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Εενία Πολύτροπος:

The Social Ritual of Hospitality in The Odyssey

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The communities of the Homeric world, being similar to the world of Ancient Greece, were relatively isolated from the larger world with interspersed times of social interaction. Since so many of the inhabitants of Homer's world did not know each other by face, but rather by reputation, *ξενία*, a cultural set of guidelines for hospitality, was used to navigate the waters of social interaction. *Ξενία* is comprised of the relationship and interactions between a guest and his host, which, ideally, are grounded in mutual friendship and respect; one can also refer to the process of this as the ritual of hospitality. No mode of social interaction is more prominent in the *Odyssey* than *ξενία*, nor is there any more important. For in the poem the sort of hospitality that a character receives governs and colors how the rest of the episode will play out. Homer gives the reader/listener a spectrum of hospitality from barbarically hostile with respect to the actions of both the guest and host, to honorable, successful *ξενία* in which both parties are satisfied. Its typical structure consists of many necessary elements such as the seeking and acceptance of shelter, washing, eating, identification, sleeping, some sort of gift, the eventual leaving of the guest, and many other ritualistic acts. Homer manipulates the order and manifestation of these elements in the structure of hospitality in order to produce a variety of episodes revolving around *ξενία*. Over the course of this essay, I shall analyze the ways in which Homer manipulates the structure of *ξενία* to achieve different social interactions in six different versions of *ξενία*: Telemachus in Pylos at the court of Nestor, Telemachus in Sparta at the court of Menelaus, Odysseus in Scheria at the court of Alcinous, Odysseus in the island of the Cyclopes at the cave of Polyphemus, Odysseus in Ithaca at the hut of Eumeus, and finally, Odysseus at his own court.

Before exploring variants on the theme of hospitality, successful precedents must be set. Successful *ξενία* is the when both guest and host observe the ritual steps of *ξενία* ending in providing conveyance for the guest to reach his next destination. These positive social interactions come in the form of Telemachus' visits to Pylos and afterwards, Sparta. These two examples have merit in that they are more likely to be similar to how Greeks of the classical era associated when travelling than the examples in Odysseus' self-narrated journeys. In searching for his father, Telemachus visits two of Odysseus' fellow kings and warriors at Troy, King Nestor of Pylos and King Menelaus of Sparta in Books III and IV. These visits demonstrate successful, positive interactions, heavily grounded in the ritual of *ξενία*. Though both interactions are positive, that is not to say that they are the same. From Telemachus' arrival at Pylos, which coincides with a sacrifice to Poseidon, the first description shows that the Pylians observe the religious practices common to the Homeric world: “τοὶ δ᾽ ἐπὶ θινὶ θαλάσσης ιερὰ ρέζον, / ταύρους παμμέλανας, ἐνοσίχθονι κυανοχαίτῃ” (III, 5-6). The first glimpse of Nestor that is given also shows him practicing the ritual of sacrifice (III, 32-3). Nestor's and the Pylians' piety is consistently reinforced throughout the remainder of the book. The initial descriptions of Pylos and Nestor are important in that they show that their culture worships the same gods and in the same way as Telemachus does, and therefore the chance for substantial *ξενία* is increased. This chance is further solidified when the guests are seen, greeted, and invited to sit with the Pylians (*οἱ δὲ οὓν ξείνους ἴδον, ἀθρόοι ἥλθον ἄπαντες, / χερσίν τ᾽ ἡσπάζοντο καὶ ἐδριάσθαι ἄνωγον* [III, 34-5]). Not content to say that the Pylians welcomed them, Homer uses intensifying adjectives to show the geniality of the hosts; “ἀθρόοι” brings to light the unity and inclusivity, while

“ἄπαντες” illuminates Homer’s efforts to show sheer number of the hosts as in keeping with *ξενία*. Here then, is the beginning of the episode when the guest has been welcomed and seated. Nestor, being in the middle of a sacrifice, offers inner parts and pours wine into a golden cup (*δῶκε δ' ἄρα σπλάγχνων μοίρας, ἐν δ' οἴνοις ἔχευεν / χρυσείῳ δέπαϊ* [III, 40-1]). However, this is not wine to drink, but wine to pour out as a libation first. This process occurs twice more (III, 332; 390) in the book. Religious probity cannot be emphasized enough in this book as the preparations for the feast and sacrifice far exceed the description of feasting (III, 65-6; 470-2). This emphasis is reinforced by the distinct difference to the previous feast of the suitors in Ithaca, where there is no reference in book I to practicing ritual, but rather eat without proper acknowledgment of the gods and are entertained by the palace bard.

It is only after the guests have been greeted and seated, and they have prayed, fed, and drank that the next crucial step in the process of *ξενία* is appropriate: identification. Nestor states that it is the fitting time (III, 69-70) to ask Telemachus and Athena (Mentes) who they are.

ὦ ξεῖνοι, τίνες ἔστε; πόθεν πλεῖθος ὑργὰ κέλευθα;
ἢ τι κατὰ πρῆξιν ἢ μαψιδίως ἀλάλησθε,
οἵα τε ληιστῆρες, ὑπεὶρ ἄλα, τοί τ' ἀλόωνται
ψυχὰς παρθέμενοι κακὸν ἀλλοδαποῖσι φέροντες;
III, 71-4

It is significant that Nestor gives distinction between types of strangers: an unknown person could be someone on business or someone with intent to harm. He acknowledges that even in engaging in *ξενία*, there is no guarantee that the other party is going to be equally gracious. Rather, a stranger poses a potential threat. This reinforces the weight that Homeric Greeks gave *ξενία* to ensure safe travel. As this is a simple, successful

guest-host relationship, there is no surprise in the truthful reply of Telemachus and his purpose for the visit: namely, information concerning his father. Once the bond of *ξενία* has been stated and affirmed, Nestor refers to Telemachus as a friend (III, 103; 199; 211; 313; 375) throughout their exchange of inquiries, state of affairs, and stories like the *nostoi* of Nestor himself, Agamemnon, and Menelaus. This type of relaxed after-dinner conversation is the informational crux of the guest-host relationship in the ancient world. Due to the isolated or insular cultures that Homeric Greeks lived in, information about the outside world was difficult to obtain. This step, in addition to the potential of reciprocated hospitality, provided a practical incentive to partaking in *ξενία*.

As the conversation ends, and the night grows late, the guests ask to sleep. Nestor's reply sums up the ideal approach to the guest-host relationship as well as reveals certain of its components.

“Ζεὺς τό γ' ἀλεξήσει καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι,
ώς ὑμεῖς παρ' ἔμετο θοὴν ἐπὶ νῆα κίοιτε
ὢς τέ τεν ἡ παρὰ πάμπαν ἀνείμονος ἡδὲ πενιχροῦ,
ῷού τι χλαῖναι καὶ ὥργεα πόλλ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,
οὔτ' αὐτῷ μαλακῶς οὔτε ξείνοισιν ἐνεύδειν.
αὐτὰρ ἔμοὶ πάρα μὲν χλαῖναι καὶ ὥργεα καλά.
οὐ θην δὴ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς Ὄδυσσηος φίλος νιὸς
νηὸς ἐπ' ἱκριόφιν καταλέξεται, ὅφερ ἀν ἐγώ γε
ζώω, ἔπειτα δὲ παῖδες ἐνὶ μεγάροισι λίπωνται,
ξείνους ξεινίζειν, ὃς τίς κ' ἔμαθε δώμαθ' ἵκηται.”

III, 346-355

“[Α]λεξήσει” and the following optative verbs reveal that this statement is in keeping with Nestor's strict adherence to religious ritual by invoking Zeus as the paladin of this important institution. It is also the first time, though not explicitly, when Zeus *Xenios* (Zeus who presides over guest-friendship) is alluded to. Through the invocation of Zeus, the insistence on displaying hospitality is emphasized and given weight when Nestor

insists on using his resources in order that any guest may be comfortable. Furthermore, Nestor explains that not only as long as he is alive, but also as long as his sons shall live, his house will practice *ξενία*, thereby showing that the relationship is passed down through future generations. This ends with Telemachus sleeping under a portico with Peisistratus, Nestor's youngest son, sleeping nearby (III, 398-400), another example of the friendliness and intimacy that the Pylians embody. Moreover, this intimacy and trust is displayed in the bathing of Telemachus by Nestor's youngest daughter, Polycaste the following morning (III, 463-469), which is a typical step in the process of hospitality and in preparation of feasts. After the farewell sacrifice and feast, the last major step of *ξενία* is helping the guest to their next destination, in this case, Telemachus to Sparta by means of chariot accompanied by Peisistratus (III, 492-494).

In less than a full day, Nestor and the Pylians perform the following ritual acts of *ξενία*: welcoming of the guest by a crowd and then the host, seating of the guest, libation and sacrifice, preparation and consumption of feast, identification of guest and his purpose, exchange of information about the outside world, bedding down, bathing, and the conveyance of guest to his next destination. Conspicuously missing from such a warm reception is the giving of a *ξενίον* (guest-present), though a case can be made for Nestor's lending of his youngest son as a substitute. However, the episode is undoubtedly a successful and positive standard of *ξενία*.

The second place Telemachus searches for information concerning his father is in Sparta at the Palace of Menelaus, which is marked by its lavishness and underlying tense atmosphere, almost to the point of coldness. As Telemachus approaches with Peisistratus, he does not view people sacrificing as he did in Pylos, but the wedding feast

of Menelaus' daughter. Though still a religious event, its practical purpose brings to light the business side of religious observance. At the gate they are not met by a throng, but by a single Eteoneus, who asks not his guests, but his king, “ξείνω δή τινε τώδε... / ἢ ἄλλον πέμπωμεν ίκανόμεν, ὅς κε φιλήσῃ;” (IV, 26/29). Questioning the giving of hospitality by positing the possibility of sending strangers on their way shows Eteoneus as completely out of keeping with *ξενία*, but does partly reveal the uncertainty and tension in the emotional atmosphere of the Spartan palace. Menelaus reprimands him, showing a gap between the thoughts of the ruler and the ruled. He does this because he has received many guest-gifts (*ξεινήτα πολλὰ*: IV, 33) in the past and wishes to be a host now, and he alludes to the fact that Zeus is the god who presides over guest-friendship (*αἴ κέ ποθι Ζεὺς / ἐξοπίσω περ παύση ὄιζύος*: IV, 34-35), like Nestor did in III, 346. As Telemachus is encouraged to feast at the wedding, Menelaus displays his version of *ξενία*: he has them bathed (IV, 48), but this time not by a member of the royal family, but merely by slaves (*δμωαὶ*: IV, 49): instead of sacrificing and pouring libations, they are fed meat and bread, and served wine in golden cups (IV, 55-58): and then he tells them they will introduce themselves after they have eaten (IV, 60-62).

However, it is not the similarities between Nestor and Menelaus that are very important, but rather the differences between the two, which color Telemachus' respective experiences. Therefore, for the sake of avoiding redundancy, simple shared steps of *ξενία* between Pylos and Sparta such as preparation and consumption of feasts will not be as deeply examined. What is most different between Nestor and Menelaus is that for all the steps of *ξενία* being done, the discomfort, tension, and alienation ought to make for an unsuccessful visit in Sparta. This uncomfortable atmosphere is for two

reasons: the material wealth that adorns the Spartan palace (IV, 43-46; 71-75), and the presence of Helen. What this difference symbolizes prompts a difference in the order of the steps of hospitality when Menelaus recounts his *nostos* and imparts further steps of ξενία even though the guest has not yet been identified, which in turn makes his father's ξενία inheritable. This difference in order comes about after Telemachus is awed by Menelaus' wealth. Here is where Menelaus takes Telemachus' comment on his wealth as a prompt to discuss the origin of it, which in turn becomes a lamentation for his lost friends, ending most of all in lamentation for Odysseus. This, in combination with the overwhelming wealth, is the beginning of Telemachus' silence. Stranger still is that Telemachus does not identify himself, but rather Helen guesses his identity: ως ὄδ'
Οδυσσῆος μεγαλήτορος νῦν ἔστικε, / Τηλεμάχῳ (IV, 143-144), Menelaus, adding his notice of Telemachus' tears at the mention of Odysseus, agrees (IV, 148), and Peisistratus confirms it (IV, 157). They all talk to each other as if Telemachus were not actually present. Telemachus has not spoken since he marveled at the palace, over eighty lines previously. Part of the reason for this is the vast material wealth of Menelaus. The king's riches symbolize and help contribute to the feeling of alienation and not being connected to others in the palace, especially for Telemachus, who does not speak until he asks to go to bed (IV, 294-295). This alienation Menelaus' ill-gotten fortune brings not only to his mind, but also to the minds of his people ten years of war, in which many friends, sons, brothers, and fathers died, and for Menelaus himself, another eight, during which he wandered while his brother was slain upon his return home. Moreover, the feeling of alienation and tenseness is increased by the existence of Helen herself, Menelaus' wife, who, by running away with Paris, was the reason for the war in the first

place. Ergo, the reason for the Trojan War is essentially Paris' abuse of *ξενία*. So, he flatly states, “ὦς οὖ τοι χαίρων τοῖσδε κτεάτεσσιν ἀνάσσω (IV, 93),” and laments, “ὦν
Ὥφελον τριτάτην περ ἔχων ἐν δώμασι μοῖραν / ναίειν, οἱ δ' ἄνδρες σόοι ἔμμεναι, οἵ τότ'
ὅλοντο / Τροίη ἐν εὔρείῃ ἐκὰς Ἀργεος ἵπποβότοιο (IV, 97-99).” Even though Menelaus did right Paris' wronging of *ξενία* and acquire immense wealth, the pain in doing so is so great that he wishes he never had. The Trojan War shows yet again the emphasis placed on upholding the rules of *ξενία* in the Homeric world. Telemachus may yet have spoken when Menelaus intended to ask him, upon suspecting who he was (IV, 116-119), but Helen enters the scene. The presence of this particular woman must make Telemachus uneasy. It is ultimately because of her that his father left long before he can remember, that the suitors have run amok in his house, depleting his stock and stores, and being disrespectful to himself, his mother, and his guests, and that his mother and grandfather, who is covered in dirt and a shroud, are so unhappy.

Again, it is Helen who changes further steps in the ritual of *ξενία* once Telemachus and Peisistratus have been identified. As a natural reaction of discussing those who have died and not yet returned, they all weep; however, Helen takes this natural action away by drugging them and making them forget their ills (IV, 220-221) in an effort to ease the tension existing in the palace. More strange, is that an “Αἴγυπτίη” (IV, 229), whose culture is by definition outside the world of Telemachus' known *ξενία*, gave them to her. This drugging echoes in the episode of the Lotus Eaters, who make their visitors forget all notions of home and trouble, and also in the episodes of Circe and Calypso as they are witches who have control over the behavior of men. The similarity between Helen and the Lotus Eaters, Circe, and Calypso makes the audience feel ill at

ease At the stage of telling stories, up to this point, Menelaus and Nestor have recounted *nostoi*, but Helen recounts a different type of story: a wartime exploit of Odysseus. She portrays herself in a good light through her actions of bathing him, anointing him with oil, and clothing him (IV, 252-253). Helen essentially says that she was a hostess to Odysseus and gave him *ξενία*. Helen's action of recognizing Odysseus and bathing him foreshadows a more climactic realization in Eurycleia (XIX, 392-393). However, once more the tension becomes apparent in Menelaus' account of another war story about Odysseus and Helen. This one, though, is more about Helen trying to trick the soldiers to come out of the Trojan horse (IV, 274-289). The juxtaposition of these two stories especially emphasizes the uneasiness of the palace because the person telling the story, which is not flattering to Helen from a Greek standpoint, is married to her. The tension is simultaneously reinforced in that the story embarrasses her in front of her guests, whom she tried to impress with the first story. As discomfort reaches its height, Telemachus regains his voice and, just as in Pylos, asks that he be allowed to sleep. However, this time his host gives him no one to keep him company, and Telemachus and Peisistratus sleep in the vestibule. This is perhaps because, unlike Nestor, who has had many children, Menelaus with his large, but empty palace, has married off his youngest and is now kept company solely by his wife. It is not surprising that Telemachus is bedded in the typical “προδόμω” (IV, 302) (or similarly in Pylos in an αἰθούσῃ: III, 399), but Homer specifically mentions that Menelaus is as far away as possible from his guests (μυχῷ δόμου ὑψηλῷ: IV, 304), and ends the day with a description of Helen (IV, 305). These two lines reinforce the distance, both physical and emotional, from the hosts to the guests, and the disturbing presence of Helen.

Since the order of the steps of ξενία has already been different in this episode, it can only continue. In the morning, Telemachus and Menelaus conduct the crucial business of exchanging information. Though, Telemachus has inherited his father's ξενία at two different places, made new friends, and grown considerably over his journey, this is the center and purpose of Telemachus' visit: to learn something concerning the whereabouts of his father. He tells Menelaus of the state of his house (IV, 318-321), and asks for his help. In exchange for the sad news of the house of his friend, Menelaus does not offer physical help by removing the suitors, nor does he tell the *nostos* of Odysseus, but rather of himself, Aias, and Agamemnon. He and Helen regale Telemachus at length with their own heroic experiences, where as Nestor's *nostos* is only existent in that he discusses the *nostoi* of others. It is only toward the end of the long story that Menelaus touches briefly on what he knows of Odysseus from his long wrestling with Proteus.

“νιὸς Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκη ἔνι οἰκία ναίων:
τὸν δ’ ἵδον ἐν νήσῳ θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυ χέοντα,
νύμφης ἐν μεγάροισι Καλυψοῦς, ἡ μὲν ἀνάγκη
ἴσχει: ὁ δ’ οὐ δύναται ἦν πατρίδα γαῖαν ικέσθαι.”

IV, 555-558

Some news is better than none to Telemachus, but now that he has obtained that for which he came, Menelaus seeks to delay his return and give him horses, a chariot, and a cup (IV, 587-592). These are two steps which differentiate the two kings further, for Nestor gave no gift nor did he seek to delay Telemachus on his journey to Sparta. However, the strangest event in this interaction (as it would be for us today) is that Telemachus refuses the gifts on the grounds that they are not practical for the ground of Ithaca (IV, 601-608). Rather, he would like some treasure (κειμήλιον: IV, 600). This would be rude by modern standards, but Menelaus accepts this because they are

inappropriate gifts and instead gives him a bowl made by Hephaestus, which was given to Menelaus by the king of the Sidonians (IV, 617-618). The original gifts of horses and chariots are a ploy by Menelaus to detain (*Ἐπίμεινον*: IV, 587, note the imperative) Telemachus in a place where those gifts are fitting, thereby preventing his return home. Menelaus attempts to delay Telemachus because he reminds Menelaus of his old wartime friend, and now Helen and Menelaus no longer have children at home due to the previous day's marriage of their youngest daughter, so they might still want a younger person nearby. However, Telemachus notices the echoing of Menelaus' previous desire for Odysseus to live in the Peloponnesus (IV, 174-177), which gives Telemachus, the impetus to decline the alluring gifts. The offering of gifts which would make one forget their home also echoes the land of the Lotus-eaters. Diplomatically, Telemachus explains that it is his responsibility to his men that requires his departure (IV, 594-599), and therefore his departure is not rude, but an honorable necessity. The relationship is maintained with Menelaus' acknowledgment that this responsibility is a quality of noble breeding (*αἵματός εἰς ἀγαθοῖο*: IV, 611). Quite abruptly at the end of a feast, the poem does not relate Telemachus' departure, but rather shifts back to the stark contrast of the feast back in Ithaca.

Though both the episodes of Telemachus' visits are successful in the observances of *ξενία*, they differ greatly. Each goes through the process of welcoming, seating, feeding, drinking, identification, bedding down, bathing, and most importantly, exchanging information, but not necessarily in the exact same order. However, neither are perfect archetypes of Homeric hospitality and the guest-host relationship. Each has the benefits necessary for a substantial social exchange and yet still does not fit the

prototype mold of *ξενία* exactly – if such a thing exists in the imagination. Nestor’s palace is characterized by its modesty and openness, while that of Menelaus by its loftiness and awe. The palaces, in turn, inform something about their owners: the Pylian king welcomes his guests personally and lends his children to be of service, all the while performing sacrifice and ritual, yet Menelaus, telling stories for the majority of his hosting, has servants and guards take care of his guests due to his lack of children and abundance of wealth. These demonstrations of friendship are enough to overcome the missing characteristics of *ξενία*. In the case of Nestor, he does not have any information for Telemachus regarding his father, but can refer him to someone who might, nor does he give him a guest-gift, a physical reminder of the special relationship that they have with each other, which can be passed down through generations. Menelaus, on the other hand, provides an alienating atmosphere with his all-encompassing wealth and the uncomfortable presence of Helen to the extent that Telemachus does not speak for almost an entire evening, and uses alluring gifts, like the Lotus-eaters, to detain his guest when he offers him horses. In light of the differences between the *ξενία* displayed at Pylos and Sparta, the nature of *ξενία* is shown to be malleable and shifting social guidelines rather than a rigid step-by-step process ensuring a successful guest-host relationship.

After two examples of successful *ξενία*, which make up Telemachus’ experiences in the historical places of Pylos and Sparta, the poem continues into Odysseus’ last stop before home: Scheria. Having been released from the island of Ogygia by Calypso, Odysseus experiences his last and most brutal sea storm, thereupon arriving at the land of the Phaeacians. During Odysseus’ time in Scheria, Homer provides the most in depth description of all the typical steps and missteps in the process of establishing a guest-host

friendship. Though overall the episode, which spans from his arrival in book V to his departure in book XIII, is ultimately an example of successful *ξενία*, Scheria, serving as a boundary between Odysseus' world of fantastic travels and his actual home, is described at length as a place which has complicated and ambivalent feelings towards guests, and thereby, its policy of *ξενία*. The Phaeacians' *ξενία* is unique in that they are human, but receive guests infrequently as they are situated very far away from the rest of mankind (*ἐκὰς ἀνδρῶν ἀλφηστάων*: VI, 8), with the result that they do not have much contact with foreigners. This lack of exchange with the outside world echoes the isolation of the Cyclopes in book IX. Moreover, this echo carries troubling undertones as the Phaeacians once lived in Hypereia, which is near the overbearing Cyclopes ("ἀγχοῦ Κυκλώπων ἀνδρῶν ὑπερηνορεόντων" (VI, 5). The isolation and historical proximity to the Cyclopes, in combination with the fact that Odysseus has not had human contact for seven years, having been kept by Calypso, has the potential for some awkward exchanges. However, that is not to say the Phaeacians are not φιλοξένοι to Odysseus – the listener already has heard that Zeus said that they will be very generous (V, 36-39) to Odysseus. Therefore, with these characteristics in mind, the reader can view the Phaeacians' potential for both good *ξενία* and awkward moments as great. This is foreshadowed in Odysseus' lamentation, “ὦ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὗτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἵκανο; / ἦ δέ οἴ γ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, / ἦς φιλόξεινοι καί σφιν νόος ἔστι θεουδής;” (VI, 119-121). He has made this exclamation before upon arriving at the island of the Cyclopes (IX, 175-176) and reiterates it upon arriving in Ithaca, not realizing that it is his home (XIII, 200-203). So, if the Phaeacians have the capability for both *ξενία* and awkward and potentially harmful situations, why is the overall episode in

Scheria successful? Ξενία only works because it is a reciprocal relationship: a guest will receive food, a bath, gifts, and conveyance in exchange for the assurance that when the host becomes the guest, he too will enjoy these honors. However, the Phaeacians live far away from the rest of mankind and do not associate with humans much. Therefore, since there is no future gain for the Phaeacians in imparting Ξενία, what is their reason for doing so? I assert that the Phaeacians have an ulterior motive, which underlies their acts of Ξενία: to show their superiority. This desire to show their superiority is ultimately a display of vanity, and can be seen in the newly presented social exchange of supplication, the description of Phaeacians themselves (*ἀγγίθεοι*: V, 35), the entertainment of Odysseus, and his receiving of guest-gifts.

However, before Odysseus is given Ξενία, he goes through a different social exchange: supplication. Supplication is similar to Ξενία in that there is a benefactor and a recipient, but supplication differs in that it involves an outright declaration of what the suppliant needs, while in Ξενία hospitality is given to a guest without it being asked for. The archetypal supplication is the appeal of a human to a god, which can be seen in the form of seeking sanctuary in a temple. This implies a stark contrast in the status of suppliant and benefactor. Supplication is based in necessity, the admission of which is self-abasing. This is in contrast to a reciprocal nature of Ξενία, which over time allows those involved to continuously honor each other by giving hospitality. Therefore, in supplication the relationship between the benefactor and the recipient is inherently uneven, while in Ξενία there is either a history or the potential for acting toward another as an equal. Therefore, it further complicates Zeus' shining prediction of the Phaeacians' Ξενία in book V. It is important to see how, over the course of his time there, Odysseus

stops being a suppliant (*ικέτης*), and becomes a guest (*ξένος*). Before he is entertained in Alcinous' court, Odysseus goes through three separate events involving supplication, each one more complex than the one before: each time a reminder of the power and superiority of the Phaeacians. The first episode is when Odysseus is carried in the river's current, the second is a sort of mini-hospitality scene when Odysseus finds Nausicaa and the maidens at the river, and the final is the formal supplication to Queen Arete and King Alcinous.

After a violent and graphic depiction of Odysseus despairing and nearly giving up among the waves and brine, he swims into the mouth of a river where the Scherian episode begins. Beaten and swollen, Odysseus begs the river god for mercy from its current when he says, “ἴκηται ἀλώμενος, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν / σόν τε ρόον σά τε γούναθ’
ἰκάνω πολλὰ μογήσας. / ἀλλ’ ἔλέαιρε, ἄναξ: ίκέτης δέ τοι εὔχομαι εῖναι” (V, 448-450). This prayer sets the Scherian episode apart from other hospitality scenes in the poem as well as sets a precedent for how he must approach Nausicaa as a suppliant and later, the royal court of the Phaeacians. The prayer differs from the scenes hitherto in that it is a prayer, Telemachus simply approaches his would-be hosts and is offered hospitality – he does not need to beg. Odysseus' prayers for mercy, and even supplication for hospitality (later), come from a state of desperation. He has been brutalized to such an extent that he has no other option but to beg. Odysseus establishes himself as a suppliant (*ικέτης*) not only by the formal declaration, but also the required statement that he will clasp the knees of his benefactor (*σά τε γούναθ’ ικάνω*). Here, begging a river god, he has no other choice but to come as a suppliant. If Odysseus were to approach a river god invoking *ξενία*, it would be considered hubris. This is because he is mortal and therefore, unequal

to a god. By abiding by these guidelines of supplication, Odysseus manages to save his life and crawls upon the shore.

Upon waking, a naked Odysseus, caked with mud and grime, enters the second supplication scene, though this time it is not with a god, but an unmarried maiden princess. This second scene begins when Odysseus says that he will clasp the knees of Nausicaa (VI, 149), and further explains that he is in dire straits ($\chiαλεπὸν δέ με πένθος$ ικάνει: VI, 169). Once he has established himself as a suppliant, Odysseus asks for directions and clothing ($\ddot{\alpha}στυ δέ μοι δεῖξον, δὸς δὲ ράκος ἀμφιβαλέσθαι:$ VI, 178). However, Odysseus does not ask, but rather tells Nausicaa the things he needs by using imperative verbs. This directness highlights Odysseus desperation and need of assistance after his long flattering of Nausicaa (149-169). Nausicaa acquiesces and addresses him as “ $\xiεῖν'$ ” (VI, 186), though the meaning of this use is *stranger*, not *guest*. She further says that Odysseus will have everything a suppliant ought ($οὕτ' οὖν ἐσθῆτος δευήσεαι$ οὕτε τεν $\ddot{\alpha}λλον, / \ddot{\alpha}ν ἐπέοιχ'$ ικέτην ταλαπείριον ἀντιάσαντα: VI, 192-193). It is the “ $\ddot{\alpha}λλον$ ” that bridges Odysseus’ formal request of clothing and directions and some steps of $\xiενία$ such as providing a bath and food (VI, 209-210). She acknowledges that she is compelled to do this because of Zeus *Xenios* ($τὸν νῦν χρὴ κομέειν: πρὸς γὰρ Διός εἰσιν$ $\ddot{\alpha}παντες / \xiεῖνοι τε πτωχοί τε:$ VI 207-208).

However, the mini hospitality scene is not without its awkward moments, which are due to $\alphaἴδως$. This feeling is felt both by Nausicaa and Odysseus, but for different reasons. Odysseus, being socially isolated for so long, refuses to engage in a socially acceptable practice when he says “ $\alphaἴδέομαι γὰρ / γυμνοῦσθαι κούρησιν ἐνπλοκάμοισι$ μετελθόν (VI, 221-222). This modesty is strange considering that in the Homeric world

guests are bathed by women, like Telemachus is at both Pylos and Sparta. The different context does not account for his reluctance as being washed by Nausicaa's hand maidens would not offend Alcinous or bring reproach upon the princess. Regardless of his reason, he refuses to take part in a commonly recognized part of *ξενία*, which was offered to him, despite Nausicaa's order to her maidens (*λούσατέ τ' ἐν ποταμῷ*: VI, 210). Nausicaa, on the other hand, too feels a sense of shame that is revealed in her directions to Odysseus. She tells Odysseus to wait for a time (*μεῖναι χρόνον*: VI, 295) at the entrance to the city until he thinks that she has reached home (VI, 296-297). Having someone who needs help wait, let alone outside a city, is poor behavior. The accusative of time that is used emphasizes the duration of the waiting and the uncertainty of when the waiting will end. She risks being a bad benefactor because she fears the “*Ὥνειδεα*” (VI, 285) that she would receive if seen walking with a man before being married. However, she too would hold a maiden in reproach for doing the same thing (VI, 286). This is because she acts from vanity, namely that she would judge from only the appearance of an act and not what it actually was. This sense of shame, but also vanity ultimately is what makes Nausicaa partially reject Odysseus' supplication; he receives the clothes, for which he asked, but does not receive the directions. Rather, Nausicaa tells Odysseus to ask one of the Phaeacians. However, her *αἴδως* also results in something good: namely, that Odysseus avoids overweening (*ὑπερφίαλοι*: VI, 274) men, which is the same word applied to the suitors (cf. I, 134), who might ask him who he is (VI, 276). *Ὑπερφίαλος* implies excess, an unnatural amount of growth. This adjective is applied to people who go beyond what is acceptable. Asking someone who he is before giving him food is impolite and contrary to good *ξενία*, as Polyphemus does in IX, 252-255. However, even though he does not

walk into the city with Nausicaa, Athena still makes the effort of shrouding Odysseus in mist in order that no one might taunt him (*κερτομέοτ*: VII, 17) or ask who he is. The verb *κερτομέω* is also frequently used by the suitors (e.g. XVIII, 350). Both Nausicaa and Athena describe the Phaeacians in the same terms as the suitors, and therefore, not as hospitable or friendly. Moreover, Athena outright tells Odysseus that, “οὐ γὰρ ξείνους οἴδε μάλ’ ἀνθρώπους ἀνέχονται, / οὐδ’ ἀγαπαζόμενοι φιλέουσ’ ὅς κ’ ἄλλοθεν ἔλθη” (VII, 32-33). However, Athena is commenting on the moral character of the Phaeacians, who perform Zeus’ prediction out of self-glorification as seen in their desire for Odysseus to tell people of the wonder of the Phaeacians.

Once at the palace, Odysseus must once again supplicate when Nausicaa tells him to clasp Arete’s knees so that he might return home (VI, 314-315). Athena too tells Odysseus to win her favour in order to see his land again (VII, 75-77). This is the only time within the three supplications that Odysseus is told to supplicate as opposed to doing it of his own volition. Being told to supplicate is out of keeping with Zeus’ prediction of the Phaeacians that they will impart good *ξενία*. If they are the utmost *φιλοξένοι*, then why does Odysseus not simply approach the palace as a *ξένος*, in his new clothes stating that he is deserving of this status because he is a king, rather than a *ἰκέτης*, and receive conveyance home anyway? This is because Arete needs to be bowed down to. Odysseus must win her favour by debasing himself, thereby raising her esteem, in order to go home. This last supplication scene is initiated upon the sudden appearance of Odysseus at the knees of Arete. It is typical in that Odysseus says he clasps her knees, and then addresses his needs, namely that he seeks “πομπὴν” (VII, 151). This favor that Odysseus seeks, however, would not be worth debasing himself for, conveyance being a typical

favor bestowed upon the guests' departing like Telemachus leaving Pylos – that is if he were a guest. So, at the end of his supplication, Odysseus firmly establishes himself as a suppliant by sitting down on the hearth in the ashes next to the fire (VII, 153-154), a grossly self abasing act that prompts pity in the audience. At the height of Odysseus' pitifulness, after a long time (*όψε*: VII, 155), Echeneüs, an old and wise figure, like Nestor, in reprimanding his king, changes the relationship of Odysseus and the Phaeacians when he refers not to a suppliant sitting in ashes, but a *ξένος*, thereby obligating Alcinous to perform the initial steps of hospitality: seat the guest and pour libations (VII, 159-165). Once Arete's vanity has been sated, Echeneüs' reprimand and the extension of Alcinous' hand transforms Odysseus from *ἰκέτης* to *ξένος*.

As *ξενία* is established, Odysseus experiences a spectrum of hospitality from the Phaeacians from rude mockery to excessive, almost unwarranted, generosity. Having been reprimanded by Echeneüs, Alcinous, in an attempt to rectify the situation, seats Odysseus in between himself and his son, Laodamas, as Nestor seats Telemachus next to Peisistratus in book III, and lets Odysseus wash his hands, drink, eat, and pour libations (VII, 167-185). However, no sooner does Alcinous finish pouring libations than he begins to make an inquiry into Odysseus' identity. Even though it is merely wondering if Odysseus is a god in disguise (VII, 199), it is still rude to wonder aloud about the identity of a guest before he has finished eating. Odysseus politely answers the social misstep, while returning to the standard process in a less than polite way: “ἀλλ’ ἐμὲ μὲν δορπῆσαι ξάσατε” (VII, 215). The “ἀλλ’” being strongly contrary, makes the interpretation of “ξάσατε” as an imperative as opposed to indicative more likely. As he was with Nausicaa before, Odysseus is insistent with his host. Arete, waiting for the appropriate

time, asks Odysseus who he is again – but this time directly: “τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν;” – and who gave him his clothes, and how he got to Scheria (VII, 238-239). However, once again Odysseus’ answer is not a full answer, but rather only answers her last two questions. He distracts Arete by telling her stories, a step in the usual process of *ξενία* reserved for after identification, as he does with Polyphemus in book IX, and explains why Nausicaa did not personally lead him to the palace (VII, 296). Alcinous reprimands her for not helping a suppliant when he says, “ἢ τοι μὲν τοῦτο γ' ἐναίσιμον οὐκ ἐνόησε / παῖς ἔμή” (VII, 299-300). However, Odysseus, in attempting to be gracious, lies to Alcinous saying that it was he who was ashamed (*αἰσχυνόμενός*: VII, 305) at the thought of walking with an unmarried girl in public. Unaware of, but pleased by, Odysseus’ lie, Alcinous, not knowing even the name of his guest, offers him Nausicaa’s hand in marriage (VII, 313)! This, while not being bad *ξενία*, is excessive, but is followed up by a more reasonable offer of a house and possessions (VII, 314). Alcinous’ offer of a house and possessions echoes similar ones of Menelaus to Odysseus and Telemachus in book IV. As the exchanging of stories and conversation dwindle, the step of bedding down approaches. The verses describing Odysseus’ bed in Scheria (VII, 336-339) are exactly the same as those of Telemachus’ in Sparta (IV, 297-300). The fact that they are the same lines draws attention to the abruptness of what the maids then order: “Ὥρσο κέων, ὡς ξεῖνε: πεποίηται δέ τοι εὔνή” (VII, 342). On Odysseus’ first night in the palace, he has become a guest, been prematurely probed about his identity, lied to his host, been offered a premature betrothal to a princess, and been treated rudely by the maids. Alcinous failed to properly receive his guest earlier, making Odysseus wait in ashes for a long time (*όψε*) and has let the evening pass without knowing Odysseus’ name. There is a failure too in

Odysseus in avoiding identification. Proper identification is crucial in the process of ξενία, without which important information cannot be shared and further steps, especially conveyance home cannot be obtained. As of the conclusion of book VII, the Phaeacian's ξενία is still unclear; it lies somewhere between the descriptions given by Zeus and Athena.

Athena, once again helping Odysseus, enhances him physically the following morning in order that he might accomplish many feats through which the Phaeacians would make trial of Odysseus (VIII, 22-23). This implies that a host would test his guest, but without knowing his name and circumstances, putting a guest to any test is rude. Alcinous, being ignorant of the affront yet to take place, makes public his agenda for his hospitality: spectacle and entertainment of music followed by feasting and a swift conveyance home (VIII, 26-45). Making his agenda public is not for the benefit of Odysseus or the general Phaeacians, but only so that people may know that Alcinous is being a good host. This appears very hospitable; however, some of Alcinous' attempts at hospitality achieve the opposite effect. Demodocus sings in order to delight his listeners, but Odysseus, being reminded of his heroic past and toils, is saddened so much that he weeps. Even worse is that in addition to weeping, he must do so secretly because he feels ashamed (*αἴδετο γὰρ Φαίηκας ὑπ' ὄφρύσι δάκρυα λείβων*: VIII, 86). It is only after this has happened repeatedly, to which the others are oblivious, that Alcinous notices and stops the bard, suggesting that games will delight Odysseus. However, this is not the reason why Alcinous suggests games, but rather so that Odysseus might tell people of the superiority of the Phaeacians at the games (*ὦς χ' ὁ ξεῖνος ἐνίσπῃ οἴσι φίλοισιν / οἴκαδε νοστήσας, ὅσσον περιγιγνόμεθ' ἄλλων / πύξ τε παλαιμοσύνη τε καὶ ἄλμασιν ἡδὲ*

πόδεσσιν: VIII, 100-103). However, the games do not delight Odysseus due to Laodamas, having been encouraged by Euryalus, challenging him to join in the games (VIII, 145-151). A challenge such as this is not remarkable as it is quite in keeping with the heroic world, of which Odysseus is a part. Martial skill is of the utmost importance, especially for one having been in a decade-long war, and is maintained in times of peace through athletics. However, Odysseus understands the challenge as mocking (Λαοδάμα, τί με ταῦτα κελεύετε κερτομέοντες: VIII, 153) (the same verb that Athena uses in VII, 17), and says that a guest ought to be allowed to sit and be entertained. Moreover, the games are meant as a spectacle so that Odysseus can spread word of Phaeacian superiority in contests. This would not be an altercation if Euryalus did not provoke Odysseus in his face (νείκεσέ τ' ἄντην: VIII, 158) by saying that Odysseus appeared as a merchant and not an athlete (VIII, 159-164). Euryalus is a prime example of the description that Athena and Nausicaa give of the Phaeacians – he is overbearing and rude to strangers; Euryalus might as well be a suitor in Ithaca. This insult implies that Odysseus is not, in fact, an aristocrat, let alone a king, but a greedy merchant (cf. Eumaeus' description of Phoenicians: XV, 415-416). Had this altercation happened outside of idyllic Scheria, violence would have ensued, but since it is a place of peace, athletics and hostile words are the weapons instead. So, Odysseus praises Euryalus' form, but disparages his mind and hurls the largest discus. It is Athena, being the deus ex machina of the poem, who speaks in praise of Odysseus' prowess (VIII, 195-198), and eases his anger. However, there is still clear tension as he continues to speak of his prowess and challenges all except but Laodamas, because, as he says “ἄφρων δὴ κεῖνός γε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς πέλει ἀνήρ, / ὃς τις ξεινοδόκω ἔριδα προφέρηται ἀέθλων / δήμῳ ἐν

ἀλλοδαπῷ” (VIII, 209-211). Here, Odysseus explains the proper behavior for *ξενία* and why he was insulted that Laodamas challenged him and outraged that Euryalus taunted him. Meanwhile, Alcinous has been silent. Not only was it a failure of Alcinous as a host to allow his son to challenge a guest, but also to not speak even after Euryalus’ insults. Alcinous has made a big, public display of his hospitality only for everyone to see his failings. The music that was meant to delight brought tears, the games that were meant for spectacle and enjoyment brought rage and aggression, and still Alcinous has said nothing even after Odysseus throws the oversized discus farther than all the rest and challenges all the Phaeacians. At last, Alcinous speaks, but it is only to assert the Phaeacians’ potential for good *ξενία*: “αἰεὶ δὲ ήμεν δαίς τε φίλη κίθαρις τε χοροί τε / εἴματά τε ἐξημοιβὰ λοετρά τε θερμὰ καὶ εύναται” (VIII, 248-249). Feasting, entertainment, new clothes, and a place to sleep are all part of the process of *ξενία*; however, Alcinous repeatedly has been fumbling, while still being a generally good host. On his third, and this time successful, attempt at entertainment and impressing his guest, Alcinous suggests viewing dancing and listening to a long, but lighthearted song so that Odysseus might tell people of the superiority of the Phaeacians in seafaring, swift footedness, and song (ὦς χ' οὐ ξεῖνος ἐνίσπῃ οἴσι φίλοισιν / οἴκαδε νοστήσας, ὅσσον περιγγνόμεθ' ἄλλων / ναυτιλίη καὶ ποσὶ καὶ ὀργηστυῖ καὶ ἀοιδῇ: VIII, 251-253). Though Odysseus is gladdened by it (VIII, 367-368), the song is about the violation of a marriage, something which caused him to leave home 18 years ago. He then agrees with Alcinous’ boast that Phaeacian dancers are the best (ἡμὲν ἀπείλησας βητάρμονας εἶναι ἀρίστους, / ἡδὲ ἄρ' ἔτοῖμα τέτυκτο: σέβας μὲν ἔχει εἰσορόωντα: VIII, 383-384).

Alcinous, pleased by his success, states that Odysseus is especially right and wishes to give him gifts proportional to how right he is (*Ο ξεῖνος μάλα μοι δοκέει πεπνυμένος εἶναι. / ἀλλ’ ἄγε οἱ δῶμεν ξεινήιον, ώς ἐπιεικές* (VIII, 388-389). Since Odysseus has agreed that the Phaeacians are the best, he therefore, earns his *ξεινήιον*. Here is the step which can rectify the hitherto unstable experience of Phaeacian *ξενία*. As Zeus says in book V: “*χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε ἄλις ἐσθῆτά τε δόντες, / πόλλ’, ὅσ’ ἂν οὐδέ ποτε Τροίης ἐξήρατ’ Ὀδυσσεύς*” (V, 38-39). The sum of which is: 13 cloaks, 13 tunics, and 13 talents of gold (VIII, 392-393) – one from each king in Scheria. In addition, Euryalus is ordered to apologize and give Odysseus a gift: a valuable bronze sword (VIII, 401-411). Moreover, Alcinous tells Arete to give Odysseus her best chest (VIII, 424), in which she places an additional cloak and tunic (VIII, 441). Finally, Alcinous, echoing Menelaus’ gift to Telemachus, gives Odysseus a golden cup by which to remember him (VIII, 430-431). Surely here in this exhaustive list of lavish gifts is where the Phaeacians are φιλοξένοι. However, immediately after Arete gives Odysseus her gifts, she warns him to lock them away lest one of the Phaeacians rob him while sleeping on his ship ride home (VIII, 443-445). Following this successful step in the process of *ξενία*, Odysseus, no longer being embarrassed due to this different social situation, is washed by handmaids, and feasting ensues. It is as if the hospitality scene is starting over, this time on a sure foot. As Demodocus is beckoned to play, Odysseus asks him to sing of the Trojan horse. This is in continuation from the last feast during which Demodocus sang of the trials and woes of the Greeks at Troy, but this time he sings of the conquering of Troy and the heroic exploits of Odysseus himself (VIII, 492-495). However, once again, the song, which is meant to delight, instead induces weeping, and only Alcinous observes it

(VIII, 532-534). Here, Alcinous asserts that his good hospitality and care for his guest is only a matter of common sense: “Ἄντὶ καστιγνήτου ξεῖνός θ’ ἵκέτης τε τέτυκται / ἀνέρι, ὃς τ’ ὄλιγον περ ἐπιψαύῃ πραπίδεσσο” (VIII, 546-547). Even after all these steps of *ξενία* have been performed, Alcinous still mentions guest and suppliant in combination. Still, according to Alcinous, Odysseus is on an equal level. Because the Phaeacians have no need for the reciprocal relationship of *ξενία*, they still consider Odysseus a sort of suppliant. At so straightforward a point, Alcinous, in a longwinded fashion, now asks Odysseus who he is, where he is from, and how he came to arrive at Scheria (VIII 550-586). After a full day of receiving hospitality from the Phaeacians, Odysseus finally reveals his identity (IX, 19). Now that Odysseus has revealed his identity, the sharing of information can begin, which continues for books IX-XII. Alcinous then gives Odysseus even more guest-gifts: a cauldron and tripod from each man who heard Odysseus’ tale (XIII, 13-14). After departing blessings and libations, Odysseus thanks the Phaeacians for this episode of successful *ξενία*, distilling the process to the two most advantageous aspects for the guest: “Ἔδη γὰρ τετέλεσται ἔ μοι φίλος ἥθελε θυμός, / πομπὴ καὶ φίλα δῶρα” (XIII, 40-41).

The episode of Scheria is the fullest account of *ξενία* in the poem. It spans from books V-XIII, describing fully the island and what happened from Odysseus’ arrival to his departure. On the one hand, the Phaeacians seem the most *φιλοξένοι*. Nausicaa gives Odysseus food, drink and clothing – a tiny episode compared to that of the palace. There, Odysseus enjoys feasts and entertainment, continuously receives lavish gifts, and securely obtains conveyance home. On the other hand, Nausicaa rejects half of Odysseus’ supplication, while Odysseus arrives at the palace a suppliant waiting in ashes,

not a proper guest-friend, and is saddened by Demodocus and maddened by Euryalus. Even Nausicaa and Athena describe the Phaeacians as ἀξένοι. So, as in the end of book VII, the Phaeacians still remain human hosts, capable of both good and bad hospitality, ambivalent toward their guests, but extremely generous in their gifts and eager to please. However, it is not their good or bad *ξενία* that is in question, but rather why the Phaeacians offer it in the first place. They have no need of a reciprocal *ξενία* since they are so isolated and far from the rest of mankind. Rather, their desire for fame of their superiority in the outside world is what motivates their display of games, dancing, seafaring, song, and gift giving, and their ἀξένοι characteristics of asking the identity of a guest prematurely or mocking him are due to their isolation. In the Phaeacian episode, Homer shows that all the forms of *ξενία* can be performed, and the overall experience can be successful, but the reasons for taking part in the social exchange can be for an entirely different, and lesser, reason: namely, self-glorification.

In the near-perfect society of Scheria, exhibiting so many examples of good (and bad) *ξενία*, Odysseus having finally revealed his identity, sets down his identity as warrior and traveler, and tries out playing the bard. He begins with overviews of his adventures and travels to the lands of the Cicones and then the Lotus-eaters, but settles on the episode of Polyphemus. Of all the interactions that Athena, Telemachus, or Odysseus have with different hosts and cultures over the course of the poem it is the episode of Polyphemus in which Homer uses the most blatant and overt language to describe the disparity between what things are expected in *ξενία* and what actually takes place. Many typical phrases and actions of the ritual of *ξενία* occur throughout Book IX, but only on a superficial level. If one were to make a check-list of typical phrases and actions of a

guest-host relationship such as seeking shelter and hospitality, eating a meal, having an after dinner drink, saying one's name, giving gifts, or exchanging farewells, then the list would seem to have all criteria present in the interaction between Odysseus and Polyphemus. However, just because the forms are observed does not mean that an interaction between the two unknown parties will be successful, such as it is between Telemachus and Menelaus at Sparta or Nestor at Pylos. Homer is subverting the structure of *ξενία* in its process and content in order to draw attention to its limitations and that it cannot always be relied upon.

After leaving Troy, Odysseus has two unsuccessful encounters with other cultures, the Cicones and the Lotus-eaters, before arriving at the island of the Cyclopes. Though he does interact with them, it is not in any way positive: there is physical violence with the Cicones and the Lotus-eaters drug Odysseus and his men. Therefore, Odysseus has yet to interact with another people on a social level since leaving his home ten years earlier. In Odysseus' account of the episode to the Phaeacians, one can attribute the collapse of a positive and substantial interaction with Polyphemus to the Cyclopes' contrary culture. His telling of the experience is essentially a catalog of what he expected to happen, but instead the opposite occurred. As this is the first time Odysseus is having social exchange with a new party in such a long period of time, Odysseus can only think in terms of the social normalcy that is normal to him. The first words Odysseus uses to describe the Cyclopes are “*Ὥπερφιάλων ἀθεμίστων*” (IX, 106). The first word is not new or shocking to the reader/listener, as it is the same word used to describe Penelope's suitors (e.g. I, 134), but the alpha privative in the second word implies a complete polarity to the culture of which Odysseus is a part: namely, that the Homeric world has

laws and the world of the Cyclopes does not. He further alienates his audience from the Cyclopes saying that they do not have councils or common law “(*τοῖσιν οὔτ’ ἀγοραὶ βουληφόροι οὔτε θέμιστες*: IX, 112), and that each makes law over his children and wives, and they are not concerned with one another (*θεμιστύει δὲ ἔκαστος / παίδων ἡδ’ ἀλόχων, οὐδ’ ἀλλήλων ἀλέγουσιν*: IX, 114-115). Odysseus, in describing the Cyclopes, has used the word *θέμις* three times. He places special emphasis on laws because it shows the alien nature of the Cyclopes to the audiences’ ear. Laws are important because they are what make social interaction on a large scale possible. Laws that require standard weights in the market, punish theft, or divide land all exist in order that people will go to the market and intermix, not alienate others by taking their property, or to prevent neighbourly squabbling. Odysseus is implying that since there are no laws that all Cyclopes abide by, then there cannot be a law of *ξενία*, which is the most intimate of social laws. Before even starting his story, Odysseus gives an overview of a culture that has no concept of the community and where each inhabitant is completely isolated from the other. The only comment which he makes that could be considered to their benefit is that they trust in the gods to provide a Hesiodic Golden-Age lifestyle (IX, 107-111) in as much as they have no need of agriculture, and all their food is provided for them. (Though men once shared this privilege, now they must work and toil for their existence). Therefore, Odysseus’ tone is an attempt to further alienate his listeners, and portray the Cyclopes as utterly polar from them. However, even an extreme of an extreme opposite can be found in Polyphemus, who has no wife or children. Odysseus uses the same adjectives of lawlessness to characterize Polyphemus, but adds the new adjective of “*οὗτος*” and the adverbs, “*ἀπόπροθεν... ἀπάνευθεν*” (IX, 188-189) to

physically set Polyphemus apart from the others. Polyphemus, aside from his flock of rams and sheep, is completely alone and ergo cannot know $\xi\text{ev}\text{ia}$, but only, “ $\alpha\theta\mu\text{i}\sigma\tau\text{ia}$ ” (IX, 189).

With Odysseus having given his overview of the Cyclopes’ culture as being completely isolated and therefore, completely without laws, he begins his story of $\dot{\alpha}\xi\text{ev}\text{ia}$ with Polyphemus. According to the structure of the hospitality theme, which can previously be seen in Mentes (Athena) at Ithaca, Telemachus at Pylos and Sparta, and Odysseus at Scheria, the hero must seek shelter and hospitality. Odysseus refers to this three times addressing three different parties: his crew, the Phaeacians, and Polyphemus, though each time $\xi\text{ev}\text{ia}$ is talked about differently. Addressing his crew, Odysseus is eager to see the island. His interest is somewhat ethnographic in that his desire is to see what they are like and if their practices and characteristics, $\varphi\text{i}\lambda\text{o}\xi\text{ev}\text{ia}$ and $\nu\text{o}\text{o}\varsigma\ \theta\text{e}\text{o}\text{u}\delta\text{h}\varsigma$ in particular, are similar to his own (IX, 174-6). When telling his story to the Phaeacians, Odysseus’ curiosity comes off as heedless when he ignores the caution of his crew in his desire to see “ $\varepsilon\text{i}\ \mu\text{o}\iota\ \xi\text{ev}\text{ia}\ \delta\text{o}\text{i}\eta$ ” (IX, 229). The optative form connotes his uncertainty and a foreshadowing of rough waters. It is in the third mention of seeking hospitality that the thematic structure is disturbed – when Odysseus and his men arrive at the cave, Polyphemus is not there to welcome them (IX, 216-217). Moreover, when Polyphemus does arrive he does not notice his guests until he has finished his chores. If the two previous examples are not sufficient due to the chance of Polyphemus being outside and him not noticing them because he is so large and they were hidden, then let his first words to them be proof that Polyphemus is not accustomed to $\xi\text{ev}\text{ia}$.

$\tilde{\omega}\ \xi\text{e}\tilde{\iota}\text{n}\text{o}\iota,\ \tau\text{i}\text{n}\text{e}\varsigma\ \dot{\epsilon}\text{s}\text{t}\text{e}\text{;}\ \pi\text{o}\theta\text{e}\text{v}\ \pi\text{l}\text{a}\text{e}\tilde{\iota}\text{h}\text{'}\ \dot{\upsilon}\text{r}\text{y}\text{g}\text{a}\ \kappa\text{e}\text{l}\text{e}\text{u}\text{t}\text{h}\text{a}\text{;$

ἢ τι κατὰ πρῆξιν ἢ μαψιδίως ἀλάλησθε,
οἵᾳ τε ληιστῆρες, ὑπεὶρ ἄλα, τοί τ' ἀλόωνται
ψυχὰς παρθέμενοι κακὸν ἀλλοδαποῖσι φέροντες;
IX, 252-255

This question is clearly out of order in the typical process of *ξενία*. Nestor asks the exact same questions in III, 71-4; however, they are prefaced by several steps in the ritual such as drinking wine and eating, and therefore it is appropriate to ask. Polyphemus' timing in posing the formulaic question is blunt and immediate. The nuances in the word *ξένος* are different for Polyphemus and Odysseus. For Odysseus, *ξένος* carries the overtone of *stranger*, but with the implied nuance of *friend*. However, for Polyphemus, *ξένος* carries the same overtone, but the implied nuance is much more volatile. The nuance has the undertone of *alien*. Polyphemus' use of *ξένος* establishes Odysseus as completely foreign, and because he is uninterested in anything beyond his flock, superfluous to him. (This is made clear the next time Polyphemus uses the word, this time in a direct insult: “νήπιός εἰς, ὃ ξεῖν” (IX, 273)). It is only after Odysseus has responded, placing himself firmly in the heroic world, but not giving his name, that he makes his third and final address seeking hospitality (IX, 266-271). Odysseus attempts to find common cultural ground with Polyphemus, assuming that Polyphemus is like him. He is unaware at this point that the greater/human society, of which Odysseus is a part, is totally foreign to the Cyclops, and therefore he continues in his search for *ξενία*. He says he is owed hospitality and a token of guest-friendship because “ἢ τε ξείνων θέμις ἔστιν” (IX, 268) and that Polyphemus ought to respect the law because it is protected by Zeus (*Ζεὺς* δ' ἐπιτιμήτωρ ἰκετάων τε ξείνων τε, / *ξείνιος*: IX, 270-271). His reasons for being welcomed into Polyphemus' cave are sound and reasonable to Odysseus, because he is

invoking a common practice, which is protected by the highest god. However, this reasoning must come across as silly to the Cyclops, being from a different type of society, one where there is no supplication and hospitality because there is no cultural or social exchange, and therefore there is no need for it to be protected by a god which he does not consider important. With this cultural clash, Homer inverts the typical reaction to a typical request for hospitality. Odysseus expects to be welcomed and shown that his host has a νόος θεουδής and is φιλοξένιος; however, Polyphemus calls him foolish and explains to him just how far away from his heroic culture he is when he says, “ούδ’ ἀνέγώ Διὸς ἔχθος ἀλευάμενος πεφιδοίμην / οὔτε σεῦ οὔθ’ ἐτάρων, εἰ μὴ θυμός με κελεύοτ” (IX, 277-278). He does not overtly say that Odysseus will not receive any sort of ξεινήιον, but rather shows how little he cares, if at all, for anything Odysseus has just said. Polyphemus does not pay heed to Zeus as a ruler, but only his passion, and so he does not have to participate in any of the common practices that bind Odysseus’ world together. The initial and crucial agreement between guest and host does not occur, and therefore, there cannot be successful ξενία.

If the most basic belief in the system of hospitality is not shared, the rest of the interaction is tainted. Immediately after this is made known to Odysseus, he lies about how he got to the island. The next steps in the ritual are the sitting of the guests and having a meal. Once again, Homer turns the table on the natural expectation. Instead of Polyphemus sitting his guests down and feeding them, he feeds on them because he is not a grain-eater (*σιτοφάγος*: IX, 191), but eats men and drinks pure milk (*ἀνδρόμεα κρέ' ἔδων καὶ ἐπ' ἄκρητον γάλα πίνων*: IX, 297). This action now shows Polyphemus not to be just a bad host, but inhuman. He eats what man does not, and drinks in ratios

that man does not (this is shown again in the wine). Odysseus' “μεγαλήτορα θυμὸν” (IX, 299) is to kill his host for defying the law of hospitality so violently, but “Ἐτερος... θυμὸς” (IX, 302) checks him because otherwise they would be locked in the cave. Odysseus understands that he is not in the heroic world and for the first time, not all forces can be met heroically.

Understanding his physical helplessness, Odysseus must use his cunning in order to escape and take vengeance upon (τισαίμην: IX, 317) his terrible host. At the time for after-dinner drinks, he gives wine to the Cyclops, who being unaccustomed to it gets drunk. Furthermore, wine is a common denominator of heroic/Hellenic culture, and Polyphemus' ignorance of it is a further marker of his otherness. This again is the opposite of what is expected, as it is the host who gives wine. Then would be the appropriate time to ask the guest's name as Nestor did in III, 71-4, if Polyphemus had given Odysseus any wine, or anything to eat for that matter. However, in his second attempt to discover his name he says, “καὶ μοι τεὸν οὔνομα εἰπὲ / αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα τοι δῶ ξένιον” (IX, 355-356). After Odysseus' clear description of the expected practice of ξενία in his culture, Polyphemus tries to use this new information for his own amusement. He understands the generic steps of ξενία, but due to his own way of life, ultimately rejects it because it is of no use to him. According to the structure, Polyphemus is saying the right thing, but the ξένιον and Odysseus' deception, Οὔτις (IX, 367), show that the ritual is being subverted. The Cyclops' ξένιον is that Odysseus will be eaten after his crew (IX, 369-370), as opposed to a ship ride home from Alcinous or a token by which to remember his host. This complete abuse of the ξένιον, while still acting under its general sense, shows a complete mockery of the law of hospitality. This

mockery, combined with the consumption of his shipmates, justifies Polyphemus' violent blinding to Odysseus.

The result of the blinding is even further isolation. Polyphemus already lives on his own away from other Cyclopes, and now he cannot even see. His helplessness and separation from his fellow Cyclopes are reinforced when he tells them it was Οὖτις and they say, “ἀλλὰ σύ γ' εὔχεο πατρὶ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι” (IX, 412). Now, his only option is to respect the gods, at which idea he scoffed just two days earlier. To break the ground rules of *ξενία* is detrimental to oneself because it leads to social isolation, and in this case, also physical isolation. That the other Cyclopes are not blinded is of little importance, as they are not given the opportunity to bestow *ξενία* on a heroic figure such as Odysseus. Odysseus brings up the problem of social isolation when he asks Polyphemus, “πῶς κέν τίς σε καὶ ὕστερον ἄλλος ἵκοιτο / ἀνθρώπων πολέων, ἐπεὶ, οὐ κατὰ μοῖραν ἔρεξας” (IX, 351-352). Though Odysseus has realized that some things cannot be conquered heroically, he still has yet to understand the complete polarity of Cyclopean existence – he is merely aware of it. From the Cyclopean point of view, the question is silly: they do not want anyone to visit them. They have been existent in the same fashion for as long as they have been present, so why change their practices to suit the needs of a world of which they are not a part? This *μοῖρα*, contrary to the way in which Polyphemus acted, can be both the murder in general, and more specifically the murder of his guests. He broke two laws, both of which help keep societies in order even today. Odysseus justifies not only the blinding, but also the abandoning of Polyphemus, now completely isolated from his world. In his justification he says that Zeus and the other immortal gods took vengeance upon him for not shrinking from eating his guests in his own home (*ἐπεὶ*

ξείνους ούχ ἄζεο σῷ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ / ἐσθέμεναι: τῷ σε Ζεὺς τίσατο καὶ θεοὶ ἄλλοι: IX, 478-479). As Zeus did not actively do anything, but rather Odysseus was the one who devised the plan, got Polyphemus drunk, and then blinded him, it seems that Odysseus is saying that he was acting in accordance with divine will. This idea is strengthened when one notices that Odysseus uses the same verb *tívw* to describe how he would take vengeance himself (*τισαίμην*: IX, 317). This then leads into his second taunting of the Cyclops, despite his shipmates advice, in which he reveals his true identity.

For a third and final time, Homer brings up the giving of a name and the promise of a *ξένιον*, when Odysseus taunts him by giving him his real name, the name of his father, and the name of his home (IX, 502-505). It is only after the truth is exposed that Polyphemus will give him a real *ξένιον* in the same form as Alcinous – conveyance home. However, instead of Odysseus sailing back, he taunts Polyphemus. This final taunt prompts Polyphemus not to give Odysseus a farewell blessing, as Nestor did for Telemachus in Pylos, but a farewell curse (IX, 526-535), which turns out to come true due to the fates. This is an inversion of the host's gift of conveyance. Homer's final inversion of the *ξενία* ritual ends the book when Zeus does not accept Odysseus' sacrifice (IX, 553-555). Why Zeus does not accept it is not easy to understand. Why is it that Odysseus summons Zeus Xenios in IX, 271, but is abandoned here? Is it simply because the fates have ordained this for him (*Οδυσῆι... δυσμόρω*: I, 48-49) or Poseidon's rage has to be satiated before Odysseus' return home? Perhaps it is that Odysseus says he is acting on behalf of Zeus (*τίσατο*: IX, 479), but is actually acting on behalf of himself (*τισαίμην*: IX, 317) when he does physical harm to his host. Zeus does not punish Polyphemus because the Cyclops and his culture are not subject to the rules of *ξενία* due

to the fact that they live in a world of isolation, where there is no need for social exchange. It is ironic that Zeus punishes Odysseus for breaking the laws of *ξενία* when he thinks he is acting as Zeus' agent. It is not that Zeus punishes Odysseus directly, but that he allows Poseidon to be the harbinger of punishment. It is Odysseus blinding of Poseidon's son, an act improper for a guest, which has provoked Poseidon's wrath. In the end of the exchange it turns out that Odysseus, who has been beseeching Polyphemus to act according to the laws of *ξενία*, is the one who breaks them by blinding his host. Polyphemus, on the other hand, has had no real experience with other people, as has been said by Odysseus himself in IX, 112-115; 187-189, and is not even part of a world that needs a set of guidelines for when one does come into contact with others. The closest thing that the Cyclops has to a relationship with someone else is his ram. He is aware of the ram's habits (IX, 447-452), assumes that the ram is sad about his lost sight (*ἢ σύ γέ
ἄνακτος / ὀφθαλμὸν ποθέεις*: IX, 452-453), and wishes that the ram could think like he does and be able to speak (IX, 456-457). In these short few verses there is a glimpse of a Polyphemus hitherto unseen. Now that he is even more removed from his society, he is full of pathos and shows that he does care about someone, though not a fellow Cyclops, but an animal. Though Odysseus feels no guilt, Homer plucks the heartstrings of the listener, if only for a moment.

It is not enough to go through the motions of a ritual, but one must let a guest leave when he wants and give when he is in need. Without applying a measure of limitation to the relationship, the guidelines can be twisted to a whole different result. From Polyphemus being absent on the arrival of Odysseus, to the final departing curse of Polyphemus and Zeus ignoring Odysseus' sacrifice, there are many places where a step in

the ritual is either out of order or perverted to some more dark purpose, almost to the extent of a total inversion of any other example of *ξενία*. However, *ξενία* is a relationship between the guest and the host, which requires proper behavior from each party. Polyphemus does not welcome his guests, he asks them who they are before any appropriate conversation has taken place (IX, 252-255), kills and eats his guests (IX, 288-290; 311; 344), physically detains his guests, and hurls boulders at them when they try to leave. However, that does not leave Odysseus blameless. Rather, Odysseus and his shipmates enter the cave and eat food without an invitation from the owner. Moreover, he gets his host drunk, blinds him, and steals his sheep, only to taunt him upon escaping. He comes into the interaction firmly set in the heroic world, and over the course of his time spent there, learns that all obstacles cannot be surmounted heroically, but must use prudence in order to achieve a goal. A greathearted passion (*μεγαλήτορα θυμόν*: IX, 299; 500) would trap him in a cave, but a second thought (*ἔτερος... θυμὸς*) will check him at times and make him the better for it. Sadly, when that strong desire is not checked a second time, he identifies himself to the Cyclops. As for Polyphemus, not understanding how to live in a community can result in even further isolation than before.

Odysseus' arrival on the island of the Cyclopes brings two worlds clashing against each other. On the one hand, there is the heroic world, which is highly interconnected, sophisticated, and regulated. These three qualities can be found in the social practice of *ξενία*, a reciprocal hosting of guests, which can be passed down through generations. On the other hand is the Cyclopean world, which resembles the Golden-Age in that the earth provides everything that the Cyclopes need, without being asked. By the will of the gods, the Cyclopes have a life where they have no need of agriculture or the

tools that come along with it, and there is no need to pray because the gods already favor them. However, having everything without effort provides no incentive to associate or discover. Odysseus characterizes the Cyclopean world as opposite to his own, and in his interactions with Polyphemus, insists upon the Cyclops acting in accordance with Odysseus' own ideal social values. This is because Odysseus has hitherto had no experience with a culture that has no social exchange, nor will he after, besides Calypso, who keeps him as a prisoner/consort. Since Polyphemus does not act in accordance with Odysseus' values, but rather acts in accordance with his own, Odysseus plans vengeance, but with the unexpected by-product of Polyphemus becoming more like Odysseus in the end. This is seen just after the blinding in book IX when, after being blinded, he calls out to his fellow Cyclopes for help. Never having done this before, Polyphemus takes his first step into a society with other people. His second step is in his prayer to his father, Poseidon. Therefore, where $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}a$ and other heroic world rituals are not natural, if enforced, they can do harm to the inhabitants by robbing them of their own culture, in this case, the Golden-Age world where no one is left wanting. This is because when $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}a$ or another practice is not previously known to a culture, its process and guidelines can be too easily perverted into something which it is not, thereby escalating the tension between the accustomed and unaccustomed parties to physical altercation. In book IX of the poem a more sophisticated world comes to a more simple culture and demands its submission to the rules of those visiting. This leads to the refusal of $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}a$ by Polyphemus and the abandonment of $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}a$ by Odysseus. Though each ended the book different than when it started. Odysseus begins to learn that he must check himself before he acts, and feel empathy toward the different circumstances of others, but still

acts in accordance with Hellenic social conventions, and Polyphemus takes those few steps toward becoming a part of a society, even though now he is more isolated than ever before.

After the Phaeacians have dropped off Odysseus at long last upon his native shore, after ten years of detainment, shipwrecks, and monsters, not recognizing his land, he laments, “ὦ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὗτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἵκανω; / ἦ δὲ οἴ γ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, / ἦ δὲ φιλόξεινοι, καὶ σφιν νόος ἔστι θεουδής;” (XIII, 200-203). These are the same words as when he was washed upon the shores of Scheria. Among the Phaeacians, Odysseus is subject to an ambivalent *ξενία*, extended by an isolated and aloof people. Although he receives conveyance and a considerable amount of gifts, he is also taunted and forced to supplicate. So too in Ithaca is he taunted by *ὑπερφίαλοι*, but also enjoys the proper treatment that he is owed as a *ξένος*. However, unlike Scheria, in Ithaca the two different sides of *ξενία* will be experienced separately: in a hut hosted by Eumaeus, and at his own palace by Penelope’s suitors. It can be argued that in fact, neither of these episodes is truly an episode of *ξενία*. With respect to the episode at the hut of Eumaeus, it is because it is not an exchange between equals, but between a suppliant and a benefactor, but also master and slave, whereas Telemachus, Nestor, Menelaus, Odysseus, and Alcinous are all royalty, and therefore are owed the same honours. As for the episode at the palace, Odysseus is not truly a guest, nor are the suitors truly hosts. However, for the sake of analyzing the hospitality given to Odysseus, they are too rich in social exchange and irony to disqualify due to a technicality. As for the hut episode, the intimate social exchange finally allows Odysseus to trust someone who matters enough to reveal his true identity, and begin the reclamation of his throne.

The episode at the palace is where Homer displays every morally depraved attribute and a paradigm for ἀξενία. Thus, the episode at the hut will be discussed before the one at the palace, as it is prior chronologically.

The episode at the hut of the swineherd, Eumaeus, is rich in its observance of quintessential phrases and actions of the process of ξενία, except for one thing: it is a hut, not a palace, which is where hospitality scenes have occurred hitherto, besides the cave of Polyphemus, which is anything but hospitable. Immediately, the audience can anticipate a different type of ξενία, namely, one that is ironically less lavish than previous episodes. It is the very lack of lavishness, which makes the hospitality that Eumaeus imparts that much more intimate. Physically speaking, it must be more intimate as there is much less space than in a palace. However, on an emotional level, it is Eumaeus' loyalty that provides such a warm feeling. In Ithaca, as in Scheria, Odysseus seeks to know what land he has come to and begs the first person he sees, typically by a well or stream, with a formulaic phrase, “σεν φίλα γούναθ’ ίκάνω... τίς γῆ, τίς δῆμος, τίνες ἀνέρες ἐγγεγάστιν;” (XIII, 231; 233). However, it is not a princess that he begs, but what he thinks is a simple herdsman (the audience knowing it is actually Athena). After Athena reveals herself to Odysseus and gives him directions (XIII, 407-410), she disguises him as a beggar. It is at this point that Odysseus, yet again, begins to lie to his host; however, this time it is under the orders of Athena: “πάντα παρήμενος ἐξερέεσθαι” (XIII, 411). However, Odysseus having enjoyed some complicated hospitality at best over his ten-year journey homeward may still have some lingering apprehension regarding the observance of ξενία in the real world. Therefore, Odysseus must not yet reveal himself to Eumaeus until he has learned the state of affairs in Ithaca and who is loyal. Odysseus

does this by making trial of Eumaeus (*πειρητίζων*: XIV, 459). It is with this goal in mind that Odysseus will steer the course of exchanging information with Eumaeus during the after-dinner drinks. So, as the first general step in establishing a hospitality scene, a description of the surroundings is done. The description of the hut is not so glorious as to render Odysseus speechless as the Spartan palace does to Telemachus, but rather there is not even a description of Eumaeus' home at all. Instead, the poet describes the swines' home: the farmyard (*αὐλή*: XIV, 5) for over 20 verses (this is modest in comparison to the description of Alcinous' palace, which spans over 50 verses). Having been built by Eumaeus, the description shows the pride and diligence with which he does his work. Upon approaching the hut, Odysseus is met by barking dogs rushing at him (*οἱ μὲν κεκλήγοντες ἐπέδραμον*: XIV, 30). The potential for violence is in stark contrast to the gentleness with which Eumaeus greets Odysseus, “ἀλλ᾽ ἔπεο, κλισίνδ’ ἵομεν, γέρον,
ὅφρα καὶ αὔτος, / σίτου καὶ οἴνοιο κορεσσάμενος κατὰ θυμόν, / εἴπης ὀππόθεν ἐσσὶ καὶ
ὀππόσα κήδε’ ἀνέτλης” (XIV, 45-48). Eumaeus, in three verses, shows the proper order of imparting *ξενία* to a stranger. Henceforth the swineherd establishes a *ξενία* that is highly personal, honest, and selfless, which shows his unwavering loyalty to his master, Odysseus, even after his 20 years of absence. In seating his guest, he cushions Odysseus' seat with his own sleeping pad (*αὐτοῦ ἐνεύναιον*: XIV, 51). After only completing this initial step in the ritual of *ξενία*, Eumaeus states his formulaic observance of the law of *ξενία*: “ξεῖν’, οὕ μοι θέμις ἔστ’, ούδ’ εἰ κακίων σέθεν ἔλθοι, / ξεῖνον ἀτιμῆσαι: πρὸς γὰρ
Διός εἰσιν ἄπαντες / ξεῖνοί τε πτωχοί τε: δόσις δ’ ὀλίγη τε φίλη τε / γίγνεται ἡμετέρη
(XIV, 56-59)”. The adjectives *ἄλιγη* and *φίλη* reaffirm the intimacy and poverty that characterizes Eumaeus' hospitality. Furthermore, giving hospitality is a law (*θέμις*), no

matter how poor a beggar or how rich a king may be. This is in distinct contrast to the Cyclopes, who only have laws unto each Cyclops. With his allusion to Zeus *Xenios*, Eumaeus gives a second sign that he is in accordance with the gods and is deeply pious (the first being XIV, 37-39). During the next step observed, feast preparation, another intentional description of Eumaeus' poverty is brought to light: Eumaeus does not mix wine in a metal bowl, but in a wooden cup (*κισσυβίω*: XIV, 78). Moreover, they do not eat fat pigs, but piglets, because that is what is available for slaves (*ἔσθιε νῦν, ὥξεῖνε, τά τε δμώεσσι πάρεστι, / χοίρε*': XIV, 80-81). It is important to notice that hitherto there has not been a host who personally furnished a seat, mixed wine, or roasted meat: even the friendliness and intimacy of Nestor to Telemachus pales in comparison. This personal touch reinforces the intimate nature of the scene. At the time for after-dinner drinks, Eumaeus even has Odysseus drink from his own wine bowl (*δῶκε σκύφον, ὥπερ ἔπινεν*: XIV, 112)!

At this point in the hospitality scene comes the time for the identification of the guest, but Odysseus, ever attempting to avoid this step, prefers to skip to exchanging stories and information in order that he may continue testing Eumaeus. This section is almost tedious in its repetitiveness between Odysseus' asserting that the Ithacan king will return and Eumaeus' rejecting of it. However, it does bring further to light Eumaeus' piety, tolerance, and loyalty. After Eumaeus' refutation of Odysseus' inquiry into the identity of Eumaeus' master, Odysseus makes an oath (*σὺν ὅρκῳ*: XIV, 151) that he will return and seeks clothing as a reward for his good news (XIV: 152-154). However, Eumaeus continues in disbelief. He then asks Odysseus formulaically: who is he, where is he from, how did he arrive, and who brought him (XIV: 187-190)? Odysseus, as

required by his disguise, lies, but on a subject that is familiar in the poem: Odysseus makes up a *nostos* about coming back from Troy, but also weaves bits of truth into his own story; namely, the amount of time being gone (Ἐπτάετες μένον αὔτοθι: 14, 285; ἐννῆμαρ φερόμην, δεκάτη δέ με νυκτὶ μελαίνῃ / γαίῃ: 14, 314-315). He then tells a completely made up story concerning Odysseus' whereabouts (XIV, 321-359), to which Eumeus says his guest lies with no purpose (μαψιδίως ψεύδεσθαι: XIV, 365), and then says not to lie to him (XIV, 387). After saying that Odysseus has lied to him three times, (although in one of them he is actually truthful) why does Eumeus stand for it? It is disrespectful for a guest to lie to his host, and even worse when the host is aware of it and admonishes him. Eumeus tolerates the lying because of his religious piety, not because of his guest (οὐ γὰρ τοῦνεκ' ἔγώ σ' αἰδέσσομαι οὐδὲ φιλήσω, / ἀλλὰ Δία ξένιον δείσας αὔτόν τ' ἔλεαίρων: XIV, 388-389). Slyly acquiescing, Odysseus provokes him by restating his oath, but this time with a penalty of death if he is lying (XIV, 391-400). Eumeus scoffs at the idea of a host ever being so terrible as to murder his guest, and laughs, “πρόφρων κεν δὴ ἔπειτα Δία Κρονίωνα λιτούμην” (XIV, 406). Eumeus ends the supposed charade by finding it laughable to act contrary to the law of hospitality. Still emphasizing Eumeus' piety, and therefore good *ξενία*, through the whole of this episode, Homer describes Eumeus' cutting of the boar (XIV, 432-438); having set an equal portion aside for the Nymphs, Hermes, himself, and his three friends, Eumeus gives his guest the honor of serving him the chine of the boar (νώτοισιν δ' Ὄδυσσηα διηνεκέεσσι γέραιρεν / ἀργιόδοντος ύός: XIV, 437-438).

Though by this point Eumeus has clearly proven himself a staunchly loyal servant, Odysseus still wishes to test Eumeus and his hospitality (πειρητίζων: XIV, 459)

and does so twice. The first time Odysseus tests Eumaeus' hospitality by asking him for a cloak of his own or to delegate the burden to someone else. He manipulates Eumaeus through his loyalty by a lengthy story of Odysseus tricking Thoas to give him his cloak on a cold Trojan night (XIV, 462-506). However, this story is not needed as Eumaeus, being in accordance with *ξενία*, would have made Odysseus comfortable regardless. In fact, Eumaeus does more than what Odysseus asks for. This is seen when Eumaeus says that Telemachus, as his master, will provide clothing and conveyance for Odysseus (XIV, 515-516). He himself subsequently prepares Odysseus a bed of sheep and goatskins near the fire, and then gives Odysseus his spare cloak for the night (*τίθει δ' ἄρα οἱ πυρὸς ἐγγὺς / εὔνήν, ἐν δ' ὄτων τε καὶ αἰγῶν δέρματ' ἔβαλλεν. / ἐνθ' Ὁδυσεὺς κατέλεκτ': ἐπὶ δὲ χλαινῶν βάλεν αὐτῷ*: XIV, 518-520). Unlike previous episodes, the guest does not sleep in a portico, which does not exist here, but by the very hearth of the home. However, in keeping with previous episodes, the guest and host do not sleep in the same area. Rather, in this inversion of typical procedure, it is the host, in his staunch loyalty to his master, who sleeps outside in order to protect the boars (XIV, 532-533). The following evening Odysseus again wishes to see whether Eumaeus' *ξενία* will withstand further testing (*πειρητίζων*: XV, 304) or not. This second time Odysseus pretends that he intends to go to the city to beg from the suitors at Odysseus palace (XV, 315-316), but Eumaeus, not wishing that his guest be subject to the suitors' outrage (XV, 329), tells Odysseus to stay (*ἀλλὰ μέν'*: XV, 335). Thereafter he restates his formulaic promise of Telemachus giving Odysseus gifts of clothes and conveyance (*αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν ἔλθησιν Ὁδυσσῆος φίλος νιός, / κεῖνός σε χλαινάν τε χιτῶνά τε εἵματα ἔσσει, / πέμψει δ' ὅππῃ σε κραδίη θυμός τε κελεύει*: XV, 337-339). As a poor slave, Eumaeus cannot fulfill all the

demands of ξενία by himself, but must rely upon his master, Telemachus, in order to meet the demands of good ξενία. Eumaeus has passed Odysseus' two tests, acted in accordance with ξενία, displayed his loyalty to his master, and thereby fully gained Odysseus' trust.

Once Odysseus trusts Eumaeus, more intimate subjects can be broached in the social exchange, namely Odysseus' parents. Eumaeus explains the pathetic state of his father and the passing of his mother (XV, 353-354; 358-359). However, even if he does trust Eumaeus, Odysseus still cannot show his true emotions. He cannot openly grieve for his mother nor bemoan his father's wasted state. Even in Scheria Odysseus could still cry, if only secretly, but the scene is so intimate that he cannot allow himself even that single release. This masked pain comes to a climax with the embrace of Telemachus at Eumaeus' hut. The arrival of Telemachus prompts a second mini-hospitality scene within the episode of the hut. It is not Odysseus who embraces his son, but Eumaeus, while Odysseus must remain distant. In the most bittersweet simile Homer describes the embrace as a loving father embracing his only and beloved son coming home in the tenth year from a far away land, for whom he endured many hardships (*ώς δὲ πατήρ ὅν παῖδα φίλα φρονέων ἀγαπάζῃ / ἐλθόντ’ ἐξ ἀπίης γαίης δεκάτῳ ἐνιαυτῷ, / μοῦνον τηλύγετον, τῷ ἔπ’ ἄλγεα πολλὰ μογήσῃ*: XVI, 17-19). Furthermore, Telemachus does not even address Odysseus when inquiring into his identity, but formulaically asks Eumaeus (XVI, 57-59), who replies that Odysseus comes to Telemachus as a suppliant (*ἰκέτης*: XVI, 67). However, Telemachus instantly considers Odysseus a guest (*τὸν ξεῖνον*, XVI, 70) and will provide all the trappings that go along with it: clothes, a sword, sandals, and conveyance (XVI, 79-81). This is in stark contrast to Scheria, where Odysseus is treated

as a ἰκέτης until Echeneüs rebukes Alcinous. This allows Telemachus and Odysseus to exchange information regarding the suitors (XVI, 90-134). At this point Odysseus is able to properly indentify himself in terms of relation to Telemachus (*πατὴρ τεός εἰμι*: XVI, 188) and explain how he arrived at Ithaca (XVI, 225-236). This is the culmination of the ξενία pattern whereby the guest identifies himself – long postponed in this instance and split between two hosts. Proper identification can only take place with Telemachus, if Odysseus is to take revenge upon the suitors. After proper identification and social exchange, Telemachus tells Eumaeus to be Odysseus' escort to the palace: thus Odysseus receives conveyance to his next destination (*πομπή*). The last step before conveyance however is the giving of a guest-gift. This comes in the form of a staff, dear to Odysseus' heart (*σκῆπτρον θυμαρὲς*: XVII, 199). This gift is representative of the giver in that it is a staff, which is used by swineherds, and that it is dear to Odysseus' heart (*θυμαρὲς*), which conveys the intimacy of the entire episode.

Over the course of three days Odysseus experiences such acts of Eumaeus' ξενία: a welcoming by aggressive dogs followed by a kindly host, a seating which involves the host's own sleeping pad, modest preparations of libations (which wine was drank from host's own bowl), sacrifice (of which Odysseus received the chine), and feast followed by the consumption of which, (false) identification and purpose, an exchange of information about the state of Ithaca and a *nostos*, bedding down involving the host's own cloak, guest-gifts, one of which is highly emblematic of the giver, and conveyance to the following destination. Though Odysseus lies for the majority of the episode in order to discover further the state of his island, Eumaeus establishes a scene, which is intimate and warm. The only aspect of ξενία, which is missing is the bath. However, a

swineherd can hardly be expected to offer such a useless thing as a bath when you live among boars. The episode is a highly pious and successful example of *ξενία*, in which Odysseus reveals his true identity and makes his first steps towards reclaiming his throne. However, this scene is not without a strong sense of irony. Eumaeus, a slave, provides *ξενία* to a wretched old beggar, who is actually a king, in a hut, which is actually owned by Eumaeus' guest. Throughout the scene, the status of host and guest has been inverted, but it is to emphasize the moral, as opposed to the aristocratic, quality of Eumaeus. However, in the following scene, the inversion of the role of guest and host is to emphasize the amoral quality of the suitors. Homer uses the same tool to provide two contrasting results.

After 20 years Odysseus at long last arrives at his palace. However, it is not the happy return that he hoped it would be, but rather it is so full of peril that he must enter his own home disguised as a destitute beggar. This is because the suitors, who were once guests in his house, have taken over the role of host, and the once host is now a time-worn vagabond. Even the proper hosts, Penelope and Telemachus, attempt in vain to prevent the outrages that the suitors commit. Thus, Homer has inverted the structure of *ξενία* at its very core in order to fully illuminate the suitors' moral depravity. With this most overarching inversion having been enacted, the audience can anticipate further reversals of the structure.

Once leaving the safety and good *ξενία* of Eumaeus' hut, Odysseus enters a world of opposites to what he has just enjoyed with the swineherd. On the way to a guest's next destination, he typically finds directions from a young person by a well; however this time Odysseus and Eumaeus come upon Melanthius the goatherd, who does accompany

them to the palace, but is verbally abusive to Odysseus not calling him *stranger* (*ξένος*), but instead a grievous beggar and a defiler of feasts (*τωχὸν ἀνιηρόν δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντῆρα*: XVII, 220). Aside from the rudeness of the first insult, inherent in the second insult is the idea that a person not affiliated with the house feasting takes away from its enjoyment. If that were so, then why would Zeus protect beggars, suppliants, and guests, all of which are not affiliated with the house feasting by definition? Why would he protect such a broad-sweeping institution as *ξενία*? He continues in saying that if Odysseus does enter the palace the suitors will throw footstools at him (XVII, 231-232). This is the first threat of violence, and a warning that Odysseus will indeed receive very bad hospitality. Melanthius' threat is punctuated by actual violence in the form of a kick to Odysseus' hip (XVII, 233). This is the first hint of the constant violence that compounds throughout the episode, culminating in the slaughter of the suitors. Ever enduring, Odysseus must not react to this offense or any other until he has properly revealed himself as the returning and triumphant king of Ithaca.

Upon arriving at the palace, the natural progression is being welcomed; however only Melanthius goes inside, sits down, and is given meat and bread to eat (XVII, 256-260). Waiting outside, Odysseus and Eumaeus deliberate about entering, but the swineherd warns Odysseus not to tarry lest someone having seen him strike him or throw something (XVII, 278-279). This is the second warning of physical violence since leaving the hut. When Eumaeus enters before Odysseus, finally Odysseus is acknowledged; however, it is not by one of the suitors, maids, or even Telemachus or Penelope, but by his old dog, covered in dung, Argos (XVII, 292), who promptly passes away. In both episodes on Ithaca, Odysseus is first noticed by dogs. Upon entry,

Eumaeus is welcomed in by Telemachus, seated, and given meat and bread (XVII, 328-335). Finally Odysseus enters, but is not given the same honors as Melanthius and Eumaeus. Rather, Telemachus takes a loaf of bread and a handful of meat to Odysseus, which he eats not at the table, or any table in fact, but on an unseemly leather pouch (XVII, 357). Odysseus then asks for bread from each of the suitors in order that he might know who is lawless (*γνοίη θ' οἵ τινές εἰσιν... οἵ τ' ἀθέμιστοι*: XVII, 363). “Ἀθέμιστοι” is the same adjective that Odysseus uses when describing the Cyclopes in book IX, which calls to mind the emphasis Eumaeus puts on law (XIV, 56-59). The parallel of the suitors and the Cyclopes continues throughout the remainder of the episode (e.g. “ὑπερφίαλοι”). Even though all of the suitors have given Odysseus some scrap of bread, Antinous, the foremost of the suitors, refuses and instead makes the same complaint as Melanthius before calling those not affiliated with the feasting “πτωχοὶ ἀνηροί, δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντῆρες” (XVII, 377). Telemachus responds by sarcastically praising Antinous, “ὅς τὸν ξεῖνον ἄνωγας ἀπὸ μεγάροιο διέσθαι / μόθῳ ἀναγκαίῳ” (XVII, 398-399). After the warnings of Melanthius and Eumaeus, Antinous too warns Odysseus to mind his tongue, but not verbally: instead he brandishes his footstool (XVII, 409-410). However, Odysseus continues to press for some bit of grain from Antinous, seeking to discover whether he is ἀθέμιστος. Antinous then shows how ἀθέμιστος he is by throwing his footstool at Odysseus’ right shoulder (*θρῆνυν ἐλών βάλε δεξιὸν ὕμον*: XVII, 362). This display of violence at a guest is complete ἀξενία and the other haughty (*ὑπερηνορεόντων*: XVII, 382) suitors show their disapproval by saying that he should not have done that, and that Odysseus could be a god in disguise (XVII, 382-384) as Alcinous had similarly wondered in book VII, 199. However, not only does Antinous not

respect fellow human beings, but he does not even respect the gods, as he does not care for the suitors' warnings (*Ο δ' οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μόθων*: XVII, 488). Here, Homer has shown Antinous' nature to be lawless amongst not just people but also the gods. This extreme behavior of disrespecting his fellows and the gods recalls the actions of Polyphemus in book IX.

It is at this point that another beggar, Irus, enters Odysseus' palace. He is like the suitors in that he incessantly devours and drinks (*ἀζηχὲς φαγέμεν καὶ πιέμεν*: XVIII, 3) and is violent. Seeing another beggar present, Irus immediately provokes Odysseus into a fight (XVIII, 10-14); however, Odysseus tries to avoid physical conflict by saying that there is enough space for them to both beg in a palace (XVIII, 17). This, aside from being true, is part of hospitality. The unforeseen nature of this social exchange is that a host does not know when there are people coming by. Therefore, if two happen to come upon the same house, and there is sufficient means for hospitality, it is the responsibility of the host to provide. However, as Irus is a beggar and therefore unaccustomed to being a host, he is possessive. At the mention of violence, Antinous is pleased and says, “ὦ φίλοι, οὐ μέν πώ τι πάρος τοιοῦτον ἔτυχθη, / οἵην τερπωλὴν θεὸς ἥγαγεν ἐς τόδε δῶμα” (XVIII, 36-37). However, this is real violence, this is not competitive wrestling or boxing. This is not *οἴη τερπωλή*. The rich suitors are delighting in homelessness and its hardships. Moreover, Antinous sets stakes for the fight, turning it into a match or a game: choosing the meal and dining with the suitors as much as the beggar pleases, and no other beggar will be allowed (XVIII, 44-49). This is completely antithetical to what Odysseus has said in line 17 and to the nature of hospitality. Rather, hospitality is no longer a social exchange, but is offered as a mocking reward for violent behavior. Irus

and Odysseus must compete in order to receive food. Darker still is the defeated's reward: a perverse sort of conveyance, which Antinous warns Irus of; conveyance to King Echtheus, who lops off facial features and feeds his victim's torn genitals to his dogs (XVIII, 84-87). Conveyance is now no longer a final step of *ξενία*, but rather it is a punishment for not obtaining hospitality. With no other option than to engage in violence, Odysseus swiftly paralyzes Irus; however it is the aftermath of that single punch that is so vulgar. Blood rushed into his mouth, and Irus fell down in the dust groaning, clenching his teeth, and kicking the ground with his feet (*αὐτίκα δ' ἥλθε κατὰ στόμα φοίνιον αἷμα, / κὰδ δ' ἔπεσ' ἐν κονίησι μακών, σὺν δ' ἥλασ' ὀδόντας / λακτίζων ποσὶ γαῖαν*: XVIII, 97-99). This disturbing image of an utterly broken man provokes the suitors to metaphorically die with laughter (*γέλω ἔκθανον*: XVIII, 100). The would-be hosts of the palace have effectively transformed *ξενία* from a social exchange connecting geographically separated family friends into a spectacle resulting in gruesome and deadly consequences. They have proven themselves to be *ἀθέμιστοι*. In this graphic scene, only Penelope voices her concern for proper *ξενία* to helpless Telemachus: “*ஓς τὸν ξεῖνον ἔσασας ἀεικισθήμεναι οὕτως. / πῶς νῦν, εἴ τι ξεῖνος ἐν ἡμετέροισι δόμοισιν / ἥμενος ὥδε πάθοι βυστακτύος ἐξ ἀλεγεινῆς*” (XVIII, 222-224). However, Penelopes' words carry little weight when Eurymachus throws another footstool at Odysseus, but misses (XVIII, 394-396). Even after Odysseus has won the suitor's hospitality, he is still met with violence.

Since Odysseus has won his hospitality and has fed, now is the time for identification and an exchange of information; however, even this step is atypical as Eumeus had said earlier that in exchange for information regarding Odysseus, Penelope

would give him clothes (XVII, 553-559). In a more simple scene, like those with Telemachus in the Peloponnese, the exchange of information is not prompted by the incentive of a reward. This seems more like a business transaction than a friendly conversation. For the first time since arriving at the palace, he is given a place to sit: a chair with a fleece cushion (XIX, 97). Penelope asks the formulaic identity question (XIX, 104-106), which Odysseus, as always, evades. The conversation echoes the one at the hut with a similar oath that Odysseus makes (XIX, 302-307); however, a glaring difference in Penelope's refutation is that since there is no master in the palace, Odysseus cannot obtain conveyance to his next destination (*πομπῆς / τεύξη*: XIX, 313-314). This is of no consequence, as the audience knows, because Odysseus has no desire to go anywhere else, but this admission is greatly distressing to Penelope. The fact that she cannot provide proper *ξενία* goes hand in hand with her not having a husband. Even though Penelope cannot provide all the aspects of *ξενία*, she can still provide a bath and, later, a bed for her guest, even though the step of the bath may be out of typical order. This bathing scene is the longest of all in the poem by much. Usually consisting of a few verses (such as in Pylos, Sparta, and Scheria), this bathing scene spans from XIX, 363-507. This is because here is the decisive identification of Odysseus by the scar on his leg (*τὴν γρηῦς χείρεσσι καταπρηνέσσι λαβοῦσα / γνῶ ρ' ἐπιμασσαμένη*: XIX, 467-468). The audience comes to know what Eurycleia knows by the recounting of a hunt that Odysseus went on when he was a boy. At the end of the evening, Odysseus sleeps in the forehall (*προδόμῳ*: XX, 1), not in a portico, upon untanned oxhide and many fleeces of sheep, with a cloak (XX, 2-4). He is not warm by the fire like he was in Eumaeus' hut, nor kept company like Telemachus was in Pylos, and he does not even sleep due to his

plotting and the noise from the maidens and suitors. Here he tells his heart to endure until his wit can solve the situation, like it did in Polyphemus' cave (XX, 18-21). Homer likens the two scenes in order to illuminate just how dangerous of a situation Odysseus is in upon returning home. At the end of his first day home, Odysseus has been taunted, physically jeopardized by a fellow beggar and footstools, seen his wife for the first time in 20 years, and been recognized by his old nurse.

After a day and night with the suitors, Odysseus has seen them for who they are. This is confirmed in his wish, ““αὶ γὰρ δή, Εῦμαιε, θεοὶ τισαίατο λώβην, / ἦν οἵδ’ ὑβρίζοντες ἀτάσθαλα μηχανόωνται / οἴκῳ ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ, οὐδέ τις αἰδοῦς μοῖραν ἔχουσιν” (XX, 169-171). Odysseus uses words that the audience knows bring punishment; nowhere in Greek literature is ὕβρις not punished. In a further affront, the suitors do not sacrifice. The language of sacrifice is used (*οἱ δὲ λέρευνον... ἵρευνον*: XX, 250-251), but they neither pray nor invoke gods, but rather set forth to their meal (XX, 256). Perhaps at this meal Odysseus, since he defeated Irus, might eat at a proper table, but he is kept apart eating on an unseemly (the same adjective applied to his leather sack, on which he first ate) stool and a paltry table (*δίφρον ἀεικέλιον... ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν*: XX, 259). However, Odysseus, even though being kept separate from the suitors, is not spared further insult. Ctesippus, a man among the suitors who knows lawlessness (*ἥν δέ τις ἐν μνηστῆρσιν ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστια εἰδώς*: XX, 287) (cf. IX, 189 for same usage), offers Odysseus a *ξενίον*, which is his due as a guest (XX, 296). However, like Polyphemus, Ctesippus' guest-gift is no gift at all, but a detriment: he hurls an ox hoof at Odysseus, but misses (XX, 299-301). As in the case of Polyphemus, Odysseus does not receive the Cyclops' “guest-gift.” However, there is a guest-gift which Odysseus once received that

allows him to win the contest, slaughter the suitors, and reclaim his throne: his bow, given to him by Iphitus when he was in Lacedaemon (XXI, 13-14). Iphitus' guest-gift is not the only one that helps Odysseus overcome overwhelming odds. The wine, which Maro gave Odysseus when he was in the Grove of Apollo (IX, 196-198), helped soothe Polyphemus to sleep, which allowed Odysseus to blind him. So, Odysseus manages to obtain retribution for the inversion of *ξενία* by using guest-gifts from successful experiences of guest-friendship. He justifies his killing of the 108 suitors for three reasons related to *ξενία* and two related to more general probity (XXII, 35-41): wasting his house, raping his housemaids, and attempting to woo his wife while he was alive; having no fear of the gods, and not expecting anything bad to come of it. These reasons, except for raping his housemaids (cf. XX, 8), have been seen in his two days being home.

Thus, with the total inversion of *ξενία*, from the role of host to the guest-gift, Homer has used the same adjectives to describe the suitors and Polyphemus, thereby establishing a parallel between the two parties. However, what makes the actions of the suitors worse than those of Polyphemus is that they have been part of a culture which has been practicing *ξενία* as long as there has been social exchange and they also were usurping a role that was not theirs, in that it was not even their house, in which to be bad hosts. The suitors have abused *ξενία* to such an extent that it becomes unrecognizable to the audience. It is no longer an institution, which facilitates social exchange in a world that can be isolated without immense effort, but is transformed into a sport (*τερπωλή*) for the suitors to enjoy. The two episodes on Ithaca work as two ends on the spectrum of *ξενία*: Eumaeus' hut provides comfort and a safe place whereas the palace, Odysseus own home, is fraught with insults, hubris, and violence. By juxtaposing these two scenes in

combination with using similar vocabulary and plot themes as the Polyphemus episode, Homer draws attention to the moral depravity of the suitors.

Having examined six scenes at Pylos, Sparta, Scheria, Polyphemus' cave, Eumeus' hut, and the palace at Ithaca, I have shown that through using the same structure and formulaic language of $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}\alpha$, but manipulating its order and manifestations, Homer has made six distinct hospitality episodes. However, with so many elements that collectively comprise any hospitality scene, there are virtually endless possible scenarios that Homer could have created. We have seen positive social interaction grounded in a reciprocal nature, aloof entertaining driven by self-glorification, monstrous behavior by both guest and host, and perverted $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}\alpha$ becoming a reward for violence. Homer's brilliance in the order of these scenes shows relatively positive social interactions (Books I-VII) before the violent repercussions of $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}\alpha$ gone awry (Books IX, XVII-XXIII) in order to give the audience an understanding of what $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}\alpha$ is before tearing it apart with the result that the actions of Polyphemus and the suitors repulse the audience even more so than they would have if the audience had been unaware of the characters' initial obligation to take part in the ritual of hospitality.

Though these six episodes are the objects of analysis in this essay that is not to say there are no other hospitality scenes in the poem. Rather, four scenes come readily to the attentive reader's mind: Athena as Mentes coming to Telemachus in Ithaca, Hermes relaying Zeus' order for Odysseus' release to Calypso at her island, Odysseus at the court of Aeolus, king of the winds, and Odysseus and the witch, Circe. These scenes too, would provoke thoughts regarding the practice of $\xi\text{ev}\text{\i}\alpha$ in the inquisitive reader. For instance, Athena's visit in disguise might recall the story of Baucis and Philemon, who

offered such good ξενία to Zeus and Hermes that they were granted a wish. Aeolus' guest-gift, the bag of winds, like Polyphemus' gift of eating Odysseus last and Ctesippus' gift of the hurled ox hoof, in reality is no gift at all, but is a harmful detriment. However, I thought it best to keep the hospitality scenes in the mortal framework as opposed to dealing with immortals.

These hospitality scenes are not simply various ways of social interaction. Rather, they can be analyzed through the lenses of many different media such as gender relations, colonization, or even veteran rehabilitation to provoke quite different thoughts in the mind of the audience. For example, Calypso's anger at being forced to send Odysseus away might make the audience ponder the difference of the nature of relations between gods and women and goddesses and men; namely, that gods can have relations with women, but if goddesses have relations with men then the men are either taken away or killed. This addresses a well-known aspect of Ancient Greek culture: inherent gender inequality. It is Penelope's constancy that is praised, while Odysseus lives with Calypso and Circe for years, yet no reproach falls on him. However, not all of Odysseus bad actions go unpunished. From our modern viewpoint, we have seen many imperial nations "civilize" populations in Asia, the Americas, and Africa, who could not defend themselves. After having imposed "civilization" upon the unknowing culture, the conquerors departed leaving destroyed peoples in their wake. Can the episode of Odysseus and Polyphemus not be seen as a form of cultural colonization? These questions seem simple in comparison to the result of the final hospitality scene: impending civil war in Ithaca. Odysseus has been a soldier for so long that he must relearn how to live in a peaceful society. Through visiting with various people over the

course of his journey home, his interactions with them attempt to rehabilitate him back into a peaceful society. However, the last effort of this rehabilitation upon arriving home is slaughtering 108 of his own people. Odysseus can only have a peaceful home through violent measures. Both in the Homeric world and ours today, veterans consistently have trouble switching from a violent way of life to a peaceful one. These questions of gender relations, colonization, and veteran rehabilitation are by no means comprehensive, but rather serve as a springboard to further inquiry for the inquisitive reader.

The nature of living and interacting with other people goes to the very heart of the poem. The guidelines for doing that positively comprise *ξενία*. The poem spans ten years in which Odysseus ceases being a commander of an army, which he has been for a previous ten years, and relearns what it means to interact with people on a non-military level. Through the various sorts of *ξενία* that Odysseus experiences, he makes his journey home both on a physical and spiritual level. *Ξενία* in the Homeric world is not simply entertainment and good times, but rather it is a way to constructively associate with new people, thereby forming new social ties and meaningful bonds, which join an otherwise isolated world together. However, as we have now seen *ξενία* is not necessarily guaranteed, not even in one's own social milieu. Therefore, it cannot be taken for granted because it is always shifting due to the various steps in its process and is even at risk of breaking down when faced with lawless men who pay heed only to their own whims. And so *ξενία*, like Odysseus, is *πολύτροπος*.

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