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THE THEOLOGY OF THE ORESTEIA:  
ITS BACKGROUND AND ORIGINS

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy at Dalhousie  
University, August 31, 1984.

FOR  
JAMES PETRIE

*-for his dream*

ROBERT METHVEN PETRIE

*-for his hope*

MELVIN GILBERT CALKIN

*-for his love*

ἡδὲ κασιγνήτος, οὐ δὲ μοι θαλερὸς παρακοίτης.  
πατήρ καὶ πότνη μήτηρ

*this work is inscribed  
from a grateful and a loving heart*

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## ABSTRACT

From ancient times the poets had sought to understand the nature of the gods, to show the order of the divine world and the implications of its dispositions for the world of men, to discern the underlying principles of the universe by which all human experience becomes intelligible. Since the ORESTEIA presents the most complete answer to these ancient problems it is important to understand not only the nature and source of the δίκη embodied in Athena's court but also the character and origin of the gods who support it and the ground of that reconciliation between the revenge goddesses and Olympian Zeus which lies at the heart of Aeschylus' vision of the πόλις. As the culmination of a long poetic tradition the settlements of the ORESTEIA must be seen in the light of certain earlier poets whose influence it reflects.

The ODYSSEY presents early evidence of the ultimate reconciliation of the conflicting claims of justice found in the ORESTEIA. The poet of the ODYSSEY looked to the limitation of wrath and individual rights, both on earth and in heaven, in the supremacy of Zeus and the ideal of the common good.

In the THEOGONIA Zeus triumphs over the Titans because of his superior wit and strength. His new government marks a significant advance over the old divine world by encompassing the diversity and ancient privileges of the natural realm within a unifying whole, with honour paid or punishment rendered to each according to his merit.

Solon's vision of the divine-human relationship focused upon the πόλις. He showed the causal link between wrongdoing and suffering, and he revealed in concrete political terms the implication of that connection for the πόλις and the individual.

The nature and proper relationship of the gods and the forces which shape man's destiny, his growing awareness of his own responsibility and of the importance of knowledge in determining his fate are part of the developing concept of justice revealed by the poet of the ODYSSEY, by Hesiod and by Solon. Their notions of justice, their recognition of the conflicts which invariably arise between individual, particular interests, their efforts to discover a basis for reconciliation between the primitive natural world and the new order of the Olympians provide an important background to the theology of the ORESTEIA.

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## INTRODUCTION

For much of the QRESTEIA we behold a world in conflict where right is set against right, justice against justice, where every act of vengeance becomes itself a crime to be avenged. As the Achæan fleet lies becalmed at Aulis, Agamemnon is persuaded to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigeneia, in return for a fair passage to Troy. Having conquered the city of Priam and returned victorious to Argos, Agamemnon is in turn slain by his queen, Clytemnestra, for the death of their daughter. In the next generation Orestes is bidden by Apollo to avenge the death of his father by murdering his mother.

From the time when Tantalus first offended the gods with the sacrifice of his son the house of Atreus has found itself caught in a recurring cycle of wrongdoing and punishment with each successive act of vengeance and atonement inevitably involving the family in ever greater sin and guilt. "In such a situation", writes Adkins<sup>1</sup>, "the man who slays in retribution seems both δίκαιος as avenger and ἄδικος as murderer. . . ."

Apollo has promised Orestes that in taking the life of his mother to avenge his father he will be ἐντός αἵματος

(Choe. 1031). On this assurance Orestes seeks Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi after killing Clytemnestra, closely pursued by the avenging Erinyes. Despite this promise it soon becomes clear that the ritual purification which Apollo offers will in no way satisfy the wrath of the ancient goddesses. To them Orestes remains a foul matricide who must pay with his own life for spilling the blood of his mother. Unable to protect his suppliant Apollo bids Orestes flee to Athens and the temple of Athena and there to await the τέλος δίκης (Eum. 243).

The conflicts seen here between the Erinyes and Apollo are a reflection of a wider division in the divine realm between the old gods and the new gods. Despite Zeus' victory over the Titans the questions still remain: how is there to be an end to the traditional and violent overthrow of father by son characteristic of previous successions; how is Zeus to establish a lasting era of peace and harmony among the gods without himself being supplanted; what, in the end, is to be the proper relationship between the ancient rights and honours of the natural realm and the will of Zeus. The answers to these questions have important and far-reaching implications not only for the structure of the Olympian order but also for the establishment of justice and order in the human cosmos.

At Athens the Erinyes eventually agree to submit their case to a court convened by Athena, confident that the justice of their claims will be upheld. When the court returns its verdict in favour of Orestes the goddesses feel themselves utterly dishonoured. It is only with the greatest effort that Athena is able to persuade the offended goddesses that the acquittal of Orestes need not dishonour them, that they may accept a home beside her in the city and, as instruments of the justice of Zeus, have their own honour acknowledged.

This reconciliation is the means by which the Erinyes, justly outraged at the spilling of a mother's blood, can be satisfied in accordance with the wider vision of Zeus. The charter of the *νόμος* thus revealed at the end of the ORESTEIA establishes, in fact, what must be the proper relationship between the natural sphere and the will of Zeus. While the interests of the ancient powers of the old divine world are limited, their responses to offence and wrongdoing immediate and automatic, the will of Zeus has decreed that the common interest prevail, that no longer is it the deed alone which counts but also the motivation behind the deed.

For Aeschylus justice was to be found in the order of the *νόμος* which was the true expression of divine justice

among men, the true manifestation of the order of Zeus in the human cosmos. Aeschylus' vision of the πόλις is the ultimate solution to the ancient problem of the succession of divine generations. It is only with the emergence of the πόλις that there appears a medium through which the full significance of the reconciliation between the powers of the old divine world and the new Olympian gods, envisaged by the older poets, can be seen by men. Only within the πόλις can the τέλος of Zeus' justice for men be completely revealed; only within the πόλις can the limited ends and particular concerns of family and class be overcome in the greater interests of peace and order and harmony in the community.

The settlements reached at the end of the ORESTEIA clearly mark a significant moment in the development of man's moral awareness. It is important, therefore, to understand not only the nature and source of the δίκη embodied in Athena's court but also the character and origin of the gods who support it and the ground of that reconciliation between the revenge goddesses and Olympian Zeus which lies at the heart of Aeschylus' vision of the πόλις.

From ancient times the poets had sought to understand the nature of the gods, to show the order of the divine world and the implications of its dispositions for the world

of men, to discern the underlying principles of the universe by which all human experience becomes intelligible. Whether it was an epic tale of war or adventure or an account of the succession of divine generations, wisdom poetry, the poetry of reflection and exhortation or the tragedies and comedies of the great dramatic festivals, every particular theme was, in certain very important ways, an expression of the universal theme of the justice of Zeus and its consequences for gods and men.

There is some evidence, however, that, in addition to the elements common to all Greek poetry, there exists a particular connection between the ODYSSEY, the works of Hesiod, the writings of Solon and the ORESTEIA. The notions of justice, the recognition of the conflicts which invariably arise between individual, particular interests, the efforts to discover a basis for reconciliation between the primitive natural world and the new order of the Olympians presented by the older poets provide an important background to the theology of the ORESTEIA.

Both in the divine realm and the human sphere the poet of the ODYSSEY looked beyond the traditional heroic code, with its focus on particular  $\tau\eta\mu\eta$ , to the limitation of individual rights and privileges in the ideal of the



common good, surmising that when each must have his share of honour at the expense of another there can be justice for none. In the world after Troy no longer are the choices before the hero the traditional ones of life with honour or death with glory. Now he must first survive before he can gain either honour or glory. For this the hero needs not simply feats of strength and daring but also endurance, physical and spiritual, as well as vision, in order to survive and, then, to establish order and justice in the community which is his new calling. Through the trials and sufferings of his return to Ithaca Odysseus gradually comes to a new understanding of his relation to the divine purpose. Having recognized the necessity for endurance and restraint Odysseus πολίπορθος can at last return as an ἀνύμων βασιλεύς, ". . . a god-like man who rules over many mighty men and upholds good government" (Od. 19.109-11). This connection between the political order which ensures the prosperity of people as well as the land they inhabit, and the divine purpose is also an important aspect of the characterization of justice in the world of men for Hesiod and Solon.

The poet of the ODYSSEY knew that the government of Zeus could not deny altogether the claims of the natural sphere. Odysseus had angered Poseidon by blinding Polyphemus and for this reason Poseidon's anger is to be allowed to run

its course, not, as Poseidon would wish, until Odysseus has been driven to death, but only until Zeus' purpose has been achieved, until Odysseus has learned to know *δίκη*. At that time Poseidon must give up his wrath, as Zeus assures Athena he will do in the first divine assembly (*Od.* 1.64ff). The covenant which Zeus ordains be struck between the kinsmen of the slain suitors and Odysseus is conceived in a similar spirit, on the notion that there must be a limit to wrath, that even the natural desire for vengeance and atonement must at some time give way to a settlement in the common interest.

Hesiod saw a solution to the problems arising from conflicting claims of honour and prerogative in the triumph of Zeus' rule over the overweening pride and reckless presumption of the old divine world. For the Boeotian poet Zeus' victory in the Titanomachia not only brought order out of chaos but revealed a new era of peace and justice among the gods. It is the supremacy and might of Zeus which can limit wrath and put an end to the primitive justice of retribution and atonement; it is the full and complete vision of Zeus which alone can encompass the diversity and ancient obligations of the natural realm within a unifying whole, with honour paid or punishment rendered, to each according to his merit.

In the ERGA Hesiod is concerned to discover a basis for human life within the divine order of the THEOGONIA. Although trouble is now an irrevocable part of this world Hesiod is convinced that man is not at the mercy of either blind necessity or divine caprice. The Moirai, as Hesiod (Th. 219) and the poet of the ODYSSEY (Od. 7.197) both know, spin out man's fate for him at his birth, for good and ill; but though they are born of Night (Th. 217), powerful figures of ancient privilege and honour, Hesiod sees the Moirai also as daughters of Zeus and Themis, sisters of Eunomia, Dike and Eirene (Th. 905), having πλείστην τιμὴν in the new order of justice. For Hesiod, as for the ODYSSEY-poet, it is ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία, not the arbitrary wrath of the gods, which bring ruin to man beyond the portion allotted to him. Nevertheless, through νόος and ἔργα Hesiod believes man may act justly and avoid the consequences of wrongdoing.

Solon brought to his role of mediator and archon his own clear understanding of the divine-human relationship. Man's destiny, he knew, was the consequence of two powerful forces: the ancient determination of Moira, the "inescapable gifts of the gods", and, also, his own wrongdoing. It was this vision of man's relation to the gods which shaped Solon's political and social reforms. Unlike Hesiod, Solon saw justice not in terms of the individual but as the peaceful

harmony of the whole social order, and, likewise, injustice, not as having repercussions for one person alone, but as the disruption and breakdown of the life of the whole community. From this understanding of the ὕβρις — ἀτη relationship grew Solon's notion of the unity, the solidarity of the πόλις: man now lived not simply within his family or tribe but as a member of a larger community, the πόλις, with which his welfare was seen to be inextricably bound. Thus, on the ground that justice is indivisible and that, therefore, what wronged one individual wronged the whole πόλις Solon cancelled debts and freed the land from its bondage. These bold steps were a clear reflection of Solon's understanding of the causal relation between wrongdoing and the downfall of the πόλις.

However, Solon knew that this rational principle was not sufficient to account for all human experience, that there was an aspect of uncertainty in this world which man must accept as his portion from Μοῖρα, and not strive to alter. Solon, therefore, refused the demands of the δῆμος that he make a redistribution of the land, for he believed that man's share of land was part of his μοῖρα and must not be interfered with. Any change in this state would inevitably increase πόρος and foster ὕβρις and in this way also bring trouble to the πόλις.

In the ORESTEIA these ancient problems of man's relations to the gods and the order of the human cosmos assume a most terrible and terrifying aspect. From the limited notion that one could act justly by fulfilling rights and duties in accordance with the primitive, natural world's code of retribution Aeschylus moved to a wider concept of justice. No longer is it the deed alone which counts, now it is also the intent, the motivation behind the deed which becomes the decisive factor in man's fate. And Aeschylus recognized, as had the poets before him, that the ancient powers and forces of the natural sphere must not be denied a place in the new order, that Moira and Zeus must settle together.

There are those, as Dodds<sup>2</sup>, Adkins<sup>3</sup> and Gagarin<sup>4</sup>, who question whether the older poets were, in fact, concerned with justice. It is clear that we must, in the following study, heed Lloyd-Jones<sup>5</sup> advice on the matter of justice when he cautions his audience to remember "... to distinguish the ancient meaning of the words indicating moral concepts from the sense assigned to them in later antiquity, and from the meanings attached in modern times to the words generally thought to correspond to them". It is this "ancient meaning" of justice that we must seek to discover, steering a careful course between the Scylla of the strictly etymological<sup>6</sup> approach and the Charybdis of modern notions of morality.

Justice, according to Chantraine<sup>7</sup>, is that which orders. With this we are coming very close if not to a definition of justice, at least to a more complete formulation of the problem. Justice is the underlying principle of the universe which renders all human experience intelligible, it is the ideal by which man may understand not only his own world and his place in the divine order but also the nature of the forces which shape his destiny and determine his end.

Limited and incomplete though their early notions were, from ancient times the poets were constantly striving, continuously searching to discover and understand this order. The ORESTEIA of Aeschylus stands as the most complete poetic expression of these notions of justice and the divine-human relationship. As such its concepts can only be fully comprehended in the light of the older works from which it takes its genesis.

A PROLEGOMENA TO THE ORESTEIAI THE ODYSSEY

## INTRODUCTION

From its opening lines the action of the ODYSSEY is directed by a clear and simple principle of justice which far exceeds the "moralizing strain"<sup>1</sup> of Lloyd-Jones, or, as E.R. Dodds suggests<sup>2</sup>, the complaint of a Zeus "sensitive to moral criticism". In the prooemium the poet himself asserts that Odysseus' men

αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,  
νῆπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἡελίοιο  
ἦσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἡμᾶρ.  
(Od. 1.7-9)

Not long after, in the first divine assembly, Zeus declares

Ἄ πόποι, ὅσον δὴ νῦν θεοῦς βροτῶν αἰτιόωνται.  
ἔξ ἡμέων γὰρ φάσι καὶ ἐμμέναι· οἳ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ  
σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ μῶρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,  
ὥς καὶ νῦν Αἰγισθοῦς ὑπὲρ μῶρον Ἀτρεΐδαι  
γῆμ' ἄλοχον μνηστήν, τὸν δ' ἔκτανε νοστήσαντα,  
εἰδὼς αἰπὸν ὄλεθρον· ἐπεὶ πρό οἱ εἶπομεν ἡμεῖς,  
Ἑρμείαν πέμψαντες, εὐσκοπον ἀργειφόντην,  
μήτ' αὐτὸν κτείνειν μήτε μνάσθαι ἀκοιτίν·  
ἐκ γὰρ Ὀρέσταιο τίσις ἔσσεται Ἀτρεΐδαι,  
ὅππότε ἂν ἡβήσῃ καὶ ἤξῃ ἱμεῖρεται αἰῆς.  
ὥς ἔφαθ' Ἑρμείας, ἀλλ' οὐ φρένας Αἰγίσθοιο  
πεῖθ' ἀγαθὰ φρονέων· νῦν δ' ἀθρόα πάντ' ἀπέτισε.  
(Od. 1.32-43)

Taken together these two passages at the very beginning present, on the highest authority, a total and complete

statement of the divine-human relationship revealed at length in the ODYSSEY. For the ODYSSEY is primarily of divine justice and human folly, of divine punishment and human responsibility, of man's quest for τιμή and κλέος and the limitations of the heroic code. It is, above all, of the sure and certain destruction which attends a man who offends the gods: it is human folly (ἀτασθαλία), taking more than one's allotted share (ὕπερ μόρον, Od. 1.35), which offends the gods and brings upon man divine wrath and suffering beyond his allotted portion (ὕπερ μόρον, Od. 1.34). Aigisthos has taken more than his allotted share by murdering Agamemnon and marrying Clytemnestra, even against the warning of the gods, says Zeus, and has thus obtained more than his allotted share of suffering.

This motif<sup>3</sup> of the murder of Agamemnon and the vengeance of Orestes runs as a bright thread through the narrative providing a divinely sanctioned pattern against which to measure the situation in Ithaca. As a model for Telemachos, a foil for Penelope and a lesson for Odysseus its implicit and explicit parallels continually remind us of Zeus' stated principle. The ODYSSEY contains many such images and motifs<sup>4</sup>, recurrent and momentary, which serve not only to adorn particular episodes but to unify the whole complex structure, to reinforce and illumine the greater central theme



of justice -- the justice of Zeus and its consequences for man.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

The three parts into which the ODYSSEY is traditionally divided not only structure the poem but reinforce its underlying unity. The Telemacheia (Od. 1-4.42) shows Ithaca in disorder, the result of hybris, impiety and the absence of the King. From the beginning the return of Odysseus means the punishment of the suitors and the restoration of order and justice in the land. The Apologoi shows the consequences of hybris and impiety in the heroic community, the disintegration and final destruction which results from man's pursuit of individual honour and glory. This second section reveals the limitations of traditional heroism and the need for a new concept of heroic virtue; Phaiacia tells of the restoration of Odysseus' heroic honour by means of this new ἀρετή. In the sense that Odysseus' homecoming in the final half of the poem means the punishment of the suitors it is a fulfillment of the prophecies of the Telemacheia. However, as a result of his renewed heroic spirit the μνηστήρων βασιλεύς goes beyond the τίσις envisaged by Athena to become a restoration of order in the community.

## 1. THE TELEMACHEIA

As the gods sit in council on Olympus the fortunes of Odysseus and his family have reached an impasse: Odysseus lies on Ogygia, a captive of Calypso, pining for his home, while in Ithaca suitors for the hand of Penelope have taken possession of the palace and its substance. When Zeus declines (Od. 1.64ff) to espouse Odysseus' cause Athena vows that she will go to Ithaca herself "to rouse Telemachos and give him heart to call an assembly of the long-haired Achaeans and to speak out plainly to all the suitors". Whether or not events turn out as Athena plans, her visit to Ithaca has an immediate and dramatic effect.

On her arrival the goddess finds the suitors, as she expected (Od. 1.91), in full occupation, arrogantly passing their days in indolent pleasures. They are not only wasting the substance of the palace but are violating every law of decency and hospitality: ignoring the arrival of strangers (Od. 1.119-20), abusing the bard, Phemius (Od. 1.154), and subjecting Penelope to unseemly treatment (Od. 1.365-66). Their behavior knows no limits as Telemachos points out to his newly-arrived guest

... τοὶ δὲ φθινύθουσι ἔδοντες  
οἶκόν ἐμὸν τάχα δὴ με διαπραΐγουσι καὶ αὐτόν.  
(Od. 1.250-51)

While any man might see the suitors' guilt for himself (Od. 1. 227-29) it is Athena who perceives the doom which awaits them:

τοῖος ἔων μνηστῆρσιν ὁμολήσειεν Ὀδυσσεύς  
πάντες κ' ὠκύμοροι τε γενοίατο, πικρὰ γαμοῖ τε.  
(Od. 1.265-66)

Their deeds have thus far gone unchallenged, but all that changes when Telemachos summons the people to Assembly.

Emboldened by Athena-Mentes Telemachos confronts the suitors and charges them with wasting his substance (Od. 2.55-58) and pressing their unwelcome suit upon his mother (Od. 2.50). Antinoos, however, rejects Telemachos' accusations and insolently declares

Τηλέμαχ' ὕψαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε, ποῖόν εἰπες  
ἡμέας αἰσχύνων, ἐθέλοις δέ κε μῶρον ἀνάψαι.  
σοὶ δ' οὐ τι μνηστῆρες Ἀχαιῶν αἴτιοί εἰσιν,  
ἀλλὰ φίλη μήτηρ, ἣ τοι περὶ κέρδεα οἶδεν.  
(Od. 2.85-88)

In open hostility Telemachos replies

ὁμέτερος δ' εἰ μὲν θυμὸς νεμεσίζεται αὐτῶν,  
ἔξιτέ μοι μεγάρων, ἅλλας δ' ἀλεγύνετε σαῖτας  
ὕμᾳ κτήματ' ἔδοντες ἀμειβόμενοι κατὰ οἴκους.  
(Od. 2.138-40)

and finally calls upon the everlasting gods for a παλίντιτα ἔργα (Od. 2.144), "then you may, unavenged, perish within the house".

At his words there immediately appear two eagles from Zeus flying down from the mountain peak. With much whirring of wings they wheel above the heads of the assembled

crowd with baneful eyes and, having torn each other's throats and cheeks, they fly away through the city (Od. 2.146-54). Both the portent and the  $\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha \pi\eta\nu\alpha$  (Od. 2.163) which Halitherses perceives in the omen reinforce the note of doom which Athena-Mentes had earlier sounded (Od. 1.265). The abuse and scorn (Od. 2.178-87) which Eurymachos heaps upon the seer, Halitherses, at his reading of the portent, emphasize the suitors' hybriatic nature and the destruction they are courting.

This Assembly, the first since Odysseus left "in his hollow ships" (Od. 2.26), brings the conflict between Telemachos and the suitors into the open and reveals, in a most vivid and dramatic fashion, the full consequences of Odysseus' absence. Not only has his wife been deprived of a husband's protection and his son of a father's support but the kingdom has lost its rightful lord and fallen into the hands of those who would usurp and exploit its power. Without Odysseus on the throne disorder and injustice prevail, for none of the people (Od. 2.239-41) has dared to stand against the suitors. The full extent of this disintegration of civic virtue is seen when the Assembly, called by Telemachos, is summarily dissolved by a scornful gesture from Laokritos (Od. 2.257).

Athena's visit to Ithaca has broken the unspoken deadlock between the suitors and Telemachos: the suitors' guilt and the ultimate destruction which awaits them are now clearly established though, as Athena-Mentes declares, "they neither perceive nor recognize the just death and black doom which is near them, to destroy them all in a day" (Od. 2.282-84). Clear also is the expectation that Odysseus' return is imminent and will mean punishment for the guilty, as Halitherses has warned:

οὐ γὰρ Ὀδυσσεύς  
 δὴν ἀπάνευθε φίλων ὧν ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ που ἤδη  
 ἔγγυς ἐὼν τοῖσδε σσι φόνον καὶ κῆρα φυτεύει  
 πάντεσσιν.

(Od. 2.163-66)

When the suitors discover that Telemachos has left Ithaca without their knowledge their insolence and overweening arrogance takes on a murderous intent. Now, not content merely to waste the substance of the house and press a reluctant bride they plan the assassination of the King's son and the usurpation of royal power:

ἄρξει καὶ προτέρω κακὸν ἔμμεναι· ἀλλὰ οἱ αὐτῷ  
 Ζεὺς ὀλέσειε βίην, πρὶν ἥβης μέτρον ἰκέσθαι.  
 ἀλλ' ἄγ' ἐμοὶ δότε νῆα θοὴν καὶ εἵκοσ' ἑταίρους,  
 ὅφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἰόντα λοχίσσομαι ἡδὲ φυλάξω  
 ἐν πορθμῷ Ἰθάκης τε Σάμοιό τε παιπαλοέσσης,  
 ὥς ἂν ἐπισμυγερῶς ναυτίλλεται εἵνεκα πατρός.

(Od. 4.667-72)

The pious and mannered societies of Pylos and Sparta, with their ritual sacrifices and dutiful hospitality, form striking contrasts to the hybris and disorder of life in Ithaca. Seeking news of his father, Telemachos learns at these courts of the quarrel which arose between Agamemnon and Menelaos when the sons of the Achaeans came to assembly of  $\nu\phi$   $\beta\epsilon\beta\alpha\pi\eta\omicron\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  (Od. 3.139), of Agamemnon's fatal return to Mycenae, of Menelaos' trials on his voyage home and of the fates of Aias and Odysseus.

The heroic examples of these narratives underline Zeus' declared principle with vivid proof of the consequences of offending the gods. Clearly, the Achaeans have incurred divine wrath by their rape of Cassandra (Od. 3.135; 4.502) and have paid dearly for their offences: Agamemnon has been murdered on his return home; Aias, being particularly hateful to Athena (Od. 4.502), has been destroyed by Poseidon for his presumptuous language (Od. 4.505); and Odysseus, despite his bold exploits in the city of Priam (Od. 4.242ff), and his endurance in the Wooden Horse (Od. 4.271ff), is now held  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\gamma\eta\eta$  by Calypso on her sea-girt island, helpless and alone -- virtual destruction for a hero. Menelaos himself has reached his homeland, but only with difficulty and after making propitiation to the gods (Od. 4.427ff). These stories with their repeated references to Agamemnon's fate (Od. 3.96-98, 205-07,

216; 4.525ff, 534ff) clearly confirm that principle of justice first proclaimed by Zeus: man's sufferings are the result of his own folly.

The Telemacheia presents a vivid picture of the guilt of the suitors and the general disorder of Ithaca; in addition it establishes through omen and prophecies the growing certainty that Odysseus will return, that he will punish the suitors and that he will do so with divine sanction. First, Athena-Mentes, with only a slight distortion of the truth, has revealed to Telemachos the imminent return of Odysseus from a "sea-girt island" where "dangerous, wild men hold him against his will". "Nor for long will he be absent from his beloved homeland", she declares, "not even if iron fetters hold him" (Od. 1.195ff). Later, in Book 2, in answer to the eagles sent by Zeus, Halitherses prophesies "for Odysseus will not long be absent from his family, but already, I imagine, he is near and planning murder and destruction for these" (Od. 2.163-66). Finally, in Book 4, Athena in the guise of Penelope's sister, Iphthime, brings this comfort to Odysseus' grieving wife: "Be of good cheer, do not be altogether too afraid in your heart. For so great an escort goes with him as other men pray to stand beside them, for Pallas Athena has power" (Od. 4.825-27).

Between the stories celebrating Odysseus' endurance and resourceful courage in Troy and the long account of the ill-fated returns of the Achaeans there stands a curious lion simile (Od. 4.335-40). Unlike his counterpart in the *ILIAD* this lion does not glorify the physical strength and daring courage of the hero, but rather reveals him as a terrible avenger who restores order and justice to his home. Almost as an allegory this simile draws together the motifs and themes of the *Telemacheia*, underlining the wholly unnatural and dangerous state of affairs in Ithaca, the oft-predicted punishment which awaits the hybristic suitors, and the now fully expected return of Odysseus. Both the context and focus of this simile point to the wider concerns of the *ODYSSEY*.

It is clear that the suitors have committed grave offences and that, in accordance with Zeus' declared principle, they are to be punished. All our attention now is focused upon Odysseus' return and the prophesied fate of the suitors at his hands.

## 2. THE APOLOGOI AND PHAIACIA

While the *Telemacheia* points forward to the return of Odysseus and his restoration of affairs in Ithaca the



focal point and interest of the Apologoi and Phaiacian episode lie rather in the past. We know already from the poet's proem that Odysseus' men perish as a result of their own presumptuous folly in eating the cattle of Hyperion Helios; we know, also, from Athena's complaints, that Odysseus lies helpless now on a sea-girt island at the earth's "mid-navel" center longing for his return. We even know from Zeus himself, in definite and concrete terms, why Odysseus is thus suffering:

ἀλλὰ Ποσειδάων γαίηχος ἀσκελὲς αἰὲν  
 Κύκλωπος κεχόλωται, ὃν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν,  
 ἀντίθεον Πολύφημον, ὅσου κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον  
 πᾶσιν Κυκλώπεσσι.

ἐκ τοῦ δὴ Ὀδυσσεὺς Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων  
 οὐ τι κατακτείνει, πλάττει δ' ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης.  
 (Od. 1.68-75)

The interest of the second section, therefore, lies not in the particular misfortunes of Odysseus and his men but rather, in light of Zeus' decrees of personal responsibility, in the character of their responses in the various adventures and in the choices they make, in the tension between impulse and reflection and the increasingly important role of knowledge in determining behavior. The Apologoi reveal in full and complete terms the consequences of human actions and the nature of man's responsibility: what it means to take more than one's allotted share, ὑπὲρ μόρον (Od. 1.35), and consequently to suffer beyond one's allotted fate, ὑπὲρ μόρον (Od. 1.34). Being framed by the Telemacheia and the *denouement* in Ithaca, the Apologoi point both backward and forward:

the recurring themes of hybris and hospitality underline the guilt of the suitors, while the fate of Odysseus' comrades prefigures their oft-predicted punishment.

The Apologoi have been the subject of many interpretations from the strictly concrete to the purely psychological. While Segal<sup>5</sup> describes the wanderings as a "return to humanity" and Høltmark<sup>6</sup> talks of the "spiritual rebirth" of Odysseus it seems clear, at the very least, that the adventures represent for Odysseus a time of testing, a time of development, or of change, if not a spiritual rebirth then a renewal. The experiences of Odysseus and his men reveal the limitations of the traditional heroic code: the failure of man stirred only by his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός to win honour and glory, and the importance of wider vision, fuller knowledge, of νόος, in a world which transcends the heroic values of physical strength and daring courage. While we must guard against too rigid a separation of the spheres of θυμός and νόος<sup>7</sup>, in a very real sense the Apologoi present the conflict between particular interests whose seat is θυμός and the wider concerns of which νόος is aware.

Although not in any conscious sense, Odysseus emerges from the world of the Apologoi with a new appreciation for the consequences of man's actions, a new awareness of human

responsibility and man's relation to the gods. Through his trials and sufferings Odysseus gradually loses all the outward signs of his heroic stature. All that is left to him of his former greatness are his heroic virtue of endurance and his proverbial resourcefulness and cunning -- so well attested in the stories which Helen and Menelaos repeat for Telemachos (Od. 4.249ff). As these qualities ensured his survival before in Troy, so now, again, they will become the well-springs of a new heroic spirit -- to answer not solely the promptings of θυμός, whose end is honour and glory of the individual and his family, but also the wider concerns of νόος, whose interest is the community at large. The discovery of the ODYSSEY is that it is not physical prowess alone, but physical prowess informed by knowledge and fortified with endurance, which will best serve the hero, to ensure his survival and secure his heroic stature within the community. The actualization of this potential for spiritual endurance, the metamorphosis of the hero from θυμός-centered warrior to νόος-guided king, is the development which Odysseus must and does undergo.

After leaving Troy Odysseus and his men come first to the land of the Kikones where they plunder and pillage the town, killing its inhabitants and taking booty. Failing to heed Odysseus' prudent advice to leave the shore they find

their victory feast routed by the unexpected return of the Kikones and their neighbours.


Later, after a stormy passage around Malea the Achaean fleet is driven by strong winds for nine days -- an interval, according to Lesky<sup>8</sup>, "sufficient to pass over into fairyland". Odysseus and his men now enter a manifestly unheroic world, "a never-never land" of violent and unexpected danger, strange and wondrous temptations, of monsters and witches and magic spells. Their first encounter with this unfamiliar world is in the land of the Lotophagoi where the men would succumb to a life of pleasure totally unbecoming a hero if Odysseus had not exerted his full authority and forced the expedition on its way.

Odysseus and his men next make land on the Island of Goats off the coast of the Cyclopes. Although the island offers all that the sailors need in the way of provisions Odysseus sets forth to explore the mainland and its inhabitants, to learn "who they are, whether they be violent and savage and unjust or hospitable and righteous" (Od. 9.174-76).

There is another reason for Odysseus' visit which becomes clear when the men reach the cave. Frightened by the evidence of what can only be the dwelling of a monster the

men urge Odysseus to take what he can and return quickly to his ship. However, Odysseus wishes not simply to learn what sort of man he is but, as a hero, he wishes to find out if he may receive *ξείνια* from him (*Od.* 9.229). Stanford<sup>9</sup> has characterized Odysseus' actions at this point as "inquisitive" and "acquisitive" but this is to cast them in an unjustifiably negative light. As Odysseus approaches the land of the Cyclopes he is every inch heroic man, moved by his *μεγαλήτωρ θυμός* to daring deeds of adventure, determined to have his rank and station recognized, his reputation and greatness accorded concrete and tangible tokens. The advice which his comrades offer, although prudent in the light of hindsight -- as Odysseus himself recognizes, could not possibly have been taken by the proud and victorious hero of Troy.

When the Cyclops does return Odysseus and his men discover, to their cost, that he is indeed *ὕβριστής τε καὶ ἄγριος οὐδὲ δίκαιος* for, far from making the customary offer of food to the strangers, Polyphemus eats his uninvited guests himself. This terrible perversion of the duties of hospitality is a vivid reminder of the abuse of hospitality in Ithaca where the suitors, in their greed and excess, are said to be consuming "the very substance of the house" of the host (*Od.* 1.248).



Here, in the Cyclops' cave, Odysseus' heroic desire for ξείνια has not only failed to secure for him honour and glory but has had, in fact, the opposite effect: it has brought him to a point of ἀμηχανίη (Od. 9.295), and to the brink of ruin and destruction. Having come to find out for himself "what sort of men they are" and to receive ξείνια, Odysseus is himself forced to answer the Cyclops' question ὦ ξείνοι, τίνας ἐστέ; (Od. 9.252) and to find his men are themselves taken as ξείνια for their monstrous host. Confined helplessly within the cave Odysseus must suppress the hero's immediate response, rising from his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός (Od. 9.299), to draw his sword and he must, instead, allow νόος<sup>10</sup> to devise a strategem, unheroic and inglorious though it be, to ensure his survival.

This is no longer a world in which heroic man may stand and fight, if not to win then, at least, to die honourably and gloriously. The world after Troy requires more of the hero than reckless courage and daring skill; no longer will these alone suffice to win him honour and glory, for in this world there are times when the hero can neither live with honour nor die with honour. In such situations survival becomes the primary concern and for that he must learn endurance. It is in order to survive that Odysseus, therefore, tells Polyphemus οὕτως ἐμολί γ' ὄνομα (Od. 9. 366), a literal

denial of his existence. Then, after blinding the Cyclops, he and his men are carried from the cave, clinging to the bellies of the sheep -- invisible, unseen and unknown -- heroic man in defeat.

But Odysseus' heroic spirit is not to be so easily quashed nor θυμός so quickly mastered. Full of pride and exultation at his escape he takes credit for blinding Polyphemus as though it were a divinely sanctioned deed he had committed:

καὶ λίην σέ γ' ἔμελλε κινήσεσθαι κακὰ ἔργα,  
σχέτλι', ἐπεὶ ξείνους οὐχ ἄζω σὺ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ  
ἐσθήμεναι· τῷ σε Ζεὺς τίσατο καὶ θεοὶ ἄλλοι.  
(Od. 9.477-79)

The escape achieved by νόος is all but lost when Odysseus hurls his boast

Κύκλωψ, αἶ κέν τίς σε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων  
ὀφθαλμοῦ εἴρηται ἀεικελίην ἀλαωτύν,  
φάσθαι Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι,  
υἱὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἔχοντα.  
(Od. 9.502-05)

Odysseus feels compelled to reveal his name not only to complete his act of vengeance, as Aristotle points out<sup>11</sup>, but, more importantly in this case, to restore his heroic self, his heroic identity so ignominiously denied in the cave. Ironically, it is by the revelation of his name, symbolic of the restoration of his heroic stature, that Polyphemus is given a vehicle for his fatal curse:

Κλῦθι, Ποσειδάων γαλήνοχε, κυανοχαῖτα·  
 εἰ ἔτερόν γε σός εἰμι, πατήρ δ' ἐμός εὖχεαι εἶναι,  
 δός μῃ Ὀδυσσῆα πολίπορθον οἴκαδ' ἱκέσθαι.  
 υἱὸν Λαέρτew, Ἰθάκῃ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἔχοντα.  
 ἀλλ' εἰ οἱ μοῖρ' ἐστὶ φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι  
 οἴκον εὐκτίμενον καὶ ἔην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,  
 ὅψε κακῶς ἔλθοι, ὀλέσας ἀπο πάντας ἑταῖρους,  
 νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίης, εὖροι δ' ἐν πῆματι οἴκῳ.  
 (Od. 9.528-35)

Not only has Odysseus incurred the anger of Poseidon but, it would appear, the wrath of Zeus also. For, as Odysseus himself recounts, when he offers the customary sacrifice back in safety on the Island of Goats Zeus

. . . οὐκ ἐμπάζετο ἱρῶν,  
 ἀλλ' ἄρα μερμήριζεν ὅπως ἀπολοίαιτο πᾶσαι  
 νῆες εὐσσελμοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ ἐρίηρες ἑταῖροι.  
 (Od. 9.553-55)

On the Cyclops episode Lloyd-Jones<sup>12</sup> writes:

(Odysseus, has indeed) offended one powerful god, Poseidon, but not by an action which in the eyes of Zeus and Justice is a crime; he blinds his son Polyphemos in self-defense. Polyphemos has ignored the themistes and scorned the gods, but Odysseus has been guilty of no worse offense than indiscretion in insisting on exploring the country of the Cyclopes and vanity in telling his defeated opponent his true name.

From the first assembly of the gods (Od. 1.68ff) we have known that Odysseus' sufferings are the result of Poseidon's anger at the blinding of his son, Polyphemos. What is less clearly shown is why both Poseidon and Zeus are so angry, why Odysseus has been made to suffer so harshly if, as Lloyd-Jones insists, he is guilty of "no worse offense" than "indiscretion"



and "vanity". The nature of Odysseus' offence and of the divine wraths thus provoked is a matter of fundamental importance to the concept of divine justice and the divine-human relationship envisaged by the poet of the ODYSSEY -- and for this reason deserves further attention.

Although Zeus himself has connected Odysseus' sufferings with Poseidon's anger for Polyphemos Bradley<sup>13</sup> has recently argued that Odysseus' punishment cannot reasonably be attributed solely to Poseidon's anger for the blinding of Polyphemos, that the disasters which dog his journey after leaving the land of the Cyclopes cannot be explained simply as the vengeance of Poseidon for his son. Certainly Poseidon appears to answer Polyphemos' prayer (Od. 9.536) but Bradley urges us to consider a further source of the god's anger than the blinding of the Cyclops.

As Odysseus and his men retreat to the Island of Goats the Cyclops stands on the shore vainly hurling rocks and boulders. At one point he declares that he is the son of the great Earth-Shaker and if the god wishes he, and he alone, will heal his eye (Od. 9.518-21). To this Odysseus cries out boldly:

αἶ γὰρ δὴ ψυχῆς τε καὶ αἰῶνός σε θρναίμην  
 εὖνιν ποιήσας πέμψαι δόμον Ἄϊδος εἶσω,  
 ὥς οὐκ ὀφθαλμόν γ' ἴησεται οὐδ' ἐνοσίχθων.  
 (Od. 9.523-25)

Would that I might strip you of life and spirit  
and dispatch you to the House of Hades, as surely  
as not even the Earth-Shaker shall ever heal your  
eye.<sup>14</sup>

In taunting Polyphemus Odysseus has, according to Bradley, violated the honour of Poseidon himself; he has overstepped the limit set to man by pitting himself and his mortal strength against that of a god. It is for this transgression against his honour that Poseidon is so angry with Odysseus; it is for this violation that Poseidon's mighty anger is roused to drive Odysseus the length and breadth of the sea.

Odysseus has clearly offended Poseidon, but he has done more than that. By claiming (Od. 9.479) that Zeus and the other gods have blinded Polyphemus as punishment for violating the laws of hospitality Odysseus has assumed for his deed a divine sanction which was never given. Here is the most extreme instance of man taking more than his share -- ὑπὲρ μέρος -- to presume to be the agent of divine justice. While it is for the taunting of the god himself as well as for the blinding of Polyphemus that Odysseus incurs the wrath of Poseidon and is "made to wander far from his homeland", it is for his presumptuous folly in ascribing his deed to the gods that Zeus is angry with Odysseus and refuses his sacrifice<sup>15</sup>.

There can be no doubt, as Bradley<sup>16</sup> points out, that after their encounter with the Cyclops there is a dramatic and significant change in the fortunes of Odysseus and his men which can only be attributed to the effect of Polyphemus' curse and the wrath of the gods. Although they are welcomed at the court of Aiolus with every mark of respect and hospitality and leave with a sack in which are contained all the winds, the crew becomes jealous and curious and unties the bag while Odysseus is unaccountably drowsing. The Winds all rush forth and the ships are blown back to Aiolia. King Aiolus takes their unexpected return as a sign that Odysseus is ἀθανάτοισιν ἀπεχθόμενος (Od. 10.75) and refuses them further help: Poseidon's wrath is now at work. This little episode is a vivid example not only of the cost of folly, ἀφραδία (Od. 10.27), but, in a wider sense, of the consequences of divine anger.

After leaving Aiolia the second time Odysseus and his men meet with one disaster after another. In the deceptive safety of the Laistrygonian harbour (Od. 10.124ff) all but one of the Achaean ships are lost when the Laistrygonians fall upon the men and spear them "like fish". Odysseus alone, and accidentally, it seems, is able to draw his sharp sword from his side, in the manner of a traditional hero, to cut the cables of his ship and make good his escape. Later, on

the island of Aiaia, when Circe turns an advance party of Achaeans into pigs and shuts them in her sty, Odysseus is only able to render the sorceress powerless and secure the release of his comrades by drawing his sword because Hermes, with the help of the μῶλυ, has made him proof against her charms.

In this new and unfamiliar world traditional values and responses seem strangely out of place and ineffective. At the risk of oversimplifying the problem it is clear that, in order to survive, the hero must learn to deny his traditional impulsive reactions, springing as they do from his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός, and he must learn to consider what each situation requires. For Odysseus to have given way to his heroic pride in the Cyclops' cave and to have drawn his sword against the monster, ἐκ θυμοῦ, would have been a deed of folly securing for him and his men not honour and glory but an inglorious and unheroic death shut up in a cave. However, at the mouth of the Laistrygonian harbour to draw his sword from his side obviously made good sense and was the only way in which he might secure the safety of even one ship and its crew. In the one case, the gesture committed in defense of personal pride, ἐκ θυμοῦ, would have missed its end and had the opposite effect; in the other, the same gesture, though it served in traditional terms, an unheroic end, i.e. retreat,

in fact secured if not honour and glory, at least survival.

To the hero in the traditional world the need to win honour and glory was all important and, if needs be, he would sacrifice his own life and that of his comrades to achieve them. For the hero there existed only two alternatives: to live with honour or to die in glory. Such a choice, however, no longer exists in the non-heroic world. Here man may have neither the opportunity to live honourably nor to die honourably. This was the dilemma which faced Odysseus in the cave of the Cyclops. In such cases survival must be the chief concern, outweighing all considerations of honour and glory, for failure to survive, in fact, denies the hero any chance he may have of winning honour and glory later.

In these and the following adventures the gesture of the drawn sword may be taken as symbolic of the hero's traditional ἀρετή. The interest now lies in the spirit behind that gesture, the ground from which that spirit rises and the hero's growing awareness of the choices involved. When the hero acts ἐκ θυμοῦ and without reflection he responds instinctively, desiring only the immediate glorification of individual pride; his νόος, however, considers the merits of each situation in the light of a larger end, beyond the immediate interest of the moment. While at one time νόος

may counsel against the drawing of the sword, at another time it may advise the same gesture. Clearly, it is not the gesture itself which fails to secure man's honour and glory but man's perception of the individual situation which proves erroneous.

The Circe adventure shows the traditional hero's limited perceptions and the disastrous consequences of ignorance. When Odysseus' men find Circe's house guarded by λύκοι ὀρέστεροι ἢ δὲ λέοντες (Od. 10.218) they start back in fear. For them a lion is a beast of might and strength and, therefore, to be feared; they perceive not how these animals, in this particular situation ". . . fawn about them as dogs about a master coming from a feast" (Od. 10.216-17). Odysseus' men tremble before the harmless beasts unaware of the real danger which the goddess presents, and when she bids them enter "they all together in ignorance followed her" (Od. 10.231). Clearly, in the non-heroic world responses made in ignorance reduce man to a state of helplessness. The place of θυμός-centered man in this world is vividly caught in these similes with their recurring images of helplessness: the Cyclops smashes Odysseus' men on the ground ὡς σκύλακας (Od. 9.289), the Laistrygonians spear the Achaeans in their harbour ἰχθύς ὥς (Od. 10.124), and Circe turns them into pigs (Od. 10.237) who must grovel for their food οἷα σῦες χαμαιευ-

ὄδους. So also, like bait for fish, will his men appear to Odysseus (Od. 12.251) when Scylla snatches them into her yawning maw.

Odysseus' visit to the underworld awakens memories of his home and family; seeing the shade of his mother, he longs for news of the father and son he left behind (Od. 11.174), to hear of his wedded wife. From this point his wanderings truly become returns, his choices determined by his newly-revived love of home and family. Indeed, Teiresias' prophecy itself is couched in language to appeal to Odysseus' latent sense of family devotion

δήεις δ' ἐν πῆματα οἴκῳ,  
 ἄνδρας ὑπερφιάλους, οἳ τοι βίοντον κατέδουσι  
 μνώμενοι ἀντιθέην ἄλοχον καὶ ἔδνα διδόντες.  
 ἀλλ' ἦ τοι κείνων γε βίας ἀποτόσσαι ἐλθών.  
 (Od. 11.115-18)

Teiresias' vision, embracing the world of the Apologoi and the reality of Ithaca, encompasses all as a continuous, implicit sequence of cause and effect. Moving from Odysseus' original offence against the powerful god of the sea (Od. 11.101) to the final propitiation required of him (Od. 11.120) the prophecy is framed by the massive figure of Poseidon. The presence of Poseidon here, the most heroic of the gods, the great θυμός-centered figure of the divine world, emphasizes the essential nature of the old heroic

world and the men who moved across its stage. Traditional heroism encouraged a hero to yield freely to the promptings of his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός. Proud of his skill, keen to prove his strength, a hero rose up immediately to answer the call to battle, to follow the scent of danger, and avenge the stain upon his honour. Teiresiās' critical direction to Odysseus, . . . σὸν θυμὸν ἐρυκαλέειν καὶ ἐταίρων (Od. 11.105), thus marks a significant change of focus for the hero. In the world beyond Troy no longer may a hero freely and with impunity give way to his θυμός. As we have seen in the Cyclops adventure, such impetuous behavior can no longer be trusted to bring honour and glory upon a man. Now the hero is bid to restrain his θυμός lest he overreach himself and offend the gods.

After his encounter with Teiresias and the explicit warning of his prophecy Odysseus is visited by the shades of both the Blessed Dead and the Dead in Torment, each one a vivid and dramatic reminder of the consequences of divine approbation or divine anger.

Following their return from the Underworld Odysseus and his men are destined to face new trials and sufferings. The Sirens, Circe warns, will make a man forget his wife and children if he approaches them ἀλδρεῖν (Od. 12.41). The



Sirens' appeal is not to the physical senses, as was that of the Lotophagoi, but to the intellect; by turning his thoughts to his heroic past they threaten to undermine Odysseus' newly-awakened desire for home and family. No show of strength or force will be of any use; to survive Odysseus must endure.

Despite Circe's warning that Scylla is an ἀθάνατον κακόν (Od. 12.118) and that he must "yield to the immortal gods" (Od. 12.116-17) when they do draw near the dread monster Odysseus prefers to don full armour and stand at the prow ready to engage the enemy and defend his comrades. Not surprisingly, in this world, such efforts are to no avail. This scene of Odysseus in full armour confronting the monster becomes an emblem of the futility of traditional heroism in an unheroic world.

From the opening passage of the poem Thrinakia has portended ultimate and complete destruction for Odysseus' men, and, since his visit to the Underworld, Odysseus has himself walked in its long shadow. When his crew reject his plea to sail on past the fatal island and avoid the αἰνότατον κακόν (Od. 12.275) Odysseus finally acknowledges the doom which awaits them, καὶ τότε δὴ γίνωσκον ὃ δὴ καὶ μήδεο δαίμων (Od. 12.295)

Thrinakia presents an image of *θυμός*-centered man reduced to the unheroic, natural state, at the mercy of nature within and nature without. Marooned on the island with their supplies running out the men turn to hunting and fishing. At length, yielding to Eurylochos' persuasive arguments and the "hunger which tore at their bellies" (*Od.* 12.332), the men slaughter the cattle of Helios improvising a sacrificial feast from the materials at hand. Because the men have sworn a mighty oath (*Od.* 12.303) not to harm the cattle of Helios their slaughter of the animals is not only an offence against the god Helios, but, more importantly, a violation of the *τιμή* of Zeus who protects the sanctity of oaths. Zeus responds immediately to Helios' prayer (*Od.* 12.377ff), vowing

τῶν δέ κ' ἐγὼ τάχα νῆα θοὴν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ  
 τυτθὰ βαλὼν κείσασιν μέσφ' ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ.  
 (*Od.* 12.387-88)

and his anger is terrifyingly confirmed in the creeping skins and lowing flesh of the slaughtered animals (*Od.* 12.395-96).

The fate of both Odysseus and his men has been known from the first lines of the poem. After leaving Thrinakia a terrible storm arises in which Odysseus loses his ship and his men and only just escapes himself, a second time, the terrors of Scylla and Charybdis to be tossed up finally on the island of Ogygia. The focus of this final adventure,

therefore, must lie not in the men's actual slaughter of the cattle, nor in their ultimate fate, but in the contrast between the characterization of Odysseus, who survives, and that of his comrades, who perish. On Thrinakia Odysseus' men fail their final test of endurance when they fail to heed his warnings not to harm the cattle of Hyperion Helios. Their fate is dramatic confirmation of Zeus' principle of justice proclaimed before the gods in the first divine assembly. Odysseus' men perish as a consequence of "their own reckless folly" in yielding to persuasion and hunger heedless of the warnings of their leader. Aigisthos also willfully disregarded the warning of Hermes and married Clytemnestra, and so Zeus declared that he perished "for his own reckless folly". Odysseus, however, is not destroyed by the Thrinakian episode for he alone has the necessary strength or endurance to heed the advice of Teiresias that they not lay hands upon the sacred cattle of the god, Helios.

The adventures of the Apologoi have shown that in this new world the unreflective heroic responses are insufficient to ensure man's honour and glory, that endurance, both physical and spiritual, and vision are now equally important components of the hero's ἀρετή. On Ogygia we see Odysseus at the extreme point of his sufferings, the great πολυμήχανος hero of the Trojan war stripped of all but his

capacity to endure, πολυτλήμων. As he "sits upon the shore, in tears, gazing upon the barren sea" (Od. 5.156-58) his posture of helpless despair presents a striking contrast to his earlier skill and resourcefulness from which derive the epithets which still adorn his name (Od. 5.203,214). Yet, it is here, when all hope of return seems lost, that Odysseus knows the love of home and family as his greatest desire. Despite Calypso's offer of immortality in her Paradise Odysseus freely chooses his return, though it be a journey of suffering, and he declares without hesitation

ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς ἐθέλω καὶ ἐέλδομαι ἥματα πάντα  
οἴκαδ' εἴ τ' ἐλθέμεναι καὶ νόστιμον ἥμαρ ἰδέσθαι.  
εἰ δ' αὖ τις ῥαίησι θεῶν ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ,  
τλήσομαι ἐν στήθεσσι νύχθ' ἔχων ταλαπενθέα θυμόν.  
(Od. 5.219-22)

Phaiacia stands, both chronologically and spiritually, between the world of the Apologoi and the realm of Ithaca, paying honour to both Poseidon and Athena. Thus, Phaiacia's role is crucial not only in Odysseus' return to Ithaca but also, in a wider sense, in the development of the ODYSSEY's central theme of Zeus' justice. As Poseidon knows full well, once Odysseus reaches the land of the Phaiacians "he is destined to escape the great end of misery" (Od. 5.288-89); and, indeed, it is in Phaiacia that Odysseus, for the first time in ten years, encounters a civilized community where, as Zeus foretold (Od. 5.36), he is honoured like a god,

recognized as a hero and accorded all the marks and privileges of his status. However, to the extent that the ODYSSEY is about the characterization of divine justice, it is also about Athena and Poseidon. Phaiacia clearly marks the limit of Poseidon's influence and the boundary of his world but it also represents a certain limit for Athena. The consequences arising from this meeting of their worlds in Phaiacia sheds important light upon the natures of these two powerful figures and upon the nature of divine justice in general.

To Poseidon the Phaiacians owe their skill and renown as sailors and in his name they keep a fine *áyopá*<sup>17</sup> (Od. 6.266). Through both their king, Alcinoos, and their queen, Arete, the Phaiacians trace their descent from Poseidon. They still remember a harsher time when they lived near the Cyclopes (Od. 6.4)<sup>18</sup>.

To Athena, on the other hand, the Phaiacians owe their skill as weavers (Od. 7.109ff) and, more importantly, their present sense of community and civic virtue. While the Cyclopes, live in isolated family groups having neither *áyopá* nor ships nor craftsmen, the Phaiacians have both a city with walls and an *áyopá*, as well as a harbour and ships (Od. 7.43ff)<sup>19</sup>. The Cyclopes care nothing for the gods and scorn the laws of hospitality (Od. 9.275-76); the Phaiacians,

however, are pious; they honour all who come to their land and receive strangers and beggars as "from Zeus" (Od. 6.207).

For the Phaiacians Arete embodies an ideal of civic virtue whose echo is heard again in Hesiod's characterization of the ἐχέφρων βασιλεύς "to whom the people all look as he determines the principles of justice with straight decisions; . . . he puts an end to great disputes; . . . and they appease him like a god when he enters the assembly" (Th. 84-92). So do the Phaiacians view Arete

. . . οἳ μιν ῥα θεὸν ὥς εἰσορόωντες  
 δειδέχεται μύθοισιν, ὅτε στείλῃσ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ.  
 οὐ μὲν γάρ τι νόου γε καὶ αὐτῇ δεύεται ἐσθλοῦ  
 οἷσιν τ' εὖ φρονέσῃ καὶ ἀνδράσι νείκεα λύει.  
 (Od. 7.71-74)

So does she declare of Odysseus: ξείνος δ' αὖτ' ἐμός ἐστιν, ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς (Od. 11.338). It is no coincidence that Athena sends Odysseus to her knees to entreat an escort to his beloved homeland (Od. 7.75-77).

The presence of both Poseidon and Athena in Phaiacia lends a curious duality to its society which represents an early, though unsuccessful, attempt to reconcile their opposed interests. The attempt fails, however, because, in the final analysis, the Phaiacians cannot honour one of the gods without offending the other: if they fulfill, as they do, their civic duty and grant Odysseus passage home they arouse the anger of Poseidon; if, on the other hand,

they were to respect Poseidon's wrath and refuse Odysseus his request, they would violate their civic responsibilities and offend Athena. Clearly, Athena's concerns, though wider than Poseidon's, still represent only a limited, particular view and are, therefore, insufficient to promote or sustain a common interest between them. Nevertheless, Athena's presence does have a profound effect upon the Phaiacian people, reducing the harsher aspects of their natures and heritage to the level of a folk-memory while promoting communal interests, civic duties and responsibilities.

The Song of Ares and Aphrodite, the second of the three songs which punctuate the Phaiacian episode, is important for the characterization of Zeus in the ODYSSEY. Critical opinion has traditionally regarded this song as a light-hearted interlude, a diverting interruption, following the drama of the *áywv* but bearing no relation to its context or to a wider view. While recent commentators have begun to suggest other interpretations<sup>20</sup> for the present discussion one aspect of the song outweighs all others -- the absence of Zeus. Despite Hephaistos' appeal to "Father Zeus and the rest of the ever-living gods" to come and see the ridiculous and unseemly sight of Ares and Aphrodite caught in the iron mesh (*Od.* 8.306-07), Zeus does not, in fact, join the other gods about the bed of Hephaistos. Poseidon and Hermes and

Apollo (Od. 8.322-23) are there; the goddesses (Od. 8.324) are not, as befits their modesty, and Zeus is conspicuous by his absence. There is in the ODYSSEY a certain aloofness about the character of Zeus, a certain distance between him and the other Olympians, which this episode vividly supports. The laughter of the gods about the bed of Hephaistos reminds us of the laughter in Heaven in ILIAD 1.595ff when all the gods and goddesses, including Zeus, were gathered together. Zeus is very much a part of that occasion and, presumably, the merriment. In Zeus' absence from the gathering about the bed of Hephaistos the gods are shown not only as frivolous in the extreme but as figures of the greatest particularity. Traditionally, action in the divine sphere underlines or comments upon action on the human stage. On this occasion Demodocus' song seems to be particularly significant for the characterization of Athena and Poseidon in Phaiacia. The absence of Zeus from the divine scene reveals the division which exists between the gods and the full extent of the individual interests which prevail among them. So also, in Phaiacia, without Zeus, Athena and Poseidon continue to pursue their limited ends for which no true reconciliation is possible.

Apart from its significance for the greater theme of justice, for Odysseus, personally, Phaiacia represents an



important and necessary step in his return to Ithaca. Not only does it mark the end of Poseidon's harassment (Od. 5. 288-89) but, more importantly, it is in Phaiacia that he is restored to his full heroic stature. It is important that Odysseus return to Ithaca a hero, in reality if not in appearance, for only then may his punishment of the suitors be more than the restoration of personal honour; only then, having already regained his accustomed heroic identity, may he become a hero of a different stamp.

After twenty days at sea Odysseus is washed up naked and alone upon the Phaiacian shores, in every sense deheroized man, stripped of all his former glory<sup>21</sup>. With only a bed of leaves to comfort him he spends his first night in Scheria unnoticed and unknown. The spontaneous piety of Nausikaa's greeting next morning,

πρὸς γὰρ Διὸς εἰσιν ἅπαντες  
 ξεῖνοί τε πτωχοί τε, δόσις δ' ὀλίγη τε φίλη τε.  
 (Od. 6. 207-08)

and the food and bath she offers mark his return to the civilized world in a most basic and fundamental way. Although Nausikaa knows not his true identity, whether he is a ξεῖνος or πτωχός, as a result of her ministrations he is at least now no longer unnoticed and unknown<sup>22</sup>.

Transformed by these rites of hospitality Odysseus eventually makes his way to the court of Alcinóos and Arete and next day finds himself the center of interest in the ἀγών. Marking his sturdy limbs and deep chest the young Phaiacians press him time and again to try his hand at the contests. Reluctant at first, Odysseus rises to the final taunt, οὐδ' ἀθλητῆρι ἔοικας, with clouded brow (Od. 8.164-65) and leaping up cloak and all he hurls the discus far beyond the cast of the others (Od. 8.192). While his skill marks him as no ordinary shipwrecked seaman it is his attitude in victory which reflects his new heroic virtue and presents such a striking contrast to his behavior in the Cyclops' adventure. There it was his appropriation of divine sanction for blinding the Cyclops which greatly offended Zeus. Now, with justifiable pride, and becoming caution, he declares, "I am by far the best of all mortals upon the earth, but I am unwilling to vie with earlier men, with Heracles or Eurytos . . . who would equal the immortals with their bows". Despite great provocation, Odysseus has met this test not only with skill but also with endurance and restraint. Here is no word ὑπὲρ μέτρον to offend the gods and rouse their indignation. On the contrary, Odysseus shows himself clearly aware of the ruin which awaits a man who sets himself against the gods, and now, therefore, he claims for himself only that δοῦρι δ' ἀκοντίζω ὅσον οὐκ ἄλλος τις ὄνσῃ (Od. 8.229).

Odysseus arrived in Phaiacia, stripped of all that constituted his heroic stature: high-spirited comrades and a well-built fleet, glorious arms and goodly treasure. Yet, it is then, and only then it seems, when his fortunes are at their lowest point, that he may begin to reassert successfully his true heroic stature -- not by the heroic gesture ἐκ θυμοῦ, but by the restraint of justly outraged feelings and the exhibition of great physical prowess. It is this combination of restraint and physical skill which wins for him the true recognition and honour of a hero in Phaiacia. Thus does he leave Phaiacia richly endowed with γέρα-ξέβνια, his heroic identity restored in fact and in substance.

### 3 ITHACA - THE DENOUEMENT

Though the Phaiacians leave him on the shores of Ithaca resplendent in all the trappings of his new status (Od. 13.118-20) Odysseus is, destined by the plan of Athena to enter his palace alone, unarmed and in the guise of a beggar, to face insult and abuse on all sides before he may claim his kingdom and his wife:

ἀλλ' ἄγε σ' ἄγνωστον τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι·  
 κάρψω μὲν χρῶα καλὸν ἐνὶ γναμπτοῖσι μέλεσσι,  
 ξανθὰς δ' ἐκ κεφαλῆς ὀλέσω τρίχας, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαῖφος  
 ἔσσω ὃ κε στυγέησιν ἰδὼν ἀνθρώπος ἔχοντα,  
 κνυζώσω δέ τοι ὅσσε πάρος περικαλλέ' ἔόντε,

ὥς ἂν ἀεικέλιος πᾶσι μνηστῆρσι φανήης  
 σὴ τ' ἀλόχῳ καὶ παιδί, τὸν ἐν μεγάροισιν ἔλειπες.  
 (Od. 13.397-403)

Since we know from Teiresias (Od. 11.118) and Athena (Od. 13.376) that Odysseus will slay the suitors and regain his royal power the interest of the last half of the poem must lie, again, not in the end itself but in the manner of its accomplishing. How is Odysseus, so sorely diminished, to slay a company of young and violent men? This problem puzzles Odysseus himself (Od. 13.385), and even after he reaches the palace he still asks Athena

ὅπως δὴ μνηστῆρσιν ἀναιδεσι χεῖρας ἐφήσω,  
 μοῦνος ἑὼν· οἳ δ' αἶν ἀολλέες ἔνδον ἔασι.  
 (Od. 20.39-40)

In the light of his previous adventures the slaying of the suitors presents another difficulty: how can Odysseus fulfill Teiresias' oracle, ἀλλ' ἢ τοι κείνων γε βίας ἀποτίσσαι ἐλθὼν (Od. 11.118), and Athena's explicit injunction, πρᾶξο ὅπως μνηστῆρσι ἀναιδέσι χεῖρας ἐφήσεις (Od. 13.376), without incurring the wrath of Zeus as he did after blinding the Cyclops. Since it was the spirit of his motivation which caused offence in the Cyclops' episode, we must consider the spirit of Odysseus' behavior in Ithaca to determine his present relation to the divine will.

In every encounter from the swineherd's hut to the palace of Ithaca, as disguised beggar or restored king, as

father or master, Odysseus displays a steadfast restraint and firm resolve which reflect his new vision of the divine-human relationship. Thus does he explain the change in his appearance to Telemachos:

αὐτὰρ τοι τόδε ἔργον Ἀθηναίης ἀγελείης,  
ἧ τέ με τοῖον ἔθηκεν ὅπως ἐθέλει, δύνάται γάρ,  
ἄλλοτε μὲν πτωχῷ ἐναλίγκιον, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε  
ἀνδρὶ νέῳ καὶ καλὰ περὶ χροῦ εἶματ' ἔχοντι.  
ῥηϊδίον δὲ θεοῖσι, τοῖ σὺρανὸν εὐρύν ἔχουσιν,  
ἡμὲν κυδῆναι θηντὸν βροτὸν ἡδὲ κακῶχαι.  
(Od. 16.207-12)

When the goat-herd kicks him from the path (Od. 17.233) as he travels to the palace Odysseus debates whether to slay him with his stick or dash his head against the ground, but in the end ἐπετόλμησε, φρεσὶ δ' ἔσχετο (Od. 17.238). In the palace, itself, Odysseus faces insults and physical abuse from Antinoos but he only stands "like a rock", steadfast, ἀλλ' ἀκέων κίνησε κάρη, κακὰ βυσσοδομεύων (Od. 17.465).

When Iros, the πανδήμιος πτωχός (Od. 18.1), would thrust him from the door Odysseus only scowls and says he meant no harm (Od. 18.15); when their quarrel comes to blows Odysseus debates whether to strike him dead on the spot or simply knock him to the ground, but finally

ὦδε δέ οἱ φρονέοντι δοῦσατο κέρδιον εἶναι,  
ἦκ' ἐλάσαι, ἵνα μὴ μιν ἐπιφρασσάιαιτ' Ἀχαιοί.  
(Od. 18.93-4)

When Melantho, the serving girl, declares him mad to linger in the dangerous company of the haughty suitors (Od. 18.327) Odysseus contents himself with a scowl (Od. 18.337) and a

threat (Od. 18.338-39). Later, lying in the porch as the serving maids go out to the suitors, Odysseus "ponders many things in his heart and soul", whether to kill them there and then or to allow them for one last time to lie with the overweening suitors (Od. 20. 11-13). Finally, he consoles his "barking heart"

τέτλαθι δῆ, κραδίη· καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης,  
ἥματι τῷ ὅτε μοι μένος ἀσχετος ἦσθις, Κύκλωψ  
ιφθίμους ἐτάρους· σὺ δ' ἐτόλμας, ὄφρα σε μῆτις  
ἐξάγῃ, ἐξ ἀντροῖο ὀϊόμενον θανέεσθαι.

(Od. 20.18-21)

When Melanthios, the overweening goat-herd, taunts (Od. 20. 178-82) him and bids him be gone Odysseus makes no answer at all, ἀλλ' ἀκέων κίνησε κάρη, κακὰ βυσσοδομεύων (Od. 20. 184).

Perhaps the most significant and ironic of all the insults is that delivered by Ktesippos as he hurls a cow's foot at Odysseus saying

ἀλλ' ἄγε οἱ καὶ ἐγὼ δῶ ξείνιον, ὄφρα καὶ αὐτὸς  
ἦε λοετροχόῳ δῶν γέρας ἢ τῷ ἄλλῳ  
δμῶν, οἷ κατὰ δῶματ' Ὀδυσσεὺς θείοιο.

(Od. 20.296-98)

This striking juxtaposition of the central terms ξείνιον and γέρας draws an implicit connection between the Cyclops' adventure and Odysseus' return to his palace. Odysseus went to the Cyclops' cave in search of ξείνια which were to be for him a tangible recognition of his heroic stature.

In the palace in Ithaca Odysseus seeks neither ξείνια nor γέρα from the suitors but rather strives to efface his presence for the time-being. The ξείνιον-γέρας which Ktesippos forces upon him not only emphasizes Odysseus' present position as stranger in the Hall but also foreshadows the time when he will truly hold his γέρας. This act of insolence is the final variation on the theme of "hospitality abused". We have come full circle, it seems, from the suitors' disregard and neglect of the disguised goddess-unknown stranger, Athena-Mentes, through the dreadful perversion of Polyphemos who made a meal of his guests, finally to Ktesippos' insult and scornful treatment of the unknown stranger-disguised king.

In every encounter Odysseus' behavior is marked by physical restraint and spiritual endurance in striking contrast to his former ἐκ θυμοῦ responses to offence and danger. The fundamental nature of this change becomes apparent when we consider the verbs used to describe his reactions to the outrages. Nearly all denote mental, not physical, activity: ὑπόδρα ἰδών (Od. 17.459; 18.14, 337; 19.70), μερμήριξεν (Od. 17.235; 18.90; 20.10), ἐπετόλμησε (Od. 17.238), ἔσχετο (Od. 17.238), κίνησε κάρη κακὰ βυσσοδομεύων (Od. 17.465; 20.184), τέτλαθι (Od. 20.18).

Two episodes in this catalogue of trials deserve a second look. First, the fist-fight (Od. 18.91ff) promoted by the suitors between Iros and Odysseus. Though this is Odysseus' first opportunity to defend himself against the abuses and insults of the suitors and the "town beggar" he faces Iros moved not by wounded pride but by caution. Mindful always of his mission he chooses the less glorious alternative, to strike the beggar "just a little" in order not to compromise his greater task by an untimely discovery "if the Achaeans should notice him" (Od. 18.90). While his capacity to ponder both sides, (μερμήριξε, Od. 18.90) clearly springs from the same source as the ἕτερος θυμός<sup>23</sup> which struck him in the Cyclops' cave his calm restraint after knocking Iros to the ground marks the final triumph of νόος over θυμός. Odysseus' deliberate and purposeful victory over Iros emphasizes the suitors' lack of restraint as they γέλῳ ἔκθανον (Od. 18.100), and prefigures his destined victory over them.

Secondly, consider again the scene in the porch where Odysseus lies sleepless, watching the serving girls go out to the suitors. Never, it seems, since the night in the Cyclops' cave, has his power of endurance been so sorely tested. In his present trial he remembers that night and the memory of his endurance there becomes a model to



strengthen his resolve now. From this analysis it is clear that a direct and explicit relationship exists between every aspect of the Cyclops' adventure and the Denouement in Ithaca.

These tests of Odysseus' new virtue are punctuated at intervals by scenes of recognition, ἀναγνώριμοι, through which he is restored as father, master, king, husband and son. In every one of these encounters, also, he reveals the same spirit of restraint and control he has exhibited in the face of insult and injury. In the swineherd's hut, noting a wondrous change in the stranger's appearance, Telemachos averts his eyes as from a god, but Odysseus dismisses all his fears in this simple, unadorned assertion

οὐ τίς τοι θεός εἰμι· τί μ' ἀθανάτοισιν ἔτιοικας  
ἀλλὰ πατήρ τεός εἰμι, . . . . . (Od. 16.187-88)

Gone are the glorious epithets, gone the heroic attitude as he stands, father before son. Every utterance, every aspect of this scene reflects Odysseus' new spirit of restraint<sup>24</sup>, even as he cautions and exhorts Telemachos to a similar virtue

εἰ δέ μ' ἀτιμήσουσι δόμον κάτα, σὸν δὲ φίλον κῆρ  
τετλάτω ἐν στήθεσσι κακῶς πάσχοντος ἑμεῖο,  
ἦν περ καὶ διὰ δῶμα ποδῶν ἔλκωσι θύραζε  
ἢ βέλεσιν βάλλωσι· σὺ δ' εἰσορόων ἀνέχεσθαι.  
(Od. 16.274-77)

When Odysseus finds his old dog, Argos, still faithfully awaiting his master's return, though greatly affected he gives only the slightest sign of emotion as he wipes away a tear (Od. 17.304-05). We mark the same stern resolve in Odysseus' response to his nurse Eurykleia's discovery of his identity. When she would cry out with joy he takes her by the throat, draws her close with a caution, σίγα, μή τις τ' ἄλλος ἐνὶ μεγάροισι πύθεται (Od. 19.486), and then warns her ἄλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μῦθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσιν (Od. 19.502). Though Odysseus allows himself the luxury of tender emotion when Eumaios and Philoitios fall upon him in joyful recognition (Od. 21.223-25) he is the first to remember their present tenuous situation and to recall them to their task. Cautioning them not to arouse the suspicion of the suitors he bids them

παύεσθον κλαυθμοῦ γόοιο τε, μή τις ἴδῃται  
 ἐξελθὼν μεγάροιο, ἀτὰρ εἴπησι καὶ εἶσω.  
 ἀλλὰ προμνηστῖνοι ἐσέλθετε, μηδ' ἅμα πάντες,  
 πρῶτος ἐγὼ, μετὰ δ' ὅμιες.  
 (Od. 21.228-31)

The Phaiacians' recognition of Odysseus as hero, which we have noted, restored his heroic identity and his position within a civilized community. Now, these recognitions of him in Ithaca, as father, lord and master, have begun to restore his position within the οἶκος and, in fact, to reconstitute the order of the οἶκος<sup>25</sup> itself. But of all

Odysseus' encounters with his people perhaps the most significant is that with Eumaios in the swineherd's hut. Though Eumaios speaks and acts all unknowingly the emphatic repetition of the word ἀνάντα in the lines with which the poet frames their first encounter (Od. 14.36; 17.201) underlines the importance of this meeting and prefigures Eumaios' later conscious recognition of "his lord".

Odysseus' restraint in all these scenes attests to his new heroic attitude. He faces no crisis of leadership now with his mastery of his own θυμός reflected in the obedience he commands in his son, his servants and his old nurse. Odysseus is no longer moved solely by the limited interest of the situation nor the glorification of personal honour alone; his concerns how are the wider claims of the community and state, their interest is his good.

Before the actual slaying of the suitors Odysseus undergoes one final test -- the contest of the bow -- instituted by Athena (Od. 21.1-4) to confirm in Ithaca, in his own halls, Odysseus' restored heroic identity. It is important to point out that this restoration, an image of the earlier one in Phaiacia, is accomplished before the slaying of the suitors and in a separate context, that the slaying of the suitors may be more than a τίσις to restore

his heroic self. As in his other actions we mark again Odysseus' quiet control and mighty strength as he turns the bow this way and that (Od. 21.394) and, right from his stool (Od. 21.420), sends the arrow singing down the line of axe heads and out through the door (Od. 21.421-23). His only comment on this feat is a model of understatement:

Τηλέμαχ', οὐ σ' ὁ ξεῖνος ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐλέγχει  
 ἦμενος, οὐδέ τι τοῦ σκοποῦ ἡμβροταν οὐδέ τι τόξον  
 δὴν ἔκαμον τανύων· ἔτι μοι μένος ἐμπεδόν ἐστίν,  
 οὐχ ὥς με μνηστῆρες ἀτιμάζοντες ὄνονται.  
 (Od. 21.424-27)

There remains now the actual slaying of the suitors, prophesied by Teiresias and ordained by Athena as punishment for the suitors' ἀτασθαλία. Critical opinion has been traditionally divided on the question of the slaying of the suitors. While H. L. Levy<sup>26</sup> speaks of it as an "ultimate act of bloody violence" Whitman<sup>27</sup> comments that the ending of the ODYSSEY "... has resisted the efforts of the poet to moralize and universalize it"; that "... it is meant to be a re-establishment of right order but an orgy of bloody vengeance peers through the moral scheme". The central problem seems to be how the slaying of the suitors can be justified as anything more than an act of heroic τῖσις; how, in fact, it differs from the blinding of the Cyclops. To determine whether the slaying of the suitors is simply an act of heroic τῖσις or an act of divine justice we

must consider both the nature of the suitors' guilt and the character of Odysseus' reactions, the spirit in which he acts and the role he assumes.

First, the guilt of the suitors: common piety held that the rights of strangers and beggars and suppliants were divinely protected, that the duties of hospitality were the rites of Ζεύς Ξένιος and Ζεύς Ἰκετήσιος. There is no need to rehearse again the many instances in which the suitors have outraged common decency, scorning the rights of the house, abusing seers and minstrels and the stranger at the door. "They honour no man among those on earth" (Od. 23.65), Penelope declares, while Eumaios asserts

ἀτὰρ σιάλους γε σῶας μνηστῆρες ἔδουσιν,  
οὐκ ὀπιδα φρονέοντες ἐνὶ φρεσὶν οὐδ' ἐλεητύν.  
οὐ μὲν σχέτλια ἔργα θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέουσιν,  
ἀλλὰ δίκην τίουσι καὶ αἴσιμα ἔργ' ἀνθρώπων.  
(Od. 14.81-4)

These lines bring the suitors and their behavior within the context of divine justice and emphasize the true nature of the divine-human relationship implicit in Zeus' principle of human responsibility.

The suitors have offended the τιμή of Ζεύς Ξένιος and Ζεύς Ἰκετήσιος and will be punished. Every oracle, every portent, every prophecy has pointed to the doom which awaits the suitors on Odysseus' return. Halitherses has

declared that Odysseus "is near and devising murder and destruction for all" (Od. 2.165). Helen reveals that Odysseus will return home and exact punishment "as an eagle comes from the mountains and snatches away a goose which has been raised in the house" (Od. 15.174-77). The seer, Theoclymenos, declares to Penelope that Odysseus is already in his native land or coming near, and having learned of the evil deeds he will devise trouble for all the suitors (Od. 17.157-59).

The motif of prophecy and the sequence of oracles and omens which have appeared at significant moments throughout the poem reach a final explicit and ironic climax when Odysseus appears in Penelope's dream, saying

θάρσει, Ἰκαρίου κόρυη τηλεκλειτοῖο  
οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἐσθλόν, ὃ τοι τετελεσμένον ἔσται.  
χῆνες μὲν μνηστῆρες, ἐγὼ δέ τοι αἰετὸς ὄρνις  
ἦα πάρος, νῦν αὖτε τὸς πόσις εἰλήλουθα,  
ὃς πᾶσι μνηστῆρσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφήσω.  
(Od. 19.546-50)

Then, as disguised beggar, Odysseus offers himself as interpreter of her dream, saying

ὦ γύναι, οὗ πως ἔστιν ὑποκρίνασθαι ὄνειρον  
ἄλλη ἀποκλίναντ', ἐπεὶ ἡ ῥά τοι αὐτὸς Ὀδυσσεύς  
πέφραδ' ὅπως τελέει· μνηστῆρσι δὲ φαίνεται ὄλεθρος  
πᾶσι μάλ', οὐδέ κέ τις θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξει.  
(Od. 19.555-58)

Such is the situation of the suitors: they have committed grievous acts of ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία for which they are to be punished. What of Odysseus?

Those who characterize the slaying of the suitors as an act of "bloody violence" (Levy), of "bloody vengeance" (Whitman) do so with some justification. Notwithstanding the suitors' guilt there is a definite equivocal aspect to Odysseus' deed, an aspect which the poet himself has underlined in the cluster of similes which enlarge these passages of the actual slaying. In the midst of the account of the slaying we find these lines:

οἱ δ' ἐφέβοντο κατὰ μέγαρον βόες ὥς ἀγελαῖαι  
 τὰς μὲν τ' αἰόλος οἷστος ἐφορμηθεὶς ἐδόνησεν  
 ὦρην ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τ' ἥματα μακρὰ πέλονται.  
 οἱ δ' ὥς τ' αἰγυπιοὶ γαμφώνυχες ἀγκυλοχεῖλαι  
 ἐξ ὀρέων ἐλθόντες ἐπ' ὀρνίθεσσι θόρωσι.  
 ταῖ μὲν τ' ἐν πεδίῳ νέφεα πτώσσουσιν ἱένται,  
 οἱ δέ τε τὰς ὀλέκουσιν ἐπάλμενοι, οὐδέ τις ἀλκή  
 γίγνεται οὐδέ φυγή.

(Od. 22.299-306)

The picture here presents a double comparison likening the suitors to βόες ἀγελαῖαι and Odysseus, Telemachos, the swineherd and cowherd to αἰγυπιοὶ γαμφώνυχες. These images of cattle "fleeing in fright upon the plain" and the vulture "leaping upon them with destruction" mark the fierce character of the avengers and the helplessness of the suitors, in contrast to their former characterization.

The second simile in this group depicts the fallen suitors as fish heaped up upon the shore

οὕς θ' ἀλιῆς  
 κοῖλον ἐς αἰγιαλὸν πολιῆς ἐκτοσθε, θαλάσσης  
 δικτύῳ ἐξέρυσαν πολυπῶν οἱ δέ τε πάντες.

κύμαθ' ἄλός ποθέοντες ἐπὶ ψαμάθοισι κέχυνται·  
 τῶν μὲν τ' Ἥελιος φαέθων ἐξείλετο θυμόν·  
 ὥς τότε ἄρα μνηστῆρες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι κέχυντο.  
 (Od. 22.384-89)

These images point back to the violent deeds of the Laistrygonians who speared Odysseus' men "as fish" (Od. 10.121), and to the Scylla adventure when Odysseus saw his men devoured by the monster as they lay gasping, "like fish heaped up upon the rocks" (Od. 12.255). By emphasizing the brutal and savage nature of the μνηστηροφονία these similes establish a disturbing connection between the palace in Ithaca and the world of the Apologoi.

Finally, after the slaying of the suitors, Odysseus' blood and gore splattered figure is likened to a lion

ὃς ῥά τε βεβρωκὼς βοὸς ἔρχεται ἀγραύλοιο·  
 πᾶν δ' ἄρα οἱ στήθος τε παρήϊά τ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν  
 αἱματόεντα πέλει, δεινὸς δ' εἰς ὧπα ἰδέσθαι·  
 ὥς Ὀδυσσεὺς πεπάλαντο πόδας καὶ χεῖρας ὑπερθεν·  
 (Od. 22.400-06)

Far from glorifying him this wholly unheroic<sup>28</sup> characterization of the traditionally heroic lion emphasizes the brutal and savage aspect of the slaying.

What, then, are we to make of this cluster of similes which has so curiously portrayed the suitors as helpless victims, the deed as wantonly violent and the avenger as blood-thirsty and cruel? In the face of all the former evidence, -- of the guilt of the suitors so



firmly supported, of the offence so clearly established, of the punishment so often foretold, -- it seems clear that we must accept that there is an aspect of violence and brutality in the slaying of the suitors. However, despite the undeniable violence of the deed, one feature redeems it and places the μνηστροφονία forever in a world beyond the Apologoi, one aspect distinguishes it from the Cyclopaea and sets it, not in violation of Zeus' justice, but beneath his mighty aegis -- that is, the spirit in which Odysseus acts. He slays the suitors, it is true, with a terrible and deadly aim but no word of exultation, no cry of triumph passes his lips. When the suitors fail to recognize him and the doom which they face, even after Antinoos has fallen, only the now familiar frown attends the anger in his words ὦ κύνες (Od. 22.35).

Not only does Odysseus check any urge he himself might feel to exult in triumph, but he forbids Eurykleia to raise a cry over the dead, bidding her

έν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καί ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυξε·  
οὐχ ὅσῃη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάσθαι.  
τούσδε δὲ μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε θεῶν καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα·  
οὐ τίνα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,  
οὐ κακὸν οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ὅτις σφέας εἰσαφίκοιτο·  
τῇ καὶ ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐπέσθον.

(Od. 22.411-16)

These lines point back to the three clear statements of divine justice which the ODYSSEY has presented: to Eumaios'

assertion οὐ μὲν σχέτλια ἔργα-θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέουσιν (Od. 14. 83), to the poet's own words αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὄλοντο (Od. 1.7), and to the declaration of Zeus himself that σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὑπὲρ μῦθον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν (Od. 1.34). These words, spoken so vehemently to Eurykleia, reveal Odysseus' new vision of divine justice and man's relation to it; that the gods punish wickedness, and that man is responsible for his own destiny. For the anger of the gods is not unmotivated and capricious: "the gods love not wicked deeds but honour justice and the righteous deeds of mortals" (Od. 14.83). Mortal sufferings are the consequences of divine wrath when man offends the gods.

Odysseus incurred sufferings "beyond his lot" when he took "more than his portion" when, in exultation in blinding the Cyclops, he assumed a divine sanction which had never been granted him. The slaying of the suitors, on the other hand, has been divinely ordained: Teiresias has foretold it (Od. 11.118) and Athena, herself, has made it explicit (Od. 13.376).

It is in his new spirit of restraint and endurance that Odysseus undertakes this charge. Moved in all by Athena's guidance, he cries

αἶ κέ μοι ὧς μεμαῦτα παρασταίης, γλαυκῶπι,  
καί κε τριηκοσίοισιν ἐγὼν ἀνδρεσσὶ μαχοίμην  
σὺν σοί, πότνα θεά, ὅτε μοι πρόφρασσ' ἐπαρήγοις.  
(Od. 13.389-91)

Later, his words to the swineherd and cowherd confirm his understanding of the divine purpose and reveal a new clear vision of his role as an agent of it, εἴ χ' ὑπ' ἐμοί γ' θεὸς δαμάσῃ μνηστῆρας ἀγαυοῦς (Od. 21.213).

In only one thing does Odysseus rejoice -- the approbation of Zeus. On that same night when he lay sleepless in the porch, sore at heart, he prayed for a sign (Od. 20.101); Zeus heard him and "immediately thundered down from shining Olympus" (Od. 20.103-04). Later, in the Hall, as he drew the bow in Penelope's contest

Ζεὺς δὲ μεγάλ' ἐκτυπε σήματα φαίνων·  
γῆθησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,  
ὅττι ρά οἱ τέρας ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω·  
(Od. 21.413-15)

In like manner did Odysseus rejoice in Athena's presence in the ἀγών in Phaiacia (Od. 8.193-200).

While exultation and glorification of personal pride ἐκ θυμοῦ accompanied Odysseus' vengeance and the restoration of his heroic honour in the Cyclops' adventure, it is restraint, the subjugation of personal honour and glory which accompanies the restorations in Phaiacia and Ithaca. It is this same spirit of restraint, the mark of

his new heroism, which mitigates the dangerous potential for brutality in the slaying of the suitors and prevents Odysseus from exulting in his deed and thereby incurring divine wrath. Moved not by a desire to glorify himself nor simply to avenge his own honour, Odysseus' steadfast purpose reveals a sense of duty rather than a cold bloodthirstiness. Such is the determination and single-mindedness he shows when he bids the herald, Medon, and the minstrel, Phemius, to wait in the courtyard after the slaying  $\delta\phi\rho' \acute{\alpha}\nu \acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha} \delta\omega\mu\alpha \pi\omicron\nu\eta\sigma\omicron\mu\alpha\iota \delta\tau\tau\epsilon\acute{o} \mu\epsilon \chi\rho\acute{\eta}$  (Od. 22.376). Such, also, he showed when he would return to Circe's house to free his comrades. Though Eurylochos begged him not to go Odysseus replied  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho \acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega\acute{\nu} \epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\iota \kappa\rho\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\eta \delta\acute{\epsilon} \mu\omicron\iota \acute{\epsilon}\pi\lambda\epsilon\tau' \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\alpha}\gamma\kappa\eta$  (Od. 10.273). While his action at that time sprang from an instinctive desire to help his comrades, now he is moved by full knowledge of the divine will. Because of Odysseus' renewed spirit we may see past Levy's "act of bloody violence", we may perceive, unlike Whitman, the true "moral scheme" beyond the "bloody vengeance" and we may acknowledge with Odysseus that  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\sigma\delta\epsilon \delta\acute{\epsilon} \mu\omicron\iota\rho' \acute{\epsilon}\delta\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\sigma\sigma\epsilon \theta\epsilon\omega\acute{\nu} \kappa\alpha\iota \sigma\chi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\lambda\iota\alpha \acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$  (Od. 22.413).

Although the suitors have been punished in accordance with Zeus' stated principle matters cannot, and will not, rest with the deaths of the guilty -- as Odysseus

realizes all too well (Od. 23.119-22) -- for this is still a world governed by the code of retribution and vengeance, a world in which blood calls for blood. When the dead have been buried (Od. 24.417) the families of the suitors gather in assembly in order to avenge their slain kinsmen. Medon rises to bear witness that Odysseus has acted in all "in accordance with the will of the gods" (Od. 24.443-44) and Halitherses, "who is able to see the future and the past", declares that all has happened "because of their own wickedness", that they "in presumptuous folly" committed grave offences "consuming the property and dishonouring the wife of a noble man" (Od. 24.454ff). Nonetheless, for a time the endless cycle of crime and punishment seems destined to continue. The beneaved families will no more heed Halitherses' warning now "not to proceed lest someone discover trouble" (Od. 24.462) than did the suitors, themselves, in the first popular assembly when he bid them "take thought how to put an end to their behavior" (Od. 2.167-69).

But even as they fall to their arms, Athena turns to Zeus and begs

ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερέ, Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρείόντων,  
εἰπέ μοι εἰρομένη, τί νύ τοι νόος ἐνδοθι κεῖθαι;  
ἢ προτέρω πόλεμον γε κακὸν καὶ φύλοπιν αἰνὴν  
τεύξεις, ἢ φιλότητα μετ' ἀμφοτέροισι τίθησθα;  
(Od. 24.473-76)

In reply the Father of gods and men answers

ἐπεὶ δὴ μνηστῆρας ἐτίσατο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,  
 ὅρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες ὁ μὲν βασιλευσέτω αἰεὶ,  
 ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ παίδων τε κασιγνήτων τε φόνοιο  
 ἐκλήσιν θέαμεν· τοῖ δ' ἀλλήλους φιλεόντων  
 ὥς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εἰρήνη ἅλις ἔστω.

(Od. 24.482-86)

Because Odysseus has acted οὐ . . . ἀθανάτων ἀέκητι θεῶν  
 (Od. 24.444) Zeus may set an end, a forgiving, ἐκλήσις, to  
 the endless cycle of crime and punishment. No longer need  
 justice now be a matter for the family, to pursue vengeance  
 and exact punishment, but for the community to administer  
 through ὅρκια πιστὰ (Od. 24.483). Odysseus has restored  
 order to his realm not as a θυμός-centered hero but as a  
 just king whose authority is truly confirmed by Zeus.

Darting down from Olympus Athena finds Odysseus  
 and his comrades preparing to meet the advancing Ithaceseans.  
 Unable to resist the call of battle herself she dons the  
 guise of Mentor once again and breathes strength and courage  
 into old Laertes. Yet even as the old man makes his cast  
 and Odysseus falls upon the front ranks (Od. 24.526) Athena  
 raises her voice in warning

τοχεσθε πολέμου, Ἰθακῆσιοι, ἀργαλέον,  
 ὥς κεν ἀναιμῶτί γε διακρινθῆτε τάχιστα.

(Od. 24.531-32)

Odysseus, however, is not to be so easily deterred and as  
 he is about to renew his attack "pouncing . . . like a high  
 flying eagle" (Od. 24.538) Zeus hurls a blazing thunderbolt  
 before Athena who warns him

διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,  
 ἶσχεο, παῦε δὲ νεῖκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο,  
 μὴ πῶς τοι Κρονίδης κεχολώσεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς.  
 (Od. 24.542-44)

Though he has travelled far from the cave of the Cyclops it is clear that Odysseus' understanding is just barely sufficient for the vision of the ODYSSEY for, even at the last, he must be restrained by Athena from transgressing the limit set by Zeus. Achilles' realization, at the end of the ILIAD, that his τιμή must not be restored or maintained at the expense of Hector's already marks a step beyond the old heroic code. Now Odysseus must understand that man's τιμή cannot be maintained or restored at the expense of the divine τιμή. In this the ODYSSEY has opened for men vistas of ethical awareness beyond the heroic world. The covenant decreed by Zeus at the end of the poem points forward to the establishment of a community in which the conflicts arising from the traditional heroic code can be finally reconciled, and foreshadows the resolutions at the end of the ORESTEIA.

#### ATHENA, POSEIDON AND THE JUSTICE OF ZEUS

At every turn in the action of the ODYSSEY, from the Island of Goats to the royal palace in Ithaca, Zeus'

principle of divine justice and human responsibility has been fulfilled. Odysseus is made to wander long and far in his journey from Troy for his offences against Poseidon and Zeus in the Cyclops' adventure, and, when his men are finally lost in the storm after Thrinakia, there is no doubt that they have perished for "their folly" (σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν, Od. 1.7) in eating the cattle of Hyperion Helios. The suitors, also, meet death at the hands of Odysseus for their ὄβρις . . . θυμάλγεα καὶ κακὰ ἔργα (Od. 23.64). In not honouring "any man on earth, noble or low-born" (Od. 23.66), nor respecting the stranger at the door, "Zeus' small and blessed gift" (Od. 6.207; 14.57-8), they have clearly violated every commonly accepted law of decency and justice. Their fate at the hands of Odysseus is, thus, in accord with Zeus' declared principle that man suffers not at the whim of the gods but as a result of his own wanton violence and reckless presumption. As Eumaios reminds Odysseus, "the blessed gods love not wretched deeds, but they honour the just and righteous works of men" (Od. 14.83-4).

Clearly, justice in the ODYSSEY, as in the ILIAD, is firmly grounded in the heroic concepts of αἰδώς and τιμή which demand that each receive what is due him, whether god or man, kinsman or enemy. Failure to fulfill the obligations of αἰδώς, to respect the τιμή of another, brings upon man



divine wrath, misery and suffering. However, there is more to the notion of justice in the ODYSSEY than the heroic code and Zeus' declaration of human responsibility, notwithstanding this assessment by Lloyd-Jones<sup>29</sup>:

. . . since in the ILIAD the human agent must always be held fully responsible for his action, even though a god has caused him to perform it, the Odyssean modification of the doctrine exemplified in the ILIAD is of strictly limited significance.

The following discussion is an attempt to show that the concept of justice in the ODYSSEY is not just a "modification" of a doctrine, a variation on a theme found in the ILIAD. The ODYSSEY, as the ILIAD, is clearly very much concerned with problems of conflict: in this case, with the conflicting concerns of Poseidon and Athena and the interests of Zeus, with the opposition between the particular claims of θυμός and the wider interests of νόος, between individual τιμή and justice. It is, in the final analysis, about the supremacy of Zeus and the limitation of particular interest; it is about the conflicts which inevitably arise in a world governed by partial and incomplete notions of justice. The ODYSSEY reveals in a vivid and dramatic way the limited nature of the justice which Athena and Poseidon support and the consequences of such particularity. The ODYSSEY addresses the question of how there can be an end to the conflicts which invariably arise between individual interests each of which has a measure of justice on its side; how, in a world

where each must have its τιμή, the common interest can prevail. It is in the characterization of Zeus and the resolution of these problems that the theology of the ODYSSEY goes beyond that of the ILIAD, pointing forward to the emergence of the πόλις as the embodiment of the justice of Zeus among men.

Consider again the characterization of the particular interests embodied in Athena and Poseidon, and the nature of the conflict between them. In the ODYSSEY, apart from the common ground they seem to share in Pylos and Phaiacia, Athena and Poseidon are almost exclusively confined to their separate realms, resolutely divided over Odysseus: Poseidon (Od. 1.69) nursing his wrath against him for the blinding of his son, Polyphemus, Athena (Od. 1.45-62) sore at heart for her favorite who lies on Calypso's sea-girt island longing for his return.

Poseidon, the mighty ἑμὸς-centered god, is a figure of particularity, concerned altogether with his τιμή<sup>30</sup>, his own personal honour. He pursues Odysseus with a stubborn relentlessness (Od. 5.286-91) born of injured pride at the blinding of Polyphemus and the taunts of Odysseus. Since the nature of particularity is always to secure its own interests without regard for the interests

of others, there is always the possibility of a breach of αἰδώς when one is moved by limited and personal considerations. These are the ones who are not only most liable to give offence, acting as they do ἐκ θυμοῦ, from personal interest alone, but also to take offence, seeing in the acts of others a violation of their own rights and privileges. Thus, Odysseus, in giving way to his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός after escaping from the Cyclops' cave, offends both Poseidon and Zeus by his excessive exultation and arrogant assertions. Poseidon, in turn, is offended by Odysseus' mocking and, also, by the Phaiacians' disregard of his will (Od. 12.128-33) in giving Odysseus a safe and easy passage to Ithaca, while by his unceasing anger and harassment of Odysseus, ἐκ θυμοῦ, he offends Athena.

Athena, for her part, is clearly acting in accord with the will of Zeus in promoting Odysseus' return to Ithaca and the slaying of the suitors. Though her vision is less complete than that of Zeus she does acknowledge Poseidon's right to punish Odysseus. It is for this reason that she remained aloof, as she explains to Odysseus (Od. 13.339ff), until Poseidon's anger had run its course and reached the point at which Zeus had decreed it must end -- when Odysseus reached Phaiacia. Nevertheless, despite her regard for the τιμή of Poseidon, she is preoccupied with what she

regards as Odysseus' unjust suffering and it is this which prevents her from taking the full meaning of Zeus' lesson that "mortals have suffering beyond their lot for taking more than their portion". As a result she must be reminded by the Father of gods and men that Odysseus has committed offences against Poseidon for which he is now making atonement.

In a world governed by individual interests such as move Poseidon offence will easily be given and taken. When particular interests prevail the common good is lost. The society of the Phaiacians is a vivid example of the division which exists between Athena and Poseidon. Despite the share which each has in that society it is clear that no true reconciliation of interests exists between them: the Phaiacians cannot honour one without offending the other as is shown in the anger they incur from Poseidon by fulfilling their civic duty to Athena, and Zeus, in escorting Odysseus home.

What then are we to make of Zeus whose presence seems often so curiously absent, whose voice so muffled by his thunderbolts? Clearly, Zeus is supreme among the gods, the primacy of his will acknowledged by all. So, Hermes warns Calypso on her sea-girt island that "there is no way for another god to elude the will of Zeus and bring it to

naught" (Od. 5.103-04), and Poseidon himself admits that he did not utterly destroy Odysseus since the Olympian had promised his return (Od. 13.133).

Perhaps the most significant indication of the difference in the characterization of the Odyssean Zeus and the Zeus of the ILIAD is his absence in the Song of Ares and Aphrodite -- an episode which presents the gods not only at their most frivolous but also in their most particular aspects. In the ODYSSEY a certain distance seems to divide Zeus from the other gods, a certain objectivity seems to mark his dealings with the rest. In no way is he touched with the particularity which is sometimes present in the characterization of Zeus in the ILIAD. Although in the ILIAD Zeus agonizes over the fate of Sarpedon and must be reminded by Hera and the other gods of the consequences of giving way to his personal feelings no such division and conflict mars his divine vision in the ODYSSEY.

Where Athena and Poseidon have limited vision Zeus has full and complete understanding, where Athena and Poseidon are insufficient Zeus is all-sufficient. When Poseidon (Od. 13.128-30) and Athena (Od. 5.23; 24.479) press their individual claims for honour and justice Zeus alone has in mind the common interest and a higher purpose

for the suffering of mankind. Zeus alone can encompass the diversity of their particular concerns through his greater vision of justice. When Poseidon maintains he is dishonoured by men and gods and will not only destroy the Phaiacian ship and put an end to their traffic but will hide the whole city under a mountain, Zeus, in his wisdom, declares

οὐ τί σ' ἀτιμάζουσι θεοί· . . .  
 ἔρξον, ὅπως ἐθέλεις καὶ τοι φίλον ἔπλετο θυμῷ.  
 ὦ πέπον, ὥς μὲν ἐμῷ θυμῷ δοκεῖ εἶναι ἀριστα,  
 ὁππότε κεν δὴ πάντες ἐλαυνομένην προῖδωνται  
 λαοὶ ἀπὸ πτόλιος, θεῖναι λίθον ἐγγύθι γαίης  
 νηὶ θοῇ ἔκελον, ἵνα θαυμάζωσιν ἅπαντες  
 ἄνθρωποι, μὴ δέ σφιν ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψαι.  
 (Od. 13.141-58)

This exchange between Poseidon and Zeus reveals the fundamental difference between the limited vision of Poseidon and the wider concerns of Zeus. In escorting Odysseus home without toil or suffering the Phaiacians have acted against Poseidon's expressed will (Od. 13.141-42) and have, thus, incurred the wrath of the great god of the sea. Poseidon's honour has been violated and he wishes, therefore, to destroy not only the Phaiacians and their ship but their whole city. Man suffers as a result of his own wrongdoing, Zeus has declared, but clearly in giving Odysseus escort home the Phaiacians have acted in accord with Zeus' law of hospitality as well as his expressed will that having once

reached Phaiacia Odysseus would return home. Although Poseidon is a great and powerful god whose prerogatives Zeus is loathe to violate nevertheless the Father of gods and men wishes to mitigate the sufferings of the Phaiacians. It is for this reason, because he can see the merits of both sides, that Zeus advises Poseidon not to destroy the city utterly but to turn the ship into a stone image as it nears the land on its return from Ithaca.

The contrast between the particularity of Poseidon and the universality of Zeus is seen most clearly in the nature of Odysseus' offences in the Cyclops adventure and in the relationship between the wrath of Poseidon and the wrath of Zeus which these offences provoke. From the first divine assembly it has been known that Poseidon is angry with Odysseus for his blinding of Polyphemus. Odysseus, however, has acted in self-defense in this matter; it is by his taunting of the monster and Poseidon from the safety of his ship that Odysseus clearly overreaches himself and exceeds his mortal limits.

Poseidon's primitive wrath, however, is aroused as much for his own violated honour as for the injury done his son. Left to himself he would drive Odysseus to the death for what he considers wrongs, regardless of the circum-

stances or situation of the offences. His anger, born of injured pride and violated honour, knows no limit, no higher purpose than immediate revenge.

Zeus, however, with his wider vision and clearer understanding, can see the merits of the case and he has long ago decreed that "Poseidon will release his anger" (Od. 1.77-78), to which will Poseidon has himself submitted since Zeus has promised Odysseus' return (Od. 13.133). Odysseus is, therefore, by the consent of the gods, left to Poseidon's wrath until the time he reaches Phaiacia from whence his return to Ithaca is assured by the will of Zeus.

It is clear that Zeus' notion of punishment and justice goes beyond that of Poseidon's. Zeus will allow Poseidon his vengeance -- but only to a certain point. He will allow the other god's anger to run its course to the point of serving his own greater purpose -- but no further. Zeus was angered by Odysseus' insolence in taunting Polyphemus and Poseidon, and his arrogant assumption that he was acting as an agent of divine justice in blinding Polyphemus. The purpose of Zeus' anger is, accordingly, the moral education of Odysseus which is to be effected by the sufferings and toils of his return -- *πάθει μάθος*. In this way Poseidon's wrath becomes an instrument of Zeus' wrath,



as the means by which Odysseus is brought to an awareness of δίκη, is transformed from the traditional θυμός-centered hero into a νόος-guided king, able to restore order and justice in Ithaca.

While Poseidon understands only the need to punish Odysseus and restore his violated honour, and Athena is interested only in the safe return of her favorite Zeus sees a further concern -- the establishment of order and justice in Ithaca. It is to this end that he allows the punishment of Odysseus but ordains his ultimate return. In this way Odysseus is brought to a fuller understanding of the nature of justice and man's relations to the gods and is, thus, able to fulfill his divinely sanctioned mission in Ithaca. So also, in this way, is Zeus' greater purpose accomplished in the establishment of a just and ordered society among men.

## II HESIOD

## INTRODUCTION

Hesiod's THEOGONIA and ERGA present an account of the world as the poet perceived and experienced it, a record of his understanding of the powers and forces he found manifest in the universe, and of man's place in the whole. We are concerned in this chapter to discover in the THEOGONIA and ERGA Hesiod's conception of Zeus and his divine order, and of the nature of the justice through which he wields power over the affairs of gods and men. For the THEOGONIA is more than just the enumeration of divine succession. Behind its systematic account of the origin of the world and the genealogies of the gods lies the poet's greater purpose: to celebrate and exalt the power and supremacy of Zeus, to reveal the nature of his rule and the means by which he established and consolidated his dominion.

Although Hesiod's THEOGONIA is now the only extant work<sup>1</sup> of theogonic literature from Greek antiquity tradition ascribed poetic theogonies also to Orpheus, Musaeus, Aristus and Epimenides, as well as prose works to Abaris, Pherecydes and "Dromocrites". To this list may be added the first poem of the Epic Cycle of the Trojan War, a THEOGONIA which began with the marriage of Uranus and Ge. The interest in the

origins of the universe and the succession of divine generations, to which these works attest, was not confined to the Greek world. As West<sup>2</sup> has pointed out the Greek theogonies were but one expression of an ancient and well defined genre, examples of which are to be found among many peoples in many places and many times, from the Hurrian civilization of the 16th and 15th centuries B.C. to Japan of the 8th century A.D.

In his analysis of the background and sources of Hesiod's THEOGONIA West has also discovered that the myth of divine succession which Hesiod takes as his framework is to be found as well in the mythologies and theogonic literature of many near Eastern civilizations, namely the Hurrian, Hittite, Phoenician and Babylonian. Furthermore, he concludes that the Babylonian is the oldest and most original of these traditions and that it is from this source, through the Minoan-Mycenean civilization, by some as yet unexplained way, that the myth came to Greece. Yet, so completely has it lost its oriental cast by the time Hesiod takes it into his hands, that we must believe it was by then a well-established tradition in mainland Greece.

Though ancient opinion concurred in the belief which Herodotus records that Hesiod and Homer

... δὲ εἰσι οἱ ποιήσαντες θεογονίην  
 Ἕλλησι καὶ τοῖς θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπωνυμίας  
 δόντες καὶ τιμὰς τε καὶ τέχνας διελόντες  
 καὶ εἶδεα αὐτῶν σημῆναντες.

(Hdt. 2.53.1)

it is important to remember that heroic epic and theogonic epic belong to separate traditions of epic poetry, though not to different geographic regions<sup>3</sup>. While it is clear that many stories of the beginnings of the universe, the rise of the gods, their relationships and interrelationships, and their various exploits, powers and offspring were current in Greece from an early date Hesiod and Homer brought their own particular perspectives to bear on the traditions. By their choice and subsequent adaptation and remodelling of the stories they each fashioned a whole to fit their own poetic purpose.

In both the *ILIAD* and the *ODYSSEY* the reign of the Olympians is an established reality. Although the gods still remember their earlier days of conflict and danger (*Il.* 1.39ff; 8.479ff; 14.200ff; 15.187ff) and still recall a harsher time when Zeus' anger had painful consequences (*Il.* 1.596ff; 14.247ff; 15.16ff; 18.388ff) the focus of these poems is the ordering of the Olympic government rather than its emergence over the older gods. Having long since triumphed over the Titans the Homeric gods hold Mt. Olympus in a present fraught with division and faction. Secure in

their high dwellings Homer's gods are truly *ῥετὰ ζῶοντες* - "the easy-living ones" - free to espouse the causes of their favorites on earth or to turn aside, weary of the deeds of men: they love and quarrel, plot and scheme, complain and grumble and laugh with abandon, each determined to have his share of honour. In the midst sits Zeus, at one time nodding his consent, at another, thundering his disapproval or weeping at a fate he dare not turn aside; sometimes by force, sometimes by threat, imposing an authority which the Olympians only grudgingly acknowledge.

Hesiod, on the other hand, approached the traditional material from a completely different perspective for a completely different purpose. If the *THEOGONIA* were merely the account of the succession of divine generations and the origin of the universe<sup>4</sup> it would be not much more than a catalogue. As it is, Hesiod is concerned to reveal the supremacy and might of Zeus in an historical context. It is the emergence of Zeus' power, the consequences of his victory over the Titans and the manner in which he established and consolidated his power which the poet seeks to discern and celebrate in his account of the origin of the universe and the succession of divine generations; it is his characterization of Zeus and the force of his presence which unify the whole. For Hesiod the centrality and supremacy of Zeus

are not only the thematic focus, the *telos*<sup>5</sup>, of the THEOGONIA but an historical reality. Despite the constraints of the traditional material and the difficulties<sup>6</sup> of adapting particular stories to his design Hesiod ultimately brings all to serve his greater purpose, to exalt and magnify the power and might of Zeus and his reign, to show

ὅσσον φέρτατος ἐστὶ θεῶν κάρτεϊ τε μέγιστος  
(Th. 49)

Solmsen declares<sup>7</sup> that "Hesiod's Zeus is Homer's Zeus, Homer's Zeus and more . . .". However, although both poets recognize Zeus' supremacy, there are striking differences in their presentation of the relations between the king of heaven and the Olympians. Hesiod sees Zeus and his justice set not against the Olympians as it often is in the ILLIAD but against the Titans and the world they inhabit. In the THEOGONIA Zeus moves across a cosmic landscape while the Olympians attend him as a court adorning his power and his reign. There is in the THEOGONIA no hint of any faction or division among the Olympians such as besets them in Homer, for, as we shall see, the limitation of the particular interests which give rise to such faction and division is Zeus' primary concern after his defeat of the Titans. It is perhaps significant that, although for Hesiod the gods are μάκαρες . . . οἱ Ὀλύμπιον ἔχουσιν (Th. 101), ἀθανάτων ἱερὸν γένος αἰὲν ἑόντων (Th. 106), δωτῆρες ἐδάων (Th. 111, 633)

and θεοὶ αἰετγενεῖσσι (Th. 893) as they are for Homer, nowhere are they βεῖα ζῶντες as they are so often described in Homer. The behavior and activities which are typical of the "easy-living" life of the Homeric gods find no place in Hesiod's account of the reign of Zeus and the Olympians.

Hesiod has taken the old stories of Gaia and Ouranos and Kronos and refashioned them according to his poetic purpose: to celebrate the "sacred race of the immortal gods who were born of earth and starry heaven, or murky night and the salty sea" (Th. 105-07) and "those gods born of these, and how they divided the wealth and how they chose their prerogatives and how first they held Olympus with its many folds" (Th. 111-13). Hesiod has presented "a new cosmic and a new ethical interpretation of the story of the gods"<sup>8</sup> by showing, as we shall see, the nature of the old powers always in the light of Zeus and his rule. Not content simply to recount the dynastic succession of the gods, in the manner of traditional theogonic literature, Hesiod asks "what was wrong with the world of the old gods; what makes the reign of Zeus different from those of Kronos and Ouranos; how did Zeus manage to overcome the Titans; how has he maintained his hold on that power?"

Nor is Hesiod's theology exhausted with the account of the origin of the universe and the emergence of Zeus' rule. Having shown in the THEOGONIA the nature of Zeus' justice and its ethical basis Hesiod proceeds in the ERGA to point out the implications of this justice for man and man's relation to the divine order of which he clearly is a part.

#### THEOGONIA: FROM THE OLD WORLD TO THE NEW

It is the Muses, Hesiod declares, who have taught him the art of singing, it is the Muses whom he invokes to sing of "the sacred race of the everlasting immortals" (Th. 105) -- but from its opening lines the prooemium is illumined by the force and presence of Zeus. It is Zeus to whom the Muses sing as they dance about his altar (Th. 4), it is Zeus, their father, the great *vóoc* within Olympus, whom the Muses delight with their songs that tell of the present, the past and the future (Th. 36-8). Zeus' role in the prooemium, as subject (Th. 47) of the Muses' song, and of their seeking (Th. 71), prefigures his central<sup>9</sup> position in Hesiod's own song. In "programmatic"<sup>10</sup> fashion Zeus stands (Th. 11ff) at the end of a line which reaches back over the divine generations of Olympians and Titans to primeval times, from



Hera, Athena, Apollo and Artemis to Poseidon, Themis and Kronos, to Earth and mighty Ocean and Black Night. As the Muses themselves sing so will Hesiod, by their grace, telling not only of the dynastic succession of the gods but of Zeus and his rule -- ὅσσον φέρτατος ἐστὶ θεῶν κάρτεϊ τε μέγιστος (Th. 49) -- of how he overcame Father Kronos and now rules as king among the immortals (Th. 71-2).

Hesiod's account begins not with the rise of the gods but with the origin of the universe, that from which the gods arise: first Chaos and then Earth, Tartarus and Eros. The appearance of these primeval powers marks the first structuring, the first primitive separation of the universe into a measure of order: broad-breasted Earth, the everlasting, sure support of all the gods (Th. 117), Tartarus and Eros whose power<sup>11</sup> over men and gods (Th. 121) has rendered him a force to be reckoned with from the very beginning. The void of Chaos then brings forth Erebus and Black Night and they together beget the Bright Air and Day. With Gaia's parthenogenic begetting of Ouranos, of the Mountains and the sea, the cosmic landscape is set and the physical universe stands ready for the first gods.

Then Ouranos and Gaia bring forth their family, the twelve powerful figures of Oceanos, Koios, Kreios,

Hyperion, Iapetos, Theia, Rheia, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoebe, Tethys and Wily Kronos. After these are born the three Cyclopes, Thunder, Lightning and Flash, and three monstrous children, the Hundred-Armed Ones. They, like the Cyclopes, are the very embodiment of might (ἰσχύς, Th. 146, 153), rude power (βίη, Th. 146), and brute strength (μηχαναί, Th. 146). Yet, it is from the Cyclopes, we learn (Th. 141), that Zeus will obtain his weapons, the thunderbolt and lightning flash, as instruments of his might.

According to Hesiod "all who were born of Earth and Heaven . . . were hateful to their father from the beginning" and

τῶν μὲν ὅπως τις πρῶτα γένοιτο;  
πάντας ἀποκρύπτασκε, καὶ ἐς φάος οὐκ ἀνίεσκε,  
Γαίης ἐν κευθμῶνι, κακῷ δ' ἐπετέρπετο ἔργῳ  
οὐρανός.

(Th. 156-59)

Constrained within by this denial of the birth process Gaia devises a treacherous plot and, grieved at heart, appeals to her children, saying

παῖδες ἐμοὶ καὶ πατὴρ ἀτασθάλου, αἱ κ' ἐθέλητε  
πείθεσθαι, πατὴρ γε κακὴν τεισαίμεθα λῶσιν  
ὕμετέρου· πρότερος γὰρ ἀεικέα μήσατο ἔργα.

(Th. 164-66)

Though the rest are filled with terror Kronos, the youngest, undertakes (Th. 170) to "punish the wicked

outrage" of his father. Following Gaia's plan he castrates<sup>12</sup> Ouranos, a deed of violence having begotten a deed of violence, and from the bloody drops (are born, significantly, the κρατερὰ/Ἐρινὺς (Th. 185). After this deed Ouranos rebukes his children, saying

τιταίνοντας ἀτασθαλίῃ μέγα ῥέξαι  
ἔργον, τοῖο δ' ἔπειτα τίσιν μετόπισθεν ἔσεσθαι.  
(Th. 209-10)

The ἀεικέα ἔργα of Ouranos have called forth a μέγα ἔργον from Kronos for, having thwarted Gaia's act of parturition<sup>13</sup>, Ouranos is himself subsequently, and altogether appropriately, unmanned. Clearly, Gaia seeks, and Kronos renders, an act of justice -- the justice of retribution. Equally clear, also, is Ouranos' expectation that he will be avenged (Th. 210), that this μέγα ἔργον<sup>14</sup> will beget a τίσις.

The world of Gaia and Ouranos is a primitive, incomplete world of primeval forces and monstrous creatures: Night's dark and hateful children, Doom and Destiny, Death and Sleep, Censure and Misery, Old Age and Strife and the Goddess of Fate. There are, also, the 50 lovely daughters of Nereus (Th. 240ff); the lawless, savage, irresistible monsters (Th. 295-311) descended from the children of Pontos and Gaia (Th. 265ff) whose very names stir fear and foreboding, Ἀελλώ, Ἀρπυιαί, Ἐνυώ, Γοργοί, Μέδουσα, and the half-nymph, half-monster, Ἐχιδνα. It is, also, a

world of rivers and springs, the splendid children born of Tethys and Oceanos (Th. 337ff); of the Sun and Moon and Dawn begotten by Theia and Hyperion (Th. 371ff); of the children of Phoebe and Koios (Th. 404ff), of Rheia and Kronos (Th. 453ff); and the seed of Iapetos (Th. 507ff). It is a world of unordered diversity, of violent deeds and primitive justice; it is a world in which presumption (Th. 209) answers presumption (Th. 164) and the Μοῖραι and the Κῆρες nurse their terrible, unceasing wrath at the transgressions of men and gods (Th. 220); it is a world not destined long to survive with its anarchic diversity.

For a time, though, it seems the cycle of outrage and vengeance is to continue into the next generation. As Rheia and Kronos beget their children

καὶ τοὺς μὲν κατέπνευε μέγας Κρόνος, ὥς τις ἕκαστος  
νηδύος ἐξ ἑρφύς-μητρὸς πρὸς γούναθ' ἔκλυτο.  
(Th. 459-60)

Ouranos attempted to bring order and unity to his world by keeping all pent within Gaia, but he succeeded only in offending Gaia and infringing upon the rights of all. Kronos' endeavour to avoid a succession and bring stability to his realm by containing all within himself is similarly unsuccessful. Ouranos refused to allow the diversity of Gaia to come into existence; Kronos refused to allow it full expression. Neither knows of an order, a justice, which

can comprehend or encompass diversity without suppressing it.

When she is about to give birth to the last of her children Rheia beseeches her beloved parents, Gaia and Ouranos.

μητιν συμφοράσασθαι, ὅπως λελάθοιτο τεκούσα  
παῖδα φίλον, τείσαιτο δ' Ἐρινὺς πατρός ἐοῖο  
(παίδων οὐδ' κατέπινε μέγας Κρόνος ἀνιόλουμένης).  
(Th. 471-73)

As before it is an act of avenging justice which is called for, an Ἐρινὺς, begotten of violence, to exact payment (τείσαιτο) for violence. The plan is laid and at the suggestion of Earth and Ouranos Rheia goes to Crete for her confinement. Even as before, when she took up the bloody drops which fell from the genitals of Ouranos (Th. 183ff), so again Gaia takes to herself (Th. 479) this last child born of Rheia. Yet, despite Rheia's hopes for vengeance, this time no Ἐρινὺς is born; instead she bore to Kronos

Ζῆνὰ τὲ μητιόεντα, θεῶν πατέρ' ἐδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν,  
τοῦ καὶ ὑπὸ βροντῆς πελεμίζεται εὐρεῖα χθόν.  
(Th. 457-58)

one who is destined to overcome his father "mighty though he be" (Th. 465) by his βουλαί. The opposition implicit in this section between Ζῆνα μητιόεντα (Th. 457), Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλᾶς (Th. 465) and Κρόνῳ καὶ κρατερῷ περ ἔοντι (Th. 465), who οὐδ' ἐνόησε μετὰ φρεσὶν (Th. 489) expresses the funda-

mental difference between the brute force and limited vision of the Titans and the wit and counsel of Zeus. Yet, clearly the new regime of Zeus is based not upon the complete rejection of all that belonged to the old world, but upon the retention, the integration and subordination, of the best of that world, through mutually beneficial arrangements and the restoration of old honours, to become instruments of Zeus' justice in a new order (Th. 392-95).

To this end the Cyclopes, mindful of Zeus' favour in freeing them from their deadly bonds (Th. 501), offer him the thunderbolt and lightning flash (Th. 140, 504); and Pegasus, born of the Gorgon, Medusa, of the line of Pontos and Gaia, finds favour in the new regime, dwelling in the house of Zeus and bearing his mighty weapons of thunder and lightning (Th. 286). In like manner Kratos and Bia, the famed children of Styx, daughter of Oceanos, take their place in Zeus' train, and

τῶν οὐκ ἔστ' ἀπάνευθε Διὸς δόμος, οὐδὲ τις ἔδρη  
οὐδ' ὁδὸς ὁππῇ μὴ κείνοις θεὸς ἡγεμονεύει,  
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ παρ' ἑνὶ βαρυκτύπῳ ἑδριόωνται.

(Th. 386-88)

In each case the violence and unrestrained power of the old world has found a place in the new order, harnessed to Zeus' rule, as instruments of his justice, embodying his might.

As the first to come to Zeus' side in the Titanomachia Styx herself and her children are honoured by Zeus beyond measure (Th: 400ff). Hecate<sup>15</sup>, born of the line of Phoebe and Koios, Zeus honours with gifts (Th. 411) and confirms her former position,

δοὸν ἔλαχεν Τιτῆσι μετὰ προτέροισι θεοῖσιν  
ἀλλ' ἔχει ὡς τὸ πρῶτον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἔπλετο δαίμων.  
(Th. 424-25)

The sacred race of maidens born of Tethys and Oceanos also finds favour in Zeus' sight as they, together with Lord Apollo and the Rivers, have a special care of young men (Th. 347).

Notwithstanding the obvious difficulties<sup>16</sup> presented by the traditional myths connected with Prometheus, Hesiod found in the history of the Iapetides an opportunity to reveal the full impact of Zeus' rule on the old gods. By his treatment<sup>17</sup> of the story and his characterization of Zeus the poet emphasized the striking difference between Zeus himself and Kronos, between the nature of the old world and that of the new era.

Iapetos, the son of Kronos, begot of Klymene, Ocean's daughter, four sons: stout-hearted Atlas; Menoitios, the overweening hybristes, Prometheus with his wily cunning, and ingenious craft and the weak-witted Epimetheus (Th. 509-21).

According to Hesiod Atlas holds broad heaven upon his neck and shoulder as a μοῖρα allotted to him by Zeus (Th. 519-20). Menoitios, however, far-seeing Zeus casts down into Erebus with his "smoldering thunderbolt" εἶνεκα ἀτασθαλίας τε καὶ ἠγορέης ὑπερόπλου (Th. 515-16). Epimetheus, it appears, is the one chosen by Zeus to receive the woman fashioned as "trouble for man" (Th. 513).

From Hesiod's account, also, we learn that Prometheus has been bound in indissoluble fetters (Th. 521) by Zeus who has decreed, as everlasting torture for him, that his liver be torn by an eagle by day and that it grow anew each night. Eventually, Heracles comes and kills the eagle and releases Prometheus from his wretched fate -- though, Hesiod points out, οὐκ ἀέκητι Ζηνὸς Ὀλυμπίου ὠψιμέδοντος (Th. 528). Prometheus has angered Zeus by making an unequal division of the sacrificial offerings and attempting<sup>18</sup> to trick him into choosing the worse portion of bones and skin, leaving the choicer portion of flesh and entrails for men (Th. 537-41). Although Prometheus is confident of his plan (Th. 536) it is clear that Zeus is not deceived, for he says, ἀφθιτα μήδεα εἰδώς,

Ἰαπετιονίδη, πάντων ἀριδείκετ' ἀνάκτων,  
ὧ πέπον, ὥς ἑτεροζήλως διεδάσσαο μοίρας.

(Th. 543-45)



"Son of Iapetos, most renowned of all lords,  
for shame, how unevenly you divide the portions."  
Thus spoke Zeus in mocking tones, with imperish-  
able wisdom.

Not only is Zeus not deceived but he is well aware of  
Prometheus' design.

Ζεὺς δ' ἄφθιτα μῆδεα εἰδὼς  
γνῶ δ' οὐδ' ἠγνόησε δόλον.

(Th. 550-51)

Zeus, in his imperishable wisdom per-  
ceived and knew well the trick.

Nonetheless, though greatly vexed and angered with the son  
of Iapetos, Zeus in his imperishable wisdom chooses the pile  
of bones (Th. 553-61).

Hesiod knows another story of Prometheus, of how  
he deceived Zeus and carried fire to mankind though Zeus had  
refused it (Th. 565). In anger the son of Kronos causes, δαί-  
βουλός (Th. 572), Hephaistos to fashion a woman into whom  
Pallas Athena breathes life. Then, Zeus presents her, robed  
and veiled, to gods and men, καλὸν κακὸν ἀντ' ἀγαθοῖο (Th.  
585). Although the integrity of the text is open to question  
from lines 602-12, there is sufficient indication from the  
manuscripts to assume safely that man cannot now escape the  
suffering attendant upon woman whether or not he chooses to  
marry her (Th. 603).

Hesiod saw embodied in the Iapetides all that characterized the old, primitive world and distinguished it from the new, emerging order of Zeus: the reckless presumption and overweening manhood of Menoitios, the erring wit of Epimetheus, the cunning of Prometheus who sought always to secure his particular interests through deception and treacherous craft against the universal interests of Zeus. The confrontation between the sons of Iapetos and Zeus presents a microcosm of that greater confrontation to come between the world of the old gods and the new era of Zeus; their fates at the hands of Zeus prefigure the justice of Zeus' new order.

Since Atlas, the stout-hearted, is the only one who finds a place in Zeus' order his destiny reminds us that not all that belongs to the old world is to be rejected, that Zeus has already guaranteed the positions of Hecate<sup>19</sup> and Styx.

When Zeus sends Menoitios to Erebus it is as punishment for ἀτασθαλία not in perpetuation of a cycle of vengeance and atonement, and this punishment is clearly not itself born of ἀτασθαλία nor will it beget a νέος. Epimetheus' fate at the hands of Zeus emphasizes the importance of vision and understanding in Zeus' new order.

Prometheus is a match neither for the physical strength nor the superior wit of Zeus. Despite Prometheus' treacherous cunning and wily craft the fetters of Zeus are indissoluble and only in accordance with his divine will can Prometheus be freed. Far-seeing Zeus cannot be tricked or deceived, says Hesiod; unlike Kronos who does not notice. (Th. 488) Rheia's substitution of a swaddled stone for her infant son, Zeus is well aware of all that Prometheus intends. Where Prometheus is ποικιλόβουλος (Th. 521), ἀγκυλομήτης (Th. 546), πρόφρων θυμόν (Th. 536), ἐξαπαφίσκων (Th. 537) and δολοφρονέων (Th. 550) Zeus is ἀφθίτα μήδεα εἰδώς (Th. 545, 550, 561), the νεφεληγερέτα (Th. 558), ὑπιβρεμέτης (Th. 568, 601) who διὰ βούλας (Th. 572) γνῶ οὐδ' ἠγνοίησε δόλον (Th. 550).

Hesiod's account of the history of the line of Iapetos closes with this warning:

ὥς οὐκ ἔστι Διὸς κλέψαι νόον οὐδὲ παρελθεῖν  
οὐδὲ γὰρ Ἰαπετιονίδης ἀνάκητα Προμηθεὺς  
τοῖτό γ' ὑπεξήλυξε βαρὺν χόλον, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης  
καὶ πολὺιδριν ἔοντα μέγας κατὰ δέσμοις ἐρύκει.  
(Th. 613-16)

So, it is not possible to deceive nor elude the purpose of Zeus. For Prometheus, the beneficent son of Iapetos, did not escape his heavy wrath but, cunning though he was, of necessity, a great fetter bound him down.

Such is Hesiod's exalted view of the supremacy<sup>20</sup> of Zeus, that he cannot be deceived or surpassed as Ouranos or Kronos were. Ouranos, being unaware of Gaia's treachery and the destruction which awaited him in her bed, fell victim to the ἀρχὴ καρχαρόδου of Kronos; the rule of Kronos was overthrown because he, in his turn, perceived not (Th. 488) the deception of Rheia in substituting a swaddled stone for her last-born child. Zeus, however, the poet emphasizes, cannot himself be deceived nor his will subverted<sup>21</sup>. These lines are both an assertion of Zeus' might and permanence, and a warning not to expect a further succession. Although unable to ignore completely the traditions surrounding Prometheus or to alter the basic features of the stories, Hesiod nevertheless shaped and fashioned them to his own purpose, to reflect glory on the supremacy and might of Zeus<sup>22</sup>.

Undoubtedly, Zeus has dealt justly with the sons of Iapetos, treating each according to his merit. With Atlas part of the new order, with Menoitios in Tartarus, with Prometheus now aware of his supremacy Zeus has established a new order among the Iapetides even as he will among the gods after the cosmic struggle to come. This order, as we shall see, is neither the complete negation of diversity nor the absolute suppression of it but the imposition of limits upon the varied and diverse claims which the old world contains.

In time the great battle is joined with the old gods on Mt. Othryus against Zeus and his allies on Mt. Olympus (Th. 632-33), and for ten years the decision hangs in the balance. Finally, Gaia advises Zeus to release the three Hundred-Armed monsters from their confinement beneath the earth for "with their help he will win victory and glory" (Th. 628). The Hundred-Armed monsters, as children of Ouranos and Gaia, are clearly part of the best of the old world which must find a place in Zeus' new order. Though Zeus sees them only as μεγάλην βίην and χεῖρας ἀάπτους (Th. 649) it is their combination of physical strength and intelligence, τῷ καὶ νῦν ἀτενεῖ τε νόῳ καὶ ἐπίφρονι βουλῇ (Th. 661); which makes them suitable allies for Zeus whose own nature reflects this union of understanding, ἐπιφροσύνη (Th. 658), and might (Th. 457-58).

The battle is a fierce contest with the might of the Titans ranged against the Hundred-Armed monsters, δεινοὶ τε κροτεροὶ τε, βίην ὑπέροπλον ἔχοντες (Th. 670). The boundless sea rings terribly, earth crashes, the broad sky groans and high Olympus is shaken from its base (Th. 678-80). Even gloomy Tartarus is rocked. (Th. 682). Then, Zeus himself enters the fray. As the great hero of the THEOGONIA Zeus must have an aresteia<sup>23</sup>; if he is to emerge from battle victorious and triumphant he must be seen, in all his

might and glory, to have won great glory. And so he is as he strides about striking lightning from heaven and Olympus (Th. 689), hurling thunderbolts one after another from his mighty hands (Th. 691). Again earth crashes and the woods shriek from the fire, the ground and streams of Ocean and the barren sea all seethe (Th. 695). The Titans flee before the blasts of heat, their eyes blinded by the brilliance of the lightning flashes. Even Chaos itself is engulfed in the monstrous heat (Th. 700). The shafts of Zeus fly in all directions and a terrible din rises; and as he shows forth his mighty deeds the tide of battle changes (Th. 710). Finally, the Titans are chased beneath the earth by rocks hurled from the monsters' hundred arms and there they are bound in grievous chains.

The Titanomachia has been necessary not only to supplant Kronos but to remove him without evoking a *τίσις*, to confirm Zeus' might and establish, unquestionably, his supremacy and authority. The Titanomachia is punishment of *ὑβρις* and *ἀτασθαλία* but not itself presumption answering presumption -- just as Zeus' punishment of Menoitios was the just punishment of wickedness but not itself an act of *ὑβρις* and *ἀτασθαλία*<sup>24</sup>. If Zeus' rule is to be permanent it must be different from that of his predecessors and therefore not perpetuate the former cycle of punishment and atonement;

thus, and only thus, does it reveal itself as a qualitatively new order.

Zeus and the Olympians have triumphed by might and wit over a world of primitive justice and a recurring need for vengeance and atonement, a world of overweening pride and reckless presumption, of treachery and craft, ignorance and limited vision.

The new cosmic order which Zeus establishes is clearly based upon a new concept of justice, upon the notion of limit and portion and honour duly paid. With full vision Zeus recognizes that Ouranos, Gaia and Tartarus each have their appropriate spheres, each have their own realms, and each have a place in the cosmos (Th. 720). Unlike Ouranos who sought to confine all within Gaia, or Kronos who would contain all within himself, Zeus sees clearly that not only must all be given a chance to exist but that they must be contained within a *unifying order that allows for diversity*. In the gloomy depths are placed now not only the Titans with their guards, the three Hundred-Armed monsters, but the dread house of Night (Th. 744) in which dwells Night and Day; the homes of Sleep and Death; the palace of strong Hades and dread Persephone watched over by a terrible dog; and Styx whom Zeus had made "the great oath of the gods"

(Th. 400). Zeus has by his victory brought order to the gods and ensured that all have a proper place in that order. Though, for the most part, they are "hateful to the gods" (Th. 739, 766, 775) Night and Death and Styx are nonetheless mighty powers whose place must be recognized and honoured; for them Zeus' justice has not less force.

Night and Day (Th. 750ff) each have their appointed hour upon the earth, each their particular powers. Similarly, Sleep and Death have their own allotted realms. As for Styx, great though her power is to punish any of the gods who swears falsely by her (Th. 793ff), even this prerogative has its limit and must in time give way:

εἰναιέτες δὲ θεῶν ἀπαμείβεται αἰὲν ἑόντων,  
οὐδὲ ποτ' ἐς βουλὴν ἐπιμίσγεται οὐδ' ἐπὶ δαίτας  
έννέα πάντ' ἔτα· δεκάτῃ δ' ἐπιμίσγεται αὖτις  
εἶρας ἐς ἀθανάτων οὗ Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσιν.  
(Th. 801-04)

If lines 820-88 are genuine, one final test awaits Zeus from Gaia's youngest child, Typhon, born of Tartarus and Gaia after the Titanomachia (Th. 821). This dread creature would have renewed the former cycle of vengeance rendered by the youngest son (Th. 137, 478) if it had not been for Zeus' watchful guard. Once again thunder and lightning fire the cosmos and all is thrown into turmoil and destruction until Zeus hurls Typhon into Tartarus (Th. 868):



his rule is permanent and not to be supplanted! But, even Typhon is given his place in the new order for from him are sprung the winds which bring advantage and those which bring suffering to men upon the sea (Th. 871-74).

The final confirmation of Zeus' supremacy comes from the gods themselves. After the great battle is over,

δή ρα τότε ὤτρυνον βασιλευμένῃ δὲ ἀνάσσειν  
Γαίῃς φραδοσύνῃσιν Ὀλύμπιον εὐρύσπα Ζῆν  
ἀθανάτων· ὃ δὲ τοῖσιν εὖ διεδάσσατο τιμὰς.  
(Th. 883-85)

Then, indeed, did they by Gaia's shrewdness urge far-seeing Olympian Zeus to be king and rule over the immortals. And he distributed well their honours to them.

Undoubtedly, the poet has a very particular image of sovereignty in mind when he chooses this explicit and concrete verb βασιλευμέν. Once before, in the prooemium, Hesiod used such a term in his most direct reference, to that point, to Zeus' ultimate victory over Kronos and his subsequent position among the immortals in heaven. Clearly, we are meant to recall those lines now:

ὃ δ' οὐρανῷ ἐμβασιλεύει,  
αὐτὸς ἔχων βροντὴν ἢ δ' αἰθαλόεντα κεραυνόν,  
κάρτει νικήσας πατέρα Κρόνον· εὖ δὲ ἕκαστα  
ἀθανάτοισι διέταξεν ὁμῶς καὶ ἐπέφραδε τιμὰς.  
(Th. 71-4)

He rules as a king in heaven with his thunderbolt and smoky lightning flash, having won victory by his might over Father Kronos. And he arranges

every particular well for the immortals and likewise, also, takes notice of their honours.

and to take special note of the following passage in which the poet dwells upon the nature of mortal kingship

οὐ δέ τε λαοὶ

πάντες ἐς αὐτὸν ὁρῶσι διακρίνοντα θέμιστας  
 ἰθείησι δίκῃσιν· ὃ δ' ἀσφαλὲς ἀγορεύων  
 ἀψά τε καὶ μέγα νείκεος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσεν.  
 τοῦνεκά γάρ βασιλῆες ἐχέφρονες, οὐνεκά λαοῖς  
 βλαπτομένοις ἀγορήφι μετὰ τροπα ἔργα τελεῦσι  
 ῥηιδίως, μαλακοῖσι παραιφάμενοι ἐπέεσσιν.  
 ἐρχόμενον δ' ἄν' ἀγῶνα θεὸν ὥς ἱλάσκονται  
 αἰδοῦ μελιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρόπτει ἀγρομένοισιν.

(Th. 84-92)

The people all look to him as he determines the principles of justice with straight decisions; and speaking firmly he puts a stop to great disputes quickly and skillfully. For this reason kings are sensible, because they easily bring to an end deeds of vengeance when the people are being misled in their assemblies and with gentle words they win the people over. When he comes into the assembly they appease him as a god with mild respect and he is distinguished among the assembled.

The juxtaposition of these two passages can be no accident, nor their explicit cross-references: Zeus who "rules as a king in heaven" . . . and the king on earth who is looked to "as a god". Clearly, this ideal of human government, vested in the king, θεὸν ὥς, illumines Hesiod's characterization of Zeus and the nature of his justice. As such a king, Zeus' principles of justice are "straight" for he has put an end to quarrels and to deeds of vengeance and

atonement. In his full vision are resolved all conflicts and dissension; in his rule all honours are fulfilled. Zeus reigns supreme now by the will of the gods and Gaia's counsel. Gaia, "the everlasting secure seat of all the gods" (Th. 117), has been the one/constant and continuing presence through every act of violence, through each succession. She was there at the beginning of the universe, right after Chaos; she was the first mother of gods (Th. 132ff), the counsellor of Rheia (Th. 469ff), the nurse (Th. 479) and counsellor of Zeus (Th. 629) and now, by her wisdom (Th. 884), Zeus' new order is crowned.

According to some traditions Hesiod knows various stories of the marriages which Zeus made and the children he begot after his victory over the Titans. Since the text in this place is open to question it is unwise to base any important arguments upon it, but a few general conclusions may be drawn. Up to this point Hesiod has been able to show Zeus' new order only in the light of the old world and its content, as the punishment of reckless presumption and overweening manhood, the censure of deceit and treachery, and the rejection of vengeance and atonement as a means to justice. In the marriages, and the children born of them, Hesiod sees the final consolidation of Zeus' reign and his new era revealed in all its positive and constructive force.

Of the marriage of Zeus and the Titan Thetis are born the three Ἄραι and the three Μοῖραι. Lesky<sup>25</sup> points out that Hesiod has by means of this lineage brought the Seasons, those "ancient forces of nature . . . wholly into the realm of moral powers" while the Fates are now seen to be "affiliated to Zeus", providing an answer "to the old question of the relation between the personal deities and an impersonal fate". Although Lesky<sup>26</sup> advises us not to think of the Archaic Greeks' "immediate perception of divine power" simply as personification it is clear that Zeus' full and complete vision not only can but must encompass that ancient principle of Right which Themis promotes.

The three Charites and the nine Muses, begotten of Eurynome and Mnemosyne, are further evidence that the best of the old world may find a place in the new and there come to full fruition to the delight of gods and men.

These and others are the children which Zeus begets of the old and new worlds to fill the cosmos and adorn his reign, establishing "beauty and order in the world"<sup>27</sup>. Of the marriages of Zeus which Hesiod records Snell writes<sup>28</sup>:

. . . in this way (Hesiod) hoped to sketch a complete canvas of the growth and organization of the divine forces operative in the world . . . In his mind the profound religious idea that Zeus, the highest god, is the source of infinite wealth of Being and Life takes shape as a picture of Zeus blessed with an abundance of children.

### ERGA

Despite Zeus' victory over the Titans and the establishment of order among the gods Hesiod knows, from his own experience, that the justice of men and the order of human society fall far short of that ideal of kingship envisaged in the THEOGONIA. Instead of βασιλεῖς who, θεοὶ ὥς, distribute justice in "straight settlements", he knows them to be δωρόφαγοι, men who render crooked settlements, (σκολιῆς δὲ δίκης κρίνωσι θέμιστας, Th. 221); on every hand he sees idleness, corruption and dishonesty, men beset with toil, misery and hardship in a world divided by tension and strife. Yet, despite these realities, Hesiod is persuaded that the divine order of the THEOGONIA embraces the world of men as well as the realm of the gods, that the justice of Zeus has consequences no less for men than for gods; for there are

ἀθάνατοι Ζηνὸς φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων  
οἳ ῥα φυλάσσουσιν τε δίκας καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα.  
(Er. 253-54)

It is this conviction which informs the ERGA and endows its

traditional wisdom and particular exhortations with universal significance.

The genre of wisdom, or didactic, literature to which the ERGA belongs has roots which stretch far back into the pasts of many peoples." In his Introduction to the ERGA West<sup>29</sup> has listed examples from the writings of the Summerians, Akkadians, Egyptians, Persians and Indians as well as the later Irish, English, French, Italian, Norse, African and Antipodean peoples. Antiquity ascribed to Hesiod three other works of instruction and exhortation which have all long since disappeared: THE GREAT WORKS, an agricultural treatise of larger scope than the ERGA; the PRECEPTS OF CHIRON, said to recount the Centaur's lessons for Achilles; and ASTRONOMY, containing information on the shapes and movements of the constellations.

Hesiod was clearly following an ancient and well established tradition when he urged his brother to "heed justice and not increase hybris, . . . to give ear to justice and altogether forget violence". Yet, Hesiod was concerned in the ERGA not simply to admonish and instruct his brother, Perses, but to reveal the human condition in the light of the divine order of the THEOGONIA, to disclose the origin of evil in the world and discover a basis for human life

within the divine order of Zeus. Notwithstanding the miseries of this life Hesiod believed that man once lived, in a time long past, at ease, in a state of peace and leisure (Er. 90-92). How is it, then, that he now finds himself so wretched? To explain the presence of evil in the world Hesiod tells two stories.

According to one tradition (Er. 47ff) trouble came into the world through a woman, as a consequence of Prometheus' treachery. Zeus caused Hephaistos, to fashion a woman and he bid all the gods and goddesses endow her with their gifts of beauty, skill and grace, of grievous desire and limb-devouring care, of shameless purpose and cunning nature. He called her Pandora and sent her to Epimetheus who did not perceive, until it was too late, what gift he had received. Through Pandora, herself 'a καλὸν κακόν' (Th. 585), division has entered the life of man and all manner of suffering and sorrow has been let loose upon the world, πλεῖν μὲν γὰρ γαῖα κακῶν, πλεῖν δὲ θάλασσα (Er. 101). While the Pandora story set down here differs in detail and focus<sup>30</sup> from that told in the THEOGONIA both emphasize the supreme power of Zeus and the consequences of offending him.

Hesiod's second story, the Myth of the Five Races, sees man's present condition in an historical context, as

the *telos* of a movement which has brought him from a Golden Age of peace, piety and plenty (Er. 115-19) through generations of increasing violence, impiety and disorder to his present wretched state in the Iron Age.

In the Golden Age, still ἐν Κρόνου<sup>31</sup>, men lived like gods without toil or woe, ageless and carefree (Er. 110-14). The earth brought forth its fruit for them in bounty (Er. 117) and when at last She covered them they took their place ἐπιχθόνιοι watching over the δίκαι καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα of men (Er. 121-24). Next came the Silver Age, much worse than the Golden, a time of weak men who, after prolonged childhoods, lived brief adult lives of pain and strife, hybris and impiety (Er. 127-35). For their ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία and their neglect of the gods Zeus destroyed them, and they now are called ὑποχθόνιοι μάκαρες θνητοί (Er. 138-41). Then he created a third race of men who occupied the Bronze Age, a terrible and mighty race of bronze-working, flesh-eating men (Er. 145-51). They, too, followed a life of hybris and war and vanished in death, nameless, into the icy House of Hades (Er. 153). Zeus created a fourth race, more just and better, a race of god-like heroes (Er. 158-59). Though they perished in war they lived afterwards as ὀλβιοί, apart from men, enjoying a carefree life in the Isles of the Blessed where the fertile earth bore for them three crops



a year (Er. 167-73). Finally, there comes the present, Iron Age, a time of unending toil and misery. Here there is neither respect for parents nor fear of the gods; men deal in violence of deed and word and honour the wicked and hybristic man (Er. 177-94). All sense of regard, Αἰδώς, and righteous indignation, Νέμεσις (Er. 200), has vanished leaving only baneful cares for man against which there is no defense (κάκου δ' οὐκ ἔσσεται ἀλήθεια, Er. 201).

Hesiod continues this theme of hybris with the curious little fable of the hawk and the nightingale. The situation is a familiar one of a hawk carrying off a nightingale clutched in his cruel talons. As she struggles piteously the hawk is heard to rebuke her saying that it is useless to fight against a more powerful adversary for it avails nothing but to increase suffering. If understood as a lesson in the fatal consequences of hybris, the story fails completely, for, as West<sup>32</sup> points out, "It is the hawk, after all; who pronounces the moral". What are we, then, in the context of the Pandora story and the Myth of the Five Races, to make of a fable which so clearly demonstrates the triumph of violence and might over the weak and powerless?

Both the story of Pandora and the Myth of the Five Races have shown the disastrous consequences of ὕβρις

and ἀτασθαλία in the divine world as well as in the human cosmos. The hawk and the nightingale, however, belong neither to the realm of the gods nor to the world of men; they are part of the natural sphere where the law of the stronger does apply, where to struggle against the mightier does only increase suffering. Clearly, Hesiod saw certain disturbing and dangerous similarities between his world and that of the ῥοῖ in whom we recognize the δωρόφαγοι βασιλεῖς. The fable is, thus, a strong indictment of those kings who allot justice in crooked settlements. Outrageous as the behavior of the hawk may be it is not unjust. Justice is an attribute of men and of gods, not of the creatures of the wild, and this is what makes the offences of the δωρόφαγοι βασιλεῖς so grievous: through their actions human society is lowered to the natural state. Common piety<sup>33</sup> held (Il. 9.99) that the βασιλεῖς held their authority from Zeus himself and were consequently agents of his justice among men. Thus, their failure to uphold the divine sanctions was, in a very direct way, an offence against Zeus.

While both the Pandora story and the Myth of the Five Races have attributed, either explicitly (Er. 49,79) or implicitly (Er. 138, 144, 168) the presence of evil and man's consequent woeful state to the divine will, man is not caught helplessly in the grip of gods who may do with

him as they will; man is not at the mercy of capricious gods in the way that a nightingale is the prey of a hawk. Consider again the characterization of Zeus and the nature of his justice in the stories Hesiod tells.

In the Pandora story Zeus is angry (Er. 47) with Prometheus for his treacherous division of the sacrificial offerings and he devises μήδεα λυγρὰ for man by concealing fire. When Prometheus offends Zeus a second time and takes fire to man the Olympian is even more angry (Er. 53) and decrees great suffering for both Prometheus and men yet unborn (Er. 56). Similarly, according to the Myth of the Five Races Zeus destroyed the Silver Age in anger (Er. 138)

οὐνεκα τιμῆς  
οὐκ ἔδιδον μακάρεσσι θεοῖς οἱ Ὀλύμπιον ἔχουσιν.  
(Er. 138-39)

In each case, when Zeus is angered and acts to punish or destroy, his anger has been roused by an offence: Prometheus deceives Zeus and steals fire for man Διὸς ἑκὼν μητιόεντος (Er. 51); the men of the Silver Age "are not willing to serve the immortals and to make sacrifices to the gods upon the holy altars" (Er. 135-36).

As Zeus dealt with the former Ages so will he deal with the Iron Age, Hesiod warns. Yet not without cause will Zeus destroy man, but because he is angry that man regards

not the rights of parents, strangers or comrades (Er. 182-83) who clearly enjoy special divine protection; because man fears not the wrath of the gods nor the sanctity of an oath (Er. 187-94) is the vengeance of Zeus roused.

Despite the difficulties these stories raise<sup>34</sup>, as aetiological myths they show not only the consequences of wrongdoing for man and his world but also the fundamental difference between it and the world of nature:

τόνδε γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι νόμον διέταξε Κρονίων,  
 ἰχθύσι μὲν καὶ θηροῖ καὶ οἰωνοῖς πετεηνοῖς  
 ἔσθειν ἀλλήλους, ἐπεὶ οὐ δίκη ἐστὶ μετ' αὐτοῖς·  
 ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἔδωκε δίκην, ἣ πολλὸν ἀρίστη  
 γίνεται.

(Er. 276-80)

For the son of Kronos has ordained this law for men; fish and beasts and winged birds eat each other since there is not *dike* among them but to men he has given *dike* which is far the best.

This is what sets man and his world apart from the realm of the beasts -- *dike* -- and within the order of Zeus. Hawks may, with impunity, carry off the weaker but that analogy does not hold for man; for Zeus is angry with man's offences against his ordinances and will certainly punish him. The nightingale may struggle helplessly, and in vain; man may undoubtedly find himself, at times, unjustly treated by a stronger man but he is not, therefore, to consider himself at the mercy of unknowable gods.

Hesiod's vision of the Just and Unjust Cities reveals the full implications of Zeus' justice for man.

Though evil is now an irrevocable part of human life Hesiod knows very well that there is in this world both justice and injustice, for the consequences of Zeus' justice, in his view, take a most concrete and direct form. Those who deal fairly with strangers and their fellows (Er. 225), who pursue their duties to the gods (Er. 231), these men live in peace without hunger or destruction (Er. 230); their city flourishes and the people with it (Er. 237), as the bounty of nature reflects the fertility of the women (Er. 232-35). For those, however, who deal in ὕβρις and οὐκ ἐλάττω ἔργα (Er. 238), as the men of the Silver and Iron Ages, Zeus has decreed famine and plague (Er. 243) to the destruction of the people. So, sometimes, a whole city must count the cost of one wicked man, even as all mankind has paid for the offences of Prometheus (Er. 240).

For Hesiod there is no doubt that justice and the deeds of men are a concern to the gods: that the ἐπιχθόνιοι go about keeping watch upon men (Er. 122), that the eye of Zeus sees all and notices all (Er. 268-69). Therefore, does Hesiod exhort the kings to concern themselves with justice

ἐγγὺς γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔδοντες  
ἀθάνατοι φράζονται ὅσοι σκολιῇσι δίκησιν  
ἀλλήλους τρίβουσι θεῶν ὅπινυ οὐκ ἀλέγοντες.

τρίς γὰρ μύριοι εἰσιν ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ  
 ἄθάνατοι Ζηνὸς φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,  
 οἳ ῥα φυλάσσουσιν τε δίκας καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα  
 ἥερα ἐσσάμενοι, πάντα φοιτῶντες ἐπ' αἶαν.  
 (Er. 249-55)

Therefore does he urge Perses to "heed justice and not increase hybris" (Er. 213), to "give ear to justice and altogether forget violence" (Er. 275) -- that he may not offend the gods and incur suffering. For Hesiod firmly believed that the just were rewarded,

εἰ γὰρ τίς κ' ἐθέλῃ τὰ δίκαι' ἀγορεύσαι  
 γινώσκων, τῷ μὲν τ' ὄλβον διδοῖ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς.  
 (Er. 280-81)

Though man sometimes suffered, it was his hybris and violence which offended the gods and brought down upon him divine retribution. Thus,

ὅς δέ κε μαρτυρήσιν ἐκὼν ἐπιόρκον ὁμόσας  
 ψεύσεται, ἐν δὲ δίκην βλάψας νήκεστον ἀασθῇ,  
 τοῦ δέ τ' ἀμαυροτέρῃ γενεῇ μετόπισθε λέλειπται.  
 (Er. 282-84)

Hesiod rejected the view that man was at the mercy of capricious and unknowable gods<sup>35</sup>, yet he knew full well the uncompromising nature of Zeus' wrath when his sanctions were violated:

ἴσον δ' ὅς θ' ἰκέτην ὅς τε ξεῖνον κακὸν ἔρξει,  
 ὅς τε κασιγνήτοιο ἐσὺ ἀνὰ δέμνια βαίνει  
 [κρυπταδίνης εὐνῆς ἀλόχου, παρακαίρια ῥέζων],  
 ὅς τε τευ ἀφραδίνης ἀλιταίνητ' ὄρφανὰ τέκνα,  
 ὅς τε γονῆα γέροντα κακῷ ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῶ  
 νεικείῃ χαλεποῖσι καθαρπτόμενος ἐπέεσσι  
 τῷ δ' ἢ τοι Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἀγαίεται, ἐς δὲ τελευτὴν  
 ἔργων ἀντ' ἀδίκων χαλεπὴν ἐπέθηκεν ἀμοιβήν.

(Er. 327-34)

He knew, also, that, though punishment may not always be swift, though a man may seem to prosper from his evil ways, the justice of Zeus is inevitable and sure.

εἰ γὰρ τις καὶ χερσὶ βίη μέγαν ὄλβον ἔληται,  
ἢ ὁ γ' ἀπὸ γλώσσης λήισσεται, οἷά τε πολλὰ  
γίνεται, εὖτ' ἂν δὴ κέρδος νόον ἐξαπατήσῃ  
ἀνθρώπων, αἰδῶ δέ τ' ἀναιδείῃ κατοπάζῃ,  
ῥεῖα δέ μιν μαυρόθυοι θεοί, μινύθουσιν δέ οἶκον  
ἀνέρι τῷ, παῦρον δέ τ' ἐπὶ χρόνον, ὄλβος ὅπηδεῖ.  
(Er. 321-26)

However, despite his own unhappy position, Hesiod does not appear to have recognized that the just sometimes suffer.

Because he understood clearly the nature of the human condition, that division and conflict were an essential feature of man's world, Hesiod sought to discover in the divine-human relationship a basis upon which man might establish his life. This he found in the duality of knowledge and labour, νόος and ἔργα.

We have seen already<sup>36</sup> the significant role which νόος played in establishing and maintaining order in the divine world. Ouranos (Th. 176ff) went to Gaia's bed *unaware* of the treachery and destruction which awaited him there; Kronos, in turn, was supplanted because he *perceived not* (Th. 488) Rheia's deception when she offered him a swaddled stone instead of her last born child. Similarly, both in the THEOGONIA (Th. 511) and in the ERGA (Er. 85ff),

Epimetheus shows the shattering consequences of incomplete vision and limited understanding. Zeus, however, can be neither deceived by Prometheus (Th. 551) nor taken un-awares by Typhon (Th. 838); Zeus alone, of the three divine rulers, has full vision, complete knowledge; Zeus alone has νόος; Zeus alone maintains his rule.

Hesiod was convinced that νόος played an equally important role in the world of men, that the ability to perceive the true nature of the world was the decisive factor in determining a man's actions and, ultimately, his fate. Not only is it νόος which distinguishes men, one from the other, as we read in the following passage,

οὗτος μὲν πανάριστος, ὃς αὐτῷ πάντα νοήσει  
 [φρασσάμενος τὰ κ' ἔπειτα καὶ ἐς τέλος ἦσιν ἀμείνω]  
 ἐσθλὸς δ' αὖ κακῆϊνός ὃς εὖ εἰπόντι πίθηται  
 ὃς δέ κε μήτ' αὐτῷ νοήῃ μήτ' ἄλλου ἀκούων  
 ἐν θυμῷ βάλληται, ὃ δ' αὖτ' ἀχρήτιος ἀνὴρ.  
 (Er. 293-97)

but it is νόος which makes justice possible among men. It is δίκη which sets man apart from the beasts of the air and the sea and land (Er. 276-80), but it is νόος, knowledge and understanding, which moves a man to δίκη (Er. 281).

Though it is not always easy for a man to know the νόος of Zeus, for

ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλοιός τ' ἐστὶν νόος αἰγιόχοιο,  
 ἀργαλέος δ' ἀνδρῶσι καταθυνοῖσι νοῆσαι  
 (Er. 483-84)



he can, through νόος, know δίκη, the daughter of Zeus (Er. 256). Through knowledge a man may "give ear to justice and altogether forget violence" (Er. 275), through knowledge a man might "heed justice and not increase hybris" (Er. 213). It is the foolish, νήπιος, the gift-devouring (Er. 40), banefully minded (Er. 261) kings and the thoughtless (Er. 134) men of the Silver Age (Er. 131), who deal in violence and outrage justice. But, Hesiod is convinced that, whether first or last, even the foolish man must ultimately come to an understanding of the nature of justice, that

δίκη δ' ὅπερ ὕβριος ἵσχει  
 ἐς τέλος ἐξελθούσα· παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω.  
 (Er. 217-18)

The connection which Hesiod draws here between suffering, experience, and understanding prefigures Aeschylus' great theme of πάθει μάθος in the ORESTEIA<sup>37</sup>.

But, Hesiod knew that justice among men was not simply an abstract quality, the absence of hybris and violence; he knew that the order of human society was revealed also in a very concrete way, in labour -- not the destructive toil, πόνος, which wears a man down and makes him wretched, but the constructive industry, ἔργον, ordained by the gods for men (Er. 398), which fills a man's granaries and wards off hunger (Er. 299-301). The gods who watch over the δίκαια καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα of men are angry not only with those who,

through violence and hybris, outrage suppliants and dishonour strangers (Er. 327), but also with the idle man (Er. 303). From work is a man wealthy and prosperous, able to make offerings to the immortal gods (Er. 336); from work is a man respected of men (Er. 312) and beloved by the gods (Er. 309). Virtue and glory attend the wealthy but no good respect follows a man in need (Er. 317). To this end does the poet exhort his brother, saying

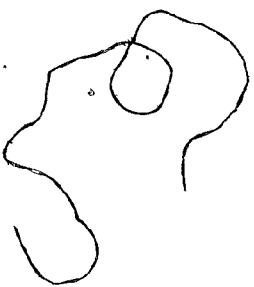
ὦ Πέρση, σὺ δὲ ταῦτα τεῦ ἐνικατθεο θυμῷ,  
μηδέ σ' ἔρις κακὸς ἀπ' ἔργου θυμὸν ἐρύκοι  
(Er. 27-8)

and

ἐργάζεο, νήπιε Πέρση,  
ἔργα τὰ τ' ἀνθρώποισι θεοὶ διετεκμήραντο.  
(Er. 397-98)

Hesiod recognized that the world was now, and had long been, full of κακά, for most men a place of woe: Pandora's jar had been opened and nothing could restore the Golden Age. Though Zeus' victory over the Titans had brought forth a new era of order and justice among the gods the poet knew that such a state was not vouchsafed to man, that the resolution of conflict was a constant and continuing task to be achieved by him. The recurring motif of duality in the ERGA is an ever present reminder of the reality and extent of the conflict and division which now besets the life of man. Every aspect, every level of the human condition

reflects the καλὸν κακὸν legacy of Pandora (Th. 585): the good Eris and the bad (Er. 24, 13), δίκη and ὕβρις, the Just City and the Unjust (Er. 225ff, 238ff), good management and bad (Er. 471-2), the πανάριστος man and the ἀχρήτιος νήπιος (Er. 293ff), the man of industry and the man of idleness -- and, not least of all, Hesiod and Perses themselves, the one of good intent (ἐσθλὰ νοέων), the other, foolish (νήπιος) (Er. 286). In addition to these explicit images there is the implication of duality in the ἐλπὶς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή (Er. 500) and the αἰδώς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή (Er. 317), about which more will be said later.



Yet, nonetheless, Hesiod believed that the justice of Zeus embraced the world of men, that misery and woe were not man's inescapable lot. Because there are now two races of Strife there are also two paths which man may tread: one, the way of justice, ὁδὸς δ' ἐτέρηθι παρελθεῖν κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια (Er. 216-17), is long and steep (Er. 290); the other is the way of wickedness, "smooth and close at hand" (Er. 288). The gods have decreed both good and ill (Th. 906) for mortal man and he is free to choose the long, steep path to justice or the smooth and easy road which ultimately leads to misfortune.

Though earthly kings may not distribute justice  
 θεοὶ ὡς Hesiod urged his brother to take heed and avoid  
 hybris, to give thought and deal justly with men and gods.  
 Similarly, though the earth no longer bears its crops freely  
 man need not be overwhelmed by πόνος. Hesiod continually  
 (Er. 367, 404, 448 *inter alia*) bids his brother to attend  
 his words, saying

σε ἄνωγα  
 φράζεσθαι τάδε πάντα μετὰ φρεσὶν ὡς ἀγορεύω  
 (Er. 687-88)

that he may not find himself unprepared (Er. 491-92), or  
 in want (Er. 577), that he may avoid a "dread report" among  
 men (Er. 760).

The contrast in the first part of the ERGA, between the πανόριστος man who notices all and the ἀχρήτος man who neither perceives nor heeds the advice of another, is answered in the second half by that between the thrifty, self-reliant man (Er. 410) who, through good management (Er. 471) and prudence (Er. 455), provides for himself and his family and, on the other hand, the foolish, idle man who goes in want feeding on empty hope (Er. 501).

Though the winters are cruel (Er. 557) man need not cower before the wind as the beasts, "with his tail between his legs" (Er. 512). Through prudence and fore-

thought a man may weather the storms of winter, through attention and observation a man may plough and plant and reap (Er. 383ff) in season providing for himself and prospering, winning favour of men and gods,

εὐδαίμων τε καὶ ὀλβιος ὅς τ' ἄγε πάντα  
εἰδὼς ἐργάζεται ἀναίτιος ἀθανάτοισιν.

(Er. 823-27)

While Gagarin maintains<sup>38</sup> that δίκη refers only to the peaceful settlement of disputes and "does not have any general moral sense", consider, now, Hesiod's own characterization of δίκη. In the Just City she is seen as a vital and all-pervasive aspect of the community, reflected in the peaceful, prosperous and pious (Er. 228-31) lives of the people and the abundant increase of their own kind, their flocks and their fields. In contrast to the lives of those who "deal justly with strangers and their fellows" (Er. 225) the men of the Unjust City, from their ὄβρις and ἀτασθαλία, live amid hunger, plague and war.

Hesiod has further illumined his vision of δίκη in the extended image of the world of nature: hawks prey upon the weaker, fish and beasts and winged birds eat each other, for there is not δίκη among them". Without this δίκη, which Zeus has granted, man, too, would live according to the law of the wild, himself both preyed upon and preying.

Through δίκη, however, man may rise above the beasts, freed from their necessity. For man, now, there is both prosperity and punishment as there never is in the world of nature. Clearly, Gagarin's "peaceful settlements" are but one aspect of Hesiod's greater vision of human justice -- a vision which went far beyond the limits of legalism.

It is clear that the THEOGONIA and ERGA together present Hesiod's complete understanding of the divine-human relationship, of the divine world and the order of the human cosmos. For Hesiod saw the emergence of Zeus' rule as the *telos* of an historical progression which brought to an end the old world's primitive justice of retribution and atonement. The overweening pride and reckless presumption, treachery, craft and limited vision of the world of Kronos has given way before the physical supremacy and full vision of Zeus to the punishment of ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία. The new order of Olympian Zeus ensured each his rightful place and was secured by mutually advantageous arrangements with the best of the old world, by the reconfirmation of ancient privileges and the recognition of new honours.

Hesiod knew that the justice of Zeus had consequences no less for men than for gods. Though misery and toil, hardship and suffering were now a part of the human

condition he believed that justice and the deeds of men were a concern to the gods, that the gods were angry with hybris and impiety and, however late, punished the wicked and rewarded the just. Hesiod was further convinced that man was not at the mercy of capricious and unknowable gods but that, through knowledge, he might choose the way of justice, through industry he might avoid offending the gods and incurring divine punishment, and might pursue the path of justice and live in peace and prosperity.

## III SOLON

## SOLON'S VISION OF DIVINE JUSTICE

Hesiod looked upon the fortunes of men and concluded that the righteous flourished and the wicked suffered, that justice, outraged, brought κακόν (Er. 223) to men. For him the equation was simple and fundamental: "Επίς (Th. 226), ὕβρις (Er. 214), κακὰ κέρδεα (Er. 352) led to ἄτη, and the connection between ill-gotten gains (Er. 320) and the decline of a house (Er. 325), between perjury (Er. 282) and the downfall of a race, between the abuse of parents (Er. 285) or suppliants (Er. 327) and the general misfortunes of a people (Er. 333) was no less clear, no less direct than that between idleness and hunger (Er. 300). Though the punishment might not always appear to be a natural consequence of the wrongdoing Hesiod knew that the gods were concerned with the deeds of men and that μέγα πῆμα inevitably followed σχέτλια ἔργα.

Solon knew, as well, that justice in the human cosmos was guaranteed by divine sanction for Zeus looked upon the "end of all" (Fr. 13.17). He, too, recognized that from "great hybris" came "much suffering" (Fr. 4.8), that, in particular<sup>1</sup>, ill-gotten gains, κέρδεα, led to ἄτη (Fr. 13.75). But though he drew from the ODYSSEY and the writings of Hesiod<sup>2</sup> many of the images and forms for his own



characterization of justice Solon's understanding of the divine-human relationship went beyond that of the older poets in a number of important ways. While the supremacy of Zeus and the emergence of his rule dominate Hesiod's understanding of divine and human justice it is the πόλις which lies at the heart of Solon's vision. For him the community was not only the natural focus of the human condition but it was also the expression and source of justice for men, the embodiment and extension of the divine order of Zeus in the human cosmos. While Hesiod was content to know that ὕβρις → ἀτη Solon sought to understand how ὕβρις and ἀτη were related and to reveal, in concrete terms, the implications of that connection both for the πόλις and for the individual. He drew from Hesiod's primary relationship a fuller, more complete expression to illumine the human condition. Although he saw a difference between what Vlastos<sup>3</sup> has termed the "justice of the polis" and the "justice of wealth", that is, the rational, knowable expression of δίκη revealed in the order of the community as distinct from the seemingly incomprehensible working of μοῖρα, nevertheless Solon sought to encompass all human experience within his vision of justice. In his hands the concept of justice took on, for all time, a new aspect and a new dimension.

Moved by the same spirit of inquiry as the scientists and philosophers of Ionia Solon saw in the state the same laws of cause and effect as moved the physical universe, that there was, as Jaeger says, an "immanent justice of events"<sup>4</sup>, a "natural self-regulating order"<sup>5</sup> in the state. By revealing the principle of order in the πόλις Solon removed its fortunes and destiny forever from the realm of mystery and pious acceptance. "The sea is stirred by the winds", he points out, "unless some wind moves it it is most even (δικαιοσύνη) of all" (Fr. 12). In the same vein he declares

ἐκ νεφέλης πέλεται χιόνας μένος ἡδὲ χαλάζης,  
βροντὴ δ' ἐκ λαμπρῆς γίγνεται ἀσπεροπῆς  
ἀνδρῶν δ' ἐκ μεγάλων πόλις ὀλλυται, ἐς δὲ μονάρχου  
δῆμος ἀνδρείη δουλοσύνην ἔπεσεν.

(Fr. 9)

Solon recognized the causal relationship between ὕβρις and ἀτη and he warned that the σχετλια ἔργα of men had direct and natural consequences for them and their world. Thus, in Fragment 4, he charges that the plundering of public and holy treasuries (Fr. 4.14ff) has not only outraged the "sacred foundations of Justice" (Fr. 4.16) but has, more importantly, given rise to civil unrest and dissension (στάσις) and then to "sleeping war" (Fr. 4.14) which destroys the youth and enslaves the people. In this analysis Solon clearly sees war and slavery not as a "spontaneous act"<sup>6</sup>

of an outraged god, completely separate and unconnected with man's actions, but as the natural and direct consequence of human corruption and dishonesty. While the sanctions which Hesiod revealed as the consequence of wrongdoing were, in many cases<sup>7</sup>, beyond the comprehension of man, Solon knew that as far as the order of the state was concerned, there were clear principles and that these were intelligible to man. It is the ἀδίκος νόος of the leaders (Fr. 4.7) together with the compliance of the people and their desire for unlawful wealth which have undermined the moral fabric of the community and had what Solmsen describes as ". . . an upsetting effect upon the precarious balance of the community life"<sup>8</sup>. Solon knew that such breaches of public morality not only destroy the integrity of the state but leave the πόλις divided against itself, defenseless before attacks from within as well as from without<sup>9</sup>.

Solon's vision of the πόλις discovered a political dimension in the ὕβρις → ἀτη relationship unrecognized by Hesiod, for he saw clearly that man's misdeeds had far-reaching consequences not simply for the individual but for the community. Despite the portraits of the Just and Unjust Cities and certain suggestions of communal suffering in the ERGA (240, 261, 284) Hesiod, for the most part, understood injustice and suffering, as he did justice and prosperity, in

terms of the individual (Er. 243) or family (Er. 244)<sup>10</sup>, as an essentially private affair,

οἱ αὐτῷ κακὰ τεύχει ἀνὴρ ἄλλῳ κακὰ τεύχων,  
ἡ δὲ κακὴ βουλὴ τῷ βουλευσάντι κακίστη.  
(Er. 265-66)

at most, a matter be decided in the courts (Er. 35ff).

Solon, on the other hand, as statesman and politician, realized that violations of justice were a public concern, that wrongdoing had, first and foremost, a direct effect upon the community as a whole and then, because his well-being was bound up with that of the community, upon each individual in the community. In Fragment 4 he paints this vivid picture of the inevitable consequences of evil,

οὕτω δημόσιον κακὸν ἔρχεται οἴκαδ' ἑκάστῳ,  
αὐλαιοὶ δ' ἔτ' ἔχειν οὐκ ἐθέλουσι θύραι,  
ὑψηλὸν δ' ὑπὲρ ἔρκος ὑπέρθορεν, εὖρε δὲ πάντως,  
εἰ καὶ τις φεύγων ἐν μυχῇ ἢ θαλάμῳ.  
(Fr. 4.27-30)

On this notion of the "common concern" of wrongdoing and the relationship of the individual to the community Vlastos writes  
". . . any act of injustice, impairing the common security, threatens everyone's individual security -- and family solidarity can interpose no effective protection"<sup>11</sup>.

Solon knew that justice and injustice were qualities intrinsic to the πόλις, that as the πόλις was ordered so was man happy or wretched. It had long been recognized in Greek

law that certain actions posed a direct threat to the safety of the community as a whole and that, therefore, the community, as a whole, could and must take extraordinary steps to deal with the danger<sup>12</sup>. It was Solon who extended this "right of public action" to situations which had previously been deemed to be purely private or individual concerns, believing that *all* acts of injustice were an assault upon the common peace and freedom of the πόλις. No longer was it simply the individual and his family who suffered or prospered: whatever harmed one in the community harmed the whole community, and whatever enslaved one, enslaved the whole<sup>13</sup>. In Solon's view<sup>14</sup> man's wrongdoing threatened the very existence of the community -- it was now the πόλις which suffered, κακὰ πλεῖστα πόλει (Fr. 4.31), it was now the πόλις which perished. "The city is destroyed by proud men", declares Solon (Fr. 9.3), and again

αὐτοὶ δὲ φθείρειν μεγάλην πόλιν ἀφραδίησιν  
ἄστοι βούλονται . . .

(Fr. 4.5-6)

Similarly, righteous and just dealings were, for Solon, the true foundation and sure support of the city.

Though war and slavery were the results of the corruption and dishonesty of her leaders Solon knew that, in a wider sense, the ἀτη which any ὕβρις engendered was, in the first place, a general, all-pervasive state of disorder

and lawlessness, *δυσνομία*, within the *πόλις* and that it was to this breakdown of law and order that such externals as war, slavery, famine, plague or defeat must ultimately be ascribed. In the same manner, the peace and prosperity which Hesiod saw, in his Just City, as a reflection of man's lawful deeds Solon knew to be, fundamentally, a consequence of the good order of the state, *εὐνομία*, which was in turn the true manifestation of justice among men.

In this vision of the human cosmos Solon has given new life, wider significance to the Hesiodic figures of *Δυσνομία* and *Εὐνομία*. By his use of genealogical schema Hesiod showed the close connection between *Δυσνομία*, *Ἄτη* and *Ἔρις*, as well as that between *Εὐνομία*, *Δίκη* and *Εἰρήνη*; in the same manner he expressed the notion that all order and peace and harmony derive from Zeus in the many children he begot. Now, however, no longer merely sister (Th. 230) to *Ἄτη*, begotten of *Ἔρις*, for Solon, and for the *πόλις*, *Δυσνομία*, begotten of *ὕβρις* and *ἀδίκῃ ἔργῳ* is *Ἄτη*, the natural consequence of injustice and, for *πόλις*-man, its punishment. For Solon *Δυσνομία* became not only the embodiment of lawlessness and disorder in the *πόλις* but, through her Hesiodic lineage, a vivid reminder of the relation between wrongdoing and ruin. Similarly, while Hesiod knew *Εὐνομία* (Th. 902) as daughter of Zeus and Themis, sister to

Δίκη and Ειρήνη, being but one aspect of the new era of peace and prosperity which Zeus has brought forth among the gods, Solon shows her to be, in fact, the ground and being of δίκη and εἰρήνη, the most complete and perfect (ἄρτια, Fr. 4.32, 39) expression of the divine order among men.

There can be no doubt that Solon had in mind Hesiod's great images of justice (οἶμος τραχὺς, Er. 290) and injustice (λείη μὲν ὁδός, Er. 288), of the straight (ἰθεῖαι, Th. 86) and crooked (σκολιαί, Er. 262) settlements of just and unjust kings, when he celebrated Εὐνομίη as she who τραχέα λειαίνει (Fr. 4.34), she who εὐθύνει δὲ δίκας σκολιάς (Fr. 4.36)<sup>15</sup>. Though Hesiod would have his kings wield justice θεοὶ ὥς Solon saw that for the πόλις Εὐνομίη was the true reflection and only guarantee of divine justice among men, being for mankind, as Zeus is for the gods, both the embodiment of order and the instrument of justice. For it was only the good order of the state, Solon knew, which could ensure for man an end to anger and strife, which could reconcile division and render "all human pursuits perfect and wise" (Fr. 4.39).

In his concern for the πόλις Solon had observed the inevitable consequences of ill-gotten gains and in Fragment 13 he traced the sequence of events which lead men to

ruin in these words

(πλοῦτος) δ' ἄνδρες τιμῶσιν ὑφ' ὕβριος, οὐ κατὰ κόσμον  
 ἔρχεται, ἀλλ' ἀδίκους ἔρμασι πειθόμενος  
 οὐκ ἐθέλων ἔπεται, ταχέως δ' ἀναμίσγεται αἴτῃ.  
 (Fr. 13.11-13)

(the wealth) which men honour from hybris comes not in good order, but being moved by unjust deeds it follows reluctantly and soon is mingled with ruin.

Solon, therefore, set out to discover the particular connection between κέρδεα and ὕβρις, to show what it was in κέρδεα that brought αἴτῃ upon man. Common piety<sup>16</sup> saw danger in any prosperity but both Hesiod and Solon knew that there was a difference between god-given wealth and that acquired from unlawful desires. For Hesiod θεόδοτα χρήματα was better than ἀρπακτὰ χρήματα because wealth acquired by violence of deed brought shame upon a man and, ultimately, ruin and destruction. From a similar conviction Solon prayed for the πλοῦτον δ' ὃν δῶσι θεοί (Fr. 13.9), for that which man gains ὑφ' ὕβριος or through ἀδίκαια ἔργα "soon is mingled with αἴτῃ" (Fr. 13.11-13).

As a political reformer Solon had observed in οἱ πλοῦτοι<sup>17</sup> a source of dissension and civil unrest for the state, and he, therefore, sought to understand the nature of wealth and the difference between that which the gods gave and that obtained unlawfully. He concluded that great wealth implied an element of excess or surfeit, κόρος, which predisposed certain men to ὕβρις:



τίκτει γὰρ κόρος ὕβριν, ὅταν πολὺς ὀλβος ἔπηται  
 ἀνθρώποις ὁπόσοις μὴ νόος ἀρτίος ᾖ.  
 (Fr. 6.3-4)

This κόρος gave rise to a desire for ever more wealth,

πλούτου δ' οὐδὲν τέρμα πεφασμένον ἀνδράσι κεῖται  
 οἱ γὰρ νῦν ἡμέων πλεῖστον ἔχουσι βίον  
 διπλάσιον σπεύδουσι· τίς ἂν κορέσειεν ἀπαντας;  
 (Fr. 13.73-75)

and, in the presence of ignorance (ἀνδρῖν, Fr. 9.4) or folly  
 (ἀφραδίη, Fr. 4.5), could not be held in check, but moved men  
 to further deeds of wickedness and excess,

οὐ γὰρ ἐπίστανται κατέχειν κόρον οὐδὲ παρούσας  
 εὐφροσύνας κοσμεῖν δαιτὸς ἐν ἡσυχίῃ  
 πλουτέουσιν δ' ἀδίκοις ἔργοισι πειθόμενοι  
 (Fr. 4.9-12)

Lattimore<sup>18</sup> comments that punishment follows unjust profit  
 "because it is against nature and therefore against the gods".

But the question still remains: "why are unjust profits  
 against the gods?" The answer is to be found in the notion  
 of κόρος: it is the element of κόρος, of excess beyond one's  
 allotted portion, in the κέρδεα which causes man to suffer  
 ruin. Unjust profits are "against the gods" because in ac-  
 quiring κέρδεα man takes more than his share. Similarly, it  
 is taking more than one's share, ὑπὲρ μόρον, which is the  
 source of disaster for man in the ODYSSEY.

From his characterization of Εὐνομίη it is clear  
 that Solon saw κόρος, ὕβρις and ἀτη not simply as aspects of  
 individual behavior but as important and central elements of

the social order

Εὐνομίῃ δ' εὖκοσμα καὶ ἄρτια πάντ' ἀποφαίνει,  
καὶ θαμὰ τοῖς ἀδίκοις ἀμφιτίθῃσι πέδας  
τραχέα λειαίνει, παύει κόρον, ὕβριν ἀμαυροῦ,  
αὐαίνει δ' ἄτης ἀνθεα φυόμενα,  
εὐθύνει δὲ δίκας σκολιάς, ὑπερήφανά τ' ἔργα  
πραῦνει· παύει δ' ἔργα διχοστασίης,  
παύει δ' ἀγαλέης ἐριδος χόλον, ἔστι δ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς  
πάντα κατ' ἀνθρώπους ἄρτια καὶ πινυτά.  
(Fr. 4.32-39)

It is Εὐνομίῃ, the just and righteous dealings of men revealed in the good order of the state, which puts an end to κόρος, wipes out ὕβρις and dries up the growing flower of ἄτη; so it is, by implication, Δυσνομίῃ, the manifestation of man's wrongdoing, which fosters κόρος, gives rise to ὕβρις and brings forth ἄτη. Solon has thus drawn from Hesiod's ὕβρις → ἄτη relationship a more complete expression, expanded to show the true nature and full force of ὕβρις in the human cosmos

κόρος → ὕβρις → ἄτη = Δυσνομίῃ → κόρος → ὕβρις → ἄτη = Δυσνομίῃ  
κτλ

Yielding in ignorance and folly to a desire for more than his share of wealth man commits deeds of violence and wrongdoing which bring ruin and disorder to the community; this atmosphere and climate of lawlessness in turn begets further excesses and deeds of violence which bring greater ruin, etc.

For Hesiod the divine-human relationship was straightforward, simple and reliable. Despite his own ex-

perience he was convinced that the gods were concerned with δίκαι καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα of men, that they rewarded the just and punished the wicked. For him Δίκη was a spontaneous and dramatic expression of the divine will

τῆς δὲ Δίκης ῥόδος ἐλκομένης ἧ κ' ἄνδρες ἄγωσι  
 δωρόφαγοι, σκολιῆς δὲ δίκης κρίνωσι θέμιστας·  
 ἧ δ' ἔπεται κλαίουσα πόλιν καὶ ἡθεα λαῶν,  
 ἥερα ἔσσαμένη, κακὸν ἀνθρώποισι φέρουσα,  
 (Er. 220-23)

an immediate reaction to outrage and offence

καὶ ῥ' ὁπότ' ἂν τίς μιν βλάβῃ σκολιῶς ὀνοτάζων,  
 αὐτίκα παρ Διὶ πατρὶ καθεζομένη Κρονίωνι  
 γηρύετ' ἀνθρώπων ἀδίκων νόον, ὅφρ' ἀποτείλῃ  
 δῆμος ἀτασθαλίας βασιλέων οἱ λυγρὰ νοεῦντες.  
 ἄλλη παρκλίνωσι δίκας σκολιῶς ἐνέποντες.  
 (Er. 258-62)

Though the wicked man might appear to prosper Hesiod believed it would be for a short time only, παῦρον δὲ τ' ἐπὶ χρόνον ὄλβος ὀπηδεῖ (Er. 326), and that ruin would then overtake him.

Solon, however, felt no such simple optimism. In the realm of public morality he had no doubt that the ὕβρις → ἀτη principle was steadfast, sure and intelligible: man's suffering was the result of his own wrongdoing and therefore not to be ascribed to the divine;

εἰ δὲ πεπόνθατε λυγρὰ δι' ὑμετέρεην κακότητα,  
 μὴ θεοῖσι τούτων μοῖραν ἐπαμφέρετε.  
 (Fr. 11.1-2)

Not by "the fate of Zeus and the intentions of the blessed gods" (Fr. 4.1-3) does the city perish, but "through ignorance a great city is destroyed" (Fr. 4.5), "through folly the

people fall into slavery" (Fr. 9.4), from "great hybris comes much suffering" (Fr. 4.8). This was the "rational δίκη" of the πόλις of which knowledge was an essential aspect if man was to avoid ruin. Hence, Solon's self-imposed "mission"<sup>19</sup> to educate the Athenians, ταῦτα διδάξαι θυμὸς Ἀθηναίους με κελεύει (Fr. 4.30). Knowledge is as important an element of divine justice for Solon as it was for Hesiod and the poet of the ODYSSEY. Having been warned by the gods, as Zeus declares at the opening of the ODYSSEY, Aigisthos is all the more guilty for taking "more than his share". In Hesiod's account of the succession of divine generations it is knowledge which distinguished Zeus from the former rulers; it is by knowledge that he avoids destruction and establishes his reign. So, also, Hesiod tells us that by knowledge a man may act justly and avoid ruin. Solon, however, recognized an element of uncertainty in wealth and success, what Vlastos has called the "capricious reversability of Fortune"<sup>20</sup>, an element that confounded reason. Recognizing that one man may inadvertantly come to ruin, while another, apparently acting wrongly, may prosper, he writes

ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν εὖ ἔρδειν πειρώμενος οὐ προνοήσας  
 ἐς μεγάλην αἶτην καὶ χαλεπὴν ἔπεσεν,  
 τῷ δὲ κακῶς ἔρδοντι θεὸς περὶ πάντα δίδωσιν  
 συντυχίην ἀγαθὴν, ἐκλυσιν ἀφροσύνης.

(Fr. 3.67-70)

Unaccountably, a man, whether sailor (Fr. 13.43), farmer (Fr. 13.47), craftsman (Fr. 13.49), seer (Fr. 13.51) or physician (Fr. 13.57), may fail to secure the success he seeks. It is Zeus who sees τὸ τέλος πάντων (Fr. 13.17) but for the rest, no matter if they be under the tutelage of Athena, Hephaistos, Apollo or the Muses, the τέλος of their activities is not within their grasp (Fr. 13.58). No human τέχνη may defend a man against his fate, τὰ μοῖσμα (Fr. 13.55). Herein lies a basic problem for man: on the one hand, god-given wealth, Solon declares, is sure "from top to bottom" (Fr. 13.8-10), however, even it, apparently, may fail. Solon thus concluded that there was an aspect of fate which lay beyond man's understanding and his control; this is the μοῖρα which falls to all, both man and god alike, on no rational basis: \*

Μοῖρα δέ τοι θνητοῖσι κακὸν φέρει ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν;  
δῶρα δ' ἀφυσκτα θεῶν γίγνεται ἀθανάτων.  
(Fr. 13.63-64)

Though the Moirai have always been regarded as great and powerful figures on the divine landscape their origins are variously represented by the poets. For Hesiod they are, first of all, the dread children of Night (Th. 217), and then, later (Th. 904), the daughters of Zeus and Themis, sisters of Lawfulness, Peace and Justice. By this double heritage Hesiod recognizes, however unconsciously, the place

which these ancient goddesses have in the new order of Zeus. In Pindar's Hymn to Zeus, on the other hand, they are daughters of necessity and "date back much farther"<sup>21</sup>. It is clear that in acknowledging Moira's role in man's fate Solon is making explicit what is already there, symbolically, in Hesiod's genealogies and implicit in the *ὑπὲρ νόμον* notion of the ODYSSEY: the continuing and important role of *Μοῖρα* in the divine-human relationship. Thus, man may incur *ἄτη* as a result of his own wrongdoing, in accordance with the rational principle of *δίκη*, or simply as a consequence of a superrational *μοῖρα*. Although Allen<sup>22</sup> suggests that Solon did not mean to stress the difference, believing that all *ἄτη* is *τελομένη* (Fr. 13.75-76), it is clear that Solon recognized a duality in man's destiny: that aspect for which he was directly responsible and that which was his by "lot".

Both the political and the social reforms which Solon instituted reveal his clear understanding of the two forces which determine man's fate, and in this way he proved himself both an innovator and a traditionalist, as Vlastos has vigorously shown<sup>23</sup>. The present distress of the City, Solon knew, was the result of the greed and wickedness of the nobles who, in loaning money to the peasants, demanded not only a portion of the produce of the land but, also, the person of the debtor as well, as security. These actions

clearly followed the κῶρος → ὕβρις → ἀτη formula and it was therefore, on this ground, that Solon cancelled all debts, both public and private, forbade the loaning of money on the security of persons and "tore up the marking posts of the land" (Fr. 36.3-7). These were bold moves which sprang not from a liberal, humanitarian view but from Solon's unique vision of the πόλις. Whatever harmed one, harmed all and whatever enslaved one, enslaved all. By freeing the people from their debts and the land from its encumbrance he was, in fact, securing the freedom of the πόλις.

On the other hand, he resisted the commons' demands for an equal share in the land and in this he followed the traditional stance of Hesiod and Homer. Privilege, honour and wealth, they taught, were assigned unequally, by μοῖρα, and were, therefore, not open to question nor capable of justification. If the state were to redistribute the land it would be a violation of the ancient assignments of μοῖρα and as such would increase κῶρος which, as we have seen, leads inevitably to ὕβρις. Thus, he assigned the division of the πόλις τιμήματι<sup>24</sup>, according to the wealth produced by the land which each man held, and on the basis of these classes he allotted the various offices in the πόλις. Equal μοῖρα between those of unequal μοῖρα was impossible<sup>25</sup>.

In his reforms Solon sought always the well-being and safety of the πόλις, charting his course midway between the claims of the nobles and the demands of the peasants

δῆμῳ μὲν γὰρ ἔδωκα τόσον γέρας ὅσον ἐπαρκεῖν  
τιμῆς οὐτ' ἀξελὼν οὐτ' ἐπορεξάμενος  
οἱ δ' εἶχον δύναμιν καὶ χρήμασιν ἦσαν ἀγῆτοί,  
καὶ τοῖς ἐφρασάμην μὴδὲν ἀεικέες ἔχειν  
ἔσθην δ' ἀμφιβαλὼν κρατερόν σάκος ἀμφοτέροισι,  
νικᾶν δ' οὐκ εἶας οὐδετέρους ἀδίκως.  
(Fr. 5)

He was criticized (Fr. 33) for not pressing his advantage and taking power and privilege for himself but Solon considered his position to be rather that of a beleaguered warrior fighting against both extremes on behalf of the πόλις. "No other man would have held the people", he said (Fr. 37), "nor stopped before he had skimmed the cream from the milk. But I stood as a boundary in the middle ground between both factions".

Although the working of Δίκη in this world was often obscured, Solon believed that wrongdoing brought eventual ruin and destruction to the deeds of men. Though Δίκη might, "look in silence" upon the outrages of men "in time she would come to exact payment" (Fr. 4.16), at the last (ὅσπερ, Fr. 13.8) justice would overtake the man who yearned after unlawful wealth. Clearly, Solon saw in Δίκη a certain historical<sup>26</sup> element, an inevitability which no man might escape. Time, says Jaeger, is Δίκη's sole aid and ally, and Solon himself



is prepared to trust to the judgment of time (Fr. 36.3) to vindicate him

δείξει δὴ μανίην μὲν ἐμὴν βαιῶς χρόνος ἀγροῖς,  
δείξει ἀλητείας ἐς μέσον ἐρχομένης.

(Fr. 10)

While "many wicked men grew wealthy" somewhere, sometime payment must be made, if not by themselves then by their "guiltless" descendants; though "many good men were poor" they were but paying the price for earlier wrongdoing. Thus does Solon characterize the τίσις of Zeus

οὐδ' ἐφ' ἐκάστῳ  
ὥσπερ θνητὸς ἀνὴρ γίγνεται ὀξύχολος,  
αἰεὶ δ' οὐ ἐλέληθε διαμπερές, ὅστις ἀλιτρὸν  
θυμὸν ἔχει, πάντως δ' ἐς τέλος ἐξεφάνη·  
ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν αὐτίκ' ἔταισεν, ὁ δ' ὕστερον· οἱ δὲ φύγωσιν  
αὐτοί, μηδὲ θεῶν μοῖρ' ἐπιούσα κίχῃ,  
ἤλυθε πάντως αὖτις ἀναίτιοι, ὅγα τίνουσιν  
ἢ παῖδες τούτων ἢ γένος ἐξοπίσω.

(Fr. 13.25-32)

By this notion of inherited guilt Solon brought both the so-called guiltless sufferer and the apparently prosperous sinner within the ὕβρις → ἀτη principle: for Solon, Δίκη is patient and bides her time but sooner or later the vengeance of Zeus is visited upon the people.

There is a certain, undeveloped suggestion of this idea of inherited guilt in Hesiod's account of the Prometheia. There we read that Zeus rebuked Prometheus, saying

Ἰαπετιονίδῃ, πάντων πέρι μῆδεα εἰδώς,  
χαίρεις πῦρ κλέψας καὶ ἐμὰς φρένας ἡεροπεύσας,  
σοὶ τ' αὐτῷ μέγα πῆμα καὶ ἀνδράσιν ἐσσομένοισιν.

(Er. 54-56)

Whether or not he owed his concept of inherited guilt to the "men unborn" of Hesiod Solon was the first to formulate the notion in this explicit way as a solution to the double problem of the guiltless sufferer and the prosperous sinner.

Because of his recognition of the two elements which comprise man's fate -- the so-called rational and the "superrational" -- Solon's view of the divine-human relationship was at once less hopeful<sup>27</sup> and more exalted than Hesiod's. On the one hand, he raised the human condition to new heights of freedom and accountability, declaring man's personal responsibility and rebuking his fellows for laying their misfortunes in the laps of the gods. Yet, there is a dark and cheerless side to Solon's thought, a certain lack of confidence and ambivalence which springs from his recognition of Moira's role in man's destiny.

οὐδὲ μάκαρ οὐδεὶ πέλεται βροτός. ἀλλὰ πονηροὶ  
πάντες ὅσους θνητοὺς ἥελιος καθοπᾷ.

(Fr. 14)

"No man is blessed", he cries, "but all who look upon the sun are wretched". The gifts of the gods are inescapable (Fr. 13.64); there is no defense against fate (Fr. 13.55), neither of sickness nor of death (Fr. 24.10). While man may not be at the mercy of the gods Solon yet confesses the "πάντη δ' ἀθανάτων ἀφανὲς νόος ἀνθρώποισι (Fr. 17).

Solon's understanding of the role of knowledge is difficult to assess. Since it is through folly (Fr. 4.5) and ignorance (Fr. 9.4) that a great city is destroyed, since it is through lack of forethought (Fr. 13.67) that a man, well-intentioned though he be, falls into ruin Solon bids man πάντα νοεῖν (Fr. 9), to set his μέγαν νόον ἐν μετρίοις (Fr. 4c.3) as a remedy against κόρος and the risk of ὕβρις. But, elsewhere (Fr. 16), he admits

γνωμοσύνης δ' ἀφανὲς χαλεπώτατόν ἐστι νοῆσαι  
μέτρον, ὃ δὴ πάντων πείρατα μόνον ἔχει.  
(Fr. 16)

Solmsen concludes<sup>28</sup> that for Solon "the 'end' . . . is not in man's own power. It is in the hand of god -- call him what you like, Zeus or Moira -- acting on no recognizable principle". Clearly, Solon realized that man's vision was limited, that the νόος of the immortals was hidden at times from man, knowledge and understanding obscure and difficult, but, notwithstanding the part played by μοῖρα in determining man's destiny, he had no doubts about the principles of order and justice which must support the πόλις, nor that their violation would ultimately be punished. It is because "Zeus looks upon the end of all" that Solon can declare that excess begets hybris from which arise ruin and destruction. To be sure, for Solon there are no ἐπιχθόνιοι to watch over the deeds of men, to reward the just and punish the wicked; to

be sure, his Δίκη often looks in silence upon the outrages of men who, in their "thin hope", stand gawking at their misfortunes (Fr. 13.36)<sup>29</sup>; but She does come in time, there is a τίσις of Zeus, as sudden and as swift as the winds in Spring.

From the poet of the ODYSSEY and from Hesiod Solon knew of the supremacy of Zeus and of the suffering which wrongdoing brings to man, but he was the first to show the direct and natural connection between man's misdeeds and his misfortunes, and that in concrete political terms. Solon understood clearly the two aspects which determine man's relations to the gods: the notion of μοῖρα which allots good and ill, and the ideal of justice which punishes ὕβρις and ἀπασθαλία. His attempt to show that they both have a place in any vision of divine justice marks an important step in the developing concept of justice among the ancient poets.

B THE ORESTEIA

## INTRODUCTION

From ancient times, in epic, lyric and dramatic poetry, the stories of the royal house of Argos ran as a bright thread throughout the long history of Greek literature. In their continuing efforts to understand the divine-human relationship and the forces which shaped man's destiny the poets turned time and again to the history of the house of Atreus for models of human folly and divine justice.

It was Zeus himself, in the ODYSSEY<sup>1</sup>, who first pointed to the deeds of Aigisthos and his subsequent death to underline his principle of human responsibility, and from the opening lines the actions of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra and Orestes became standards against which to measure the deeds of Telemachos, Penelope and Odysseus. For the poet of the ODYSSEY, however, Orestes' murder of his mother remained a simple act of retributive justice, uncomplicated by questions of motive or guilt, applauded by all men and conferring renown upon the son of Agamemnon.

Later, Steisichorus, also, told the story of Agamemnon's fatal return from Troy and his death at the

hands of his queen, of the vengeance of Orestes and his subsequent hounding by the Erinyes; and Pindar, too, mentions the familiar events in Pyth. 11. In contrast to the epic stance, however, the lyric poets now began to reflect upon the deeds and motives of Clytemnestra.

Aeschylus, in his turn, found in the history of the house of Atreus a myth to illumine his own understanding of man's relations to the gods and the complexity of forces which conspire to determine his fate. Zeus' declaration in the ODYSSEY that Aigisthos has perished beyond his lot (ὕπερ μέρου, Od. 35) for marrying Clytemnestra beyond his portion (ὕπερ μέρου, Od. 34) defines the two strands which together determine man's destiny. Man incurs suffering, on the one hand, κατὰ μέρος, that is, as part of his portion spun out for him by Μοῖρα, in accordance with the ancient laws of the pre-Olympian universe; and, on the other hand, ὕπερ μέρου, as a result of his own ὑβρις and ἀτασθαλία for which he is punished according to the law of Zeus.

In the ORESTEIA of Aeschylus we find the clearest and most complete expression of the inevitable conflict which arises between the rights of the old, chthonic gods and those of Olympian Zeus, and of the manner in which it must be resolved. The operation of Μοῖρα is strict and

mechanical: her standards are absolute and unalterable, her vision limited, and she exacts what is due for each offence with implacable wrath and no regard for motive. The rule of Olympian Zeus, however, is characterized by wider vision and a combination of intelligence and strength which takes into account not only the deed but also the motivation. While the old gods are moved by particular interest and the demands of honour Zeus has in sight the common good in which each may have his place and honour without offence to other.

For Hesiod Zeus' victory over the Titans brought peace and order and harmony to the divine world. It is Aeschylus who shows the proper relationship which must exist between Zeus and Moira. On the human plane the endless cycle of bloodshed which resulted from deeds of vengeance and atonement was resolved by removing it from the sphere of the family to the sphere of the πόλις. No longer were matters of homicide to be the subject of tribal justice and the demands of violated honour but the proper business of the state through which the common interest might be secured. On the divine plane, while the Erinyes were shown to be different from Zeus, they were also seen to be sufficiently compatible in nature and outlook as to allow a reconciliation between them and the Olympians. In Aeschylus'

view the mission of the Erinyes, through a change in outlook, becomes an instrument of Zeus' justice, and through their incorporation in the city they partake of the τέλος embodied in it. It is Aeschylus, in the ORESTEIA, who can finally bring Moira into the order of Zeus and the city of man, with honour for her and prosperity for mankind.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS

##### 1 AGAMEMNON

The long absence of the King and army from Argos has bred trouble and unrest in the palace. When the beacon fire<sup>2</sup> from Troy finally appears the watchman cries for the οἴκου τοῦ δὲ συμφορὰν (Ag. 18). These words kindle a feeling of unease and foreboding which will turn, in time, to a sense of inevitable doom for the house of Atreus and the army of the Achaeans. All is not well within the palace and before the action is finished the house will have found a voice and told its bloody tale (Ag. 37-38). The watchman's prologue sets the tone for all that follows<sup>3</sup>. Commenting on the dramatic<sup>4</sup> effect of this passage E. Fraenkel<sup>5</sup> writes:

There is first the expectation of the capture of Troy. Then momentous words give the full measure of Clytemnestra's gigantic figure. Soon afterwards the evil that is brewing in the house of Agamemnon



is hinted at in an impassioned sentence, the thought of which is taken up and intensified in the concluding lines of the Prologue. Thus, from the outset that somber note is struck which is soon to become a keynote of the whole play; the obsession of inescapable doom begins to work on the hearer's mind.

The history begins with the entrance of the Chorus.

The old men recall vividly the passion of ten years before when Agamemnon and Menelaos gathered their forces as a μέγας ἀντίδικος (Ag. 40) against Priam, raising a loud cry of war ἐκ θυμοῦ (Ag. 48). The sons of Atreus had been sent by Zeus Xenios, the Chorus sing, as a "late avenging Erinys" (Ag. 59) against Alexander. The sense of doom inspired by the watchman's φόβος and compounded by the Chorus' μέριμνα takes on an ominous note with the knowledge of what has happened and "what is fated" (Ag. 68) and the "excessive anger" (Ag. 71) which no sacrifice or libation will assuage.

Remembering the events at Aulis before the departure of the fleet, the Chorus tell of the portent which appeared and the seer's reading of it. Two eagles fell upon a pregnant hare and slew it together with its young. Seeing in this omen the Achaeans sack of Troy Calchas prayed that no wrath from the gods fall upon the army, for Artemis abhorred the eagles' feast and was angry with the birds of her Father. Fearful lest "some other lawless sacrifice" (Ag. 150) be asked Calchas warned that

μίμνει γὰρ φοβερὰ παλίνορτος  
οἰκονόμος δολία, μνάμων Μῆνις τεκνόποινος.  
(Ag. 154-55)

Calchas' words, veiled though they be, are the first reference to the troubled history of the house and the restless spirit which drives the family.

The abrupt change in rhythm and diction which marks the break between these stanzas and the strophai commonly known as the "Hymn to Zeus" underlines the contrast between the world of Aulis and the order of Zeus. Agamemnon and the Achaean army dwell in a world of blind necessity where misery and suffering are seen as inevitable, though incomprehensible, elements of the human condition. With no clear understanding of the divine order or the forces which shape their destinies they find themselves at a loss, in a state of ἀμηχανία, where all efforts to ward off ruin and destruction are destined to bring only further sorrow and suffering. Thus, Agamemnon cries in despair τί τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν; (Ag. 211).

Unwilling to accept such a vision of hopelessness for man, the Chorus resolutely thrust τὸ μᾶταν ἄχθος (Ag. 165) of despair from their minds and turn to Zeus as the one who can "set man on the path to knowledge" (Ag. 176), as the one who has ordained the principle of πᾶθει μάθος (Ag. 177).

Fraenkel<sup>6</sup> speaks of this ἄχθος as

. . .the burden of folly which induces men to believe that Zeus is not the almighty ruler, who directs all that is done among mankind . . . If (man) is to succeed in really freeing himself from his burden, there is only one course to take: to recognize that Zeus is supreme and that there is none other like him.

Fraenkel goes on to point out that we must not mistake the knowable, rational order of Zeus for a compassionate, merciful one; there is a χάρις δαίμονων available to man but it is nonetheless βίαιος (Ag. 182). In this world there is suffering and sorrow, to be sure, but man is not at the mercy of unknown forces: he suffers for his wrongdoing, and the χάρις of Zeus is that from this suffering he may come to understand the divine order of Zeus and his place in it. To the watchman's fear for the house and the Chorus' sense of impending doom a new element has now been introduced. In the darkness of ignorance a crack of light has appeared by which we may make sense of the fortunes of men. Fraenkel considers this hymn to be a "cornerstone not only of this play but of the whole trilogy"<sup>7</sup>, and so it is: a cornerstone and a pivotal point upon which, and about which, Aeschylus erects his mighty edifice which is the justice of Zeus.

The account of events at Aulis continues. When a storm arose and delayed the fleet 'Agamemnon' was persuaded to sacrifice his daughter to Artemis' anger. Though the

choice before the King was grievous (Ag. 206), to obey and offer Iphigeneia upon the altar, or disobey and jeopardize the expedition, in the end he saw no real choice:

παυσανέμου γὰρ θυσίας  
παρθενίου θ' αἵματος ὁρ-  
γᾶν περιόργων σφ' ἐπιθυ-  
μῶν θέμις. εὖ γὰρ εἴη.

(Ag. 214-17)

Moved by forces beyond his comprehension Agamemnon put on the "strap of necessity" (Ag. 218) and became the sacrificer of his daughter.

Critical opinion is firmly divided on the issue of Agamemnon's position at Aulis: recent critics maintain that he had free choice and that, therefore, his death is a just penalty under a rationally beneficent Zeus; others, among whom are Denniston and Page, claim Agamemnon had no free choice at Aulis. Lloyd-Jones<sup>8</sup> claims that Page is right in asserting Agamemnon had no choice, as leader of the expedition, but to sacrifice his daughter. Dodds is equally right, Lloyd-Jones also declares, in maintaining that Agamemnon's action was and is meant to be regarded as a crime. Agamemnon was forced to choose, Lloyd-Jones insists, between two crimes both of which meant his destruction. Dover<sup>9</sup>, on the other hand, takes a critically non-traditional stance and suggests that at Aulis "Agamemnon took the course which most people with Greek values and presuppositions would have felt bound

to regard as dictated by honour, justice, piety and the overriding obligation to subordinate one's life and the lives of one's dependents to the common good". Dover's view that Agamemnon took the course "dictated by honour, justice, piety . . .", however, overlooks the Chorus' explicit condemnation of the sacrifice as a *δυσσεβὴ τροπαίαν ἀναγνον ἀντίπον* (Ag. 219-20). There can be no doubt that in the eyes of the Chorus Agamemnon has committed a *δυσσεβὲς ἔργον* for which there will most certainly be more suffering. The Chorus' final comment,

Αἶψα δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦ-  
σιν μαθεῖν ἐπιτρέπει

(Ag. 249-50)

not only emphasizes this position but underlines the principle of *πάθει μάθος* found earlier in the hymn with a particularizing force which, as Fraenkel says, "leaves no doubt which deed it is, and which doer, that draws down the suffering"<sup>10</sup>. Agamemnon has committed an "impious deed" in sacrificing his daughter and for this he will suffer.

Clytemnestra's entrance, with the news that "the Argives have captured the city of Priam" (Ag. 267), brings us quickly back to the present. Although the actual course of events after the fleet sailed from Aulis is still unknown Clytemnestra knows full well that an Achaean victory in Troy will have certainly meant death and destruction for the

Trojan people (Ag. 325ff), and she fears for the safety of the army, lest in their conquest they may have committed deeds of violence and excess born of greed and lust (Ag. 338ff). While these misgivings reflect the traditional view expressed by Solon, τίκτει γὰρ κόρος ὕβριν (Fr. 6.3), they are even more deeply rooted in τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλωλότων (Ag. 346). Clytemnestra's forebodings take up and reinforce the notion of present suffering from past wrongs introduced by the Chorus in their reference to φοβερά παλίνορος οἰκονόμος δολία (Ag. 154-55).

In the first stasimon the Chorus again contemplate the relationship between the forces of natural necessity and the justice of Zeus, between the misery which falls according to no clear principle and the suffering which wrongdoing brings upon man. Man is not at the mercy of the dark unknowable forces, his suffering is a result of his misdeeds -- which is not to say that many men may not suffer for the actions of one man, for clearly they do and both Aeschylus and the Chorus know this. What is of importance and significance in the order of Zeus is that it is possible now for man to know, on one level, at least, why he suffers, and to trace the cause of his misfortunes.

In Strophe α (Ag. 367ff) the Chorus continues the theme of the nature of the divine-human relationship: "some say that the gods consider it beneath their dignity to care for mortals who trample under foot the favour of sacred things; but this man is not εὐσεβής (Ag. 369-72). The gods are concerned, the Chorus declare, and "there is no defense<sup>11</sup> of wealth against νόρος when a man kicks the mighty altar of justice into obscurity" (Ag. 382-84). It is excess beyond what is best, presumption and folly, which brings destruction upon a race; "for the man who is wise let it be enough<sup>12</sup> to be without harm" (Ag. 378-80). Both in diction and imagery the whole stanza breathes an air of excess and overweening violence which underlines the theme of the choral ode:

"When a man gives way to wretched Persuasion (Ag. 385) all remedy is vain. It is at that time that all prayer is useless -- not because the gods care not for the deeds of men -- but because they will destroy the δεικός φώς (Ag. 398). A case in point is Paris who went to the house of Menelaos and shamed the table of hospitality by stealing his wife (Ag. 400). The effect of this outrage has fallen not only upon Menelaos himself (Ag. 415ff) for whom "all love has perished in the eye's blank gaze", but upon the homes of each individual where sorrow dwells at the hearth and an urn of ashes returns in place of the departed warrior (Ag. 435).

In Antistrophe γ the Chorus take up again the central theme of Strophe and Antistrophe α, that the gods are not heedless of the deeds of men but punish the unjust:

τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ  
 ἄσκοποι θεοί, κελαι-  
 ναί δ' Ἐρινύες χρόνῳι  
 τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἀνευ δίκης  
 παλιντυχεῖ τριβᾷ βίου  
 τιθεῖσ' ἄμαυρόν, ἐν δ' αἰ-  
 στοῖς τελέθοντος οὐτις ἀλ-  
 κή·

(Ag. 461-67)

The gods are not unmindful of those who murder;  
 in time the black Erinyes cause the man who is  
 successful without justice to grow faint and dim  
 in reversals of fortune which wear away life and  
 there is no defense when a man is ignorant.

This important passage is rich in imagery and allusions drawn from the earlier poets. To Solon Aeschylus owes the idea of punishment which "comes in time" (Fr. 4.16) and the notion of the peril in which a man stands who prospers unjustly (Fr. 13.11ff). The recurring ἀλκή-motif and the powerlessness of a man to avoid the consequences of his unjust acts take up the last lines of Strophe α of this very song, and point back even earlier, to Hesiod's vision of the justice of Zeus (Er. 105) and the human condition (Er. 201).

The final words of the song (Ag. 471-74) repeat the notion of excess as the source of man's suffering, for excess of any kind, the old men know, arouses the anger of the gods and brings down the thunderbolt of Zeus upon the



house. The last wish of the Chorus, "that they not be a "sacker of cities" nor find themselves in captivity, brings the thought of the ode back to the opening lines with their focus upon the defeat of Troy, reminding us again of the danger in which the King and army stand.

The arrival of the messenger confirms the worst forebodings of the Chorus and the Queen: not only has the city of Priam been razed to the ground but "the altars and seats of the gods have been destroyed", as Clytemnestra feared (Ag. 338-39), and "the seed of all the land wiped out" (Ag. 527ff), as the portent had warned so long ago at Aulis (Ag. 126ff). The army has indeed committed crimes of excess and violence and, having conquered the city of Troy, has itself met suffering. The disaster which overtook the fleet on its homeward voyage, a two-fold horror of fire and storm (Ag. 657), the herald calls an ἔλκος (Ag. 640) for the city which has left many homes bereft of their men. This striking use of the word ἔλκος is found also in Solon's image of the consequences of injustice for the community: ἤδη πάση πόλει ἔρχεται ἔλκος ἀφικτον (Fr. 4.17).

The herald bids the Queen welcome home her lord who has "demolished Troy with the pick-axe of avenging Zeus" (Ag. 525-26) and, later, he declares that the Achaean army's

destruction of Troy has shown forth the χάρις of Zeus (Ag. 581-82). This characterization of the χάρις Διός, as the source of violence and excess, stands in sharp contrast to the Chorus' vision of the χάρις δαιμόνων in the parodos and reveals the herald's limited understanding of the justice of Zeus.

After the report of the herald the Chorus attempt to discern the underlying cause of both the present suffering of the army, and of what they fear will yet follow. They naturally turn first to Helen, having apparently forgotten the sacrifice of Iphigeneia and the delusion which struck the King at Aulis, which they had previously termed the πρωτοπήμων (Ag. 223), "the first cause of suffering". The debate over the extent of Helen's responsibility has a long history in fact<sup>13</sup> and fiction<sup>14</sup> but it is clear that on this occasion the Chorus recognize in her the source of "Ἐπὶς αἱματόεσσα (Ag. 689). Because of the outrages committed by Paris against the house of Menelaos and thus against the Olympians who watch over the οἶκος there has arisen an implacable spirit of wrath, Μῆνις τελεσσέφρων (Ag. 700), which "in later time" (Ag. 702) -- again the recurring (Ag. 59, 463) motif of time -- demands payment from everyone at Troy (τέοντας, Ag. 706). As a lion cub, raised by man, in time becomes a λερεὺς τις ἄταξ (Ag. 735) for the house, by the

will of the gods, so, the Chorus sing, has Helen become an Ἐρινύς (Ag. 749), conducted by Zeus Xenios (Ag. 748) to destroy the people of Priam.

According to this vision of the human condition the ancient powers of Strife and Wrath, Delusion and Vengeance hold absolute power over man demanding revenge and atonement for every wrong. The Chorus, however, for the second time (cf Ag. 370ff) in as many songs, reject the common view. There is an old story, they sing, which says that from good fortune comes misery and woe, that prosperity lies in begetting children and not dying childless; but "I am of another opinion", they continue,

τὸ δυσσεβὲς γὰρ ἔργον  
μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίηται,  
σφετέραι δ' εἰκότα γένναι  
οἴκων γὰρ εὐθυδίκων  
καλλίπαις πότμος αἰεὶ.

(Ag. 758-62)

. . . the impious deed begets more crimes like  
to itself; destiny of beautiful children belongs  
always to the house which judges rightly.

Behind the δυσσεβὲς ἔργον lies ὕβρις, the Chorus continue, and it is ὕβρις, begetting new ὕβρις among the misfortunes of men, that brings black destruction upon a house (Ag. 770). Justice honours the righteous man (Ag. 775) but, with eyes averted, she forsakes the man of wealth and power whose hands are stained.

In the anapests following the choral meters the Chorus salute<sup>15</sup> the arrival of Agamemnon and return again to the question of who is the righteous man and who the man with hands befouled, a decision, they admit, which is obscured by questions of appearance and reality. Ironically, the Chorus here reject their initial opinion of the King, that, at the time when he mounted his force on account of Helen, he had not been "plying the tiller" of his mind well, and now they declare they are "kindly disposed to those who are successful" (Ag. 799-806).

Both in the parodos and the first two stasima the Chorus have been concerned, in a very direct way, with the problems of man's relations to the gods, with the tangle of forces which determine man's destiny. Although each song has taken as its focus a particular aspect of the story which is unfolding and is, thus, clearly an integral part of the drama, in development and structure they have all followed a common pattern. Against the apparent confusion and chaos of the world of men, as seen by man, is set the order and reason of the divine realm of Zeus and from the contrast thus created the Chorus draw certain truths which lie at the heart of the divine-human relationship and render human life within the divine order possible.

In the parodos the world of men is represented by the Achaean force at Aulis where man's fate appears to be completely controlled by a necessity which drives man on to acts of vengeance and atonement in a never ending cycle to appease  $\mu\upsilon\delta\mu\omega\nu$   $M\eta\nu\iota\varsigma$   $\tau\epsilon\chi\nu\acute{o}\mu\alpha\iota\nu\omicron\varsigma$  (Ag. 155)! The truth, however, the Chorus sing, is that Zeus is triumphant in heaven; it is Zeus and not  $Mο\iota\rho\alpha$  nor  $M\eta\nu\iota\varsigma$  who controls the fates of men. And this he does according to the principle of  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\iota$   $\mu\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$ . This is the  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  of the gods, albeit a  $\beta\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$  one, that man shall come to know  $\sigma\alpha\phi\epsilon\rho\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$  through his suffering. This is what makes sense of the human condition.

In the first stasimon the news of the defeat of Troy affords the Chorus another opportunity to disentangle the two strands which comprise man's fate: that aspect determined by the mighty and primitive powers of the universe which operate according to blind necessity, and that determined by Zeus as a consequence of man's deeds. While it is true that both Night and Zeus have worked together, the Chorus sing, to destroy Troy, the truth is that the gods are mindful of the deeds of men (Ag. 370) and they punish excess and hybris and the unjust man. Man's destiny now does not lie absolutely in the hands of the old divine forces, such as Night and Peitho, Ate and Erinyes, but rather in the

hands of Zeus, of whose Will Night and Peitho and Ate are now instruments, acting at his behest to punish the murderous (Ag. 461), the man who prospers *ἀνευ δίκης* (Ag. 464).

Similarly, in the second stasimon, while *Ἔρις* and *Μῆνις*, *Ἄτη* and *Ἐρινός* have certainly played their part in the events leading up to the defeat of Troy they do not of themselves have absolute power over man. Rather, sing the Chorus, the root of man's suffering lies in a *δυσσοεβὲς ἔργον*; when ancient *ὕβρις* begets new violence then, at that time, does black ruin come upon a house. While man sees only *Ἔρις*, *Μῆνις*, *Ἄτη* and *Ἐρινός* it is *Ἄλκη* (Ag. 772) which directs all.

In this way has Aeschylus' vision of divine justice and the divine-human relationship emerged from the story of the Achæan expedition to Troy; so, also, will it continue to unfold in the fateful return of Agamemnon and the doom which falls upon the whole house of Atreus.

From the moment of his arrival Agamemnon shows himself full of willful pride and ignorance, oblivious of the peril in which he stands, destined for destruction. Vaunting himself before his queen and his gods he declares again and again (Ag. 811, 812, 813) the justice of his deeds. Taking the gods as partners in his victory (Ag. 811) and his success-

ful return (Ag. 853) he courts death and destruction with every word. In all that he says and does the King confirms the fears which have surrounded his return: he has, indeed, committed deeds of excess (Ag. 827-28) and is, himself, consumed by blinding pride (Ag. 832-33). We are reminded by his claim *ἄνευ φθόνων σέβειν* (Ag. 833) of the earlier chorus where the old men prayed for *ἄφθονος ὀλβος* (Ag. 471) knowing that the gods punish the man who is *τυχηρόν* . . . *ἄνευ δίκης* (Ag. 464). Despite the frequent mention of *φθόνος* it is becoming increasingly clear that it is the *δυσσεβές ἔργον*, not *φθόνος*, which is the decisive factor in determining man's fate. Though Agamemnon considers he has acted *ἄνευ φθόνου*, or perhaps because he believes it, he has acted *ἄνευ δίκης* and for this, we now know, he will be destroyed.

Dissembling her true feelings Clytemnestra welcomes her husband with an account of the *δυσσοφορὸν βίον* (Ag. 859) of a woman deprived of her husband, of the fears (Ag. 866) which each new message brought from Troy and her attempts (Ag. 875) to take her own life in despair. Finally, she salutes Agamemnon as "the watchdog of the fold", "the saving mast of the ship", "a lofty pillar of a high roof", "an only begotten son to a father", "a well-stream for a thirsty traveller", "a land appearing unexpectedly to sailors,

a most beautiful day for them to look upon after a storm" (Ag. 896-901). This last image reminds us of the similes of ship-wrecked sailors in the ODYSSEY which marked Odysseus' arrival in Phaiacia (Od. 5.394ff) and his reunion with Penelope in Ithaca (Od. 23.233ff) and emphasizes the great difference between Odysseus' return to Ithaca and Agamemnon's return to Argos.

Clytemnestra's invitation to Agamemnon to step forth from his chariot, not upon the ground but upon a carpet specially laid (Ag. 905ff), is fraught with ominous overtones of peril and treachery. Her final command that a "purple-dyed path be laid so that Justice may lead him, unexpectedly, into the house", and her conviction that "the rest will be arranged justly, having been fated by the gods" (Ag. 910-13) reveal the limits of her own vision. While there is never any doubt that Clytemnestra has consciously betrayed Agamemnon both as wife and guardian of the kingdom, it is clear that, at this point, she believes she has justice on her side.

Agamemnon is hesitant at first to accept Clytemnestra's excessive acts of welcome, deeming the shrieking more fitting for a foreigner (Ag. 919) and fearing he might incur the envy of the gods by treading upon the woven goods



(Ag. 921). Although he declares that "the greatest gift of god is not to be ill-disposed in mind" (Ag. 927) it is clear that he has no true understanding of the meaning of τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν or the χάρις δαίμόνων.

In the end Agamemnon is easily persuaded<sup>17</sup>, as he was so long ago at Aulis. With a final wish that "no envy from the gods fall upon him" (Ag. 946-47) and a cavalier dismissal of "this foreign woman here" (Ag. 950-51) he steps down upon the carpets<sup>18</sup>. His treading of the purple carpet is both an act of pride and hybris in itself and the ultimate act of reckless presumption, symbolic of all that has gone before, for which he will be destroyed.

The obscurity of its thought and expression makes the third stasimon the most difficult of the choral odes of the AGAMEMNON. Yet, this song of fear,<sup>19</sup> is an important and integral part of Aeschylus' vision of divine justice and, as such, deserves close attention. The old men of the Chorus are quite overcome by the enormity of what they have just witnessed; their earlier anxiety and unease (μερίμνη, Ag. 99) has now become a deepseated fear (δειμά, Ag. 976) which is no mere foreboding to be thrust aside or interpreted away. (Ag. 980-81). This is a fear which comes unbidden (ἀκέλευστος, Ag. 979) from the heart, a hopelessness against all evidence to the contrary.

In studying this ode it is helpful to remember not only the structure and pattern of the earlier χοροί but also their themes, the contrasts which they present between the world as seen by men and the true nature of the divine order, and the principles, thus drawn, upon which that order is established. The Chorus have seen with their own eyes (Ag. 988) what can only be interpreted as the triumphant and safe return of the King from Troy. Nevertheless, they find themselves singing a spontaneous θρήνος. The old men can have no firm knowledge of the Queen's true mind or plan but their deepest feelings (σπλάγχνα, Ag. 995) counsel them that "the claim of δίκη must and will be met"<sup>20</sup>, for the gods are concerned with those who trample the ἀδίκτων χάρις (Ag. 371), with the man who kicks aside the Δίκας βωμός (Ag. 383), and the gods are mindful of those who murder (Ag. 461). The focus of this ode, as in the others, lies in the contrast between appearance and reality, between the apparent success and prosperity of the King and the fundamental principle of Δίκη, δρᾶσαντι παθεῖν.

In certain circumstances (Ag. 1008ff) in this world, the Chorus concede, it is true that a man may avoid complete disaster and, even when there is an element of excess (πλοσυμονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν, Ag. 1012), he may, by a judicious and partial sacrifice of goods, secure the safety of the whole

house (Ag. 1011). But "when the black blood of a man once falls upon the ground in death who might call him back again?" In all that the Chorus have ever said they have held to the conviction that injustice and hybris beget more hybris, that wrongdoing must be avenged. What, then, when blood is spilt, what payment must be made?

Here is the true source of the δαίμα which holds the old men in its grip: that, despite all evidence to the contrary, Δίκη will yet require its due. Agamemnon has clearly taken more than his share, his μοῖρα, in sacrificing Iphigeneia, in the violent destruction of the people of Troy and the seats of their gods, and, finally, in treading upon the purple carpets. There is no doubt in the minds of the Chorus that such actions will bring their own rewards. This is the τέλος of δίκη, the end to which it always strives, for man cannot expect to exceed his μοῖρα.

Despite their fears the Chorus know that it would be useless for them to speak more clearly of what has been done and what will surely come to pass in the future. It is Cassandra<sup>21</sup> with her prophetic nature who is the appropriate one to draw past and present and future together into one vision, as Teiresias did for Odysseus in the Underworld. With cries of misery and sorrow Cassandra invokes Apollo

"who a second time has utterly destroyed me" (Ag. 1081) and condemns the house of Atreus as "hateful to the gods". All about her she sees a "land reeking with human sacrifice", "children weeping at the slaughter" and "roasted flesh eaten by their father" (Ag. 1090-97).

Turning her gaze from the past to the present Cassandra's vision reveals νέον ἄχος, μέγ' ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσδε . . . κακόν (Ag. 1102). As if witnessing the actual event, she describes the bloody deeds of Clytemnestra, the bath in which she washes her husband (Ag. 1108), the hand outstretched (Ag. 1110), the robe in which she catches him (Ag. 1115). The Chorus, at first unimpressed by her prophetic powers (Ag. 1106), now understand completely that vengeance has exacted its price and from this there will soon come ruin (Ag. 1119ff).

Cassandra knows full well that her own fate is inextricably bound up (Ag. 1137) with the destiny of the king whose murder she has just foretold and, with a clarity born of her mantic powers, she sees that for herself there now awaits οἰσμοῶς ἀνθρώποις δοῦν (Ag. 1149). Driven by the god her vision embraces not only this present disaster but the "marriage of Paris, destructive of dear ones" (Ag. 1156) and the "toils of the city, destroyed altogether" and the

"sacrifices of a father made for the city, no way sufficient to ward off grief" (Ag. 1167ff).

"Although she has been fated to prophecy in vain" for having rejected the love of Apollo (Ag. 1208) it is Cassandra through whom the house of Atreus now may finally tell its tale. No longer speaking in riddles (Ag. 1183) she tells of the "kindred Furies who have tasted human blood and now grow strong" (Ag. 1189-90), of "dead children killed by their dear ones, their hands full of meat, their own flesh, a piteous burden of which their father tasted" (Ag. 1217ff). It is from these events that Cassandra sees that "someone plans retribution. . .<sup>22</sup> for my master when he comes" (Ag. 1223-25).

As the Chorus have continually insisted, so, Cassandra here makes explicit the inevitable connection between guilt and retribution, between the deaths of these children (not specified as yet but clear to the Chorus [Ag. 1242] and all from myth, as the children of Thyestes), and the fate of Agamemnon. There is a chain of events, Cassandra urges, reaching back into the past, to the slaughter of Thyestes' children by Atreus, and it is now catching in its tangle of *πολὴν* both Agamemnon and herself, and will surely continue to stretch on into the future fulfilling further

deeds of recompense. Believing she will not die unavenged (Ag. 1280) Cassandra sets her face to the gates of Hades. She knows there can be no escape, *ἀλυσίς* (Ag. 1299), from suffering, as the Chorus know that there can be no defense, *ἐπαλυσίς* (Ag. 381), once wrongdoing has been done. Retribution is not only inevitable and inescapable for men but it is also a continually recurring cycle. "Who among mortals", the Chorus sing, "might boast of having a destiny without harm when they hear how Agamemnon pays back the blood of previous generations and by his own death fulfills retribution of other deaths?" (Ag. 1338-42).

Hearing the death cries of Agamemnon from the palace the Chorus are thrown into confusion. Unable to decide whether to call the citizenry for help (Ag. 1349) or to enter and investigate for themselves they stand helplessly discussing the question until Clytemnestra leaves the palace. This behavior of the Chorus has been the subject of much debate among scholars attempting to understand such inaction on the part of those undoubtedly loyal to the King. Fraenkel<sup>24</sup> has framed the difficulty in this way:

Why did the poet at this fatal moment present the Elders in helpless torpor instead of allowing them at least the modest gesture of determination which many of his modern readers have interpolated? The question cannot be answered with confidence. It

may be assumed that Aeschylus and his audience did not care for the belated display of an energy which could not have the faintest influence on the course of events. It is also conceivable that the inactivity of the Elders in this scene is meant to set off the surprising vigour with which they rise against the insolence of Aigisthos at the end of the play.

To this we may add that the behavior of the Chorus is consistent both with their characterization as old men in the "sear and yellow leaf" (Ag. 79ff) and with the many references to the hopelessness and uselessness of any attempt to ward off the disaster which inevitably follows wrongdoing.

The scene between Clytemnestra and the Chorus, following the murder, shows the Queen to be utterly consumed by hatred and injured pride. Driven by her desire for revenge she is completely unmoved by either the condemnation of the Chorus or their warnings. She makes no attempt to excuse or deny her deeds (Ag. 1380) but rather exults in her actions, recounting how she caught Agamemnon as in a net, and struck him twice, three times, how he fell to the ground breathing out his life in bloody drops and spattering her with his gore (Ag. 1382ff). Her grievance against the King is compounded of ancient wrongs (Ag. 1378) and recent injustice: of his sacrifice of Iphigeneia, "my own daughter, my dearest travail" (Ag. 1417-18) and the insult he has dealt her in bringing Cassandra to the palace, "an added delight in addition to the pleasures of my bed" (Ag. 1447).

The old men recoil in horror before the brutal deed and the bold and reckless language of the Queen. They declare her to be μεγαλόμητις (Ag. 1426) and warn that she must atone for "blow with blow." Clytemnestra, however, cares nothing for their opinion: "It is the same thing whether you wish to praise or blame me," she scoffs (Ag. 1403-04), believing that she has acted justly and in accordance with the will of the gods. In welcoming Agamemnon home she had declared that "Justice will lead him into the house . . ." (Ag. 911-13); now, after the murder, she invokes Dikē and Atē and Erinyes "by whom I slew this man" (Ag. 1432-33).

It is clear that Clytemnestra has no complete understanding of the forces which have shaped her destiny and that of her family. For her Δίκη, Ἀτὴ and Ἐρινύς hold equal authority in the atonement of wrongs. There can be no doubt that we are meant to remember at this point the third stasimon in which the Chorus rejected the blind working of Ἔρις, Μῆνις, Ἀτὴ and Ἐρινύς as the source of man's suffering preferring, rather, the notion of Δίκη which has as its source a συσσεβὲς ἔργον

Confronted by the body of the dead King the Chorus again<sup>25</sup> lament, the consequences of Helen's actions, the many



lives that have been lost (Ag. 1457), and the "Ἐπὶς ἐπίδ-  
ματος in the house which has brought misery to men" (Ag. 1461),  
and the δαίμων who has fallen upon the house and the two  
families of Tantalos<sup>26</sup> (Ag. 1468-69). Clytemnestra, too,  
acknowledges τὸν τριπλάχυντον δαίμονα γένους τῆσδε (Ag. 1476-  
77), "the thrice-fattened daimon of this race", and admits  
that "before the ancient grief abates there will be new  
blood" (Ag. 1480).

It is an "evil tale of insatiate ruin" (Ag. 1483)  
the Chorus declare, but nonetheless they are confident all  
is done through the will of Ζεὺς παναίτιος: "for what comes  
to pass for mortals without the will of Zeus? What of these  
things is not wrought by the gods?" (Ag. 1486-88). This  
view of the divine-human relationship stands in sharp con-  
trast to that of Agamemnon who, at Aulis, could only cry τὶ  
τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν; (Ag. 211).

Faced with the Chorus' unremitting condemnation  
Clytemnestra at last concedes that "the ancient bitter  
avenger has taken on the appearance of this corpse's wife  
and made this man pay the price for the man who fed on the  
grievous feast of Atreus, sacrificing a grown man for young  
men" (Ag. 1500-04).

The Chorus, however, remain unmoved: "who will bear witness that you are not responsible for this murder?" they demand. "But because of the crimes of a father the god may join forces as an accomplice with the avenger" (Ag. 1505-08) they do admit. This notion of a deity who "joins in" is found also in the PERSAE when Darius points out ἄλλ', ὅταν σπεύδῃ τις αὐτός, χῶ θεός συνάπτεται (Pers. 742).

Growing bold again (Ag. 1521) Clytemnestra reminds the Chorus of the δολία αἴη which Agamemnon has brought upon the house and she bids him boast in Hades for the cruel way he has dealt with Iphigeneia. As far as she is concerned Agamemnon has justly paid with his life for the deeds he committed; both he and Cassandra have fared as they deserved (Ag. 1443, 1528). So bold is Clytemnestra, in fact, that having slain her husband she shrinks not from the duties of burying him also (Ag. 1552).

Clytemnestra admits the truth (Ag. 1567) of the dictum, repeated by the Chorus, παθεῖν τὸν ἑσθλόν (Ag. 1564) but nevertheless she believes that with her deed she has, in fact, driven from the house the daimon of the race (Ag. 1569). The Chorus, for their part, know full well this cannot be the end, for

Δίκη δ' ἐπ' ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θήγεται βλάβας  
 πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισι Μοῖρας.

(Ag. 535-36)

These lines emphasize the central place which both Δίκη and Μοῖρα hold in Aeschylus' theology, and remind us that any solution to the problems of Δίκη must take into account the ancient rights and privileges of Μοῖρα. The lines quoted above are from Page's edition; however, Fraenkel<sup>27</sup> takes Μοῖρα to be the subject and prefers the reading of Auratus, which takes Δίκαν or Δίκην to be the object. Since the time of Triclinius editors have offered emendations to the text with widely differing results. Whether we translate the words: "Justice is sharpened for another act of mischief against other sharpening blocks of Moira" or "The Moira of Justice is sharpened for another act of mischief against other sharpening blocks" it is important to note the idea of a recurring cycle of vengeance in the ἄλλο . . . ἄλλαις figure, and the essentially violent image of "sharpening" and "sharpening blocks". These lines clearly convey the central theme of the AGAMEMNON, that acts of vengeance and retribution inevitably beget further acts in an endless cycle when Δίκη is set against Μοῖρα. It is not until the closing lines of the EUMENIDES that we find a solution to this problem and see Zeus and Moira truly reconciled.

'Aigisthos' appearance gives the final expression to the bloody history of the house of Atreus. From him we learn of the feast which Atreus, the father of Agamemnon, served to Thyestes, the father of Aigisthos (Ag. 1590-93), and the curse which then was called upon the whole race (Ag. 1602). "As a result of these deeds (ἐκ τῶνδε)", Aigisthos cries, "this man lies fallen here" (Ag. 1603). For Aigisthos, as for Cassandra before him, the connection between the ancient wrongs and present sufferings is clear and direct.

Aigisthos is himself full of pride and hybris, altogether concerned to establish the justice of his own part (Ag. 1604). When the Chorus repeat their usual warning of retribution to come a dangerous situation seems about to develop. The old men revile Aigisthos as "a woman staying at home to shame the bed of a general gone to war" (Ag. 1626), "not daring to do the deed you planned" (Ag. 1634-35). Aigisthos, in turn, threatens all manner of harm (Ag. 1636ff) and, at the mention of Orestes' name (Ag. 1646-48), is set to draw his sword. Only Clytemnestra's intervention (Ag. 1654) prevents further bloodshed. Despite all evidence that points to a continuance of suffering she believes, with certainty, that there can be an end to retribution at this point. Neither Aigisthos nor the Chorus,

however, are prepared to leave the matter and their brief exchange (Ag. 1665-67) opens the way to the next play in the trilogy with the awful expectation of more bloodshed to come.

## 2 CHOEPHOROI

Despite Clytemnestra's insistence (Ag. 1568ff, 1656) that in killing Agamemnon she has made an end of trouble for the house of Atreus it is clear that the suffering cannot and will not end with her. Orestes, now grown to manhood, has returned to Argos and at the tomb of the dead king he is found praying that Zeus may allow him to avenge the death of his father and that he will be his ally in the task (Choe. 18-19). This prayer, at the very beginning, points out the difference between Orestes and Clytemnestra, as avengers. Only once did Clytemnestra appeal to Zeus, as she followed Agamemnon into the palace (Ag. 973-74). Her only other prayer, and that after the deed, was to Διῒ, "Atῆ and Ἐοίῳις" "by whom I slew this man" (Ag. 1432). Clytemnestra is, for the most part, moved by her own desires: in addition to the justifiable anger and grief at the death of her daughter she is moved by a wife's anger at her husband's faithlessness, by her own desire for

power and her lust for Aigisthos. Orestes, however, as we shall see, having been sent by Loxias Apollo, wishes always to act in accordance with the divine will -- difficult though that may be. It is in this spirit that he prays for Zeus to become his ally.

It is soon clear that Orestes is not the only one still troubled by the murder of Agamemnon. A band of suppliant women appears and from their song Orestes learns that there is unrest in the palace, also. A sleep-disturbing dream (Choe. 33) has fallen upon the women's apartments and from it the seers have decreed that "those beneath the earth are angry with those who murder" (Choe. 40-1). Because of this dream Clytemnestra, easily recognized in the δούσθεος γυνή (Choe. 46), has sent Electra and her women to the grave of Agamemnon with offerings, ἀπότροπον κακῶν (Choe. 44). The Chorus, however, are full of foreboding and their cry, τί γὰρ λύτρον πέσόντος αἵματος πέσοι (Choe. 48), reminds us of the fear of the old men after the death of Agamemnon. "Who", they asked at that time, "might call back again with chants the black blood of a man once fallen in death upon the ground?" (Ag. 1019ff).

Agamemnon's murder has clearly brought unrest not only to his palace and his family but also to his people:

darkness envelops the house and all  $\sigma\epsilon\beta\alpha\varsigma$  now stands aloof (Choe. 52-5). Prosperity has become a god, and more than a god, among mortals, the Chorus, sing, but for those who honour prosperity and success above all, there awaits justice, that "those in the light" suffer in darkness as "utter darkness holds the others" (Choe. 65). Justice, in the view of the Chorus, demands new blood for old, that ruin overtake "the one responsible" (Choe. 66-8). Further suffering is the inevitable consequence of murder, and in a thinly-veiled reference to Aigisthos the women return to their original theme: "there is no relief for a man who lays hands upon the bridal seats, and all measures . . . are in vain" (Choe. 71-4).

Electra is as uncomfortable in her role as suppliant as are her women: while they are convinced of the hopelessness of trying to avert trouble once human blood has been shed she is unable to decide how she should pray. All her instincts recoil from declaring the offerings are "from a loving wife to a beloved husband" (Choe. 89), yet she is equally reluctant to offer the customary prayer which asks for retribution (Choe. 92-3).

The Chorus, however, have no doubts and they urge her first to pray for herself and "whoever loathes

Aigisthos" (Choe 111) and to remember Orestes (Choe. 115).

"In a word", they cry, "pray for one to come, either god or man, who will kill in return" (Choe. 121). From the parodos and this exchange with Electra it is clear that the Chorus know only the need for retribution and vengeance, and in this they are expressing the common piety of their world, that "the enemy make return for evils" (Choe. 124).

Electra's vision, on the other hand, is wider than this. She calls upon "Hermes of the earth" and "the gods of the underworld" to hear her prayer but she also invokes Agamemnon to have pity upon her and Orestes, to raise up a light in the house and to send Orestes back (Choe. 126-38). Finally, she concludes her prayer saying, "grant, Father, that I may be much more moderate than my Mother and more pious of hand . . . Show forth an avenger for yourself and grant that those who kill die justly in turn" (Choe. 140-44).

It is clear that in Orestes Electra sees not only an avenger of the murder of her father but also a hope for the future. For, unlike the Chorus, Electra desires more than vengeance for Agamemnon and punishment for Clytemnestra and Aigisthos; she prays, as well, for a renewal of the house, for a release from her present miseries and slavish



existence but, withal, to be "more moderate and pious" than her mother. The discovery of Orestes' hair upon the tomb and the footprints nearby moves her to tears of expectation and new hope but still her prayer is a model of pious moderation that "there may arise a great foundation from a small seed" (Choe. 204).

The reunion of Orestes and Electra is, for both, first and foremost the reunion of brother and sister, the recreation of their family and the return of hope for the future (Choe. 236). Having lost all her family Electra<sup>28</sup> now finds in Orestes a four-fold portion of father, mother, sister and brother (Choe. 238-42).

Orestes' prayer on meeting Electra is, also, for the family and the house. His vision of them as orphaned nestlings of an "eagle-father" (Choe. 247) suggests a relationship not only with Agamemnon, whose royal authority derived from Zeus, but also with Zeus himself. Appealing for divine protection Orestes points out that from them will Zeus receive his sacrificial honours and by their hands will the holy altars be decked on days of sacrifice (Choe. 257-61).

●The division between the Chorus, on the one side, and brother and sister, on the other, is clearly drawn. The women are full of vengeance and completely taken up with the need to punish those who have killed (Choe. 267-68). Electra and Orestes, though moved by the wholly natural desire to avenge the death of their father, wish, nonetheless, to remain pious. Theirs is a wider vision which encompasses a conscious reflection of their own relationship to the fate of the house and their own role in the punishment which must be inflicted. Though Electra recognizes the necessity for "those who kill to die in turn" (Choe. 144) she would not be guilty of such acts as her mother committed. Orestes, for his part, prays for Zeus to raise up the mighty house (Choe. 262), to be an ally to him in avenging the death of his father, yet knowing himself driven by the command of Loxias Apollo who has decreed that he "go after those responsible for the death of his father in the same manner, meaning to kill in return" (Choe. 273-74).

Orestes is fully aware of the many forces (Choe. 300-01) that conspire to move him: not only the θεοὶ, ἐφετμαί with their attendant threats (Choe. 276ff) of suffering and sorrow if he fails to obey, but also πατὴρ πένθος μέγα and his own very pressing χρημάτων ἀκηνία.

In the second and great χορικός of the CHOEPHOROI the Chorus join Electra and Orestes in a κομμός in which the women continue their call for vengeance while brother and sister struggle to understand how τὸ δίκαιον may "pass over" (Choe. 308). The Chorus see a close connection between Δίκη and Μοῖρα (Choe. 306) who renders "hateful word for hateful word" (Choe. 309-10), "murderous blow for murderous blow" (Choe. 312-13), exacting "what is due" (Choe. 310) to ensure that δρῶσάντα παθεῖν (Choe. 313). Against these terrible, recurring themes of vengeance and murder Orestes and Electra sing of their sorrow for the past and their fears for the future, of their desire to avenge the murder of their father and their feelings of horror at the crime of their mother.

Orestes seeks words and offerings to appease the restless spirit of his father (Choe. 314ff) but the Chorus know only that the dead require retribution (Choe. 324ff). In the limited vision of the Chorus the need to avenge wrong holds absolute power and drives a house in a recurring cycle of vengeance and atonement (Choe. 327-31).

Electra's cry τί τῶνδ' εἴ τί δ' ἀπὸ κακῶν;  
(Choe. 338) takes up Orestes' question (Choe. 316) and reminds us of the anguished appeal which Agamemnon raised so

long before at Aulis when he asked τί τῶνδ' ἀνευ κακῶν;  
(Ag. 211). To the extent that it acknowledges that there  
may be a way in which events may turn out "well" Electra's  
cry marks a certain advance over Agamemnon's vision.

Orestes and Electra continue to resist (Choe.  
345ff, 364) the "task which must be done" (Choe. 298) while  
the Chorus urge them on, insisting that since Agamemnon  
has perished there is need for "defenders of those beneath  
the earth" (Choe. 376). Both Orestes and Electra are torn  
by the conflict before them: Orestes by the need to avenge  
the death of his father and the horror of inflicting punish-  
ment upon his mother (Choe. 381-85), Electra seeing the need  
for δίκαν δ' ἐξ ἀδίκων (Choe. 398).

No such conflicts trouble the Chorus, however, and  
their words at line 400ff take up again the recurring theme  
of retribution and its endless cycle of vengeance and atone-  
ment:

ἀλλὰ νόμος μὲν φονίας σταγόνας  
χυμένας ἐς πέδον ἄλλο προσαιτεῖν  
αἷμα· βοᾷ γὰρ λοιγὸς Ἑρινὺν  
παρὰ τῶν πρότερον φθιμένων αἶτην  
ἐτέραν ἐπάγουσαν ἐπ' αἶτη.

(Choe. 400-04)

It is the custom for bloody drops poured  
forth upon the ground to demand other blood.  
For mischief calls for an Erinyes from those  
who perished before, bringing another ruin  
upon ruin.

This passage presents in the clearest possible language the concept of the lex talionis which directs this world.

In confusion Orestes cries out "whither might one turn?" (Choe. 408) and Electra asks "can it be we suffer these griefs from our parents?" (Choe. 419). The thought of their mother, of her θυμός harsh as a savage wolf, of how she dared to bury her husband without lamentation, of the dishonourable deeds she committed (Choe. 421-34) finally stir the two to firmer resolves and Orestes vows she will pay "on account of the gods and my own hands and, then, may I having slain (her) perish myself" (Choe. 435-38).

As the terrible song draws to its close the Chorus press their point reminding Orestes and Electra of the sufferings and unbearable fate of their father (Choe. 440ff) and that "it is fitting to come down with inexorable strength" (Choe. 455). When Orestes prays that Agamemnon be with his children the women add "be with them against their enemies" (Choe. 456-60).

The final strophai (Choe. 456-78) underline the central theme of this complex χορικός: the tension between the Chorus' excessive desire for vengeance and the natural reluctance on the part of Orestes and Electra to punish

their mother. It is this fundamental conflict which lies behind Orestes' cry "Ἀρεὶ εὐμβάλεῖ, Δίκαι Δίκα (Choe. 461), yet, nonetheless, the Chorus can only answer to μόρσιμον μένει πάλαι (Choe. 464), "that which is fated abides long since".

While brother and sister continue their prayers for strength and help, that their line not be wiped out (Choe. 480-503) the Chorus make a final attempt to rouse Orestes bidding him "put his fortune to the test" (Choe. 573). "It will be", Orestes declares, but first he wishes to learn why the queen has sent offerings at this time to the grave of the murdered king.

Clytemnestra has had a dream, the Chorus tell, in which she fancied she gave birth to a δράκων (Choe. 527). Having wrapped it in swaddling clothes she put it to her breast where "it drew forth a drop of blood in the milk" (Choe. 533). The dream has clearly convinced Orestes that since she has "nourished this terrible creature she must die violently" and that he, for his part, according to the portent, "must turn serpent and kill her" (Choe. 548-50).

Thus resolved his plans are quickly laid: for Electra to return within doors, for him to present himself

at the door as a Phocian stranger and for the Chorus to keep silent and only speak when it is suitable. With his eye fixed firmly on the task before him Orestes declares "the Erinyes will drink a third pure drink of blood" (Choe. 577-78).

The unnaturalness of Clytemnestra's dream sets the Chorus thinking of what is natural and what is not. There are many creatures of fear and terror (Choe. 585ff) in the natural world, on the earth and in the sea, which are hostile and harmful to man but there is nothing more terrible than the overbold spirit of a man and the all-daring love of a woman. The unloving love which sways a woman corrupts by conquest the union of beasts and mortals (Choe. 594ff).

Women, moved by loveless love, have committed the most unnatural acts against those whom they ought, by nature, to have loved: witness the "wretched daughter of Thestius" (Choe. 605) who destroyed her own child, and the "murderous daughter" of Nisos (Choe. 613) who betrayed her father for a golden necklace. It is for such "harsh toils" as these that the Chorus prefer "the unexcited hearth of homes and a woman's undaring spirit" (Choe. 623-30).

Such unnatural deeds as these women have committed are abhorred by gods and men alike for "no one honours what

is hateful, to the gods" (Choe. 635-37). The connection between these examples from myth and the history of the house of Atreus is clear, if implicit. The crimes committed by the family are of the most unnatural kind: the banquet which Atreus served to Thyestes of his own children's flesh, Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigeneia, his daughter, and Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon, her husband and her king.

Against the unnaturalness often found in man's world, the Chorus declare, stands the order of Δίκη to avenge such acts: "the sharp-pointed sword near the side makes a home thrust by means of Δίκη who tramples on the ground underfoot that which is not right when a man not lawfully transgresses altogether the honour of Zeus" (Choe. 639ff).

The Chorus, however, fail to see that the Δίκη which punishes Clytemnestra's "unnatural" deed must also be offended by the very act which makes atonement. For them Δίκη is closely allied<sup>29</sup> to the ancient figures of Αἴσα and Ἐρινός by whom "in time a son is brought into the house to avenge the abomination of older blood" (Choe. 648-50). The relationship and inherent conflict between Δίκη and Ἐρινός expressed in this last strophe takes up a similar conflict between Δίκη and Μοῖρα seen in Ag. 1535-36.



In his guise as a stranger from Phocis Orestes easily gains entrance to the palace and the presence of the queen. Whether or not lines 691ff are to be attributed to Electra or to Clytemnestra the response which the counterfeit message (Choe. 680ff) of Orestes' death evokes is equally false: if the lines belong to Electra she is clearly acting her part in Orestes' deception; if they are Clytemnestra's she, too, is dissembling for she can be nothing but relieved to hear of Orestes' death.

Orestes' old nurse, Kilissa, however, is full of grief (Choe. 744-47) at the news of Orestes' "death" and her genuine sorrow provides a striking contrast to the pose (Choe. 737-41) which Clytemnestra has assumed before her household. For Kilissa, as for Electra (Choe. 236), Orestes represents the ἐλπίς σώμων (Choe. 776) and the old woman knows full well that his death would be welcome news to both Clytemnestra and Aigisthos. Following, as it does, the second stasimon, this characterization of Kilissa, the foster-mother (Choe. 750), also underlines the unnatural behavior of Clytemnestra, the natural mother<sup>30</sup>.

The entrance of Kilissa provides the Chorus with their first opportunity "to show their strength for Orestes" (Choe. 721) as they intercept the nurse and bid her send Aigisthos back to the house alone.

In the prayer which forms part of the third stasimon the Chorus commend Orestes to the care of Zeus, desiring the god to "take in exchange two and three-fold retribution" (Choe. 790-92). They pray for the release of "blood of deeds done long ago by the justice of fresh slaughters" (Choe. 805) and that "old murder no longer bring forth (new) in the house" (Choe. 806). It is clear from this prayer that the Chorus have no true understanding of the character of Zeus nor the nature of his justice. Their vision is as limited as was Clytemnestra's who believed there could be an end of trouble for the house of Atreus with the death of Agamemnon (Ag. 1568). When the "blood of ancient deeds" is avenged by the "justice of new slaughter" there can be no end.

The Chorus' wish that "the house may see the shining light of freedom with its own eyes from a veil of darkness" (Choe. 811) suggests man's present incomplete understanding of his destiny while pointing forward to the time when he will fully know "the light of freedom" through the δαίμονων χάρις. It is in this sense that the Chorus appeal to Hermes who can close or open men's eyes (Od. 5.47-8).

The Chorus' insistence that the deaths of Aigisthos and Clytemnestra bode fair for the city (Choe. 824), that

"ruin stands apart from dear ones" (Choe. 826), repeats the confident assertion of the queen after the death of Agamemnon. In their ignorance each generation believes it can, by its acts of retribution and atonement, bring the suffering and misery of the family to an end. Yet, by their very acts they fuel and fire anew the recurring and endless cycle.

The allusion to Perses and his mighty task of slaying the gorgon endows Orestes' deed with the air of an heroic deed worthy of praise and honour.

The little scene between Aigisthos and the Chorus is charged with irony and double entendre which emphasize the fatal consequences of ignorance. Although determined to know the truth (Choe. 844) of the stranger's message, "desiring to see and examine the messenger himself" (Choe. 851), Aigisthos goes to his death without gaining any knowledge, with no clear understanding of the conflicts or forces which have shaped his end.

For the first time, with the death of Aigisthos, the Chorus' conviction begins to falter, (Choe. 855-58). At last they recognize that all may not be well, that Orestes will either bring "destruction upon the house of Agamemnon" or "by burning fire and light for freedom he will hold the

great prosperity of his fathers" (Choe. 862-65). In the end they can only pray  $\epsilon\lambda\pi\eta\ \delta'\ \epsilon\pi\iota\ \nu\iota\kappa\eta$  (Choe. 868) in an echo of the refrain of the old men in the AGAMEMNON,  $\tau\omicron\ \delta'\ \epsilon\upsilon\ \nu\iota\kappa\alpha\tau\omega$  (Ag. 121. 138. 159).

The servant's announcement of the death of Aigisthos,  $\tau\omicron\nu\ \zeta\omega\nu\tau\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\upsilon\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\epsilon\theta\nu\eta\kappa\omicron\tau\alpha\varsigma$  (Choe. 886), underlines the endless nature of the recurring cycle of retribution and atonement which drives the house when the dead slay the living. Here the reference is, on one level, to Orestes, whom the household believes to be dead, killing the living Aigisthos. But, on another level, the statement points to the curse of the house and the power of those who have died violently to exact retribution and vengeance from the living.

Clytemnestra also acknowledges now, at least in part, the true nature of the forces which direct the house. Faced with the body of Aigisthos she declares: "we are perishing by treachery even as we killed . . . for we are come here because of this evil" (Choe. 888-91). Confronted with her own imminent death she bares her breast and bids Orestes  $\tau\omicron\nu\delta\epsilon\ \delta'\ \alpha\lambda\delta\epsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$  (Choe. 895-96). Orestes' cry,  $\tau\acute{\iota}\ \delta\omicron\delta\omega$  (Choe. 899), here makes a third with the cries of Agamemnon ( $\tau\acute{\iota}\ \tau\omicron\nu\delta'\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\kappa\omega\nu$ ; Ag. 211) and Electra ( $\tau\acute{\iota}\ \tau\omicron\nu\delta'\ \epsilon\upsilon$ ,  $\tau\acute{\iota}\ \delta'\ \acute{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\rho\ \kappa\alpha\kappa\omega\nu$ ; Choe. 338), and marks the culmination of man's journey along the path to moral awareness.

Faced with the dilemma at Aulis Agamemnon knew only that he must betray either his daughter or his position. Moved by forces beyond his understanding, unaware of the conflicts which beset his world, he recognized for himself no freedom of will.

Electra's vision is somewhat wider than Agamemnon's for she perceives, in part, the conflicts before them, the need to avenge the death of her father, the need for those who kill to die in turn, yet she would be "more moderate than (her) mother, more pious of hand". Thus, she prays for δίκαν δ' εἰς ἀδίκων (Choe. 399).

Orestes' cry reveals now a clear understanding of the dilemma he faces, that to avenge his father he must slay his mother; to follow the injunction of Apollo he must incur the wrath of the Furies.

In Clytemnestra's appeals for mercy and Orestes' responses we behold the full force of the conflict wrought by the primitive justice of the Erinyes. Orestes rejects every attempt of Clytemnestra to defend herself: when she would place the blame on Moira he declares, "Moira, then, provides the destiny" (Choe. 911); when she bids him respect the curses of his race he charges that it was she who cast

him into misfortune (Choe. 913-15); when she points to the folly of Agamemnon he is equally unmoved (Choe. 919-21). Finally, she appeals to him, a second time, as his mother (Choe. 922), to which Orestes answers: "Indeed, you, not I, will kill yourself (Choe. 923).

Her warning to watch out for the "wrathful dogs" (Choe. 924) of his mother brings the dilemma confronting Orestes into clear focus. If Orestes follows the commands of Loxias and slays his mother he will certainly avenge his father but, also, certainly incur the wrath of his mother's Erinyes. If, on the other hand, he spares his mother, failing the injunction of the god, he will, then, be pursued by the Furies of his father (Choe. 925). In the end Orestes places the responsibility clearly on Clytemnestra: "you, not I, will kill yourself" for "you killed the man whom there was no need to kill, therefore, suffer what there is no need to suffer" (Choe. 930).

In their exit song the Chorus associate  $\Delta\iota\kappa\eta$  with the retribution (Choe. 936) which visited the house of Priam and the house of Agamemnon. Raising a cry of triumph they exult in the present escape from "evils and wasting of the substance of the house by the two polluters" (Choe. 944). For the Chorus Retribution (Choe. 947) is a "true daughter

of Zeus whom mortals, during good fortune, name Justice" (Choe. 950). This Δίκη, they sing, "breathes destructive wrath upon enemies" (Choe. 952) and she it is whom Loxias Apollo has raised for harm" (Choe. 954).

The Chorus clearly recognize no conflict of interests between Loxias and Zeus as they pray κατέτω δέ πως τὸ θεῖον (Choe. 957); they seem ready to believe that, after a long time of darkness and suffering, the house has emerged into the light of freedom (Choe. 961-64), as was their wish in the last stasimon (Choe. 809).

Over the slain bodies of Aigisthos and Clytemnestra Orestes calls upon Helios "who sees all" to bear true witness that "justly I have managed this murder of my mother" (Choe. 985-89). He recalls again the unnatural behavior of Clytemnestra in slaying her husband, the father of her children, and he likens her, in her "daring and unjust spirit", to a serpent or adder which by its very touch putrifies the flesh (Choe. 992-96).

Orestes has no joy in his act for he understands clearly that, though he has carried out the command of Loxias Apollo, he is nonetheless polluted by his deed, ἀζηλα νίκης τῆσδ' ἔχων μιάσματα (Choe. 1017), and will

therefore, as his mother foretold, he hounded by her Furies. The Chorus have now rejected their earlier optimism about an end of trouble for the house. Their cry,  $\mu\acute{o}\chi\theta\omicron\varsigma\ \delta'\ \delta'\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\iota}\chi'$ ,  $\delta'\ \delta'\ \eta\epsilon\tau'$  (Choe. 1020) takes up the notion found in Solon,  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda'\ \delta'\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\iota}\mu'\ \acute{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\lambda\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\nu$ ;  $\delta'\ \delta'\ \upsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\nu$  (Fr. 13.29), that whether now or later punishment eventually comes.

Orestes knows full well the toil which awaits him and, while still he may (Choe. 1026), he declares again that he slew his mother "not without justice" but "according to the Pythian oracle, who promised I would be without evil blame by doing this" (Choe. 1027-32). As the madness comes upon him Orestes sets his face to the oracular hearth following the instruction of Loxias Apollo.

Though the Chorus salute him for his deeds, hailing him the saviour of the city, Orestes knows the Furies with their black robes and snake-entwined heads are already pursuing him and that he may no longer remain (Choe. 1044-49). Full of confidence that Loxias Apollo will cleanse him "of these sufferings" (Choe. 1060) the Chorus entrust him to the care of the god.



Yet, the final strophe leaves all the conflicts still unresolved. Notwithstanding the assurances of Loxias there is no clear indication at this point whether Orestes and his act of retribution may truly be called a *owno* or a *uopos* (Choe. 1073-74). Apollo has been satisfied but the wrath of the Erinyes is in full spate and for the Chorus and their world the question is still very much "whither will it end, whither will ruin cease?" (Choe. 1075-76).

## 3

EUMENIDES

The third play of the trilogy opens before the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi where the priestess is offering a prayer to the gods who have from time to time occupied this seat. It is clearly an ancient and venerable shrine whose authority goes back to the very origins of the universe (Eum. 2-7). Gaia was the first seer and after her the seat was held by Phoebe and Themis. Apollo is the fourth, the priestess sings, to occupy the oracle, and he, much honoured by the King and people of Delphi, has received from Zeus himself his gift of prophecy, to speak the words of Father Zeus. Being careful not to neglect the other gods and lesser deities who have adorned this precinct with their presence the priestess remembers also Pallas Pronaia and

the nymphs of the rocks, Bromius and the springs of Pleistus, Poseidon, in his might, and Zeus, the Highest (Eum. 21-28). It is important to note, as Thomson<sup>31</sup> points out in his commentary on the EUMENIDES, that each of these catalogues of divinities (Eum. 2-17, 21-28) leads up to the name of Zeus. Both the divine lineage of the oracle itself and the list of deities associated with it present the divine world as a unified whole: the former showing the old gods and the new as part of a continuous unbroken line, the latter embracing the greater and the lesser deities in one vision. This characterization of the oracle prefigures the final reconciliation between the old gods and the younger Olympians at the end of the trilogy.

This is the sanctuary to which Apollo has bidden Orestes flee after the murder of Clytemnestra, and it is there, on the navel stone (ἐπ' ὀμφαλῶν, Eum. 40), that the priestess discovers him. With his hands dripping blood and holding a newly-drawn sword Orestes bears all the signs of pollution, while about his feet sleeps a "wondrous company of women" (Eum. 46-7). Black-robed and wingless, they present a disgusting sight, snoring and dripping hateful drops from their eyes (Eum. 54).

The priestess flees from such abomination but Apollo is there to receive Orestes with words of comfort: "I shall not betray you"; he declares; "standing near you and afar off I shall be your guardian, nor shall I be gentle to your enemies" (Eum. 64-6). Yet, despite these bold words he bids Orestes flee from the *κατάκρυπτον τόπον* (Eum. 68) while they sleep and seek sanctuary of Athena at Athens "where we shall find judges of these matters . . . so as to release you altogether from these toils" (Eum. 81-3). Enjoining Hermes to guide and protect "this my suppliant" (Eum. 96) Apollo dispatches Orestes from his shrine to that of Athena.

At length, the ghost of Clytemnestra rises amid the sleeping chorus of Erinyes. Seeing Orestes gone she rebukes the women for their neglect bitterly reminding them of her own care and attention for them while she lived (Eum. 106-09). Because of their failure to take Orestes she now finds herself dishonoured among the dead, left to wander in shame and suffering with "none of the gods angry on my account" (Eum. 101).

The scene about the navel stone of Apollo's sanctuary is a vivid and dramatic statement of the fundamental conflict which now exists with Orestes caught between

Apollo, on one side, and the Erinyes and the ghost of Clytemnestra, on the other. The endless cycle of vengeance and atonement which has directed the house of Atreus for so many generations is now seen to be a reflection and consequence of a fundamental division among the gods. For the conflict between the demands of Clytemnestra's ghost for vengeance and Apollo's promise of sanctuary and ritual purification to Orestes is, in fact, a conflict between the rights of the Erinyes to avenge crimes of blood guilt and the right of Apollo to offer sanctuary to those guilty of these crimes and to cleanse the guilty. Ranged on either side of Orestes each is completely taken up with his own particular interest: to the Erinyes Orestes is a guilty matricide, to Apollo he is a just avenger.

As an introduction to the greater confrontation to come, the prologue reveals the limitations of both Apollo's justice and that of the Erinyes. Having promised Orestes that in murdering Clytemnestra he would be ἐπὶ αἰτίας καὶ ἡσυχίας (Choe. 1031) Apollo is, in the final analysis, unable to secure an end to suffering for his suppliant. The Erinyes, also, despite their close pursuit, fail to fulfill their mission.

Waking to find Orestes gone the Chorus raise a great cry of suffering at this ἀφαιρετόν κακόν (Eum. 146). With the beast gone from the net and the chase lost the Erinyes round upon the younger Apollo charging him with riding roughshod over the old gods (Eum. 147-54). It is clear that the Erinyes are concerned not so much with the primacy of Clytemnestra's rights over those of Orestes as they are with their own particular rights which they see wronged by the younger gods. In honouring his suppliant the young Apollo has not only "overridden" the old gods but he has set the interests of a mortal against the custom of the gods and violated their παλαιγενεῖς μόρας (Eum. 173). As far as the Erinyes are concerned Apollo has acted ὑπὲρ μόρον in denying them their rightful privilege. Their cry, τί τῶνδ' ἐρεῖ τις δικαίως εἶναι; (Eum. 154), is a clear reminder of the recurring cries of the house of Atreus (Ag. 211; Choe. 338, 899) calling, however unconsciously, for justice.

Unmoved by this song of grievance Apollo renews his attack upon the hateful host bidding them leave his sanctuary and withdraw to those places where it is more seemly for such ones (Eum. 190). The Chorus, however, demand to be heard: "Did you order Orestes to slay his mother?" (Eum. 202) they ask. When Apollo agrees that he

did the Erinyes point out that it is their appointed task to "drive the matricide from his home" (Eum. 210). "What of the woman who slays her husband?" Apollo counters, and the Chorus reply that οὐκ ἂν γένοιθ' ὁμαίμος αὐθέντης φόνος (Eum. 212), "it would not be death by murder of the same blood".

The division is clearly drawn between the Erinyes and Apollo. The former, holding blood ties to be closer than ties of marriage, are thus more wroth with Orestes for his murder of Clytemnestra than they were when she murdered Agamemnon (Eum. 222-23). Apollo, on the other hand, honouring the "pledges of Hera and Zeus" knows only the need to avenge the murder of Agamemnon and to protect his suppliant.

The scene now shifts from the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi to Athens where Orestes is already invoking Athena. Calling upon the goddess to receive him he stresses that he has come, not as a suppliant or one with unclean hands, but at the direction of Loxias, as a man suffering divine vengeance (Eum. 235-37). Having been worn away "against other houses and by-ways of men" (Eum. 238) he has come to the house and statue of Athena as a last resort to await the τέλος δίκης (Eum. 243).

The Erinyes enter at this point still tracking Orestes "as a dog hunts a fawn" (Eum. 246). The stanza which follows their discovery of him "wrapped about the image of the goddess" (Eum. 159-60) sounds again the recurring theme of the trilogy that blood spilt upon the ground calls for fresh blood. In the Erinyes' own song we hear again the old foreboding fears: "a mother's blood upon the ground is hard to lull to sleep, alas; blood shed upon the ground is gone . . ." (Eum. 261-68). No one can call back blood once spilt upon the ground. It is gone and for the Erinyes there is no atonement but new blood: Punishment also awaits those who dishonour gods or strangers or parents in accordance with the ancient and unwritten laws concerning *doxeta* whose sanctions the Erinyes fulfill<sup>32</sup>.

Orestes' answer to this terrible cry for blood is a clear and simple reply which continues the Erinyes' own imagery: "the blood *does* sleep and is quenched from my hand; the pollution of matricide *is* washed out" (Eum. 280-81). Orestes never denied that he was polluted by his deed (Choe. 1017), but when the blood was fresh upon him, following the direction of the god, he was cleansed by Apollo at his hearth (Eum. 282-83). However, Apollo's power has been insufficient to "release him from these toils" and the Erinyes have continued to pursue him. It is for

this reason that Orestes now calls upon Athena (Eum. 228) to come to his aid that having been taught in trouble there may now be a release for him from these sufferings (Eum. 276-98). This notion of knowledge gained through trouble in life, and its salutary effect, repeats the *πάθει μάθος* principle first found in the AGAMEMNON (Ag. 177) and stands in sharp contrast to the Erinyes' conception of suffering as punishment, and of punishment as sheer revenge.

Despite Orestes' insistence that the blood has been washed out the Erinyes recognize no power of either Apollo or of Athena to cleanse him or to rescue him. He is their "bloodless food", they cry, nourished and dedicated to them and while he lives he "will feast them, but not having been sacrificed upon the altar" (Eum. 299-305).

In the first stasimon (Eum. 307-96) the Chorus give an emphatic account of their nature and their appointed role, stressing the ancient and inviolable authority of their function. They are daughters of Night, begotten as retribution (*ποινή*, Eum. 323) for the dead and the living, a blood-dripping, hateful tribe whom Zeus has deemed unworthy of conversation. Having no share or portion in white robes they dwell in the dark and sunless damp beneath the earth, with no one to share their feasts, forebidden to mingle with the other gods or with men.



They are righteous judges, they declare: for the man with clean hands has nothing to fear from them and will live his life without harm; but the man whose hands are stained with murder will find them, in the end, avengers of blood. This is their lot, spun out for them at their birth by "remorseless Moira": to pursue the man who wantonly falls upon crimes of blood until he goes beneath the earth, but to keep their hands away from the gods.

In powerful and vivid images they weave their *ῥέπουτος ὄπνος* (Eum. 306), a song of delusion and madness to bind the mind and wither the body of a man. With heavy tread and dancing leap of spite they bring to nothing the man who turns against his family in murder and diminish the high and mighty reputations of men. They alone are skillful in devising punishments; pressing on to the end, mindful of wrongs, standing aloof from the gods they are hard for mortals to appease.

They are daughters of Night, they repeat, but now Apollo, the son of Leto, has dishonoured them by taking away the rightful atonement of a mother's murder (Eum. 321ff). Their final stanza is a clear assertion of their ancient and divine authority, as they sing

θεσμών,  
 τὸν μοῖρ᾽ ὅραντον ἐκ θεῶν  
 δοθέντα τέλεον; ἐπὶ δέ μοι  
 γέρας παλαιόν, οὐδ' ἀτιμίας κύρω,  
 καί περ ὑπὸ χθόνα τάξι' ἔχουσα  
 καὶ δυσήλιον κνέφας.

(Eum. 391-96)

Is not my right allotted by Moira, given  
 complete by the gods? My privilege is  
 ancient, nor do I meet with dishonour  
 though I dwell beneath the earth in  
 the sunless dark.

These lines underline, by their diction and imagery, the division between the forces of darkness and night and the powers of light, between the Erinyes and Apollo, and it is clear that the divine unity envisaged by the priestess in the prologue does not yet encompass this world.

On her arrival from "the land of Skamandros" Athena finds a stranger clinging to her statue and about her altar a strange and wondrous "company of the earth" who declare they are "the daughters of everlasting Night" whose *τυμή* is to drive the homicide from his home (Eum. 398-421). Athena's entry marks an important change of focus in the contest between the Erinyes and Apollo and her questions concerning limit and motive add a new dimension to the nature of justice and its *telos* in the ORESTEIA. Learning that the women are avengers of murder Athena immediately inquires "and for the murderer where is the end of flight?" "Wherever rejoicing is no more," comes back the answer. As

a second consideration Athena asks "and do you shriek such flight for this man?" "Yes", reply the Erinyes, "he is deemed to be the murderer of his mother". "But, can it be he murdered from necessity, or fearing the wrath of someone?" Athena questions and, again, the answer comes straight back: "Where is there such a goad as to slay a mother?" (Eum. 422-27).

The Erinyes, intent upon their τιμή, react only to the deed, to pursue the murderer, and it is enough for them to know that murder has been done. No consideration of motive, no other extenuating circumstances enter the picture for them -- the act alone is all that matters. It is for Athena, with her wider, fuller vision, to encompass the whole, and turning to Orestes she bids him speak his case.

He begins his story by removing any question of his being a suppliant (Eum. 445-52). He has not come to Athena with murder still upon his hands -- this he also made clear to the Erinyes when first they discovered him at Athena's shrine (Eum. 280-83). The murder of Clytemnestra was committed at the behest of Apollo and according to his promise he has cleansed Orestes of the blood-guilt. Orestes recounts in a simple and straight-forward way how his father, Agamemnon, returning from Troy was murdered by his mother,

Clytemnestra, and how he, himself, thereafter returned from exile and slew his mother. "I will not deny it", he declares and concludes: "Loxias bears part of the blame for this." He declared sufferings sharp as goads at the heart if I did not do harm to those responsible for these deeds. But do you decide whether I acted justly or not. For I shall be content, in whichever way I shall have fared at your hands" (Eum. 465-69). Orestes' unadorned account of his deed, his simple οὐκ ἀρνῆσομαι (Eum. 463), stand in striking contrast to the wild exultation of Clytemnestra's cry, οὕτω δ' ἐπραξα, καὶ τὰδ' οὐκ ἀρνῆσομαι (Ag. 1380), after the murder of Agamemnon.

As Athena realizes all too well, it is indeed a great matter to sit in judgment on this mortal. Orestes has come as a *καίτης* but "cleansed of all harm for the temple" (Eum. 474); the Erinyes, however, have their harsh *μοῖρα* and if they are denied their honour "unbearable poison" and "everlasting disease" (Eum. 479) will fall upon the land. Faced with this dilemma Athena institutes a court which shall stand for all time, choosing "men without blame" to be judges of murder for the city.

The second stasimon presents a clear statement of the Erinyes' vision of the divine-human relationship: retribution comes upon men as the result of their unjust deeds

and it is the fear of retribution which ensures order among men. Having entrusted to the new court the justice of their claims the goddesses regard any verdict other than "guilty" as a threat to the very foundation of the justice and order they support<sup>33</sup>. They see full well that any acquittal which the court may render will set a dangerous precedent (Eum. 491-97): if Orestes is allowed to go free after murdering his mother there will be nothing to prevent children hereafter from inflicting such treatment upon their parents. For it is only the fear of punishment, τὸ δεινόν, they declare, that will ensure justice among men (Eum. 517-19). If once their authority to punish is undermined "what city, what mortal . . . would respect Justice" (Eum. 522-25). If their right to punish is called into question there will be no point, then, in a father or mother calling in misfortune, "Oh! Justice, Oh! Thrones of the Erinyes" (Eum. 511-12) for with the dishonour of the Erinyes, the goddesses insist, has fallen "the house of Justice" (Eum. 516).

It is their retribution (ποινή) which serves as a sure remedy (ἄκος) to restore the order and balance of society. The human condition, they declare, is prone to excess, either in an ἀναρπτος βίος (Eum. 526) or a δεσποτ-  
οῦμενος βίος (Eum. 527) in which δυσσεβία begets ὄβρις. Against this picture of disorder the Erinyes hold up a

vision of *ὁλότητα*, of balance and harmony and soundness of mind which ensures prosperity "much prayed for and beloved of all" (*Eum.* 636-37). So, also, did Hesiod admonish Perses saying *σοὶ δ' ἔργα φίλ' ἔστω μέτρια κοσμεῖν* (*Er.* 306).

It is their sanctions, the Erinyes maintain, which will ensure the righteous deeds among men, for it is in difficulty that a man grows moderate (*Eum.* 520-21). In the same sense the old men of the AGAMEMNON sang that it is Zeus who "sets man on the path to understanding through the law of *νόμιμα μάθος* and that "even unwillingly a man comes to be moderate" (*Ag.* 176-81).

With further echoes of the AGAMEMNON (*Ag.* 384ff) and of Solon (*Fr.* 4.16) the Erinyes advise man to "revere the altar of Δίκη" and not "kick it with godless foot beneath your heel having an eye on unlawful gain" (*Eum.* 539-41). There are many other striking similarities in diction and imagery between this song and the first stasimon of the AGAMEMNON. In particular we may compare the Erinyes' characterization of the unjust man and his fate (*Eum.* 552-56) with that passage (*Ag.* 462-66) in which the old men emphasize the utter destruction which comes "in time" to a man who lives "without justice". The Erinyes' vision of the *ἀναγκητος βίος* and the *δεσποτούμενος βίος* is a further

reminder of the prayer of the Chorus of the AGAMEMNON that they not be "a πολυπόρθης nor find themselves in captivity" (Ag. 472-74). Both the ἀναρκτος βίος and the life of a πολυπόρθης contain a similar potential for excess while a life of oppression and a life of captivity lie equally at the opposite extreme.

In the court convened in order that "justice may be well observed" (Eum. 573) Apollo speaks first, insisting that he has cleansed Orestes of the murder and that he himself is responsible for Clytemnestra's death. Then the Erinyes begin their cross-examination of Orestes. His story is soon told: he killed his mother -- there is no denial of this, he emphasizes (Eum. 588) -- by cutting her throat with his sword at the direction of Apollo's oracle. The god himself bears him witness, Orestes declares, adding that he finds no fault with his fortune for he trusts his father will send help from the grave (Eum. 592-98).

Pressed to explain why they have pursued Orestes for slaying Clytemnestra when they did not seek atonement of her for her murder of Agamemnon the Erinyes repeat, as they did before, their principle of the primacy of the blood tie (Eum. 605). Clytemnestra was not of the same blood as the man she killed but Orestes may not deny his blood ties

with his mother. Unable to answer the Erinyes Orestes appeals to Apollo to whom he now entrusts his defense (Eum. 609-13).

As a seer Apollo declares he speaks the truth, and the oracles which he delivers from his prophetic throne are the judgments of Father Zeus. The Chorus are amazed that Zeus would decree that Orestes avenge the murder of his father at the expense of his mother's honour (Eum. 622-24). It is not that the claims of the father are put before the mother's but that a man of noble birth, honoured by his god-given authority, was cut down by a woman on his return home -- not even in battle at the hands of an amazon -- but trapped and fettered in his bath (Eum. 625-39).

"How about Zeus' treatment of his own father?" the Erinyes demand. One might release fetters, Apollo points out, but when the dust draws up the blood of a man dead once and for all there is no rising again. Not even Zeus himself can bring that about (Eum. 645-51). Again and again in the trilogy we have marked the important and powerful image of blood spilt upon the ground (Ag. 1019; Choe. 48, 263) and the inevitable disaster which follows such a crime.



This is the very point which the Erinyes have insisted upon all along but they are even more concerned with one who has his mother's blood upon his hands. Shifting his ground Apollo rejects the Erinyes' claims for the primacy of a mother: she who is called mother is but the nurse of the new life, but the father is the one who truly begets. Did not Zeus himself, alone and without a mother, give birth to Athena<sup>34</sup>, Apollo declares. The young god then concludes his case with an undisguised appeal to the interest of the court and Athena, that he will make the city and her people mighty and that the goddess may have Orestes and his descendants as her allies forever. (Eum. 667-73).

Athena's charge to the court (Eum. 681-710)<sup>35</sup> stresses that this is the "first case of spilt blood". Within this court, she declares, are to be contained both the σέβας ἀσπίων and φόβος συγγενῆς τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν, the very qualities which the Erinyes feared would be lost if their rights were overthrown. These sanctions are not to be lost, it appears, nor are they to be considered the sole prerogative of the Erinyes. They are now, in this court of Athena, to be maintained forever, while "the citizens do not make innovations upon the laws". The interests of Athena and the Erinyes are not so different, it seems, for she declares, in a clear echo of their earlier song (Eum. 517-19)

τὸ μὴτ' ἀναρχὸν μῆτε δεσποτούμενον  
 ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλευῶν σέβειν  
 καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν.

(Eum. 696-99)

I bid the citizens, upholding that which is  
 not without rule and that which is not ruled  
 despotically, to show reverence and not to  
 cast fear altogether out of the city.

In the same vein Solon bid the δῆμος follow its leaders,  
 μῆτε λίην ἀνεθείς μῆτε βιαζόμενος (Fr. 6.2). While the  
 σέβας ἀστῶν and φόβος τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν were for the Erinyes the  
 bulwark of the altar of Δίκη, they are, in Athena's wider  
 vision, become the ἔρμα τε χώρας καὶ πόλεως σωτήριον (Eum.  
 701), "both the bulwark of the land and the preservation of  
 the city".

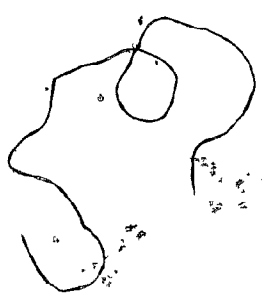
Athena's injunction that the court remain un-  
 touched by κέρδος is directed particularly to Apollo and  
 his implied offer of benefits bestowed for favour given  
 and repeats the Erinyes' warning against kicking over the  
 altar of Δίκη with an eye on κέρδος. The notion of the  
 corrupting influence of κέρδος owes its inception to Solon  
 who also warned the people against the danger to the σεμνὰ  
 Δίκης θέμεθλα (Fr. 4.16) from κέρδος (Fr. 13.74) and unjust  
 wealth (Fr. 13.11).

The exchanges between the Erinyes and Apollo  
 which accompany the voting are a microcosm of their earlier

and greater δῖον. The Erinyes make their appeal for honour and brandish their threats if they do not meet with justice (Eum. 712-19), while Apollo maintains the divine authority of his oracle and his right to honour τὸν σέβοντα (Eum. 713-25). It is still very much a contest between the Erinyes who insist upon the ancient authority of their rights and Apollo who claims the sanction of Zeus. This opposition between the forces of darkness and night and the powers of light is reinforced by Orestes' appeal to Phoebus Apollo (Eum. 744) and the Chorus' answering prayer to Night (Eum. 745).

The nature of the verdict of the judges and Athena's role in the final decision have long been matters of speculation among critics and commentators<sup>36</sup>. Whether Athena casts her vote with the judges or after the count has been made, whether her vote makes the count even, and thus provides a precedent for acquittal on equal votes in the future, or whether her vote breaks a tie in favour of Orestes are uncertain and must remain so in the absence of clear stage directions. Whatever the true origin of the tradition, Athenian law always attributed the custom that a defendant be acquitted in the event of equal votes to Athena's vote at Orestes' trial.

Despite Athena's charge to the people of Athens respecting the nature of the justice of her court Apollo and the Erinyes remain utterly divided, completely unwilling to countenance any adjudication of their interests. For the Erinyes the only possibilities are "for us to perish or to wield our honour further" (Eum. 747).



Athena's verdict<sup>37</sup>, when it is delivered, means more than personal survival for Orestes. By this judgment he sees his home restored and himself returned to his native land. In much the same way Electra and Orestes saw in their reunion the hope of their house for the future (Choe. 236). However, it is not until this point, when Athena has announced his acquittal, that Orestes can be truly said to have returned home from exile. The succession of bloody acts of vengeance and retribution in the house of Atreus have both literally and figuratively divided the house and broken the family asunder, leaving Agamemnon dead at the hands of his wife, Electra no better than a slave and Orestes in exile. While Orestes' return to Argos held hope for Electra and himself that Zeus could, through them, effect a restoration of the house (Choe. 262) their hopes proved vain. It is only with the verdict of Athena's court that such a restoration can be truly achieved. In return for his release Orestes renews (Eum. 289ff, 667ff, 762ff) the promise of an Argive alliance.

Although the verdict has absolved Orestes of responsibility in the murder of Clytemnestra and ensured the survival of the house the Erinyes remain unappeased. Overridden by the younger gods and deprived of their ancient rights they see themselves dishonoured in the land and mocked, able only to cry vengeance upon the country (Eum. 780-89).

Now, begins Athena's mighty task of reconciliation. They are not defeated nor dishonoured by the acquittal, she maintains. It was Zeus' will, delivered through his oracle, which declared that Orestes should not come to harm for murdering Clytemnestra. She bids them, then, not to harm the land nor its people in their wrath. Rather will she promise them altars and sanctuaries in the land and much honour from the citizens (Eum. 985-807).

A song of grief and dishonour, of vengeance and suffering rises again from the ancient goddesses. You are not without honour Athena repeats and again urges them not to render the land uninhabitable in their excessive anger. Against their threats she now raises the spectre of her own power: "I alone of the gods know the keys of the chamber in which the thunderbolt has been sealed". But, there is no need of it, she hastens to assure them; do you but obey me

and not harm the land. Lull your bitter wrath and dwell with me in honour and you will have as your everlasting portion the sacrifice of first fruits of the land for children and the rites of marriage (Eum. 808-35).

Another cry of grief and suffering escapes the Chorus as they groan over their violated honour. Pursuing her efforts to win them over Athena concedes that they are older and wiser than she but she is the one to whom Zeus has given intelligence. She urges them to accept honoured seats in the house of Erechtheus from which they will gain more than from any other mortals and she cautions them, again, not to foster bloody strife and intestine war among her people but to accept the offer of honour in return for fair treatment, sharing a place in the god-beloved land (Eum. 837-69).

Yet another refrain of grief is heard and Athena casts her final shot: I shall not grow tired telling of your blessings so that you, an ancient goddess, may never say you perished at my hand, dishonoured by a younger goddess and the hands of the city-protecting men, far from this land. Finally, Athena concludes her case saying they may remain if she has persuaded them but, if they do not wish to remain, they may not justly allot for the city any

wrath or anger or harm for the people since it is possible for them to partake in the division of the land being justly honoured in all (Eum. 870-90).

Athena's settlement ensures honour for the Erinyes, such as they have never had, providing them with an active role for good, to grant prosperity for the righteous, while guaranteeing their ancient rights to be "more ready to weed out the unrighteous". As earth goddesses their powers are now to be used for the increase of the land, its crops and beasts and people as well as to punish wrongdoing (Eum. 895-909).

The Chorus embrace Athena's offer and vow not to dishonour her city. As a  $\varphi\rho\omicron\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\nu\ \theta\epsilon\omega\nu$  and  $\rho\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\beta\omega\mu\omicron\nu$  . . .  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\lambda\mu\alpha\ \delta\alpha\iota\mu\acute{o}\nu\omega\nu$  (Eum. 919-20) the city has taken on the aspect of the  $\beta\omega\mu\acute{o}\varsigma\ \Delta\acute{\iota}\omega\eta\varsigma$  and it is in this sense that the Erinyes promise not to harm it. Their prayer now is for the "shining brightness of the sun to make profitable fortune of life rush bursting forth upon the land". The common cause of sun and earth which lies at the heart of this image not only symbolizes, as Thomson<sup>38</sup> point out in his note on this passage, the reconciliation of Apollo and the Erinyes, but also emphasizes the benefits which will accrue from it.

Athena agrees with the goddesses (Eum. 310-11) that they hold power over all the affairs of men (Eum. 930) and it is, therefore, to the advantage of the citizens that their wrath be soothed. But even so "when a man finds them grievous he knows not whence come the blows of life; for the offences of past generations bring him to them and in silence destruction utterly wipes out with hateful passion even the proud man" (Eum. 932-37). To the Erinyes now may be assigned the punishing of wrongdoing among men whether they have themselves committed the offence or not. The characterization of the destruction which comes in silence takes up Solon's vision of Δίκη (Fr. 3.15-6) and makes an important, if implicit, connection between the punishment of the Erinyes carried out within the order of Zeus and Solon's lofty vision of justice.

In their new and kindly role the Erinyes foreswear "the cankerous inflammation of plants" and "eternal barrenness" (Eum. 939-43); they decry "murder which carries a man off before his time", Strife within the city insatiate of troubles, and the desire for revenge and ruin which renders murder in return (Eum. 956-81).

The Erinyes' prayer that the dust not drink the black blood of its citizens (Eum. 980) not only underlines



the end of civil strife already marked (Eum. 977) but symbolizes their own transformation from purely avenging powers to their new role within the πόλις. Throughout its history crimes of blood have, from generation to generation, brought suffering and disaster to the family of Atreus. In the ORESTEIA the image of blood spilt upon the ground has become a powerful and recurring motif<sup>39</sup> through which we may now trace the struggles and conflicts which have led to the present reconciliation.

In the AGAMEMNON, the old men of the Chorus watched with fear and foreboding as their king entered his palace upon the purple carpet, and they sang "who might call back again . . . the black blood of a man once fallen in death upon the earth?" (Ag. 1019-21). In a similar vein Electra's band of suppliant maidens cried out at the tomb of Agamemnon: "I am afraid to cast forth this word for what atonement is there when blood falls upon the ground?" (Choe. 46-8). There can be no atonement, they conclude: "It is the custom for bloody drops shed upon the earth to demand other blood; for destruction cries for an Erinyes who brings on ruin upon ruin from those who have perished before" (Choe. 400-04).

The Erinyes themselves confirm this ancient belief when they assert: "a mother's blood upon the earth is hard to assuage, alas. The living stream poured out upon the ground is gone" (Eum. 261-63). In this Apollo wholeheartedly concurs: "when the dust draws up the blood of a man once dead there is no rising again" (Eum. 647-48). Now, in this final prayer, after the reconciliation, the image appears again, in a certain sense of climax and conclusion, to mark the end, at last, of the recurring and endless cycle of blood guilt (Eum. 980-83).

With generous good will for the city the Erinyes now promise prosperity for the land and its people in the bounteous increase of flocks and desirable brides and in the single-minded joy and wrath of the citizens (Eum. 944-85).

The powers of the goddesses are clearly great, Athena declares, both among the immortals and those beneath the earth, to render either renown or a "dim life of tears". Such were the powers which Hesiod attributed to Zeus in the prooemium of the ERGA (Er. 3-4) to make a man great in reputation or not.

The allusions in these stanzas, both explicit and implicit, to Pan and Hermes, to the gods above and the gods below, to Ares and to Zeus and, finally, to the Moirai (Eum. 943-61) constitute a sense of divine unity such as we found in the priestess' prayer in the prologue. It is clear from these stanzas that the Erinyes now see themselves as part of the divine world and not, as formerly, "dwelling in the darkness of Tartarus, beneath the earth, objects of hatred for men and gods" (Eum. 72-3), or "standing apart from the gods in sunless dark" (Eum. 386), a "hateful tribe enjoying no intercourse with Zeus" (Eum. 365).

It is to the eye of Peitho, working through her mouth and tongue, that Athena attributes the present reconciliation in which Zeus has won the victory. The presentation of Peitho here is clearly set against her appearance in the second chorus of the AGAMEMNON where she is characterized as "the unbearable child of Ate who debates beforehand" (Ag. 385-86). In the world of the AGAMEMNON Peitho is an agent of retribution, later personified in Clytemnestra whose superior powers of intellect and rhetoric enable her to overcome every objection of Agamemnon's to entering the palace on the carpet. In the EUMENIDES Peitho is represented as an instrument of reasonable argument, personified in Athena. On this we may quote Goheen<sup>40</sup> who says:

"one of the major functions of EUMENIDES is to convert the forces and images of blood, blight and destruction into forces and images of physical and moral fecundity in the life of the city".

As a result of the force of Peitho, now become an instrument of reasonable argument, in future the Erinyes are to honour both earth and city in fulfillment of their reconciliation. From this unity they see "happiness of wealth" for the people. The Erinyes have been brought into the city, with full honours, by both gods and men alike, to keep off ruin and to send what is profitable for victory (Eum. 993-1009).

To conclude their reconciliation Athena sends the Erinyes forth accompanied by the very maidens who tend her own shrine. In a triumphal procession the goddesses are led away in new crimson cloaks<sup>41</sup> to be forever εὐπρόσθε<sup>42</sup> to the citizens. As the procession departs the maidens sing of "Zeus and Moira" going down together -- the final reconciliation, on the highest level, of the ancient division between the old gods and the new.

Long before this exit of Zeus and Moira upon the Attic stage Hesiod had envisaged a new disposition of

honours and privileges in Zeus' emerging order. This settlement Hesiod expressed in genealogical terms by giving the Moirai a second heritage as daughters of Zeus and Themis, goddesses to whom "Zeus has given most honour to give to mortal men both good and ill" (Th. 904-05). Although thinking on a higher, more speculative level, it is in this tradition that Aeschylus has framed his own resolution of the ancient conflict between the old divine world and the new era of Zeus.

#### C HUMAN MOTIVATION AND DIVINE JUSTICE

For much of the ORESTEIA we behold a world in conflict where right is set against right, justice against justice, where blood calls for blood and each crime begets a punishment which itself becomes a crime demanding punishment in return; where the spilling of kindred blood sends forth the Erinyes on their relentless pursuit of vengeance and atonement.

According to tradition the house of Atreus had long been caught in this fatal nexus of sin and punishment. Originating with Tantalus' sacrifice of his son to the gods the curse is renewed from generation to generation: from

Myrtilus it falls upon Pelops and is later called down upon Atreus by his brother, Thyestes, after he had feasted upon the terrible banquet of his own children's flesh. As the Atreidai are about to set forth, at the command of Zeus, to destroy Troy in punishment for Paris' abduction of Helen, Agamemnon continues the tradition of child-slaughter by sacrificing his daughter, Iphigeneia, in return for a fair passage. On his return home Agamemnon is himself slain by Clytemnestra to atone for the death of Iphigeneia. Later, Orestes, grown to manhood, is sent by Apollo to avenge his father's death by murdering his mother. Such, in the briefest outline, is the mythological background of the ORESTEIA.

Both Agamemnon and Clytemnestra believe themselves to be acting in accordance with justice and the will of the gods: Agamemnon knowing only that the expedition against Troy is sanctioned by Zeus and that he is Zeus' minister in that campaign (Ag. 810-12); Clytemnestra maintaining that she is acting as an avenging Erinys (Ag. 1500-04). Each has fulfilled an act of avenging justice which, in its commission, becomes a crime to be avenged. Each has a certain measure of justice on his, or her, side, yet each perishes for his, or her, deeds.

The conflicts seen upon the human plane are images of a greater division within the divine realm where the ancient rights of Moira stand before the emerging claims of Zeus. The curse and guilt which lie upon a family caught in such a cycle continue and grow from age to age, fueled and fired anew in each succeeding generation as attempts at atonement inevitably involve the family in ever greater sin and guilt.

In the world of Aeschylus man's destiny is seen to be both objectively and subjectively determined: the consequence of divine purpose and the natural result of human desire. It is this duality of causation, arising, in part, from personal desire, which Dodds has characterized as "overdetermination"<sup>43</sup>. In such a universe man's motivation is of paramount importance in determining his fate, for clearly there is no guarantee that simply in doing the will of the gods he may avoid committing an offence and incurring guilt.

The nature of human motivation and its relation to the divine purpose, its consequences for the individual and the extent of human responsibility are questions which lie at the very heart of Aeschylus' view of man and the divine-human relationship. Yet, despite the long history

of Aeschylean scholarship, critical opinion has reached no general consensus and remains polarized about two mutually exclusive views concerning the poet's characterization of Zeus and the nature of his justice. One school, for whom Lloyd-Jones is a forceful and articulate advocate, maintains the supremacy of Zeus, the helplessness of man before the forces of fate<sup>44</sup> and the primitive and retributive nature of divine justice<sup>45</sup>. In support of this position Page<sup>46</sup> writes that the primary wrongdoing lies in the past and the present sufferers are drawn in against their will to commit crimes for which they must be punished. Reeves<sup>47</sup> joins this party in suggesting that, in the world of Aeschylus, man is compelled to choose but to choose from among evils: man is free to the extent of bearing responsibility for his actions but, owing to the human condition and the nature of the universe free only to choose evil which must inevitably corrupt him. In the early sixties it was this view of Zeus, as a primitive, anthropomorphic and arbitrary god who practised violence himself and then demanded obedience from men and gods to principles of justice, which held the field<sup>48</sup>.

Reacting against such stern interpretations the critical climate moderated and now generally supports a degree of responsibility on the part of Aeschylean man. In refuting the earlier view Golden<sup>49</sup> asserts that Aeschylus



placed in man's hands the ultimate responsibility for deciding moral questions in human society while recognizing the existence of an ultimate divine cause of all events in the world. In his article, "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus"<sup>50</sup>, Lesky declares: "the question is what significance the poet ascribes to the personal decisions of the human agent within the framework of a basically god-governed *Welt-bild*, how the limitations on his freedom are defined and what degree of responsibility is thus entailed". Grube<sup>51</sup> points out, in this respect, that in the Greek view "divine and human causation are not mutually exclusive . . . Divine causation is not . . . a second cause or a secondary cause, it is an alternative way of describing the same event". Fraenkel<sup>52</sup>, commenting on the Hymn to Zeus (Ag. 160ff), writes, in part, ". . . Aeschylus . . . makes it clear that all the evil that is to befall Agamemnon has its first/origin in his own voluntary decision".

The positions of the two opposing camps are perhaps most clearly shown by two quotations, both of which deal with the question of Agamemnon's guilt. Page writes<sup>53</sup>:

. . . the whole course of Aeschylus' exposition shows the clear intention of absolving Agamemnon from responsibility (xxiv). It is the will of Zeus that Troy should fall: Agamemnon has done and will do nothing contrary to the will of Zeus (xxv). The primary wrong lies in the antecedents and the present sufferers are involved against their will (xxix).

On the other side Fraenkel<sup>54</sup> states:

Throughout the tragedy the indications regarding Agamemnon's guilt are consistent. His main crime is the sacrifice of Iphigeneia. Moreover, he has done an evil thing by sending so many men to their death for the sake of one woman.

Inevitably, attempts to assess the extent or even the existence of man's guilt and responsibility become confused with, and complicated by, considerations of human choice and freedom. Both Page and Lloyd-Jones, while insisting Agamemnon is guilty and responsible, still deny him any freedom of action whatsoever. On this point Lloyd-Jones<sup>55</sup> writes: "We must agree with Page that Agamemnon has no choice but to sacrifice his daughter; the expedition had to sail. Yet, E.R. Dodds is equally right in insisting that his action was, and is, meant to be regarded as a crime". N.G.L. Hammond<sup>56</sup>, however, argues against this position: "Those who say that Agamemnon has no choice between . . . two courses can only mean that the choice is difficult, for Agamemnon mentions two courses of action and chooses one course deliberately".

In a universe where human destiny is seen to be doubly determined the important question must be not whether man, at any given time or in any given situation, is free to act or not, but the nature of the spirit in which he acts:

for it is the spirit in which he acts that reflects the extent to which he has made the deed his own.

With this in mind consider again the account of Agamemnon at Aulis and the ground on which he may be declared guilty in the sacrifice of Iphigeneia. The chorus of the AGAMEMNON reported that the Atreidai prepared their expedition "raising a loud cry of war from their θυμός" (Ag. 48), and that, in the face of the awful choice at Aulis:

ἡγεμῶν, ὁ πρό-  
σβυς νεῶν Ἀχαιῶν,  
μάντιν οὐτινα ψέγων,  
ἐμπαλοῖς τύχαισι συμπύων.

(Ag. 185-87)

Finally, Agamemnon determined:

παρθενίου θ' αἵματος ὀρ-  
γᾶν περὶ ὀργῇ σφ' ἐπιθυ-  
μεῖν θέμις.

(Ag. 215-17)

It is in the realm of the θυμός, in the area of individual motivation and particular interest, in the involvement of personal desire that we must seek the basis for human guilt and responsibility. In this regard, the words συμπύων, ὀργᾶ, ἐπιθυμεῖν and θυμοῦ, being set particularly against σωφρονεῖν (Ag. 181) are especially significant. From the moment in which his θυμός becomes involved, from that time does man stand in danger of offending the gods with a δυσσεβὲς ἔργον<sup>57</sup> and thereby incurring personal guilt. From that time he ceases to be an instrument of the divine will

alone: no longer can he disclaim responsibility as a mere agent of the god -- an agent he may be but with his own personal interest in the matter. It is this personal interest, colouring his motivation, moving him ἐν θυμῷ, which involves man in wrongdoing and brings upon him personal sin, ruin and destruction.

This is the subjective aspect of the two-fold fulfillment of an individual's doom -- the burden of personal guilt which each man bears whose motives are tinged with personal interest, whose actions proceed from his own desire. By taking upon himself a personal and passionate interest in the war Agamemnon exceeded his role of a simple avenging agent. He is guilty of the crime of sacrificing Iphigeneia, and, as it will appear, of the subsequent atrocities of the war. Because he chose to sacrifice her not as an instrument of Zeus<sup>58</sup> but as the king, leader of a great force, in his own interest, he now bears the responsibility for this sacrifice and for this he will be punished. The characterization of Agamemnon at Aulis has evoked lively interest among critics on both sides of the debate about the nature of Zeus and his justice. Lesky<sup>59</sup> finds Agamemnon responsible for the crime of sacrificing Iphigeneia, declaring that the king "comes to feel a passionate desire for the sacrifice" -- what Agamemnon is forced to do he wants to do, and Dover<sup>60</sup>

suggests that Agamemnon desires the end to which the sacrifice is a means. Lloyd-Jones<sup>61</sup>, on the other hand, maintains that Agamemnon had no free will at Aulis and that even if he had he could not have exercised his judgment because ἄρη had deluded him (Ag. 221-22).

This brings us to the objective element of man's doom, for in the world of Aeschylus each individual is a victim both of the personal guilt he incurs in his own life and of the legacy of guilt he inherits for the sins of his forefathers<sup>62</sup>, or of the necessity to avenge the wrongs done to his ancestors. Those forces and factors which arise outside the individual and over which he has no direct control -- the so-called will of the gods, τελεῖται δ' ἐξ τοῦ πεπρωμένου (Ag. 68) -- are a very real power in the psychology of Aeschylean man. We hear of this aspect of Agamemnon's guilt first from Calchas in his interpretation of the omen at Aulis: "there abides fearful treachery which rises up again, directing the house, ever-mindful, child-avenging wrath" (Ag. 154-55). The sense of fear and foreboding which these lines evoke pervades the drama from the opening prologue when the watchman's air of expectancy quickly turns to anxiety as he contemplates the return of the king and the situation in the palace at Argos (Ag. 18-38). Clytemnestra gives voice to similar misgivings that the returning army might incur misfortune from the πῆμα of the slaughtered.

The common fear clearly is that for past wrongdoing in the house of Atreus the army and the king stand in jeopardy of future wrongdoing. This aspect of objective causation, the notion of inherited guilt<sup>63</sup>, is expanded to include the force of communal guilt as the Chorus, considering Troy and the origins of the war, sing of "wretched Peitho, the unbearable child of Ate who plans before hand" (Ag. 386-87).

Troy has been guilty of hybris, of sins against the gods, and Paris, a son of this society, has committed further acts of sin, renewing the guilt in his own generation and, finally, bringing down the wrath of the gods upon himself, Troy and all the people of Priam. Paris bears a two-fold burden of guilt: of inherited, communal guilt and of personal sin. Troy also shares a double burden: the guilt of the community for past excesses and hybris and a present guilt for its acquiescence in Paris' crime.

In the specific relation of these various factors in the chain of events which leads to destruction we see both the subjective and the objective aspects of ἀτη. For there is in πλοῦτος<sup>64</sup> a potential for νόρος which fosters intellectual blindness and infatuation (the subjective aspect of ἀτη) which, in turn, leads men on to further acts of hybris and eventually culminates in punishment by the gods and ruin (the objective aspect of ἀτη).

The Chorus have been singing particularly of Troy and Paris but it is clear they have Agamemnon and the Greek army very much in mind when they tell of the "man who prospers without justice" (Ag. 464). The force of Agamemnon's legacy of inherited guilt, as yet but vaguely articulated in the φοβερὰ πάλιν ποτος . . . μνάμων Μῆνις and τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλωλότων, is felt in the fear that it will somehow foster new sin. For the legacy of inherited guilt is a certain disposition to wrongdoing, which arises from an individual's intellectual blindness and is the source of man's limited vision and poor judgment (Ag. 222-23). At Aulis Agamemnon can see the sacrifice of Iphigeneia only in terms of his heroic honour and the expedition against Troy; the dilemma before him is, therefore, all too quickly resolved. He neither appreciates the future implications of his actions nor suspects the danger in which he stands.

Through its own dual nature, then, "Atē becomes the bridge between the objective and subjective aspects of man's doom -- being, in its objective sense, as ruin, the manifestation of ancestral guilt, and, in its subjective nature, as blindness, the catalyst of, and basis for, personal sin. Taking its origin in the inherited and communal guilt it gives rise, in the individual, to a measure of intellectual blindness which in turn provides a fertile

ground for the θεός συλλήπτωρ. It is this phenomenon of which Darius speaks to Atossa in the PERSAE when he says ἀλλ' ὅταν σπεύδῃ τις αὐτός, χῶ θεός συνάπτεται (Pers. 742).

Yet, we must not mistake this disposition to wrongdoing for inevitability. It is simply a disposition, a weakness, which is there in each individual who has inherited guilt for the sin of his ancestors. Ancestral guilt manifests itself in the tendency to wrongdoing which renews and regenerates the burden of guilt, but never is this process inevitable. Man's sin and guilt are not beyond his own control<sup>65</sup>, depending entirely upon the nature of his motivation. The choices are set, as tests<sup>66</sup>, some say, but the initiatives are man's. Notwithstanding the ἀτη within, the element of divine complicity, and the impossible choices, man may choose.

So it is that at Aulis Agamemnon does choose and the fears which that choice prompted seem justified when the herald reports of the destruction which has leveled Troy (Ag. 534-38). Yet, there is no hint in these lines that Agamemnon has transgressed the mandate of his authority. In the vision of the κῆρυξ, in the vision of the AGAMEMNON, one justice, incomplete though it be, has been done (Ag. 532-37). Agamemnon has inflicted punishment upon Troy --



but in an excessive spirit of revenge: the altars and temples of the gods have been desecrated, the city razed to the ground and the people annihilated, young and old and unborn alike, even as the portent at Aulis warned. The herald's language with its violence and ominous overtones, falls heavily in the silence reminding us of Clytemnestra's earlier foreboding (Ag. 341-42).

Agamemnon is hailed home the ~~πρόλιπορος~~ (Ag. 783) of Troy, an εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ (Ag. 530), victorious but trailing clouds of guilt. He is, we now know, the victim of personal sin incurred in sacrificing Iphigeneia and in the excessive and wanton destruction of Troy<sup>67</sup> and its people, and the victim, also, of the φοβερά παλίνορος Μῆνις, the ancestral curse<sup>68</sup>.

From the moment of his entrance, both in word and deed, Agamemnon gives proof of the sin he bears. The violence of his language (Ag. 814), the fierceness of his images (Ag. 827-28), the arrogant air of confidence (Ag. 832-33) and the presence of his γέρας, Trojan Cassandra, all are vivid and dramatic confirmation that Agamemnon has committed deeds of sin and violence for which he will be punished.

Yet, the king is himself completely unaware of the precarious nature of his position. Perceiving no dilemma, no contradiction in his actions he stresses only the rightness of one cause, the destruction of Troy and his mission of retribution (Ag. 810-13).<sup>68</sup> Unconscious of the hidden threat in Clytemnestra's words of welcome, of her hatred, the triumphant Sacker of Troy receives his queen's homage (Ag. 905-11). Blinded by his desire for heroic honour Agamemnon was easily persuaded at Aulis to sacrifice his daughter; now, acknowledging in only the most cursory and rhetorical manner the common piety (Ag. 927-28) he falls an easy victim to Clytemnestra's urging that she be allowed to honour him as he deserves. Appealing to his intemperate and autocratic nature<sup>69</sup> (Ag. 937-39) she bids him enter the palace upon the oriental splendor of purple tapestries. Agamemnon's treading of the carpet is both symbolic of the general hybristic tenor of his nature and the final concrete act of hybris for which he will soon die.

Blind to the end, Agamemnon perceives neither the wider issues in which he has played a part nor the full implications of his own actions. Recognizing no conflict of opposing rights he is revealed to be a sinner, a hybristes<sup>70</sup> who brings down his doom upon himself. He dies a guilty, though unconscious, victim, on the one hand of

ancestral guilt, of the curse which demands payment from him for his father's crime, and, on the other hand, of his own wrongdoing, of sacrificing Iphigeneia and wreaking excessive vengeance on the Trojan people, of exulting over his victory and committing the final offence against the gods by treading upon purple carpets. The realm of the objective and subjective have worked together to one end: the primeval call of blood for blood and Clytemnestra's own desire to avenge Iphigeneia and her hatred of Agamemnon have all brought Agamemnon to his death.

This examination of Agamemnon's career has attempted to define the nature of the dual causation of which he has been a victim and to distinguish the relation of the separate elements to each other and to the individual, both in the particular case of Agamemnon himself and in the more general situation. Although the fullest expression of the relationship and influence of these factors is seen in the doom of Agamemnon, these forces are to a greater or lesser degree apparent in each of the other characters, and each may be seen as a study in a particular aspect of the larger pattern.

More than any other character of the ORESTEIA Aigisthos shows in his fate the closest connection with the curse of the house of Atreus, and from him we hear the most

explicit statement of that history (Ag. 1583-1602). Yet, Aigisthos' account of the feast of Thyestes (Ag. 1593) is nevertheless one-sided and simplistic reflecting the primitive and limited justice which directs and controls the world of the AGAMEMNON. Heedless of the guilt of Thyestes in committing adultery with Atreus' wife, Aigisthos perceives only the injury done his own family and the necessity to avenge the slaughter of his brothers. For him the line between the hideous feast and "Agamemnon lying in the robes of the Erinyes" (Ag. 1580-81) "is direct and inevitable, ἐκ τῶνδ' ἐσσι πεσόντα τόνδ' ἴδεῖν πάρα (Ag. 1603), and his own part in the action, as the sole surviving son of Thyestes, is clear and just (Ag. 1604).

Despite his confident assertion of the justice of the deed the Chorus see Aigisthos not as a δίκαιος ῥαφεύς (Ag. 1604) but as a man ὑβρίζοντ' ἐν κακοῖς (Ag. 1612), a hybristes exulting in his triumph, full of pride and boastfulness, a coward who, having made a cuckold of the king (Ag. 1626) had not the courage to commit the crime he planned (Ag. 1634-35). Though claiming to be the instrument of justice (Ag. 1607) Aigisthos has clearly been moved by his own desires, by passion and lust for power and revenge no less than for the queen. It is for these offences that the Chorus declare him doomed (Ag. 1615-16).

The fate of Aigisthos reveals in a clear and direct way not only the full force of ancestral guilt but its relationship to personal guilt and the destruction of an individual. In a world where blood spilt upon the ground calls for new blood Aigisthos is bound to seek atonement for the murder of his brothers. In this respect Aigisthos is as much a victim of Thyestes' curse as is Agamemnon for such a curse cuts with a double edge sending forth the νόμος συγγόνων Ἐρινύων against both the one who seeks vengeance and the one who must pay. In addition to the curse Aigisthos has also inherited the disposition to wrongdoing attendant upon his own father's guilt.

Yet, as we have seen in the case of Agamemnon, neither the curse nor the inherited disposition to wrongdoing are sufficient to cause an individual to commit a crime and thus establish his guilt and responsibility for his own doom. In the final analysis Aigisthos has been moved not simply by the will of the Erinyes but by the spirit of vengeance in which he has taken it upon himself to render justice. His death is attributable, on the one hand, to the primitive and retributive justice of the Erinyes and, on the other, to his own personal sin. His hands are stained with blood and his heart with lust and ambitious pride.

Cassandra's primary dramatic role is now well understood and accepted by critics. With her gift of prophecy she is clearly the one to reveal the theological implications of all that has so far been said and done; she is the one through whom the house can finally tell its tale τῶν πάλαι πεπραγμένων (Ag. 1185), the one through whom the future and the awful consequences which lie before them all can be disclosed.

Ridden by the god she "sees" past and future (Ag. 1096-1101) as one, perceiving in all the justice of the Erinyes: that the spilling of kindred blood and its call for new blood is an unending cycle which runs through the family from the past into the future drawing all along in its train of destruction. Her frenzied, often cryptic, utterances emphasize the fundamental unity of the πρόταρχος ἄτη (Ag. 1192) which underlies and informs all that has happened and all that will happen.

What is less clear concerning Cassandra's role is whether her fate conforms to Page's dictum that in Aeschylus there is "no punishment without sin"<sup>71</sup>, or whether, in fact, as some would have it, she is a guiltless sufferer. Leahy<sup>72</sup> makes a strong case for the former view, pointing out that Cassandra's fate shows the same duality of causation, of

personal sin and inherited guilt, as other characters in the ORESTEIA. While Cassandra is a victim, on the one hand, of the inherited and communal guilt of Troy which has brought her to Argos as the prisoner and concubine of Agamemnon Leahy believes she has, also, incurred a burden of personal sin and guilt in denying the love of Apollo and the children which that union would have created.

We may never know the full intent of Aeschylus' characterization of Cassandra, but, to the last point, it should be borne in mind that although Cassandra has clearly offended Apollo in refusing his love she has equally clearly already been punished in having her gift of prophecy frustrated<sup>73</sup>. Not actively involved in the cycle of sin and punishment which directs and moves the house of Atreus Cassandra has nonetheless been caught up and swept along in the tide of destruction.

There can be no doubt that in the fate of Cassandra we see how inextricably complex the nexus of human will and divine purpose can be in determining the destiny of Aeschylean man. It was the will of Zeus that Troy be punished because of Paris' wrongdoing, but it was Agamemnon's overweening desire for honour and glory which turned punishment into excessive revenge, utterly destroying the city of

Priam and bringing Cassandra to the palace of Argos and the murderous intent of the queen.

It is through the sacrifice of Iphigeneia that Clytemnestra is drawn into the bloody history of the house of Atreus. Consumed by hatred and desire for revenge the queen becomes a willing, though at first unconscious, instrument of the elemental justice of the Erinyes. Her apparently eager anticipation of the king's safe return (Ag. 600-04) and her directions for his reception (Ag. 910-11) only thinly veil the true welcome she has planned, and portend more ominously the outraged feelings of a mother and her natural desire to avenge the murder of her daughter. In the world of the AGAMEMNON Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon is, in one respect, an act of justice, limited and incomplete though that justice is, an atonement for the death of Iphigeneia and a propitiation of the anger of the Erinyes to whom the spilling of kindred blood is abhorrent. Yet, in another respect, the crimes of violence and the acts of hybris she commits in killing the king bring upon her a burden of personal sin and guilt for which she must bear personal responsibility.

Despite the motivation of the Erinyes Clytemnestra is, from the beginning, completely preoccupied with her own



outraged feelings, her own personal injury and desire for revenge. She, at first, accepts full responsibility for the murder and only later comes to recognize, to a limited degree, the role which the divine purpose has played. Claiming the deed her own (Ag. 1377-80) she exults in her victory, describing how she caught the king in a cloak, how she struck him one, two, three blows, how he spattered her with his blood as he died (Ag. 1390-92). Her triumph knows no bounds, it seems (Ag. 1403-06), and only when the Chorus recoil in horror before her rage and the foully murdered bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra does she begin to seek external justification for her deed. Now, she recalls her hatred for a husband who "sacrificed his own child, my dearest travail" (Ag. 1417-18), her jealousy because "he brought to me a delicacy in addition to the delights of my bed" (Ag. 1446-47), and, finally, the insatiate drive of the Erinyes (Ag. 1432-33).

As the Chorus sing of Helen and the "Ἐπίς (Ag. 1461) "which was in the house at that time" and the δαίμων "who falls upon the house and the two families sprung from Tantalus" (Ag. 1469) Clytemnestra beholds the unending nature of this cycle of sin and punishment: of the ἀεὶ ὄντα-τον ἄλγος (Ag. 1467) and the "thirst for blood nourished in the belly" (Ag. 1478-79). "There will be new blood

before the ancient grief abates" (Ag. 1479-80), she declares at length and, with only limited understanding of the divine purpose, she argues: "you consider that I am Agamemnon's wife; but the ancient, bitter avenger of the grievous banqueter, Atreus, taking the appearance of the wife of this corpse, has taken vengeance on this man, sacrificing a grown man for young ones" (Ag. 1499-1504).

Nonetheless, the Chorus maintain that she herself must bear the responsibility for the murder, for the spirit is only a συλλήπτωρ (Ag. 1507). Later, Orestes, too, places the responsibility for her death squarely upon her own shoulders (Choe. 923). In murdering the king she has clearly been moved by motives beyond the bloody history of the house. Recalling her adulterous union with Aigisthos Orestes charges "you considered him, while he lived, more than my father; in death sleep beside him since you love this man but he whom you should have loved you hate" (Choe. 905-07).

In the development of moral awareness which the ORESTEIA marks Clytemnestra stands one step nearer conscious responsibility than does either Aigisthos or Agamemnon. Clytemnestra knows that although she may claim to be the embodiment of the daimon still she can not deny her own responsibility<sup>74</sup>. Yet, her vision falls short of full

enlightenment, for though she perceives both her own part and that which Agamemnon has played (Ag. 1523-24) she does not understand that the cycle of sin and punishment cannot and will not end with her murder of Agamemnon. (Ag. 1568-73), that her life must and will be demanded in payment for her crime.

Behind the overwhelming evidence of Clytemnestra's personal sin and guilt -- her hybristic behavior in committing the crime of violence, her exultation and her vengeful murder of Cassandra -- it is possible to distinguish the two motivating forces: the impulse of the Erinyes to punish the spilling of kindred blood and her own desire, fed on hatred and jealousy.

Orestes is the only avenger in the house of Atreus who is not destroyed by the punishment he inflicts; he, on the whole, has clean<sup>75</sup> motives and full vision being moved always by the will of Loxias, Lord Apollo.

Aeschylus' characterization of Electra and Orestes is a significant departure from the traditional, Homeric presentation of these figures where Orestes' act of vengeance is seen only as a glorious deed conferring honour on him and his house. In Aeschylus it is both more signifi-

cant and more problematical. The reunion of brother and sister in the CHOEPHOROI, symbolizing the restitution of the family and the hope of restoring a just order to the house, marks the beginning of the end of a world dominated by the revenge-oriented justice of the Erinyes. Electra's suppliant women, however, are still very much a part of the old world in which "bloody drops falling upon the ground call forth other blood" (Choe. 400-04) and they can only wish that they might some time see their "masters dead in the pine's pitchy flame" (Choe. 267-68). Electra, on the other hand, asks that she may be "more moderate than her mother and more pious of hand" (Choe. 140-41), and Orestes prays not for retribution but for a restoration of the house (Choe. 262-63).

On his return to Argos Orestes finds himself, as did Agamemnon at Aulis, in a fearful position: to follow the command of Loxias and kill his mother or to yield to her appeals and spare her life. In either case he will become a victim of the Erinyes. If he does not avenge his father's murder Loxias has declared he will pay "with his own life" suffering the attacks of the Erinyes who "fulfill their purpose from the blood of fathers" (Choe. 275ff), and Clytemnestra warns him that in murdering her he must "guard against the wrathful dogs of a mother" (Choe. 924). <

Agamemnon faced a similarly impossible choice. However, with his limited vision and his  $\delta\tau\eta$ -deluded judgment, moved always by his own interests, Agamemnon's deeds of avenging justice became crimes of violence despite the divine sanction of his expedition.

Clytemnestra incurred sin and guilt in murdering Agamemnon when her attempt to render just punishment became an act of personal vengeance arising from her passionate hatred and jealousy, from her ambition and lust.

Orestes' vengeance, on the other hand, is just because he acts "not under the impulse of human blindness"<sup>76</sup> but with a full and unclouded perception of his own various motives and the conflicting claims of justice which confront him (Choe. 461). Although he surrenders his own will to that of the oracle and is resolved to act only as its instrument (Choe. 297-98) Orestes is aware of the other forces, natural feelings and emotions, which press upon him to subvert his will: a son's desire for his rightful inheritance (Choe. 301), a child's just abhorrence of his mother's adultery (Choe. 905-07) and his own abandonment (Choe. 913).

Notwithstanding these heavy provocations Orestes stands firm refusing to make the deed of retribution his

own act of vengeance. He clings steadfastly to the role he first assumed, advising his mother "you will pay back for the dishonour of my father on account of the daimons and my own hands" (Choe. 435-37), and falters only once when Clytemnestra bids him "fear the breast" at which he often slept and took his milk (Choe. 896-98). His piteous cry: "Πυλάδην, τί δρῶω; μητέρ' αἰδεσθῶ κτανεῖν;" (Choe. 899) reveals a sense of conscious reflection and vision altogether lacking in the other avengers. Agamemnon never cries τί δρῶω and goes to his death with no understanding of what has happened or why; Clytemnestra never recognizes any choice and achieves only a partial, incomplete vision. Orestes, however, understands fully what he is to do, ἀνταποκτεῖναι λέγων (Choe. 274), and the consequences both of action and of inaction. Despite his natural regret and hesitation, his loathing before the awful crime of matricide, he is able to counter all Clytemnestra's pleas and appeals with the same steadfast purpose as when he determined for himself that, having slain his mother, he would then also die. (Choe. 438).

Notwithstanding the sanction of the oracle Orestes takes no satisfaction in the deed. He knows himself polluted by the murder, an outcast now, neither alive nor dead (Choe. 1016-43). Yet, even as the madness comes

upon him and he sets his eyes toward "the land of Ioxias, the earth's mid-navel seat" he betrays no feelings of resentment or anger, trusting only in the pledge of Apollo who said that having done the deed he would be free of evil blame (Choe. 1030-32).

Later, at Athens, before Athena and the high court, Orestes' defense is marked by the same integrity and unity of purpose. The simplicity with which he rests his case (Eum. 462-69) stands in stark contrast to Clytemnestra's wild-eyed cries of exultation (Ag. 1380ff) as she recounted her bloody deed. Although Clytemnestra (Ag. 1368, 1406, 1432), as well as Aigisthos (Ag. 1577, 1604, 1607, 1611), repeatedly stress the justice of their deeds Orestes is content, except for one plea to Helios and one assertion that he acted οὐκ ἄνευ δίκης (Choe. 1027), to leave his fate to the power which has directed him. Though he inherited the family burden of guilt his act of vengeance has not become a crime of violence for which he must bear the ultimate responsibility.

Speaking of the difference between Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon and Orestes' murder of his mother Solmsen writes<sup>77</sup>:

The Choruses of AGAMEMNON put us in a frame of mind in which we are prepared to experience a reversal of the king's fortunes but they never suggest that Clytemnestra may have a right to kill him. The chorus of the LIBATION BEARERS, on the other hand, lends its full moral support to the plan of Orestes, sharing and strengthening his own readiness for its execution. We have thus, long before the trial scene, come to see Orestes' action in a very different light from Clytemnestra's . . .

The question remains how to understand the double motivation of human action and man's relation to the gods in the ORESTEIA. For Aeschylean man there existed two explanations of one action: events were seen to be both the result of divine purpose and the natural consequence of human actions<sup>78</sup>. Man's fate is determined on the human level by the burden of his own personal sin and guilt and, in the divine sphere, by the ordinances of the gods, by the legacy of his inherited sin, whose disposition to wrongdoing exerts a powerful influence upon the individual in critical situations. Despite this dual-nature of man's motivation, however, it is the spirit in which he makes his decisions and subsequently acts which determines his end.

#### FROM ERINYES TO EUMENIDES

In Hesiod's account of the origin of the universe the Erinyes are presented as mighty daughters of Gaia, born



of the bloody drops which fell from the castration of Uranos by Kronos (Th. 175ff). Through these dread goddesses there arose, thereafter, vengeance and atonement for the spilling of kindred blood (Th. 472). It is in this tradition of the old divine world, presented by Hesiod<sup>79</sup>, that Aeschylus has, in part, cast his own characterization of the Erinyes. For the poet of the ORESTEIA the Erinyes are terrifying, hate-avenging (Ag. 59) goddesses, born of Night (Eum. 321, 416) and robed in black (Ag. 463). Apollo derides them (Eum. 70ff) as ancient and abominable maidens, dwelling in the darkness beneath Tartarus, hated alike by men and gods, those with whom neither gods nor men nor beasts associate. They themselves recognize and accept their unenviable lot, that they remain separate from the gods, "standing apart . . . in sunless gloom" (Eum. 380-86), for Zeus, they say, has deemed them unworthy of his company (Eum. 365).

Theirs is an ancient honour (Eum. 394) spun out for them long ago by Moira (Eum. 335) at their birth (Eum. 349): mindful of wrongs they bring forth ἀτῆ upon ἀτῆ (Choe. 400ff) from kindred murders until, in time (Ag. 463), they exact punishment for blood spilt upon the ground. Implacable in their wrath they tolerate no interference in their sovereign powers (Eum. 362), maintaining an absolute

and unalterable standard of right and wrong:

εὐθυδίκαιοι δ' οἰόμεθ' εἶναι  
 τὸν μὲν καθαρὰς χεῖρας προνέμοντ'  
 οὐτις ἐφέρει μῆνιν ἀφ' ἡμῶν,  
 ἀσινὴς δ' αἰῶνα διοιχνέτ'  
 ὅστις δ' ἀλιτῶν ὥσπερ ὅδ' ἀνὴρ  
 χεῖρας φονίας ἐπικρύπτει,  
 μάρτυρες ὄρεαί τοῖσι θανοῦσιν  
 παραγιγνόμεναι πράκτορες αἵματος  
 αὐτῷ τελέως ἐφάνημεν.

(Eum. 312-20)

We believe we are righteous judges: as far as the man who shows forth clean hands is concerned, no wrath from us comes upon him, but he lives his life without harm; but when a man offends, as this man does (i.e. Orestes), and conceals murderous hands, we are righteous witnesses for the dead, being avengers of blood, and we bring him to light in the end.

It is this κῶμος συγγόνων Ἐρινύων (Ag. 1190) which has driven the house of Atreus from generation to generation in an endless cycle of crime and punishment. Intent only upon vengeance and atonement they pursue the one who murders until they drive him beneath the earth (Eum. 339) to perish without honour, alone and friendless (Choe. 295). Neither Apollo nor even Athena, they declare, has the strength to rescue Orestes from their power (Eum. 299ff).

Despite the obvious opposition between the Erinyes and the Olympians Solmsen<sup>80</sup> points out that for a time, in the early stages of the trilogy, the justice of the Erinyes in fact coincides with the justice of Zeus, that it is only

in the fate of Orestes that the two purposes diverge so that the "antagonism between Zeus and the Erinyes becomes acute". The question at this point, however, is really not so much why the justice of the Erinyes and the justice of Zeus come into conflict over Orestes, but, rather, whether one can truly speak of a justice of Zeus in the early stages of the ORESTEIA. In the AGAMEMNON the old men of the Chorus reveal certain fundamental principles, that the gods are not unmindful of those who trample upon holy things (Ag. 368ff), that they punish those who murder (Ag. 461ff), that the  $\chi\rho\alpha\tau\epsilon\varsigma$   $\delta\alpha\iota\mu\acute{o}\nu\omega\upsilon$  is  $\beta\acute{\iota}\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  (Ag. 182). To the extent that these principles are not incompatible with the laws which govern this universe, that blood spilt upon the ground calls for new blood, one may, perhaps, speak of the justice of Zeus being compatible with the justice of the Erinyes. But the distinction is far from clear since the Chorus of the AGAMEMNON see the Erinyes as agents of that notion of justice which they associate with Zeus (Ag. 463).

What is of greater importance in the conflict between the old world of the Erinyes and the new order of the Olympians is the poet's characterization of the old gods and the justice they represent. Through his picture of the limited and incomplete nature of the justice of the Erinyes, as well as that of Apollo<sup>81</sup>, of the endless cycle

of crime and punishment which results from the lex talionis. Aeschylus shows the contradictions inherent in the old world, and the need to remove punishment of murder from the sphere of the family, with its particular interests, to that of the state, with its universal concerns. Yet, despite the obvious limitations of the justice of the Erinyes Aeschylus is careful to emphasize that they do have a measure of justice on their side, that as powerful and ancient goddesses their rights must not be totally abrogated. Solmsen<sup>82</sup> reminds us that "to Hesiod Aeschylus owes what we may call the historical or genealogical structure of the divine world" and that it was from the older poet that he also learned that in the new government of the Olympians room must be found for some of the older powers.

It is the nature of the ultimate reconciliation between the Erinyes and the Olympians and the basis upon which that harmony is founded that lie at the center of the third play, if not of the trilogy as a whole. Rather than stressing the coincidence between the justice of Zeus and the justice of the Erinyes Aeschylus, at first, uses all his poetic powers to emphasize the opposition and division between them. Yet, before the action is done, the Erinyes accept Athena's offer of a home and honour beside her in the city (Eum. 833), and as the procession departs we hear

the Propompoi sing that Ζεὺς πάντωντας οὕτω Μοῖρα τε σὺν-  
κατέβα (Eum. 1045-46). In view of the poet's apparently  
uncompromising portrait of the Erinyes, and remembering  
their own vigorous self-defense, how are we to account for  
this reconciliation, for what Lloyd-Jones<sup>83</sup> has called  
"this startling change in the aspect of the Erinyes. . .?"

From ancient times the poets had addressed the  
problems inherent in the succession of divine generations,  
in the conflict, and ultimate reconciliation, between the  
old gods and the young gods which formed the background of  
Greek theological thought. Hesiod, as we have seen, re-  
cognized that Zeus' triumph over the Titans could not of  
itself ensure lasting peace among the gods, that to endure  
this new government must take account of the powerful and  
mighty figures of the old divine world. Aeschylus knew, as  
well, the necessity for bringing the Erinyes into the new  
order of Olympian Zeus, for establishing a firm basis upon  
which the old divine world's code of retribution could be  
harmonized with the principles of justice supported by Zeus.  
According to Hesiod Zeus' government had not rejected all  
that belonged to the old world but had incorporated and  
assimilated the best of that world as part of the new era.  
When Aeschylus came, "at the stage of his maturest specu-  
lation . . . to unriddle the ultimate cause of the fate

and suffering of man"<sup>84</sup> he sought to establish the reconciliation between the old and new gods on more "fundamental and permanent qualities"<sup>85</sup>. These he found in the outlook and the nature of the Erinyes themselves.

Tradition and Aeschylus' own characterization held that the Erinyes were dread goddesses of implacable wrath who exacted what was due according to a strict and absolute code of retribution. However, a careful reading of the second stasimon of the EUMENIDES may show the Erinyes in another light. In this chorus the goddesses warn the court and people of Athens of the consequences of allowing Orestes to go free. In this passage the Erinyes describe themselves as "mortal-watching maidens" and it is clear that they see themselves and their sanctions as a bulwark about the foundation of justice. There is no doubt that they believe that in acquitting Orestes the court will undermine the whole structure of justice; no longer will there exist any check to human folly and recklessness when their sanctions have been rendered powerless.

After these particular warnings the goddesses continue with more general statements which reveal their own conception of the nature of justice and the divine-human relationship. It is the fear of punishment which

guarantees the just and righteous behavior of men; neither a life of anarchy nor of oppression is pleasing to the gods, they say. Hybris is truly the child of impiety, but from soundness of mind comes prosperity. Finally, they bid man respect the altar of Justice and not kick it aside with godless foot with an eye to gain for there will be retribution; respect, also, parents and the stranger in the house.

The song concludes with a double image, reminiscent of Hesiod's vision of the just and unjust man (Er. 325ff). He who is just willingly and without necessity will not be unprosperous and will never be utterly destroyed, but he who is overbold and spends his time in violent transgressions will come to absolute ruin.

While the influence of both Hesiod<sup>86</sup> and Solon<sup>87</sup> can be clearly seen in the diction as well as the imagery of these verses the importance of this chorus for the purpose of this discussion lies on a deeper level. It is clear that despite their profound differences, Aeschylus recognized that a broad base of common interest did, in fact, exist between the Erinyes and the Olympians. As Spotóνομοι (Eum. 499) the goddesses are clearly concerned with the deeds of men. From the old men of the AGAMEMNON we know that the gods are "not unmindful of those who murder"

(Ag. 460ff), that "the man who declares that the gods care not for those who trample upon holy things is not pious" (Ag. 369ff). Hesiod has also reminded us that the gods are concerned with the deeds of men and that it is to this end that the men of the Golden Age are sent as ἐπιχθόνιοι, to watch over the δίκαι καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα of men. Zeus has other agents, the poet insists, the 30,000 spirits, immortal guardians of mortal men, and there is Δίκη, the daughter of Zeus, who runs crying to her father whenever she is harmed; and, finally, there is the eye of Zeus himself which sees all and notices all. In the ODYSSEY the swineherd makes the same point when he declares that the gods love not the σχέτλια ἔργα of men but honour justice and the righteous deeds of men (Od. 14.83-4). There can be no doubt that in their role as "mortal-watchers" the interests of the Erinyes are compatible with those of Zeus and the Olympians who have traditionally been concerned with the deeds of men.

The parallels between the concerns of the goddesses and those of Athena and of Zeus become even more marked as the song progresses. The Erinyes support τὸ δεινόν, seeing it as an important element<sup>88</sup> in maintaining the balance between the ἀναρκτος βίος and that which is δεσποτούμενος (Eum. 527). It is only through fear, they assert, that a man or a city honours Δίκη. Later, in her address to the



people of Athens, Athena herself stresses this same aspect of justice:

τὸ μὴτ' ἀναρχὸν μῆτε δεσποτοῦμενον  
 ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλευῶ σέβειν  
 καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν  
 τίς γὰρ δεδοικῶς μηδὲν ἐνδίκος βροτῶν;

(Eum. 696-99)

I bid the citizens to honour and maintain that which is not unbridled nor ruled despotically, and not to cast out of the city all fear. For who among mortals would be just fearing nothing?

A further point of comparison is the notion of hybris. In the AGAMEMNON the old men of the Chorus declare that it is not the jealousy of the gods which brings suffering upon men but the *δυσσεβὲς ἔργον* (Ag. 758): "old hybris is wont to beget new hybris in the wrongdoings of men . . .", they sing. In the final play of the trilogy the Erinyes are heard to utter the same fundamental principle: "how truly is hybris the child of impiety" (Eum. 532).

The image of the altar of Justice provides an important and significant link between the characterization of Zeus' justice, as presented by Aeschylus as well as the other poets, and the interest of the Erinyes revealed in the third play of the trilogy. In the second chorus the goddesses appeal to the people "not to kick aside the altar of Justice with godless foot having an eye to gain" (Eum.

539ff). These lines are suggestive of the chorus of the AGAMEMNON which warns that "there is no defense for the man who kicks the altar of Justice into obscurity" (Ag. 381). the image occurs, as well, in Solon when he speaks of the σεμνὰ Δίκης θέμεθλα (Fr. 4.14).

Finally, the Erinyes' concern for the rights of guests in addition to those of parents (Eum. 269, 545) is clearly in accord with Zeus' own role as Xenios and Hiketios. In the ERGA Hesiod warned his brother of the consequences of mistreating suppliants and guests, orphans and aged parents: "with that man", the poet declares, "Zeus himself is angry and in the end he renders a grievous exchange in return for unjust deeds" (Er. 327-34). In the ODYSSEY Odysseus warns the Cyclops that "Zeus is an avenger of suppliants and guests and as a patron of strangers he attends the honoured guests" (Od. 9.270-71).

Despite the strong opposition which undoubtedly exists in the ORESTEIA between the Erinyes and the Olympians it is clear that in many respects they share a common interest and concern for justice. Of equal importance and significance, however, for the conversion of the Erinyes to Eumenides is the willingness of the goddesses to submit their case to the court of Athena. Despite their original

resolve (Eum. 299ff) not to concede to either Apollo or Athena any rights over Orestes, despite their initial refusal (Eum. 427) to consider motive, in the end they accept Athena's assurances of justice in the court (Eum. 432), and relinquish their cause to her and her court. By this action they have already moved beyond their nature as goddesses of blind revenge. Apollo, for his part, though one of the Olympians, appears less flexible than the Erinyes, less willing to submit to arbitration -- he would not be willing to give or take an oath, the goddesses charge (Eum. 429).

In the trial which follows the institution of the court it is the Erinyes who cross-examine Orestes, asking him first if he did, in fact, kill his mother, then the manner in which he slew her and whether he acted under the advice or instruction of anyone (Eum. 587-93). The goddesses here are actually considering the merits of the case and by so doing they have taken the first steps toward reconciliation. Apollo, in his turn, contents himself with a categorical statement of his role as the oracle of Zeus and with a firm rejection of the Erinyes' argument of the primacy of the blood tie between mother and child (Eum. 615-25) in favour of the marriage tie and the claims of husband and wife.

The willingness of the Erinyes to enter into the trial and their subsequent cross-examination of Orestes prepare the way for their ultimate reconciliation with Athena within the city. Having used all his poetic powers to emphasize the separation between the old gods and the Olympians Aeschylus has nonetheless shown a credible basis upon which we may accept their final conversion. In the end, however, their incorporation is carried out through a "truly democratic vote"<sup>89</sup>. On this point Solmsen writes:

By giving half of the votes to the Furies . . . Aeschylus indicates that the justice for which the Furies plead has great significance and cannot be lightly turned aside . . . The victory of the Olympians is brought about by these gods themselves, in particular by Athena. Although it is based on the merits and the specific nature of the case in hand, it has a symbolic significance which transcends the case. The world of the Olympians is both stronger and better than that of the daughters of Night. But the Olympians do not simply crush their rivals and antagonists.

As a result of Athena's persuasion and her promises of honour for them the Erinyes consent to enter the city where they find a "new sphere and form of activity"<sup>90</sup>. Now their ancient powers, as nature goddesses, to blight the land and scourge its inhabitants are to be used, in part, to fructify the land and promote its prosperity, to ward off plague and pestilence, starvation and infertility so that no house may flourish against their will (Eum. 895).

In assuming this positive and constructive role, however, their original character is not to be utterly ignored. Since their lot has to do with all human affairs to them will still belong the punishment of the wicked and the maintenance of τὸ δεινόν in the hearts of the people.

It is as instruments of the justice of Zeus, embodied within the city, that the Erinyes are now to wield their power. In their ancient character the mission of the Erinyes was "without an end"<sup>91</sup>. That is, their justice, being firmly rooted in the lex talionis, had no purpose other than vengeance and atonement. This is clear from Orestes' account of the suffering which was to come upon him from the προσβολαὶ Ἐρινύων, "to die in dishonour and friendless" (Choe. 295). The goddesses themselves affirm this aspect of their nature when they sing

τοῦτο γὰρ λάχος διανταῖα  
Μοῖρ' ἐπέκλωσεν ἐμπέδως ἔχειν,  
θανάτῳ τοῖσιν αὐτουργίαι  
ἑυμπέσωσιν μάταιοι,  
τοῖς ὁμαρτεῖν ὄφρ' ἂν  
γὰν ὑπέλθῃ θανάτῳ δ'  
οὐκ ἄγαν ἐλεύθερος.

(Eum. 334-40)

This constant lot Moira spun to hold secure, to pursue those who fall into fatal recklessness until they go beneath the earth. But even in death he is not absolutely free.

The Erinyes are concerned solely with family relationships based on blood-ties. Implacable in their wrath, blind to all considerations of motive or circumstance their justice is clearly limited and one-sided. As primitive goddesses they punish the spilling of kindred blood with a mechanical pursuit of vengeance which sees no further than the immediate deed. The result is, thus, a recurring cycle in which each crime calls for atonement which in turn becomes a crime to be avenged.

Apollo is also concerned with the family, but his interests are with the marriage ties, with the rights of spouses, and in particular of husbands, and by extension, with those of rulers in the state. He protects a relationship based upon ethical and moral choices, rather than the natural relationship which the Erinyes support, and thus, represents a higher level of justice. While Apollo's justice, with which the Erinyes inevitably come into conflict, is also limited and one-sided, it is not equally blind. Being wroth at the murder of Agamemnon, husband and ruler, Apollo has consciously instructed Orestes to murder his mother. The Erinyes have no other aim than revenge; the spilling of kindred blood sends them in pursuit of the criminal with no concern other than vengeance. Their punishment, thus, results only in an endlessly recurring cycle

of crime and punishment. Apollo, on the other hand, seeks to establish an order of justice by the punitive act he counsels; his subsequent ritual cleansing of the avenger is to break the cycle which results from the Erinyes' punishment. To this extent his vision is less clouded, less restricted than the older goddesses'. But, although he has a higher purpose than the Erinyes, he nonetheless counsels private acts of vengeance and not even his promise of ritual cleansing can achieve a stable order of justice. Aeschylus' characterization of Apollo completes his picture of a world torn by unresolved conflicts and irreconcilable contradictions, a world in which Orestes can be, on the one hand, a just avenger and, on the other, a criminal guilty of the most wicked of crimes -- matricide. It is the need to resolve such a dilemma that gives birth to the court of Athena wherein the justice of Zeus may prevail.

It is Zeus, with his full vision and complete knowledge who can encompass a wider purpose, a greater good than the vengeful punishment of one deed. According to Solon (Fr. 13,7) it is Zeus who "sees the purpose, *τέλος*, of all" while for the others "there exists no purpose, no *τέλος*". This purpose, this *τέλος*, of Zeus is the establishment of a stable order of justice. His justice serves not the individual or particular interest as does that of the

primitive, older gods, but the common interest of all and it does this through the limitation of individual or particular concerns. In Zeus' vision of justice no longer may wrath hold power for ever; now it must come to serve his greater purpose, the establishment of peace and harmony among both gods and men.

Such is the intent of Zeus in the first divine assembly of the ODYSSEY when he assures Athena that Poseidon's wrath will give way (Od. 1.77-9). Poseidon's anger has only one purpose, to punish Odysseus for the wrong done to Polyphemus, and his own violated honour, and one result, a continuing series of disasters. Poseidon's notion of justice is primitive and limited, and seeks only the restoration of violated honour not the establishment of a stable order of peace and justice. However, Zeus does not simply demand that Poseidon's wrath give way; he provides a means for the fulfillment of the other god's anger as an instrument of his own wrath. For Odysseus has offended Zeus as well as Poseidon by assuming for his deed a divine sanction not previously granted. The purpose of Zeus' anger in the ODYSSEY, the end to which it strives, is the moral education of Odysseus that he may return to Ithaca not simply as a traditional hero but as a wise and just king, able to restore order and justice in his realm. It is as an instru-



ment of this purpose, to teach Odysseus the need for  $\delta\iota\kappa\eta$ , that Poseidon's wrath can have both an end and a purpose.

In Hesiod's vision of the new order of Zeus after the Titanomachia the sanctions of Styx are given full power for nine years over those gods who swear false oaths; but "in the tenth year he mingles again in the company of the immortals who have Olympian homes" (Th. 803ff). While the primitive powers of Styx are not suppressed altogether by the new government of Zeus neither is her wrath allowed to hold sway absolutely.

In its purely theological aspect the conversion of the Erinyes represents Aeschylus' solution to the ancient problem of the relations between the old gods and the new gods in the order of Olympian Zeus. Aeschylus knew, as had the poets before him, that the ancient powers of Moira could not be denied but that, in any lasting order of the universe, they must find a place with honour. In Hesiod's vision Zeus brought the best of the old divine world under his rule by the restitution of old honours and the recognition of original privilege. When Aeschylus came to consider the tradition of divine succession and its consequences for the world of men he discovered in the nature of the Erinyes and the character of Zeus' government a basis for

reconciliation which, partly through a change of τύχη and partly through a reaffirmation of old τύχη, conferred advantage upon both.

Under the rule of Zeus, as conceived by Aeschylus, there is never any question that the deeds of men are a concern to the gods, that they punish the wicked and reward the righteous. It is as instruments of this justice, having rejected the principle of revenge, that the Erinyes accept the Εὐνοῖα of Pallas Athena: to lavish blessings on the just and to punish the wicked:

On the political aspect of the settlement between the Erinyes and Zeus Lloyd-Jones writes:<sup>92</sup>

What the Erinyes, the helpers of justice, are in the universe, . . . the court of the Areopagus is in the Athenian constitution . . . Aeschylus insists strongly on the value of the punitive element in the government both of the universe in general and of the Athenian state.

Both in the world of gods as well as the world of men the position of the Erinyes was secured not only in their traditional character, in which the punitive element of Zeus' rule was vested, but also in their new role as benign goddesses, concerned with the righteous deeds of men. It is on this basis that they may truly share in the τέλος of Zeus' justice embodied in the city.

The entry of the ancient goddesses into the city completes Aeschylus' vision of the πόλις. For him the πόλις was the true expression of the justice of Zeus among men, the means by which Hesiod's vision of the new era of peace and harmony established by Zeus was made manifest in the human cosmos. The πόλις was the vehicle of reconciliation among men whose model was the divine order of Olympian Zeus. Although the ancient powers of vengeance and atonement may now no longer hold absolute sway among men neither are they to be denied altogether. By accepting a home beside Athena the goddesses have found a place within the πόλις even as they have within the government of Zeus. Now, within the πόλις their ancient claims can be recognized and given a place as instruments of the justice of Zeus which is the establishment of order and justice in the human cosmos.

# CONCLUSION: KNOWLEDGE AND DIVINE JUSTICE

In the parodos of the AGAMEMNON the Chorus declare that Zeus "is the one who sets mortals on the path to understanding ( $\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ ) by establishing the law of learning through suffering" (Ag. 176-78). While these lines clearly indicate the importance of knowledge and understanding in Aeschylus' concept of divine justice and the human condition, they also mark the culmination in Greek theology of the poets' efforts to understand man's relation to the gods and his place in the divine universe.

From ancient times the poets taught that the wrath of the gods is not arbitrary nor capricious; that the order of the universe is rational and depends upon clearly defined principles revealed by the gods themselves: it is  $\nu\beta\omicron\lambda\epsilon$  and  $\alpha\nu\alpha\sigma\theta\alpha\lambda\iota\alpha$  which offend the gods and bring upon men divine wrath and eventual ruin. Since the laws of Zeus are knowable, man's ability to perceive them and, thence, to learn from his experiences becomes an increasingly important factor in his growing awareness of the nature of the gods and the justice they support. Only through knowledge and understanding may man hope to avoid wrongdoing and the suffering it brings and live in happiness and prosperity. "Be the ways of God never so entangled", writes Lesky<sup>1</sup>,

"yet at the last they can be understood". From the ODYSSEY to the ORESTEIA knowledge and understanding are shown by the poets to be of fundamental significance in their characterizations of Zeus<sup>2</sup> and his justice, as well as in their understanding of the human condition and the divine-human relationship.

According to Hesiod it is Zeus' knowledge and perception which prove decisive in bringing to an end the continual and violent overthrow of father by son, characteristic of the old divine world, as well as in establishing order and justice among the gods. Kronos was able to castrate his father, Ouranos, and supplant his rule because of the older god's lack of understanding. In the next generation Kronos himself "perceived not" (Th. 488) Gaia's deception when she presented him with a swaddled stone instead of the baby Zeus; wherefore Zeus, in his turn, could punish his father and establish his own rule.

In contrast to the limited vision and incomplete knowledge of the old gods, Olympian Zeus is shown to have full knowledge and complete vision; he alone cannot be deceived nor his rule surpassed. Despite the craft and cunning with which Prometheus made his unequal division of the sacrificial offerings the poet emphasizes that "Zeus,

in his imperishable wisdom, was not ignorant nor unaware of the trick" (Th. 550-51). Having stolen fire away from the gods and given it to men there was no way for Prometheus "to escape the grievous wrath of Zeus", for "it is not possible", we are told, "to deceive or subvert the mind of Zeus" (Th. 613).

For Hesiod the supremacy of Zeus and the enduring nature of his rule were a direct consequence of his wider vision and superior intelligence. It is by a combination of wit (Th. 658) and physical strength (Th. 687) that Zeus, first, wins his victory over the Titans and, then, secures his new government. By his own counsel (Th. 653) and the advice of Gaia (Th. 627) Zeus restores the Hundred-Armed Ones to the light and gains them as allies in his cause against the Titans; for their part, the monsters show a combination of intelligence (Th. 661) and strength which marks them out among the old gods as fit to share in Zeus' new order. After his victory over the Titans, Zeus maintains his rule by the same exercise of intelligence. According to some legends, when the great battle was ended, Gaia bore a last child, Typhon, who would have renewed the tradition of divine succession if Zeus had not been keeping a "sharp watch" and perceived the danger (Th. 836-38). Again, the heavens and earth echo to the sound of Zeus' thunderbolts

and with a great show of strength Zeus overpowers the would-be usurper and hurls him into Tartarus (Th. 868).

Knowledge is clearly an important element in Hesiod's characterization of Zeus and his government. Of equal importance, however, is its role as an attribute of men, as the basis upon which the divine-human relationship is grounded and the means by which man may apprehend the order of the divine realm. In this regard Bruno Snell writes of Pindar<sup>3</sup>:

(He) no longer takes it for granted that the divine is readily discerned in the phenomena about him. Wisdom is required to point it out and to establish its value; . . . Not all things participate in the divine to an equal degree. But the wise man descries it in the outstanding example of each kind all around him.

It is in this sense, as a poet taught by the Muses (Th. 22), as a man of good intent (Er. 286), as one who has glimpsed the order of the divine, that Hesiod continually urges his brother to take his advice to heart, "to heed justice and not increase hybris" (Er. 213).

It is the fundamental connection between knowledge and justice, between understanding and right behavior, which Hesiod has in mind when he warns his brother to "heed justice and altogether forget violence. The son of Kronos", he continues, "has ordained this law for men -- while fish

and beasts and the birds on the wing eat each other, since they have not justice ~~to~~ to men he has given justice which is by far the best; for if one, through understanding, wishes to speak justly, far-seeing Zeus may give to him prosperity" (Er. 275-81). Similarly, he warns the kings against "bane-ful thoughts" and "crooked talk" (Er. 261-67) which "makes justice lean precariously". It is the man who "notices all for himself" or is ready to accept the advice of another whom the poet deems πανδριος; but he who is without perception himself, and deaf to the pleas of another, is useless, ἀφρητος (Er. 293-97).

Through his ability to comprehend, to perceive the order of the universe man is raised above the level of nature, no longer wholly subject to blind necessity; through his ability to think and learn man takes his place in the divine universe, responsible, in part, for his own destiny. Through intelligence and understanding man may learn the lessons of the THEOGONIA, that wrongdoing offends the gods and brings suffering and ruin; through knowledge man may perceive the order and harmony of the divine realm and find therein a model for peace and justice in his own world. P.A. Vander Waerdt<sup>4</sup> has defined the role of knowledge in the divine-human relationship in this way: "...man's capacity for phronein enables him to realize a useful place



within Zeus' order . . . Without phronein, man cannot avoid hybris and hence destruction; with it, he can discern and observe the limitations which define his condition".

For the poet of the ODYSSEY, as well, there can be no doubt that knowledge plays an important and significant role in shaping the lives and destinies of man. Homeric man found instruction readily available from seers and poets as well as from the direct intervention of the gods themselves who offered frequent reminders of the consequences of ignorance and wrongdoing. It was to this end, Zeus declares in the first divine assembly, that the gods sent Hermes to Aigisthos to warn him of the consequences of marrying Clytemnestra. But Aigisthos did not heed the advice of Hermes, we are told, "and now he has made repayment for all his deeds together". Man's failure to heed the divine warnings presented in myth, as well as in omen and prophecy, and his persistence in committing deeds of violence are characteristic of the lack of vision and understanding which leads him to ruin and disaster.

In the Telemachia the guilt of the suitors and their lack of δῆμη is confirmed by their arrogant refusal to accept the warnings and instructions offered to them. Despite the portent of the two eagles sent by Zeus (Od.

2.146ff) and Halitherses' explicit warning the young men continue in ignorance their headlong pursuit of violence and ruin.

While the Telemachia shows the breakdown of order and justice in the community as a consequence of the suitors' hybriatic and violent behavior the account of the wanderings of Odysseus and his men on their way home from Troy shows the effect of similar acts upon the traditional heroic community. After the Cyclops adventure the Achaeans find themselves in a strange and sometimes terrifying world of monsters and witches, of curses and magic spells. It is a world beyond normal human experience, a radically different world in which the values and virtues of traditional heroism seem out of place and useless. The offences committed by Odysseus against Polyphemus and Poseidon have severely disrupted the divine-human relationship and left Odysseus, the favourite of Athena, alone, estranged from the gods, a seeming plaything of the elemental forces of nature.

The toils and sufferings which befall Odysseus thereafter represent a certain process of enlightenment. Bradley suggests that for Odysseus there is "a growing awareness of *δίκη*"<sup>5</sup>; that on his wanderings "Odysseus experiences the cruel absurdity of a world without *δίκη*;

. . . by the time he arrives among the Phaiacians he *understands* the necessity of δίκη; . . . finally, when he at last reaches Ithaca, he *acts* as the champion of both δίκη and δόξα<sup>6</sup>.

Odysseus' education, however, is expensive, and achieved only at the high cost of his traditional heroic identity. After losing his ships and comrades, his glorious arms and rich treasure the conquering hero, with a reputation "as high as the sky", finds himself, in the end, helpless and alone, sunk in oblivion on Calypso's island paradise. At this point Odysseus can only sit day after day upon the shore weeping in vain for his return. No longer will any bold gesture or daring spirit serve to win him either his return home or honour and glory. Now, all he can do is endure, survive. It is at this point, and apparently not until this point, that Odysseus may truly recognize and understand that there are things more precious than a hero's honour and glory; now, he knows the love of home and family as worth living for. From this knowledge he may take the first step towards restoring his lost identity, when the opportunity is offered, by choosing his return -- danger and all -- rather than Calypso's offer of immortality with its hedonistic existence. Odysseus had earlier rejected the Lotophagoi's life of pleasure and indolence, but in the

character of a traditional hero for whom such an existence was anathema, the negation of the heroic ideals of reckless courage and daring skill. Now his refusal of Calypso's offer and his determination to return to Ithaca stem from his new vision of himself not primarily as a warrior-hero but as a husband, father and king. Thus, he assures Calypso, "I shall endure having a patient heart within my breast" (Od. 5.222). This decision, freely taken, is a conscious, ethical choice based upon love of home and family and is indicative now of the new and wider vision, as well as of the spirit of endurance, which are integral parts of his new heroic nature.

There can be no doubt that once Odysseus reaches Phaiacia both his fortunes and his behavior show a significant change. Although in Phaiacia Odysseus is recognized as the hero he undoubtedly is by his display of physical skill and prowess his new identity now has a dimension beyond the traditional heroic limits. No longer does his stature depend entirely upon deeds of strength and daring courage and the rich prizes gained in consequence. Endurance, both physical and spiritual, now becomes the hallmark of his new heroism.

In the world after Troy the hero can no longer indulge his μεγαλήτωρ θυμός to the full with impulsive deeds of skill and courage, seeking only to live with honour or to die in glory. In this world the hero sometimes finds himself in situations where he can neither live honourably nor die gloriously, where his only options are to perish ingloriously or to survive. In such circumstances the hero requires, first and foremost, not feats of strength and reckless courage but reflection and endurance. It is as the source of man's new spirit of endurance that knowledge and understanding become important factors in determining man's destiny.

In the Cyclops' cave Odysseus suddenly realized that to kill the monster there and then would be a futile gesture. While it might satisfy his desire to avenge the brutal deaths of his comrades it could not gain the survivors their release from the cave. With the Cyclops dead there would be no one able to move the rock from the mouth of the cave and they would, thus, surely perish alone and unknown. It is from this realization that Odysseus accepts the need to restrain his first impulse, to slay Polyphemus, and determines to devise another plan by which he may secure their release. It is this need to survive, first of all, and the recognition of the consequences of rash action, that moves

Odysseus to wait in patience for a more favourable opportunity. Clearly, in the world after Troy there are times when the hero of the battle field, with his μεγάλητων θυμός must give way to the νόος-guided leader of the community.

Odysseus, however, fails to sustain his new spirit of endurance and restraint after escaping from the cave. In reverting to the great θυμός-centered hero he commits such deeds of ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία as to incur not only the wrath of Poseidon but also the anger of Zeus. Time and again suffering and disaster come to Odysseus and his men for their failure to endure: when he falls asleep after leaving Aiolia his comrades give way to their curiosity and jealousy and open the bag of winds which then blow them straight back the way they had come; because he cannot bear to sacrifice some of his comrades to the monster, Scylla, he ignores the advice of Circe and dons full armour to confront the creature, thus nearly bringing all to grief; finally, on Thrinakia, he alone survives while his men fail their final test of endurance.

In this world survival is the first demand and for this man must have wit, intelligence and endurance. Odysseus is a long time learning this lesson but he does eventually understand. After much back-sliding the new

spirit of endurance achieves its final victory when he lies sleepless on the porch of his palace in Ithaca watching the serving maids as they steal away to the suitors' beds.

Then, grieved though he is, he chides his heart: "Be patient, my heart; you once endured an even more shameful thing on that day when the irresistible Cyclops ate my stalwart comrades. You endured until a plan led you out of the cave though you thought to die" (Od. 5.18-21). To return to Bradley's comment, Odysseus has reached this point of "understanding" as a result of the suffering of his return from Troy. Having experienced the futility of bold action in a world which no longer recognizes the traditional heroic virtues he is now prepared to act with restraint and caution to achieve, not simply honour and glory for himself and his house, but order and justice for the community.

It is no coincidence, therefore, that it is in Phaiacia that Athena re-enters Odysseus' life. As the goddess most closely associated with wisdom and the community her reunion with Odysseus at this point is an important sign not only of the hero's re-entry into the civilized community but of his wider vision and new understanding which has made this return possible. As a consequence of his new vision, after Phaiacia, Odysseus acts always on the guidance and direction of Athena. So it is that he implores

the goddess, on his arrival in Ithaca, to tell him truly "what land, what country" he has reached, and "who are its people" (Od. 13.232). Later, as Athena undertakes to reveal her plan for his return to the palace Odysseus confesses ". . . I am likely to die the evil death of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, in my own halls unless you, goddess, speak to me of each particular". (Od. 13.383-85).. Because Odysseus acts now with a new understanding of his relations to the gods, as the duly sanctioned agent of divine justice, his slaying of the suitors may transcend the limits of retribution to become a restoration of justice and order in the community. In the end the herald, Medon, can declare: "Odysseus has devised these deeds not without the will of the immortal gods" (Od. 14.443-44). The suitors, however, against all advice and every warning, continued to provoke the wrath of the gods and for this reason their fate is deemed by Halitherses to be of their own doing (Od. 24.455).

Odysseus' distinctive intelligence and his powers of endurance had always marked him out among the Achaean warriors as unusual. He is what Stanford<sup>7</sup> calls the "un-typical hero". The poet's choice of Odysseus as his hero underlines the importance which he attached to knowledge and understanding as an element in the determination of man's destiny. The characterization of Odysseus in the



ODYSSEY, thus, provides a new focus for the heroic figure. The θυμός-centered warrior of the battle field has now become the νόος-guided ruler of the community. This change of focus has brought about a redefinition of the heroic ideal. No longer is family honour and glory to be the hero's sole concern. From the moment Odysseus returns to Ithaca it is the just ordering of the community, in accordance with the will of the gods, which will move the hero.

The importance of knowledge in man's growing awareness of his relations to the gods lent added weight and authority to the poets' traditional role as teachers long after they had ceased to attribute their knowledge and understanding to the gods alone. Having observed the close connection between ignorance, excess, hybris and suffering Solon, therefore, undertook to teach his fellow citizens ὥς κακὰ πλεῖστα πόλει Δυσνομίη παρέχει (Fr. 4.31). Solon knew well enough that there were many aspects of man's destiny which lay beyond his understanding and must thus be accounted "superrational", as when a man, unaccountably, falls from prosperity into misfortune. Nevertheless, he believed that the life of the πόλις operated according to clearly defined principles of δίκη, and that knowledge was an important factor in establishing justice and avoiding ruin in the community. "It is not by the will of the gods

that a great city is destroyed", he declares, "but through the folly ( $\alpha\sigma\phi\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha$ , Fr. 4.5) and ignorance ( $\alpha\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ , Fr. 9.4) of its citizens". He also emphasizes that it is foolishness which leads a man, in prosperity, to commit such deeds of excess that he comes to ruin (Fr. 6.3-4). With all good will, therefore, he bid the men of Athens  $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha \nu\sigma\epsilon\iota\nu$  (Fr. 9.6) and to practise moderation (Fr. 4c.3) rather than yield to  $\kappa\omicron\rho\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\psi\omicron\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  which brings misery and ruin.

Aeschylus knew, as had the poets before him, that the gods are not heedless of the deeds of men: man suffers for his own wrongdoing for the gods love not the wretched deeds of men but honour their righteous and just works. He recognized, also, the importance of knowledge as a factor in man's ultimate fate. In a world in which man's destiny seems to be peculiarly doubly motivated, that is, the result of both divine purpose and human will, the spirit in which he acts is of crucial significance. It is as the determining factor of this spirit that man's wit and understanding play a decisive role in his ultimate destiny.

At Aulis, faced with the dilemma of sacrificing his daughter or disobeying the priestly reading of the portent, Agamemnon cries "grievous is my doom not to obey,

and grievous if I sacrifice my child . . ." (Ag. 206-08). Yet, despite these exclamations of dismay, the king never has any serious doubts about his action nor any perception of the unholy and impious deed he has committed. Blinded by his desire, as the leader of a great expedition, for honour and glory on the field he believes, to the end, that in destroying Troy and the people of Priam he has accomplished a just deed (Ag. 812) in accordance with the will of Zeus. He returns home confident of the rightness of his position, full of pride and arrogance. Giving only lip service to the common piety that "the greatest gift of the gods is not κακῶς φρονεῖν" (Ag. 927) he is easily persuaded to tread the purple carpets to his palace. He goes to his death, as he had lived, without any clear understanding of the forces which have shaped his end, with no recognition of the part which his own desires have played in determining his actions.

Clytemnestra's vision, though far from complete, is wider than that of Agamemnon. From the beginning she is aware of the bloody history of the house, of τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλοφόντων (Ag. 346), yet so consumed is she by her hatred of Agamemnon and her desire to avenge the death of Iphigeneia that she perceives not the role which the divine purpose has played in her act. Making the deed her own (Ag. 1380).

she exults in her bloody act, finally declaring to the Chorus "this is Agamemnon, my husband, a corpse, the work of this right hand, a just craftsman" (Ag. 1401-06). Not until the Chorus cry out in horror at the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra does Clytemnestra attempt to justify her deeds. Then, she points to her husband who "sacrificed his own child, my dearest travail" (Ag. 1417-18), who "brought to me a delicacy in addition to the delights of my bed" (Ag. 1446-47), and reminds the old men of "Dikē, Atē and Erinys, for whom I slew this man" (Ag. 1433).

Eventually, Clytemnestra acknowledges the nature of the cycle of sin and punishment which drives the house when she cries "from this (deed) blood-licking desire is nourished in the belly and before the ancient grief abates there will be new blood" (Ag. 1477-79). She recognizes, also, for a time, the role which the divine has played in acting through her to avenge the murders, committed by Atreus, with the death of Agamemnon (Ag. 1497-1504). Yet, in the end, her vision fails. She declares with confidence that by her deed she has removed the daimon from the house (Ag. 1575), and, while she stands between the slain bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra and the hostile Chorus, she pleads with Aigisthos not to continue the bloody deeds: "there is enough suffering; let us not spill more blood" (Ag. 1656):

Aigisthos, on his side, is completely ignorant of the forces which have acted upon him, of the wider issues in which he has played a part. Blinded by hatred and lust he knows only the necessity to avenge the slaughter of his brothers. His account (Ag. 1590ff) of the banquet which Atreus served Thyestes is simplistic and one-sided for he fails to acknowledge either the adulterous guilt of Thyestes or the nature of the events which have moved through the house of Atreus from generation to generation.

It is Cassandra with her divine gift of prophecy who can finally see the recurring cycle of crime and punishment which drives the family of Atreus. It is Cassandra who can embrace the past and present in one vision and reveal its implications for the future. It is Cassandra who can, at last, give "the house a voice".

Although Clytemnestra believed that she was justified in killing Agamemnon to avenge the murder of her daughter and Aigisthos, that he was acting as a *δυνατός πατριός* (Ag. 1604) in avenging the slaughter of his brothers, both perish for their deeds. Orestes, however, though he kills his mother for her murder of Agamemnon is the only avenger in the house who does not perish as a result of the crime he commits.

When Orestes returns to Argos he finds himself facing a seemingly impossible choice: to obey the commands of Apollo who bids him take the life of his mother for the death of his father, or to yield to his mother's pleas that he spare her life. If he fails to heed the injunctions of the god he has been told that he will become the victim of the "assaults of the Erinyes" (Choe. 275ff); if, on the other hand, he kills his mother, he knows full well that he will be pursued by the Erinyes who are angry at the spilling of a mother's blood (Choe. 438).

Unlike Agamemnon, however, who found himself confronted by a similar dilemma at Aulis, Orestes recognizes the conflicting claims of justice (Choe. 461) before him: that of a murdered father to be avenged by a son and that of a mother to avenge the death of her daughter. In addition, Orestes is fully aware of the personal elements involved, the natural feelings and desires of a child for his rightful inheritance (Choe. 301), the revulsion of a son at his mother's adultery (Choe. 905-07) and anger at her rejection of him as a child (Choe. 913). Yet, despite the provocations which press upon him he refuses to make the deed of retribution ordained by Apollo his own act of personal revenge.

With full vision and complete knowledge, he surrenders his will to the oracle (Choe. 297), determined to act only as its instrument though it means he must slay his mother (Choe. 274). His natural regret and hesitation before the loathesome deed he has been sent to commit, his piteous cry,  $\tau\acute{\iota}$   $\delta\pi\acute{o}\omega$  (Choe. 899), before his mother's breast reveal a sense of conscious reflection and vision altogether lacking in the other avengers in the family. Agamemnon and Clytemnestra never recognized choices, never cried  $\tau\acute{\iota}$   $\delta\pi\acute{o}\omega$ ; Agamemnon went to his death with no understanding of what had happened or why, and Clytemnestra with only a partial and incomplete perception. Orestes, however, understands fully what he must do and the consequences of his deed. Because of his clear vision his motives remain largely untouched by the various personal considerations which press upon him. In the end he is moved primarily by the will of Loxias Apollo, trusting in the god's promise that in fulfilling his decree he would not be held responsible (Choe. 1031).

Clearly, knowledge and understanding have played an important rôle in the poets' visions of justice from the ODYSSEY to the ORESTEIA. Through knowledge and understanding Zeus established order and justice in heaven; through knowledge and understanding man may perceive the

nature of divine justice and its consequences for his own world. The gods have decreed that man suffers not without cause but as a result of his own wanton violence and reckless presumption in taking more than his portion allows. However, through knowledge and understanding man may so order his life as to avoid wrongdoing and live in harmony with his fellows and his gods.

Nevertheless, despite this exalted vision of the divine-human relationship suffering is clearly a part of the human condition. Man's failure to act always in a rational manner, and with *σωπρόσυνη*, to heed the lessons of myth and the divine warnings of omen and prophecy, in fact his very humanity, leads him to exceed his limits, to overreach himself, thus offending the gods and incurring suffering and misery. Yet, within the universe ruled by Zeus there remains a chance for man to achieve order, to experience justice and harmony in his world. Man suffers for his wrongdoing, but Zeus has ordained that this suffering be for him a lesson through which to learn the nature of divine justice and its consequences for himself and his world.

This notion, of *πάθει μάθος* marks an important and significant advance of Zeus' government over the primitive



justice of vengeance and atonement of the older gods. The punishment and suffering inflicted under a code of vengeance serve no end beyond that of immediate retribution. The endless cycle of crime and punishment which such a code promotes can end only in the ultimate destruction of a family or a people. Zeus, however, with his wider vision, sees a higher purpose for man's suffering than death, and that purpose is the moral education of man.

Under the justice of Zeus man is given the chance to profit from his suffering, to turn a potentially destructive situation into a potentially constructive experience. This is the *χρῆσις* of Zeus, albeit a harsh one, that man learns from his suffering. Through suffering Odysseus came to an awareness of *δίκη* and, hence, returned to Ithaca a wise and just king. So, also, does Hesiod remind Perses that "through suffering even a foolish man comes to understanding" (*Er.* 218). Finally, in the *PROMETHEUS BOUND* of Aeschylus Kratos declares that Prometheus must make recompense to the gods "that he may learn to love the rule of Zeus" (*Pr.* 10-11).

Clearly, suffering and knowledge are closely linked in the poets' characterizations of divine justice and the human condition. Man is not at the mercy of

arbitrary and capricious gods who do with him as they will.

Man suffers for his own wrongdoing, as a result of his ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία, but through his sufferings he may come to know the true nature of the gods and their justice and may, then, learn to act justly and avoid offending the gods and the misery which that brings upon him.

## FOOTNOTES

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 A. W. H. Adkins, Merit and Responsibility: (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 185.
- 2 E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and The Irrational: (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), p. 32. Dodds writes that he can find ". . . no indication in the narrative of the ILIAD that Zeus is concerned with justice as such."
- 3 Adkins, p. 62. Adkins declares that ". . . the gods as portrayed generally in the Homeric poems are far from just."
- 4 M. Gagarin, "Dike in the WORKS AND DAYS," CP, 68 (1973), 92. Here Gagarin writes that the ERGA "tells first how life came to be as hard as it is -- and there is certainly no 'justice' in the stories of Prometheus and Pandora or the five ages of man, or in the little fable of the hawk and the nightingale, . . ."
- 5 H. Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus: (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 3.
- 6 Recently M. Gagarin, "Dike in the WORKS AND DAYS," CP, 68 (1973), 81-94; "Dike in Archaic Greek Thought," CP, 69 (1974), 186-97. V. A. Rodgers, "Some Thoughts on Dike," CQ, ns.21 (1971), 289-301. For the concept of justice in later Greek thought see E. A. Havelock, "Dikaiošyne," Phoenix, 21 (1969), 49-70.
- 7 P. Chantraine, "Le Divin et Les Dieux Chez Homère," Fondation Hardt, 1 (1952), 76.

## THE ODYSSEY

- 1 H. Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus: (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 31.
- 2 E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and The Irrational: (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), p. 32.

- 3 See Appendix A.
- 4 Birds of omen, foretelling Odysseus' descent upon the suitors appear at *Od.* 2.146; 15.160, 525; 19.535. The slaughter of the suitors is itself marked by a bird simile at *Od.* 22.320.
- 5 C. P. Segal, "The Phaiacians and The Symbolism of Odysseus' Return," *Arion*, 1, 4 (1962), 17.
- 6 G. B. Holtsmark, "Spiritual Rebirth of The Hero," *CJ*, 61 (1965), 206. For other interpretations see also: W. B. Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme*: (Ann Arbor: 1968), pp. 23, 33-42; G. S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer*: (Cambridge: 1962), pp. 355-71; E. M. Bradley, "The Greatness of His Nature: Fire and Justice in the ODYSSEY," *Ramus*, 5 (1976), 137-48.
- 7 E. L. Harrison, "Notes on Homeric Psychology," *Phoenix*, 2, 14 (1960), 63-80. Harrison describes θυμός as the "source of irrational impulses" (72) but adds that it is "quite wrong to see the key to its Homeric usage in terms of the emotional to the exclusion of the rational . . ." (71). N. Austin, *Archery at The Dark of The Moon. Poetic Problems in Homer's ODYSSEY*, (Berkeley: 1975) pp. 106ff. Austin concludes that θυμός is the most complex of all the mental organs and ". . . seems to perform many functions attributed to νόος." On νόος Harrison concludes that it is the mental organ which "takes in" a situation (72) and is "non-emotional" (73), while Austin remarks that νόος does not reveal the emotional aspect of the θυμός (110). Harrison admits that "there is an easy interchange of one mental organ with another" (67) but according to Austin "the θυμός takes over, as it were, the functions of the νόος only when a strong element of emotion is present in the act of knowing or thinking" (110).
- 8 Albin Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature*, trans. James Willis and Cornelis de Heer, (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1966), p. 45.
- 9 W. B. Stanford, *The ODYSSEY of Homer*: (Oxford: 1950 & 1954), p. 356.
- 10 Although this strategem is termed a ἑτερος θυμός (*Od.* 9.302) it is clear from the verb ἐπυκεν that a certain element of reflection characteristic of νόος is involved.

11. Aristotle, Rhetorics, 2. 1380 b. 22.
12. Lloyd-Jones, p. 29.
13. E. M. Bradley, "The Hybris of Odysseus," Soundings, 51 (1968), 33-44.
14. This is Bradley's translation, "The Hybris of Odysseus," 40.
15. See also K. Reinhardt, "Die Abenteuer der Odyssee," in Von Werke und Formen. Vorträge und Aufsätze: (Godesberg: 1948), pp. 84ff on the hybris of Odysseus.
16. Bradley, "The Hybris of Odysseus," 33.
17. The presence of both Poseidon and Athena in Phaiacia gives rise to some interesting images. Such is the notion of an ἀγορά sacred to Poseidon for it is clearly due to Athena's influence that the Phaiacians now have ἀγοραί.
18. Curiously, even now they have a reputation for inhospitality which is a remnant of that heritage (Od. 7. 32-33).
19. S. Scully, "The Polis in Homer: A Definition and Interpretation," Ramus, 19 (1981), 3-4. Scully's comparison of the lives of the Cyclopes and the community of Phaiacia also focuses upon the "tripartite" aspects of harbours, ἀγορά and walls.
20. Walter Burkert, "Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite," RhM, nF 103 (1960), 1-30. Burkert has proposed that the Song of Ares and Aphrodite, in its frivolous characterization of the gods, reflects a certain criticism of the θεῶν ζῶοντες θεοί of the traditional religion. Bruce Karl Braswell, "The Song of Ares and Aphrodite," Hermes, 2, 110 (1967), 129-37. Braswell, on the other hand, addresses the question of the song's relevance to its context and suggests that it has a definite relation to the events of Book 8 and, in fact, reflects, on the divine plane, the action in the human sphere. He sees a parallel between Hephaistos' victory over Ares and Aphrodite and Odysseus' victory over the taunts of Euryalos, between the undistinguished appearance of the lame god and the wretched condition of the shipwrecked Odysseus, between Ares and Aphrodite whose external beauty belies a foolish nature and the handsome Phaiacian

courtier who behaves in a foolish and unseemly manner. Braswell sees Odysseus' reluctance to compete in a footrace as a further connection between him and the lame god. However, despite these several significant relationships between the Song of Ares and Aphrodite and the action in Phaiacia Braswell fails to examine the curious role of Poseidon in the final reconciliation of Hephaistos, whether it also may bear upon the context of the Song or the general characterization of Poseidon. Perhaps, by some strange reverse association, Poseidon's role as mediator in the clash between Hephaistos and Ares reflects the civic virtue displayed by Arete whose descent we have traced to Poseidon. If so, the Song of Ares and Aphrodite is relevant to its context in all respects and at every moment in a way in which Braswell did not envisage, for it is directly following this performance, dare we say as a consequence?, that Alcinoo assumes the role of mediator between Euryalos and Odysseus (Od. 8.396-97).

- 21 R. Friedrich, "On the Compositional Use of Similes in the ODYSSEY," AJP, 102 (1981), 123.
- 22 See Friedrich, "On the Compositional Use of Similes in the ODYSSEY" for a convincing discussion of the significance of the bath in Odysseus' restoration both here and later in Ithaca.
- 23 See note 10, above.
- 24 Compare these lines with his somewhat more elaborate response to Alcinoo's suggestion that he is τις ἀθανάτων (Od. 7.208ff).
- 25 For in knowing him as father and master Telemachos and Eumaios now know themselves truly as son and servant.
- 26 H. L. Levy, "The Odyssean Suitors and the Host-Guest Relationship," TAPhA, 94 (1963), 145.
- 27 C. H. Whitman, Homer and The Heroic Tradition: (Cambridge, Mass.: 1958), pp. 305-08).
- 28 Friedrich, "On the Compositional Use of Similes in the ODYSSEY," 123-25. The lion was traditionally used to glorify and exalt the hero's strength and physical prowess; here it reduces him to the level of the natural sphere.

29 Lloyd-Jones, pp. 31-2.

30 See Od. 13.128-30.

#### HESIOD

1 M. L. West, Hesiod THEOGONY: (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 12.

2 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 1.

3 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 12.

4 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 1. All theogonies, according to West, treat "the origin of the world and the gods, and the events which led to the establishment of the present order."

5 F. Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus: (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1949), p. 8.

6 For the discussion of the history of Prometheus see pp. 92ff below.

7 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, 9. 7. Solmsen continues: ". . . this 'more' must be understood as a development of that character of Zeus which had emerged in the heroic epos." By which we understand Solmsen to mean Hesiod's emphasis on, and expansion of, the notion of the supremacy of Zeus found in Homer.

8 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 23.

9 J. Rexine, "The Centrality of Zeus in Hesiod," CB, 42 (1965-66), 37.

10 Dodds, The Greeks and The Irrational, p. 31.

11 See further Plato, Republic, 329c

12 This act traditionally symbolized the final separation of earth and heaven. See West, Hesiod THEOGONY, pp. 19, 211-13.

13 Linda Sussman, "The Birth of the Gods," Ramus, 7 (1978), 61-77.

- 14 See Od. 24.370ff for the consequences of another μέγα ἔργον.
- 15 See West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 276 for a complete analysis of the Hymn to Hecate, and also p.95 below.
- 16 According to the myths Prometheus was the benefactor of men. He deceived Zeus and obtained for men the finer portion of the sacrifice and then, later, successfully stole fire away from Heaven and gave it to mankind. Unable to deny or disregard these long-established beliefs Hesiod nonetheless imposed upon this mythical framework his characterization of a supreme Zeus "whose purpose it is not possible to elude." This is, perhaps, one of his least convincing examples.
- 17 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 305. West declares that "the Prometheus myth is aetiological through and through." Hesiod, however, does not use the myth for this purpose alone. He is concerned here with his greater purpose, to reveal the supremacy of Zeus and the consequences of transgressing his will.
- 18 It is clear that Prometheus' intent is to trick Zeus. West says (Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 321), "the statement that he (i.e. Zeus) was not deceived (though he acted as if he was) is manifestly inserted to save his omniscience and prestige. This is quite typical of Hesiod: . . ."
- 19 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 277. West points out here that it is the "universal" nature of Hecate's τὴν which marks her a suitable and appropriate figure for the new order of Zeus.
- 20 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 355. Here, West speaks of "Hesiod's tendency to glorify Zeus more than the facts of mythology warranted."
- 21 See p. 114 below.
- 22 Jasper Griffin, "The Divine Audience and the Religion of the ILIAD," CQ, 28 (1978), 1-22. Griffin points out that in the ILIAD the greatest exaltations of the gods' power and might follow their greatest humiliations. Such a pattern does not apply here. Hesiod takes great care to impress on his audience that Zeus is not deceived, that in all aspects he is superior, that his supremacy is uncompromised.



- 23 West, Hesiod THEOGONY, p. 74.
- 24 See pp. 88 and 95 above.
- 25 Albin Lesky, A History of Greek Literature, trans. James Willis and Cornelis de Heer, (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1966), p. 99.
- 26 Lesky, p. 98.
- 27 Bruno Snell, The Discovery of the Mind, trans. T. G. Rosenmeyer, (New York: Dover Publications, 1982), p. 81.
- 28 Snell, pp. 75ff.
- 29 M. L. West, Hesiod WORKS AND DAYS, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), ppff.
- 30 Hesiod's treatment of the Prometheia is typical of the Archaic poet's use of myth -- the ability to focus on whatever aspect of the story will serve his immediate purpose. For the THEOGONIA Hesiod used the framework of the Prometheus myth to exalt the power and supremacy of Zeus and to underline the consequences, even in the divine world, of angering Zeus and offending his will. In the ERGA the same myth is retold, with a different emphasis, to underline the consequences of Zeus' wrath for mankind, as befits the focus of the ERGA, and to bring the human cosmos within the divine order of Zeus.
- 31 After Hesiod's characterization of Kronos in the THEOGONIA the notion of a Golden Age "in the reign of Kronos" seems to strike a dissonant note. West remarks (Hesiod WORKS AND DAYS, p. 179) that "the myth of a happy, easy life in the reign of Kronos existed independently of the Ages myth, and was more firmly rooted in the popular imagination." The expression "Golden Age in the reign of Kronos" may have been no more for Hesiod and his generation than the cliché "the good, old days" is for us.
- 32 West, Hesiod WORKS AND DAYS, p. 204.
- 33 See also Il. 197 and Th. 96.
- 34 See Appendices B and C for fuller discussions of some of these problems.

- 35 For such a characterization of the gods see *inter alia*, Il. 13.1ff and 15.365ff.
- 36 See pp. 90, 96, 97 above.
- 37 Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 177.
- 38 M. Gagarin, "Dike in THE WORKS AND DAYS," CP, 68 (1973), 81.

#### SOLON

- 1 While Hesiod's ὄβρις embraces a wide spectrum of wrongdoing, from the dishonour of parents, suppliants and guests to ill-gotten gains and perjury, Solon is specifically concerned, because of his political stance, with the ὄβρις which affects the state; that is, with ἀφάρπαγή, or the acquisition of ill-gotten gains.
- 2 Solon's debt to the poet of the ODYSSEY and to Hesiod is now widely understood and acknowledged. See further W. Jaeger "Solon's Eunomia", in Five Essays, trans. A.M. Fiske, (Montreal: Marie Casaline Ltd., 1966), pp. 87ff.
- 3 G. Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," CP, 41 (1946), 81.
- 4 Jaeger, "Solon's Eunomia," p. 91.
- 5 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 65. These are Vlastos' words.
- 6 F. Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1949), p. 113.
- 7 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 65 and W. Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, trans. Gilbert Highet, (Oxford: 1946), pp. 139-40. Vlastos says they "clearly belong to the order of magic." Whether or not they all belong to this category Hesiod does not make the distinction between those which do and those which follow from a rational principle, as Solon does.
- 8 Solmsen, p. 113.
- 9 Commenting on the effect of wrongdoing on the common safety Vlastos writes "wherever there is disturbance there the would-be tyrant gets his chance," p. 73.

- 10 F. Solmsen, "Hesiodic Motifs in Plato," Fondation Hardt, 7, p. 176.
- 11 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 69.
- 12 Vlastos, 75.
- 13 Vlastos, 73.
- 14 In the words of Vlastos "... a direct injury to any member of the πόλις is indirectly, but no less surely, an injury to every member of the πόλις; for though the initial injustice affects only one or a few, the eventual effect on the common well-being imperils everybody's welfare, hence anybody's wrong is everybody's business." 68.
- 15 So, also, does Isaiah 40.4, writing 750-40 B.C., characterize the coming of the Messiah for the Hebrew people.
- 16 See Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 464.
- 17 Aristotle, Ath. Pol. 5.
- 18 R. Lattimore, "The First Elegy of Solon," AJP, 68 (1947), 164.
- 19 Jaeger, "Solon's Eunomia," p. 88.
- 20 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 78.
- 21 Snell, The Discovery of the Mind, p. 76.
- 22 A. Allen, "Solon's Prayer to the Muses," TAPhA, 80 (1949). 58.
- 23 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 76.
- 24 Aristotle, Ath. Pol. 7.3.
- 25 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 79.
- 26 See Jaeger, "Solon's Eunomia," pp. 90ff.
- 27 Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 27, 82.
- 28 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 111.

29. Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," 77. Vlastos believes that the κακόν which Zeus sends (Er. 57-8) is ἑλπίς. See further Appendix B.

#### THE ORESTEIA

- 1 For a discussion of the occurrences of the motif in the ODYSSEY see Appendix A.
- 2 T. N. Gantz, "The Fires of the ORESTEIA," JHS, 97 (1977), 28-38. In this study Gantz examines the recurring motif of the fire from the beacon flame which announces the destruction of Troy, with its undercurrents of doom and foreboding, to the hearth flames, as a focus of suffering and ruin (Choe. 267-68), and torches lit in the dark (Choe. 536-37) to the hearth of Athena and the final triumphant torch-lit procession of reconciliation in the EUMENIDES. See also R. F. Goheen, "Aspects of Dramatic Symbolism: Three Studies in the ORESTEIA," AJP, 76 (1955), 174.
- 3 J.W. Vaughn, "The Watchman of the AGAMEMNON," CJ, 71 (1975-76), 335-38. Vaughn comments on the dichotomy of form and substance of the speech, i.e. extreme formalism vs. disorder of thought. It thus becomes a microcosm of the larger dramatic situation.
- 4 Michael Ewans, "Agamemnon at Aulis: A Study in the ORESTEIA," Ramus, 4 (1975), 18. Ewans points out that the prologue sounds a recurring note of expectation tinged with anxiety which brings first fulfillment then apprehension born of possible consequences and a cautious hope that despite fear the outcome may be good. This pattern foreshadows the pattern of the whole tragic action.
- 5 Eduard Fraenkel, Aeschylus AGAMEMNON: (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), vol 2, p. 26. (Hereafter cited as Fraenkel).
- 6 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 103.
- 7 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 114.
- 8 Hugh Lloyd-Jones, "The Guilt of Agamemnon," CQ, ns 12 (1962), 191. See also note 55 below.
- 9 K. J. Dover, "Some Neglected Aspects of Agamemnon's Dilemma," JHS, 93 (1973), 66.

- 10 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 142.
- 11 Aeschylus' use of ἐπαλξίς (Ag. 381) reminds us of Hesiod's image of ἀλή at the end of the myth of the Five Ages: for the men of the Iron Age κακοῦ δ' οὐκ ἔσσεται ἀλή.
- 12 The danger of κόρος and the importance of moderation were central both to Solon's understanding of justice and his political reforms, as he writes: ἔδωκα τόσον γέρας ὅσον ἐπαρκεῖν (Fr. 5.1).
- 13 See Gorgias, DK 76 B11, Γοργίου 'Ελένης 'Εγκώμιον.
- 14 Alcaeus, Fr. 74 2D.
- 15 For a full discussion of the staging of this passage see Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 370.
- 16 For the possible emendation of this corrupt passage see Fraenkel, vol 2, pp. 363-65.
- 17 Fraenkel, vol 2, pp. 441-42. Fraenkel's view of the character of Agamemnon and his motivation differs markedly from the one proposed in this study. A more extensive treatment of the subject is given below, in the section "Human Motivation and Divine Justice", and in note 69 below.
- 18 R. F. Goheen, "Aspects of Dramatic Symbolism," 168. Goheen examines the dramatic symbolism of the carpet and makes an important connection between the image of the carpet and the greater, recurring image of blood on the ground. "Verbal imagery of *blood on the ground* forms a recurring motif, carefully articulated and impressively sustained. Significantly, it gets its first explicit statement in the choral ode which immediately follows the carpet-scene, and from here it is carried through the trilogy to form one of the more potent lines which bind the three plays into a single whole." Thus, the carpet-image, in a certain sense, prefigures the greater image of spilt blood. See p. 222.
- 19 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 144.
- 20 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 452.
- 21 For a full, vigorous examination of the dramatic and theological importance of the Cassandra scene see D. M. Leahy, "The Role of Cassandra in the ORESTEIA of Aeschylus," BRL, 52 (1969), 144-77.

- 22 Fraenkel, vol 3, p. 561. Fraenkel rejects altogether the reading λέοντ' ἀναλκιν. Maas has emended the text to read λύκον λεόντος which makes better sense, certainly, although Fraenkel declares it weakens 1259.
- 23 Fraenkel, vol 3, pp. 642ff.
- 24 Fraenkel, vol 3, p. 643.
- 25 See pp. 159ff above on lines 681ff.
- 26 Fraenkel, vol 3, p. 695. Fraenkel is unwilling to find in Τανταλίδαισιν any further reference than to the two families of Atreus and Thyestes. But the audience could not have failed to recognize in the word the whole history of the house as known from myth.
- 27 Fraenkel, vol 3, pp. 727-30.
- 28 See also Il. 6.429 and Andromache's vision of Hector as father, brother, mother and husband.
- 29 See p. 184 above on line 306.
- 30 The nature and basis of the mother-child, or parent-child, relationship is one of the major and recurring motifs of the trilogy through which the poet, first, expresses the conflicts and, then, shows them resolved. The image appears first in the parodos of the AGAMEMNON, in the grief of the vultures at the plunder of their nest (Ag. 50), then in the horror of Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter, Iphigeneia, (Ag. 224ff) and then in Clytemnestra's love-turned-to-hate at the loss of the "labour of my womb" (Ag. 1417). In the CHOEPHOROI it appears in the unnatural behavior of Clytemnestra as mother to Orestes, then in the dread portent of her dream in which she gives birth to a serpent and, finally, in the foil to Clytemnestra which Kilissa represents. The motif is taken up again in the EUMENIDES as an important aspect of the trial in which the importance of the blood tie between mother and child, supported by the Erinyes, is set against the claims of marriage, espoused by Apollo, and in Athena's claim "no mother bore me . . ." (Eum. 736). See also Goheen, "Some Aspects of Dramatic Symbolism," 133ff:
- 31 The ORESTEIA of Aeschylus, ed. George Thomson: (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1966), vol 2, p. 191. Hereafter, referred to as Thomson.

- 32 Thomson, vol 2, p. 200.
- 33 K. J. Dover, "The Political Aspects of Aeschylus' EUMENIDES," JHS, 77 (1957), 230-37.
- 34 Winnington-Ingram, "Clytemnestra and the Vote of Athena," JHS, 68 (1948), 13-47. Winnington-Ingram sees in the characterization of Athena in the EUMENIDES the culmination of a male-female theme which began with the ἀνδρό-βουλον . . . κέαρ (Ag. 11) of Clytemnestra. Winnington-Ingram points out that Athena is in a certain sense a counterpart of Clytemnestra, (able to do all, by virtue of her godhead, that Clytemnestra's nature demands but her sex forbids.
- 35 See, also, K. J. Dover, "The Political Aspects of Aeschylus' EUMENIDES," 230-37.
- 36 Thomson, vol 2, pp. 220ff on lines 734-43. Lloyd-Jones (The Justice of Zeus, p. 92) has no difficulty with the vote of Athena: "the votes are equal and when Athena gives her casting vote, she does so for a reason that has nothing to do with the issue that is being judged; that is essential, for neither party is in the wrong and neither party must be defeated."
- 37 See P. Vellacott, "Has Good Prevailed? A Further Study of the ORESTEIA," HSPH, 81 (1957), 113-22 for the view that in casting her vote Athena "betrays the deterrent principle she has solemnly enjoined on the court" (p. 120). Vellacott continues that Athena recognizes not mercy, consideration, intention, penitence nor consanguinity but only sex of victim. D. A. Hester, "The Casting Vote," AJP, 102 (1981), 165-74, presents a concise survey of critical opinion on this problem with a lengthy bibliography. On a general basis he shows Muller, Verrall, Thomson, Campbell, Croiset, Winnington-Ingram, Podlecki and Fagles, among others, supporting the traditional view that Athena gives a casting vote to break a tie; Hermann, Wilamowitz, Kitto, Vickers and Gagarin, however, believe Athena's vote creates the tie.
- 38 Thomson, vol 2, p. 228.
- 39 See p. 166 above and note 18.
- 40 Goheen, "Some Aspects of Dramatic Symbolism," 172.

- 41 Thomson, vol 2, p. 231. Goheen (see note 18) points out the totality of the image of blood spilt upon the ground which has its first verbal and visual statement in the carpet-scene and its final conclusion in the red-robed procession at the end of the EUMENIDES.
- 42 For the political overtones and allusions implicit in the reconciliation of the Erinyes, and for the significance of εὐφρων and μετοικία see Thomson's long note vol 2, pp: 232ff.
- 43 Dodds, The Greeks and The Irrational, pp. 7, 16, 30.
- 44 Lloyd-Jones, "The Guilt of Agamemnon," 192.
- 45 H. Lloyd-Jones, "Zeus in Aeschylus," JHS, 76 (1956), 55-67.
- 46 Aeschylus AGAMEMNON, ed. J. D. Denniston and D. Page: (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), xxix.
- 47 C. H. Reeves, "The Parodos of the AGAMEMNON," CJ, 55 (1960), 169.
- 48 L. Golden, "Zeus, whoever he is . . .," TAPhA, 42 (1961), 156-67.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 A. Lesky, "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus," JHS, 86 (1966), 79.
- 51 G. M. A. Grube, "Zeus in Aeschylus," AJP, 91 (1970), 48.
- 52 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 99.
- 53 Aeschylus AGAMEMNON, ed. Denniston and Page.
- 54 Fraenkel, vol 3, p. 625.
- 55 Lloyd-Jones, "The Guilt of Agamemnon," 191. For the source of Dodds' views contained in this quotation see "Morals and Politics in the ORESTEIA," PCPS, 186 ns 6 (1960), 27-8. Elsewhere, in The Justice of Zeus, p. 91, Lloyd-Jones writes: "Agamemnon can hardly refuse the sacrifice, since it is the will of Zeus that the expedition shall sail and it can only sail when the sacrifice has been performed; but the sacrifice is nonetheless a dreadful crime."



- 56 N. G. L. Hammond, "Personal Freedom and its Limitations in the ORESTEIA," JHS, 85 (1965), 47.
- 57 See Appendix D.
- 58 It is the will of Zeus only that Troy be destroyed. The decision to sacrifice Iphigeneia arose directly from Agamemnon's θυμός, from his desire for victory and glory.
- 59 Lesky, "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus," 82.
- 60 Dover, "Some Neglected Aspects of Agamemnon's Dilemma," 64n.
- 61 Lloyd-Jones, "The Guilt of Agamemnon," 192.
- 62 See Solon-Fr. 13.25ff.
- 63 R. E. Doyle, "The Objective Concept of 'Ατῆ in Aeschylean Tragedy," Traditio, 28 (1972), 19.
- 64 See Diogenes Laërtius, 1.59: καὶ τὸν μὲν κόρον ὑπὸ πλούτου γεννᾶσθαι, τὴν δὲ ὕβριν ὑπὸ τοῦ κόρου.
- 65 Although it is doubtful whether, in the world of the AGAMEMNON man can free himself from the compulsion of ἄτη, the message of the ORESTEIA, as a whole, is clear and the elements of personal desire and human motivation remain the most significant factors in assessing an individual's guilt.
- 66 Leahy, "The Role of Cassandra in the ORESTEIA of Aeschylus," 175.
- 67 U. Fontenrose, "Gods and Men in the ORESTEIA," TAPhA, 102 (1971), 74ff. Fontenrose says if we are to suppose Zeus turned against Agamemnon we must find Agamemnon's supposed loss of favour implicit in the drama for it is not explicit. He claims, as well, that Agamemnon did not offend Zeus in causing great loss of life, in destroying Troy or committing outrages. However, it seems clear from the preceding analysis that Agamemnon has exceeded his role of divine agent in the war with Troy: it was Zeus' will only to punish Troy, not to sacrifice Iphigeneia and inflict violence upon the young and the temples of the gods. The Chorus make clear that in sacrificing his daughter Agamemnon committed an unholy,

impious deed (Ag. 220), while the herald's language underlines the violence of his deeds in Troy.

- 68 Hammond, "Personal Freedom and its Limitations in the ORESTEIA," 42. Hammond here argues against Lloyd-Jones ("The Guilt of Agamemnon, 199) in this saying, "if the curse is to come first and to be the *fons et origo* of the ensuing action in a living drama; then it must be presented early in the drama by the playwright. Yet, Aeschylus does not mention anything like "the curse" until the AGAMEMNON is two-thirds done." But, as we can see from this examination of the text, the curse is first alluded to in line 155.
- 69 Fraenkel takes a rather different view of Agamemnon's character from the one proposed here (see note 17 above). In his comment on "Agamemnon's behavior" in the carpet-scene Fraenkel writes: "he loathes what eventually he is compelled to do and feels degraded by it, as a warrior, as a Greek, as a man respectful of the gods . . . Why, then, does he yield at all? . . . One reason . . . is his reluctance to get the better of a woman. When he realizes that she has set her heart on reaching her end, his resistance falters. In this, as in everything else he proves a great gentleman, possessed of moderation and self-control." In the end Fraenkel feels Agamemnon gives way because "he is tired to the utmost, worn out by the unceasing struggle, overpowered by the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."
- 70 H. G. Robertson, "The Hybristes of Aeschylus," TAPhA, 98 (1967), 378.
- 71 Aeschylus AGAMEMNON, ed. Denniston and Page, p. xiii. See also Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, p. 90.
- 72 Leahy, "The Role of Cassandra in the ORESTEIA of Aeschylus," 144-77.
- 73 I am grateful to Professor A. Podlecki for his comments on this point.
- 74 Winnington-Ingram, "Clytemnestra and the Vote of Athena," 137
- 75 H. D. F. Kitto, "The Idea of God in Aeschylus and Sophocles," La Notion du Divin depuis Homère jusqu'à Platon, Fondation Hardt, 1, p. 185. Kitto writes: "Orestes

is an avenger of a new kind, his hands are clean, his motives are pure." This is not quite accurate for Orestes has blood on his hands until Apollo purifies him and his motives reflect certain personal elements: the desire to punish his mother for her murder of his father and her treatment of him, and his desire to regain his patrimony. What is new and different about Orestes is his refusal to give way to these only natural and human desires, to allow them to determine his actions.

- 76 Doyle, "The Objective Concept of *Atē* in Aeschylean Tragedy," 24.
- 77 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, pp. 192-93.
- 78 Kitto, "The Idea of God . . .," p. 173.
- 79 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 196.
- 80 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, pp. 188-89. On the death of Agamemnon Solmsen writes: ". . . we should remember (it) is a link in a chain of murders which stretches through the curse-ridden, Erinyes-haunted house of the Atreidae, but that it is at the same time a manifestation of Zeus' justice . . . There can be little doubt that both work together for Agamemnon's destruction." Solmsen believes that the same conjunction of forces can be seen in the death of Clytemnestra: ". . . we have every right to believe that Zeus approves of the murder of Clytemnestra . . . It is certainly inconceivable that the unjust and oppressive tyranny which Clytemnestra and Aegisthos built upon the basis of their crime should be a matter of indifference to the god who is the protector of Right and Justice. Again, however, not only Zeus but the Erinyes, too, demand retribution for the blood of Agamemnon." Solmsen is clearly mistaken, though, in thinking the Erinyes "demand retribution for the blood of Agamemnon." Apollo threatens Orestes with the προσβολαὶ Ἐρινύων (Chor. 283) if he fails to avenge the death of his father but the Erinyes themselves never had any part in it, being concerned only with the spilling of kindred blood.
- 81 Although Apollo is cast as the chief opponent of the Erinyes in this final play of the trilogy, and insists he speaks for Zeus upon his oracular seat (*Eum.* 616-18), in fact he does not represent completely the position of Zeus. That role belongs to Athena whose wisdom and

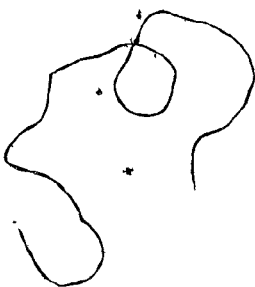
civic virtue enable her to bring about a reconciliation between the primitive justice of the Erinyes and the justice of Zeus embodied in the νόμος. Rather, Apollo, as he is presented in the ORESTEIA, represents a primitive and early stage in the development of the Olympian order. Discussing Apollo's role in the trilogy Winnington-Ingram writes: "Somewhere between the Furies and the Areopagus stand Apollo and the Delphic code of vengeance. I believe that Aeschylus meant to criticize this code as an inconsistent compromise, showing all too slight an advance upon that of the Furies and destined itself to give way before a more efficient instrument of justice" ("The Role of Apollo in the ORESTEIA," CR, 47 (1933), 101). The characterization of the justice of Apollo in the ORESTEIA Winnington-Ingram calls a "half-way house" between "the (Furies') justice and that of the city-state" (103). For a fuller discussion of the nature of Apollo's justice, see pp. 267-68 below.

- 82 Winnington-Ingram, "The Role of Apollo in the ORESTEIA," 196.
- 83 Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, p. 92.
- 84 Fraenkel, vol 2, p. 113.
- 85 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 200.
- 86 Er. 223-37, 22021.
- 87 Solon, Fr. 6.2, 14.16, 13.74 and 13.11.
- 88 See also Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, pp. 93-4.
- 89 Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 195.
- 90 Ibid. p. 202.
- 91 See also Solmsen, Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 180, note 11.
- 92 Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, pp. 93-4.

#### CONCLUSION

- 1 Albin Lesky, History of Greek Literature, trans. James Willis and Cornelis de Heer: (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1966), pp. 257ff.

- 2 Such a statement requires the acknowledgement, at the very least, of the difficulties presented by the PROMETHEUS BOUND in drawing any general conclusions about the character of Zeus and the nature of his justice, not only in Aeschylus but also in that sense that a consistent characterization may be traced in the other poets. Critics and commentators have long struggled with the presentation of Zeus in the PROMETHEUS BOUND. In their efforts to harmonize it with the rest of the works of Aeschylus and the other poets they have found themselves mired among, and contributing to, what D. J. Conacher describes as the "welter of conflicting views and ever subtler refinements of the problem of Zeus in PROMETHEUS BOUND. . . ." (Aeschylus' PROMETHEUS BOUND: A Literary Commentary: [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980], p. 127). Professor Conacher's commentary of the PROMETHEUS BOUND provides a comprehensive and balanced examination of the critical history of this question and it will be enough here to indicate the general divisions into which scholarly opinion has tended to fall and the conclusions which Conacher has drawn from his own analysis of the play and its problems.



The problem of "Zeus in PROMETHEUS BOUND" arises from the characterization of Zeus as cruel and harsh in his treatment of Prometheus and as ruling his new realm ἀθέτως (Pr. 150) and ἰσίοις νόμοις (Pr. 430), and thus, as Conacher writes, from "the necessity of envisaging, from what the poet tells us in the first play, this radical transformation of Zeus in the reconciliation or compromise (or both) which we know must take place" (p. 125). In answer to these problems the critics have adopted various attitudes. At one extreme stand those who, despairing of any solution, would deny the Aeschylean authorship of PROMETHEUS BOUND, while at the other end of the critical spectrum L. D. F. Kitto allows, as Conacher relates, "a sort of poetic licence on Aeschylus' part in presenting an evolving Zeus whether or not this presentation agrees with prevailing Greek ideas on the gods" (p. 125).

In between lies the majority of the commentators who accept Aeschylus' authorship and yet acknowledge certain problems in the characterization of Zeus which it presents. This large group, according to Conacher, can be roughly speaking, classed as "Zeus-defenders" and "Zeus-improvers" (p. 120).

The "Zeus-defenders", among whom Conacher lists Lloyd-Jones and Reinhardt, maintain that the Zeus of PROMETHEUS BOUND is consistent with the rest of Aeschylus' work despite the harshness and apparent arbitrariness of his treatment of Prometheus. The PROMETHEUS BOUND shows a different aspect of Zeus' power and supremacy, they insist, as is demanded by the different context. This difference in situation is sufficient to account for any apparent inconsistencies.

The "Zeus-improvers", by far the larger group including L. Sechan, George Thomson, Wilamowitz, Solmsen, Grossmann, Winnington-Ingram, argue that, even granting the different circumstances of the PROMETHEUS BOUND a change is needed in the attitude of Zeus for a reconciliation between him and Prometheus to take place. These critics, thus, promote the notion of evolution in the character of Zeus. Solmsen (Hesiod and Aeschylus, p. 189) writes: "... in PROMETHEUS BOUND Zeus has not yet learned wisdom. He is not the same Zeus whose vision dominates the EUMENIDES," and Winnington-Ingram ("The Role of Apollo in the ORESTEIA," 101) declares: "... Aeschylus' Zeus is not a static god, but capable of moral development."

For himself, Conacher believes that despite the unsympathetic light in which Zeus is portrayed in PROMETHEUS BOUND there are clear indications of the terms upon which a reconciliation between Zeus and Prometheus must be made. This reconciliation, Conacher declares, must exploit, as before, the "rational element which Zeus needed to establish his new rule and ... the philanthropic element without which man is doomed. In any reconciliation between Zeus and Prometheus, these Promethean qualities must again be exploited: they may not require a change in Zeus' nature, but they will assuredly require a change in his manner of ruling and his attitude toward his subjects" (p. 132). Conacher concludes his discussion with a look at the "practical political terms" upon which he sees this reconciliation being made, the concessions granted by Zeus in return for recompense made by Prometheus.

Although one may not with impunity apply the  $\mu\alpha\theta\epsilon\iota$   $\mu\alpha\theta\omicron\varsigma$  notion to the situation of Zeus in PROMETHEUS BOUND it is clear that the type of change in attitude envisaged by Conacher requires an element of intelligence such as we have attributed to the other characterizations of Zeus.

- 3 Bruno Snell, Discovery of the Mind, trans. T.G. Rosenmeyer: (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1982), p. 86.
- 4 P.A. Vander Waerdt, "Post-Promethean Man and The Justice of Zeus," Ramus, 11 (1983), 32. One must, of course, distinguish here the knowledge which Prometheus gives man and that which Zeus gives: as Conacher (Ibid. p. 127) points out "in the solemn catalogue of the arts which Prometheus bestows there is no mention of the civic arts by which the polis will be made possible."
- 5 E.M. Bradley, "The Greatness of his Nature: Fire and Justice in the ODYSSEY," Ramus, 5 (1976), 137.
- 6 Ibid. 146.
- 7 W.B. Stanford, The Ulysses Theme: (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954), p. 66.

## APPENDIX A

THE PARADIGM OF THE HOUSE OF ATREUS IN THE ODYSSEY

From the time when Zeus first points to the lesson of Aigisthos' fate (Od. 1.35ff) the story of the house of Atreus becomes an important and powerful paradeigma in the ODYSSEY, endowing the particular story of Odysseus' return with a wider, more universal significance. While the poet of the ODYSSEY saw important parallels between events in Mycenae and the situation in Ithaca he also saw significant differences. As the poet weaves the old themes of treachery, death and vengeance throughout the narrative the focus of the myth changes from the similarities which link the two situations to the differences which distinguish them, the difference in the actual situations and the difference in the outcome. This shift of focus within the myth reflects the development of the theme of justice in the narrative itself and underlines an important change in its focus.

It is Athena, in the guise of Mentes, who draws the first direct connection between the house of Atreus and the royal family of Ithaca when she urges Telemachos to go in search of his father. "If you discover Odysseus has perished," she counsels, "slay the suitors in your hall, either by a trap or openly;" and she reminds him



ἢ οὐκ αἰεὶς οἷον κλέος ἔλλαβε δῖος Ὀρέστης  
 πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, ἐπεὶ ἔκτανε πατροφονῆα,  
 Αἴγισθον δολόμητιν, ὃ οἱ πατέρα κλυτὸν ἔκτα;  
 (Od. 1.298-300)

Clearly, Athena implies, the situation in Ithaca is in need of just such a restoration as Orestes wrought in Mycenae. With Orestes as a model Telemachos, too, may win glory for himself and avenge the honour of his father.

Later, in Pylos, the analogy between the house of Atreus and the family of Laertes is reinforced when Nestor repeats the story of Agamemnon's death. Even more explicitly than Athena he also emphasizes the treachery of Aigisthos and the vengeance of Orestes. "You, yourself," he says, "though afar off, have heard how he came and slew Aigisthos," and he continues:

ἀλλ' ἦ τοι κείνος μὲν ἐπισμυγερῶς ἀπέτισεν,  
 ὥς ἀγαθὸν καὶ παῖδα καταφθιμένοιο λιπέσθαι  
 ἀνδρός, ἐπεὶ καὶ κείνος ἐτίετο πατροφονῆα,  
 Αἴγισθον δολόμητιν, ὃ οἱ πατέρα κλυτὸν ἔκτα.  
 (Od. 3.195-98)

Though he doubts he would ever be able to follow the example of Orestes Telemachos has marked the connection between events in Mycenae and the present situation in Ithaca.

αἶ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τοσσὴνδε θεοὶ δύναντιν περιθεῖν,  
 τίσασθαι μνηστῆρας ὑπερβασίης ἀλεγεινῆς,  
 οἳ τέ μοι ὑβρίζοντες ἀτάσθαλα μηχανόωνται.  
 (Od. 3.205-07)

The repetition of the verb *τίνω* in this passage (Od. 3.195ff) is of particular importance: Orestes has taken *vengeance* upon Aigisthos (Od. 3.195, 197, 203), Telemachos prays that he might have the strength to take *vengeance* upon the suitors (Od. 3.206), and Nestor (Od. 3.216) suggests that Odysseus, on his return, would deal *retribution* to the suitors. For both Athena and Nestor the myth speaks of the need to avenge shameful deeds. Aigisthos' murder of Agamemnon has called forth a *τίσις* from Orestes; therefore, by implication, the shameful deeds of the suitors also require a *τίσις*. Whether or not this is what is ultimately required and fulfilled remains one of the important questions of the ODYSSEY.

In Sparta, while still in search of news of Odysseus, Telemachos hears again the story of Agamemnon's homecoming, of how crafty-minded Aigisthos (Od. 4.525) devised a treacherous plot (Od. 4.529) and laid an ambush (Od. 4.531), of how he invited the shepherd of the host in and

κατέπεφνε  
δειπνίσας, ὥς τις τε κατέκτανε βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτῃ.  
(Od. 4.534-35).

With Menelaos' account the notion of *τίσις* has begun to fade yet the recurring themes of treachery and betrayal and murder in all these versions underline the guilt of the suitors and reinforce the expectation that Odysseus will return and that he will slay the suitors.

The motif appears again in Book 11 when Odysseus meets Agamemnon in the House of Hades. There Odysseus learns from the lord of hosts himself of the unheroic death which he suffered on his return from war, ὡς τίς τε κατέκτανε βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ, how he and his men, σύες ὡς ἀργυρόδοντες, fell not ἐνὶ κρατερῇ ὑσμίνῃ, but as they ate, δειπνίσσας, in the midst of the κρατῆρα τραπέζας τε πλυθούσας (Od. 11.411-19).

Agamemnon's account emphasizes not only the unheroic manner of his death but the shamefulness of Clytemnestra, a δολόμητις (Od. 11.422), κυνῶπις (Od. 11.424), who devised ἔργον ἀεικέες, κουριδίῳ . . . πόσει φόνον (Od. 11.430), and

οὐδέ μοι ἔτλη εἶναι περ εἰς Ἀΐδαο  
χερσὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοῦς ἐλέειν σὺν τε στόμ' ἐρεῖσαι.  
(Od. 11.425-26)

Though Clytemnestra's faithless treachery and violation of the most sacred duties has brought shame upon all women (Od. 11.433) Agamemnon marks the contrast between his wife "who should have been my benefactor" (Od. 11.434) and the steadfast fidelity of Odysseus' wife, Penelope (Od. 11.446).

Finally, Agamemnon compares the reception he received in Mycenae with the joy he imagines awaits Odysseus in Ithaca. "I had expected to be welcomed home by my children and household" (Od. 11.430-32), he laments, but

ἡ δ' ἐμὴ οὐδέ περ υἱὸς ἐνὶ πλοσθῆναι ἀκοιτὶς  
 οφθαλμοῖσιν ἔασε· πάρος δέ με πέφνε καὶ αὐτόν.  
 (Od. 11.452-53)

Odysseus, however, will not find murder at home when he  
 returns, for

λίην γὰρ πινυτή τε καὶ εὖ φρεσὶ μῆδεα οἶδον  
 κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο, περίφρων Πηνελόπεια.  
 (Od. 11. 445-46)

and there will be his son

ἧ γὰρ τὸν γε πατὴρ φίλος ὄψεται ἐλθών,  
 καὶ κεῖνος πατέρα προσπύξεται, ἡ θέμις ἐστίν.  
 (Od. 11.450-51)

It is natural that Agamemnon's story centers upon the treachery of Clytemnestra, the cowardly deed she planned and the unheroic manner of his death. Yet, with his account the myth takes on a new focus. The earlier theme of τίσις, of punishment and revenge, has faded completely to be replaced by a new emphasis upon the virtue of Penelope and the joy which awaits Odysseus at home as a result. The myth now speaks not of the similarities between the events in Mycenae and the situation in Ithaca but rather of the differences: no longer does it offer a model for vengeance and atonement but rather the hope of a different fate for Odysseus.

With the meeting between the two great lords in the Halls of Death every aspect of this many-faceted myth seems to have been explored. Yet, somehow the image never quite fades,

and indeed it reappears again, in full vigour, in the epilogue in Book 24. Hermes is conducting the spirits of the slain suitors to the Underworld and from Amphimedon Agamemnon learns how Odysseus "let the grief-bearing shafts fly against the rest (of the suitors) with straight aim and they fell one after another" (Od. 24.179-80). The last word fittingly, belongs to Agamemnon as he salutes the μεγάλη ἀρετή (Od. 24.193) of Odysseus and the ἀγαθαὶ φρένες (Od. 24.294) of Penelope, as he hails Odysseus, ὀλβιος (Od. 24.192), and condemns again the κακὰ ἔργα (Od. 24.199) of the daughter of Tyndareus for "slaying her wedded husband" (Od. 24.200).

Agamemnon's fate also underlines the important role of knowledge in deciding a man's destiny. The lord of hosts answered the invitation of Aigisthos "not knowing" the destruction (Od. 4.534) which awaited him. It is for this reason that he bids Odysseus to be circumspect, to land in Ithaca "secretly, not openly" (Od. 11.455); thus, does he extol the virtue of Penelope who εὖ φρεσὶ μήδεα οἶδε (Od. 11.455). Because of the ἀγαθαὶ φρένες (Od. 24.194) of blameless Penelope her fame will never perish.

Clearly, the history of the house of Atreus has proven a rich treasury of exempla for the poet of the ODYSSEY. As the shameful deeds of Aigisthos brought punishment from

the hand of Orestes so also will the deeds of the suitors bring punishment upon them from an avenger. Yet, having marked the similarities between the two situations the ultimate force of the paradigm is to emphasize the differences (οὐχ ὥς, Od. 24.199), the differences between the χαρίεσσα δούδῃ of Penelope (Od. 24.198) and the στυγερὴ δούδῃ of Clytemnestra (Od. 24.200), and, consequently, between the happy fortune of Odysseus and the wretched fate of Agamemnon. This movement in the myth reflects a similar change of focus in the narrative of the poem, also. While all signs in the Telemachia point to the need for Odysseus to return and avenge the wrong done by the suitors in the event it is not the *τὸς* aspect of the slaying of the suitors which the poet emphasizes but rather the spirit in which Odysseus "sets his hand against" them. It is his virtue, his restraint and endurance upon which the poet focuses our attention.

#### APPENDIX B PANDORA'S HOPE

From ancient times the confusion of images in the nature of the Hope left within Pandora's jar and the character and function of the jar itself has puzzled critics who, with the scholiast, have asked "what sort of jar is it?" and "what does the poet mean by saying Hope remained in the

jar?", (Schol. Op. 97). Aristarchus (Ibid.), in answer to a question raised earlier by Comanus, declared that it was ἡ τῶν κακῶν that remained in the jar while ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν flew out. Proclus (Procl. Op. 94), however, likening the jar of Pandora to the two jars of Zeus (Il. 24.527), concluded that Hope was of the τὰ ἀγαθὰ. Although this division of opinion has persisted to recent times most scholars are now inclined, with West (Hesiod WORKS AND DAYS, p. 169), to grant Hope a positive character and constructive role.

The following discussion suggests that the poet's characterization of Αἰδώς and Νέμεσις, and the general motif of duality which informs the ERGA, may provide a model for determining not only the nature of Hope but the significance of her place within the jar, and its implications for men.

Amid all the explicit images of duality which the ERGA contains, Hope alone seems strangely incomplete. There are the two Ἐριδες, δίκη and ὕβρις, the πανάριστος man and he who is ἀχρήτος, νήπιος and there is also αἰδώς, ἥ τ' ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεταί, ἥδ' ὀνίνησιν (Er. 317); but of hope, apart from the one which remains in the jar, we know only of the Ἑλπίς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή which attends a man in need (Er. 500) and the κενεὴ ἐλπίς upon which an idle man feeds (Er. 498). Are we, therefore, to assume that the Ἑλπίς in the jar is the ἀγαθὴ Ἑλπίς?

The case of Αἰδώς may, perhaps, cast some light on the problem for Hesiod knows of an αἰδώς which can harm a man and one which can benefit him (Er. 318), of αἰδώς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή which attends a man in need (Er. 317) and of Αἰδώς which, according to the Myth, has gone off with Νέμεσις back to Olympus because of man's violence and impiety (Er. 200). Since, clearly, the αἰδώς which harms man is the αἰδώς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή it seems safe to assume that the αἰδώς which benefits man is that Αἰδώς which has returned to Olympus.

Here we find a model for the understanding of Ἐλπίς. If the ἐλπίς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή and αἰδώς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθή both represent the negative aspects of their respective feelings can we not assume that the Ἐλπίς in Pandora's jar is the good, the beneficial ἐλπίς even as is the Αἰδώς which has gone to Olympus?

However, a more important question for the ERGA as a whole is not whether this is the Good Hope or the Bad Hope but whether by remaining within the jar Hope can now be said to be preserved safely and to be, therefore, available to man or whether it is imprisoned and kept from man. Clearly, a jar can be used to keep a thing safe for something or safely away from something else. It is this double function that we see in the one jar of Pandora: while the evils are in it they



are kept safely away from the lives of men -- under his control Walcot ("Pandora's Jar, ERGA 83-105," Hermes, 89 (1961), 251) says, -- and later, when the evils have flown away, Hope is kept safe for man and preserved as Αἰδώς and Νέμεσις are safe on Mt. Olympus.

This image has a relevance beyond its immediate context. The myth of Pandora, as well as that of the Five Races of Man, serve a double purpose for Hesiod: by means of these stories he is able not only to explain the presence of evil in the world but also to support his conviction that, despite the evil that now exists, man's lot need not be one of suffering and woe. Trouble comes upon man as a result of his own ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία, yet, according to the myths, Hope still remains and the gods are concerned with the δίκαια καὶ σκέτλια ἔργα of men. But if the Hope within Pandora's jar is denied to man in what may he hope that his lot need not be one of unending misery and woe; wherefore, then do the spirits of the Golden Age become ἐπιχθόνιοι, as ἀλεξίκακοι, φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων?

#### APPENDIX C THE MYTH OF THE FIVE RACES.

Hesiod's ἕτερος λόγος (Er. 106) tells of man's early history in the form of a myth of Five Races. Critical,

opinion has traditionally focused upon the structure and origins of the myth but attempts to harmonize its peculiarities with the rest of Hesiod's thought and Greek religion, as a whole, have met with little success. On the general problem Lloyd-Jones (The Justice of Zeus, p. 34) writes:

The myth of the races cannot safely be taken as representative of Greek belief; it is a highly individual invention, made to demonstrate a theory which found few echoes in later tradition.

West, however, in his analysis of the ERGA (Hesiod WORKS AND DAYS, p. 176) has discovered mythological traditions among the Persians, Hebrews, Indians and Sumnerians in which man's pre-history is represented by the branches of a tree or the limbs of a statue -- all images reflecting an organic unity similar to that of a succession of races. Writing of these Oriental parallels West notes ". . . while we do not find a system that contains all the features of Hesiod's system of metallic ages, we find parallels for each of those features, and sometimes for several of them together, which go beyond coincidence."

Although West admits that the myth in "its very formalism is ungreeks" (p. 177) it is clear that Hesiod was working with a well-established tradition which he brought to serve his own greater poetic purpose. It is his success in this endeavour which is at issue.

As a creation story it is true that Hesiod's Myth of the Five Races never gained wide acceptance. Traditional ties with the heroes and autochthonous ancestors were too deeply rooted to be supplanted by this rather artificial scheme. But was it Hesiod's intent to offer a story about the origins of man? Was he not rather concerned to illumine the human condition, to reveal to his generation the basis upon which the divine-human relationship was founded? For this purpose the Myth of the Five Races served Hesiod very well: the gods are wroth with those who break their sanctions, it teaches, -- ὕβρις and ἀτασθαλία offend the gods and bring suffering to mankind. Though we may not understand the implications of a Golden Age ἐπὶ Κρόνου, though we do not know why the Golden Age passed away we do know that the Silver Age outraged Zeus by their violence and impiety and were, thus, destroyed. We may not understand why Zeus created the Bronze Age nor the full intent of the parallels between the men of Bronze, whose interests are in hybris and the mournful deeds of war (Er. 148-49), and the One-Hundred Armed monsters born of Kronos and Rheia (Th. 150-51, 649, 671) who find a place in the new order of Zeus. Nevertheless, it is clear that, because of their ὕβρις and κρατερῶρων θυμός, these men of the Bronze Age have vanished, nameless, into the icy House of Hades, never again to see the light of the sun (Er. 155). So, also, will Zeus punish the men of the Iron Age if they persist in their ways of violence and injustice.

Although some scholars (Walcott, REG, 74 (1961), 4-7; Querbach, "Hesiod's Myth of the Four Races," presented to CAC, June, 1982, Ottawa, Ontario) believe the Age of Heroes was part of the original mythical structure West gives this as the present consensus (p. 174): "It has long been recognized that the Heroes have been inserted (whether by Hesiod or a predecessor) into a system of four metallic races, each worse than the one before." For Hesiod the Age of Heroes offered a focal point for a new pattern: the evidence of the Golden, Silver and Bronze Ages shows that the fate of the wicked and unjust is suffering and misery; so now, in the Heroes, we find explicit proof that the just are rewarded. As Zeus has rendered the heroes (Er. 172) so also will he deal with the man who speaks justly, τῷ , ἐν τ' ὀλβον εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς (Er. 281). Herein lies the fulfillment of the poet's hope, for this end do the ἐπιχθόνιοι watch over the δίκαια καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα of men.

Despite the many inconsistencies and unresolved questions of the myth it became for Hesiod, in its broad outlines, a paradeigma to support his two-fold premise that man's present state of misery and woe was attributable to his own wrongdoing, that the gods were concerned with the deeds of men and punish the wicked and reward the just.

## APPENDIX D THE IMPIOUS DEED

In emphasizing that Aigisthos has suffered ὑπὲρ μέρου (Od. 1.35) for marrying Clytemnestra the poet of the ODYSSEY has made explicit the principle of human responsibility which lies at the center of man's relations to the gods. The poets all accept a certain duality in the human condition: that suffering and woe are, in part, the result of man's own misdeeds and come, therefore, ὑπὲρ μέρου, and, in part, the consequence of his lot, apportioned by Μοῖρα and, therefore, κατὰ μέρου. Yet, despite their recognition of that element of man's destiny which lay beyond his control the poets were unanimous in their understanding of the essential nature of the divine-human relationship. Man is not at the mercy of arbitrary and capricious gods, they teach; he has grief beyond his lot because of his own folly and reckless presumption; the wrath of the gods is not unmotivated but is roused by man's wrongdoing. It is this fundamental principle which underlies all Greek theological thought from the ODYSSEY to the ORESTEIA.

In the ODYSSEY the poet declares that Odysseus' men have "perished because of their own wrongdoing (ἀτασθαλίῃσιν, 1.7) for in their foolishness they ate of the cattle of Hyperion Helios". And Zeus, himself, points out that "men

have grief beyond their lot because of their own reckless presumption" (ἀτασθαλίῃσιν, 1.34).

In the THEOGONIA Hesiod declares that "Zeus was angered" (χόσατο δὲ φρένας, Th. 554) at Prometheus' duplicity in the division of the sacrificial offerings (Th. 550ff). When Prometheus deceived Zeus a second time (Th. 565) and stole fire away for man in a hollow reed the mighty Olympian was again moved to anger (ἐχόλωσε δὲ μιν φίλον ἦτορ, Th. 568). As a result of Prometheus' wrongdoing Zeus caused Pandora to be made and sent as great suffering for men (Th. 593), for there is no way to avoid the purpose of Zeus.

So important does Hesiod consider this lesson that he tells the story of Prometheus again in the ERGA with particular emphasis again upon Zeus' anger at the treachery and deception of Prometheus: "Zeus grew angry at heart" (χολωσάμενος φρεσὶ ῥσιν, Er. 47) because the wily Prometheus had deceived him. And when the son of Iapetos stole fire for man Zeus, the Cloud-Gatherer, spoke to him in anger (χολωσάμενος, Er. 53) saying, ". . . for you and men yet unborn there will be great suffering" (Er. 47-56).

In the Myth of the Five Races the message is the same: Zeus, the son of Kronos was angry with the men of the

Silver Age "because they did not honour the blessed gods who dwell on Olympus" (Er. 138-39) and so he destroyed them. So also will the men of the Iron Age perish, Hesiod declares, because they "honour not their aged parents nor fear the wrath of the gods" (Er. 185-87).

It is ὕβρις and ἀνασθαλία which rouse the anger of the gods and bring suffering to men. For this reason Hesiod bids his brother "heed justice and not increase hybris (Er. 213), . . . : give ear to justice and altogether forget violence" (Er. 275) that he may not offend the gods and incur suffering. In the ODYSSEY the same lesson is told by Eumaeus, the swineherd; when he reminds Odysseus, "the gods love not the wretched deeds of men but honour their just and righteous works" (Od. 14.83-4).

There can be no doubt that, for the poets, the gods are mindful of the deeds of men and reward the just and punish the wicked. It is to this end, Hesiod says, that the men of the Golden Age pass upon the earth as ἐπιχθόνιοι (Er. 122) watching over the δίκαια καὶ σθένεα ἔργα of men; it is for this reason that Hermes is sent by the gods to warn Aigisthos of the consequences of his actions. Zeus has other agents, as well, Hesiod reminds his audience: the thirty thousand immortal guardians of mortal men (Er. 153), and Δίῃ

(Er. 256), his own daughter, who runs crying to Zeus whenever she is harmed, and, finally, the eye of Zeus, himself, which "sees all and notices all" (Er. 267).

In Solon's poetry we discover the same fundamental principle: it is not by the destiny of Zeus and the intent of the blessed gods that the city is destroyed (Fr. 4.1-2) but by the citizens themselves who, being foolish and moved by desire for unlawful wealth (Fr. 4.5-6), are willing for it to perish. It is νόσος (Fr. 6.3) which begets ὄβρις and leads man to destruction, and ἀνδρῶν δ' ἐν μεγάλῳ πόλις ὀλλυται (Fr. 9.3). In another place (Fr. 11. 1-4) Solon emphasizes this principle of human responsibility again in unmistakable, and politically explicit, terms: "if you have suffered baneful woes on account of your own wrongdoing", he chides the people, "do not impute to the gods the portion of these things; for you yourselves, by giving them protection, have promoted them and, for this reason, you have evil slavery."

In the AGAMEMNON the old men of the Chorus, considering the origin of their present misfortunes, sing, "some deny that the gods are concerned for those who tread upon sacred things. But he is not pious" (Ag. 369ff). Rather, "the gods are mindful of those who murder and in time a black Erinys wears away, with reversals of fortune, the man who is



fortunate without justice, and she renders him unseen: (Ag. 461ff). Common piety held that it was dangerous to hear excessive good of oneself. "There is an old story told among men," the Chorus recall (Ag. 750ff), "that great happiness for man is to beget children and not to die childless, and that from good fortune insatiate misery for a race bursts into bud. But, I am of another opinion," they declare:

τὸ δυσσεβὲς γὰρ ἔργον  
μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίηται,  
σφετέρῳ δ' εἰκότα γέννηται  
οἴκων γὰρ εὐδυδίκων  
καλλίπαις πότμος αἰεὶ.

(Ag. 758-62)

The impious deed thereafter begets more  
like unto its own race; the destiny of  
the righteous house is always fair.

According to tradition divine wrath first fell upon the house of Atreus when Tantalus offered his son, Pelops, as a sacrifice to the gods. For his hybris the gods cast him into Tartarus to suffer everlasting hunger and thirst while standing in water and surrounded by tempting fruits. Pelops, himself, offended the gods when he treacherously defeated Myrtilus in a chariot race for the hand of Hippodamia. In the next generation, Thyestes took the wife of his brother, Atreus, in adultery and for this offence Atreus served him a banquet of his own children's flesh. At Aulis Agamemnon continued the tradition of child-slaughter by sacrificing his daughter in exchange for a fair wind to Troy, and he, in turn,

was slain by Clytemnestra for the murder of their daughter. In time, Orestes was sent by Apollo to avenge the death of his father by murdering his mother and her new husband, Aigisthos.

The question arises: how are we, in this cycle of sin and punishment, to understand the concept of the *δυσσεβές ἔργον*? In a world in which blood calls for blood, where sons are bound to avenge the wrongs of their fathers and each generation is driven by the guilt of the past how can man avoid the consequences of the *δυσσεβές ἔργον*? What is it that renders an act of avenging justice, ordained by the gods, a *δυσσεβές ἔργον*?

While Agamemnon is the victim of the ancestral curse, of the *φοβερά παλίννοτος οἰκονόμος δολία* (Ag. 154-55) the Chorus have no hesitation in declaring his sacrifice of Iphigeneia an *ἀναγνον, ἀνίερν* (Ag. 220). His wanton destruction of the temples of Troy and the people of Priam, his arrogant return to Argos are impious deeds of *ὑβρις* and *ἀτασθαλία* which anger the gods and bring down suffering and death upon the king.

Although not originally involved in the ancestral guilt of the family Clytemnestra is caught up in it by the

death of Iphigeneia. In seeking to avenge the murder of her daughter she in turn commits a  $\delta\upsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\beta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma \epsilon\pi\gamma\rho\upsilon\nu$  by her own treacherous slaughter of her husband and her king.

Aigisthos is, also, driven by the ancestral guilt and the need to avenge his father, but through his hybristic exultation and pride in the crime he devised that which he sees as an act of avenging justice becomes an impious deed for which he himself will be punished.

As we have seen Agamemnon and Clytemnestra and Aigisthos all desired with a passionate will the deeds to which they had set their hands. Orestes, however, though clearly guilty of the murder of Clytemnestra, stained and polluted by her blood, alone maintains the integrity of his role as agent of Apollo. It is for this reason that his act of avenging justice becomes neither a  $\delta\upsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\beta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma \epsilon\pi\gamma\rho\upsilon\nu$  nor a continuation of the former cycle of sin and punishment.

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