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Free of Memory: The Importance of the Underworld to the Completion of the Archetypal Hero's Quest

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Recommended Citation
Payne, Emily Rachel, "Free of Memory: The Importance of the Underworld to the Completion of the Archetypal Hero's Quest" (2017). *Senior Projects Spring 2017*. 254.
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Bard

Free of Memory:

The Importance of the Underworld to the Completion of the Archetypal Hero's Quest

Senior Project submitted to

The Division of Languages and Literature

of Bard College

by

Emily Payne

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

May 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Lauren Curtis, for her constant support on this project and for encouraging my love of Classics. This project would not have turned out the same without her guidance and support throughout the year and a half writing this project. I would also like to thank Professor Curtis for her encouragement of my Classics career throughout my four years at Bard, and for sparking my love of not only a language, but an entire field of study I had never dreamed of becoming a part of before I came to Bard.

I would also like to show gratitude to my Senior Project Board, Professor James Romm and Professor Robert Cioffi. Their advice and suggestions during my midway board helped to shape what my project has become today, and both have helped to encourage my love of Classics through courses I have taken with them. I would also like to thank both of them and Professor Curtis for helping me improve my translating abilities in Ancient Greek and Latin, two languages that have opened up an entirely new world of study for me over my past four years at Bard, and beyond.

This Senior Project did not happen without its bumps and unexpected delays, and I have many people to thank for helping me to finish this project. I would like to thank the Dean of Students, Bethany Nohlgren, for being a constant source of support and guidance through what have been a tough couple of years. Her constant availability and her attentiveness to my needs and concerns made me feel that even in the toughest moments of my time at Bard, that I was not

alone. A special thank you must also go out to Bard's Executive Committee, for giving me one less thing to worry about as my plans for my academics and my project changed.

I would also like to thank my friends-- Lena, Dani, Chelsea, and Kaity-- for helping to keep me sane during this project, for listening to me rant about Classics, and for their overwhelming support and encouragement.

And finally, I would like to thank my family. Thank you for listening to my complaints, my struggles, my rants about Classics, and for giving me a strong support system to rely on. I am constantly surprised by the amount of support and love you have given me, and it is something that I will always be grateful for.

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"Free of Memory": The importance of the Underworld to the Completion of the Archetypal Hero's Quest

"Free of memory, you may return beneath the curve of the upper world." Aeneid VI. 992-993

"I simply want to be dead.
Weeping, she left me
with many tears and said this:
Oh, how badly things have turned out for us.
Sappho, I swear, against my will I leave you.
And I answer her:
Rejoice, go and
remember me. For you know how we cherished you.
But if not, I want
to remind you
] and beautiful times we had"

Sappho 94, translated by Anne Carson

Sappho 94 showcases a very compressed version of the grieving process. Sappho begins the poem by wishing that she was dead, due to the loss of her companion. Her companion bemoans their situation, and promises Sappho that this wasn't her choice to leave her, to which Sappho urges her to "rejoice, go and remember" her, and how she was cherished by Sappho. Sappho's grief is enough that she wishes that she was dead, but she pulls herself and her companion from their shared grief at her departure by asking her to remember her, and the positives about their times together rather than the sadness surrounding her departure.

Sappho 94 outlines a process of grieving, remembering, and moving on that this project argues is central to the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*. Odysseus and Aeneas are both veterans of the Trojan War, grieving the loss of their wartime companions, whom like Sappho's companion they left against their will, and whose losses they grieved to the point of complete despair. Moving past that despair and their feelings of trauma and grief from the Trojan War is not an easy task, but the language of Sappho 94 calls back upon commands given both to and by Aeneas and Odysseus during their journeys to move forward, when they both must confront their grief over the Trojan War through their interactions with the shades of fallen companions in the Underworld.

This paper will focus on the role of the Underworld in Odysseus' and Aeneas' journeys, and emphasize its importance for both heroes overcoming trauma and undergoing a shift from the mindset of soldiers to that of leaders. The Underworld is a source of memory, and makes not only the past, but the future too, accessible to the heroes. Odysseus' and Aeneas' Underworld journeys are crucial to their quests and narratives moving forward, as they must reorient themselves with regards to who they are beyond their identities during the Trojan War, and step forward with knowledge about their futures that could not be obtained elsewhere. The *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* both focus on memory-- of war, of home, of a kingdom or empire--and memory serves as a hindrance for the heroes as they mourn their losses of fallen companions and family. Like Sappho's companion, they fixate on the grief, and "how badly things have turned out" for them rather than anything else. The Underworld possesses the means by which Odysseus and Aeneas are able to connect with those memories that stall their journeys--their grief, their losses, their uncertainty over the road ahead--by allowing them to communicate with the spirits of the

dead. The Underworld provides them with the ability to release those memories, and move forward with a renewed sense of purpose given to them by the shades they encounter. It is only by confronting their memories that they can accept them, and move forward free of them.

LACK OF FAITH AND TRAUMA: THE HERO THAT CAN'T GO HOME

In his book *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming,* Jonathan Shay discusses the difficulties of homecoming for the veteran. Difficulty faced in homecoming from war, though pressing in today's world, is not a new concept; Shay's research bases itself on ancient examples in order to demonstrate and in some ways explain the feelings and actions of veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD. Shay's book outlines the trials and tribulations of Odysseus' behavior in Homer's *Odyssey* in order to show the psychological complexities of what we would consider a war hero: Shay writes, "today we see our heroes as unmixed blessings, almost as though pure beneficence is part of the definition (Shay 2)." In contrast, Shay's examination of Odysseus throughout the early books of the *Odyssey* shines light on his irregular, often dangerous behavior, his grief for his losses, and his inability to properly fit into the home space.

Shay continues one of the principal difficulties of homecoming is that veterans "may simply *remain* in combat mode, although not necessarily against the original enemy (Shay 20)." Odysseus certainly shows this to be true during his travels, and he slaughters the suitors when he finally returns to Ithaka. War is something that clings to Odysseus and Aeneas both, though in different ways: Odysseus remains a soldier, his actions fixated in combat mode, while Aeneas is struck by the grief of his losses, and loses his ability to function as a proper leader for his men as

temptation and loss sidetrack him from his quest [i.e. remaining in Carthage with Dido, nearly abandoning his quest in Sicily-- both circumstances which required divine or supernatural interference in order to get him on track again]. Each had a purpose at the beginning of the war, and with the war over, their purposes fall short and do not grasp the attention and the determination of their heroes.

Shay discusses in his book that veterans' options are somewhat limited when they return home from war. For those unable to properly reintegrate themselves back into civilian life, suicide is often the result. For Aeneas and Odysseus, the choice between life and suicide never becomes one that they must choose between, but they engage in grieving and behaviors similar to that of many of the veterans Shay discusses. To commit suicide would go against the ancient idea of a heroic code-- it is unthinkable for a hero to kill themselves, and the concept of suicide in ancient texts is condemned and highly stigmatized. However death is still a present thought in each of their minds, and something that, in their own ways, they must engage with in order to decide to continue living rather than merely existing in their states of grief which keep them detached from the rest of civilization. The Underworld is the most appropriate place for this transformation, as it is not only a place of death, but a place of rebirth, where souls are cleansed before they return to the upper world as new people with a fresh start.

WHAT IS A KATABASIS?

"And now he's off on the dark journey from which they say no one returns." Catullus II. 11-12.

Journeys to the Underworld are not voyages that are typically considered ones that the partakers are able to return from. Death is, as the above quotation from Catullus II emphasizes, a

journey from which no one returns. However, there are heroes in a few myths that are able to successfully travel to and from the Underworld. This is a concept that has fascinated writers throughout the centuries, and continued on from Classical literature to resonate in the Western imaginary. From ancient social comedies such as Aristophanes' *Frogs* to later Christian texts like Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, the concept of traveling to the Underworld and making it out alive is one that appears throughout the literary imagination.

The word for this kind of journey is *katabasis* (Ancient Greek "κατάβασις", or "a going below").The reasons for embarking on a *katabasis* vary from myth to myth, but the common theme among the journeys is that they all take the hero to the Underworld, where they accomplish something that is not possible to accomplish in the world of the living. A *katabasis* is not a journey which anyone can accomplish, in fact very few heroes actually manage it. The hero Herakles is successful in his *katabasis* myth, but there are other cases, such as in the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, when only one of the party makes it back alive successfully. Orpheus is forced to leave Eurydice behind in the Underworld in their myth; successful or not, each *katabasis* myth sends the hero into the Underworld alive and brings at least one back alive.

In the *Odyssey*, Circe puts a slightly different spin on the idea of a *katabasis* when she describes Odysseus' men after his *katabasis*. She proclaims, "Unhappy men, who went alive to the house of Hades, so dying twice, when all the rest of mankind die only once (Odyssey XII. 21-22)." Odysseus' symbolic death through his *katabasis* allows him to have a figurative rebirth, and emerge from his katabasis as a renewed man. Aeneas engages in the same sort of death and rebirth, and both men, once free of their traumas and memories, are able to return to their quests as completely new, rejuvenated men.

RAYMOND CLARK AND CATABASIS: VERGIL AND THE WISDOM TRADITION

The foundations of this project are cemented in the analysis given in Raymond Clark's book *Catabasis: Vergil and the Wisdom-Tradition*. Clark examines the concept of a katabasis from the vantage point of the *Aeneid*, tracing the tradition of communicating with the dead back to the Babylonian myth of Gilgamesh, through Homer's *Odyssey*, and other catabatic myths in the ancient tradition. Clark writes that "Virgil, who is known to have devoted a great deal of research to the writing of [the *Aeneid*], and [... who] makes Aeneas appeal to several catabatic heroes as his prototypes, read much of this tradition [of katabasis], though a detailed comparison reveals that Virgil never merely borrows, he always transforms: the elements are traditional but their impact is new (Clark 14)." In other words, a *katabasis* is a pervasive type of myth to appear in many places, but is flexible enough to be used and told in many different ways in order to fit the story or the myth it is in.

Clarke expands to other Ancient Greek myths beyond the *Odyssey*, and the majority of his book focuses on appearances of this theme of *katabasis* into other places where Virgil could have feasibly taken inspiration from them for the creation of the *Aeneid*. While Clarke looks from Virgil back to earlier myths, this paper begins with Homer and examines how Virgil transforms the foundation given to him in the *Odyssey* into something different to suit his purpose.

While Aeneas engages on his *katabasis*, Odysseus engages in a similar but not entirely identical quest to consult with the spirits of the dead. Odysseus himself does not enter the Underworld, but rather engages in a *nekyia*, which Clark claims "is the word given by the

ancients to the Eleventh Book of the Odyssey in which Odysseus narrates [...] the story of his Visit to the Land of the Dead [...] and of the magical rites by which the ghosts of the dead were called up (Clark 37)." A *nekyia* is not a direct descent into the Underworld, as a *katabasis* is, but rather a rite by which ghosts are called upon, in order to communicate with the individual responsible for summoning them for his or her own purpose. Clark puts great distinction on the difference between a *nekyia* and a *katabasis* for his analysis of the Underworld myths, and splits his arguments accordingly when he discusses the *Odyssey*. Odysseus is at the threshold of the Underworld when he communicates with the spirits of the dead, though he does not actually descend. Because of this, this paper treats both the *nekyia* in the *Odyssey* and the *katabasis* of the *Aeneid* as Underworld journeys, since both heroes perform the rites and instructions given in order to communicate with the dead, the difference being that Odysseus calls the spirits to him from his point outside the Underworld's entrance, while Aeneas goes to find them at their source.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW: ODYSSEUS' AND AENEAS' MOTIVATIONS FOR KATABASIS

My approach to this project is to look at the Underworld in relation to the hero's connection to his household and his journey home. Each hero is greeted by family members and former companions during their journey to the Underworld, and must confront their neglected quests through their interactions with these spirits. However, neither hero goes into the Underworld anticipating their transformations, but rather to get advice from more knowledgeable figures they are told to seek out before their Underworld quests truly begin.

Odysseus' Underworld journey is framed by interactions with women, namely with the witch Circe. His sojourn on her island halts his journey in another one of his sexually charged asides, as his dalliances lead him from one pseudo-*oikos* to the next. He remains with Circe on her island until his men demand to return home to Ithaka, and Odysseus as their captain is forced to oblige. Though his grief over the Trojan War is an overhanging presence for Odysseus, it is not the thing which leads to his Underworld journey, but rather his responsibilities at home that spur his quest forward. Women throughout the text offer Odysseus places as their partners and invite him to abandon his quest and remain with them as a lover or husband, but ultimately, Odysseus' journey is one that focuses on homecoming. When he and his men finally agree that their time on Circe's island must be at its end, Circe directs them to undertake their Underworld journey in order to ask the seer Tiresias how to get safely back home to Ithaka.

It is in the Underworld that Odysseus' real voyage ends, and his quest becomes one of homecoming rather than marauding. It is for this reason that his voyage is recounted in such an out-of-order fashion in the first half of the *Odyssey*, in order to make the journey to the Underworld the focal point upon which the course of Odysseus' journey home must shift.

Aeneas enters his *katabasis* immediately after the funeral games for his father, Anchises. The anniversary of his father's demise brings death to the forefront of Aeneas' mind, and the incident of the Trojan women nearly destroying his fleet of ships have him doubting his course. His quest to provide a new home for his people becomes more futile with each step he attempts to take, with his step in Carthage nearly bringing his mission to a complete halt. His role as a leader is one that he had failed to establish, as poor decisions and the desires of others delay and

hinder his progress. His journey to the Underworld is Aeneas' version of reorienting himself, a last-ditch attempt to focus himself back on the course he was meant to be on.

What he finds is more than he anticipated, however, and Aeneas' desire to reconnect with his father for guidance becomes an opportunity not only for him to confront his past from the Trojan War but to gain a connection to family that has been sorely lacking since the demise of his father. Aeneas' journey is not a straightforward one of homecoming as Odysseus' is. He needs to find a new family, a new home, and his *katabasis* is what taps him in to the knowledge that such a future is out there, and that he must find and achieve it before he will ever gain a sense of peace.

LOOKING FORWARD

This project orients around the argument of the Underworld's relation to personal relationships, the household, and gender. The Underworld provides a unique setting which allows the heroes to confront significant connections in their lives in order to highlight the importance of their households and their roles in their respective quests.

The first chapter of this paper will focus primarily on the male relationships of the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* shown in the Underworld, and focus on the aspect of family and how it relates to each of the heroes. The transition from war family to social family is one that is central to Odysseus and Aeneas' journeys to the Underworld, and how they move forward in their quests. The *Odyssey* focuses more on family than the *Aeneid* does, with a more direct link to Odysseus' family in Ithaka, while Aeneas' family is on a larger scale, and encompasses the Roman people as a whole for his family unit. From the war families to the passing on from father

to son, the first chapter looks at these relationships and how they aid the heroes in releasing their traumas and their pasts from the Trojan War.

The second chapter focuses on the female presence in the Underworld, and how women impact the *katabases* of the heroes. It is not just as guides that they help the heroes, but as connections to the household and family that they provide for the heroes. The Underworld is Persephone's realm, and her presence and power is noted by both heroes, emphasizing the overarching femininity that permeates the Underworld journeys. Through their connections to family and sexuality, women in the Underworld shape the gazes of the heroes, and reorient them on their journeys for when they leave to resume their quests.

"*Where the Road Divides*" : Family and *philia* in relation to the Hero's Quest in the Underworld

"This is the place where the road divides in two. To the right it runs below the mighty walls of Death, our path to Elysium, but to the left-hand road torments the wicked, leading down to Tartarus, path to doom." Aeneid VI. 629-32

The familial and social relationships of Odysseus and Aeneas are what lie at the heart of the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid,* and are what give the respective heroes their purpose in their quests. Both men are consumed by the losses they suffered among the men they fought beside in the Trojan War, and as a result are unable to connect themselves properly with the future legacies of their families. The heroes' past and future connections are a crucial part of each hero's quest which must be repaired before they can continue on their journeys. Aeneas and Odysseus have both been wandering outside of established civilization, having lost their sense of purpose and as a result fallen from the timeline of their own narratives. Neither hero, however, can reestablish himself in his narrative on his own, and the Underworld is the only place where they are able to gain access to all that they need in order to resume their quests. The Underworld allows the heroes to communicate with members of their families and with companions from the war who aid them in taking themselves out of the role of soldier lamenting the loss of their brothers-in-arms, and placing themselves back within the narrative of their families and respective legacies. Odysseus needs to be reminded where he is supposed to be--home in Ithaka--before he can return, while Aeneas must be transformed into an entirely new person with the strength and determination to shoulder the legacy of being the founder of Rome.

Family is something that formed the foundation of the lives of Greek and Roman men. It forms their identity, and both Odysseus and Aeneas are defined by their families and people. Odysseus is the "son of Laertes (X. 488)" before he is "resourceful Odysseus (X. 488);" his identity that he embodied during the Trojan War comes second to his identity as a son. That order was inverted by necessity; fighting in the war took precedence over being part of his family unit, and for a time resourceful Odysseus was his main identity. But with the war over, it is time for Odysseus to return to Ithaka and reconnect with his identity as the son of Laertes and father of Telemachus. Aeneas' connection to family is much broader, as he is not returning to his neglected family, but stepping into a new family, and new identity. Aeneas begins his trip to the Underworld as "Trojan Aeneas (VI. 64)," and the son of Anchises. He is a Trojan prince without Troy, and his identity as a Trojan is gone along with his city. His father Anchises is the one who gives him his new family, and his Roman identity, culminating in the command "Roman, remember (VI. 981)" before he sends Aeneas off on his quest once again. He is no longer Aeneas, son of Anchises, but *pater* Aeneas, connected to a new family and legacy which he can found and begin.

The *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey* both make different use of the Underworld in order to put the heroes in touch with both past and future generations to reconnect them with their families and allow them to move past the aspects of their past which they need to release in order to continue with their quests. Generations, both past and future, as well as familial connections, are what tie the heroes' stories from beginning to end. Wartime families that were enough to sustain the heroes during their time spent fighting in the Trojan War cannot support the heroes on their

quests. Odysseus, who has been lost and cut off from civilization and traditional family structures, must reconnect with his goal of returning home and to his family before he can make the journey back to Ithaka.

Virgil takes what he saw in the *Odyssey* and expands it into a myth defining the establishment of a people, putting more emphasis on prophecy while reducing the number of shades the hero must encounter in order to connect Aeneas' quest more closely with the future of his family and the legacy of which Aeneas is the father. Aeneas must first confront the physical and emotional trauma and horrors of the war through Deiphobus, and like Odysseus he must be willing to release his connections to his past and the wounds it left, as well as those he left behind. Once he has done so, his father Anchises establishes his emotional and familial connection to the task which he lays out before him, putting Aeneas in the cycle of heroes and allowing Aeneas to take on these future generations of Romans as his responsibility; motivated by the promise of a legacy passed down to him from his father, Aeneas is able to complete his journey and emerge from the Underworld as a completely new man, no longer part of a military structure but the leader of a new people.

PART ONE: THE ODYSSEY

In his journey to the Underworld, Odysseus encounters the spirits of various people from his past, who are able to reconnect him with his family unit and shape his understanding of past and current events so that he may move forward in his journey. Tiresias, the seer, provides him with an outline of his quest, explains the consequences of tricking and blinding the cyclops Polyphemos, and reasserts Odysseus in the course of his own narrative through this recap and his

later predictions and prophecies. Achilles, an old companion of Odysseus', is representative of Odysseus' wartime family--his brothers-in-arms during the Trojan War-- and allows Odysseus to confront and release the traumas and losses of the war, as well as reminds him that he has a family of his own that he needs to return to. Antikleia, his mother, is able to reconnect him emotionally to his household, as well as give him a glimpse at the state of what things are like back in Ithaka, stressing the importance of his return and reminding him that his place has been vacant for far too long. This information is able to focus Odysseus once again on the emotional and familial ties which he has neglected and forgotten in his ongoing quest, and with that newly re-established bond in place, he is able to focus on returning to Ithaka with his full power. Agamemnon's narrative provides Odysseus with valuable advice which he will use in the future in order to assure reintegrates himself at home in a manner that will not lead, as it did with Agamemnon, to tragedy. Each spirit provides Odysseus with a different part of his homecoming, and a different tool with which he is able to proceed with his journey. He is given a fresh direction to avert his journey from its current path of mourning for his war family, as well as an opportunity to confront his trauma in the Trojan War, which he must release before he can reintegrate into his social family. Once reminded of his obligation to his household by the spirit of his mother, the return to Ithaka becomes the only option for Odysseus, and the goal which he is able to strive for freely once he has accomplished the rest.

I. PRESENTATION OF AN ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVE

Tiresias is the first shade with whom Odysseus communicates. It is essential for Odysseus to meet with him first, since Tiresias establishes the quest that Odysseus must

complete, laying out the groundwork for him to be able to proceed on his mission. Odysseus has forgotten that he can be anything but a soldier during the war; he is too set in the mind of a warrior, and with no war he is left with nothing but his own grief. Odysseus' journeys bring him from violence to violence; there is no respite for him, no true peace. His time with Calypso, Circe, and Nausicaa are the closest he gets to a return to normal, and each break with one of these women only serves to remind him of what and whom he's left behind in Ithaka. The blinding of Polyphemus, the fights against Scylla and Charybdis, the interactions with the Lotus Eaters and the Laistrygones, all deny Odysseus of peace, and force him to cling to his identity as a soldier as he requires his abilities to fight or think his way out of everything he faces. Resourceful Odysseus is the identity he must take first over his identity as the son of Laertes--Polyphemus names Odysseus the "sacker of cities (IX. 530)" before he calls him "son of Laertes, who makes his home in Ithaka (IX. 530)." Even Odysseus names himself as the sacker of cities first, before he identifies with his family; his achievements in war take first place over his family in title as well as practice.The first step he needs to take is to be reminded that returning to his family unit is possible, and with that knowledge and assurance in mind, he is able to let go of his role of soldier in the hopes of being able to return home a husband and father. Tiresias gives Odysseus the possibility of an alternative narrative to his story; until now it has been consumed by his own grief, still a soldier's narrative, but Tiresias presents him with a future where he could conceivably return to his family once again.

Tiresias' knowledge is limited to the events that led Odysseus to where he is now and his predictions about what Odysseus has yet to face in his quest. Tiresias knows the purpose for Odysseus' quest is "a sweet homecoming (Lattimore XI. 100)" to his kingdom and his family,

but "because [Odysseus] blinded his dear son, [Poseidon] hates [him] (XI. 103)," making his homecoming more difficult than Odysseus had planned for or anticipated. Tiresias is able to have this knowledge only after he drinks from the pool of blood. The significance of the blood in Tiresias' appearance is its power to give him the ability to communicate past, present, and future to Odysseus in order to establish a fresh narrative for the hero's journey. Tiresias requires the blood to communicate his prophecies about the outside world effectively and accurately. The blood does not give him the ability to speak, necessarily-- as is seen later on, Achilles is able to speak without drinking the blood from the sacrifice-- but the blood gives him the ability to be aware of the world outside the realm of the Underworld. Without drinking, he would not be able to give his prophecies to Odysseus.

Tiresias' main significance when it comes to Odysseus' return to his quest is in his prophecies, which he gives Odysseus in order to give him hope for a forward-moving narrative. His presentation of his prophecies is certain, and he gives them as instructions rather than predictions of what should happen. His speech uses assertive language in the directions, frequently using "you must (XI. 121; 129)" when telling Odysseus what he needs to do. He is "easily" able to "tell [Odysseus] and put it in [his] understanding (XI. 146)" what is going to happen, and his prophecies "must be as the gods spun it (XI. 139)," and are not to be doubted or questioned. Odysseus has been traveling with so much doubt that he would be able to return to his own narrative, that Tiresias' clear instructions and factual statements regarding a narrative that could conceivably have Odysseus returned safely home is something that Odysseus must cling to if he wants to return home. Tiresias tells him that "if [he keeps his] mind on homecoming, [... he] might all make your way to Ithaka (XI. 110-111)." Even when Tiresias tells

him of his death, and that it "will come to [him] from the sea, in some altogether unwarlike way (XI. 134-135)," a way in which a hero such as Odysseus should balk at the mere thought of, Odysseus does not question it. He in fact embraces the new course Tiresias has laid out for him, since it will free him from this state of limbo he has been caught in for years.

Tiresias' statements are not entirely clear, though they do allow Odysseus to proceed with a much clearer idea of what will happen to him in the future. Tiresias' instructions are the outline of events which can or could happen in the future, should Odysseus heed his warnings; they are not the full scope of his journey which he must take with a detailed summary of all he must do, but an abridged version of what could happen. Tiresias gives the opportunity for another conclusion to Odysseus' quest, rather than a direct promise of success. Now imbued with purpose and able to see a potential future more clearly, Odysseus' quest still lacks crucial details to make it possible. He requires the other spirits in order to proceed, and surrender his narrative of a warrior without a war for a story of homecoming.

II. THE RELEASE OF ODYSSEUS' WAR-FAMILY

Communicating with Tiresias allows Odysseus to see that another future is possible, but he is unable to move forward with that future until he releases his identity as a soldier. Odysseus' family for all of the time he was fighting and for the years it takes him to return home to Ithaka was not Penelope and Telemachus; it was his band of brothers, his fellow soldiers and companions who served alongside him in the war. Achilles was a companion to Odysseus during the war, and valued greatly by Odysseus as shown in his confirmation of Achilles as the "far greatest of the Achaiains (XI. 478)" and his praises of Achilles' many deeds during the war.

Gregory Nagy in his book *The Best of the Achaeans* discusses how Achilles is "the most *phílos* to his comrades-in-arms (Nagy 107)." He is admired and respected greatly by his fellow Greeks for his skills in battle, and it makes sense that Odysseus meets with him rather than another Greek soldier. He was, as described by Agamemnon in book XXIV, "like the immortal, who died in Troy, far away from Argos, and around you others were killed, Trojans and the best men among the Achaians, as they fought over you (XXIV. 36-39)." Achilles' body was fought over "for the whole day long, nor would [the Greeks and Trojans] ever have stopped fighting, if Zeus had not stopped [them] with a whirlstorm (XXIV. 41-42)," when the Greeks were finally able to bring him back to their ships. Though not ever shown in the *Iliad*, Achilles' death strikes a chord among the Greeks, and with Odysseus especially, that forms a bond of grief between them-- Achilles was the best among them, and his death is the one that brings the Greeks the most grief out of all of their fallen comrades. Odysseus is tied especially close to Achilles since he won Achilles' armor in a competition after Achilles' death, and so there is the connection of the armor between the two of them as well, as it was passed from one man to the other.

But the significance of Achilles' appearance is not only in this connection, but also in what Achilles represents to Odysseus. He is a physical manifestation of Odysseus' traumas faced in the Trojan War, and afterwards in his journey home. Achilles is "full of lamentation (XI. 492)" over the war and his fallen comrades, and is barely able to keep himself together in his talks with Odysseus. He is a shadow of his former self, consumed by grief and trauma, unable to let go of the horrors he has witnessed and partaken in. He is much like Odysseus in the past several years of his journey-- he is lost, without perception of time, place, and purpose, too focused on his own grief and suffering to acknowledge anything else. In his book *Achilles in*

Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character, Jonathan Shay discusses how understanding ancient models of military bonds can help modern soldiers understand and cope with the trauma of war and losing comrades-in-arms in combat situations. Shay uses ancient examples to show modern trauma, and use the ancient examples as models of behavior to discuss his research. Shay focuses on modern soldiers and their trauma through the lense of ancient behavior, but these ideas can be flipped just as easily, and rather be used to give a name to what Greek soldiers suffer from in ancient literature such as the *Odyssey*. Shay claims that for many soldiers, "grief and guilt often seem to merge in the wake of a close friend's death in battle (Shay 73)." Odysseus' earlier lamentations over what he lost in Troy are given a focal point to fix on; Achilles' death encompasses the deaths of all of Odysseus' companions in the war, as he personifies that trauma.

The grief that Odysseus is feeling and the guilt over those he left behind can be focused on the figure of Achilles, in order to help Odysseus move on from his trauma. Shay continues that "both [grief and guilt] slam the door on a happy homecoming for the survivor. Grief [...] can lead men to give up all desire to return home alive (Shay 73)." Here Shay is discussing suicidal tendencies of some soldiers who are unable to imagine returning back to normal civilian life, but once again, the modern and ancient models can coincide. Odysseus struggles with his own grief in his interaction with Achilles, and commands him to "not grieve, even in death (XI. 486)," advice which he himself must take in order to move forward in his quest. He cannot be the grieving wanderer any longer; he must return home to Ithaka and rejoin society and his family unit. Odysseus' attempts to remind Achilles of his former glory are almost a reminder to himself

to remember what it was he was fighting for, and why he must return. His attempts, however, fall upon deaf ears with Achilles in his emotionally and mentally unstable state.

The one thing that Achilles can focus on is his son, Neoptolemus, and he asks Odysseus for any sort of information regarding him. He asks Odysseus to "tell [him] anything [he has] heard of [his] proud son (XI. 492)" and of his homeland. Odysseus is able to tell him only a little of Neoptolemus, but it is enough, and Achilles leaves satisfied. This reverse exchange of knowledge is somewhat counterintuitive for Odysseus' journey; it does not advance his own knowledge in any way, merely comforts the grieving shade of his fallen companion. But Achilles' son is his solace in his suffering, and the only thing that can pull him out of his grief; he leaves "happy for what [Odysseus] had said of his son, and how he was famous (XI. 540)." Achilles is the symbol of Odysseus' grief and trauma from the war, a mirror image of Odysseus still trapped in the mindset of a soldier, and yet the one thing that pulls him from his suffering is his son, and the connection to that family bond. Instead of asking himself why he was the survivor, why it was Achilles who died and not him, instead of being caught in this loop of suffering, Odysseus is given a reason to continue living--Achilles finds comfort in the life of his son, and Odysseus is able to do the same for himself. The connection to his family is exactly what Odysseus needs in order to pull himself from his own grief. By releasing the pain that the war brought him, and by getting resolution with his brother-in-arms Achilles after saving him from his own lamentations with the news on Neoptolemus, Odysseus can then reorient himself into the role of father and husband. He must return to this mindset and position as the patriarch of his household rather than a brother in a band of soldiers. After learning it is possible from Tiresias and releasing his identity as part of the family of warriors that made up his family during

the war with Achilles, Odysseus is free to make that next step towards reconnecting with his family unit and returning to Ithaka.

III. HOUSEHOLD TIES AND THE OBLIGATION OF THE FAMILY

Odysseus' reconnection with his family is not just a simple relinquishing of his brothers-in-arms, however. He must begin to move forward with rekindling his ties with his family back in Ithaka, and to do so, he must connect himself to his source, and the center of his family. Traditionally the center of the family is the father, but Odysseus is returning to his household, to the domestic sphere, and so it is fitting that the shade he encounters to accomplish this is his mother, Antikleia. Antikleia's knowledge of life outside the Underworld is centered around the household, which she was once in charge of and responsible for. She is aware of many happenings in Ithaka, even though she had been dead for some time, and she is able to impart this knowledge to Odysseus in order to give him an idea of what has been happening while he has been away, and to stress the importance of his return. Odysseus seems to know that Antikleia will have this information, having asked her to "tell [him] of [his] father, and son [...and to] tell [him] about the wife [he] married (XI. 174-177)" when she approaches him and drinks the blood. Antikleia is able to provide all of this information easily for Odysseus, with information up to the present, even though she had perished before then.

Perhaps the most interesting thing that Odysseus asks of her, however, is about Penelope, asking "what she wants, what she is thinking (XI. 177)." This inquiry into the private thoughts of his wife suggest a sort of otherworldly quality to them, as Antikleia should have no real idea of what it is Penelope wants or thinks, other than what Penelope herself told her while Antikleia

was alive. This sort of knowledge that Odysseus seeks and expects implies a level of insight about the happenings outside the Underworld that Antikleia as a shade would seemingly have access to, which Odysseus is unable to access in his current predicament. If he was in Ithaka alongside Penelope, where he should be, he would have access to this sort of information through his own talks and communication with her, but time and distance have prevented him from accessing such knowledge, and so he must rely on the spirit of his mother to gain it, and it is in seeing her that this desire to know the thoughts of his wife is prompted.

Antikleia makes a point of emphasizing Odysseus' prolonged absence during her interaction with her son, making it very clear to Odysseus that he has been gone from the family for too long and encouraging his hasty return home. She tells Odysseus about when "the summer comes and the blossoming time of harvest (XI. 192)" and describes the poor living conditions of Odysseus' ailing father in these conditions as he sleeps "in the dirt next to the fire (XI. 191)," "on the ground, on fallen leaves in piles along the rising ground of his orchard (XI. 194-195)" as he waits for Odysseus' return. His household is falling apart in his absence, and Antikleia makes sure that he is aware of the state that it is in because of his absence. His father, a figure that should be respected in his household, is living in a hovel, sleeping by the fireplace and left in neglect like the rest of the household in Odysseus' absence.

Odysseus also demands to know the thoughts of his wife, Penelope, and while Antikleia complies to the best of her abilities to give him the information he desires, she also points out through her descriptions of the "wretched nights and days (XI. 183)" that Odysseus' absence is heavily marked in Ithaka. Life has not just stopped in Ithaka while he has been away, and Antikleia's frequent reiterations of the passing of time help to remind Odysseus that he is not

returning to the same household which he left. He is an absent lord of the house, not a son returning to his parents, wife, and son, but a father and lord returning from war. Antikleia provides a grim warning for Odysseus regarding his father, telling him that she herself passed from "longing for [Odysseus] (XI. 202)" to return from the war, and now Odysseus' father, sick and wasting away in the countryside, also "longs for [Odysseus'] homecoming (XI. 196)." Like the lives of his parents, Odysseus' family is slowly crumbling as his absence stretches out longer and longer, and like life, it cannot stretch out indefinitely. Antikleia attributes her death to her longing for Odysseus' return, and the reiteration of this language of longing for Odysseus' homecoming in the discussion of Odysseus' father serves as an indirect warning to Odysseus that the fate of one parent could easily become the fate of the other, and of his family as well, if his journey is delayed any longer.

IV. THE PROPER RETURN TO THE FAMILY UNIT

With this information from Antikleia and Tiresias in hand, and the aid of the interaction with Achilles, Odysseus' journey home seems of paramount importance, and one in which time cannot wait for him to resume. But Odysseus cannot just rush back to Ithaka and make a loud, triumphant return; his house is filled with suitors, all vying for the attention and hand of Penelope. Time has passed, as Antikleia emphasized, and he is not returning to the same home unit that he left. He has little idea of what sort of environment he is returning to, or even if Penelope will welcome him back and acknowledge him as the rightful lord of the house once again. Odysseus puts very little actual thought into this until he meets Agamemnon, who serves as the final piece of the puzzle, and uses his own tragic death to give Odysseus clear instructions

for what Odysseus should do upon his homecoming. Agamemnon, much like Achilles, is a shadow of the man Odysseus knew in life, with "no force there any longer, nor any juice left now in his flexible limbs, as there had been in time past (XI. 393-394)." Agamemnon's descent into his now grieving and weak self was brought upon by his death, and the treachery that surrounded it. After returning home victorious from the Trojan War, he was murdered soon after his return by his wife, Clytemnestra, who allied herself with his cousin Aegisthus during Agamemnon's absence from Mycene. His story gives Odysseus one possibility of what his homecoming could look like, and warns Odysseus about the dangers he faces trying to integrate himself into his family unit once again. Agamemnon claims that Odysseus "will never be murdered by [his] wife (XI. 444)," but nevertheless urges caution with his homecoming, telling him that "when [he] bring[s his] ship in to [his] own dear country, do it secretly, not in the open (XI. 455-456)." Odysseus will follow this advice when he returns to Ithaka, and is lucky to have done so, otherwise risking being slaughtered by his wife's many suitors. Agamemnon's own misfortunes echo what will come with Penelope's suitors when Odysseus returns, them having been "killed [...] without mercy [...] for a wedding, or a festival, or a communal dinner (XI. 412-415)." There is room for Odysseus in his family unit in Ithaka, but only once the suitors are removed; he is unable to resume his position and his role as patriarch, king, and husband while they remain, a fact which Agamemnon only discovers in death, after being killed by his own wife and her lover.

Odysseus, now armed with the information and guidance he gained from the shades he encountered, is now able to resume his journey home to Ithaka. The shade of his mother aids him in reestablishing his emotional and familial ties back home, while his former companions

Agamemnon and Achilles allow him to confront and accept the traumas of the Trojan War so that he can move on with his quest. Tiresias grants him the outline for his journey, the foundation upon which these other factors may build, and with his advice and the support of the others, Odysseus is able to reconnect himself to his narrative and his family so that he can continue his journey home. But Odysseus' journey is not one that ends with his return to Ithaka; in fact, Odysseus is back in Ithaka only halfway through the epic. His true homecoming is only halfway over when he reaches Ithaka; the rest of the epic is spent with Odysseus finding and reclaiming his place as the head of his household. Taking back his identity as a member of the family is his final battle before he surrenders his identity as a soldier for the role of husband and father.

PART TWO: THE AENEID

Virgil is not writing a story of homecoming, but transforming it into a symbol of an empire's history. Aeneas is not just important to his own narrative, he is important to the whole founding of Rome, and so his journey to the Underworld must serve a greater and higher purpose than Odysseus' journey home. The transition is not just about the private life of Aeneas, it is about establishing the foundation upon which later generations--generations which he sees in the Underworld when he encounters Anchises-- will build Rome into something greater than he could have possibly envisioned or dreamed on his own. The *Aeneid* is a magnified version of the *Odyssey*; it takes a story of homecoming and makes it into a story of the founding of a people. The *Odyssey* focuses on Odysseus accepting his wartime trauma and returning to his neglected home in Ithaka. Aeneas has no home to return to, no neglected kingdom that he can reclaim; his quest is larger than him, than Troy, than his immediate family. His lack of a place to belong

leads him to found an empire; his story is bigger. But when it comes to the Underworld, Virgil magnifies Aeneas' experience to reflect his journey by reducing the number of spirits which his hero communicates with. Odysseus required four different spirits in order to accomplish the same task, but Virgil concentrates this process and these pieces of moving forward in the figure of Anchises, who gives Aeneas the emotional motivation and guidelines to accomplish the future he lays out for him. Deiphobus acts as the symbol of the past through which Aeneas is able to release his grief and trauma from the war with, while Anchises is both past and future to Aeneas, and uses his influence on Aeneas to pass the figurative torch of Rome's history on from father to son. Once Aeneas relinquishes the traumas of his past, he is able to transform into the person he needs to become in order to continue with his quest and as a result found Rome.

I. RELEASE OF THE TROJAN FAMILY AND PAST

There is a particular irony used by Virgil in the creation of the character of Deiphobus as the focus of Aeneas' wartime grief. Deiphobus calls to mind figures such as Agamemnon and Achilles to readers familiar with the *Odyssey*; Trojan victims are modeled off of their Greek conquerors, and their defeat is even more sound because of it-- not even their fallen heroes are their own. The Trojan identity is one that ends with the fall of Troy, and there is nothing left for Aeneas to cling to when he comes to the Underworld in search of his Trojan roots. Deiphobus is the subject that Aeneas focuses his grief on, but he is also a symbol of how completely the Greeks destroyed the Trojans. The primary war hero shown to Aeneas, the one that is meant to embody his grief and the suffering he and his people faced at the hands of the Greeks, embodies the characteristics and the roles that two of the Greeks' most important heroes showed in the

Odyssey. Deiphobus is the Roman version of Agamemnon, of Achilles; his identity is one that layers Trojan loss over Greek suffering, which forms the foundation of Deiphobus' characterization.

Aeneas is immediately reminded of war even before he meets Deiphobus in the Underworld as he and the Sibyl travel through "throngs of the great war heroes (VI. 557)." Aeneas' confrontation with his trauma is already very physical as he moves among those "mourned in the world above and fallen dead in battle (VI. 558)," and he is literally surrounded by the ghosts of the dead as they crowd around him, surrounding him from every angle as he walks through the fields where they are forced to dwell. Aeneas' grief is much more all-consuming in his narrative than Odysseus' was in the *Odyssey*; he laments and weeps frequently and openly in the previous five books, and it makes sense for his trauma and grief from the war to be something that truly surrounds and overwhelms him when he enters the fields of the dead. Aeneas' interaction with Deiphobus is hardly a respite from the barrage of war memories, but Deiphobus is an appropriate figure for Aeneas to interact with to release his grief and guilt. The two are not only brothers-in-arms from the Trojan War, but are also second cousins[1], and share a connection of family as well as their military bond, which was all that bonded Odysseus to Achilles as the figure representing his trauma. Aeneas is reminded that it was not only his war family that he lost, but his true family as well; his son is all he has left after the death of his father Anchises, and distancing himself from his people--the Trojans--is something that he must do as well as accepting and releasing his guilt and grief surrounding the war.

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[1] Deiphobus is a son of Priam, while Anchises (Aeneas' father) and Priam are first cousins.

The trauma of the Trojans was greater than that of the Greeks in the Trojan War, as it was their city which was attacked and taken over, and their people who were either killed, enslaved, or forced into exile in the hopes of finding a new home, and so their suffering and trauma must be shown in a more obvious, horrific light to match this. The sight of Deiphobus is a disturbing and vivid one, and he appears to Aeneas "mutilated, his whole body, his face hacked to pieces [...] his face and both his hands, and his ears ripped from his ravaged head, his nostrils slashed (VI. 574-576)" so that he is barely recognizable to Aeneas. The trauma Deiphobus faced in the world of the living was so great, and is still so fresh in Aeneas' mind, that Deiphobus is unable to even be whole again in the Underworld. He is completely ravaged, completely torn apart, by the happenings in Troy, that he maintains his wounds even in the Underworld. There is no peace for Deiphobus in death either, and he never truly gets to achieve it. The Trojans were the defeated people of the Trojan War; it is not enough for Deiphobus to be lost and miserable in his own anguish over death, a shade of his former self as Achilles and Agamemnon were, he must be physically marked by all he endured. He is the suffering of Aeneas and his people, as well as a symbol of Aeneas' own grief and guilt.

Deiphobus and his house also act as a smaller version of Aeneas' Trojan household, and Deiphobus recounting his death brings Aeneas back to the fall of the city itself, allowing him to accept it and eventually release his guilt and grief. Aeneas passed by "the grand house of Deiphobus stormed by fire, crashing in ruins (II. 390-391)" as he ran to find his father--interestingly enough, setting up a pattern which will be mirrored in Book VI as he continues his journey in the Underworld by consulting his father Anchises after he and Deiphobus reunite--and passed through the rest of the city falling to the attack of the Greeks. Deiphobus' brief marriage

to Helen of Sparta, which he recounts in his story, is what led to his downfall, as well as the downfall of the city-- Deiphobus colorfully tells Aeneas that Aeneas is not to blame, but rather his "own fate and the deadly crimes of that Spartan whore (VI. 595)" are what "have plunged [him] in this hell (VI. 596)." Helen admitted the Greeks into the city, and then into Diephobus' house, where he is murdered when Helen "calls Menelaus in and flings the doors wide open [...and] they burst into the bedroom, Ulysses, the rouser of outrage right beside them, Aeolus' crafty heir (VI.611-616)." The breach of Troy and of Deiphobus' house is one that is aided by Helen both times, and the violence inflicted on Deiphobus becomes that of the Trojan people. He is, after all, of the royal household of Troy, and his position as one of Priam's sons as well as his marriage to Helen-- while short-lived-- make him an ideal choice for the symbol of the Trojan household. Deiphobus' house is the Trojan house, and Deiphobus' suffering is Trojan suffering-- Aeneas is able to concentrate his grief on Deiphobus, and use Deiphobus' forgiveness for leaving as a blanket forgiveness for his decisions made in Troy.

Jonathan Shay's work is once again relevant in his book *Achilles in Vietnam*, in which he continues to discuss the effects a comrade's death can have on a soldier, leading the soldier to have suicidal thoughts or tendencies. The connection between modern and ancient examples is an easy one to draw with Shay's argument, and he claims that "self-blame seems almost universal after the death of a special comrade, regardless of the presence or absence of a 'real' basis for it (Shay 73)." The idea of survivor's guilt is one that haunts many soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress, and is an idea which prevails strongly throughout the *Aeneid*. Aeneas blames himself for Deiphobus' lack of peace because he "could not find [Deiphobus' body], could not bury [his] bones in native soil (VI. 589-590)" before he had to flee Troy. It is a guilt

which Aeneas carries with him just as Deiphobus carries the physical reminders of his death and defeat, and a blame which Aeneas places directly on his own shoulders, even though he did all that he could before he fled. In order to begin moving on, Aeneas must accept that he "left nothing undone. All that's owed Deiphobus and his shadow [he has] paid in full (VI. 592-593);" in other words, he must accept that there was nothing more he could have done for Deiphobus or their people. Aeneas cannot continue on his quest until he gives up this emotional, mental, and familial tether to Troy and accept that the past is the past, that he must let Troy go in order to move forward. Deiphobus commands Aeneas to "go forth and enjoy a better fate (VI. 534-535)" than he has, and Aeneas carries that message with him as he proceeds with his quest.

Raymond Clark, in his book *Catabasis: Vergil and the Wisdom Tradition*, expresses the importance of Deiphobus' appearance to Aeneas. He arrives after the appearances of Palinurus--one of Aeneas' fallen comrades--and Dido--Aeneas' old flame from earlier in the epic--and explains its role in how it is a crucial part of separating Aeneas' from his past in a narrative structure as well as through his individual interactions. He writes:

> "[Aeneas] encounters his past represented by the three ghosts of Palinurus, Dido, and Deiphobus in a definite order-- 'the inverse order to that in which they have formerly met us in the narrative.' This observation should be carried still further, for in fact Aeneas' encounters in the catabasis, both past and future, seem to be arranged on a grand chiastic plan. Such an elaborate arrangement suggests that the various stages of Aeneas' journey through the kingdom of darkness are represented as having a definite purpose (Clark 162)."

Clark goes on to describe how Palinurus, Dido, and Deiphobus each represent a gradual distancing from Aeneas in a subtle progression from his most recent past to Troy itself through Deiphobus. Deiphobus "takes Aeneas back to the cause of his wanderings (Clark 165)" by

reminding him of Troy and the struggles and horrors that he faced there, and through his acceptance of this, he is able to distance himself from these horrors as the narrative has done through the ordering of the individuals Aeneas encounters.

Deiphobus represents Troy and the disasters and men lost there, all the anguish and suffering which caused Aeneas to lose his way during his journey. But Aeneas is brought even further; Clark continues that "here in the meeting with Anchises, Aeneas [...] journeyed backwards from the end of his wanderings to the very source of his being (Clark 166)." Now, having accepted and distanced himself from his past and from the horrors of Troy through Deiphobus, and traveled backwards through his epic quest to reacquaint himself with his heroic journey, he must reconnect with the source of not only his hope to finish his quest and his reasons for setting out, but the source of his life itself-- his father. And as it just so happens, it is in the world of the dead alone where he can accomplish this. Deiphobus' death brings that chapter of Aeneas' quest to its end. Now, Anchises, the original life-giver for Aeneas, must once again fill his son with life before he can continue his quest.

II. RECONNECTION TO THE FATHER AND INTRODUCTION OF A NEW FAMILY

Free of his ties to his Trojan roots, Aeneas must focus on connecting himself back to his family, and the future of his quest. He is taking the first steps away from being a Trojan to become a Roman. This is the real moment where the eventual founding of Rome becomes tangible for Aeneas, when he is presented with the future of his new people and able to face it and take ownership of it through his father, Anchises. Anchises is the source of Aeneas' life, his heritage, but is also his role model, and the person that Aeneas frequently turned to for guidance,

as did his men. Anchises, while not always the best leader for the Trojans, was the figure that their Trojan crew looked up to-- "Anchises urges, and all are overjoyed to follow his command (II. 229-230)." Anchises' death is one that strikes especially hard with Aeneas, beyond the grief of a son for his father. He laments, "'my father I rescued once, but all for nothing (V. 999),'" as Anchises never got to see what Aeneas would one day accomplish, and never got to witness the rise of Rome that Aeneas would one day bring. Anchises provides Aeneas with the emotional connection to family that he otherwise had to sever in his interaction with Deiphobus, and presents him with a new future family to identify with and connect himself to. Aeneas can no longer be Trojan, he must be Roman, and let that idea of finding a new Troy go. If that was what he was looking for, he could have settled with Helenus in Book III, or with Dido in Carthage. He cannot hold onto his past, as he learned with Deiphobus, but must look elsewhere for a future. Anchises is the one to provide him with this future. Aeneas finds him "counting over his own people, all his cherished heirs (VI. 789)," quite literally surrounded by generations of future descendents "on their way to the world of light above (VI. 788)." Odysseus' focus in the *Odyssey* was on creating a future that looks like his past in Ithaka, on returning to the family which he had left behind and resuming his role as king, husband, and father there, but Aeneas' goal is greater, his destiny larger. It is not his place at home that he needs to be reminded of, or Troy and identity as a Trojan. It is the future of his people.

The *Aeneid* takes its hero beyond the concept of homecoming, and Virgil's choice of Aeneas meeting Anchises was a carefully chosen one. Odysseus' goal was to return home to his family unit, back to his household, and so speaking with Antikleia, his mother and the head of that household, made sense. Aeneas is trying to do something bigger, he is trying to found a

people. It is a legacy that he will pass onto his son Silvius, but first it must be passed to him. Anchises' part is crucial in bringing out the patrilineal connection, and bringing out the generational transfer of power and the strengthening of the family legacy. Aeneas is returned to Anchises, the source of his life, his father, and figuratively reborn as a Roman, with the Roman legacy and family at his back, passed from son to son and Roman to Roman and creating a future not just for one man, but for a people.

III. THE PARADE OF HEROES

But Aeneas must first be able to identify with his future people. He cannot connect to an abstract concept of Rome; that is what he has been trying to do so far, and it has not helped him move forward. He requires a group, a family, a legacy that he can see, that he can understand and feel like he is a part of. The parade of future heroes is an important part of this connection; it shows him "the glory that will follow the sons of Troy through time, [...] children born of Italian stock who wait for life (VI. 875-876)" in order to give Aeneas an idea of what will come if he completes his quest. The purpose of the Underworld narrative in Aeneas' epic is not about how he will get there, but rather on the fact that the completion of his quest is imperative. Anchises emphasizes the importance and vitality of him completing the quest, and shows him that he has a place among the heroes' parade as the founder of the civilization in which all of these heroes will earn their fame and reputations.

The Parade of Heroes serves to place Aeneas in the timeline of heroes of Rome, establishing his place in its history as the first of its founders and leaders, as well as giving him an idea of the weight his quest has on the future of not only his people, but on the future

generations and the empire which is to be built after him. The spirits Anchises shows Aeneas are "bright souls, future heirs of [Aeneas'] name and [his] renown (VI. 877)," and can only become part of this lineage if Aeneas succeeds in his quest. Putting his journey in the perspective of what is to come, Anchises places Aeneas at the start of the grand race to Rome's ascension. Anchises claims that Aeneas' "son, [his] last-born [will be] a king who fathers kings in turn, he founds [the] race that rules in Alba Longa (VI. 883-886)," placing the responsibility directly onto Aeneas to not only establish a place for his people, but to continue the legacy through his son, who will begin the rise of the Romans.

The Parade of Heroes is what takes Aeneas' journey from the story of a man to the story of a people; it is no longer about a single hero, but the establishment of an entire race of men. Anchises uses the future heroes and Romans to bring Aeneas' quest for homecoming into a more public sphere. Unlike in the *Odyssey*, Aeneas' journey is not just about him. The stakes are higher, and so the reward and motivation must also be greater, which is why Virgil chooses his heroes with such care. He integrates Aeneas into the history of the Roman people by tying him to their existing leaders and heroes--Romulus, Caesar, Numitor, Augustus, and others--and makes their history into Aeneas' future, one which he can be proud of and eager to achieve. Figures especially like Romulus and Augustus strike a chord, as both are responsible for a refounding of Rome, Romulus as part of the original founding myth of Rome and Augustus with his reformation of the Roman empire. Aeneas is the first founder, and the men that Anchises shows to Aeneas are those that will each advance his empire into something greater than it was before.

He is passing the flame which has already been lit-- the audience knows that his quest succeeds because they know the heroes, and know that if Aeneas fails, such figures destined to

"revisit the overarching world once more (VI. 868)" will not be able "to return to bodies yet again (VI. 869)" as they are meant to. It is not just his people traveling with him that he is responsible for, but this whole other race of men who are waiting for him to succeed on his quest. Anchises' introduction of the heroes makes it impossible for failure to be an option for Aeneas. His success and the rise of Rome through its heroes is not an abstract hope Anchises is presenting his son with, but an inevitability he is certain to achieve, and one which he must achieve for the sake of his people and the future generations he is now responsible for as well. The Roman reader is aware of the names mentioned such as Romulus, Numitor, Caesar, and Brutus, and they know that what Anchises is describing must come to pass since it is part of their history; Aeneas is placed at the beginning of a line of names and heroes that they already know, and so it is easier to accept him into the history once he is tied to pre-established heroes and figures from Roman history.

Anchises establishes the path that Rome will lead in his presentation of the heroes to Aeneas, but his descriptions focus on the successes rather than the failures of Rome. He encourages Aeneas with promises of a bright future, and "led his son through each new scene and fired his soul with a love of glory still to come (VI. 1024-1025)" to give him the motivation to complete his quest and establish Rome. However, Anchises does not end his speech on a positive final note. After building Aeneas up for great success and the mightiness of Rome which is relying upon his quest, it seems an odd and slightly counterproductive note to end on a Roman that died before he could see any glory come from his life. Marcellus, the final hero discussed, was the nephew of Augustus, and at the time of the *Aeneid*'s composition, had only recently died in 23 BC. He died young, his life and ambitions not played out; Anchises claims that "no child of

Troy will ever raise so high the hopes of his Latin forebears, nor will the land of Romulus take such pride in a son she's borne (VI. 1009-1010)" when he speaks of Marcellus. He is celebrated, even though he did not make it to twenty years old before he died, and the grief over his premature passing is clear through Anchises' laments. This seems a strange note to end things on, though it brings the Roman reader up to their current time in terms of rulers to discuss Marcellus last, since his death would have been fairly recent in Roman memory. So again, why does Virgil end Aeneas' journey in the Underworld like this?

It comes back to making a cycle, to connecting Aeneas into the line of heroes and integrating him into the Roman history and myth. It is because of him that Rome is able to begin, but he is, as stated, not the "king who fathers kings (VI. 886)." Aeneas sets up the foundations for Rome, but he never gets to see its true greatness; that honor falls to his descendents, and to those who follow after him. Aeneas does the work, but he gets none of the reward. Marcellus dies before his greatness can be achieved; Anchises boasts of Marcellus' power and the greatness he could've brought to Rome, but Marcellus dies before he can accomplish it. Like Aeneas, he never gets to see his greatness achieved, though his is because of his death; the glory does not belong to other men, it dies with him. Marcellus serves as a parallel for Aeneas, and connects the two to make the parade a cycle, with Aeneas at the beginning and Marcellus at the end. Neither get to see their own greatness in its full strength and brilliance, and it creates a cycle, closes the loop between the past and the Roman reader's present, between Aeneas' life and the future of his people that he will never get to witness outside of the Underworld.

The introduction of Marcellus also serves to address some of the uncertainty that is felt not only by Aeneas, but by the Roman audience as well. Aeneas is in the same mindset of

uncertainty as the Roman audience-- he does not know what will become of his people until Anchises points him down the proper path and shows him what his future holds. Marcellus was Augustus' heir, and without him, Augustus' dynasty is no longer certain. Aeneas' future as a Trojan prince is one that was snatched away from him by the Trojan War, and his journey to find his people a new home has been unsuccessful and incredibly taxing on him and his men. Fellow soldiers have been lost, Anchises has died, and Aeneas' men have faced great trials in order to get to a point of uncertainty which it is Aeneas' job to remedy as their leader. Aeneas is able to overcome this uncertainty, and the connection to Marcellus is one of subtle hope for the Roman audience, that the period of uncertainty currently holding the empire is one that will pass.

CONCLUSION

Both the *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey* utilize the Underworld and its freedom from the normal boundaries of time to reorient their respective heroes on their quests and reconnect them with the ideas of family and legacy. Both heroes are trapped in their own traumas, still in the mindset of soldiers rather than fathers or leaders, and in order to continue they must remind themselves what it is exactly that they are attempting to reach or accomplish. For Odysseus, he must reconnect himself with his family unit and his identity as a father and husband, which he accomplishes through the interaction with his mother, Antikleia. He must also let go of his sorrow and identity as a soldier, which he accomplishes through his interactions with Achilles and Agamemnon. Tiresias gives him the outline for what it is he must do, and the others give him the motivation to try, looking into both the past and the present to give Odysseus a clear path to reach his future, and his family once again. It removes the future of a soldier from his narrative and takes away

his heroic death in battle in order to give him his homecoming narrative, which is something Odysseus must comes to terms with and accept in order to complete his quest and return to Ithaka. Aeneas must go through an even more arduous journey through the Underworld in order to get himself back on his path, and he must not just reorient himself with his quest, but must undergo a full change, a metaphorical death through his interaction with Deiphobus. He essentially lives Deiphobus' death when he hears it told to him, and allows his grief and guilt over the Trojan War, as well as his identity as a Trojan, to perish with the spirit of his friend. He returns to the source of his life, his father Anchises, and adopts the role of father Aeneas as he emerges from the Underworld, no longer his father's son but the starting point for the Roman people. Virgil reinterprets what he saw in the Odyssey and expands it, making it a bigger scale quest in order to accommodate the much larger story, changes the focus from the household and family to being about father-son relationships and legacy. The ability to connect to family and comrades from the past, the present, and the future gives the heroes the ability to accomplish things that they would not otherwise be able to do--face their pasts and their identities as warriors no longer at war directly in order to release their trauma and grief, to catch a glimpse of what it is their futures hold in order to keep them from continuing on blind as they have been in their quests, and to reconnect with their motivations for embarking on their quests in the first place. The Underworld provides a place outside of conventional time where all of the figures necessary for these changes are readily available for the heroes to access, and without its information and the spirits it holds, the heroes would not be able to continue on their quests.

Winged words & Parian marble : Women in the Underworld and their roles in the Hero's Journey

"...my mother came and drank the dark-clouding blood, and at once she knew me, and full of lamentation she spoke to me in winged words--" Odyssey XI. 152-154

"But [Dido], her eyes still fixed on the ground, turned away, her features no more moved by his pleas as he talked on than if she were set in stony flint or Parian marble rock." Aeneid VI. 545-547

The departure of the heroes from their military families leaves Odysseus and Aeneas to once again return to the family units which were neglected during the Trojan War. Odysseus' family back in Ithaka is where his journey takes him, and returning there is something that he is unable to accomplish without the aid of his mother Antikleia, and the witch Circe. Aeneas requires a new family unit-- the Roman family-- which is something that Anchises directs Aeneas towards before Aeneas resumes his journey. Men and women play very different but equally important roles to each hero to help them release themselves move forward in their own epics. Men like Deiphobus, Achilles, Agamemnon, and others like them that grant the heroes the closure that they need with their lives of war, but the women are the ones who provide insight into the present and the future, give the heroes what they need to be able to progress in their journeys, and in Odysseus' case reorient the hero towards the family unit once again. Both heroes are guided to the Underworld by women-- Circe gives Odysseus instructions about how to summon the spirits of the dead and communicate with them, while Aeneas is actually guided through the Underworld by a priestess of Apollo, the Sibyl--and would not be able to achieve this reorientation to their quests without this guidance. Women are more present in the *Odyssey*,

as Odysseus' mission is more centered around the family unit-- he is needed at home to fulfill that role of father, husband, and master of his household-- while Aeneas' focuses more on the connection of a family legacy, something passed between father and son. But women play a vital role in both epics, and without their involvement and presence, the quests of the heroes would go unfinished.

I. GETTING TO THE UNDERWORLD

When it comes time for Odysseus and Aeneas to take their Underworld detours, neither hero has had experiences with women in their narratives aiding them in their quests. Both heroes find themselves confronted with women who would seek to prevent them from moving forward-- Odysseus has several moments in the *Odyssey* where he has put his journey on hold while he has various affairs, and is in fact telling his story of the Underworld to Nausikaa, who is one such figure in his journey. The concept of Odysseus being delayed by women is much more on the nose than it is in the *Aeneid*, and his affairs with women like Circe and Calypso, as well as his flirtation with Nausikaa, are strongly on the mind of the reader as the Underworld journey is introduced. Aeneas' most difficult obstacles are the result of women as well-- Dido tempts him to remain in Carthage, and he nearly does so until the gods remind him of his quest, and only then he leaves his pseudo-marriage with her to continue on his quest. The Trojan women also attempt to stop him by setting his boats on fire, to keep him and his men from leaving. Women are shown as hindrances or temptations to Aeneas and Odysseus, and the idea that either of them would get help from a woman seems somewhat unlikely as they both seek to enter the Underworld. Seeking aid and being rejected and offered something else is a regular pattern with

the women in the texts-- in the *Odyssey*, help continuing his journey is denied and Odysseus is offered sex, in the cases of Calypso and Circe, or marriage when it comes to Nausikaa; in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is presented with situations that would force him to remain where he is rather than continuing his quest, either through force or through sex. Breaking this pattern is the first part of getting to the Underworld. Odysseus manipulates his relationship with Circe in order to achieve this, while Aeneas seeks out a figure meant specifically to aid him, rather than risk repeating his previous pattern.

Once they are brought on as assets to the continuation of the hero's journeys, neither Circe nor the Sibyl seek to impede the quests of their respective heroes, but rather are critical in the continuation of their quests. In this, they are unlike other women, such as Calypso, Nausicaa, the Trojan women who attempt to burn the ships in Book V of the *Aeneid*, Dido, and others who stand in the way of the heroes by not only standing aside to let them proceed, but also actively aiding in their quests. Odysseus is tempted by desire and the chance to become a member of a different *oikos*, such as with Nausicaa, while Aeneas is granted a similar chance with Dido, which he is forced to leave by the will of the gods. But where other women seek to impede the heroes, Circe and the Sibyl are vital parts of the continuation of the journeys of the heroes. They are the first of the women encountered that aid directly in this part of the quest, and for Odysseus, they are not the last. Members of Odysseus' household aid him in his recapturing of Ithaka, and it is his wife Penelope that holds the final decision of whether he is permitted to stay or not. Circe and the Sibyl begin the journeys to return to the original missions of the heroes, and it is the other women in the Underworld of the *Odyssey*-- Antikleia, the Parade of women, and the others-- who continue the work that Circe begins and aids in pursuing.

Neither hero is able to see the course to take on their own, and both are sent to the Underworld by a woman. Each woman gives their hero very specific and clear instructions about how to reach the Underworld, and how to prepare for their journey. Virgil takes the Odyssean figures of Circe and Tiresias and combines them into the figure of the Sibyl, making her a guide that physically travels into the Underworld with Aeneas rather than just giving him instructions on how to get there and communicate with the spirits of the dead, as Circe and Tiresias serve to do for Odysseus' quest.

a. GUIDES IN THE *ODYSSEY*

Gender proves to be an interesting relationship that each guide has their own interesting and unique relationship to. While Circe and the Sibyl are the two most obvious female guides of their respective epics, the role of Tiresias the seer cannot be overlooked. Tiresias fulfills his role as a guide through his abilities with the gift of prophecy, which he uses to construct a possible path for Odysseus' quest to take that will bring him home to Ithaka. He is able to set the groundwork that Odysseus requires in order to move forward, and establish both past and future for Odysseus' journey. His prophecies "must be as the gods spun it (XI. 139)," and Odysseus does not question Tiresias' words and advice to him, even when it is presented as unwanted news for him, such as information regarding his unheroic death in the future. Tiresias' role fills out the aspects of a guide that Circe was missing by providing Odysseus with knowledge of how to communicate with spirits of the dead, and which the Sibyl is able to fill on her own in the *Aeneid*.

Tiresias does not hold the status of being a woman like the other two Underworld guides, but a look into Tiresias' history give some insight as to why he serves as one of the guides in Odysseus' journey. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Tiresias had once "come upon two serpents mating in the green woods, and struck them from each other, and thereupon, from man was turned to woman (Ovid 327-329)." Tiresias remained a woman for several years before he "saw the serpents once again, and once more struck them [...] and so he was a man again (Ovid 329-334)." Though this rendition was written years after the *Odyssey*, it comes from an older story tradition that Homer would have been aware of during the construction of the *Odyssey*. Tiresias holds a status of someone who was once both genders, and this ambiguity carries through to his uses as a guide to Odysseus. In the myth of how Tiresias got his gift of prophecy, Tiresias used his knowledge of both his male life and his female life to provide insight that could not be objectively observed by any other individual. In the *Odyssey*, Tiresias' abilities are slightly more obscured through the ambiguities of his prophecies, but are still ones that he uniquely possesses. Tiresias approaches Odysseus "holding a staff of gold, and he knew who [Odysseus] was, and spoke to [him] (XI. 90-91)." Tiresias alone is able to speak to Odysseus without first drinking the blood. Once again, he possesses an ability that no one else has, and his ability to speak without drinking the blood allows him to instruct Odysseus about the proper protocol for receiving information from the other spirits of the dead.

When Tiresias is introduced "holding a staff of gold (XI. 90-91)," Homer recalls the story of the snakes and his initial gender transformation to the memory of the reader. He is no longer a woman, but small aspects of his transformation and former femininity are scattered throughout his interaction with Odysseus, and he is connected to women by another guide, Circe, who

claims that Tiresias' "senses stay unshaken within him, to whom alone Persephone has granted intelligence even after death (X. 493-495)." Tiresias' power in his original myth was given to him by Zeus, in return for Hera making him "live in the black night of blindness (Ovid 336-337)." Zeus is credited for Tiresias' gifts of prophecy while he lives, but the Underworld is not Zeus' realm, it is Hades'. But Persephone is the one that grants Tiresias' his powers in the Underworld-- her power is shown throughout Odysseus' experience when she later sends the parade of women, and when Odysseus departs the Underworld. Tiresias, however, is the part of the Underworld that Odysseus sought, and his advice that he came for. Tiresias' knowledge comes from a woman, from Persephone, and it is because of her that Tiresias is able to aid Odysseus. He is a crucial part of Odysseus' journey, and it is through his connection to women, and not his identity as a man, that allow him to be helpful to Odysseus in the Underworld.

Circe fills out the parts of Tiresias' role as a guide that Tiresias himself is unable to. Circe is an enchantress, versed in magic as is seen when she turns Odysseus' men into pigs upon their arrival. She has powers beyond that of a normal mortal, and is able to use such powers to further the mission of Odysseus by giving him insights and aid which she would not be otherwise able to obtain. Her connection to this 'other' or mystery gives her knowledge on the Underworld, which is in its own way unknowable to mortals, and it is these ties to mystery and the unknown that make her being a woman crucial to the narratives, and to the heroes themselves. She provides the information about how to communicate with the spirits of the dead to Odysseus (X. 488-541) that will "tell [him] the way to go, the stages of [his] journey, and tell [him] how to make [his] way home (X. 539-540)," which Tiresias complements with his own prophecies.

Odysseus is also Circe's sexual partner for a year, and her sexuality in connection to him is something that is very strongly present in her portion of the text. She invites him to share her bed "so that, lying together in the bed of love, [they] may then have faith and trust in each other (X. 334-335)." Odysseus engages in this relationship with Circe so that "she will set free [his] companions, and care for [him] also (X. 298);" he is using her for his own gain, to have his men returned to human form once again after Circe has turned them into swine, and he is told by Hermes to "not then resist and refuse the bed of the goddess [...] but bid her swear the great oath of the blessed gods, that she has no other evil hurt that she is devising (X. 297-300)." Odysseus gains the freedom of his men and himself by engaging in a sexual relationship with Circe, as instructed by Hermes. Circe holds up her end of the bargain, and in return for his company he receives both the return of his men and knowledge about the Underworld, which he would not have been otherwise able to gain. This fact and this relationship between the two of them highlights Circe's identity as a woman, and she would not be able to have the same effect on Odysseus if she was a man. Her femininity and her sexual appeal to Odysseus are critical to her role in the epic, and the narrative would not be able to proceed without Circe and Odysseus' relationship, as it is from that which he receives the ability to continue with his quest and journey to the Underworld in order to reorient himself with his mission.

b. GUIDES IN THE *AENEID*

Aeneas is sent to the Sibyl to gain information to travel to the Underworld. Aeneas and his men travel "to the stronghold that Apollo rules [...and] the awesome Sibyl's secret haunt where the Seer of Delos breathes his mighty will, his soul inspiring her to lay the future bare (VI.

10-14).” The Sibyl commands the presence of the room, both as a figure of mystery and authority, and her orders for sacrifice and so on are followed swiftly by Aeneas’ men.

In the transition from the *Odyssey* to the *Aeneid*, it seems strange to have a figure as highly eroticized as Circe to become a pious, chaste priestess of Apollo. The Sibyl’s abilities and power are centered around her connection to religion, not witchcraft or her sex appeal to the hero. She is nothing like her Greek model, Circe, until her highly eroticized prophetic fit. She is overcome when Apollo possesses her-- “all her features, all her color changes, her braided hair flies loose and her breast heaves, her heart bursts with frenzy (VI. 60-61)” as her prophetic fit begins. It is almost a physical assault on her body; she “storms in a wild fury through her cave (VI. 93)” as she tries “to pitch the great god off her breast (VI. 94).” She writhes and fights against Apollo’s control over her body throughout her prophetic fit, but “his bridle exhausts her raving lips, overwhelming her untamed heart, bending her to his will (VI. 96-97)” until she is forced to give in to the fit. Her struggle is physical, and also represents a struggle of power between her and Apollo. The way that Virgil describes the struggle emphasizes her womanhood in a very sexual manner, as Apollo is entering her body to speak through her, and her sexual position as subordinate--as women were traditionally seen to be--is emphasized through Apollo overcoming her resistance and using her as a mouthpiece to communicate to Aeneas through. Her ability to act as a vessel for Apollo is crucial to her role in the narrative, and her position as Aeneas’ guide. She is given divine knowledge and awareness by Apollo through the very physical and sexualized entering of the god into her body. Her identity as a woman is brought into focus through her prophetic fit, and it is presented in such a way that it would seem out of place if the Sibyl had been a priest rather than a priestess; the sexual nature of her fit focuses on

her body and the eroticism of the action that her femininity cannot be ignored, and is critical to who she is, both as a priestess and as a vessel for Apollo's wisdom and guidance.

Imbued with the knowledge of her prophetic struggle with Apollo, the Sibyl's sexuality becomes less critical to her role, which, as the narrative continues, does not call for sexualization in the way that her fit did. The Sibyl takes on the role of Aeneas' guide through the Underworld itself, as well as giving him instructions on how to get there. She is his constant companion on his journey, and the Underworld that he sees is shown through her, as she acts as the guide to his much more passive, tourist-like presence in the Underworld. She frequently reprimands him that there is "no time for gazing at the sights (VI. 45)," and urges him on during his journey to ensure that he is able to emerge and return to his quest safely. She is "directing Aeneas (VI. 49)," though she also "shrouds the truth in darkness (VI. 119)" and muddles many of her answers to Aeneas, unwilling or unable to be direct with him. Her sense of mystery is coupled with her advanced knowledge; she is familiar with the ways of getting to the Underworld, and Aeneas is willing to follow his "experienced comrade (VI. 332)" blindly through the Underworld, even though the means and the knowledge of how she manages to do so remain a mystery to him.

The *Aeneid*'s Underworld narrative is unlike the *Odyssey* in that the Sibyl takes Aeneas all the way into and through the Underworld; like Circe, she gives him instructions for a sacrifice to begin their journey, but once they enter the Underworld, Aeneas is completely at her mercy. He is lost, and the Sibyl is his key to getting in and out of the Underworld safely. He would not be able to accomplish this part of his quest without her, and the Sibyl has complete power over Aeneas throughout the entire journey, as she knows where she is going, and Aeneas can only

trust her to bring him where he needs to go and return him back to the upper world when they have completed their mission.

II. THE MATERNAL PUSH TOWARDS RESPONSIBILITY

Each hero requires the Underworld to place himself back on course with his quest, and accomplish the task that was set out to him to achieve. Getting there is the first step, which is achieved with the help of Circe and the Sibyl, but once they are where they need to be, it is up to the spirits they encounter to fill in the information and motivation that the heroes are lacking in order to get them to refocus themselves. Odysseus' quest focuses on returning to his household, and his family unit, so it is only appropriate that he meets with his mother, Antikleia, who was the woman of the house and the center of the home when he left for the Trojan War.

Antikleia's speech precedes the parade of women, and her words seek to reorient Odysseus towards his home and life in Ithaka with Penelope. She attempts to reconnect Odysseus emotionally with his responsibilities and his family, and urges him to "remember these things for [his] wife, so [he] may tell her hereafter (XI. 223-224)." He is a husband and a father; his position is one that he needs to remember, and one that he has severely neglected during his time away from home, first because of the war, then because of his own wayward journey and misguided wanderings. He has ignored this responsibility, spending his time instead with women like Calypso and Circe--and Nausikaa, whose presence is an active part of the narrative when her mother later interrupts--instead of with his own wife. Following up Antikleia's speech urging him to "remember these things (XI. 223)" with the parade of women, many of whom were adulterous, makes the message from Antikleia that he must return home that much more difficult

to ignore, as it is literally paraded in front of Odysseus, giving him no choice but to confront it and finally deal with the situation and responsibilities which he has been avoiding up until now. But it is not enough to simply tell Odysseus that he has been neglecting his responsibility; he must face it head-on, and it is the parade of women which follows Antikleia's speech which allows him to do that.

III. THE PARADE OF WOMEN

The women presented in the *Odyssey* during Odysseus' communication with the spirits of the dead are sent in by Persephone for somewhat unclear reasons to be interviewed by Odysseus during his quest for knowledge. They are the only figures in Odysseus' journey to be specifically sent to see him-- he says that they were "sent [his] way by proud Persephone (XI. 226)." Persephone is queen of the Underworld beside her husband Hades-- she too is a wife, which is perhaps why her sending of the women occurs, in an indirect gesture of women looking out for other women. She does not come up again until the end of the book, when Odysseus "thought that proud Persephone might send up against [him] some gorgonish head or a terrible monster up out of Hades' (XI. 636-637)" for trespassing too long, but otherwise she is absent from the Underworld text. And though her role is fairly minimal, it is still important to note that her presence and influence is mentioned, while the actions of Hades--whose realm they are trespassing in-- are absent. Persephone's suspected actions which cause Odysseus to flee suggest a protecting of the home through his expulsion; he does not belong in the Underworld, which is her home, and his removal from it is necessary to return things to the way that they should be in the Underworld once again. The presence of the women in the parade is also protecting the home

of Odysseus, albeit indirectly, as they bring to attention the responsibilities he is shirking and remind him of the role and status he occupies, encouraging his return home to Ithaka.

The women were "all who had been the wives and daughters of princes (XI. 227)," and are throughout their interviews and Odysseus' descriptions defined solely by their connections to the men in their lives, whether it be husbands, fathers, sons, or even lovers. There are fourteen women in total that Odysseus encounters before he claims that he cannot recite them all since it would take too much time. They are not unique or powerful in their own rights, but by the men in their lives, and the position that gives them in their own. There is very little opportunity for female agency in the text, and the parade of women does not provide an opportunity for this either; they are silent in Odysseus' retelling, and they are someone's wife, mother, daughter, or lover. Only one of them, Chloris, is identified in the text as being "queen of Pylos (XI. 285)" rather than just, as many of the other women are described, simply a wife or a daughter, though she is not the only queen in this group of women. But many of them are simply wives of the king, or associated through some other familial connection.

The women presented are given the purpose of showing Odysseus a certain path that he must take, and to remind him what it is he is leaving at home in Ithaka. All of the women are wives and mothers, just as Penelope is, and a parade of women who are such is a perhaps not-so-subtle reminder to Odysseus that he in fact already possesses a familial unit back at home, one that has been neglected for far too long while he has been on his roundabout return journey. But the women selected are of a more scandalous and in some cases dangerous variety; many of them are adulterers, and others, like Eriphyle and Epikaste, hold much more sinister messages of warning for Odysseus in order to encourage his return home.

Five of the women of the fourteen are discussed for their adulterous affairs with gods, which is especially poignant given that more than one of Odysseus' affairs take place with goddesses during his travels, and this connected association helps to put in perspective Odysseus' own activities. He too has been adulterous in his travels, but unlike the women presented to him, his affairs lead to no product--that is, children. There is no purpose or point in them; the adulterous women described in the text are known and, in many cases, respected because their adultery led to the birth of heroes with divine lineage, for as later stated "the couplings of the immortals are not without issue (XI. 249-250)," or product. Odysseus can boast no such thing, though "the lost *Telegonia* continued the story. Odysseus performs his pilgrimage, meeting [...] Telegonus, his son by Circe (Oxford Classical Dictionary 747)." Telegonus' presence in the *Odyssey* would have legitimized Odysseus' affair with Circe by making their pseudo-*oikos* the legitimization of a child, and a line to be passed on from Odysseus to Telegonus. However, Homer makes the conscious decision to omit this from his epic to emphasize the pointlessness of the affairs-- and his actions are purely selfish and for his own pleasure; the parade of women seeks to remind him of that, and show that his affairs are purely selfish in a way that he did not before seem to understand.

In their essay "Gender and Homeric Epic," Nancy Felson and Laura Slatkin claim that Odysseus' "sexual adventures do not disrupt the *oikos*: [...] they do not constitute a violation of societal norms and in this poem they threaten neither patriarchy nor patriliny (Felson/Slatkin 109)." Odysseus' affairs only avoid affecting the *oikos* because of the lack of offspring they produce; if a child had been the result, the effect it would have on Odysseus' household would have been much more severe. His return would have struck more of a chord with that of

Agamemnon, who did not come home with a child but with Cassandra as a concubine, another very different relationship but one which still affects the *oikos*, just as Odysseus returning to Ithaka with a child or a physical manifestation of his infidelity would have done.

Tyro is the first woman discussed for her adultery; she is the wife of Kretheus, but is said to have had an affair "with a river, godlike Enipeus (XI.238)," who later reveals to her that he is in fact "the Earthshaker Poseidon (XI. 252)." She gives birth to Pelias and Neleus by Poseidon, and tales of both men are given in her story. She was "in love (XI. 238)" with Poseidon, and the language surrounding her affair with the god is all fairly positive, and she is told to "be happy [...] in this love (XI. 248)," for it will give her children of divine lineage. Nothing is mentioned of Tyro's feelings towards the matter other than her love, and it is generally seen as a positive thing in the text that she takes part in this affair, for it leads to the births of Pelias and Neleus.

Antiope is the next woman of adulterous history to be discussed; she "claimed she had also lain in the embraces of Zeus (XI. 261-262)," and gives birth to Amphion and Zethos by him. Not much else is said on Antiope, though the divine lineage of her children does seem slightly dubious because of wording by the speaker, Odysseus, who unlike with the other adulterers claiming divine lineage for their children, says that Antiope merely "claimed (XI. 261)" that she had done so. Alkmene is the third of the adulterers; she is Amphitryon's wife, and is known for sleeping with Zeus and giving birth to the hero Herakles by him. Finally there is Iphimedeia, who was the wife of Aloeus, and gave birth to Otos and Ephialtes after sleeping with Poseidon.

These women are all identified because of their adulterous relationships with gods, which provide a strong parallel to Odysseus' own story. While their affairs produce some sort of end result--a child or children-- Odysseus' affairs are purely selfish and for his own pleasure; there is

no product of his affairs, only a longer amount of time spent away from his wife and son who are still waiting for him to return home. The women presented as adulterers are not necessarily presented in a negative light, because at least their affairs brought them something of note--sons, and half-divine sons, no less. Odysseus' affairs bring him nothing, and no closer to his goal than he was before.

After this message of adultery is solidified by these women, the focus shifts to Epikaste, who is the famous mother of Oidipodes, who "married her own son (XI. 273)" out of "ignorance of her mind (XI. 272)," as she was unaware of it at the time. Their relationship is better known in its presentation in the tragic play by Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, which tells the story of Oedipus' discovery of his incestuous relationship with his mother and his murder of his father in a much more dramatic and tragic setting. But the myth's presence here in the *Odyssey* is striking. Epikaste and Oidipodes' incredibly complex and muddled relationship is mirrored in a less drastic way by Telemachus and Penelope: Telemachus is the man of the household while Odysseus remains absent, and claims that he "is the power in this household (I.359)" even though that right belongs to his absent father. He is forced into this awkward mixed role of being both son and lord of Penelope, while Penelope herself is both Telemachus' mother and the lady of the household. Telemachus and Penelope take on the responsibilities of husband and wife in relationship to both status and responsibility out of necessity. Telemachus is somewhat desperate to relieve himself of this position, and goes as far as to go on his own miniature Odyssey in search of his wayward father, or at least news of his fate, in order to find his proper place in the household. This awkward dynamic which brings the mother/son dynamic closer to that of a husband and wife is unnatural and odd, and promotes an already uncomfortable atmosphere to

become even more peculiar. Their relationship is not sexual, but it is complicated and difficult to manage. This mixing of roles leads to tragic results in the story of Oidipodes, but Epikaste's appearance in the parade of women is for the purpose of highlighting the discomfort of this relationship that Telemachus and Penelope are currently forced to hold during Odysseus' absence, and the regular order of the household cannot be restored until he returns.

The final woman discussed is "Eriphyle the hateful (XI. 326)," who serves as a cautionary tale and a transition from the parade of women to the next spirit Odysseus encounters, Agamemnon. Eriphyle "accepted precious gold for the life of her own dear husband (XI. 327);" nothing else is said on her, but the warning in her tale becomes even more clear with the presentation of Agamemnon next. As discussed in Chapter One, Agamemnon's death at his own wife's hands serves as a warning to Odysseus to proceed home with caution, and a warning too about the deceit of women. Eriphyle's mention in the parade of women highlights the untrustworthiness of women in a more subtle way, and helps to transition the text to Agamemnon's tale of betrayal at the hands of Clytemnestra.

IV. DIDO AND THE REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HERO'S NARRATIVE

Like the Odyssey, the *Aeneid* possesses a small parade of women. They are found in the Fields of Mourning, where "those souls consumed by the harsh, wasting sickness, cruel love (VI. 513)" are made to wait for eternity. It paints a much bleaker picture than the Parade of Women in the *Odyssey* did, and the women are not shown in a grand procession like they were there, but rather wandering aimlessly in a state of mourning and grief. Among these women, Aeneas finds Dido "drift[ing] along the endless woods (VI. 522)." Her presence focuses Aeneas to confront

his non-heroic actions in Carthage, and he attempts to give himself peace and resolution through an interaction with Dido. But while Homer made his women in the *Odyssey* instrumental and willing to participate in the hero's journey, Vergil decided to take another course of action, and have Dido be the only woman shown who refuses to communicate with and interact with the hero at all. She is, in many senses, the complete opposite of the other woman in the *Aeneid's* Underworld narrative, the Sibyl, who is instrumental and crucial for each step of Aeneas' journey. The Sibyl is present as his guide and leads him through the Underworld every step of the way, while Dido refuses to even look at Aeneas at all.

Throughout Aeneas' emphatic apologies and excuses, Dido is "no more moved [...] than if she were set in stony flint or Parian marble rock (VI. 546-547)." She ignores him completely and remains "his enemy forever (VI. 548)" rather than making peace with him. She instead returns to her husband Sychaeus, who "answers all her anguish, meets her love with love (VI. 550-551)," and comforts her in the Underworld. Dido has been reconnected with her family in the Underworld; she does not have unfinished business like Aeneas, nor does she make up one half of a whole in the absence of her husband or another male figure in her life like the parade of women in the *Odyssey*. Sychaeus is present, and her family unit with him is complete. In contrast, the women in the *Odyssey* were without the presence of their husbands and children during the parade, and their stories to Odysseus focused on the men in their lives that were standing absent. But Dido has no such problem; she is with Sychaeus in the Underworld. For Aeneas, it is a harsh reminder of what he has left behind, and how that place of a husband figure by Dido's side is not one that is open to him any longer. There is no going back for either of them. Aeneas' regrets weigh on him, but he is not able to do anything to change or amend them.

Dido's attraction towards Aeneas was a detour from her own personal narrative, and something that she openly lamented, as she felt it made her disloyal. She tells her sister Anna, "I pray that the earth gape deep enough to take me down or the almighty Father blast me with one bolt to the shades [...] before I dishonor you, my conscience, break your laws. He's carried my love away, the man who wed me first-- may he hold it tight, safeguard it in his grave (IV. 31-35)." Dido's attraction to Aeneas is something that she struggles to come to terms with, and something that she feels guilty for and regrets when he abandons her. Dido's true quest is to be reunited with Sychaeus, her first husband, and the man that she bids to "hold [her love] tight, safeguard it in his grave (IV. 35)," and wishes to be struck down if she dishonors him by loving another. She takes her life and her death into her own hands, and her death is one that completes her personal quest. She is able to return to the position of his wife and exist in the Underworld by his side, permanently closing the door of reconciliation in life to Aeneas and cutting herself off from his narrative completely with the completion of her own.

Dido's reconciliation with Aeneas is impossible in the scheme of the narrative, because she has found this position where she belongs, and cannot forgive Aeneas for leaving her--nor would she want to, since his departure "brought [her] so much grief (VI. 539)" and was the reason for her death. She will not give him the satisfaction or peace in giving him the reconciliation or pass on the guilt which he seeks in talking to her. She has, for the purpose of the narrative, said her piece, and no longer feels the need or the desire to participate in Aeneas' narrative any longer. There is no role for him to play, nor niche for him to fit himself into for her any longer. And yet, Aeneas' business is not done, and seeing Dido's return to her family unit reminds Aeneas of this very fact, that he cannot entertain thoughts of Dido any longer. Filling

that position in her narrative is no longer possible; he must make his own way, and continue with his quest, because there is no place for him to fill in Carthage now that Dido is gone.

Aeneas attempts to gain some form of closure with Dido, even though she is unwilling to participate in the conversation he is attempting to have with her, and at least gets to say what he was unable to while he was still in Carthage with her. He promises that he "left [her] shores [...] against [his] will (VI. 535)," and that it was "the will of the gods (VI. 536)" that forced him on his journey, not a desire to leave her. He justifies his actions to her, even though she is unwilling to respond to him, because it is "the last word that Fate allows [him] to say to [her] (VI. 541-542)." She is stepping out of his narrative permanently, and this final reunion is his last chance to say anything to her to explain himself. In her article *Women in the* Aeneid*: Vanishing Bodies, Lingering Voices*, Georgia Nugent explains that "rather than absorbing and somehow transforming pain, the women of the *Aeneid* very often simply reflect it back into the community (Nugent 253)." Dido does just this with her refusal to communicate or even look at Aeneas. Her pain and her death are not a grand statement or revelation, but a reminder to Aeneas of his wrongdoings, of one of the least heroic moments of the narrative where his blind following of the gods caused Dido to end her life in a fit of grief. She does not need to make a statement or say anything at all; her presence alone is enough to bring back memories of her previous role in Aeneas' narrative, and forces Aeneas to reflect on his unheroic actions and current lack of a family unit he can fit into before he can proceed in his quest.

Dido's refusal or inability to participate in Aeneas' narrative calls back to a similar figure in the *Odyssey* who was also unable and unwilling to aid in the exchange of information between the hero and the spirits of the dead. Achilles, whom we encountered in the previous chapter, was

unable to give Odysseus any information or comfort because he himself was "full of lamentation (XI. 472)." He is able to speak to Odysseus, something Dido does not do, but he is unable to give him any consolation, comfort, or knowledge because of his grief. It would seem appropriate for a figure similar to Achilles to be found in the *Aeneid*'s Fields of Mourning, which is where Dido remains, but Virgil turns the figure of Achilles into Dido for a reason. She, like Achilles, is unable to grant the hero any aid or guidance, though while Achilles is too consumed in grief to participate, Dido simply refuses to, remaining unmoved by Aeneas' impassioned speeches to her until he is forced to leave her behind. She is grounded in a different past; while Achilles is stuck in grief over the Trojan War and his losses there, Dido remains stuck in her past rage for Aeneas, and is "his enemy forever (VI. 548)," unable and unwilling to move past her feelings about the way that Aeneas left things between the two of them.

The evolution of Achilles to Dido relies on the transition of emotion, and performs an interesting reversal of ancient gender expectations. Mourning is part of a woman's societal duties, she is permitted to grieve, and even expected to, but men are not held to that same standard. There is an expectation of controlled emotion for men that is not held by women. Homer flips this idea on its head with the portrayal of Achilles as the emotional griever; Virgil later takes this and turns it once again by making Aeneas the emotional griever instead of Dido, who remains cold and emotionless to Aeneas' entreatments for forgiveness. Achilles is the symbol of militaristic strength and fortitude to the Greeks; the "Argives honored [him] as [they] did the gods (XI. 484-485)," and Odysseus reminds him that "no man before has ever been more blessed than [him], nor ever will be (XI. 483-484)." He is unable to cease properly in his grieving when Odysseus first confronts him, and commands him to "never try to console [him]

for dying (XI. 488)," as it is pointless; he "would rather follow the plow as thrall to another man, one with no land allotted him and not much to live on, than be a kind over all the perished dead (XI. 488-491)." Achilles' grief is so public and so on display, it is impossible for Odysseus to ignore that he has been, in many ways, behaving similarly with his own grief. Odysseus spends many of his days "crying, as before now he had done, breaking his heart in tears, lamentation, and sorrow (V. 82-83)." Achilles' overly emotional lamentations are for Odysseus' ultimate benefit, by forcing him to look at his own grief and not just Achilles'.

Virgil takes this depiction of Achilles and transforms it into Dido. He takes the role of the expected griever-- Dido, a figure unafraid to lament Aeneas' departure two books before-- and flips it, making Aeneas the emotional figure in their exchange. Dido's lamentations over Aeneas' departure color her final moments in Book IV, to the level that her own sister "can't conceive of such a fiery passion. She fears nothing graver than Dido's grief (IV. 627-628)." She laments, "'No, no, die! You deserve it-- end your pain with the sword! [...] If only I'd been free to live my life, untested in marriage, free of guilt as some wild beast untouched by pangs like these! I broke the faith I swore to the ashes of Sychaeus (IV. 684-690).'" Her death and her lamentations are highly performative and loud, her emotions fully on display. But now in the Underworld, she is silent, while "Aeneas wept (VI. 527)" the moment he saw her in the Fields of Mourning. Virgil plays subtly on this switch with linguistics, and has Aeneas' speech to Dido recall Achilles' to Odysseus. Aeneas tells Dido that it is "the will of the gods, that drives [him] through the shadows now [...] their decrees have forced [him] on (VI. 536-538)," calling back on Achilles asking Odysseus how he could "endure to come down to Hades' place where the senseless dead men dwell, mere imitations of perished mortals (XI. 475-476)." Aeneas' takes on the roles of

both Achilles and Odysseus, lamenting even as he “tried to soothe [Dido’s] rage (VI. 544)” enough to get her to communicate with him. But Dido remains apathetic to his words and explanations, just as Achilles does to Odysseus’ comforts and reassurances.

The only solace for Achilles is to hear about the deeds of his son Neoptolemus, and focus on the future that he left behind, his legacy. Dido never had children, with her first husband or with Aeneas, and so she has no line to look for comfort in. During Aeneas’ flight in Book IV, Dido claimed that she “would not feel so totally devastated, so destroyed (IV. 411-412)” by Aeneas’ departure from her “if only [he’d] left a baby in [her] arms [...] before [he] deserted [her]. Some little Aeneas playing about in the halls, whose features at least would bring [him] back to [her] in spite of all (IV. 407-410).” The only comfort Dido could have taken in Aeneas’ departure would have been if she had born him a child, who would have been able to carry on not only his line, but hers as well. Achilles takes comfort in his son’s life, but Dido, with no such child to comfort herself with, can only seek solace in “Sychaeus, her husband long ago, [who] answers all her anguish, meets her love with love (VI. 549-551).” The type of comfort which Dido needs is not one that Aeneas was able to give her during her life, and so she returns to the next best thing, her first husband, who is the only person who can bring her any peace in death when Aeneas proves to be lacking in the ability to do so.

But it is her similarities to Achilles that highlight the main differences of the goals of the two heroes. For Odysseus, Achilles is a symbol of the Trojan War. He carries with him the traumas and the men that he left behind, his own guilt and grief and acts as a physical representation of Odysseus’ post-traumatic stress surrounding the Trojan War. Dido, however, is representative of something completely different to Aeneas, and his interaction with her is

crucial for his narrative to continue. Nugent claims that "Dido has been understood both as the most dangerous threat to the Roman project and as an enormously sympathetic tragic figure (Nugent 252)." The reader can easily sympathize with Dido because of her mistreatment from Aeneas, and for her own suffering she is rightly mourned by Aeneas, who takes her tragedy as something he is directly responsible for.

But she is also a threat, as Nugent states, to the 'Roman project'; Achilles is a representation of trauma and war, which Odysseus must release to proceed, but Dido is a symbol of settling somewhere that is not what Aeneas set out to find, of accepting a place in Carthage and giving up on the search for Rome. The threat of Dido's position was against Aeneas' Roman dream; she did not want to help him to find a new home for his people, but rather integrate them into her own, and make him her consort, not an equal but a partner. Aeneas does the same thing later on to Lavinia, when he joins her people with his, but it is he who is in the position of power, he who is creating this new and united civilization of Rome. Dido offers Aeneas everything that he wants, but on her terms rather than his own. It would not be his Rome that he would be creating, but a larger image of her Carthage, and joining his people with hers that leaves him in a position of subordination to Dido. Aeneas' eventual success comes from his power and his founding of Rome through both military and social means; he is not seeking to join an already formed kingdom, but start his own. Dido is an independent queen of her people, and Aeneas' role would be as her husband, not as an equal ruler. Aeneas requires the ability to be his own leader, and that is something which Dido is unable to give him in Carthage, which is why he is unable to remain with her and must continue on.

Odysseus' options upon being confronted with Achilles are to either succumb to grief like his friend and former companion, or to give up his grief and move on with his quest. This is exactly what the Parade of Women reminds him to do, and what his mother Antikleia urges him to do with her speech to him. Aeneas' options upon being confronted with Dido, however, are somewhat taken away from him by Dido herself. He was presented with a life in a kingdom that was not his own, Carthage, where he could have settled down with Dido and abandoned his quest, but when given the command from the gods to continue, he did. Dido's appearance in the Underworld confronts him with the time when he was closest to abandoning his quest, and slams the door on that possibility by showing Aeneas that it is not where he belongs anymore; he cannot fit in there. Dido's identity as a woman is crucial to this role; she offered Aeneas a place in her household, welcomed him in and presented him with a place where he could belong as a husband and consort to her. I close this chapter by returning to Nugent's chapter, *Women in the* Aeneid*: Vanishing Bodies, Lingering Voices*. She states that: "The great female characters of the *Aeneid* [...] refuse the mission of Rome (Nugent 260)." Dido is the most prominent example of this attitude of refusal, as she stands directly in the way of Aeneas' quest by giving him a household that he could belong in. Other women, such as the Sibyl, Antikleia, and Circe, invest themselves fully in the quest of the hero moving forward, while others such as the Parade of Women encourage the proceeding of the quests. Dido, however, was a hindrance, and like Odysseus' trauma from the Trojan War, Aeneas cannot continue without realizing that the two of them no longer have a place in the narrative of the other.

CONCLUSION.

While in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* we see plenty of the process of returning from war, one portion of the stories that we rarely see in the life of the hero is what happens after homecoming. Odysseus' return to Ithaka is centered around the removal of Penelope's suitors and reclaiming his position as head of his household. We know very little about his reentry into civilian life, as even when he has returned, the conflict with the suitors and their families keeps him from properly settling back into his civilian life.

Aeneas in contrast had no home to return to, and his quest keeps him in conflict until the end of the *Aeneid*. We do not see him begin a new life in Italy, but rather the poem ends still on the battlefield, in the moment where Aeneas kills his enemy, Turnus. He gets all of the parts necessary to establish a prosperous and successful end to his journey-- a wife, a kingdom, the promise of a Roman heir-- but like Odysseus, him finally being able to settle down into civilian life is the part that his epic neglects.

For most soldiers, returning home is where the real work begins, and where the full toll of their experiences begin to really affect their quality of life. It seems odd for Odysseus and Aeneas to attempt to combat their traumas during their quests rather than after, when they have the proper amount of attention to devote to handling their issues, and when their military mindsets are no longer needed. So why is it handled so out of order like this?

We turn one last time to Jonathan Shay's *Achilles in Vietnam*. He writes, "melodramas of moral courage provide satisfaction through the comforting fantasy that our own character would hold steady under the most extreme pressure of dreadful events. [But we must face] the painful

awareness that in all likelihood one's own character would not have stood firm (Shay 124)." In the end, it comes down to the desires of the audience. The *Odyssey* would have lost its power if Odysseus had traveled so far after so many years only to end with him in complete despair over all he had lost. Aeneas' victory would have been cheapened if he had fallen apart in the end, or worse if he had given up on his quest entirely and settled due to his lack of faith. The stories need the triumphant endings to be untainted by past grief, they cannot be weighed down by mourning. As Shay emphasizes, it is more comforting to know that the hero experiencing great struggles is triumphant in the end, rather than to have them fall short as reality often does. It does no good to show a story of triumphant homecoming, or success, only to have it marred by the hero losing their sense of self and purpose, or falling into despair.

Part of this is due to genre, and the identities of both of these texts as epics, rather than tragedies. Tragedy, like in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, feeds off of the despair and downfall of the hero, and in *Agamemnon*, the homecoming is the focus of the tragedy itself. But epic does not focus on the aftermath, but rather the action and the struggle. The audience does not expect to hear about the aftermath, or the winding down from a grand journey; the focus is on the hero's journey, overcoming their obstacles, and the triumphant end to their journey. To focus on the aftermath would be dishonest to the genre, and defeat the purpose of the epics by taking the audience out of the action of the hero's journey.

The Underworld is a place that is shown to exist outside of the normal confines of time. Figures from the heroes' pasts and futures are both accessible, and allow them to come face to face with their doubts and traumas in a unique and compelling way. In many ways, the Underworld journeys act like digressions from to the heroes' journeys, not fully integrated in the

narrative's course and at first glance a mere confidence boost for the doubting heroes. But the Underworld journeys allow Odysseus and Aeneas to prepare themselves for the full brunt of what they are going to face when their quests have concluded. Their recoveries from what they have faced and endured do not begin at home, but rather in a familiar space for both heroes while they remain with their bands of brothers-- their crews. The men that have been with Odysseus and Aeneas since leaving Troy are the silent support groups for their suffering heroes-- they have been through the same horrors of war, they have been with their heroes each step of the way, and though not all of them (or in Odysseus' case, any of them) make it to the end of the journey, they are uniquely qualified to understand and empathize with the others in their crew.

The final lines of Lord Tennyson's poem *Ulysses* puts into perspective this idea, and emphasizes the presence of others in the hero's mind following war. The end of the war and the journey has finally been reached by the end of the Odyssey and the Aeneid, but still, there is more to do for both of them, and more still to accomplish. Tennyson writes,

"Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'

We are not now that strength which in old days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,

Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Ulysses, lines 65-70. Lord Alfred Tennyson.

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