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### In search of 'alpharhoetataueta' [i.e., arete]| The "Odyssey" of Homer, the "Oedipus tyrannus" of Sophocles, and the "Amores" of Ovid

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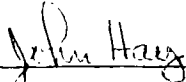


IN SEARCH OF ἌΡΗΤΗ:  
THE *ODYSSEY* OF HOMER, THE *OEDIPUS TYRANNUS* OF SOPHOCLES,  
AND THE *AMORES* OF OVID

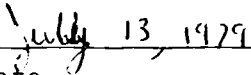
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B.A., University of Montana, 1975

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ODYSSEUS AS Ἀπιστός IN HOMER'S *ODYSSEY*

*The Odyssey* of Homer may be roughly divided into three parts: the first four books, the so-called *Telemachy*, in which Odysseus appears not at all; Books V-XII, when we find Odysseus leaving the island of Ogygia and visiting the Phaeacians; and the remainder of the poem, when Odysseus returns to Ithaca and reclaims his home.

I should like to look at the development of Odysseus as a character through the course of his adventures as he journeys home from Troy. Those adventures, which we see and hear about primarily in the second two parts of the narrative (Books V-XII), occur in two major phases. The first consists in the adventures Odysseus relates to the Phaeacians in Books IX-XII and which comprise the first half of his journey chronologically (from the time he left Troy through his stay on Ogygia). The second phase consists in those adventures of the second half of his journey, when he visits the Phaeacians (Books VI-VIII) and, returning to Ithaca, regains his home (Books XIII-XXIV).

The words and actions of Odysseus in the series of adventures before his arrival on Aeolia reflect the hero displaying not merely self-indulgent curiosity, but a desire to explore places and men with a deep commitment to learning about them. That commitment untempered, however, results in failures of leadership which imperil the return to Ithaca. That failure is complicated from Aeolia onward to Ogygia by failures of initiative, as Odysseus is literally and figuratively swept away in a current of events over which he has no control.

In the series of adventures constituting the second half of his journey, on the other hand, namely the journey from Ogygia to Ithaca and the

reclaiming of his home, Odysseus must reconcile that aspect of adventure, i.e., his commitment to learn about the world, with his recognition of human limitation, his mortality, and his commitment to reach home. It is only by learning restraint that Odysseus is able to complete his journey.

I disagree, then, with the interpretation of Howard Porter that:

In Homer a man's *ethos*, his moral predisposition, is only one facet of what he is, not, as with us, the essential reality about him. Odysseus' *ethos* does not change from beginning to end of the poem, but his situation changes. Hence he changes, because what he is is the combination of *ethos* and situation.<sup>1</sup>

I shall try to demonstrate that, on the contrary, Odysseus' *ethos* does in fact undergo change, that through the course of his adventures he becomes ἄριστος in a manner new to heroic man.

The groundwork for this development is laid in the opening lines of the poem where we learn the basic character of this man and his journey, which are to serve as the theme of the narrative. He is a hero of the Trojan War (I.2) who has since known many men and many pains (ἄλγεα--I.4) while struggling for his life (ψυχὴν--I.5) and the lives of his friends in his long journey home from that great battle. His companions, however, have perished by now--fools (νήπιλοι--I.8)--by their own arrogance (ἄτασθαλίησιν--I.7). Now we learn that the time has come which the gods "ordained for him to make his passage homeward"<sup>2</sup> (οἱ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ οἴκόνδε νέεσθαι / εἰς Ἰθάκην--I.18-19).

The poem, then, is concerned with a hero of the Trojan War and his journey home after that war. And it is concerned with ἄλγεα and ἄτασθαλίαι, which stand in many ways as antithetical to the essential qualities of



an ἄριστος. This theme is reinforced immediately following this opening invocation to the Muse, in the speech of Zeus:

ὦ πόποι, οἶον δὴ νῦν θεοὺς βροτῶν αἰτιόωνται.  
 ἔξ ἡμέων γάρ φασι κάκ' ἔμμεναι· οἳ δὲ καὶ αὐτῶν  
 σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν, (I.32-4)

My word, how mortals take the gods to task!  
 All their afflictions come from us, we hear.  
 And what of their own failings? Greed and folly  
 double the suffering in the lot of man.

Thus, says Zeus, Aegisthus perished, and so also, we hear, did the companions of Odysseus. The poem, then, is concerned with the ideal of heroic virtue, the sorrows of life and the arrogance of man which may bring those sorrows on. It remains to see what Odysseus, a hero of the Trojan War, has to do with arrogance and sorrow.

Unlike his companions, we hear that Odysseus himself, after seven years with the nymph Calypso on the island of Ogygia, is to be allowed to go home. It appears that he shall not suffer their fate. It appears, by inference, that he is not ἀτάσθαλος nor νήπιος.

This decision to send Odysseus home is a sudden one on the part of the gods, especially Athena (who has not been with Odysseus since he left Troy--XII.316-19). To understand this move, especially in the light of Zeus' opening speech, it is crucial to consider where Odysseus is when the narrative opens and the gods convene to determine his fate.

He is at this time in the midst of his journey following the battle of Troy. He is on the woody (δενδρήεσσα--I.51) island of Ogygia, the navel (ὄμφαλός--I.50) of the sea, with the nymph Calypso, whose name connotes "coverer" or "burier"--and who entices Odysseus "with tender and

flattering words (μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι--I.56) so that "Ithaca may be forgotten" (Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται--I.57).

The goddess and the island suggest a life of absolute ease, sensuous pleasure and eternal bliss. With respect to the world, Odysseus is effectively dead. He lies buried somewhere at the ends of the earth. His fate at this point, at least as far as the world is concerned, is no better than that of his men, who are physically dead. The imagery suggests, at least metaphorically, that Odysseus is also dead.

In such a condition, then, do we find Odysseus at the beginning of this narrative. He is at the nadir of his journey and buried with an immortal nymph. But she has ceased to please him (V.153) and he now spends his time pining to go home (V.81-4). It is at this point that Athena has taken a renewed interest and has gone to Zeus on his behalf, thus initiating the council of the gods with which the poem opens. And as a result, Calypso is requested to let the man embark at last on his journey home.

It is important to note that the time at which Athena has come back to Odysseus' assistance concurs with the failure of the nymph to please him longer, with his desire to go home and with his refusing her offer of immortality. His response to her is significant in this regard:

πότνα θεά, μή μοι τόδε χῶεο. οἶδα καὶ αὐτὸς	215
πάντα μάλ', οὐνεκα σεῖο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια	
εἶδος ἀκιδνοτέρη μέγεθος τ' εἰσάντα ἰδέσθαι.	
ἢ μὲν γὰρ βροτός ἐστι, σὺ δ' ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρωσ.	
ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς ἐθέλω καὶ ἐέλδομαι ἥματα πάντα	
οὔκαδέ τ' ἐλθέμεναι καὶ νόστιμον ἦμαρ ἰδέσθαι.	220
εἰ δ' αὖ τις ραίησι θεῶν ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ,	
τλήσομαι ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔχων ταλαπενθεῖα θυμόν.	
ἤδη γὰρ μάλα πολλὰ πάθον καὶ πολλὰ μόγησα	
κύμασι καὶ πολέμῳ. μετὰ καὶ τόδε τοῖσι γενέσθω.	

My lady goddess, here is no cause for anger.  
 My quiet Penelope--how well I know--would seem a  
 shade before your majesty, death and old age  
 being unknown to you, while she must die. Yet,  
 it is true, each day I long for home, long for  
 the sight of home. If any god has marked me  
 out again for shipwreck, my tough heart can  
 undergo it. What hardship have I not long  
 since endured at sea, in battle! Let the trial  
 come. (V.215-24).

Odysseus explicitly rejects a life of eternal bliss and immortality. He chooses instead mortality, with all the ambiguity and risk it implies, with a wife who will grow old. And he is willing to risk the sea, which even Hermes admits is "boundless" (V.101), in order to get home.

It is only now that Odysseus becomes singularly committed to going home. And, aware of his human frailty, he recognizes the need for restraint and the help of the gods, if he is to accomplish that mission. It is at this point in the chronology of his wanderings that the council of the gods convenes at the request of Athena. It is now that the speech of Zeus is made and Odysseus is allowed to journey home, having come to know the force of that speech--and of our own human responsibility. Odysseus had, for all practical purposes, suffered the same fate as his men, i.e., he was dead. But here, after seven years on the island of Ogygia, he has awakened to life as a mortal. Only now does he leave.

The significance of his change is further enhanced by the scene of his arrival on Phaeacia, with its imagery symbolic of rebirth.<sup>3</sup> From this point the narration of his adventures may begin--both those leading up to Ogygia and those following. From this point Odysseus is a new man, cognizant of the limitations of man and considerably more restrained. It

remains to show, via his adventures, how he has changed.

His adventures are best traced in the order of their occurrence. Since we have entered Odysseus' journey *in medias res*, we must turn for his early adventures to Books IX-XII, where he relates them to the Phaeacians.

The first of his encounters with men after his departure from Troy was on the island of Ismarus, home of the Ciconians. That encounter was straightforwardly aggressive on the part of Odysseus and his men. It began as a raid carried out strictly for the sake of plunder, in which they carried off the women and treasures "to make division, equal shares to all" (IX.39-42). The raid itself was successful, but his men did not heed his advice to flee immediately and, being "fools" (μέγα νήπιου--IX.44), they brought on their own "sorrows" (ἄλγεα πολλὰ--IX.53).

He might have gotten home even then, he claims, but a storm drove them past Cythera (IX.80-81), to the land of the Lotus-eaters. Upon arriving in this land he sent some scouts out "to learn" (πέυθεσθαυ--IX.88) what sort of men lived there. Thus, though his mission throughout, as Odysseus claims explicitly, is to return "to his native land" (ἔς πατρίδα γαῖαν--IX.79), his action, as here, speaks differently. His mission here, as elsewhere in his adventures before Ogygia, is discovery. He wishes to *learn* about the world and men. That is reflected in the forms of the verb πυνθάνομαι (to learn by inquiry) which prevail in these passages relating to his early adventures. But that heroic commitment to seek knowledge conflicts in these adventures with his equally deep commitment to get home. Consequently his mission of getting home was threatened here, when he

discovered that the effect of the Lotus-eaters was that his men

οὐκέτ' ἀπαγγεῖλαι πάλιν ἤθελεν οὐδὲ νέεσθαι,  
ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μετ' ἀνδράσι Λωτοφάγοισι  
λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι μενέμεν νόστου τε λαθέσθαι.

never cared to report, nor to return: they longed  
to stay forever, browsing on that native bloom,  
forgetful of their homeland. (IX.95-7)

They only encounter the Lotus-eaters because Odysseus wishes to know what kind of men live on the island. He thus opens himself and his men to dangers that seriously jeopardize their getting home. This is a pattern common to many of his adventures before Ogygia.

At any rate, they finally escape that sad fate, only to sail immediately into their next adventure with the Cyclopes, "giants, louts, without a law to bless them" (IX.106). They encounter these people clearly as a result of Odysseus' quest for knowledge, having even to go to an island neighboring their camp to investigate them:

Ἄλλοι μὲν νῦν μίμνεν', ἐμοὶ ἐρίηρες ἑταῖροι.  
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ σὺν νηὶ τ' ἐμῇ καὶ ἐμοῖς ἑτάροισιν  
ἔλθων τῶνδ' ἀνδρῶν πειρήσομαι, οἳ τινὲς εἴσιν,  
ἦ ρ' οἳ γ' ὕβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι,  
ἢε φιλόξεينوι, καὶ σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής.

Old shipmates, friends, the rest of you stand  
by; I'll make the crossing in my own ship, with my  
own company, and find out what the mainland natives  
are--for they may be wild savages, and lawless,  
or hospitable and god-fearing men. (IX.173-6)

He is even aware that they may not be kind to strangers nor regard justice. Yet he is spurred on by his inquisitiveness and love of adventure. His encounter with the Cyclops Polyphemus is crucial among the adventures of Odysseus.

While it was Odysseus' inquiring that got them into trouble with

Polyphemus, it was his wiliness, his noetic power, that got them out. Odysseus is preeminently aware of that, and when they are finally escaping he shouts back at the Cyclops "in derision" (κερτομίουςι--IX.474) a message very much like that which we hear later in the chronological order of events, on the lips of Zeus at the council of the gods at the outset of the poem, namely, that he (Polyphemus) is suffering because of his own bad deeds (κακὰ ἔργα) and that he is σκέτιλος (IX.477-8). The language of that later speech, when Odysseus too is suffering profoundly, parallels this too closely to ignore, implying, ironically, that perhaps it is precisely such arrogance as Odysseus is displaying here that brings on a man's suffering.

Still unsatisfied, Odysseus calls to Polyphemus a second time, against the pleading of his men who call him σκέτιλος for so taunting the monster (IX.494). This time he assumes a tone of personal glory for blinding the Cyclops:

Κύκλωψ, αἴ κέν τις σε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων  
ὄφθαλμοῦ εὔρηται ἀεικελίην ἀλαωτύν,  
φάσθαι Ὀδυσσῆα πολυπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι,  
υἷὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἔχοντα.

Kyklops, if ever mortal man inquire how you were  
put to shame and blinded, tell him Odysseus,  
raider of cities, took your eye: Laertes' son,  
whose home's on Ithaka! (IX.502-5)

In relating these events to the Phaeacians, Odysseus points out that it was at this point that Polyphemus prayed to his father and was heard. Now the wrath of Poseidon descends upon Odysseus and remains to plague him for a long time. The god no longer heeds his sacrifices:

ὁ δ' οὐκ ἐμπάζετο ἱρῶν,  
ἀλλ' ἄρα μερμήριζεν ὅπως ἀπολοίατο πάσαι  
νῆες εὐσσελμοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ ἐρίηρες ἑταῖροι.

destruction for my ships he had in store and  
 death for those who sailed them, my companions.  
 (IX.553-5)

Whether or not the mere blinding of his son is enough to incur the wrath of Poseidon, and whether or not that blinding was just on Odysseus' part, it is significant that Odysseus specifies in his narrative the point at which Polyphemus prayed to his father: after Odysseus' boast. This may imply a connection between his reckless boasting and his subsequent suffering. Certainly, it collocates the boast and the subsequent suffering in the mind of the auditor, so that inference of a causal connection is just a short step away. And it strangely suggests Odysseus' own recognition of some such connection in telling the story to the Phaeacians.

The next disaster, with the winds of Aeolus, is the result of the "bad counsel" (κακή βουλή--X.46) of Odysseus' men, who are jealously suspicious that he might be carrying gifts from Aeolus in the bag which bore the winds. Coming back to Aeolus' house after loosing the winds, Odysseus admits that it was a "wicked crew" (κακοὶ ἔταροι) that betrayed him, they and "a cruel sleep" (ὑπνος σκέτλος--X.68-9). Aeolus, however, will not help them a second time, but banishes Odysseus as "a man the blessed gods detest" (X.73-4).

Sailing on, then, with worn spirits and no aid (X.77-8) they reach Lamos. Once more Odysseus sends out a party to "discover" (πεύθεσθα--X.100) who lives there. They encounter the Laestrygonians, "and more than men they seemed,/gigantic" (X.120), and utterly unfriendly. The heroism of Odysseus and his men fails completely in that encounter and they can do nothing but turn and run.

Yet again, when they land next on Circe's island, there is no apparent reason for them to encounter the goddess but that Odysseus sees the smoke of her house and wishes to learn (πυθέσθαι--X.155). He again indulges his own inquisitive nature and risks his men and his mission. He has to exert considerable force even to make the men go:

τοῖσιν δὲ κατεκλάσθη φίλον ἦτορ  
 μνησαμένοις ἔργων Λαιστρυγόνος Ἀντιφάταο  
 Κύκλωπός τε βίης μεγαλήτορος, ἀνδροφάγοιο.  
 κλαῖον δὲ λιγέως, θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυ χέοντες·

They were all silent, but their hearts contracted, remembering Antiphates the Laistrygon and that prodigious cannibal, the Kyklops. They cried out, and the salt tears wet their eyes. (X.198-203)

Odysseus' companions, at least, are not the adventurers they once were.

And when the first party is bewitched by the goddess, Odysseus himself sets out toward her house, compelled, he says, by strong necessity (κρατερὴ ἀνάγκη--X.273), as he is later compelled to remain with Calypso (V.154).

Indeed, he saves his men from the curse of the sorceress, but this time not solely by his own wit, which seems at this point to fall short of helping him. He is able to do so, rather, only with the advice of Hermes. The presence of Hermes at this point is interesting, considering the otherwise conspicuous absence of the gods during this part of Odysseus' journey. It signals, I believe, that Odysseus' noetic powers have fallen short.

Following that, however, Odysseus stays with Circe for a year, and it is his men who must remind him of their initial intention to get home:

Δαιμόνι, ἤδη νῦν μινμήσκεο πατρίδος αἴης,  
 εἴ τοι θέσφατόν ἐστι σωθῆναι καὶ ἰκέσθαι  
 οἶκον εὐκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.



Captain, shake off this trance, and think of home--  
if home indeed awaits us, if we shall ever see your  
own well-timbered hall on Ithaka. (X.472-4)

Only then does he remember and his "spirit stirs" (X.484). Clearly, he has not been committed to getting home. On the contrary he is here, as in each adventure before, more compelled by a desire to explore the world, adventure, and excessive self-confidence than a desire to reach Ithaca. Again, as it was his men who begged him not to taunt the Cyclops for fear of his wrath, so it is his men who must remind him of their desire to reach home.

Circe lets them go. But first, she says, they must journey to Hades to consult the blind prophet Teiresias, to whom alone of all the shades Persephone has granted "sound understanding" (φρένες ἔμπεδοι--X.493). Two aspects of that visit make it especially significant in regard to the fantastic adventures ahead and the understanding of heroic virtue to which Odysseus must come.

The first is reflected in the prophecy of Teiresias, for which they came to Hades. The blind seer foretells that the hero and crew may reach home, but only on one condition:

ἀλλ' ἔτι μὲν κε καὶ ὡς κακά περ πάσχοντες ἵκοισθε,  
αἴ κ' ἐθέλης σὸν θυμὸν ἐρυκακέειν καὶ ἑταίρων,  
ὅππότε κε ἴπρωτον πελάσῃς εὐεργέα νῆα  
θρινακίῃ νῆσω, προφυγῶν ἰοειδέα πόντον,

One narrow strait may take you through his blows:  
denial of yourself, restraint of shipmates. When  
you make landfall on Thrinakia first and quit the  
violet sea... (XI.104-7)

If he and his men do not show restraint, on the other hand, Teiresias warns that ship and crew shall perish and Odysseus shall reach home late

and with trouble even there. The condition necessary for Odysseus to reach home, then, is restraint.

It is precisely restraint that Odysseus has lacked in his encounters thus far. It was his inquiring spirit of adventure which brought them in contact with the Ciconians, the Lotus-eaters and Polyphemus; so also quest for knowledge of the world and adventuring brought them to the Laestrygonians and Circe. Odysseus' life thus far has shown little sign of unswerving commitment to reach home or of the restraint necessary to do so. Teiresias' explicit advice, based on his "wisdom," is that only this will afford him a homecoming. In so far as Odysseus reflects the embodiment of heroic virtue, that advice seems contrary to his principles.

Teiresias' prophecy further concerns a journey which Odysseus must undertake after returning to Ithaca and regaining his home. He must journey inland, says Teiresias, carrying his oar, until he meets a people who mistake it for a winnowing fan. There he must offer sacrifice to Lord Poseidon. That seems a strange journey indeed, and its import is doubtless yet unclear to Odysseus. At the very least, however, it implies that Odysseus is to take up a life far different from the sort of adventuring he has thus far known.

There is a further suggestion that Odysseus must reconsider his notion of heroic virtue in his subsequent conversation in Hades with Achilles, the greatest hero of the Trojan War. His standing in Odysseus' eyes is explicitly clear when he calls him "most happy" (μακάριστος--XI.483), "equal to the gods in life" (σε ζῶν ἐτίομεν ἴσα θεοῖσιν--XI.484) and in death a "mighty lord" (μέγα κρατέεις νεχύεσσιν--XI.485). He personified

for Odysseus the excellence of a hero in life and he continues to do so even in death. Achilles seems now, as always, a master.

Achilles' response to Odysseus, however, calls this value into question. He calls Odysseus "rash" (σχέτιλλε--XI.474) and says:

μη δὴ μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.  
 βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἔων θητευέμεν ἄλλω  
 ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίωτος πολὺς εἴη,  
 ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

Let me hear no smooth talk of death from you, Odysseus, light of councils. Better, I say, to break sod as a farm hand for some poor country men, on iron rations, than lord it over all the exhausted dead. (XI.488-91)

That speech seems an overwhelming affirmation of life. But it speaks also about a *kind* of life. The life of which it speaks is far from the kind of life which Odysseus apparently believes is not only the best, but the *only* kind of life for a hero--namely a life of contending and mastering. The greatest hero of the greatest war known to an age of heroes may be suggesting that one need not dominate every situation, indeed one cannot. His own tragic life may have taught Achilles this. Certainly his advice, along with that of Teiresias, challenges Odysseus to consider heroic virtue in a new light.

Odysseus and his men return briefly from Hades to Circe's island. After advising them of the fantastic adventures to come she sends them on their way. Just as she warned, they soon draw near to the Sirens' island. Odysseus utterly succumbs to the temptation to listen to their glorious songs of his own past glory:

ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ  
 Ἄργεῖοι Τρῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν.  
 ἴδμεν δ' ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πούλυβοτείρῃ.

All feats on that great field  
 In the long warfare,  
 Dark days the bright gods willed,  
 Wounds you bore there,

Argos' old soldiery  
 On Troy beach teeming,  
 Charmed out of time we see.  
 (XII.189-91)

His heart longed to listen (XII.193) and he must be physically restrained. He is still more interested in his own heroic adventures and the world than in getting home and only his men restrain him from staying to bask eternally in the memory of Troy. His own self-restraint utterly fails him.

When he next faces Scylla, that "nightmare (which) cannot die, being eternal/ evil itself--horror, and pain, and chaos" (XII.118-19) he insists on arming himself; for such "persistence of war" (πολεμῆϊα--XII.116) and "struggle" (πόνος--XII.117) Circe has already called him σκέτλε (XII.116). And, just as she warned, Odysseus learns that with this monster "There is no fighting her, no power can fight her, all that avails is flight" (XII.120). His military prowess fails him and six men are snatched away screaming his name. That sight, says Odysseus, was the most pitiful of all:

οὔκτιστον δὲ κέλνο ἐμοῖς ἕδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι  
 πάντων ὅσσ' ἐμόγησα πόρους ἀλὸς ἐξερεείνων.

far the worse I ever suffered,  
 questing the passes of the strange sea.  
 (XII.258-9)

When they subsequently draw near to Thrinacia, Odysseus refuses to land (XII.271-6), remembering the warning of Teiresias and Circe. He is

nevertheless forced by his men to go into the island, his leadership utterly failing. They there commit the ultimate offense against which Teiresias warned, slaying the cattle of the sun god, Helios, while Odysseus himself is overtaken "by a ruthless sleep" (νηλέϊ ὕπνῳ--XII.372). Soon after this they meet their doom and Odysseus alone survives to drift back to Charybdis, then on to Ogygia.

By the time of his arrival on Ogygia, the central event in his journey and the one with which the poem opened, the heroism of Odysseus is all but completely destroyed. In his adventures with the Laestrygonians, the Lotus-eaters, the Cyclops, and the winds of Aeolus, Odysseus' desire for adventure and knowledge, and his rashness, led him to lose many of his men and called his stated mission of returning to Ithaca severely into question. Further, his encounter with Circe, the Sirens, Skylla, and the mishap on Thrinacia called the sufficiency of his noetic power and his qualities of leadership into question. Finally he has lost his companions altogether and enters upon an extended stay on an island at the navel of the sea, unable spiritually as well as physically to go on.

It is after seven years there with the immortal nymph Calypso that Athena, his patron goddess, returns to Odysseus. She has been conspicuously absent from his adventures until now. She returns only when, without external aid or influence, Odysseus rejects this life of death-like ease. He effectively makes a decision both for life and human frailty. He commits himself finally and fully to going home and he seems to recognize, as is implicit in the speech of Zeus at this time, the reality of one's human frailty and one's responsibility for suffering.

To see how that implicit change of heart is made manifest, we must look to the series of events following Odysseus' departure from Ogygia in Books V-VIII and XIII-XXIV.

Athena, having returned to sponsor the wily Odysseus on Ogygia, remains close by thereafter. It is she who gives him the "ready thought" (ἐπιφροσύνην--V.437) that enables him to land safely on Scheria. From there his commitment to getting home and his sense of the need for restraint become apparent almost immediately. When he awakens on Scheria and goes out to approach the princess Nausikaa, daughter of King Alcinous, there is no doubt but that he approaches her in supplication--γούνοῦμαί σε (VI.149). But first he consciously "wondered" (μερμήρηξεν--VI.141) *how* to do so. He finally chooses the less aggressive mode, standing off and pleading, fearing that "he might anger the girl, touching her knees" (VI.147). His one purpose is to receive aid in getting home, and he is unwilling to jeopardize his chances in any way. There is no sense of adventure of conquest, and there is a good deal of restraint displayed. He even tells Nausikaa the truth--an unusual twist for the wily Odysseus.

His entrance into the town of Phaeacia bears striking parallels to his entrance into the town of the Laestrygonians. There too he entered the town with his men in order to go to the king and queen as guests. But this time Odysseus stops outside the town and invokes Athena's aid, noting her conspicuous absence in an earlier adventure (VI.325-6). Book times he encounters a water-girl and asks her for directions to the palace (VII.20 and X.105). But in Phaeacia the water-girl is Athena in disguise, while there was no divine presence in Laestrygonia (X.73-4). The point

is also made that the Phaeacians, as the Laestrygonians, do not readily welcome strangers. These details and his attribution to the gods of his success in this adventure constitute a new attitude on Odysseus' part upon entering the town.

The manner in which he accepts the hospitality of Arete and Alcinous reflects further his increased sensitivity to the precariousness of human fortune:

οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ γε  
ἀθανάτοισιν ἔοικα, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,  
οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυῆν, ἀλλὰ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν.  
οὔς τινας ὑμεῖς ἴστε μάλιστ' ὀχέοντας οὔζυν  
ἀνθρώπων, τοῖσιν κεν ἐν ἄλγεσιν ἴσωσαίμην.

Body and birth, a most unlikely god am I,  
being all of earth and mortal nature. I should  
say, rather, I am like those men who suffer the  
worst trials that you know, and miseries greater  
yet, as I might tell you--hundreds; indeed the  
gods could send no more. (VII.208-12)

On Phaeacia, also, Odysseus begins to return from the nadir to which he had been reduced on Ogygia and to regain his heroic stature. First Athena restores his appearance:

τῷ δ' ἄρ' Ἀθήνη  
θεσπεσίην κατέχευε χάριν κεφαλῇ τε καὶ ὤμοις,  
καί μιν μακρότερον καὶ πάσσονα θῆκεν ἰδέσθαι,  
ὥς κεν Φαιήκεσσι φίλος πάντεσσι γένοιτο  
δεινός τ' αἰδοῖός τε, καὶ ἐκτελέσειεν ἀέθλους  
πολλούς, τοὺς Φαίηκες ἐπειρήσαντ' Ὀδυσῆος.

Athena now poured out her grace upon him, head and  
shoulders, height and mass--a splendor awesome to  
the Phaiakians; she put him in a fettle to win the  
day, mastering every trial they set to test him.  
(VIII.18-23)

Then, by means of the games the Phaeacians hold in his honor, Odysseus regains his reputation for physical prowess. Significantly, he is not eager to compete. He enters the competition only after

considerable provocation. His newly regained heroic stance is tempered with a humility not seen before. Thus, when Euryalus finally succeeds in provoking him, Odysseus prefaces his entrance with a remonstrance:

ξεῖν', οὐ καλὸν ἔειπες. ἀτασθάλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.  
 οὕτως οὐ πάντεσσι θεοὶ χαρίεντα δίδουσιν  
 ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε φῦν οὔτ' ἄρ' φρένας οὔτ' ἀγορητύν.  
 ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνὴρ,  
 ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεσι στέφει, οἳ δέ τ' ἔς αὐτὸν  
 τερπόμενοι λεύσσουσιν. ὁ δ' ἀσφαλῶς ἀγορεύει  
 αἰδοῖ μελιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν,  
 ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστῳ θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωσιν.  
 ἄλλος δ' αὖ εἶδος μὲν ἀλίγκιος ἀθανάτοισιν,  
 ἀλλ' οὐ οἷ χάρις ἀμφιπεριστέφεται ἐπέεσσιν,

That was uncalled for, friend, you talk like a fool.  
 The gods deal out no gift, this one or any--birth,  
 brains, or speech--to every man alike. It looks a  
 man may be a shade, a specter, and yet be master  
 of speech so crowned with beauty that people gaze  
 at him with pleasure. Courteous, sure of himself,  
 he can command assemblies, and when he comes to  
 town, the crowds gather. A handsome man, contrari-  
 wise, may lack grace and good sense in everything  
 he says. (VIII.166-175)

Odysseus speaks here out of hard experience. He has himself been a man of rude words and reckless action. He has come to respect the manner in which circumstances and the gods may grant and revoke one's powers. He is no longer willing to risk himself impetuously. The heroic virtue to which he has always aspired is gaining this nuance of meaning which it did not have before.

Neither is Odysseus looking for the kind of glory one gains in winning games. He enters the competition not in order to prove himself an athlete (ἀθλητήρι), but because Euryalos speaks "heartstinging" (θυμοδακής --VIII.185) words. He is not a contender seeking to dominate. Nevertheless, when he does enter the games he proves himself easily and his



"excellence" (ἀρετῆν--VIII.239) is recognized by Alcinous.

Odysseus finally reveals his identity to the Phaeacians and tells them of his woeful adventures after leaving Troy, which we have already examined. And his standing in the eyes of the Phaeacians is thus greatly enhanced, as Arete points out:

Φαίηκες, πῶς ὑμῖν ἀνὴρ ὄδε φαίνεται εἶναι  
εἰδός τε μέγεθος τε ἰδέε φρένας ἔνδον εἶσας;

Phaiakians, how does he stand, now, in your eyes,  
this captain, the look and bulk of him, the inward  
poise? (XI.336-7)

They, in turn, bestow great wealth upon him and, sailing out, land him safely upon Ithaca.

His first encounter on his native Ithaca is with Athena in the guise of a young shepherd--whom he invokes for aid with considerable caution (XIII.231). He finally recognizes her presence explicitly, as he could only sense it in Phaeacia--though she must introduce herself to him before he recognizes her (XIII.300).

It is finally upon returning to his native land and having his noetic power, his physical prowess and even his wealth returned to him, that Odysseus has become once more aware of the sponsorship of the goddess. His actions since his decision on Ogygia to reject death-like immortality and come home have come increasingly to reflect a new sensitivity to the world and human frailty. Out of such a relationship of reciprocity with the world Odysseus finds himself once more in communion with the gods. Even as the heroic values of leadership, wit, strength, wealth, etc., are restored to Odysseus, he shows greater restraint and patience and

a greater sensitivity for the way the world may speak to one.

He is on Ithaca, but still far from home, since his home is in the possession of the suitors of his peerless Penelope. Athena warns him that he must continue to show patience and self-restraint, even more than he already has, to receive back his full position on Ithaca:

εἶπω θ' ὅσσα τοι αἶσα δόμοις ἐνὶ πολυτοῖσι  
κῆδε' ἀνασχέσθαι. σὺ δὲ τετλάμεναι καὶ ἀνάγκη,  
μηδέ τω ἐκφάσθαι μήτ' ἀνδρῶν μήτε γυναικῶν,  
πάντων, οὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἦλθες ἀλώμενος, ἀλλὰ σιωπῇ  
πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλά, βίης ὑποδέγμενος ἀνδρῶν.

Then I can tell you of the gall and wormwood it is your lot to drink in your own hall. Patience, iron patience, you must show; so give it out to neither man nor woman that you are back from wandering. Be silent under all injuries, even blows from men. (XIII.306-310)

The disguise of a beggar which Athena devises for Odysseus allows him to test the loyalty of his servants, family, and subjects without himself being recognized. Conversely, it also allows him to be tested in his patience and restraint by exposing him to abuse to which he is unaccustomed as king in Ithaca. It produces a striking contrast as well, of Odysseus returning to Ithaca very aware of his own human frailty, but in the face now of an old reputation which regarded him as almost super-human.

So he goes first, then, to his old servant Eumaeus. He is entertained with the hospitality of the poor shepherd and is assured of the man's deep and abiding loyalty. There he reveals himself to his son, Telemachus, and weeps tears, which he on this occasion "held back too long" (πάρος δ' ἔχε νωλεμῆς αἰεὶ--XVI.191). Before Telemachus, Athena

has enhanced his appearance, about which Odysseus only says:

αὐτὰρ τοῖς τόδε ἔργον Ἀθηναίης ἀγελεύεις,  
 ἢ τέ με τοῖον ἔθηκεν ὅπως ἐθέλει--δύναται γάρ--  
 ἄλλοτε μὲν πτωχῶ ἑναλίγκιον, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε  
 ἀνδρὶ νέω καὶ καλὰ περι χροῦ εἵματ' ἔχοντι.  
 ῥηϊδίον δὲ θεοῖσι, τοῖς οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,  
 ἡμὲν κυδῆναι θνητὸν βροτὸν ἢ δὲ κακῶσαι.

As for my change of skin, that is a charm Athena, Hope of Soldiers, uses as she will; she has the knack to make me seem a beggar man sometimes and sometimes young, with finer clothes about me. It is no hard thing for the gods of heaven to glorify a man or bring him low. (XVI.207-212)

Thus he is sensitive to the changes wrought suddenly in a man's fortune by circumstances and the gods. Even as he continues to grow strong in his character and position, he does not presume on that.

Together, then, father, son, and loyal servant plan the slaughter of the suitors and the repossessing of Odysseus' house. Throughout the episodes which immediately precede the slaughter of the suitors, Odysseus' patience and restraint are thoroughly tested; e.g., by the goatherd Melanthius' insult and kick for which Odysseus "doubted" (μερμήριξεν--XVII.235) what to do but "was patient and by thought restrained himself" (φρεσὶ δ' ἔσχετο--XVII.238); by the sight of his old dog, Argos, lying at the entrance to his house:

αὐτὰρ δὲ νόσφιν ἰδὼν ἀπομόρξατο δάκρυ,  
 ῥεῖλα λαθὼν Εὐμαίων, ἄφαρ δ' ἔρεείνεται μύθῳ.

the man looked away, wiping a salt tear from his cheek; but he hid this from Eumaios. (XVII.304-5);

in the process of begging from the suitors to test them and learn the righteous from the lawless:

ἀλλ' ἀκέων κίνησε κάρη, κακὰ βυσσοδομεύων.

Odysseus only shook his head, containing thoughts  
of bloody work. (XVII.465);

by the sight of his serving women going out to sleep with the suitors,  
at which "knocking his breast he muttered to himself" (XX.9) to keep from  
reacting and killing them, and "his rage/ held hard in leash, submitted  
to his mind" (XX.22); and in meeting his wife, when "He had this trick--/  
wept, if he willed to, inwardly" (XIX.212). Always he keeps his one  
purpose in mind: to regain his home. He never lets his curiosity nor  
his pride get in the way of that.

In his speech to one suitor, Amphinomus, Odysseus gives voice to the  
feelings that must be the heart of the new tone of restraint which his  
old set of heroic values has taken on:

οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο	130
πάντων ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνεῖλει τε καὶ ἔρπει.	
οὐ μὲν γάρ ποτέ φησι κακὸν πείσεσθαι ὀπίσσω,	
ἔφρ' ἀρετὴν παρέχῃσι θεοὶ καὶ γούνατ' ὀρώρη.	
ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ καὶ λυγρὰ θεοὶ μάκαρες τελέσωσι,	
καὶ τὰ φέρει ἀεκαζόμενος τετληότι θυμῷ.	135
τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων	
οἶον ἐπ' ἡμᾶρ ἄγησι πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.	
καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ποτ' ἐμελλον ἐν ἀνδράσι βίβλιος εἶναι,	
πολλὰ δ' ἀτάσθαλ' ἔρεξα βίη καὶ κάρτεϊ εἵκων,	
πατρί τ' ἐμῷ πίσυνος καὶ ἐμοῖσι κασιγνήτοισι.	140
τῷ μὴ τίς ποτε πάμπαν ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστιος εἶη,	
ἀλλ' ὅ γε σιγῇ δῶρα θεῶν ἔχοι, ὅττι διδοῖεν.	

Of mortal creatures, all that breathe and move,  
earth bears none frailer than mankind. What man  
believes in woe to come, so long as valor and  
tough knees are supplied him by the gods? But when  
the gods in bliss bring miseries on, then willy-  
nilly, blindly, he endures. Our minds are as the  
days are, dark or bright, blown over by the father  
of gods and men.

So I, too, in my time thought to be happy; but far  
and rash I ventured, counting on my own right arm,  
my father, and my kin; behold me now.

No man should flout the law, but keep in peace  
what gifts the gods may give. (XVIII.130-42)

It was his pride and sense of personal power, his confidence in his own wit that led Odysseus and his men into the reckless behavior that destroyed them. Now he says the appearance of a man, his ἀρετή, his ὄλβος, are gifts which are as easily lost as gained. He too once possessed all these things and came, by the time of his stay on Ogygia, to lose them. And then, utterly without them, he came to a new sense of responsibility in the world. The heroic values are gifts one is given, and they come only to him who recognizes his own frailty and the power of the forces of the world. They may come to him who senses himself standing *in* the world, but not to him who stands *upon* the world. Odysseus is no longer an impetuous hero, seeking to impose himself upon the world in search of fame and wealth. He is a mature man come home.

Even the slaughter of the suitors is done more for justice's sake than to achieve any personal glory. That becomes clear in his response to Eymachus' offer to make recompense:

Εὐρύμαχ', οὐδ' εἴ μοι πατρώϊα πάντ' ἀποδοῦτε,  
ὅσσα τε νῦν ὑμῖν ἐστὶ καὶ εἴ ποθεν ἄλλ' ἐπιθεῖτε,  
οὐδέ κεν ὡς ἔτι χεῖρας ἐμὰς λήξαιμι φόνοιο  
πρὶν πᾶσαν μνηστῆρας ὑπερβασίην ἀποτίσαι.

Not for the whole treasure of your fathers,  
all you enjoy, lands, flocks, or any gold put up by  
others, would I hold my hand. There will be killing  
till the score is paid. (XXII.61-64)

He has no desire for material gain. Neither has he a desire for personal glory. That becomes apparent in his rebuke of Eurycleia, who was ready to rejoice at the sight of the slain suitors:

ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυζε.  
 οὐχ ὀσίη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάσθαι.  
 τοῦσδε δὲ μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε θεῶν καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα.  
 οὐ τινα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,  
 οὐ κακὸν οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ὅτις σφέας εἰσαφίκοιτο.  
 τῷ καὶ ἀτασθαλίησιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐπέσπον.

#### Rejoice

inwardly. No crowing aloud, old woman. To glory  
 over slain men is no piety. Destiny and the gods'  
 will vanquished these, and their own hardness.  
 They respected no one, good or bad, who came their  
 way. For this, and folly, a bad end befell them.  
 (XXII.411-16)

This is certainly a different response in tone from that which he  
 felt at the blinding of Polyphemos, though it employs the same principles.  
 Both instances reflect his recognition of a man's being somehow responsi-  
 ble in the affairs of life. In the former event, however, Odysseus  
 boasted of his own responsibility for the Cyclops' evil doom. He pre-  
 sumed himself there justified in judging the Cyclops, in punishing him,  
 and in blaming him. He does not do so now. In the present event, where  
 the rashness, the evil, and the arrogance of men is clearly recognized,  
 Odysseus takes no personal pleasure in securing their just end. Such  
 judgment and such gloating are not appropriate for man. His own respon-  
 sibility in such affairs is something he now understands much more pro-  
 foundly and assumes with greater humility--knowing himself to have been  
 the author of rash deeds.

There is a direct relationship between what the gods may give a man  
 in terms of good or bad fortune, and how a man is himself responsible  
 for his good or bad fortune. Man, it seems, is in a paradoxical posi-  
 tion. He must act in such a way as to be respectful of the world and of

his own human frailty; living in that mode of respect and reciprocity, he is an ἄριστος. Man is ultimately not a contender in the world, and the gods are not utterly capricious. Homeric man and his world are, then, in a relationship of reciprocity; and he is responsible *for* his own fortune only by being responsible *to* the world.

Odysseus comes home, then, to be Laertes' son, King of Ithaca. He reestablishes himself in all the heroic virtues as ἄριστος. But he comes in the process to have considerably more respect for the powers of the world in which he lives and for the frailties and strengths of being a man. He comes to know responsibility in an ability-to-respond. So when Athena commands him to cease the battle with the avengers of the suitors, out of his new sense of responsibility "He yielded to her, and his heart was glad" (XXIV.545).

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## Notes

1. Howard Porter, ed., *The Odyssey*, George Herbert Palmer, trans. (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1962), p. 11.
2. Translations here and elsewhere, except for single words, by Robert Fitzgerald, from Homer, *The Odyssey* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963).
3. Porter, p. 6.

ΤΥΦΛΌΣ AND "ΤΥΦΛΌΣ" IN SOPHOCLES' *OEDIPUS TYRANNUS*

\*

nec rupit tamen fati necessitatem humanis consiliis

--*Titii Livi Ab Urbe Condita*, 42.2

The history of Greek religion reflects two strains, two modes of experiencing the divine Other. They are probably historically traceable to the gods of Hellenic invaders of the late third and early second millennium, on the one hand, and to the chthonic vegetation gods of people already present in Greece and the Aegean. W. K. C. Guthrie describes these two strains as contrasting thus:

. . .the one emphasizing the gulf between human and divine, mortal and immortal, and the other teaching that the aim of the religious life was to exchange mortality for immortality, to become god from man.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, in terms of myth and cult these two strains are most characteristically reflected in the historical period in two gods neither brought by the Hellenes nor indigenous to Greece, but both later immigrants from the Near East, apparently, namely Apollo and Dionysus. Although not one of the original "sky gods," Apollo, of all the gods of the Olympian pantheon, best represents the Hellenic spirit. He is the god of limit, form and moderation, whose characteristic precepts, written on the walls of his home at Delphi, included "Know thyself" and "Nothing too much." He represents, Guthrie notes, ". . .the Greek preference for the intelligible, determinate, measurable, as opposed to the fantastic, vague and shapeless."<sup>2</sup>

Dionysus, on the other hand, is the god of ecstasy, enthusiasm, and the paradox of joy and suffering at the roots of human existence. He infects those who ritually invoke him as well as those who resist him, primarily women, with madness. In that madness one is taken out of oneself and becomes one with the god. His duality is manifest to us, Walter Otto claims,

in the antithesis of ecstasy and horror, infinite vitality and savage destruction; in the pandemonium in which deathly silence is inherent; in the immediate presence which is at the same time absolute remoteness.<sup>3</sup>

Dionysus stands in this respect antithetical to Apollo. Whereas Apollo represents limit, form and moderation, Dionysus represents that which is unlimited, without form and knows no order or moderation. Apollo, as Nietzsche correctly identified him, images the "principium individuati-  
onis,"<sup>4</sup> and Dionysus represents the shattering of this.

These two figures arose as popular cult figures in the eighth and seventh centuries, during the Archaic period. The economic and political climate of that time was such that it benefited the tyrants to support the popular folk religions. Thus Dionysus gained a foothold in Hellas.

According to Martin Nilsson,<sup>5</sup> however, the rise of the cult of Dionysus merely reflected the re-emergence of the old Minoan vegetative religion of the Bronze Age. That strain had been suppressed by the rational gods of the Dorian invaders and apparently lost in the Olympic pantheon of Homer. But that was only a suppression effected by the ruling Dorian aristocracy of the Greek Middle Age, and not a total eradication. These two strains would continue during the subsequent history of Greek religion, converging and diverging as they reflected the general cultural and intellectual development of the Hellenic world. As they converged under the rational ascendancy of Homer so they diverged in the Archaic period, only to be united again in the later Classical period and separated in the Hellenistic age.

During the Archaic Period, however, the power of Dionysus must have

been awesome and frightening. A control had to be instituted. The rational Greek side of this people's nature could not rest easy while possessed of this god. Consequently the cult of Apollo was encouraged and in the sixth century a temple was built to Apollo at Delphi.

Ironically, Apollo shared that temple with Dionysus. Although he was the god of form and limit, he too could be encountered. Unlike the encounter of Dionysus, however, which was a communal experience and open to anyone, Apollo had his priestesses. He might be encountered personally, but was more frequently encountered through his special priests, priestesses and prophets.<sup>6</sup> He was the god of reason, sponsoring rational man.

It was man in his rational capacity, then, who was developing in this period. At the same time, however, the religion of sixth-century Hellenic man was often superstitious at best. The old myths ceased to speak in any vital way. The old mythopoeic world-view which had characterized their Minoan ancestors was fading. Thus in this century a group of Ionian naturalist philosophers were beginning to ask questions about the world and to look away from the gods and to the *world* for answers. Man was beginning to assume a rational understanding of the world, though even this development remained initially grounded in the divine. Apollo continued to be the god of reason, the source of law. Even as reason and man's belief in his capacity to understand the world with his own mind developed, skepticism was close to follow. A great debate arose, reflected in the terms νόμος and φύσις.<sup>7</sup> This debate concerned whether natural law is grounded in the divine and is intelligible to man, or whether society operates merely on human convention. The principle

exponents of this latter stance in the fifth and fourth centuries were the sophists. They called into question any sense of the absolute in terms of which man might understand himself in the world.

With the rise of reason and subsequently of skepticism, then, two modes of experiencing the world, which had been incipiently reflected in the Olympian and chthonic religions, and later in Apollo and Dionysus, came fully into being. In the one the world is rendered sensible and human conduct is determined by reason and expediency; in the other the world remains understood and moral conduct remains determined by the word of god. It is only in the sixth century, then, that these two modes of experiencing the world began to become distinct possibilities for man.

In terms perhaps more modern, Martin Buber<sup>8</sup> speaks to the experience of dual modes of existence in the world, which he calls "experience" and "encounter." They parallel, I think, the respective experiences of the world which became possible for man only with the Greek enlightenment. In "experience" we know the world in the mode of appropriation and in the dimension of time, a relationship characterized by Buber as the mode of I-It. In "encounter" we know the world in the mode of relation and reciprocity, and in the eternal present, characterized as the I-Thou. Experience in the mode of I-It corresponds roughly, I believe, to the rising rationalism among the Greeks. Likewise, encounter in the mode of I-You corresponds to religious enthusiasm such as was most characteristically represented in Dionysus, but was present in Apollo as well.

A stance of "openness" is required if one is to encounter the divine. That is, openness to the divine is a necessary (though not a sufficient)

condition for encounter. It is possible, however, as Buber claims, for one to lose the stance of openness to the world in which encounter may occur; one may forget the primal longing to relate and live only in the It-world where causality holds sway. In such a life, however, every You is reduced to an It, all things appear as if causally connected, and one feels as if his fate is merely visited upon him; as if there is no room for response.

But the two worlds are inextricably bound up with one another. Experience and encounter must be maintained in dialectic for the full realization of human nature in the world. Out of such a dialectic the shape of life may come to feel appropriate--destinate: that is, the It and the You suggest dual modes of experiencing the world which may be lived out dialectically. In such a dialectic, responsibility may be felt as an ability-to-respond to a world which speaks. Within such a life one may encounter that which is Other. Such a life, in which one is sensitive to the possibility of the Other, is destinate. One may also live *upon* the world, however, as if to dominate. One may presume to comprehend the world in its entirety. Such a life may ultimately fail one's expectations and seem as if capriciously visited upon one. That, then, is fate.

We are by no means in control of that "dialectic," nor do we even control that there be a dialectic. The encounter which opens to us the eternal moment of being-in-unity is a gift--a divine gift. The initiative remaining to us, then, (if initiative is the proper word at all) is of attaining a stance of openness to the world in which we may (not will)



know the It and the You in dialectic. But just as the It-world threatens to limit us in our modern secular world, so I think was rationalism a limiting force for the Greek world of the enlightenment period. As men assumed the power and the responsibility for discerning "limit" in the world<sup>9</sup> they began to forget the divine force behind that limit. They began to forget their own limit.

The tragedians, of all intellectuals of the enlightenment period, must have felt the threat of rationalism to the old, divine world-view. For Greek tragedy began as a choral dance in honor of the god Dionysus--the god of encounter. Tragedy was created out of the poet's encounter with, and celebration of, that great god of paradox and epiphany. That encounter, which must be spoken, found its voice in the poet's creation of tragedy. That is, the creation of tragedy was the necessary speaking, in the eternal symbols of myth, of the encounter with that which is Other, with that which is divine and at the root of all existence. It allowed men to view the terror and the ecstasy of the reality lying beneath and grounding the rational, conceptual lives they live; and it allowed them thus to be purged. In his art the tragedian returned to the rational world to speak his encounter of an eternal moment. In tragedy, then, is the union of Apollonian and the Dionysian forces of which Nietzsche spoke in *The Birth of Tragedy*.<sup>10</sup>

Out of such an encounter the tragic poet Sophocles, in the latter part of the fifth century, ca 429--in the heart of the Greek enlightenment--addressed the problem of knowledge. In *Oedipus Tyrannus* Sophocles sets before us two kinds of knowledge. One is rational knowledge of the sort

that has proven itself effective in the world in the untangling and solving of the problems of man: this is σοφία, wisdom in the mode of intellectual skill which comprehends things with the γνῶμη alone. The other is φήμη θεοῦ which comes from the god himself in encounter and to a few special people. The one "knowledge" is rational and human, appropriated by the power of reason; the other is non-rational and a divine gift to which all are not open, which all do not have eyes to see.

F. Storr briefly outlines the plot of the drama, based on an old myth which would have been familiar to the audience:

To Laius, King of Thebes, an oracle foretold that the child born to him by his queen Jocasta would slay his father and wed his mother. So when in time a son was born the infant's feet were riveted together and he was left to die on Mount Cithaeron. But a shepherd found the babe and tended him, and delivered him to another shepherd who took him to his master, the King of Corinth. Polybus being childless adopted the boy, who grew up believing that he was indeed the King's son. Afterwards doubting his parentage he inquired of the Delphic god and heard himself the words declared to Laius. Wherefore he fled from what he deemed his father's house and in his flight he encountered and unwittingly slew his father Laius. Arriving at Thebes he answered the riddle of the Sphinx and the grateful Thebans made their deliverer king. So he reigned in the room of Laius, and espoused the widowed queen. Children were born to them and Thebes prospered under his rule, but again a grievous plague fell upon the city. Again the oracle was consulted and it bade them purge themselves of bloodguiltiness. Oedipus denounces the crime of which he is unaware, and undertakes to track out the criminal. Step by step it is brought home to him that he is the man. The closing scene reveals Jocasta slain by her own hand and Oedipus blinded by his own act and praying for death or exile.<sup>11</sup>

The play opens some years after the incident of the Sphinx, with Oedipus as the much-loved king of Thebes. The Priest of Zeus addresses

the King in the opening scene. And it is clear from his address that Oedipus, a man of the greatest integrity,<sup>12</sup> is most noted in Thebes for his powers of reasoning. For in the encounter with the Sphinx (the knowledge of which the play presupposes) he proved his noetic ability (31-9). Remembering that and caught in the grips of a plague which is now rendering them utterly barren (25-7), the Thebans, through the intercession of their priest, seek both Oedipus' aid and that of their patron deity, Apollo.

It is not by mere chance that the citizens look to Apollo and Oedipus simultaneously. There is an implicit parallel being made here between Oedipus and the god which is not lost on the suppliants themselves. Apollo is a patron deity of Thebes as well as the god of light, reason and law. He is also, incidently, the god who rules over homicides, though they do not yet realize there is any murder connected with their plight. Oedipus, on the other hand, is the King of their city, and he is

ἀνδρῶν δὲ πρῶτον ἔν τε συμφοραῖς βίου  
κρίνοντες ἔν τε δαιμόνων συναλλαγαῖς. (33-4)

He is "first among men in transactions with the gods" because he solved the riddle of the Sphinx:

. . . ὕφ' ἡμῶν οὐδὲν ἐξειδὼς πλέον  
οὐδ' ἐκδιδαχθεῖς, ἀλλὰ προσθήκη θεοῦ (37-8)

That is, he received no human counsel in his dealing with the Sphinx, but was "assisted" (προσθήκη) by the god. The god of whom the Priest speaks here is no doubt Apollo. Thus it seems prudent for the Thebans now to come for aid both to Oedipus, who has the ear of the god, and Apollo.

Richard Jebb, however, notes concerning this passage that Oedipus' dealing with the Sphinx was clearly "a triumph of human wit."<sup>13</sup> And that seems to be supported by Oedipus himself when he says later, at 393-8, that the riddle was solved not by any "divine utterance" but by his own human mind. In any case Oedipus is a shrewd man of practical "experience" (ἡ ἐμπειρία--44) in such matters as the present "crisis," a man who is apparently able to see to the heart of a situation and act upon it. That is, Oedipus is apparently the best example of a rational and pious man known to the Thebans; he is considered most capable of throwing "light" upon this situation. In fact, he does do that. In the process, however, he tragically shatters all the expectations set up in this first scene in the ironic juxtaposition of Oedipus and Apollo. He comes to be revealed as the very murderer they seek, as tragically blind and limited in his sagacity, and consequently as considerably less pious than his subjects here realize. The tragedy effected by those revelations, on the other hand, will make of Oedipus a more pious man than the Thebans can ever conceive.

At any rate, to enlist his aid again, in another apparently "divine transaction," namely the current plague, the Thebans solicit Oedipus "to discover some help" for them:

οἷσθ' ἄκουσά μου· (42-3)  
 εἴτε τοῦ θεῶν / φήμην ἀκούσας εἴτ' ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν

They do not care whether Oedipus finds that aid in some divine source or if he merely figures it out himself. It is not clear, I think, how much they even distinguish the two. They represent the tradition and probably do not conceive of human knowledge which is not grounded in the

divine. It is for Oedipus later in the play to make the distinction between divine and human knowing clear, to attribute to man per se any significant mode of "knowing."

The priest does imply, nevertheless, the beginnings of a distinction between two sources of "knowledge." There is human "knowing." Knowledge in that mode is frequently expressed by the verb  $\hat{\omicron}\lambda\delta\alpha$  which comes to be extremely important in the imagery of the play as a form of the verb  $\ast\epsilon\lambda\delta\omega$ , which primarily means "I see." The human mode of knowing, then, of which Oedipus is the paradigm example, is a form of *seeing*. It is precisely his own "seeing" that Oedipus will come to consider defective and will try to correct by an act of self-blinding. There is, then, human "sight" and divine revelation. But the second depends on the disposition of the first, on an "openness" (to use Buber's term) and a sympathetic listening, to be understood truly.

The Thebans see this man as having proven himself pre-eminent in the past in discerning solutions to divine riddles, and this primarily by his own human wit. Consequently, he seems best qualified again to discern the will of the divine and save Thebes from its plague. His wit, although only human, has proven itself in the past capable of discovering divine intention. They will trust it again.

Oedipus himself seems to have the utmost respect for the words of the god. Thus he has sent Creon to Delphi to learn  $\tau\omicron\hat{\upsilon}\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\hat{\upsilon}\ \phi\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\nu$  (86), the nature of this  $\mu\acute{\iota}\alpha\sigma\mu\alpha$  (97) which Thebes is suffering and the  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\mu\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  (99) they must undergo to be cleansed. Upon learning that they must find the unknown murderer of Laius, the former king of Thebes, and expel

him from the land, Oedipus sets out to do just that. Indeed, the remainder of the play consists in Oedipus tracking the murderer like a hunter (another important image motif in the play). That is, he sets his mind to doing precisely what the word of the god has instructed. He does not consider this divine utterance to be a "riddle." Rather he takes it as a straightforward pronouncement by the god, completely comprehensible to the unaided human intelligence. It is finally, I think, his own mind, his own powers of sight, Oedipus respects, rather than the "utterance of the god," although he does not yet realize that.

But the oracle, although it instructed Thebes to avenge the murder of Laius, gave no clue as to who the murderer might be. Therefore Oedipus seeks τὸ φρονεῖν of Apollo's own prophet, Teiresias, to aid his search on behalf of Thebes. In the subsequent *agon* between these two men, already known for their respective powers of sight, i.e. Oedipus for his human wit, Teiresias for his divine wisdom, two modes of being in the world, two ways of "knowing" are juxtaposed.

These different and contrasting modes of knowing are symbolized in the very physical presence of these two men on stage and in the play's sight/blindness imagery, which is focused most dramatically here. Teiresias, on the one hand is blind; Oedipus, on the other, is sighted. Teiresias is introduced, nevertheless, as one ταῦθ' ὀρῶντ' . . . φοίβῳ (284-5), as τὸν θεῶν μάντιν (298) in whom τὰ ληθῆς ἐμπέφυκεν ἀνθρώπων μόνῳ (299). Although he is blind, then, Teiresias can "see": he has the sight of the gods, and of the truth.

Oedipus, on the other hand, is characterized by his human powers of

sight. The Priest of Zeus has already said that he is "not equal to the gods" (31), but "first among men." Likewise, the several references to the Sphinx clearly imply that Oedipus' "sight," metaphorical of his "knowledge," is peculiarly human, as opposed to the divine "sight"--the wisdom--of Teiresias. Their respective powers of sight and wisdom are qualitatively different.

As the *agon* begins, Oedipus begs Teiresias for his φάτις (323), his divine message, if indeed he has one to give. Teiresias responds that Oedipus and the Thebans are all without understanding (πάντες γὰρ οὐ φρονεῖτ'--328). You blame my temper, he says, but οὐ κατεῖδες (338) your own temper (or your "wife") with which you dwell.<sup>14</sup> If ἐτύχχανες βλέπων (348), Oedipus replies in anger, I would blame you for "the very deed" (347).

Clearly, what Oedipus wants here in the φάτις of Teiresias is wisdom in the mode of facts; he wants a simple answer which accords with the logic of his human reason and which he can put into effect. In a word, he wants the name of the murderer of Laius. Teiresias, on the other hand, represents a kind of knowing not in the mode of facts which can be appropriated. His knowledge comes not of a "seeing" (for he is blind) but of a "listening" to a god which "speaks," one might say, through the world. The two contrasting modes of knowledge do not seem in this argument to comprehend one another.

Nevertheless, pushed beyond his patience, Teiresias begins to speak his "word" in cryptic phrases. You live in shame, he tells Oedipus, nor are you able ὀρᾶν ἕν' ἐὶ κακοῦ (367). He will not suffer from that

assertion, however, "if there is strength in truth" (369). But Oedipus dismisses him as τυφλὸς τά τ' ὤτα τὸν τε νοῦν τά τ' ὄμματα (371). These same taunts, Teiresias says, will soon be hurled at Oedipus. Oedipus retorts that Teiresias' life is passed in "one unbroken night" (374).<sup>15</sup>

Teiresias is physically τυφλός, of course, but clearly he has divine "sight." If he does not see, he nevertheless understands. Oedipus, on the other hand, sees, but does not "understand" (328). Teiresias' wisdom enables him to "ponder all things. . .things teachable and un-speakable, heavenly things and earthly things" (300-301).

Oedipus too has had opportunity to contemplate an enigma posed by one more than mortal, the riddle of the Sphinx in fact. But, he recalls, no seer, no augury, no divine agency lent him help in solving that riddle. No, he, ὁ μηδὲν εἰδὼς οὐδ' ἴππους (397), hit upon the solution by his intellect (γνώμη--398). The paradoxical enigma posed by the Sphinx was solved not by means of divine wisdom but by strictly human wit. If, then, Teiresias will not lend his divine understanding, we might suppose that Oedipus intends once again to "hit the mark with his mind."

It becomes clear in this passage what Oedipus thinks of divine and human knowledge. For him the world is comprehensible by man without the aid of god. He is a product of the new generation of thinkers of the Greek enlightenment, for whom the world was available to the human *mind* through the power of reason. The god is no longer needed to reveal the order of the world. Thus, if Teiresias will not help Oedipus, he will strike out once more with his mind to solve this problem.

Further, Oedipus seems even to be indicting Teiresias' understanding,



to be calling his wisdom as a prophet into question. Certainly the Chorus, in the ode immediately following the *agon*, does so explicitly. They say what Oedipus only implies here, namely that although Zeus and Apollo are *ξυνετού* (498), and *εὐδότε*s (499), "That a seer wins more than I among men is no true judgment" (501-502). It is true that one may surpass another in *σοφία*, that is, he may be more clever in the matters of common life, or skilled in the sciences--which Oedipus proved himself to be by solving the riddle of the Sphinx--but the Chorus is doubtful that any man knows the divine truth. What they require for belief is to see Teiresias' *ὀρθὸν ἔπος* (505). That is, they must see his prophecy proved "true," by empirical proof, as Oedipus' was with the Sphinx.

Their point is that whether or not there be divine truth is something of a moot question for mere men to pose. Iocaste states this probably the strongest of all (in fact too strongly for the liking of the Chorus). She claims that "no man has the art of the seer" (709) and she will look "neither to left nor right for the sake of a prophet" (857-58); that in fact it is *τύχη* (977) which rules men and that "there is clear foreknowledge of nothing" (*πρόνοια δ' ἔστιν οὐδενὸς σαφῆς*--978). She has gone even further in enlightenment thinking than Oedipus. She seems skeptical not only that the truth is available to man but that there is any divine truth at all!<sup>16</sup>

From Oedipus' own account of his encounter with the Sphinx (393-98), however, we learn what he conceives knowledge to be, and we see human knowledge as distinct from divine utterance. Knowledge, Oedipus believes, is that which a man discerns with his mind. There is no such thing as

"divine wisdom" spoken through the mouths of prophets. Or, if there is, it is of no benefit to man.

Perhaps such skepticism, on the one hand, opens the door toward real scientific advancement.<sup>17</sup> It seems, nevertheless, a short step from this sentiment to something like that expressed in the saying of the fifth-century sophist Protagoras, that "man is the measure of things, of things that are, that they are, of things that are not, they they are not."\* That, at least, is a profoundly irreligious sentiment. And it is in reaction to such a sentiment, specifically that of Iocaste stated above,<sup>18</sup> that the tragic poet himself speaks through the mouthpiece of the Chorus, saying, "if such deeds as these are honored/ why should I dance?. . . Nowhere is Apollo manifest in honor;/ Religion perishes" (859-91).

But let us return briefly to Oedipus' mention of the Sphinx to Teiresias (390-398), for he poses a question there which is never seriously addressed:

πῶς οὐχ, ὅθ' ἡ ῥαψῶδος ἐνθάδ' ἦν κύων,  
 ἠύδας τι τοῖσδ' ἀστοῖσιν ἐκλυτήριον; (391-2)

Why did Teiresias not answer the Sphinx' riddle? Surely as the prophet of Apollo he was capable of an answer as simple as the one Oedipus gave. Oedipus' implication is, at least, that Teiresias did not know the answer, that his wisdom is not so "divine." Or, worse, his question implies that no prophet spoke because no god spoke; that no god spoke because there was no god to speak.

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\*πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δ' οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν (Sextus, *Math.* VII 60).

Oedipus, on the contrary, to the riddle "what creature walks on four legs in the morning, two at noonday, and on three in evening?" we know from tradition, answered, "Man," and thus freed Thebes from their awful tribute to the Sphinx. Suppose, however, that Oedipus did not really solve that riddle at all. Suppose that his response, rather than a solution, was merely the predicate term of a tautology, and the Sphinx' real question was "What is man?" Oedipus did not address that question at all. If this be the case, then Oedipus solved the riddle only technically and perhaps only temporarily.

Such a speculation concerning the Sphinx becomes plausible and important later, in connection with another divine saying with which the play is more directly concerned: that is, the oracle, given to Oedipus years ago that he would commit incest with his mother and murder his father (966-67). Oedipus did not see that oracle as particularly enigmatic either, any more than he sees the oracle concerning Thebes' plague or the riddle of the Sphinx as enigmatic. All these "divine sayings," however, tempt Oedipus to presume a complete understanding--on the basis, as it were, of what he "sees." And he succumbs to that temptation.

The enigma of that earlier oracle, the temptation placed upon Oedipus, was to presume to understand who his parents were to whom it referred, and about whom he had gone to ask. In fact he did not understand that. In that regard Oedipus was not only ignorant, but blind to his ignorance as well. He remains thus ignorant and blind, as Teiresias points out, saying:

σὺ καὶ δέδορκας κοῦ' βλέπεις, ἔν' εἶ κακοῦ,  
οὐδ' ἔνθα ναίεις, οὐδ' ὅτων οἰκεῖς μέτα. (413-14)

Consequently, Oedipus' action to avert that prophecy, namely leaving Corinth and his assumed parents, was tragically unsuccessful.<sup>19</sup> Certainly the effects of that oracle seem proof enough that Oedipus' γνώμη was not sufficient to unravel the Apollonian riddle. Why, then, should we assume his solution to have been any more true in the case of the Sphinx?

Perhaps now we can begin to see in what way the "sighted" Oedipus is "blind," and "without understanding." His mind is a strong bow, which wins him much (1197-1201). He has a good deal of personal integrity and is committed τάδ' ἔκμαθεῖν σαφῶς (1065). But he is convinced that he is capable by the sole power of his wit to solve this problem. He does not conceive the possibility of that power being limited. Teiresias, on the other hand, in his very mode of being as well as in his spoken word, implies that there are truths in the world which the human γνώμη applying itself σαφῶς cannot see or "know," i.e. that the "οἶδα" of "Οἰδίπους" is necessarily limited. Man is ironically "blind" *in* his knowing. Teiresias' "blindness" symbolizes the defect or limitation of unaided human wit, a defect in which Oedipus shares but of which he seems unaware.

The implication made by Oedipus in the *agon* (380-404), by the Chorus just after (497-511) and by Iocaste later (707-9, 857-8, 977-8), that men cannot "know" the truths of the gods, is proved wrong in the final unfolding of Teiresias' words. His final words to Oedipus in the *agon* are that the mandated search is for a man who will be τυφλός though once δεδορκῶς, a stranger who will be found a native Theban, a poor man once rich, a man at once brother and father to his children, son and husband

of his wife, same-sower and murderer of his father (447-462). And those words are proved all too true. Clearly there are two modes of knowing and *both* are open to at least some men, Iocaste's claim notwithstanding.

At any rate, the Chorus does get its proof of Teiresias' word; it sees his ἔπος demonstrated ὀρθόν (505); it does finally come to light, as Teiresias says it will (341). It does so, I might add, only because Oedipus has the integrity to demand the truth, a thing which no one else in the play has.<sup>20</sup> Even Teiresias comes to Oedipus reluctantly, certain that his wisdom and knowledge of the truth can serve no one well (316-18); likewise the old shepherd of Laius, and only witness of Oedipus' true identity and pollution, gives his knowledge with the greatest reluctance (1159); and Iocaste herself begs Oedipus to leave off his search (1056-57). Oedipus alone is determined to find out the truth no matter what the consequences.

It is, finally, from an old shepherd of Laius that, after a long hunt, Oedipus hears the ἀνελκτά of Teiresias unraveled. It is himself whom he has hunted; himself who has been blind; he is the pollution which has rendered Thebes barren.

Oedipus is at last receptive to hearing from the old shepherd:

κἀγωγ' ἀκούειν· ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀκουστέον. (1170)

He *hears* now as he has never been able to hear; as, I think, he has never been open to hear. He is on the brink of a reckoning such as he has never known before. And he knows immediately the implications of the shepherd's news, which comes to him as a "bringing to light" (πέφασμαι --1184). He utters in response words foreboding of the tragic blinding

to follow:

ὦ φῶς· τελευταῖόν σε προσβλέψαμι νῦν, (1183)

The irony of the "light" of reason in which he has so long stood is just coming home to him.

He turns then to follow his wife-mother, Iocaste, who has run into the palace, into her inner chamber, as the Messenger later tells us, slamming the doors behind her and bewailing her wretched twofold marriage (1241-7). Seeking her, we hear, Oedipus burst into the hall βοῶν (1252), "wandering" among the guards looking for a weapon and asking where he might find his non-wife wife. Finally in utter madness (λυσσῶντι--1258), as if shown by δαυμόνων τις (1258), and δεινὸν δ' ἄύσας, ὡς ἕφηγητοῦ τινοσ (1260) he drove in the doors and entered violently his wife-mother's inner chamber, letting forth a "dread deep cry" (1265) as if of a wild animal or a bull, at sight of her.

The imagery of the wild animal, the talk of madness (λυσσῶντι), of demonic power (δαυμόνων), of being guided by someone (ὡς ἕφηγητοῦ τινοσ) and the Chorus' question later about his μανία and the δαίμων (1300-1) allude clearly to a state of ecstasy. Oedipus at this moment is outside of himself. He has the god within him. It is the moment of confrontation with the god of limit and light. He drives in the doors of Iocaste's inner chamber and beholds his wife-mother--dead.

Ripping the brooches from her dress he plunges them into his eyes, crying out: οὐκ ὄφελυντό νιν neither the evils he suffered nor the evils he did/ but in darkness henceforth they would see those whom they ought never to have seen, and fail to know those whom they ought never to have

known" (1271-4).

If he is to accept this truth, which events have necessarily led him now to face, he must recognize the ignorance in which he has always lived. He must accept the darkness of his whole previous life, the blindness of his whole mode of being. He does so emphatically.

The blinding symbolizes for Oedipus a willingness not merely to recognize the truth of an old oracle. It symbolizes the recognition of the limitations of human wit and the power of the divine. It implies the beginning of a willingness to adopt a whole new mode of being--one more appropriate to the limitations of man and the presence of the god. Man is essentially blind. Oedipus recognizes that condition here as he repeatedly plunges the brooches into his eyes.

His is also, ironically, the beginning of a *positive* response to the tragic human condition, born of an encounter with the god. It is the action of a rational man who is finally sustained by the god in whom his gift of reason is grounded (though he may not yet explicitly recognize the presence of the god as sustaining). He is able, at 1331-32, to assume responsibility for the blinding, while making Apollo responsible for the murder-incest, because he has at last confronted the god. At last he knows wherein man is blind--when he presumes on his own power to comprehend the world. To know what shall come from the gods and to manipulate events is not within the power of man. But neither must life seem utterly chaotic. It may, in a man's response, make sense.

That Oedipus' response, the blinding for which he assumes full responsibility and claims: ἔπαλσε δ' αὐτόκλειρ νιν οὐρίς, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τλάμων

(1331-32), is ultimately positive, is further demonstrated by its implicit contrast to the *suicide* of Iocaste. She is made responsible for her suicide, as Oedipus is for his blinding, and in similar words: αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς (1237). She, however, chose to commit suicide in the face of a truth she could not accept, could not with live--to which she simply was not open. Her suicide is an act of will consistent with her belief in a world ruled by chance. It is the final willful act of a woman who feels herself in an utterly capricious world.

The Chorus, too, has a response to this tragedy. It assumes, however, absolutely no responsibility and finds itself able to stand outside the action and moralize. It concludes that no man may count on εὐδαιμονία, even he having won it by skillfully bringing down the Sphinx (1197-1203), that is, by human wit. Ὁ πᾶνθ' ἄρῶν χρόνος (1213) finds out every man and judges him. The Chorus apparently considers this just punishment for a man who overstepped his human limits. Oedipus, it implies, is guilty of ὕβρις (872-82). Further, it connects his fall with his sharp wit (1200-1).

For the Chorus, then, the order of the world is indeed divine. And it is not for man to comprehend with his poor mind, but only to accept. It is locked into an existence of fate, to which it feels no ability to respond. Man cannot be assured of happiness by his human wit. His fate is fraught with tragedy. That tragedy, however, never frees the Chorus in its human condition, but only limits it.

For Oedipus, on the other hand, at this moment the gods are not merely capricious nor is man doomed to suffer a fate beyond his ken.



Rather he emerges from the palace in a scene symbolic of birth, reborn in the blindness that is essentially man's. He must take up anew a life full of things he cannot by his own power "see"--which he cannot "know."

Oedipus is still stricken by the objective horror of the pollution in which he is so inextricably bound. He feels hatred of the gods (1360); unable even to face his parents in Hades (1371-3); sorry ever to have been saved from Mt. Cithairon as a baby (1349-51); and desirous of being exiled from Thebes (1436-7).

Nevertheless, his self-blinding was not an act to *avoid* the implication of his latest revelation, that is, the blind ignorance of the human condition, but to *accept* it. He acted to accept his "blindness" in the fullest sense, physically; to accept it as the mode of being appropriate to a man. It is by that implicit acceptance that Oedipus can later come to "see." He affirms the tragic condition of man. Out of that act of affirmation Oedipus is open to becoming such as he is in *Coloneus*--contented. There at last he comes explicitly to recognize his implication in his tragedy and to accept responsibility for it--but not to assume *blame*. He is, in that latter play, a blind prophet much in the same mode as we see Teiresias here. Finally Oedipus feels himself sustained by the god in the form of the Eumenides. A blind man, he can "see"; he can hear the φήμη τοῦ θεοῦ. The way toward such a reversal is made ready here, in Oedipus' encounter with and response to the limits of man.

Human knowledge, then, is absolutely limited. No man can be assured of happiness, though he have wealth, fame, and knowledge of riddles (1525). Certainly he who presumes his intellect to be enough to assure such

happiness, or even he who presumes there is no happiness, is made liable, by his noetic limitation, to suffer tragedy. He must of necessity fail to achieve happiness. He who reduces the world to mere "experience" and presumes, however unwittingly, to comprehend it is doomed to suffer his "fate."

Man may, on the other hand, recognize the limits of his human power. He may adopt a stance cognizant of his own blindness. For such a man tragedy may be the moment of encounter with the divine. Out of a stance of openness and response to that which is Other, and beyond, he may find contentment and even consummation. That is, if one seeks to "know" the world with the intellect alone, and does not recognize that his human reason is essentially limited, his life may unfold as tragically fated. One may live, however, in a mode of reciprocity and in his responding to that which is Other--even in tragedy--one may realize a destinate existence.<sup>21</sup>

Thus Sophocles, speaking to the problem of knowledge raised by the fifth-century enlightenment and rise of rationalism, recognized the possibility of two modes of "knowing" the world, and the need for both.

## Notes

1. W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950), p. 179.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
3. Walter F. Otto, *Dionysus Myth and Cult*, trans. Robert Palmer (New York: Random House, Inc., 1967), p. 121.
4. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Random House, Inc., 1967), p. 36.
5. Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1964).
6. E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), Chapt. III. Dodds argues that both Dionysus and Apollo infected man with divine madness--μανία. The madness of Dionysus, however, is, according to the Platonic distinctions, Ritual madness. It is infectious, spreading among all men for primarily cathartic purposes. The μανία of Apollo, on the other hand, Plato calls Prophetic madness. It too is enthusiastic and ecstatic, but infects only a few. Its function is primarily to give ". . .supernatural assurance, for an authority transcending man's, . . ." (p. 75).
7. Victor Ehrenberg, *Sophocles and Pericles* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell & Mott, Limited, 1954), p. 50. Ehrenberg argues that this is "the fundamental and outstanding contrast in the intellectual life of Athens," and that it is reflected in the relationship of "the two greatest men in the greatest period of Athenian history," namely Pericles and Sophocles.
8. Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970).
9. For example the famous dictum of Protagoras: πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος.
10. Nietzsche, p. 47.
11. F. Storr, trans., *Sophocles* (London: William Heinemann, 1912), pp. 1-2.
12. Bernard Knox, *Oedipus at Thebes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, Inc., 1957), p. 29: "Such is the character of Oedipus: he is a great man, a man of experience and swift courageous action, who yet

acts only after careful deliberation, illuminated by an analytic and demanding intelligence. His action by its consistent success generates a great self-confidence, but it is always directed to the common good. He is an absolute ruler who loves and is loved by his people, but is conscious of the jealousy his success arouses and suspicious of conspiracy in high places. He is capable of terrible, apparently ungovernable anger, but only under great provocation, and he can, though grudgingly and with difficulty, subdue his anger when he sees himself isolated from his people."

13. Sir Richard Jebb, ed., *The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles*, 4th ed. (1885, rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 82.
14. See Jebb, p. 44, note on line 337: the phrase "while it dwells close to you"--refers both to Oedipus' temper, which he has been impugning in Teiresias, and to his "own," i.e., his kinswoman, his mother, dwelling with him.
15. In all modern editions, the MSS reading has been changed in the lines immediately following this to give a reading commensurate with a tragedy of fate. The text reads at line 376 οὐ γὰρ σε μοῖρα πρὸς γ' ἐμοῦ πεσεῖν. . . . The manuscripts, however, reading οὐ γὰρ με μοῖρα πρὸς γε σοῦ πεσεῖν, have the logical subject and object of the infinitive βλάβαι (375) reversed. Thus the meaning is: Oedipus: ". . .so that neither I nor any other, who sees the light would ever harm you." T.: "For it is not fate that I fall at your hands, since Apollo is enough, whose care it is to work these things out." In the reading adopted by modern editors Apollo is made responsible for the μοῖρα of Oedipus, thus effecting a tragedy of fate.
16. Jebb, p. 106: "τὰ τῆς τύχης is here somewhat more than a mere periphrase for ἡ τύχη, since the plur. suggests successive incidents. Τύχη does not here involve denial of a divine order in the government of the world, but only of man's power to comprehend or foresee its course." I have thus put the case stronger than Jebb did.
17. Dodds, p. 181. Concerning a claim by Xenophanes that no man has sure knowledge about gods, Dodds says: "That honest distinction between what is knowable and what is not appears again and again in fifth-century thought, and is surely one of its chief glories; it is the foundation of scientific humility."
18. Ehrenberg, p. 71. Concerning Iocaste's relationship to the gods Ehrenberg notes: ". . .the very fact that she is so full of love for her husband that she neglects and even despises the gods, is ample proof that, in her emotions as well as her intellect, she has no religion."

19. Knox, p. 5. Knox claims that we cannot consider Oedipus' response to this old oracle because "Sophocles has very carefully arranged the material of the myth in such a way as to exclude the external factor in the life of Oedipus from the action of the tragedy." I am not concerned here, however, with Oedipus' act in Corinth as free or determined, but rather with what his action implies about his character and how consistent his action now is with that action then.
20. Walter Kaufman, *Tragedy and Philosophy* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969), p. 144. This honesty is part of Oedipus' greatness and his claim to our awed admiration, Kaufman claims, ". . .precisely because it is true that supreme honesty usually does not make the honest man happy."
21. See pp. 4-6.

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*AMANS AS STULTUS AND LENO IN OVID'S AMORES, II.xix*



The *Amores* of P. Ovidius Naso traces the development of a Poet-Lover in three facets of his personality through the course of several love-affairs. I will briefly describe that poet-lover and his development in terms of the corpus as a whole (speaking especially to several poems in each of the three books comprising the *Amores*). With that as a basis I will analyse more closely the last poem of the second book, II.xix, in terms of its internal thematic development and imagery and in terms of its relationship and significance to the corpus as a whole.

In the first three poems of Book I we meet the main character of this drama. In the first poem he introduces himself as a *Vates* (I.i.24). He aspired to write epic poetry (I.i.1-2) but upon the instigation of Cupid took up elegy (I.i.3-4). Cupid also gave him subject befitting eleven-foot meter and shot his heart full of *Amor* (I.i.26). In the first aspect of our protagonist's personality, which I will call his Persona One, he is a love-poet writing of love poetry under the guidance of Cupid and his divine mother, Venus. We shall meet this persona most explicitly in the framing poems, the first and last poem of each of the three books.

In I.ii the second aspect of our protagonist's character comes to light, his Persona Two. This is a man who feels the *ignis* of passionate love (I.ii.9). He is the *praeda* of Cupid (I.ii.19). He surrenders to Cupid in order to avoid *bellum* (I.ii.21), in order to avoid the struggle which necessarily ensues when an unwilling heart is struck with love. And he winds up a "soldier of love" (I.ii.49-50). This persona is recognizable in the military and sexual imagery so prevalent in the corpus. In love he is an opportunist with few scruples; he is given to the moment

and driven by an insatiate passion.

In I.iii Persona Three appears. In this aspect of his personality, too, our hero is a lover, having been struck by *Amor* (I.iii.11-12); and he is a poet (I.iii.19-20). The object of both his love and his poetry, however, is not any and all beautiful women but a specific girl--the Corinna to whom we are introduced at I.v.9. Nor is the nature of Persona Three's love fiery passion, as was that of Persona Two. Rather he is romantic and idealistic in his conception of love. He pledges *cura perennis* (I.iii.16), *sine crimine mores, nuda simplicitas*, and *purpureus pudor* (I.iii.13-14). He is neither wealthy nor aristocratic (I.iii.7-10), but is to be loved for his noble character and his *carmina*. His aim is to immortalize his *puella* (and himself) in poetry (I.iii.25-6). Persona Three is a poor romantic *Amans* who hopes to win the object of his pure love with his immortal poetry.

In the subsequent poems this *Amans* struggles with these two conflicting aspects of his own personality as they are reflected especially in Personae Two and Three; with his passion for adventure and sexual gratification on the one hand, and his romantic illusion of pure and chaste love on the other. Consequently his love-affairs, with which the corpus is principally concerned, are fraught with the contradictions inherent in his inconsonant conceptions of love.

In Books I and II, in his relationship with his mistress, Corinna, the *Amans* attempts to effect his ideal love. The precepts of such an ideal, however, are clearly untenable in the face of the real situation. Further, the *Amans*, acting in the mode of the sexual adventurer and soldier of fortune, completely undercuts his own ideal. Consequently, as

ideal lover-poet, the *Amans* is forced to make major compromises and resort to self-deceit to maintain any semblance of a chaste love. Finally, however, even that semblance deserts him, as in Book II his relationship with Corinna declines, unable to contend with the reality of the situation and the *Amans'* deceitful passion. As it inevitably must in the face of these pressures, the Persona Three of our *Amans* fades, leaving only his Persona Two--the shallow soldier of fortune who seeks fulfillment from random sexual engagements, but does not find it. Likewise the poetic aspirations of Persona One are transformed in the course of the corpus. But that development will be discussed later.

Thus the *Amans* is sometimes an ideal poet-lover, sometimes a soldier of love and passionate adventurer; and often both in the course of a single poem. Consequently, as those two concepts actively contradict one another and conflict with reality, his love-affair and his character degenerate.

The contradictions and the struggle in loving begin to appear even as we are first introduced to his *amores*, in I.iv, where we learn that the object of his "chaste" love, no doubt Corinna, is not even an available woman. She has a *vir* (I.iv.1). The ideal love of the *Amans* of I.iii is thus made impossible. Then, in the mode of Persona Two, he proceeds at great length to plan deceits for her *vir* in order to satisfy his own burning passion (I.iv.13-58). In fact his very planning teaches Corinna infidelity and runs contrary to all his expressed ideals of love. Finally, still clinging to his romantic ideals in the mode of Persona Three, yet unable to accomplish his ideals in the face of the real

situation and in the face of his own passion, he finally asks that, whatever she may do with other men, she deny any infidelity to him (I.iv.70). He can only achieve his ideal by self-deceit.

So, to achieve any semblance of the ideal love of his Persona Three, the *Amans* must continue deceiving himself and making ever greater compromises because of the discrepancy between his ideal and the real. Simultaneously, in his Persona Two, he continues to destroy his ideals by his own uncontrollable passion. Thus he begins I.vi, the *paraclausithyron*, honoring the tradition of spending the night upon the doorstep of his beloved as a testimony of his love. He gradually transforms in the poem, however, into a slobbering drunk, mocking the tradition and undercutting any sense of ideal love.

The seeds of a greater threat to his ideal, however, begin to be found in the advice he overhears a *lena* (I.viii.1) giving his *puella*, instructing her in the ways of prostitution. Subsequently in Books I and II he becomes the object of all the advice of the *lena*, as his mistress, Corinna, blossoms forth into a prostitute. In fact she begins her meretricious manipulation already in I.x, asking him for the first time for *munera* (I.x.11). Apparently disillusioned, he pleads for the purity and innocence of *Amor* (I.x.15-20), invokes the shamefulness of prostitution (I.x.37-44), and reiterates his devotion and the value of his poetry by which he had aspired, in I.iii, to immortalize *puellae*. But finally, in another major compromise not only of his ideals but of the power of his poetry to win love, he asks only that she cease demanding, and then he will give the prize she wants (I.x.63-4).

Corinna is still further revealed as an aspiring prostitute and the *Amans'* fortune continues its decline in I.xii, where Corinna denies him a meeting (I.xii.2)--in accordance with the advice of the *lena* (I.viii.73). His effectiveness as poet and lover is implicitly called into question, since it was upon *tristes tabellae* (I.xii.1)--doubtless in his poetry--that he asked for the meeting. The tablets failed, however, to gain her company. Perhaps his *carmina* are not so powerful after all.

The same struggle between conflicting conceptions of love is especially apparent in the framing poems at the beginning and end of the books. In I.xv and II.i the *vates* is shown continually torn between passionate love poetry--elegy--and glorious war poetry--epic. Here Persona One reappears and carries on the same struggle over the writing of poetry that Personae Two and Three carry on in their love-affairs. Our protagonist is apparently no more successful in the one struggle than in the other. Although he thinks he may win fame through elegy (I.xv.7-8) he nevertheless calls his subject his own *nequitia* (II.i.2), thus disparaging it. Likewise at II.i.23-8 he claims for his *carmina* powers such as were attributed to the *lena* in I.viii; powers such as the magic arts, the ability to turn back water to its source and turning the moon blood-red. That poetry, however, did not seem so effective in I.x, where Corinna demanded *munera*, or I.xii when his *tabellae* failed to gain him audience with Corinna. Or perhaps the power of his *carmina* persuades *puellae* to things other than eternal love. In fact his *carmina*, later in III.i, personified as the goddess Elegy, will claim to be precisely a *lena*. Thus, though in the present struggle elegy appears to have won the battle,

it has not yet won the war!

In Book I, then, we saw the development of an *Amans* in three aspects of his personality. We saw him try to effect an ideal love which was utterly untenable to the real situation. Further we saw his ideal conflicting with and undercut by the *Amans*' own passion. Consequently, for the sake of his ideal the *Amans* was forced to accept compromise and self-deceit, while he simultaneously continued, by passionate deceiving, to further denigrate the real situation and divorce it from his ideal.

The *Amans* continues, in Book II, to struggle with his conflicting conceptions of love in an ever more degenerate real situation. His relationship with Corinna continues to disintegrate, while an additional note of mortal despair is added to his character as his ideals and his Persona Three fade further into the background and finally disappear. Soon only Persona Two will remain, the shallow soldier of fortune whose indulgence in passion leaves him continually unfulfilled. Our protagonist is ever less effective and less fulfilled, either as *vates* or *amans*.

The already degenerate values of the *Amans* come forth explicitly in II.ii where, in the ever ascending mode of Persona Two, he argues with his mistress' doorkeep, claiming that lies and deceit will increase the man's *honor* (II.ii.39-40). It is precisely such arguments that are destroying the ideal held simultaneously by the *Amans*. And so by II.iv he cries out explicitly against the driving passion from which he makes such immoral claims as that above, and which continually undercuts his ideal love: *Odi, nec possum cupiens non esse, quod odi* (II.iv.5).

Regardless of his awareness of the conflict, he is swept on

uncontrollably in a great *aqua* of eros (II.iv.7-8) toward every attractive *puella* (II.iv.47-8) and remains subject to the manipulation of Corinna.

In II.v. at another dinner feast, the *Amans* is deceived by Corinna in precisely the way he and Corinna had deceived her former *vir* in I.iv. The *vir* of I.iv has become the *Amans* of II.v, and, as he feared then, the *Amans* is now the victim of his own example (I.iv.46). Furthermore, though he had asked to be deceived in I.iv, he can now no longer even deceive himself into believing in Corinna's purity. Neither, however, can he help being compelled by his own passion and her powerful *facies* (II.v.47-8). He is trapped by his own passion in a degenerate love-affair whose demoralization he himself helped to engineer, and without even a redeeming ideal to cling to.

The struggle yet goes on as the fidelity Persona Three longs for is immediately undercut in II.viii, where Persona Two is unfaithful to Corinna. He takes her *ancilla* for *concubitus* (II.viii.6,22), and then denies it. He even blackmails the *ancilla* and forces her to continue their affair (II.viii.22-8), clearly for no purposes of affection but for mere sexual gratification.

His plight is epitomized in II.ix, where he knows he is the pawn of Cupid. The battle of love is waged within him (II.ix.3-4) and he has no choice whether to love or not. He wants to be allowed to live in peace, like an old soldier (II.ix.24); at the same time he cannot help taking up the banner of love (II.ix.25-54). In the light of the internal turmoil of the *Amans*, as revealed in II.ix, one cannot regard the *propenticon* (II.xi) as merely a farewell to a vacationing Corinna. It

is a tentative good-bye to their whole relationship. Their affair is fading fast. Indeed the abortion poems, II.xiii and xiv, stand metaphorically for the untimely murder of their young love (II.xiv.25-6).

Thus, after II.xiv his love-affair with Corinna is virtually over, and Persona Three is gone. The *Amans* is implicitly forced to recognize that in reality Corinna is a prostitute and no fit object of ideal love. He can no longer deceive himself about his ideal or his real situation. Nor can he rest content with the equally shallow conception of love offered by Persona Two. Thus, beginning in II.xvi the *Amans* shows signs of building a new conception of *amor* with new ideals and new images. He has traveled in that poem to his native country of Sulmo, a small wholesome rural land which he begins to recognize "holds" (*tenet*, II.xvi.1) him. He cannot yet fully enjoy Sulmo, for his *ignis* (II.xvi.11) is far away. He has not yet conquered the blind and violent force of his passion. But this rural country, characterized by its fertility and richness with its abundant water in channeled streams, doubtless symbolizes the dawning of a new sense of love which is itself more fertile, controlled and moral than he has yet known. We begin to see our *Amans* developing a new persona.

Several other new developments also appear in the final poems of Book II and in Book III. After II.xvii Corinna is mentioned rarely, and then only in memory. The *Amans* continues to have affairs, but apparently not with Corinna. More significantly, however, he realizes explicitly that he has been suffering from his own deceitful advice. As Persona Two and as *vates*, he had been a *leno* (III.xii) and had himself



turned Corinna into a prostitute by teaching her to deceive her *vir* and by making her the subject of his *carmina*.

Persona One, in III.i, in the debate between Tragedy and Elegy, realizes explicitly the destructive aspect of his poetry. Elegy explicitly calls herself a *lena* (III.i.44) and describes all the things she has taught Corinna to do (III.i.49-60). Realizing that, Persona One resolves to turn to epic as soon as he finishes his *amores*, and gives *nostro victurum nomen amori* (III.i.65).

In Book III, then, there are two main developments. This new conception of love as fertile, controlled, and faithful continues to develop even in the face of adversity, and it overpowers the lingering influence of Persona Two. On the other hand, the *Amans* realizes explicitly the contradiction implicit in Personae Two and Three and their total destructive power. He realizes that the *carmina* by which he had sought to immortalize an ideal love have in fact been a *lena* and turned his mistress into a prostitute. Finally he is able to reject the false conceptions of love of both Personae Two and Three in favor of his new conception of love. So, at the close of the corpus we find the *Amans* married.

His new conception of love, however, must undergo strong adversity. Thus, in III.iii, he finds his new *puella* breaking oaths, even as Corinna had. This oath, however, seems to him no mere lover's oath--which we have seen would not be really binding (II.viii.19-20). This is a serious oath and its violation is a serious offense against the gods. He will not endure such impiety and he will not be deceived (III.iii.47-8). Further, in III.iv he points out to yet another *vir* a thing the *Amans*

knows well both from the side of the *vir* and the side of the *Amans*: that no mere guard will keep his *puella* chaste (III.iv.2,5-8). Truly a women's own *ingenium* must be her guard. And at III.iv.27 a radically new position is taken: *nec facie placet illa sua, sed amore mariti*. Physical beauty is beginning to lose its significance for the *Amans* as marriage gains significance.

The Poet-Lover finally realizes the tragic irony of his *ingenium* in III.xii. He knows at last that it is his *ingenium* which has corrupted the *ingenium* of Corinna. He has been the *leno* through his poetry (III.xii.11). As his *carmina* have made her known, his *ingenium* has prostituted her (III.xii.7-8). No bard was necessary to teach Corinna prostitution; the very poetry by which he had thought to win her has done that!

So we find the *Amans* in III.xiii having come full-circle. He is married and attending the festival of Juno in the Faliscan country-side (III.xiii.1). Here is a new parade, parallel to the one we saw in I.ii. This, however, is in honor of Juno, the goddess of marriage and things of the home. The imagery has reversed; Cupid and Venus are gone. The *Amans* of this drama has found a new kind of love in the institution of marriage. With that the *vates*, in III.xv, may bid farewell to elegy and sing to the strokes of a greater thyrsus.

Let us go back now and look more closely at II.xix to examine its internal construction and its place in this overall development. The poem stands in a peculiar place in the thematic development of the corpus. By this time in Book II, Persona Three has all but disappeared, leaving primarily Persona Two, whom the *Amans* has come to abhor, and the

budding hope of a Persona Four. Likewise Corinna seems to have fallen out of his life, if not out of his memory. And he is very near to the realization that his poetry and his advice have been a corrupting force. Further, the poem's physical location at the end of Book II is peculiar in the corpus. It has displaced the usual framing poem of Ovid's composition and stands between two poems (II.xviii and III.i) in the mode of Persona One. This position cannot but enhance the poem's significance.

Thematically the poem consists in an address by the *Amans* first to some *vir*, and second to the *puella* of that *vir*. The aim of the *Amans* appears to be, on the one hand, to convince a *stultus vir* that love is burning, jealous, deceitful, passion--which is precisely how we have seen that Persona Two conceives of it. Likewise his address to the *puella*, which sounds suspiciously like that of the bawd of I.viii in its advice, attempts to convince her that love entails deceit, denial, teasing, and cheating. Throughout both addresses the *Amans* draws on his own experience from Books I and II to support his claims for a passionate, deceitful, demoralized conception of love.

He turns back, on the other hand, to address the *vir* a second time, still drawing on experiences we have seen earlier, to incite fear and jealousy in the *vir*. It is later revealed, however, that this is not just any *vir* or *puella* whom he is addressing here. This couple is married. Thus he is trying not merely to corrupt a man and woman, but to corrupt a marriage! Finally, then, apparently giving up on ever being able to make this an attractive adventure in loving, our soldier of fortune rejects the affair altogether.

It is possible that this poem, enhanced by its location at the end of Book II, reflects an after-thought on the part of the *Amans*, a last minute turning back and disguised pleading with Corinna to receive him once more. Perhaps the long catalogue of past episodes is a last attempt to get Corinna to allow him to continue in their affair. Maybe the poem's violation of the framework of Book II indicates a frantic grasp at straws. I do not think, however, that the internal development of the poem supports such a thesis.

Rather the poem assumes completely the perspective of Persona Two, arguing for his passionate, degenerate, shallow conception of love and drawing upon his experiences from Books I and II to bolster his claim to know what love is. From having seen the *Amans* on those earlier occasions, however, we can readily recognize the irony of using them for ammunition now. We know already the failure of Persona Two's love. Drawing on those earlier experiences here only magnifies the impotency of his conception of love. The *Amans* in this poem is clearly no more than a pimp, and a failure.

Further, his fiery, deceitful passion is brought square up against another conflicting conception of love. That other conception, moreover, is not the equally shallow one of romantic idealism such as we saw in Persona Three. Rather it is the love of marriage--precisely the new conception the *Amans* has been developing since II.xvi, and will bring to culmination in Book III. In fact the closing lines of this poem reflect an implicit reversal of perspective from that with which it began. The *Amans* begins in fact to argue obliquely not for mere physical

passion but for marital love.

Thus, enhanced by its peculiar physical location in the corpus, II.xix is really reflecting all that has happened to the *Amans* at the hands of Corinna in Books I and II, and adumbrates all that is about to happen in Book III. Persona Two is dealt a deadly blow in the development of the poem and in the final reversal one is left wondering who in the poem is the *Amans*, and who the *stultus*.

The internal development of II.xix occurs in four main phases: the address to a *vir*, lines 1-18; address to a *puella*, lines 19-36; second address to the *vir*, lines 37-51; and the final reversal, lines 52-60. The first two sections parallel the advice of the bawd in I.viii and draw upon the experience of the *Amans* throughout the corpus. The last reflect a reversal of his argument and position.

The initial address of the poem is to a *vir*. One *vir* or another has played an important role as third party to most of the affairs of the *Amans* throughout the corpus. The *vir* has acted either to be deceived by the *Amans* and his mistress (e.g., I.iv) or, with the help of the mistress, to deceive the *Amans* (e.g., II.v). Thus the *Amans* and the *vir* have always been *rivales*. In fact they have frequently reversed roles and seem but two sides of the same coin. That occurs in this poem as well, as their "rivalry" comes explicitly into question.

In II.xix, however, the *Amans* addresses a *vir* who is not his *rivalis*. His advice in the following lines is an attempt to convince the *vir* to guard his *puella*, thereby ostensibly to make the *amor* interesting for the *Amans*. That is, he is advising the *vir* not to be *stultus* (1)

but to be his *rivalis* (60)--to be another *Amans*! The advice contained in the next four couplets describes the object of the *Amans*' love. *Amo*, he says, 1) that which *acrius urit*, 2) that which is not allowed (*ferreus est, si quis, quod sinit alter, amat*), 3) that which is simultaneously desired and feared (*speramus pariter, pariter metuamus amantes*), 4) occasional rejection (*rara repulsa*), 5) deceit (*fallere*), and 6) that which pains (*laedat*).

The argument of these first couplets, however, is belied by the behavior of Persona Two throughout the corpus. He has "burned" with love since Cupid shot him in I.ii. But he has never *desired* fear and rejection as the rewards of his *amor*! In fact in I.xii he was most distraught at being rejected; at II.v he wished *mori* on account of Corinna's deceit (2); and in II.ix.5-6 he pleaded with Cupid to let him cease burning. In II.v he called the man *ferreus* who can bear to learn the involvement of his *puella* with another man, a far cry from calling the man *ferreus* who loves *quod sinit alter* (3). The facts of his experience as we have seen it in earlier poems belie the argument of the *Amans* here. What he calls the objects of his *amor* and greatly to be desired have not in fact made him happy but the opposite. In the face of the real situation there is considerable irony in the *Amans*' calling this man *stultus* (1). Already we must wonder who is *stultus*.

His "advice" on the "true" nature of *amor*, then, has effectively described the nature of his passion as we saw it in Books I and II. He calls this man *stultus* for not possessing such qualities and immediately afterward, in line 9, calls these qualities his *vitium*. He goes on in

the following four couplets to recall how his *versuta Corinna* (9) knew his *vitium* and played upon it. *Vitia* reappears in III.xi with some important implications for this poem which will be treated shortly. His *vitium* is not external and something he can accept or reject at will. He admits it is *in me*, which brings to mind II.ix where the battle of love was said to be waged within the *Amans* and not by his choice. His conception of love is his *vitium*. It drives him and destroys him.

Corinna knew this (by symbolic verse form his fault is held squarely within her sight: *viderat. . .vitium. . .Corinna*), and she played upon it. Thus he is *captus* (10) by his own deceitful love. He is captured and surrounded by his fault and Corinna. All the verbs, however, which refer to Corinna (e.g., *viderat--9*; *norat--10*) are in pluperfect tense. Corinna is no longer his lover and will be mentioned from now on only in past tense.

The *vitium*, then, the particulars of which he goes on to recount, as if to further encourage the *vir* to be his *rivalis*, is familiar to us and recalls his relationship with Corinna. The events related, however, far from enhancing the position of the *Amans*, bring to mind both the failure of his relationship with Corinna and the advice of the bawd in I.viii, with its subsequent effect on Corinna. They reflect his *vitium* to be most destructive of love.

He recalls how often she pretended *dolores* (11). Feigning *dolor capitis* is precisely what the bawd advised in I.viii.73. Likewise he remembers here how often she levied *culpa* against him, as the bawd also advised (I.viii.80) and as we saw occur in II.vii. Further, he recalls

how she would tease him (*vexarat*--15) and then rekindle (*refoverat*--15) his flame. This too the bawd advised (I.viii.73,75-6) and Corinna often carried out (I.xii and II.xii). But then she would again become *comis* in answer to his prayer. She is even found, symbolically, in the midst of his prayers in the poem: *votis comis. . .meis* (16). Finally he recalls her *blanditiae*, *dulcia verba*, and *oscula* (17-18). These too we saw Corinna bestow in II.v.50 and II.xviii.10 in a purely manipulative fashion.

So part one of the poem began by insulting the *vir* and apparently attempting to show how a man ought to love. And it drew for evidence upon the *Amans'* own experiences, which we saw in Books I and II. In the process of making his argument for love, however, the *Amans* revealed his conception of love to be burning, frustrated passion and his love experience to have been an utter failure. Consequently, rather than building an argument for the love of Persona Two his address showed how wretched and torn is this *Amans* and how impotent is his *amor*.

He then turns to address a new *puella*, who has just caught his eye: *quae nostros rapuisti nuper ocellos* (19). He continues from lines 19-34 to address this *puella*, with advice in the same mode as the bawd's of I.viii, which is superficially intended to keep him interested in her. Thus he advises that she deny him, tease him and make herself precious by her scarcity. Likewise he shows that the nature of his love is passionate desire for sexual gratification. And he again draws upon past experiences from Books I and II, plus examples from mythology, to bolster his claims of love. Ironically those examples once more turn upon the



*Amans*, enhancing the failures of his love-affairs and the shallowness of love. But more than that, they begin to reflect the first tentative signs of a reversal of that conception of love. And a new idea enters.

His advice to the *puella*, then, as that to the *vir*, is superficially intended to keep him interested in her. But the bawd's advice had a similar intention! Likewise, I.iii, the dawn of another affair, was addressed to a girl *quae me nuper praedata puella est*. The ensuing advice of II.xix, however, is far different from the kind of love he sought there.

He advises here that this women deny (*nega*--20). The bawd too advised denial (*saepe nega noctes*--I.viii.73), and Corinna first did so at I.xii.2: *posse negat*. He says in this instance that she should allow him to lie on her door step through the cold night. He began to do that in the *paraclausithyron*, I.vi, but ended up drunkenly mocking the whole tradition and leaving (I.vi.67-74).

The sexual imagery here suggests his real ambition. Consider only the first line of the couplet:

*et sine me ante tuos projectum in limine postis  
longa pruinosa frigora nocte pati. (21-2)*

It is a clear proposition, especially if we recall the many earlier uses of *fores*, *postes*, and *limina* to express metaphorically the physiology of love (e.g., I.vi). The act of intercourse is further suggested audibly by the onomatopoeic "s," "p," and "t" sounds. The second line of the couplet reverses the image, however, and places the *Amans* out in the cold night where we saw him in I.vi.

The sexual imagery continues into the next couplet where his *amor* . . . *adoleſcit* and *durat*. The *amor* ſpoken of by the *Amans* in his poem is chiefly deſire for ſexual gratification, which has been continually fruſtrated in the preceding poems. Sex, the imagery covertly ſuggeſts, is the *alimenta mei animi* (24). At leaſt it would be; but the ſubtle irony of the paſſage is that his ſexual deſires have been unfulfilled. The *alimenta* of his ſoul, then, is nothing but unrequited love! This *Amans* has ſhown little honor in his love, but he has enjoyed even leſs ſucceſs!

Seen as a reſponſe to the implied failure of his *amor* in the poem up until now, the next couplet marks a climactic moment for the *Amans* and comes almoſt exactly midway through the poem. In 25-6 he begins an implicit denial of his arguments thus far, a denial of the paſſionate love of his paſt experience. He does ſo immediately after he has ſymbolically intimated his deſire for ſexual gratification and acted the pimp to this *puella*.

The metaphor alluded to in *alimenta* (24) is continued in 25-6, where he ſays:

*pinguis amor nimirumque patens in taedia nobis  
vertitur et, stomacho dulcis ut esca, nocet.*

He is continuing to claim that love, i.e., ſex, too readily obtained leads one to boredom and is ultimately harmful. *Pinguis*, however, may alſo mean "rich" or "fertile," as a female or a field may be fertile. The *Amans* has had experience with that ſort of *pinguis amor* too and indeed it was harmful. In II.xiii and xiv we ſaw Corinna deathly ill from an abortion. Although fertile, her love doubtleſs grew bored and was

finally aborted--a most harmful effect. So this event too turned round on the *Amans* and stands ironically in this poem. When this *Amans* has come closest to a rich and fertile love, the love was aborted and his mistress suffered greatly. It is his conception of love, I think, which "harms."

There is, nevertheless, an image of fertility embedded in this metaphor. That image continues and is enhanced in the next couplet where *parens* is explicitly mentioned (28), echoing the *patens* in *pinguis amor nimiumque patens*. Does rich, fertile, productive love cause harm? Perhaps it does when one of the lovers is *versus in taedia*--as Corinna doubtless came to be at the end of their affair and at the time of her abortion. This *Amans* has never actually known a love which was mutually *pinguis*, which might produce children and make one *parens*. The only time his love came near to being productive, in II.xiii, it was literally aborted. Perhaps now, however, *pinguis amor* is taking a more positive place in the *Amans'* conception of love.

A reversal in attitude is ever so cautiously begun, then, which is strengthened in the context of his mythological imagery. Mythological motifs are used throughout the corpus, usually with implicit reversal of the superficial intent. The motif here of Danae becomes important in Book III, appearing in III.iv and viii.

In the myth, Danae's father, Acriseus, locked her in a tower to avoid an oracle which said her son would kill him. Jove saw her there and came to her in a shower of gold coins and she conceived Perseus. The myth is superficially intended to encourage the *puella* to play

hard-to-get, to encourage the passion of the *Amans*. In fact it points out that the reward of such resulting affairs is to make one a *parens*. Thus there seems to be a definite development here in the argument of the *Amans*. He seems to be arguing (covertly) for a love which is *pinguis* and (overtly) makes one *parens*. That is not the love of the soldier of passion.

The same myth is alluded to in III.iv.21-2, where the *Amans* again addresses a *vir* about guarding his *puella*. In that poem, however, the *vir* is a married man (III.iv.27) and the *Amans*' argument is the reverse of II.xix, namely that the *vir* should not guard his *puella*. Her chaste *ingenium* must be its own guardian. He backs up that argument with the same contention as II.xix, that closely guarded women will more likely be adulterous. And he uses the same mythological imagery of Danae, once more obliquely emphasising Danae's role as *mater* (22). That poem on one level at least argues explicitly for trust and the marital relationship. In both poems the mythological imagery implicitly supports the nurturing love of marriage, not sex-driven passion.

The allusion to Jove and Io in the next couplet (29-30) is also superficially intended to emphasize how much more desirable is the closely guarded *puella*. But in that myth, as Ovid himself tells it in the *Metamorphoses* (I.583-750), Jove never gets to make love with Io, she is guarded so closely. He must ultimately promise Juno his fidelity to spare Io from her wrath. Also, Juno is most significant in this corpus as she appears in III.xiii--the goddess of marriage and marital love! Consequently, the counter-message of the Io allusion is that the closely

guarded *puella*, though she may be desirable, does not enhance one's love. In fact she causes pain and frustration. Fidelity and marriage, on the other hand, consummate love.

Every piece of advice and evidence the *Amans* gives to the *puella* in this poem is superficially intended to corrupt her in order to make her more exciting! He is being the pimp to a new maiden even as the bawd was to Corinna in I.viii and as he realizes in Book III his poetry has been all along. Further, his examples show his love-affairs to have been failures. Yet the advice, upon closer examination, turns out to support marital love.

The next couplet,

*quod licet et facile est quisquis cupit, arbore frondes  
carpat et e magno flumine potet aquam (31-2),*

is more perplexing for its image from *arbore frondes* than that in *e magno flumine*. Water imagery is frequently and significantly used in Books II and III, e.g., in II.x.12-14, II.xi, xvi.2, III.vi, etc. The motif has stood increasingly for passionate love which is boundless and uncontrollable as the sea. And the *Amans* has come to see himself increasingly as buffeted about on this great flood of passion. But in II.xvi, at Sulmo, the image of controlled water running within its banks began to arise as a counter image of proper love.

The water in this case is great, its magnitude enhanced by the spondees, *ē māgnō flūmine*. But though it is a great water this is no flood, seeming to keep well within its banks. It is controlled, as a healthy love would be. Likewise the trees suggest an image of fertility

and healthy growth. Thus once more the underlying logic reverses what appears on the surface to be a remark disparaging of this couple's unchallenging love. The *Amans* also implies that they are partaking of a controlled and fruitful love. In fact a similar image pattern appears earlier, in II.x.13-14, when the *Amans* briefly disparages his passion:

*quid folia arboribus, quid pleno sidera caelo,  
in freta collectas alta quid addis aquas?*

The *Amans* is in great conflict here, wanting on the surface to argue for the passion of Persona Two, but failing finally to do so.

He returns in the next two couplets to the advice of the bawd that the *puella* should cheat her *vir* (*deludat amantem*--33). Such deceit we have seen the *Amans* suffer in II.v, and in III.iii; a *puella*, perhaps the same one to whom he is speaking here, will deceive him again (*fellit*--III.iii.1). But in the pentameter (34) he draws back from that advice with a familiar refrain, *ei mihi, ne monitis torquear ipse meis!* He feared the same thing in I.iv.46 and came to suffer his fear in II.v. Likewise he expressed such fear in II.xviii.20 and again now. The man has just spent thirty-four lines advising this *puella* as a pimp would a prostitute, and now he wants not to suffer from his advice? That contradicts everything he has said on the superficial level and supports his underlying desire for controlled, nurturing marital love.

In the final couplet of this section of the poem the *Amans* draws on the hunting motif: *quōd sēquūtūr, fūgīō; quōd fūgīt, īpsē sēquōr.* The idea of flight is aurally enhanced in the line by the galloping sound of the dactyls. We saw the same image in II.ix.9-10, where the

*Amans* spoke of the hunter following what flees: *venator sequitur fugientia* (II.ix.9). He did so, however, in the context of begging Cupid to let him cease fleeing and rest from this mad game. He was not allowed any respite, however, and we find him still fleeing and following. Likewise in II.xix he claimed to desire the pursuit, but immediately afterward he expressed the hope that he might not suffer from his own advice.

In this second section of the poem, then, the *Amans* began clearly in the mode of a pimp to corrupt this *puella*. He spoke of love in terms of passionate desire for sexual gratification. But he drew for examples from events which earlier left him a frustrated failure of a lover. And midway in his argument a new conception of love began to creep in, via the imagery, subverting the logic of his arguments; a love more fertile, faithful and controlled than he has ever known or yet understands.

So he turns back in the next part of the poem to address the *vir* once more. Again, under the guise of advice, he reminds us of what he has suffered in preceding poems. He does so, however, in an effort to cause this *vir* to worry about the fidelity of his *puella*. He calls the man *nimum secure* (37). *Securus* may mean either secure or unconcerned. In fact the bawd warned at I.viii.95 that the *Amans* not be allowed to grow *securus*. Perhaps this man is unconcerned, however, because he is secure in his relationship with this woman. It is precisely that sense of security the *Amans* wishes to undermine in the following lines. Ironically, the forthcoming evidence all backfires on the *Amans* as any indication of real infidelity by his *puella*.

He bids the *vir* to inquire: *quis totiens furtim tua limina pulset* (39), seeking, he implies, his *puella*. Has the *Amans* spent any nights with this *puella*? Ought the *vir* to worry? We recall I.vi, where the *Amans* spent the night on Corinna's doorstep--never to get in. There is no precedent to cause this *vir* concern, then. Further, besieged *limina* occurred in the same poem, I.vi, as sexual imagery alluding to female genitals and intercourse. But again, the *Amans* was never successful. And here, too, all we have is implication of success. The *vir* is exhorted to worry, but whether for good reason, we do not know.

The threat of line 41 recalls the *ancilla* and the *tabella* we saw in I.xii--which came back to him denying a meeting. Are tablets thus supposed to imply a threat to this *vir*? We have seen that they were failures. The next line has *ipsa* placed, with symbolic form, in the middle of the empty bed: *vacuo. . . ipsa toro*. We have seen the adjective *vacuus* used in I.xi in the sense of "available." Is the maiden's bed empty or available--waiting for her *vir*? Or, if it is really empty, then neither is the *Amans* in it.

Let that *cura*, he says, gnaw on the *medullae* of the *vir* and give *locum nostris materiamque dolis* (43-4). If one understands that every reference made was to a thwarted attempt by the *Amans* to carry on an affair, it is difficult to imagine how they could pose any real threat, or worry this *vir* too much. Ironically, it was *materia* for his *carmina* the poet sought from the *puella* in I.iii. Indeed she has provided that *materia*--but for grief as well as *carmina* throughout. Who, then, is



the *vir* in this poem and who the *Amans*?

The next couplet drops an explosive bit of information into the poem. This *puella* is an *uxor* (46). This is not just any *puella* and *vir* he has been trying to corrupt, but a husband and wife! He adds that whoever loves *uxorem stulti* can steal *harenas vacuo litore*. An odd image, it is apparently intended to mean that such a love is no contest and not to the *Amans*' liking. But the image is of barrenness. It seems to imply that to love another man's wife is a barren and fruitless enterprise. And in fact at this point in the poem the *Amans* no longer wants the *puella*. But that she will cease to be his is an idle argument since there is never any indication in the poem that she was ever his to begin with. On the contrary we find now that she is married. If she were well-guarded the *Amans* might have some feeble excuse to offer for why they are not lovers. As it is she is not guarded and still, it seems, she is not his lover. She is not his lover because she is married, and that is not a love which lends itself to deceit and infidelity. Nor, I think he implies, is it a relationship he wishes any longer to destroy.

It is significant that he repeats his indictment of the *vir* as *stultus* at precisely that point where it is revealed that this couple is married, for it implies a question we have not yet answered about who in fact is the *stultus* here. The next line, 49, states in a nutshell the sum of his affairs up until now: *multa diuque tuli; speravi saepe futurum*. And these two ideas, of his past suffering and his past hope, juxtaposed in this way against this marital relationship show more vividly than ever the impoverishment of his own affair.

In addition, these two ideas together adumbrate events to come in III.xi. That poem begins *Multi diuque tuli* (III.xi.1) and ends *non ego sum stultus, ut ante fui* (III.xi.32). That poem is the recognition that his *vitium* has overcome his *patientia*--which he implied here at line 9 when he said Corinna knew and played upon his *vitium*. But he is finally able, in III.xi, to cast off once and for all that *vitium*. He determines to suffer no more this sea of passion--to be no longer a *stultus*. Subsequently, then, in III.xii, he recognizes the power of his *carmina* to corrupt and in III.xiii is married. He has by then completely reversed his Persona Two conception of love and adopted marital love in its place. The *stultus* of that later poem clearly recalls Persona Two --and poem II.xix.

Ironically, in II.xix too the *vir* to whom our *Amans* is speaking is no soldier of fortune. He is married. Clearly the *stultus* of II.xix is not the *vir*, though the *Amans* would have us believe it. Rather the *Amans* has wanted all along to deceive us--*ut bene verba daret* (50). He wants us to believe the *vir* is *stultus*. In fact, the *stultus* is the *Amans* himself. And all he has said so far in the poem is deceitful words.

In 51 he says this *vir* suffers things *nulli patienda marito*. This *vir* is a married man, and he does not in fact suffer this deceit and infidelity. It is the *Amans* who has suffered all these things. His whole superficial argument goes up in a cloud of smoke. The *maritus* knows *pinguis amor* which makes one *parens*. He does not fear dogs barking in the night nor men pounding on the door, nor any of the other things mentioned by the *Amans*. Those are for the poor *Amans* to endure.

Thus this third section of the poem, the second address to the *vir*, was begun as an attempt by the *Amans*, drawing on his past experiences, to instill fear and jealousy in the *vir* of infidelity on the part of the *puella*. The counter logic of his examples, however, has reversed his arguments and shown the *Amans* to be no threat at all, but only impotent and a failure at love. Further, it was revealed that this couple is *married* and so represents a conception of love which conflicts with that of the *Amans*. This revelation brings to culmination the inverse logic of his whole argument and renders the *amans stultus*.

This makes way for the last section of the poem, which is an implicit reversal in the *Amans'* argument, beginning at line 52 where he says that, because the love is yielded, *finis amoris erit*. He is impressed by the *amor* of this man and woman as it implicitly compares with his own barren love experience. And in Book III there will be a final end to his passionate loving which has proved so frustrating and destructive. In fact he soon will not be "denied entrance" (*prohibebor adire--53*); there will not be a *vindex* (54) in the night; he will not fear (*nil metuam--55*) and, though he may not sigh his nights through (55), he will not wish another man dead (56).

The *leno* is brought up explicitly in line 57 and applied to the *maritus*. But there is nothing in this poem which would make the *maritus* a pimp. The *Amans* is the pimp throughout, trying to corrupt the *maritus* and the *puella* and failing utterly. He realizes that explicitly in III. xii also:

*me lenone placet, duce me perductus amator,  
ianua per nostros est adaperta manus. (III.xii.11-12).*

It is here, in II.xix, however, that these realizations begin to glimmer.

In line 58 the *Amans* claims the *vitium* of the *vir* has spoiled his *gaudia*. But it was the *Amans* in line 9 who had *vitium*, not the *vir*. And there is no precedent in the poem for the *Amans* to speak with this *puella* of *nostra* joy--the *puella* is never seen as his mistress, never in companionship with him. On the contrary she is married to this *vir*. Further, he says that another *quem tantum iuvet patientia* should be sought (59). Whose *patientia*? What suffering can he mean but all that has been recounted in this poem and which we know to be the suffering of the *Amans*? He has spent the entire poem asking to suffer and now in the last couplet rejects it. It is as though in these last couplets the distinction between the *vir* and the *Amans*, which has grown increasingly fuzzy, has finally and utterly collapsed. I must ask once again, who is the *vir* and who the *Amans*?

In conclusion, this poem is located crucially in the corpus on the brink of a profound shift in the *Amans*' degenerate, deceitful, shallow conception of love. It begins an argument from the perspective of that old conception, but argues for it on the basis of experience whose logic clearly turns his argument on its head and reveals his love for what it is--shallow sexual gratification and a failure at that! The poem implicitly introduces, on the other hand, a new conception of love--a glimmer which we saw beginning in II.xvi, and which comes to culmination with the marriage of the *Amans* in III.xiii. And the poem closes with an implicit reversal on the part of the *Amans*, as he takes up the role of the *vir*.

The *Amans*, whose arguments have at every turn been shown to be internally contradicted, in this last section of the poem has rejected his role as the soldier of fortune and taken up the role of his *rivalis*, more exactly, of his rival-who-is-no-rival. Book III will show his further struggle to overcome his destructive side. Finally in III.xi he will be able to cast off his passion. Finally he will cease to be the *stultus* and the *leno* he once was. Clearly the *stultus* and the *leno* is to be found here, in II.xix, struggling with realizations he does not yet fully understand.