Political Allusions in Book 22 of the Odyssey
Odysseus, Pisistratus and the deployment of myth for the justification of tyranny.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur s'attache à démontrer que des concepts politiques peuvent être dépistés dans des textes littéraires et notamment dans deux genres, l'épique et le tragique. Le texte exposé dans l'article ne relève ni de l'histoire ni d'une pure propagande mais présente une philosophie de la politique concernant la démocratie à Athènes au V^ième^ siècle avant Jésus Christ.

ABSTRACT

This article considers how political information can be gleaned from literary sources, notably epic and tragedy. Although not history, although manipulated as propaganda at times, the text that the author describes exemplifies how a *philosophy of politics* relative to democracy in sixth-century Athens may be discerned.

Relating 6th Century Athens to the Political Parameters of the Epics

It has been an academic tendency to associate the Homeric epics with a historically disputed social background.[1] Two mainstream theories inform this basis: the first one claims that the epics reflect a Mycenean code of political organization and are, therefore, indicative of a pragmatic community arrangement. The other view regards the epics as a compilation of mythical facts, with little or no relevance to political structures in the semi-historical times described by their composer.[2] There is a functional way out of these problems. One has only to accept that the epics are indeed the compilation of different stories, *with*, nevertheless, an accretion of various historical truths. These may, however, originate from unparalleled and asynchronous

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temporal periods of the Mycenean Era, as well as from the times usually referred to as "Dark Ages".[3]

The embodiment of these stories into the temporally and culturally specific environment of classical Athens is a process that raises potentially controversial points.[4] It is well known that the epics formed the basis of the officially constituted Athenian educational system,[5] and most classical scholars accorded them a degree of respect bordering on awe.[6] Many a modern scholar, though, has often wondered about the political projections of the epic narratives. It is only natural to investigate the way that a consciously political society, such as the one of classical Athens, relates to the political conveyance of those ancient poems. Literature, as a form of public and civic expression, had never been free of politics, as the case of Athens often proves. The subtle way that emotions are manipulated and ideologies are reinforced for the sake of the *polis* has been extensively researched, especially with regard to tragedy.[7] It would be naïve, then, to presume that a state which paid so much attention to the political dimension of its public art, would neglect the political aspects of a text used in the education of its future citizens.[8]

It has been recently suggested that in the Homeric epics appear elements of democratic concepts.[9] This sounds logical to anyone who connects Athens to the democratic constitution. However, there might be more to this case. Without underestimating these democratic traces in the epics, we should strive for a wider appreciation of the position of the epics within the contemporary historical and political framework of classical Athens.

The parameters that will inform the present research follow briefly:

- The epics are, indeed, a compilation of stories. Nevertheless, reference to historical events should be regarded as factual, especially information concerning political organization.

- The ways in which various community types are described in the epics - especially the way that different kinds of government are described - do not necessarily mirror historical facts. These descriptions should not be regarded as an attempt to chart a

political situation synchronous to the times of the composer, but as an attempt to inform a *philosophy of politics*, in general.

- The present article shall not be concerned with clarifying the pragmatic, historical parameters of the poems. Focus is placed on the political allusions of Book 22, in relation to the society responsible for the establishment of the first known written copy of the epics: this is the Athenian society, in which a moderate tyrant, Pisistratus, is trying to establish himself.

- It will be claimed that the decision to write down the epics was taken with dual criteria: undoubtedly esthetic, since it was oral tradition that preserved and established the epics in human consciousness. On the other hand, an intuitive and gifted politician like Pisistratus could not have neglected epic paradigms that might subconsciously inform political opinions. He managed to detect in them the possibility of an acceptable and subtle propaganda that would allow him the chance to justify his tyranny; even if it had been imposed in the manner that tyrannical constitutions were usually established.

It should also be remembered that the term *tyrant* had not always carried negative connotations and the first known tyrants exhibited a lot of care for the prosperity and the interests of the people.[10] It is often hard to draw clear lines between different kinds of rule – a task that Aristotle himself does not seem able to solve clearly.[11] In book III of the *Politics*, Aristotle defines six forms of constitution, three of which are "right" (*kingship, aristocracy, polity*) and three of which are "deviations" (*tyranny, oligarchy, democracy*).[12] We already detect a political possibility here: Pisistratus, as seen by Aristotle, could have noted a latent connection of democracy to tyranny, as well.

The true meaning of rhapsodies and of the *Odyssey* becomes clearer if we accept the fact that the epics were first brought to Athens by a tyrant[13] and that they were first recorded in the 6th century B.C. for the official celebration of the *Panathenaia*, established by Pisistratus.[14] This fact is one of the reasons why it could well be true that the last couple of rhapsodies of the *Odyssey* were added at a later stage – a

subject to be addressed promptly. This hypothesis refers to an extremely important question; is there a possibility that there were additions or alterations made to the epics during the stage of their official recording during the reign of Pisistratus? The truth is that we are in no position to determine exactly the original nucleus of the two poems. The compilers of the epics probably had several versions to choose from – every oral composer would have added something of his own – so even if Pisistratus' camp did not actually add interpolations themselves, they may have chosen the versions most amenable to his purposes. Furthermore, there was presumably tremendous scope for censorship. If a passage appeared which reflected badly on Pisistratus, he could simply have it omitted. As a result, it may be just as important to look for what is missing in the epics as it is to look at what is present. More important, however, is that we are certain that altering text was indeed a known, if not common, practice in classical Athens.[15] It should therefore not come as a surprise that Pisistratus' régime might have had something to do with the final shaping of the poems, which were meant to educate its future citizens. After all, Pisistratus had realized the importance and ideological power of education and he created a good name for himself by making education one of his prime tasks in the new-founded regime.[16]

Pisistratus and the Populist Régime

The fact that Pisistratus cared for the citizens is not necessarily proved by the longevity of his reign – albeit with intervals – but this longevity may be evidence that he was successful in placating the people and in justifying his tyranny. His tyranny really ended in 510, when the Spartans, aided by the Alcmaeonids and other Athenian exiles, removed Hippias. Pisistratus and his sons had managed to maintain their status by diminishing the powers of local aristocrats, and the period from 546 to 510 B.C. was one of stability with a developing sense of unity in Attica.[17] The encouragement of civic festivals in honour of Athena and Dionysus not only offered an alternative to the faith in local *archons*, but they also redirected

attention towards festivals of the polis which were open to all Athenians. The *Panathenaia* and the *City Dionysia* were bound to evolve into powerful symbols of Athens and its people in the 5th century B.C.[18]

Pisistratus had to make use of peaceful means of propaganda, in order to establish himself in the public consciousness. He had attempted three times to institute a tyrannical constitution in Athens.[19] So, it was obvious that he needed to find other means to make himself accepted by the people of Athens. When he tried to bring himself in (both metaphorically and literally, since he was in exile) from the periphery to the centre, he enacted a drama in which the goddess Athena in person restored him to Athens.[20] A beautiful girl of impressive physique was enrolled to dress up as Athena and to lead him into the city, where an astounded crowd actually believed in the epiphany and hence a divine justification for his comeback![21]

Within a decade of the foundation of the Panathenaic Games, he had attempted two coups. The second was cemented by the political alliance with Megacles, an Athenian aristocrat, whose daughter he married. Megacles himself had envisaged "the end of the complicated faction-fighting between groups representing different geographical areas as well as different socio-economic and political interests in Attica. ... Initially, the marriage allegiance was a success, and through it, Pisistratus achieved, briefly, the second of his three tyrannies some time around the mid-550s. But it ended all too soon in tears, allegedly because Pisistratus refused to practise the sort of sexual intercourse that might lead to procreation (he already had two sons by an earlier marriage)".[22]

Pisistratus was forced into exile once more, this time for a decade. It must have been during this period that he realized the importance of symbolic and cultural means of securing himself on the political stage of Athens. Economic power was not enough and military prowess was a relative measure. Therefore, when he returned to power, he paid attention to religion (via the glorification of the *Panathenaia*), and to tragedy, as a means of educating people and informing the civic ideology.

"Less predictably, rather than simply ruling by dictatorial fiat Pisistratus chose to operate through the existing constitutional rules of Athens, that is those laid down at the beginning of the century by the moderately oligarchic reformer Solon. Of course, he was careful also to see to it that the top jobs were always held by the "right" men, that is his men".[23] However, the people of Athens were allowed participation in the state-affairs, thus gaining political experience, and at the end of the day, the twenty-year reign of Pisistratus was recalled as an era of prosperity and political stability.[24] It was this kind of enlightened leadership that fits Aristotle's description of the ruler who, "if he has been well educated by law, gives good decisions; but he has only one pair of eyes and ears, one pair of feet and hands, and it would be a paradox if he had better vision in judgment and action than many men with many pairs. Monarchical rulers, as we see even in our own times, appoint large numbers of men to be their eyes and ears, hands and feet; for such people as are friendly to themselves and to their rule, they make sharers in it."[25]

Deployment of Myth and Literature in Civic Propaganda: Odysseus the Tyrant.

As already mentioned, Pisistratus managed to detect the powerful effect of mythical stories in the process of shaping ideology. Therefore he provided for an official and formal context in which tragedy was developed.[26] Since tragedy draws extensively upon epic, it is a possibility that the reason for which Pisistratus supported these two genres was more complex than just the wish to keep people entertained: both epic and tragedy deal with stories about kings and royal courts. Both genres do not question the need of rule by exceptional people. Perhaps this is the reason for the late establishment of *theorika*, by Pericles:[27] During his most "democratic" constitution, Pericles felt the need to disseminate tragedy to as many people as possible, even the poorest, whereas Pisistratus was satisfied by educating politically only the ones who could afford the ticket to the theatre — the aristocrats.

It is possible that the intuitive ruler had grasped the essence of *applicatory history*, through the paradigms of which one can draw historical parallels.[28] Since, just like its successor, tragedy, the epic was such an important means of political education, some parts of it might possibly serve as justification of the regime. After all, the allegorical use of Homer was a common practice at least since the 5th centurey BC.[29]

The *Iliad* presents us with a world in which the aristocratic, heroic ideal prevails. The heroes of the *Iliad* are the depiction of the land owning, prevailing social echelons of the archaic period, whereas the *Odyssey* shows more interest in people from the lower classes.[30] It seems that the political tendencies are clear-cut in the two stories; the world of the aristocracy in the *Iliad* and interest in the importance of common people in the *Odyssey*. Nevertheless, the *Odyssey* includes a particularly interesting rhapsody, book 22, which allows space for break-through approaches.

This rhapsody holds distinctive importance in both epics, as it marks the logical conclusion of the whole story.[31] The war of Troy has ended, the hero Odysseus has left the battlefield, wandered around the world and after long sufferings now confronts the final obstacle that stands between him and the regaining of his status and identity: the threat posed by his wife's suitors.[32]

A number of incidents occur in this book, which is characteristic of the *aristeia*, one man's heroic heat of arms against a series of powerful enemies. Typical elements in an Iliadic *aristeia*, for example, are: divine exhortation and inspiration of a hero, arming, enthusiasm for battle, the advance of the hero through the ranks, a number of single combats, various counter-attacks, a moment of danger or weakness (often a wounding), a grand duel, and finally victory, with ritual boasting over the dead man. The whole episode is frequently enlivened with similes (often multiple similes) and divine interventions at critical points. See, for example, Diomedes' *aristeia* beginning at the start of *Iliad* 5 and Agamemnon's at the start of *Iliad* 11.

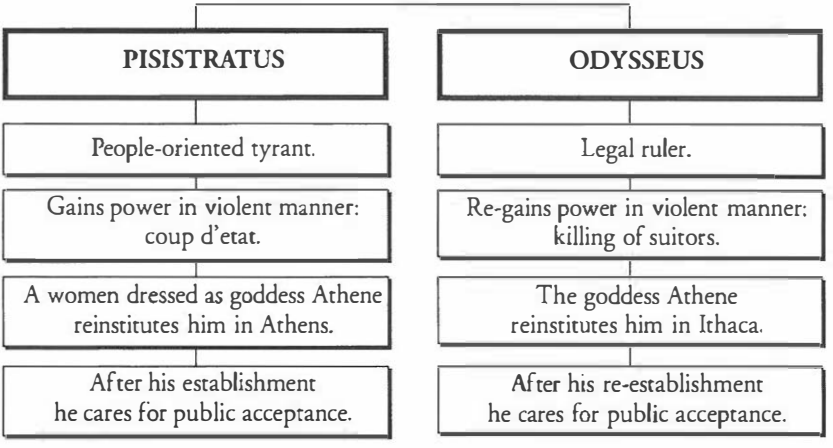
It is obvious that the conditions that apply to battle in the hall in the Odyssey 22 are radically different from those which apply to the battlefield. First, the arena for the conflict is the palace, not an open field, and battle is joined by subterfuge, before the opposition realizes that a battle is going to take place at all. Second, until his arrows run out (119), Odysseus is fighting exclusively with a bow, a weapon which scarcely encourages Iliadic hand-to-hand combat, and it is with this instrument that he dispatches his two deadliest rivals Antinoos (14-21) and Eurymachos (81-8) at the very start of the contest. Third, the odds are so numerically stacked against

Odysseus that before the contest even starts he has organized some help, in the shape of Telemachos, Eumaios and Philoitios. These have a part in the household, under Odysseus' leadership, and finally bring to an end the rule of the suitors in the palace – and so must, to some extent, detract from the mighty achievements of one man.[33]

In these ways, the battle in the hall in the *Odyssey* cannot be said to fit the *aristeia*-structure typical in the *Iliad*.[34]

The resemblance here of Odysseus to a classical tyrant in the mold of Pisistratus is very graphic. He is a political leader who marches against the old, established régime (the institution of the suitors). In this task he is not alone, but is assisted by loyal supporters (Telemachus, Eumaius). In analogy, Pisistratus marched against the old, decadent aristocratic régime, supported by a number of loyal followers. It should be stressed at this point, that tyranny is not a one-man régime, as opposed to a multiple democratic leadership, despite the deceitful perception created by the single-numbered essence of the noun *tyranny/tyrant*. After all, Thucydides was the first to notice that democracy was not all it was cracked up to be from the point of view of collective decisionmaking.[35] The following diagram shows the analogy between Pisistratus and Odysseus:

Political Analogy of Leaders:



The analogy of the situation in the *Odyssey* and that in Athens is thus based on the analogy between Odysseus and Pisistratus, both of whom fight against old, decaying aristocratic régimes. The pattern is reinforced by the analogy one could highlight between Telemachus and the sons of Pisistratus, both of whom support their father. There is also Eumaius, who could well stand for the common folk, willing to assist the rightful leader's comeback. Even Pisistratus' banishment from Athens, during which he only dreamt of his return, could be compared to Odysseus' wanderings and his burning desire to return to Ithaca.

As noted in the diagram, the first political problem that Odysseus faces after the killing of the suitors is the placation of their relatives.[36] The problem is resolved in the last book of the Odyssey by divine intervention. *Odysseus*, aided by Telemachus, is ready to fight the suitors' relatives and, in fact, he kills Eupeithes, the initiator of the attack against him.[37] However, Athene and Zeus intervene in time to enforce order and bring an end to the retaliations.[38]

There are considerable problems about the authenticity of this final book.[39] Even if the spirit of it is not anti-Homeric, it carries a logical conclusion of a coup d'état's aftermath. Odysseus, just like Pisistratus, would have to explain his actions to a crowd of varied opinions. Eupeithes is the voice of those who condemn the violent change of the regime (*Od.* 24. 425-37) and Halithersis is the one who sees the need for the change and understands the necessity for it, even if it is brought about by violent means (*Od.* 24. 454-62). One can easily apply the voice of these characters to the Athenian people subjected to the upheaval of the political situation by Pisistratus.

The end of the *Odyssey* is a glorification of Odysseus and an affirmation of Athene's favour of him. Just as Athene assisted Pisistratus in his comeback from exile and continuously watched over the city that honored her through the *Panathenaia,* Athene of the epic promises to protect Odysseus and the people of Ithaca. One might still doubt the originality of this rhapsody, but the lesson is simple and it applies to Pisistratus' Athens too. In sum, a ruler who has the

approval of gods can exercise his power with wisdom and sincere care for the people, even if this power was gained by violent means.

Conclusion: Mythological Justification of Contemporary Political Patterns

Being a remarkably perceptive politician, Pisistratus realized the authority that literature and especially myth held. It not only preserved tradition, but also helped forge political ideologies and attitudes. Since the political change he was about to introduce had to be justified before a skeptical, not to say *hostile*, public, he needed to legitimize his position. Therefore, the trick with the girl/Athene and the aid of the epics for the justification of his actions were politically necessary. The establishment of the festival of the *Panathenaia* was indeed an act of honouring the goddess who brought him back to power. In fact, Pisistratus made this festival an occasion for the celebration of *the people*, unlike the character of other state-festivals. Even at later times, when the Parthenon was constructed, Pericles' populist policy favoured the depiction of the Panathenaic procession on the Parthenon's frieze, rather than the carving of heroic or divine figures. Thus, Athenian citizens with their sons and daughters are given the illusion of priority and importance in the state.[40]

Furthermore, Pisistratus detected in the popular fiction of his times a means of justifying his rule by analogy to mythical patterns that had earned the people's approval. It has been argued that Pisistratus made conscious use of the epics, taking advantage of the political allusions of the *Odyssey*, especially through the comparison between himself and Odysseus. If we turn, yet again, to Aristotle, we could see another part of the analogy reinforced: according to Aristotle, kingship (Odysseus) and tyranny (Pisistratus) were both "rule by one man", the literal meaning of the word *monarchia*, monarchy.[41]

In relation to the main theme of this rhapsody the killing of the suitors by Odysseus should not be considered as the re-establishment

of the constitution of *basileia* (since Odysseus is the rightful king of Ithaca), but as a reference to the constitution of tyranny. The approach is based mainly on three points:

- First, the suitors represent the decaying aristocracy of the archaic and classical period.
- Second, the violent manner of their removal from the palace refers to the manner that tyrannical constitutions are enforced upon the political stage.
- Third, the 24th book of the *Odyssey*, in which a civil war and the final rule of Odysseus thanks to the intervention of Athena are described, remind us of the way that Pisistratus devised for his return from exile, in order to gain the rule of Athens by force.

If one sides with Page, who doubts the authenticity of this book,[42] one would have firm ground for the hypothesis that this final rhapsody was added at a later period[43] – perhaps during that very period when Pisistratus needed to justify his political rule, and perhaps via a popular narrative that was turning into an educational tool. Even if Pisistratus did not deliberately manipulate the epic text for his own purposes, he may have simply populized for political reasons a story which was already current, but, at that time, just one amongst many. We may therefore owe something of the popularity of the Odyssey today to his political ambition.

ENDNOTES

1. Georges C. Vlachos, *Les Sociétés Politiques Homériques* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1974); here used translated in Greek by M. Apostolopoulou & D. Apostolopoulou (Athens, 1985, 2nd ed.)

2. Cf. M. I. Finley's classic, *The World of Odysseus* (London, 1977), where he proposes that the society described in the epics is essentially factual, but does not represent however the Mycenean society or the society of the period of the polis. Instead, Finley suggests that this

society is that of a transitive period between 10th and 9th c. B.C. This is strongly questioned today, as it presupposes a distinctive break between the 10th and 9th c. B.C. and between the 8th and 7th century B.C.

3. The avoidance of a stance on the matter of the poet's uniqueness, as opposed to the theory of a poem originated by multiple contributors will be noted. For the single poet theory, see J. Russo, "Homer Against his Tradition", *Arion 7* (1968), pp. 275-95 and J. Griffin, "The Epic Cycle and the Uniqueness of Homer", *Journal of Hellenic Studies 17* (1977), pp. 39-53.

4. An exemplar of the school of criticism regarding the continuity between Homer's period and that of the Hellenistic age is R. Hunter, *The "Argonautica" of Apollonius: Literary Studies* (Cambridge, 1993).

5. Plut. Alc. 7; Plut. Them. 10. Cf. Aesch. 1. 9ff. For the proposition that poetry is read in the depiction on almost all red-figured vase painting of the classical period see H. R. Immerwahr, "Book rolls on Attic vases", *Classical, medieval and renaissance studies in honor of Berthold Louis Ullman* I (Rome, 1964) and "More book rolls on Attic vases", Antike Kunst XVI.2 (1973), pp. 143-7. See also, F. D. Harvey, "Greeks and Romans learn to write", *Communication arts in the ancient world* (New York, 1978), pp. 63-78. The same is suggested by A. A. Long in P. Easterling & B. M. W. Knox (edd.) *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature.* I: Greek Literature (Cambridge, 1985), p. 705.

6. Cf. F. Solmsen, "Leisure and play in Aristotle's ideal state", *Rheinisches Museum* 107 (1964), pp. 193-220; C. Lord, *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle* (Ithaca & London, 1982).

7. In general, see C. Meier, *The Political Art of Greek Tragedy* (Munich, 1988), transl. by A. Webber (Cambridge, 1993); P. J. Euben, *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory* (Berkeley, 1986); W. M. Calder, "Sophokles' political tragedy, Antigone", *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies,* Vol. 9 (1968), pp. 389-407; A. J. Podlecki, *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy* (Michigan, 1966).

8. See, F. A. G. Beck, *Album of Greek Education* (Sydney, 1975).

9. G. Rousis, *Ancient Democracy. Forever Young* (ed. Govosti, Athens, 1999), pp. 44-48. A similar opinion was presented recently by A. Kontos during the 16th Seminar of Homeric and Odysseian Literature, held at Ithaca (30th August – 3rd September, 2001).

10. Arist. Pol. 1305a22; Thuc. p. 13.

11. In *Pol.* III, vii, Aristotle discusses four types of limited monarchy (the Spartan, the non-Greek, *aisumneteia* , and the heroic) in the light of four main criteria: (a) whether they are subject to law, (b) whether the monarch's tenure is for life or for a set term, (c) whether they are elective, (d) whether they are over willing subjects. Confusingly, Aristotle calls all these four monarchies "kingships", but admits that two are in effect tyrannies.

12. Arist. *Pol.* 1284b35-1285b33.

13. This tyrant was Hipparchus. Cf. Pl. *Hipparch.* 228 B.

13. Cicer. *De Orator.* III, 137.

14. *Cf.* the incident with Alcibiades, who struck a teacher because he did not have a copy of the epics. To another teacher who claimed that he had a copy of the texts "corrected by himself", he answered that, if he had the ability to edit Homer, he should not be teaching children, but young men (Plut. *lc.* 7). Also, Plutarch informs us that Aristotle had amended or corrected a text of the Iliad, in order to use it as a textbook for Alexander's education (Plut. *Al.* 8).

15. It is argued that, although we cannot speak for an education scheme applying to all castes, elementary lessons in reading and writing (with the use of Homeric texts) applied to all during the last decades of the fifth c. B.C. *Cf.* F. D. Harvey, "The use of written documents in the business life of classical Athens", *Pegasus* 2 (1964), pp. 4-14; "Literacy in Athenian Democracy", R. E. G. 79 (1966), pp. 585-635. Some scholars even place the beginning of formal education earlier than the beginning of the 5th c. B.C. *Cf.* W. V. Harris, *Ancient*

Literacy (Cambridge, Mas.: H. U. P., 1989), p. 57; M. A. Manacorda in M. Vegetti (ed.), *Oralità, scrittura, spettacolo* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1983), pp. 190-1.

16. R. Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens* (Cambridge, C.U.P., 1988), ch. 1. See also, W. G. Forrest, *The Emergence of Greek Democracy (The character of Greek politics, 800-400 BC)* [Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1966], ch. 7.

17. A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London, 1967), pp. 107-15; H. W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers* (Oxford, 1933), pp. 34-45, 125-35.

18. He was exiled two years after the battle of Marathon due to the suspicion he caused, as he had become tyrant while leader of the democratics and a general. *Cf.* Arist. *Pol.* XXII, 3.

19. Detailed account in Herodot. 1. 60.

20. This "justification" is often questioned: "In spite of the confidence with which mythical precedents were often invoked, seeing one thing or person "as" another was far from being a straightforward matter; especially when that other belonged to the world of mythology. When a link is inserted with the world of gods and heroes, authority, albeit limited and potentially questionable authority is conferred. But the nature of the paradigmatic authority is complex": R. G. A. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece* (Cambridge: C. U. P., 1994), pp. 196-7.

21. P. Cartledge, "Power and the State", in P. Cartledge (ed.), *Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 144.

22. P. Cartledge, "Power and the State"., p. 145.

23. *Cf.* W. G. Forrest, *The Emergence of Greek Democracy*, p. 242; P. Cartledge, "Power and the State", p. 145.

24. Arist. *Pol.* III, xvi 1287b25.

25. Around 536-533, Thespis undertook the first production of a Tragedy for the festival of *City Dionysia*, established by Pisistratus. Cf. Par. Marble I. G. XII, 5, 1, 444. For the introduction and

establishment of Dionysus' cult by Pisistratus, cf. J. de Romilly, *La Tragédie Grecque* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1970), pp. 13-22.

26. *Cf.* D. Kagan, *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy* (London, 1990).

27. *Cf.* A. Platias, *International Relations and Strategy in Thucydides* (Athens, 1999) p. 18.

28. B. M. W. Knox, "Books and readers in the Greek world", in P. Easterling & B. M. W. Knox (edd.) *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature.* I: *Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 65.

29. E. Degani, "Ancient Greek Literature until 300 B.C.", in H. G. Nesselrath (ed.) *Einleitung in die Griechische Philologie*, Vol. I (B. G. Teubner Stuttgart und Leipzig, 1997), transl. in Greek, I. Daniel & A. Rengakos (edd.), (Papadimas, Athens, 2001), 178-9.

30. The *Odyssey*, overshadowed by the prophecy of Teiresias, never really ends. It closes with Odysseus at home, but fated to wander still, and at last to meet death from the sea, that shifting and chaotic substratum of boundless possibility. Indeed, Odysseus is not home to stay, and judging by his sea-borne death; neither is the anger of Poseidon, the god and lord of the sea, to be placated. See, H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge. Mass., 1958), p. 290.

31. An old, yet intuitive account of the episode in T. W. Allen, "The Theme of the Suitors in the *Odyssey*", *TAPAA* 70 (1939), pp. 104-124, esp. p. 260.

32. P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey. A Companion to the English Translation of Richmond Lattimore* (Bristol Classical Press, 1988), p. 203.

33. Yet, there are distinctive *aristeia* elements present. For example, divine inspiration has spurred Odysseus on ever since Book 13, and cf. 20.32-53, 22.233-5. There is an arming scene (108-25). Enthusiasm for battle is shown at 203-4. At 233-5, Athene urges

Odysseus to follow her forward into the attack, after which a number of mass and individual combats are joined, with counter-attacks from the suitors (241-96). Moments of weakness and slight wounding occur at 147-8, 208-9, 277-81, and while there is no single, climactic grand duel (the two main suitors have been killed with the bow at the start of the contest), there is the scene of triumph at the end (381-417), but without any ritual cries of triumph. The whole is enlivened with runs of similes (299-309, 381-9, 401-6) and divine interventions (205-40, 356, 273, 297-8), typical in the *Iliad*. So there is much in Book 22 to remind us of a hero's triumphant feat of arms, suitably modified to the special circumstances of this battle in the palace (information cited here is from P. Jones, loc. cit., p. 203).

34. In fact, Thycudides claims that the constitution of Athens was only a nominal democracy, gradually becoming a form of power exercised by the leading citizen, Pericles. *Cf.* Thuc. II, 65, 8-10.

35. Hom. *Od.* 23. 360-4.

36. Hom. *Od.* 24. 520-4.

37. Hom. *Od.* 24. 527 ff.

38. P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey*, pp. 216-8. Cf. H. Clarke, *The Art of the Odyssey* (repr. Bristol, 1989). D. L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* (Oxford, 1955).

39. E. Simon, *Festivals of Attica* (Madison, Wisconsin: University Press, 1983), pp. 55-72.

40. Arist. *Pol.* 1284b35 ff.

41. D. L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey*, pp. 101-36.

42. *Cf.* P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey*, p. 215 (notes on Hom. *Od.* 23. 296).