀρετή and κλέος" (1983, 257). See also Collins for her remarks on the effeminate connotations of dance (1988, 38) and Clay (1983, 130).

107. "...to imagine a starry-eyed Odysseus wandering blissfully hand in hand on the Phaeacian shore with his young bride Nausicaa happily ever after - belongs to the world of Peter Pan, not of Homer or Goethe" (Stanford 1954, 54-55). And see Murnaghan (1987, 101) and Reuchner (1989, 107).

108. "Odysseus can no more exist in the dream-world of Alcinous and Arete, where woman rules man and rowing is no trouble, than he can with Calypso" (Dimock 1989, 66).

109. Hainsworth declares that the wider function of the Phaikis is "...to confront the peace of Scheria with the disorder of Ithaca during the absence of Odysseus" (HWH, 291). And see Rutherford (1985, 140ff.) for his description of the ways in which Phaeacia prepares for and prefigures Ithaca.

110. "It is important that Odysseus becomes his own bard [when he recounts his adventures to the Phaeacians], for he will return to a world in which heroism as he knew it will exist, as it did for the Phaeacians, only in the sweet, far away strains of poetry or in the reveries of his returned comrades" (Schmoll 1987, 26).

111. "The orchard of Laertes resonates richly in comparison and contrast with the lush orchard of Alcinous..." (Falkner 1989, 45).

112. Clarke, too, observes of Teiresias' prophecy, "One thing is certain: Odysseus is not home to stay, at least not for the present. He has done his work on Ithaca and now he must set out again" (1967, 61). Katz agrees (1991, 187).

113. "Concealment is of course necessary if Odysseus is to survive in the face of so many enemies as Athena tells him..." (Kearns 1982, 2). Dimock adds, "[Odysseus' disguise] enables the suitors to reenact their crimes against Odysseus even as his revenge takes shape, thus making the justice more poetic when it comes..." (1989, 216). Murnaghan argues generally that, "Odysseus' affinity to disguise is related to the capacity for endurance that is expressed in his characteristic epithet, 'πολύτλας', 'much-enduring'. It represents the ability to endure a suspension of recognition - both in the sense of recognition of achievement and status - that other Homeric heroes are unable to tolerate" (1987, 5).

114. Rutherford, following in Page's footsteps, argues, "The beggar's resemblance to Odysseus raises the question whether we are to suppose that he has been magically transformed or only changed by time and disguised" (1992, 180).

115. Heubeck agrees (RFH, 328). And see Murnaghan (1987, 15).

116. Murnaghan writes, "Odysseus conceals himself from the suitors by a disguise that mimics what the normal effects of the past twenty years could be expected to be" (1987, 15). Murnaghan is, however, underestimating perhaps the apparent age of the beggar. In all likelihood he appears to be considerably older than the real Odysseus.

117. "The beggar's disguise which Athena has given him is on the surface a practical device for reconnoitering and strategy, but it is only symbolic of a condition of the self. The beggar presents the image of humanity fallen, entitled by custom and religion to pity, but little more..." (Whitman 1958, 301).

118. De Jong feels the digression of the scar represents a mental 'flashback' on Eurycleia's part (1985, 518), and if this is the case we perhaps have further justification for arguing that the nurse identifies the beggar because she comes to see him in a heroic perspective, and not merely because the scar, regardless of its implications, is a tell-tale token.

119. "...just as true and false stories are generated by the same social pressures and are required to meet the same criteria of excellence, so, in the Odyssey, true and false stories share thematic material and presentation" (Emlyn-Jones 1986, 4). Murnaghan argues to similar effect (1987, 166).

120. "...Odysseus' lies consistently bear a close resemblance to his real

experience..." (Fenik 1974, 37 n.42). Segal agrees (1962, 24).

121. Fenik, too, notes the similarity between the two passages, but he argues, "...neither [incident] gains significance by the repetition. Their relationship is purely formal. Even the pattern itself has no particular importance in the sense of being connected with incidents of larger import for the story of the hero's return. It is nothing more than a convenient narrative tool" (1974, 157).

122. Emlyn-Jones discusses this difference (1986, 6).

123. This is Williams' observation (1972, 75ff.).

124. Odysseus' relation to Teiresias recalls that of Menelaus' to Proteus (Clay 1983, 151).

125. Haft makes a similar observation (1984, 300).

126. West remarks in passing that a voluntary submission to delay would be "...out of keeping with the way in which Odysseus is generally presented. Menelaus may indulge in travel for its own sake, but (apart from his year's dalliance with Circe) Odysseus' heart is set on his return to Ithaca and Penelope" (1984, 172). The examples cited above show that this is simply not the case.

127. Reuchner argues much the same (1989, 57).

128. "Man spürt den männlichen Egoismus, die Sorge um die gesellschaftliche Position zuhause" (Reuchner 1989, 57).

129. Of the encounter in general, Stanford comments, "Here Homer presents a typical scene in life - the devoted mother and the busy, rather self-centered, but not entirely inconsiderate or unaffectionate, son..." (1954, 62).

130. This is Dimock's contention (1989, 151). Stanford, on the other hand, argues that there is "...perhaps a touch of bitterness in Anticleia's repetition of her son's cool words in 172-3" (1978, I 388).

131. "...within the roles Odysseus plays, he is always playing himself. We know him as well in an assumed persona as in propria persona, among other reasons because he tends to choose roles which prompt part of the truth about himself" (Mariani 1967, 171).

132. Reuchner raises the possibility, moreover, that Odysseus, as a plundering soldier, is contrasting himself adversely with the industrious, peace-loving Eumaeus. This line of interpretation is

immediately rejected. On the other hand, the punishment by Zeus of the duplicitous Phoenician may well possibly mean "...daß Seehandel und Piraterie nicht als legitime Form des Eigentumserwerbs gesehen werden" (1989, 126).

133. It is possible, too, that Odysseus is communicating to Eumaeus the fact that he is a "...man whom no one would want or could afford to ignore" (Walcot 1992, 57), and further more that he is "...no professional beggar but someone very much down on his luck" (ibid.).

134. Stanford comments of 14.222-26: "...these lines are typical of the adventurous, undomesticated, Greek heroic temperament..." (1978, II 225).

135. "...his disguises and lies, though fully in accord with his character and Autolycan heritage, perhaps reflect also a residual reluctance to meet reality, an attempt to evade it by concealment of his identity until bit by bit the reality can be tested and his true self revealed to it in the gradual process of recovering his entire human environment" (Segal 1962, 39).

136. "His [Odysseus'] household is invaded by enemies who, for all Odysseus knows, may have won over most of the members of his household to their side. It is for this reason that Odysseus, coming in disguise, tests everyone in the household for their loyalty..." (Thornton 1970, 91).

137. "After first meeting Eumaeus, the humblest and remotest of his subjects, Odysseus reveals himself successively to his son, his nursemaid, and his wife, on an ascending scale of family intimacy; finally he is reunited with his father, though when he has inherited his kingship" (Clarke 1967, 73).

138. "This rediscovery [of the familiar] is nothing less than his recreation of his entire mortal life, the whole range of his human ties. As he discover these, he recreates himself" (Segal 1962, 46). See Whitman (1958, 301), Mariani (1967, 212) and Haft (1984, 300).

139. As Clay observes, "It is one of the cruces of Homeric scholarship that, despite Circe's words [10.538ff.] and our reasonable expectations, Teiresias does not give Odysseus instructions on how to get back to Ithaca" (1983, 152).

140. Nagler comments, "To reveal Odysseus' whole identity then, including his generic identity, and to do so not only for the benefit of the hero's audience but for the poet's audience, for us, is the function of the Apologue as a whole, with the nekyia as its centerpiece and the words of Teiresias its climax" (1980, 91). Fenik's observation is similar: "Teiresias views Odysseus' fate as a whole.... His words focus on Odysseus' identity

in its most general and important sense" (1974, 121).

141. Thornton is presumably arguing along the same lines when she baldly observes that, in contrast to every other member of his household, Odysseus does not doubt the loyalty of his son, "Although he recognizes his weakness" (1970, 91).

142. Katz agrees with Murnaghan, for example, but qualifies her argument: "...consanguinity in the Odyssey functions as the basis for establishing the relationship between Telemachus and Odysseus, rather than its constitutive feature. Its actuality, by contrast, is constituted as such through the narrative action of Books 16-24" (1991, 174).

143. Stanford raises the question, "...why [are there] no nostalgic references [on Odysseus' part] to Telemachus earlier in the poem" (1965, 9)? Part of his explanation is that, "Ethically... Telemachus was virtually an unknown personality to Odysseus until they met again, unlike Penelope and Laertes" (ibid.).

144. As Stewart observes (1976, 95).

145. Rose does, admittedly, anticipate this criticism: "Philoetius functions... as a mere image not so much for Eumaeus' entire role with all the development that entails, but largely for his inner condition at the end of that development" (1980, 294).

146. As Rose points out (1980, 286 n.2).

147. This recognition scene occurs where it does as a means of bringing, "...the hero to the brink of discovery and to leaven the melancholy bitter emotions of Odysseus' first meeting with his wife with the suspense and danger of near recognition" (Fenik 1974, 44). Woodhouse argues along the same lines (1930, 223).

148. Harsh does speculate that, "...we find strong reasons for assuming that Penelope ... suspects the identity of the stranger in her first long interview with him [in Book 19]" (1950, 6). Austin speaks somewhat less definitively of Odysseus and Penelope "...discovering each other's phase" (1975, 225) and goes on to argue that "Penelope invokes an epiphany [of her husband], but just at the flashpoint averts her eyes, unable to endure what she must inevitably see next" (1975, 227). In response to such views and others, Rutherford writes, very sensibly in our estimate, "We need... no subconscious recognitions to make the scene between Odysseus and Penelope moving and significant.... It remains true that there is a strong bond of affinity between them.... But always and consistently there is a final step, the step of recognition, which Penelope does not take..." (1992, 35). Emlyn-Jones argues to

similar effect (1984, 3ff.).

149. For a discussion of this passage and a summary of other commentators views on it, see Katz (1991, 56ff.).

150. Russo, for example, comments, "...we may fairly infer that her [Penelope's] unconscious mind is considerably less hostile to the Suitors than her often voiced conscious attitude" (1982, 9). Rankin goes further: "The dream then is a conclusive piece of self-revelation. Penelope herself reveals that her desire to keep the suitors is stronger than her longing for Odysseus' return" (1962, 622).

151. "Why does Odysseus approach his own wife Penelope like a potential enemy and traitor? The background to this is what happened to Agamemnon at the hands of Clytemnestra" (Thornton 1970, 91). See also Beye (1966, 97), Murnaghan (1987, 121) and Katz (1991, 58).

152. "The context here can only suggest betrayal by Penelope, although editors and commentators have attempted to palliate the obvious force of the implied comparison between Penelope and Clytemnestra" (1991, 56-57). And Olson: "...there are other disquieting suggestions made throughout 19 and 20, particularly in the queen's account of her dream of her beloved geese slaughtered by the eagle/husband... that Penelope is to be seen in part as a shadowy and untrustworthy character" (1989, 392).

153. Van Nortwick argues more generally of Penelope that, "The preoccupation with marriage as a social (and political) necessity is accompanied by an unconscious resurgence of interest in men, which triggers the impulse to arouse the suitors [in Book 18]" (1979, 274).

154. Rutherford argues along the same lines: "Penelope grieves while she thinks the dead geese are themselves, but says nothing of any distress after the eagle explains what their death symbolizes..." (1992, 194-95). Having reviewed the different interpretations of the dream, Katz for her part concludes, "The trope of the dream... fills the narrative function of allowing the expectation of Odysseus' return to be displaced from the surface of the narrative and consigned to the realm of unreality" (1991, 147).

155. Although, as we have seen, Olson also feels the dream in Book 19 casts Penelope in a suspicious light (see note 147).

156. Emlyn-Jones argues that, "Homer's purpose was not only to exploit the dramatic possibilities inherent in a major extension of the recognition sequence but also to give himself time to establish the recognition of Penelope and Odysseus as the other, and perhaps equally important, climax of the Odyssey" (1984, 14). With respect to the first point, Homer

does indeed use the irony inherent in Odysseus' disguise to great effect, but this in itself does not explain, as far as the poem's plot is concerned, Odysseus' reluctance to admit his wife into his confidence.

157. Heubeck comments of this passage, "...both here and at vi 229-35 Athena adds a touch of beauty or distinction (κάλλος or χάρις) to Odysseus' head and shoulders - an action which appears in xxiii to imply also removal of the most obvious signs of old age..." (RFH, 32).

158. (1987, 61). In particular, Roisman refutes Marquardt's contention (1985, 43) that Penelope is here alluding to the suitors because she fears Odysseus may suspect that she has behaved with them in a fashion similar to Helen's reaction to Paris.

159. Pace Thornton who argues, "It is her loyalty that keeps Penelope at a distance from Odysseus until his identity is unmistakeably proved" (1970, 105). Eisenberger, too, disagrees (1973, 304).

160. "Penelope's words οἷος ἔησθα in 175 suggest that she may actually know who he is at this point..." (Roisman 1987, 63 n.10). See Harsh (1950, 5) and Rankin (1962, 624) for a similar view. Erbse, on the other hand, following Schadewaldt, finds the second person singular here unsuitable: "Der Satz μάλα δ'εὖ οἶδ' οἷος ἔησθα hat nur Sinn, wenn der Angeredete als Gatte Penelopes kenntlich ist, wenn sie ihre anfänglichen Bedenken zerstreut hat und ihn aus echter Überzeugung mit 'Du' auszusprechen vermag. Irgendetwas muß noch geschehen, damit das möglich wird" (1972, 59).

161. Stanford is more uncertain on this point: "...it is not easy to decide whether Homer is simply referring to the fact already well-known to the audience that the stranger is O., or wishes to imply that Penelope despite her recent doubts has inwardly decided that the avenger must be her husband after all" (1978, II 394).

162. As Mariani comments, "In the very process of calmly postponing the issue of his identification for the moment, Odysseus is of course -- consciously or not -- revealing himself. In his calm stock-taking of the danger of their position, the flattery of inviting his son to form a plan with him, the resourceful ruse of the wedding celebration, he is playing Odysseus to the watching Penelope" (1967, 151).

163. Stewart argues, "What sort of test is it [the bed] really? Does she need to test his identity, by having him declare a piece of evidence that only she and Odysseus know? That seems unlikely since Eurycleia has offered the scar as evidence, since he has been able to bend the bow, and since he acts so fully at home once the battle is over. If Penelope is testing Odysseus for something here, I think it is not for redundant evidence of

his minimal and technical identity, but for the plausible evidence of his humanity" (1976, 138).

164. "...this scene is a test of Penelope, self-imposed, in order to recreate her role as wife. For she too must show him that she will have only the man who knows the nature of the steadfast bed" (Whitman 1958, 304). Murnaghan argues much the same (1987, 116). Then there is Katz' contention, "...she [Penelope] extends recognition to him, not so much because he has revealed his identity, but because through his narrative [of the bed's construction] he has instantiated it" (1991, 178).

165. Having argued that the bed, being rooted in the ground, "...is consecrated to the stability and union of marriage," Clarke concludes, "It also symbolizes Odysseus' emancipation from the adventures of Books V to XII, from his random affairs with the likes of Circe and Calypso, and his conquest of the temptations of the Lotus-Eaters and the Sirens" (1967, 78).

166. Stewart comments of Penelope's reference to 'rocks and oaks' in Book 19 that, "One may still debate at this point whether Penelope suspects the stranger for who he is, but we can at least see that her words are in fact a proper account of his unfeeling treatment of her, whether or not she knows that just yet" (1976, 108).

167. Dimock comments appositely, but with some exaggeration, of Penelope, "...Troy is to her not a great... exploit, but something he [Odysseus] merely 'went to sea' and for this she cannot forgive him" (1989, 70).

168. Rankin, on the other hand, speculates that when Penelope expresses a longing for her husband, it is in fact the young Odysseus she is yearning for (1962, 623). The implication of οἷος ἔησθα, then, is that "...Odysseus has changed too much from the cherished image of twenty years" (1962, 624). If one accepts this argument, however, it is difficult to understand why Odysseus' knowledge of his bed's semata would induce his wife into accepting him as her proper husband.

169. "When Penelope proposes that Odysseus' bed should be placed ἐκτὸς ἐϋσταθέος θαλάμου she is seemingly not only denying him her bed, but relegating him to the periphery of the house in a way that would contradict his successful return and repossession of it" (Murnaghan 1987, 115 n.30). Line 23.178 is problematic - see Heubeck (RFH, 332) and Sullivan (1984, 21ff.) - but the general sense is clear enough. Our argument is left unaffected.

170. Recognizing that the simile transfers Odysseus' experience to Penelope, Foley comments that it equates, "...Penelope with a figure like Odysseus himself, as he has been and will be" (1978, 7).

171. This interpretation does not invalidate Clarke's contention, that the simile shows Odysseus to be, "...the solid earth of stability, the incarnation of victory over disordering nature and the guarantor of personal security and social prosperity" (1967, 9).

172. Moulton argues to similar effect: "...the poet has arranged the simile's details to emphasize Odysseus' joy at survival, as well as Penelope's joy after her long ordeal of waiting on Ithaka. At the moment of their reconciliation, the reward for the endurance of each, the image telescopes their elation in each other" (1977, 129-30).

173. "In the middle of a highly emotional scene, Odysseus abruptly breaks the atmosphere of joy by mentioning, albeit in general terms until pressed, the πόνος foretold by Tiresias" (RFH, 340-41).

174. Falkner, on the other hand, observes of this passage, "The hero is clearly preoccupied with the suffering in store for him, as if only now appreciating the weight of the prophecy he had received without comment or complaint, and not wishing to dampen Penelope's joy only reluctantly tells her of the inland journey and the destiny revealed by Teiresias" (1989, 50). If Odysseus does not wish to dampen Penelope's joy, why does he mention the prophecy to begin with? Rutherford, for his part, states baldly, "Even in this supreme moment of happiness, he does not spare her, and she does not asked to be spared, the truth about the future" (1985, 144).

175. For views of a similar nature see Stanford (1954, 60), Beye (1966, 180), Clarke (1967, 25), Stewart (1976, 94) and Walcot (1992, 61), among others.

176. Conceding that Odysseus' treatment of Laertes is gratuitously mean, Wender goes on to suggest, in a vein similar to Rutherford's, that "...such behaviour is utterly characteristic of Odysseus as he has been presented throughout the epic.... Odysseus is not the 'ordinary' spontaneous, affectionate man; he lies instinctively and he waits instinctively" (1978, 56-7). Such a view is true in part - one must not underestimate Odysseus' Autolycan characteristics - but unfortunately begs the question in part.

177. Heubeck agrees: "By posing questions, awaking memories, and stirring long-suppressed feelings, Odysseus forces his father not only to answer the questions put, but to ask questions in return, and so, step by step, to emerge from his self-inflicted isolation and apathy" (RFH, 390).

178. Whitman observes, "...it is by no means tactless of the poet to have saved Laertes till last... for recognition by one's father is, in a way, the final legitimation which establishes a man in his world" (1958, 296).

Clarke agrees: "It is his father and his land that give Odysseus status and substance in heroic society, and these are his overt reasons for wanting to return home" (1967, 77-78). And see Redfield (1975, 111) and Murnaghan (1987, 32).

179. Murnaghan, on the other hand, argues, "While Laertes may have been the source of Odysseus' power in the past, and Telemachus may represent the greatest prospect of its continuation in the future, Penelope is the figure on whom the recovery of his power to assert it in the present most depends. In the middle of his life, Odysseus is most decisively defined by his role as her husband" (1987, 42-43). Compare Halverson's remarks: "It is evident that Penelope in fact has no mysterious power to choose the next king. Neither the poet nor the characters attribute any such power to her, and there is no reason to think that it exists" (1986, 122). And then there is Stanford's judicious conclusion, "...if we view Penelope's status in the perspective of the other nostalgic references in the Odyssey we can hardly consider her the all-important object of his strivings to reach home. Odysseus' native land, his home, his material possessions, his father, and his son are all significant parts of his full τέλος νόστοιο" (1965, 12).

180. The influence of fathers on sons appears in three passages at least: i) τὸν δὲ μνηστῆρες ἀγαυοὶ/ οἴκαδ' ἰόντα λοχῶσιν, ὅπως ἀπὸ φῦλον ὄληται/ νώνυμον ἐξ Ἰθάκης Ἀρκεισίου ἀντιθέοιο (14.180-82). ii) ὑμετέρου δ'οὐκ ἔστι γένεος βασιλεύτερον ἄλλο/ ἐν δήμῳ Ἰθάκης, ἀλλ' ὑμεῖς καρτεροὶ αἰεί (15.533-34). iii) ὧδε γὰρ ἡμετέρην γενεὴν μούνωσε Κρονίων·/ μοῦνον Λαέρτην Ἀρκείσιος υἱὸν ἔτικτε,/ μοῦνον δ'αὖτ' Ὀδυσῆα πατὴρ τέκεν· αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς/ μοῦνον ἔμ' ἐν μεγάροισι τεκὼν λίπεν οὐδ' ἀπόνητο (16.117-20).

181. "He [Odysseus] names the trees which his father gave him as a child, thus in a way declaring his patrimony, his knowledge of the land, and his right to it. He recreates, by continuity with the past and with the land, his role as the rightful and legitimate heir. And with this recognition, Odysseus has, in a sense, restored his selfhood completely" (Whitman 1958, 304-5). For similar remarks see Falkner (1989, 44) Wender (1978, 60-62) and Moulton (1974, 164).

182. Rose looks briefly at all the occurrences of κερτομέω and its cognates in the Odyssey. Having concluded that in nine of these the word marks some kind of derision, he observes that at 24.240 "Teasing rather than hostile derision is involved" (1969, 391). Thornton writes, "It is wrong to translate certomiois as 'teasing' or 'bantering', because these words do not exclude friendliness or affection... in each case the speech either provokes anger or may provoke anger. We must not be tempted into toning down what seems to us heartless and cruel" (1970, 116). De Vries disagrees and, contradicting Rose in particular, claims that there is no suggestion of hostility at 24.240 (1977, 115). Mariani for her part observes

that the term "is often applied to the contemptuously amused or furious insults and coarse abuse flung at Odysseus by the suitors.... Possibly its use in the scene between father and son glances at Odysseus subjective sense of remorse at the pain he causes, and draws on his own experience as a ragged beggar at the mercy of the suitors' jeering" (1967, 214-15). Macleod suggests that the word refers at 24.240 (and 13.326) to "deception and not mockery" (1982, 142).

183. "Certain things are clear: it is not his own hostility that causes Odysseus' decision [to test Laertes], for he is full of pity for his father..." (Dimock 1989, 327).

184. See Chapter 3, note 3.

185. "...Eumaios' carefully structured organization of the livestock offsets, to some degree, the disintegration of his two masters, the young master who sits day-dreaming in the palace and the old master out on the estate, drifting in surrender to the elements" (Austin 1975, 168).

186. Edwards speaks of Laertes' misery and unworthy way of life (1993, 63), and adds, "This grim picture [of Laertes dressed in tatters and toiling away in the garden] conveys none of the charm of Eumaeus' existence, but only an image of harsh toil and hopelessness" (ibid.). He observes, moreover, of Odysseus' comment to Eumaeus ζώεις δ'ἀγαθὸν βίον (15.491) that "Taken in character, the beggar may well envy the relative prosperity of Eumaeus, but viewed through the irony of Odysseus' disguise, this praise assumes a patronizing, self-serving ring. This is hardly the life which Odysseus in fact envisions for himself or Telemachus..." (1993, 64).

187. Taplin observes that the life and status of the lord presiding joyfully over his temenos at harvest-time in the simile at Il. 18.556ff. serves as something of a model for the position Odysseus hopes to win back once he has achieved his nostos (1980, 8). Needless to say, this lord stands at his ease as his servants toil industriously about him.

CONCLUSION

The immediate focus of the Iliad and Odyssey, the former in particular, is so exciting and dramatic that it is easy to underestimate or neglect the impact of the subtler roles which Homer has assigned to his poem's older population. The wrath of Achilles and its tragic consequences or Odysseus' travels and exaction of revenge attract an audience's attention far more readily than the exertions of a Nestor or the lonely grief of an abandoned Laertes. And yet Homer does devote a great deal of attention to his older characters, and this fact suggests that an examination of their condition and conduct might contribute significantly to our understanding of the poems' movement and meaning. It has been the object of this thesis, then, to ascertain Homer's evaluation of old age and to examine, if only partially, the thematic relevance of old age to the narrative of the poems as a whole.

We have seen that some commentators feel, as far as the Iliad is concerned at least, that the elderly stand on the periphery of the Homeric world and, virtually despised by the younger generations, have little or no bearing on their immediate environment. It is true that in a climate of war the elderly cannot distinguish themselves as obviously as a young man can and their dependency on their children is graphically exposed. There is, in other words, an undeniably piteous dimension to the Homeric senior. This unhappy aspect of old age, however, is purely circumstantial. Homer's treatment of the elderly reveals that it is war and war alone that renders them pathetic and not any quality inherent in geras itself. Indeed, far from suffering out and out neglect, the elderly are often seen wielding tremendous influence over their juniors through their wisdom,

objectivity or the inspiring model of their own former brilliance. In this regard Nestor is most conspicuous. His effect on Achaean policy, from the withdrawal of Achilles until his return, is remarkably impressive. He is responsible for the construction of the ditch and wall (Book 7), the embassy to Achilles (Book 9), the night excursion (Book 10), and Patroclus' sortie (Book 11). He often dominates the Achaean assemblies as well. Once one has studied his performance closely, one cannot possibly discount the value which the Homeric warrior would set upon effective counsel. And it is a contribution of this sort which the elderly alone are capable of making.

The desirability of attaining a ripe old age becomes even more apparent as we move from the war-tossed world of the Iliad to the more domestic settings of the Odyssey. Apart from the odd parent who has lost his sons to the Trojan campaign, the old go about their business leisurely, full participants still in the daily life of their societies and pre-eminent by reason of the virtues peculiar to their age. Senescence marks a stage of life which, its physical debilitation notwithstanding, Homeric man anticipates and embraces gladly. Odysseus, it is true, is something of an exception to this rule. Although Homer does often insist that this hero strives single-mindedly to achieve his nostos, he creates the impression simultaneously that Odysseus' polytropic character is in many respects incompatible with the quiet domesticity which prevails in a society at peace. His curiosity and enterprise cause him to digress on several occasions when he is journeying home, and his inborn restlessness - in conjunction with a genuine desire to return to Ithaca of course - forces him to abandon any port-of-call that proves too humdrum and predictable. This disinclination on Odysseus' part to join the ranks of the elderly, however, by no means compromises the general status of the Odyssey's older population. For this reason the poem's audience, though informed that Odysseus must continue to wander even after the suitors have been dispatched, is reassured by the prospect that eventually this hero too, in spite of

his mercuriality, will be rewarded for his labours with the comforts of a sleek old age.

Abbreviations

HWH = Heubeck, West, Hainsworth

HH = Heubeck, Hoekstra

RFH = Russo, Fernandez-Galiano, Heubeck

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrahamson, E. 'The Adventures of Odysseus,' CJ 51 (1956), 313- 16.

Ahl, F. 'The Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome,' AJPh 105 (1984), 174-75.

Allen, W. 'The Theme of the Suitors in the Odyssey,' TAPhA 70 (1949), 104-24.

Amory, A. 'The Reunion of Odysseus and Penelope.' In Essays on the "Odyssey", C.H. Taylor ed. Bloomington: 1963. 100-21.

Amory, A. 'The Gates of Horn and Ivory,' YClS 20 (1966), 1-57.

Andersen O. 'Odysseus and the Wooden Horse,' SO 52 (1977), 5-18.

Anderson, W.A. Anderson, 'Calypso and Elysium,' in Essays on the "Odyssey", C.H. Taylor ed. Bloomington: 1963. 73-86.

Andrewes, A. 'Phratries in Homer,' Hermes 89 (1961), 129-141.

Arieti, J. 'Achilles' Inquiry about Machaon: The Critical Moment in the Iliad,' CJ 79 (1984), 125-30.

Arieti, J. 'Achilles' Alienation in Iliad 9,' CJ 82 (1986), 1-27.

Arieti, J. 'Achilles' Guilt," CJ 80 (1985), 193-203.

Arieti, J. 'Homer's Litae and Ate,' CJ 84 (1988), 1-12.

Armstrong, J. 'The Marriage Song - Odyssey 23,' TAPhA 89 (1958), 38-43.

Arnold, M. 'On Translating Homer,' in The Selected Prose of Matthew Arnold, London, 1982.

P

Auerbach, E. 'Odysseus' Scar,' in Homer ed. G. Steiner and R. Fagles. New York: 1962.

Austin, N. 'The Function of Digressions in the Iliad,' GRBS 7 (1966), 295-312.

Austin, N. 'Telemachus Polymechanos,' CSCA 2 (1969), 45-63.

Austin, N. 'Name Magic in the Odyssey,' CSCA 5 (1972), 1-19.

Austin, N. Archery at the Dark Side of the Moon, Berkeley: 1975

Austin, N. 'Odysseus Polytropos: Man of Many Minds,' Arche 6 (1981), 40-51.

Bassett, S. 'The Suitors of Penelope,' TAPhA 49 (1918), 41-52.

Bassett, S. 'The Second Necyia,' CJ 13 (1918), 521-26.

Bassett, S. 'The Second Necyia Again,' AJPh 44 (1923), 44-52.

Bassett, S. 'The Fate of the Phaeacians,' CPh 28 (1933), 305-7.

Bassett, S.E. The Poetry of Homer, Berkeley: 1938.

Beck, G. 'Beobachtungen zur Kirke-Episode in der Odyssee,' Philologus 109 (1965), 1-29.

Belmont, D. Early Greek Guest-Friendship and its Role in Homer's "Odyssey", Ph.D Dissertation, Princeton: 1962.

Belmont, D. 'Telemachus and Nausicaa: A Study of Youth,' CJ 63 (1967), 1-9.

Bernardete, S. 'Achilles and the Iliad,' Hermes 91 (1963), 1-16.

Bernadete, S. 'The Aristeia of Diomedes and the Plot of the Iliad,' Agon 2 (1968), 10-38.

Bertman, S. 'Structural Symmetry at the End of the Odyssey,' GRBS 9 (1968), 115-23.

Beye, C.R. The "Iliad", the "Odyssey" and the Epic Tradition, Garden City: 1966.

Beye, C.R. 'Male and Female in the Homeric Poems,' Ramus 3 (1974), 87-101.

Block, E. 'Clothing Makes the Man: A Pattern in the Odyssey,' TAPhA 115 (1985), 1-11.

Bowra, M. Tradition and Design in the Iliad, Oxford: 1930.

Braswell, B. 'Mythological Innovation in the Iliad,' CQ 21 (1971) 16-ff.

Braswell, B. 'The Song of Ares and Aphrodite: Theme and Relevance to

Odyssey 8,' Hermes 110 (1982), 129-37.

Brenk, F. 'Dear Child: The Speech of Phoinix and the Tragedy of Achilleus in the Ninth Book of the Iliad,' Eranos 84 (1986), 77-86.

Byl, S. 'Lamentations sur la vieillesse chez Homere et les poètes lyriques du VIIe et VIe siecles,' LEC 44 (1976), 234-44.

Byre, C. 'Penelope and the Suitors Before Odysseus in Odyssey 18.158-303,' AJPh 109 (1988), 159-73.

Carpenter, R. Folk Tale, Fiction, and the Saga in the Homeric Epics, Berkeley: 1946.

Chantraine, P. 'A propos de Thersite,' AC 32 (1963), 18-27.

Clarke, H. 'Telemachus and the Telemacheia,' AJPh 84 (1963), 129-45.

Clarke, H. The Art of the "Odyssey", Englewood Cliffs: 1967.

Claus, D. 'Aidos in the Language of Achilles,' TAPhA 105 (1975), 13-28.

Clay, J.S. 'Demas and Aude: The Nature of Divine Transformation in Homer,' Hermes 102 (1974), 129-137.

Clay, J.S. 'Immortal and Ageless Forever,' CJ 81 (1977), 112-17.

Clay, J.S. 'Goat Island,' CQ 30 (1980), 261-64.

Clay, J.S. The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Men in the "Odyssey", Princeton: 1983.

Collins, L. Studies in Characterisation in the Iliad, Frankfurt: 1988.

Combellack, F.M. 'Hesiod's King and Nicarchus' Nestor,' CPh 69 (1974), 124.

Crane, G. Calypso: Background and Conventions of the "Odyssey", Frankfurt: 1988.

Davies, M. 'Nestor's Advice in Iliad 7,' Eranos 84 (1986), 69-75.

Davison, J.A. 'Thucydides, Homer and the "Achaean Wall",' GRBS 6 (1965), 5-28.

Davison, J.A. 'The Foam of Perilous Seas,' Wiener Studien 79 (1966), 13-20.

De Jong, I. 'Eurykleia and Odysseus' Scar: Od. 19.393-466,' CQ 35 (1985), 517-18.

De Jong, I. Narrators and Focalizers: The Presentation of the Story in the "Iliad", Amsterdam: 1987.

De Jong, I. 'The Subjective Style in Odysseus' Wanderings,' CQ 42 (1992), 1-11.

Delebecque, E. Construction de l'Odyssée, Paris: 1980.

Delebecque, E. Telemaque et la Structure de l'Odyssée, Annales de la Faculté des Lettres d'Aix-en-Province: 1958.

Devereux, G. 'The Character of Penelope,' Psychoanalytic Quarterly 26 (1957), 378-86.

De Vries, G. 'Phaeacian Manners,' Mnemosyne 30 (1977), 113-21.

Dickie, M. 'Phaeacian Athletes,' Papers of the Latin Liverpool Seminar, 4 (1983), 237-76.

Dietz, G. 'Das Bett des Odysseus,' Symbolon 7 (1971), 9-32.

Dimock, G. 'The Name of Odysseus,' In Essays on the "Odyssey", C. Taylor ed. Bloomington: 1963. 54-72.

Dimock, D. The Unity of the "Odyssey", Amherst: 1989.

Donlan, W. 'Homer's Agamemnon,' CW 65 (1971), 109-115.

Donlan, W. 'The Structure of Authority in the Iliad,' Arethusa 12 (1979), 51-70.

Dunkle, R. 'Nestor, Odysseus, and the Metis - Bie Antithesis: The Funeral Games of Iliad 23,' CW 81 (1987), 1-17.

Edwards, A. 'Homer's Ethical Geography: Country and City in the Odyssey,' TAPhA 123 (1993), 27-78.

Edwards, M. Homer: Poet of the Iliad, Baltimore: 1987.

Edwards, M. 'Scenes from the Later Wanderings of Odysseus,' CQ 38 (1988), 509-21.

Edwards, M. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. V, Books 17-20, Cambridge: 1991.

Edmunds, S. Homeric 'Nepios', London, 1990.

Eichholz, D. 'The Propitiation of Achilles,' AJPh 74 (1953), 137-148.

Eisenberger, H. Studien zur Odyssee, Wiesbaden: 1973.

Emlyn-Jones, C. 'The Reunion of Penelope and Odysseus,' G&R 31 (1984), 1-18.

Emlyn-Jones, C. 'True and Lying Tales in the Odyssey,' G&R 33 (1986), 1-10.

Erbse, H. Beiträge zum Verstandnis der Odyssee, Berlin: 1972.

Falkner T. ' ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ: Homeric Heroism, Old Age and the End of the Odyssey,' in Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature, T. Falkner and J. de Luce eds. New York: 1989. 21-67.

Feldman, A. 'The Apotheosis of Thersites,' CJ 42 (1947), 219-21.

Felson-Rubin, N. 'Penelope's Perspective: Character from Plot,' in Beyond Oral Poetry: Recent Trends in Homeric Interpretation, J. Bremer, I. De Jong, and J. Kalff eds. Amsterdam: 1967. 61-71.

Fenik, B. 'Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad,' Hermes Einzelschrift 21, Wiesbaden: 1968.

Fenik, B. 'Studies in the Odyssey,' Hermes Einzelschrift 30, Wiesbaden: 1974.

Ferrucci, F. The Poetry of Disguise, Trans. A. Dunnigan, Ithaca: 1980.

Finlay, R. 'Patroclus, Achilles and Peleus: Fathers and Sons in the Iliad,' CW 73 (1980), 267-73.

Finley, J. Homer's "Odyssey", Cambridge: 1978.

Finley, M.I. The World of Odysseus, New York: 1979.

Finley, M.I. 'The Elderly in Classical Antiquity,' G&R 28 (1981), 158-71.

Foley, H. 'Reverse Similes and Sex Roles in the Odyssey,' Arethusa 11 (1978), 7-26.

Foley, J.M. Immanent Art, Bloomington: 1991.

Frame, D. The Myth of Return in Early Greek Poetry, New Haven: 1978.

Fränkel, H. Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy, Trans. J. Willis, Oxford: 1975.

Fraser, A. 'Scheria and the Phaeacians,' TAPhA 60 (1929), 155-78.

Frazer, R. 'The Crisis of Leadership Among the Greeks and Poseidon's Intervention in Iliad 14,' Hermes 113 (1985), 1-9.

Friedrich, R. 'Heroic Man and Polymetis: Odysseus in the Cyclopeia,' GRBS 28 (1987), 121-33

Friedrich, R. 'Zeus and the Phaeacians,' AJPh 110 (1989), 395-99.

Gagarin, M. 'Antilochus' Strategy: The Chariot Race in Iliad 23,' CPh 78 (1983), 35-39.

Gaisser, J. 'A Structural Analysis of the Digressions in the Iliad and the Odyssey,' HSPh 73 (1968), 1-43.

Garland, R. The Greek Way of Life, Ithaca: 1990.

Garland, R. The Greek Way of Death, Ithaca: 1985.

Germain, G. La Genèse de l'Odyssee, Paris: 1954.

Gould, J.P. 'Iketeia,' JHS 93 (1973), 74-103.

Gresseth, G. 'The Homeric Sirens,' TAPhA 101 (1970), 203-18.

Griffin, J. 'Homeric Pathos and Objectivity,' CQ 26 (1976), 161-185.

Griffin, J. 'The Epic Cycle and the Uniqueness of Homer,' JHS 97 (1977), 35-53.

Griffin, J. Homer on Life and Death, Oxford: 1980.

Griffin, J. 'Words and Speakers in Homer,' JHS 106 (1986), 36-56.

Griffin, J. 'Heroic and Unheroic Ideas in Homer,' in Homer: Readings and Images, ed. C. Emlyn-Jones, L. Hardwick, J. Purkis eds. London: 1992. 21-31.

Griffith, M. 'Man and the Leaves: A Study of Mimnermos Fr. 2,' CSCA 8 (1975), 73-88.

Groten, F. 'Homer's Helen,' G&R 15 (1968), 33-49.

Guntert, H. Kalypso, Max Niemeyer Verlag: 1919.

Haft, A. 'Odysseus, Idomeneus & Meriones: The Cretan Lies of Odyssey 13-19,' CJ 79 (1984), 289-306.

Hainsworth, B. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. III, Books 9-12, Cambridge, 1993.

Halverson, J. 'The Succession Issue in the Odyssey,' G&R 33 (1986), 119-28.

Hansen, W. 'Odysseus' Last Journey,' Quaderni Urbinati 24 (1977), 27-48.

Harsh, P. 'Penelope and Odysseus in Odyssey XIX,' AJPh 71 (1950), 1-21.

Harrison, E. 'Odysseus and Demodocus: Homer's Odyssey 492f.,' Hermes 99 (1971), 378-9.

Hart, W. 'High Comedy in the Odyssey,' University of California Publications in Classical Philology 12 (1943), 263-79.

Held, G. 'Phoinix, Agamemnon and Achilleus: Parables and Paradeigmata,' CQ 37 (1987), 245-61.

Heubeck, A., West, S., Hainsworth, B. A Commentary on Homer's 'Odyssey,' I, Oxford: 1988.

Heubeck, A., Hoekstra, A., A Commentary on Homer's 'Odyssey,' II, Oxford: 1989.

Hinckley, L. 'Patroclus' Funeral Games and Homer's Character Portrayal,' CJ 81 (1986), 209-21.

Hooker, J. 'Homer, Patroclus, Achilles,' SO 64 (1989), 30-35.

Houdijk, L. and Vanderbroek, P. 'Old Age and Sex in the Ancient Greek World,' WZRostock 36 (1987), 57-61.

Huxley, C. 'Odysseus and the Thresprotian Oracle of the Dead,' La Parola del Passato, 61 (1958), 245-48.

Janko, R. 'ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως: The Genealogy of a Formula,' Mnemosyne 34 (1981), 382-85.

Janko, R. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. IV, Books 13-16, Cambridge: 1992.

Jungclaussen, W. Ueber das Greisenalter bei Homer, Flensburg: 1870.

Jeanmaire, H. Couroi et Couretes, Lille: 1939.

Kakridis, T. 'Die Bedeutung von πολύτροπος in der Odyssee,' Glotta 11 (1921), 288-91.

Kakridis, J. Homeric Researches, Lund: 1949.

Kakridis, J. 'Neugriechische Scholien zu Homer,' Gymnasium 78 (1971), 505-24.

Kakridis, J. Homer Revisited, Lund: 1971.

Katz, M. The Renown of Penelope, Princeton: 1991.

Kearns, E. 'The Return of Odysseus: A Homeric Theoxeny,' CQ 32 (1982), 2-8.

Kirk, G.S. The Songs of Homer, Cambridge: 1962.

Kirk, G.S. 'Old Age and Maturity in Ancient Greece,' Eranos - Jb 40 (1971), 123-58.

Kirk, G.S. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. I, Books 1-4, Cambridge: 1985.

Kirk, G.S. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. II, Books 5-8, Cambridge: 1990.

Knox, R. and Russo, J. 'Agamemnon's Test: Iliad 2.73-75,' ClAnt 8 (1989), 351-58.

Kullmann, W. 'Oral Poetry Theory and Neoanalysis in Homeric Research,' GRBS 25 (1984), 307-23.

Lang, M. 'Reverberation and Mythology in the Iliad,' in Approaches to Homer, C. Rubino and C. Shelmardine eds. Austin: 1983. 140-164.

Lattimore, R. 'Nausikaa's Suitors,' in Classical Studies Presented to Ben Edwin Perry. Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, special issue, 58 (1969), 88-102.

Leaf, W., ed. The Iliad, 2nd ed. Vols. 1 and 2. 1900 and 1902. Reprint. Amsterdam: 1960.

Leaf, W. A Companion to the Iliad, London: 1892.

Levine, D. 'Odyssey 18: Iros as Paradigm for the Suitors,' CJ 77, (1982), 200-4.

Levine, D. 'Penelope's Laugh: Odyssey 18.163,' AJPh 104 (1983), 172-8.

Levy, H. 'The Odyssean Suitors and the Host-Guest Relationship,' TAPhA 94 (1963), 145-53.

Lloyd-Jones, H. The Justice of Zeus, Berkeley: 1971.

Lord, A. The Singer of Tales, Cambridge: 1960.

Macleod, C. ed. Homer: Iliad Book XXIV, Cambridge: 1982.

Magrath, W. 'Progression of the Lion Simile in the Odyssey,' CJ 77 (1982), 205-12.

Maniet, A. 'Pseudo-Interpolations et Scène de Ménage dans l'Odyssée,' AC 16 (1947), 37-46.

Mariani, A. The Forged Feature: Created Identity in Homer's "Odyssey", Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University: 1967.

Marquardt, P. 'Penelope "ΠΟΛΥΤΡΟΠΟΣ",' AJPh 106 (1985), 32-48.

Martin, R. The Language of Heroes, Ithaca: 1989.

Mazon, P. Introduction à l'Iliade, Paris: 1948.

Mcglew, J. 'Royal Power and the Achaean Assembly at Iliad 2.84-393,' ClAnt 8 (1989), 283-95.

Meltzer, G. 'The Role of Comic Perspectives in Shaping Homer's Tragic Vision,' CW 83 (1990), 265-80.

Millar C. & Carmichael, J. 'The Growth of Telemachus,' G&R 1 (1954), 58-64.

Minchin, E. 'The Interpretation of Theme in Oral Epic: Iliad 24.529-70,' G&R 33 (1986), 11-19.

Minois, G. Histoire de la Vieillesse en Occident de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance, Paris: 1987.

Mondi, R. 'The Homeric Cyclops: Folktale, Tradition and Theme,' TAPhA 113 (1983), 17-38.

Moulton, C. 'The End of the Odyssey,' GRBS 15 (1974), 153-69.

Moulton, C. Similes in the Homeric Poems, Göttingen: 1977.

Murnaghan, S. Disguise and Recognition in the "Odyssey", Princeton: 1987.

Murray, O. 'Philodemus on the Good King According to Homer,' JRS 55 (1965), 161-82.

Nagler, M. 'Entretiens avec Teiresias,' CW 74 (1980), 89-106.

Nagy, G. The Best of the Achaeans, Baltimore: 1979.

Nash, L. 'Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought,' Daedalus 107 (1978), 1-21.

Newton, R. 'The Rebirth of Odysseus,' GRBS 25 (1984), 5-20.

Olson, S. 'The Stories of Helen and Menelaus (Od. 4.240-89) and the Return of Odysseus,' AJPh 110 (1989), 387-94.

Owen, E.T. The Story of the Iliad, Toronto: 1946.

Page, D. The Homeric "Odyssey", Oxford: 1955.

Page, D. History and the Homeric Epic, Berkeley: 1966.

Page, D. Folk-Tales in Homer's "Odyssey", Cambridge: 1973.

Parry, A. 'The Language of Achilles,' TAPhA 87 (1956), 1-7.

Parry, A. 'Language and Characterization in Homer,' HSPh 76 (1972), 1-17.

Pedrick, V. 'Supplication in the Iliad and the Odyssey,' TAPhA 112 (1982), 125-140.

Pedrick, V. 'The Paradigmatic Nature of Nestor's Speech in Iliad 11,' TAPhA 113 (1983), 55-68.

Pedrick, V. 'The Hospitality of Noble Women in the Odyssey,' Helios 15 (1988), 85-101.

Peradotto, J. Man in the Middle Voice, Princeton: 1990.

Perry, B. 'The Early Greek Capacity for Viewing Things Separately,' TAPhA 68 (1937), 403-27.

Phillips, E. 'The Comic Odysseus,' G&R 6 (1959), 58-67.

Podlecki, A. 'Guest-Gifts and Nobodies in Odyssey 9,' Phoenix 15 (1961), 125-33.

Podlecki, A. 'Omens in the Odyssey,' G&R 14 (1967), 12-23.

Postlethwaite, N. 'Thersites in the Iliad,' G&R 35 (1988), 123-36.

Powell, B. 'Narrative Patterns in the Homeric Tale of Menelaus,' TAPhA 101 (1970), 419-31.

Preisshofen, F. 'Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Greisenalters in der frühgriechischen Dichtung,' Hermes Einzelschrift 34 (1977).

Pucci, P. 'Song of the Sirens,' Arethusa 12 (1979), 121-32.

Querbach, C. 'Conflicts Between Young and Old in Homer's Iliad,' in The

Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome, S. Bertman ed. Amsterdam: 1976. 55-64.

Rabel, R. 'Chryse and the Opening of the Iliad,' AJPh 109 (1988), 473-81.

Rankin, A. 'Penelope's Dreams in Books XIX and XX of the Odyssey,' Helikon 2 (1962), 617-24.

Rankin, H.D. 'Thersites the Malcontent: A Discussion,' SO 47 (1972), 36-60.

Redfield, J. Nature and Culture in the Iliad, Chicago: 1975.

Reeve, M.D. 'The Language of Achilles,' CQ 23 (1973), 93-95.

Reinhardt, K. 'Die Abenteuer der Odyssee,' in Tradition und Geist, Göttingen: 1960, 47-124.

Reuchner, T. Der Unbekannte Odysseus, Stuttgart: 1989.

Richardson, B. Old Age Among the Ancient Greeks, Baltimore: 1933.

Richardson, N.J. 'Recognition Scenes in the Odyssey and Ancient Literary Criticism,' Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar, 4 (1983), 219-235.

Richardson, N. The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. VI, Books 21-24, Cambridge: 1993.

Robbins, E. 'Achilles to Thetis: Iliad 1.365-412,' EMC 9 (1990), 1-15.

Roisman, H. 'Penelope's Indignation,' TAPhA 117 (1987), 59-68.

Rose, G. 'The Quest of Telemachus,' TAPhA 98 (1967), 391-98.

Rose, G. 'The Unfriendly Phaeacians,' TAPhA 100 (1969), 387-406.

Rose, G. 'Odysseus' Barking Heart,' TAPhA 109 (1979), 215-30.

Rose, G. 'The Swineherd and the Beggar,' Phoenix 34 (1980), 285-97.

Rose, P. 'Thersites and the Plural Voices of the Iliad,' Arethusa 21 (1988), 5-25.

Rose, P. 'Class Ambivalence in the Odyssey,' in Homer: Readings and Images, ed. C. Emlyn-Jones, London: 1992, 193-209.

Rosner, J. 'The Speech of Phoinix: Iliad 9.434-605,' Phoenix 30 (1976), 314-27.

Rousseaux, M. 'Ulysse et les Mangeurs des Coquelicots,' BAGB 71 (1971), 333-

51.

Russo, J. 'The Inner Man in Archilochus and the Odyssey,' GRBS 15 (1974), 139-52.

Russo, J. 'Interview & Aftermath: Dream, Fantasy, and Intuition in Odyssey 19 & 20,' AJPh 103 (1982), 4-18.

Russo, J., Fernandez-Galiano, M., Heubeck, A., A Commentary on Homer's 'Odyssey,' III, Oxford: 1992.

Rutherford, R. 'Tragic Form and Feeling in the Iliad,' JHS 102 (1982), 145-60.

Rutherford, R. 'At Home and Abroad: Aspects of the Structure of the Odyssey,' Pro. Cam. Phil. Soc. 31 (1985), 133-149.

Rutherford, R.B. 'The Philosophy of the Odyssey,' JHS 106 (1986), 145-162.

Rutherford, R.B. ed. "Odyssey": Books XIX and XX, Cambridge: 1992.

Sale, W. 'Achilles and Heroic Values,' Arion 2 (1963), 86-100.

Schadewaldt, W. 'Kleiderdinge: zur Analyse der Odyssee,' Hermes 87 (1959), 13-26.

Schadewaldt, W. 'Lebenszeit und Greisenalter im frühen Griechentum,' Hellas und Hesperien 1960, 41-59.

Schein, S. 'Odysseus and Polyphemus in the Odyssey,' GRBS 11 (1970), 73-83.

Schein, S. 'On Achilles' Speech to Odysseus: Iliad 9.308-429,' Eranos 78 (1980), 125-31.

Schein, S. The Mortal Hero, Berkeley: 1984.

Schlunk, R. 'The Theme of the Suppliant Exile in the Iliad,' AJPh 97 (1976), 199-209.

Schmiel, R. 'Telemachus in Sparta,' TAPA 103 (1972), 463-72.

Schmoll, E. 'Odysseus and the Stag: the Parander,' Helios 14 (1987), 22-28.

Schofield, M. 'Euboulia in the Iliad,' CQ 36 (1986), 6-31.

Scodel, R. 'The Autobiography of Phoenix,' AJPh 103 (1982), 128ff.

Scodel, R. 'The Achaean Wall and the Myth of Destruction,' HSPh 86 (1982),

33-50.

Scodel, R. 'The Word of Achilles,' CPh 84 (1989), 91-99.

Scott, J. 'Phoenix in the Iliad,' AJPh 33 (1912), 68-77.

Scott, J. 'The Journey Made by Telemachus and its Influence on the Action of the Odyssey,' CJ 13 (1917), 420-28.

Scott, J. 'Eurycleia and Eurynome in the Odyssey,' CQ 12 (1918), 75-79.

Segal, C. 'The Phaeacians and the Symbolism of Odysseus' Return,' Arion 1 (1962), 17-64.

Segal, C. 'Transition and Ritual in Odysseus' Return,' La Parola del Passato 22 (1967), 321-42.

Segal, C. 'Circean Temptations: Homer, Vergil, Ovid,' TAPhA 99 (1968), 419-42.

Segal, C. 'Nestor and the Honor of Achilles,' SMEA 13 (1971), 90-105.

Segal, C. ' and its Ironies,' AC 52 (1983), 22-47.

Segal, C. 'Divine Justice in the Odyssey,' AJPh 113 (1992), 489-518.

Sheppard, J. The Pattern of the Iliad, London: 1922.

Slatkin, L. 'The Wrath of Thetis,' TAPhA 116 (1986), 1-24.

Slatkin, L. 'Genre and Generation in the Odyssey,' MHTIS 2 (1986), 259-68.

Slatkin, L. The Power of Thetis, Berkeley: 1990.

Solmsen, F. 'The Conclusion of the Odyssey,' in Poetry and Poetics, G.M. Kirkwood ed. Ithaca: 1975.

Stahmer, H. 'The Aged in Two Ancient Oral Cultures: the Ancient Hebrews and Homeric Greece,' in Aging and the Elderly, S. Spicker, K. Woodward and D. van Tassel eds. Atlantic Highlands: 1978. 23-36.

Stanford, W. 'Homer's Use of Personal πολυ - compounds,' CPh 45 (1950), 108-10.

Stanford, W. 'Studies in the Character of Ulysses - III,' Hermathena 75 (1950), 35-48.

Stanford, W. The Ulysses Theme, Oxford: Blackwell, 1954.

Stanford, W. 'The Ending of the Odyssey: An Ethical Approach,' Hermathena 94 (1965), 5-20.

Stanford, W.B. 'The Lily Voices of the Cicadas,' (Iliad 3.152),' Phoenix 23 (1969), 3-8.

Stanford, W. ed. The "Odyssey" of Homer, 2nd Ed., 2 Vols. London: 1978.

Stewart, D. The Disguised Guest: Rank, Role and Identity in the "Odyssey", Lewisburg: 1976.

Suerbaum, W. 'Die Ich Erzählungen des Odyssee,' Poetica 2 (1968), 150-77.

Suder, W. 'Geras': Old Age in Greco-Roman Antiquity, Profil, 1991.

Sullivan, J. 'The Sign of the Bed: Od. 23.173f.,' GRBS 25 (1984), 21-25.

Sullivan, J. 'Nature and Culture in Odyssey 9?,' SO 65 (1990), 7-17.

Taplin, O. 'The Shield of Achilles within the Iliad,' G&R 27 (1980), 1-21.

Taplin, O. 'Homer's Use of Achilles' Earlier Campaigns within the Iliad,' in Chios, J. Boardman, C.E. Vaphopoulou- Richardson eds. Oxford: 1986. 15-19.

Taplin, O. 'Agamemnon's Role in the Iliad,' in Characterisation and Individuality in Greek Literature, C. Pelling ed. Oxford: 1990.

Taplin, O. Homeric Soundings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Tarkow, A. 'Achilles' Response to the Embassy,' CB 58 (1982),

Taylor, C. 'The Obstacles to Odysseus' Return: Identity and Consciousness in the Odyssey,' in Essays on the "Odyssey", C. Taylor ed. Bloomington: 1963. 87-99.

Tebben, J. 'Alkinoos and Phaiakian Society,' SO 66 (1991), 27-45.

Thalmann, W.G. 'Thersites: Comedy, Scapegoats, and Heroic Ideology in the Iliad,' TAPhA 118 (1988), 1-28.

Thornton, A. People and Themes in Homer's "Odyssey", London: 1970.

Trahman, C. 'Odysseus' Lies (Odyssey Books 13-19),' Phoenix 6 (1952), 31-43.

Tsagarakis, O. 'The Achaean Wall and the Homeric Question,' Hermes 97

(1969), 129-135.

Tsagarakis, O. 'Phoenix' Social Status and the Achaean Embassy,' Mnemosyne 32 (1979), 221-42.

Valk, M. 'Ajax and Diomedes in the Iliad,' Mnemosyne 5 (1953), 269-86.

Vallillee, G. 'The Nausicaa Episode,' Phoenix 9 (1955), 175-79.

Van Erp Taalman Kip, A.M. Agamemnon in Epos en Tragedie, Assen: 1971.

Van Nortwick, T. 'Penelope and Nausicaa,' TAPhA 109 (1979), 269-76.

Van Nortwick, T. 'Penelope as Double Agent: Od. 21. 1-60,' CW 77 (1983), 24-5.

Vermeule, E. Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry, Berkeley: 1979.

Walcot, P. 'Odysseus and the Art of Lying,' in Homer: Readings and Images, ed. C. Emlyn-Jones. London: 1992. 49-62.

Wender, D. 'The Last Scene of the Odyssey,' Mnemosyne Supplement 52 (1978).

West, S. 'An Alternative Nostos for Odysseus,' LCM 11 (1986), 169-75.

West, M.L. 'The Achaean Wall,' CR 19 (1969), 255-60.

Whallon, W. 'The Homeric Epithets,' YClS 17 (1961), 97-142.

Whitman, C. Homer and the Heroic Tradition, Cambridge: 1958.

Willcock, M. The Iliad of Homer 1, London: 1978.

Willcock, M. The Iliad of Homer 2, London: 1984.

Willcock, M. 'Mythological Paradeigma in the Iliad,' CQ 14 (1964), 141-54.

Willcock, M. 'The Funeral Games of Patroclus,' BICS 20 (1973), 1-11.

Willcock, M. 'Antilochos in the Iliad,' in Mélanges Edouard Delebecque, Aix-en-Provence: 1983.

Willcock, M. 'Ad Hoc Invention in the Iliad,' HSPh 81 (1977), 41-53.

Williams, H. 'Viewing the Stubble: A Note on the Odyssey,' CJ 68 (1972), 75-78.

Wilson, J. 'The Wedding Gifts of Peleus,' Phoenix 28 (1974), 385-89.

Woodbury, L. 'Gold Hair and Grey, or the Game of Love: Anacreon fr. 13.358 PMG, 13 Gentili,' TAPhA 109 (1979), 277-87.

Woodhouse, W. The Composition of Homer's "Odyssey", Oxford: 1930.

Woolsey, R. 'Repeated Narratives in the Odyssey,' CPh 36 (1941), 167-81.

Wyatt W. 'Homeric ATH,' AJPh 103 (1982), 247-76.

END

01-11-94

FIN