Voluntary Submission: Odysseus the Master and Eumaeus the Slave in *The Odyssey*

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Involuntary submission is characteristic of the master-slave relationship, which Hegel illustrates in a retrospective, descriptive and above all dialectical way in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Submission is the forced outcome of a life-and-death struggle rather than a welcomed duty. With these preliminary remarks, let us proceed to consider Hegel's dialectics of master and slave, who have fought, cease to fight and would probably fight again, for the sake of freedom and acknowledgment. Why is fighting necessary for gaining freedom and acknowledgment? Or couldn't we just acknowledge each other so that all is sweetness and light? The answer to this question has to begin with the discussion of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness desires to be certain of itself. In attempting to achieve self-certainty, self-consciousness realizes that its own existence is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for its goal. It depends on another self-consciousness for satisfying its desire for recognition. Here arises a problem. When it stands face to face with another self-consciousness, self-consciousness comes out of itself. "This has a twofold significance: first, it has lost itself, for it finds itself as an other being; secondly, in doing so it has superseded the other, for it does not see the other as an essential being, but in the other sees its own self" (Hegel 111). This implies an irony. Self-consciousness wants to attain self-certainty by confronting itself with another self-
consciousness, only to find that it has lost itself in another self-consciousness. In order to recover its lost self, it must "supersede this otherness of itself" (Hegel 111). This superseding act must be accomplished by seeing another self-consciousness as unessential, since self-consciousness desires to be certain of itself, or put otherwise, to be essential. In so doing, however, self-consciousness threatens to deny the existence of another self-consciousness as an "independent and self-contained" self-consciousness. It both needs and denies the existence of another consciousness. This dilemma can only be solved by, in Pinkard's words, treating another self-consciousness as a thing, natural and corporeal. (125) So far, this movement of self-consciousness in relation to another self-consciousness has been represented as the action of one consciousness, but this action of the one has itself the double significance of being both its own action and the action of the other as well, for the other is equally independent and self-contained (Hegel 111-112). As might be expected, neither self-consciousness nor another self-consciousness is willing to be viewed as an unessential thing. Yet this dispute must be resolved, "one being only recognized" and "the other only recognizing" (Hegel 113). Not surprisingly, since neither is ready to submit to the other, the only way of solving this dispute is a fight. This fight, however, cannot end in the death of either self-consciousness or another self-consciousness, for death makes self-certainty impossible. While it is the least desirable result, death makes the difference between master and slave. To be more exact, the attitude to death determines who is the master and who is the slave. The master is the self-consciousness who holds life of no account, both in itself and in the other whereas the slave is the self-consciousness who surrenders its independence and freedom for the sake of preserving its life. The slave has to work for his master, who dominates nature by dominating the working slave. An unexpected result follows. Through work, which requires the discipline of service and obedience, the slave becomes conscious of what he truly is (Hegel 118). Since his work is the pure negating of the object he works on, he is to the object what his master is to him. He is the master of the object, which retains its independence precisely for him. By means of work, he comes to see in the independent being of the object his own independence (Hegel 118). In other words, he acquires the concept of freedom, the actualization of which depends on the overcoming of his fear, fear of his master, fear of the other, and fear of death. Again it is work that enables him to overcome his fear by giving him the knowledge of his due worth, from which he gathers confidence in himself. In this way, he rises above
his natural existence as his master does. Therefore, work offers the slave the prospect of realizing freedom through a fearless struggle against his master, who is destined to surrender his power in this dialectical movement. It is obvious that the life-and-death struggle, which is the driving force of the dialectical movement in question, not only forges the master-slave relationship, but also ends it.

So far as Odysseus and Eumaeus are concerned, however, the life-and-death struggle has no part in either forging the master-slave relationship or ending it. The life-and-death struggle, as I have mentioned before, is due to involuntary submission, which is also the outcome of the life-and-death struggle. In *The Odyssey*, Homer seems to imply an unbreakable master-slave relationship between Odysseus and the swineherd, which is solely based on voluntary submission, and there is no occasion for a life-and-death struggle, especially when Odysseus and the swineherd form a strong bond of love, in which voluntary submission seems to be a natural and spontaneous act.

**The Bond of Love and Its Evolution**

Before entering on any detail, it is necessary to point out that here I will not use "the bond of love" in Jessica Benjamin's sense, or the feminist sense. Rather, as I have mentioned before, I will borrow this phrase to define the relationship between Odysseus and Eumaeus. Let us now return from this digression to the evolution of the bond of love.

We may trace the bond of love back to Odysseus' days in Ithaca before his departure for the Trojan War. The bond of love owes its formation mainly, if not entirely, to Odysseus's love of his slaves. Probably Odysseus's love of his slaves serves utilitarian ends. That is to say, Odysseus cultivates his affections towards his slaves in order to make his slaves willing to work for him and even sacrifice their lives for him, if occasion arises. But this realistic view of love seems unable to find evidence in *The Odyssey*, where Odysseus' love of his slaves is sincere, so much so that it touches his slaves deeply. And his slaves, with the exception of Melanthius, not only return his love with their love, but also swear a loyalty that stands the "trial by death" (Hegel's phrase). Odysseus' love of his slaves, however, only appears in Eumaeus's recollection in the presence of his anonymous master, who has returned to Ithaca after ten years of exile. Shortly after he lands on Ithaca, Odysseus asks his patron goddess Athena how he can accomplish his revenge on the suitors who court his wife while he is absent. Athena weaves a revenge scheme for Odysseus. As part
of the scheme, Athena transforms Odysseus into a beggar. In the disguise of a beggar, Odysseus could make full preparation for the final punishment of the suitors. Odysseus makes his way to the swineherd first. The swineherd doesn’t recognize his master, but treats his anonymous master kindly. During his talk with the beggar-king, the swineherd makes the above-mentioned recollection. When they are talking, Mesaulius comes in and serves them bread (Homer 316). Mesaulius is a man the swineherd purchases for himself in Odysseus’ absence. So far, we have encountered two role reversals. Odysseus changes from a master to a slave-master whereas Eumaeus turns from a slave to a master-slave. Their role reversals increase their knowledge of the other, which promotes their mutual understanding instead of leading to a Hegelian slave revolt. This mutual understanding maintains and strengthens the bond of love.

In this way, role reversal becomes a major contributing factor to Eumaeus’s voluntary submission. Let us see how this takes place. We need to start our discussion with Odysseus’ disguise, which gives Odysseus the chance to have a deeper understanding of what it is like to be a slave.

**Odysseus’s Disguise and His Knowledge of a Slave**

Before elaborating on Odysseus’ disguise and his knowledge of a slave, a brief reiterative outline of the self’s knowledge of the other in Hegel’s “Lordship and Bondage” may prove helpful. The self recognizes itself in the other. In so doing, the self loses itself. In order to recover itself, it must supersede this other. Unfortunately, this other is another independent self who wants to do the same to the self. Since neither is willing to yield to the other, only a fight can solve this dispute. The self who is willing to sacrifice its life becomes the master while the other self who surrenders to the previous self for the sake of preserving its life becomes the slave. The master actualizes his knowledge of freedom by becoming a master. The slave, on the other hand, has to work for the master, but in the course of working, he gains self-knowledge and the knowledge of nature. His master, however, can only gain the knowledge of nature through the work of his slave. So far the master’s knowledge has been of freedom, of the self in the other and of nature.

Odysseus also has these three types of knowledge, but in a different sense. His knowledge of freedom is not that of absolute freedom, but that of relative freedom, which is a compromise between absolute freedom and absolute slavery. His knowledge of the self in the other is not that of an exclusive absolute self, but that of
an inclusive relative self, who is a balance between the self and the other. Probably because of this, Hegel asserts that ancient Greeks don’t have a self. Odysseus’ knowledge of nature, generally speaking, is not acquired through the work of his slaves, but through his own work. Let us examine Odysseus’ three types of knowledge one by one from the perspective of his disguise as a slave.

But first of all, I would like to make a transition from Odysseus the beggar to Odysseus the slave. Odysseus the beggar is interchangeable with Odysseus the slave. Odysseus the beggar defines himself as a slave. In the tale he tells Eumaeus, he represents himself as being turned into a slave, involuntarily but not through a life-and-death struggle, by the crewmen of a Thesprotian cutter. He is indeed a slave, since he has “some skills to serve the house” (366). He can, as he puts it himself, build a good fire, split kindling neatly, carve, roast meat and pour rounds of wine, and anything menials do to serve their noble masters he can do, and better than others, he believes. (329) Enough has been said about this issue. Let’s move on to Odysseus’ three types of knowledge.

Odysseus mediates between absolute freedom and absolute slavery by introducing a slave’s identity into his life experience, that is, through his disguise as a slave. Of course, before his disguise, he already does so, but in a different way. He is a skilled craftsman as well as a good worker. Here we may use a Hegelian notion. Work involves both freedom and slavery. This freedom is not absolute, nor is this slavery. Odysseus the working master, unlike the Hegelian idle master, reaches a compromise between absolute freedom and absolute slavery. After his disguise, he continues with this mediation, only more thoroughly. This mediation, whether before his disguise or after it, enables Odysseus to have a close affinity with his slaves. They may share similar emotions, similar world outlooks and even a certain degree of equality, which derive from their common work experience. In this case, Odysseus’ order will be lacking in unreasonableness and compulsion. Obeying his order would be like following a piece of advice. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Eumaeus would obey his master’s order voluntarily as if he were following the advice of an equal. In Hegel’s eyes, however, this would seem to be a utopian dream. Hegel’s self seeks absolute freedom, the reverse of which is the absolute slavery on the part of the other. The pursuit of absolute freedom presupposes the self’s absolute place in the world. The self is “the only instrumental value” in its world. (Pinkard 126) This is not to say that the self hasn’t recognized the equal claim of the other. Rather, since it sees itself in the other, the self recognizes the same claim of the
other, but in order to be absolutely certain of itself, the self must deny the other's right to claim an equally valid instrumental value. By so doing, the self changes the other from an independent and self-sufficient self-consciousness to a thing, an object, whose existence is meaningful only in relation to the self. (Hegel 115) Only in this way can the self subject the other to absolute slavery and achieve absolute freedom for itself. But is this freedom really absolute? Unfortunately, the answer is no. By enslaving the other, the self enslaves itself. The reason is obvious. The other is no other than the self. The self and the other are inseparable from each other, though they are distinct from each other at the same time. Thus, the self that succeeds in subjecting the other to absolute slavery only succeeds in subjecting itself to absolute slavery. Its dream of absolute freedom turns out to be an illusion that is doomed to be shattered in Hegel's dialectical movement of self-consciousness. This seems to point to a ruthless view: "Man is not a solitary animal, and so long as social life survives, self-realization cannot be the supreme principle of ethics." (Russell 684) Self-realization as the supreme principle of ethics may well end in absolute self-enslavement, which makes both freedom and equality impossible. If this is true, Odysseus' way of mediating between absolute freedom and absolute slavery seems to be a desirable solution to the Hegelian dilemma.

It's time to deal with Odysseus' knowledge of the self in the other. In Odysseus, the self is inclusive rather than exclusive. The exclusive self has its origin in absolute inequality (Hegel 112), the source of involuntary submission. Neither the self nor the other could bear the thought of submitting to an absolute authority that acts like and in fact is an absolute tyrant. The inclusive self, on the contrary, treats the other as an equal, in attitude, if not in social status. This attitude gives rise to respect, which creates distance between the self and the other, and thereby reduces the possibility of conflict to a minimum. Since neither the self nor the other feels threat from outside, they could get along well with each other. Odysseus has a very good relationship with Eumaeus, who even calls Odysseus "Brother". Odysseus' disguise as a slave makes this appellation sound more real because the self that poses as the other indicates their interchangeability. Only equal things can enter into the relationship of interchangeability. It's not important whether the self and the other are really equal. What's important is that this equality, even if unreal, becomes the basis on which a relationship of mutual equality, mutual love, mutual tolerance and mutual respect can be built. Due to the mutuality of this relationship, submission is transformed into a natural duty to a brother who seems to have the same kind of duty
to the submissive slave. The latter duty may be an imaginary construct, but it serves the function of helping to achieve the mutuality of the relationship in question.

It remains to consider Odysseus' knowledge of nature that he acquires chiefly through his own work rather than through the work of his slaves. This seems to have little to do with his disguise, yet as we shall see, it is really worthy of our consideration. In Hegel, the master owns the knowledge of nature by owning the slave who works for him. Since he obtains the knowledge of nature without working on nature himself, it is inevitable that his slave should bear resentment towards him. Submission alloyed with resentment cannot possibly be anything but involuntary. Odysseus is not as much of a parasite on his slaves as the Hegelian master is, though he may rely on his slaves to do some work. As I have mentioned before, Odysseus is good at working, even better at working than his slaves. He cannot be a competent worker unless he works a lot. When he works a lot and does his work well, he will incite strong admiration rather than resentment from his slaves. If this is a logical conclusion, it is natural that Odysseus should secure voluntary compliance, as a much-admired hero does. In fact, Odysseus is a hero, one of the best Achaeans. Only a hero can earn his way into Achaean epic and become its protagonist. (Nagy 17) Odysseus is brave, suffers tremendously, gains a supportive crowd, and most of all has a myth to wrap him up. He is a war hero, and a working hero as well. Odysseus the slave boasts that thanks to Hermes the guide, who gives all work the grace and fame that it deserves, no one alive can match him at household chores and farming work (Homer 329; 387–388). The grace and fame that Odysseus deserves as a skilled worker reinforces his charisma, which attracts his slaves to him. As regards his disguise, it will bring him closer to nature, to the knowledge of nature, to the authentic knowledge of nature that a slave is more entitled to than a master. The authentic knowledge of nature that Odysseus the slave acquires more easily than Odysseus the master draws him nearer to his slaves both emotionally and mentally. Or to put it in another way, Odysseus shares the authentic knowledge of nature with his slaves through his disguise and his work. Sharing promises equality. As a leveling instrument sharing becomes the shaping force of the bond of love, and the bond of love in turn renders submission spontaneous and natural.

To sum up, while absolute inequality is the source of involuntary submission, relative equality opens up the possibility of voluntary submission. Nevertheless, Odysseus will not liberate his slaves from slavery, however kind he may be to them. Rather, his full understanding of his slaves will only help him channel his
relationship with them in a desirable direction. In other words, his felt knowledge of his slaves will strengthen their master-slave bond instead of weakening or destroying it. Athena has transformed Odysseus into a beggar, but she can also transform him back into a master, as she does at the end of the epic. This transformation not only enables Odysseus to accomplish his revenge, but also restores his position as a master. The necessity of maintaining and solidifying the master-slave bond finds its best expression in divine help. No doubt Odysseus’ role reversal is peaceful, but it offers no prospect of liberation as Hegel’s theory does. In spite of this, Odysseus’ knowledge of and sympathy for a slave make his slave’s workload at least bearable, emotionally of course. This explains in part why Eumaeus submits to Odysseus’ authority voluntarily.

Eumaeus carries out his role reversal in the opposite direction, but with the same result.

**Eumaeus the Master-Slave and his Knowledge of a Master**

Eumaeus buys a slave and hereby becomes a master in a peaceful way. But he is still Odysseus’ slave. In this sense, he is a master-slave. The relationship between Eumaeus and his slave is hard to define in that Homer does not give us a clear picture of it. But a reasonable conjecture may be made about it. I shall begin this conjecture with the slave trade. Though it is not fair to a slave, the slave trade does involve a principle of fairness. The slave trade is fair in the following senses. First, the buyer has the right to choose his object. I use the Hegelian word “object” because in the slave trade a slave is changed into a thing. Second, the seller has the right to reject the buyer’s bid and thus choose his slave’s master. This fairness implies both that the potential master-slave relationship is formed by free will rather than by physical force and that the potential master-slave relationship is partly contingent and partly necessary. In this way, the slave trade avoids the Hegelian direct conflict between the master and the slave. It follows that the master-slave relationship arising out of a slave trade is more likely to give rise to voluntary submission than the Hegelian master-slave relationship that originates from a life-and-death struggle. That is one of the reasons why there doesn’t seem to be a serious tension between Eumaeus and his slave. Another reason is that being a slave himself, Eumaeus feels sympathy for his slave. Also because he is a slave himself, Eumaeus the master is both the superior and the equal of his slave. Equality does not cause conflict.

Next comes the question of the master-slave relationship between Odysseus and
Eumaeus, which is also formed by the slave trade. Odysseus’ benevolent father Laertes buys Eumaeus, who has been taken away from his home by his nurse in all his innocence. Odysseus and his family treat Eumaeus with kindness, sincerity and especially generosity. Because of this Eumaeus can afford, and is allowed, to buy and own a slave. The change in his identity increases his knowledge of a master, but his increased knowledge of a master does not bring about a subversive revolution, but betters his relationship with Odysseus. In other words, his increased knowledge of a master merely increases his willingness to submit to Odysseus’ authority.

Before tackling this issue, I call attention to the complexity of Eumaeus’ knowledge of a master. Eumaeus’ knowledge of a master is complex in that Eumaeus, like Odysseus, is not only a master, but also a slave. His knowledge of a master is a mixture of a slave’s knowledge of a master and a master’s knowledge of a master. It’s difficult to separate one from the other. But for the convenience of analysis, I have to divide his knowledge of a master into Eumaeus the slave’s knowledge of a master and Eumaeus the master’s knowledge of a master. Let us start with Eumaeus the slave’s knowledge of a master.

Eumaeus represents a master in a favorable light. A quotation from “The Loyal Swineherd” affords an example of this favorable representation:

Every stranger and beggar comes from Zeus
and whatever scrap they get from the likes of us,
they’ll find it welcome. That’s the best we can do,
we servants, always cowed by our high and mighty masters,
especially our young lords [...] But my old master?
The gods, they must have blocked his journey home.
He’d have treated me well, he would, with a house,
a plot of land and a wife you’d gladly prize.
Goods that a kind lord will give a household hand
who labors for him, hard, whose work the gods have sped,
just as they speed the work I labor all day.
My master, I tell you, would have repaid me well
if he’d grown old right here [...] (303)

A master strikes Eumaeus as high and mighty. The words “high” and “mighty” remind us of gods. Homer does describe Odysseus as a godlike figure (175). Odysseus the other is high and mighty like a god whereas Eumaeus the self is lowly and powerless. Inequality is there, but the self bears no hatred nor resentment. We
cannot help asking why. The self lives together with the other, but their psychological
distance the self feels is vast, so much so that the other becomes a godlike figure.
The relationship between the self and the other is that between a human being and a
god. Please note that the self, who is a slave, does not treat himself as a Hegelian
object, but as a human being who has self-consciousness, not in the Hegelian sense
but in the ordinary sense. No doubt the self is a commodity, a thing, in the slave
trade, but the self itself does not accept this identity. This is not to say that the self
thinks of himself as an independent self-consciousness. Rather, the self is dependent
upon the other, his master, his godlike master, for discipline and guidance. The self
is “always cowed” by the other. The self who is always cowed by the other is not an
individual self, but a collective self, “we servants”; the other who cows the self is
not an individual other, but a collective other, “masters”. Instead of being a
universal self, the collective self is a oneness composed of the submissive selves;
instead of being a universal other, the collective other is a oneness consisting of the
dominating others. Between the two extremes there seems to be no middle term that
splits itself up into the two extremes, no middle term that fills the gigantic gap
between the two extremes. The collective self accepts the reality as it is, as if the gap
were already there before the collective self’s birth. The gap between gods and
humans is already predetermined before humans appear. The collective self respects
the gap, and the collective other who is at the other side of the gap. Not only does
the collective self respect the collective other, he also fears the collective other for the
collective other always cows him. In Hegel, “the fear of the lord is indeed the
beginning of wisdom” (117–118). This fear leads the slave to possible freedom
step by step, first by implanting in the slave the being-for-self that is an alien
“other” for the slave, then by letting the slave work and be aware that being-for-self
belongs to him, and finally by enabling him to gain self-knowledge, i. e. the
knowledge of his existence as an essential being in his own right (118–119).
Strange enough, this process does not occur in Eumaeus. The reason might be that
for Eumaeus, his master is a near equal of gods. And he has grounds for thinking so.
In The Odyssey, those closest to the god are not the poor and the meek, but the
strong and the powerful (Snell 33). Whenever Odysseus wants to accomplish
something, his patron goddess Athena steps in and gives her advice. Here we should
note that the poor and the meek don’t seem to have a patron god. Since gods are with
the master, the slave has every reason to fear the master. The fear of the master is
the fear of gods. This equation lengthens the distance between the slave and the
master to a maximum so that the master, like gods, becomes the absolute other that cannot be reached, let alone disalienated. Thus, just as a god is always a god, an absolute other, to Eumaeus, so Odysseus the master is always a master, an absolute other, to him. It is simply impossible for him to recognize his self in the absolutely alien other. As a consequence, his path to freedom is blocked by his piety towards gods and his master. Before moving on to the next point, I have to answer a possible challenge: Can the submission out of fear of something be a voluntary act? The answer to this question will lead to my next point. What is fear? Fear is the fear of punishment or disaster. In this sense, the submission out of fear seems to be involuntary. But please note the other side of the coin. While seeming to be an involuntary act, the submission out of fear has a utilitarian end to achieve and this utilitarian end is to avoid harm and punishment. Avoiding harm and punishment is beneficial to the submissive person, who by doing manages to protect his interests, or property, if property is the main concern. Therefore, for the sake of self-protection, the submissive person submits to the external authority voluntarily. In addition to self-protection, the submissive person may expect to profit by submitting voluntarily, as we can see in the case of Eumaeus. Eumaeus says, “He’d have treated me well, he would, with a house, / a plot of land and a wife you’d gladly prize. / [...] / My master, I tell you, would have repaid me well / if he’d grown old right here.” Hence it is obvious that for Eumaeus, voluntary submission is not only a pious act, but also a utilitarian act. Eumaeus the self hopes to get rewards for his voluntary submission from Odysseus the other. The self is not concerned with the question of whether his self is in the other who is none other than his split self, but with the question of whether he can get rewards from the other who is definitely not his self. If the other were his self, the rewards he gets from the other would be meaningless for it is his split self who gives his self the rewards. He does not get anything, though he is given his rewards. In order to get something, the other must be the absolutely alien other rather than the split self of the self as a middle term. Here we encounter a similar conclusion to the one drawn from the analysis of piety. Let us continue with our examination of Eumaeus’ knowledge of a master and see if we can draw yet another similar conclusion. At the beginning of the above quotation, Eumaeus says, “Every stranger and beggar comes from Zeus/ and whatever scrap they get from the likes of us, / they’ll find it welcome. That’s the best we can do, / we servants, always cowed by our high and mighty masters [...].” Euameus appears to be talking about a servant, but from his talk about a servant, we might be able to
make a reasonable inference about a master. If a servant cannot offer a decent
treatment to his guest, then his master must be able to do so since his master is high
and mighty. Eumaeus admires his master's high social status and great power, which
are naturally associated with great wealth. In spite of his strong admiration for his
master's social status, power and wealth, Eumaeus cannot aspire after them
personally, without divine aid, that is to say. The reason again is related to his piety
towards gods. Odysseus the slave's remarks echo Eumaeus' world outlook: "it lies
with the gods to make us rich or poor" (376). The only way to become rich is
through gods' grace. Hence, Eumaeus' piety towards gods limits his admiration to an
almost impersonal degree. His admiration is almost impersonal in that it is essentially
an admiration of almighty gods who are too far away from him, a non-individualistic
individual. He forgets himself for a moment during his admiration of gods. Since the
object of admiration has changed from human power to divine power, this admiration
is that of an absolutely alien other. A god confers the absolute otherness on Odysseus
by standing by him. This absolute otherness enshrines Odysseus with a godly
charisma that draws Eumaeus along, filling him with admiration.

So much for Eumaeus the slave's knowledge of a master and its effect on
voluntary submission. Now I call attention to Eumaeus the master's knowledge of a
master. This is a significant issue, but there is not much textual evidence. We have
to concentrate on Eumaeus' famous remarks addressed to Odysseus the slave: " [...] Slaves, / with their lords no longer there to crack the whip, / lost all zest to perform
their duties well." (364) Eumaeus realizes that masters have to discipline their
slaves in order for the latter to perform their duties well.

Here his self already splits up into two extremes, the self as a master and the
other as a slave. He opposes a collective self to a collective other, the self as a
master belonging to the former and the other as a slave the latter. He places the self
as a master in the collective self, one of whom Odysseus the master is, and then acts
as the spokesman of this collective self, addressing both Odysseus the slave, an other
in the collective other, and the collective other, to which the other as a slave
belongs. In this complex interaction, Eumaeus's double identity and Odysseus' double identity are interwoven with each other, but it is Eumaeus' self as a master
and Odysseus' self as a slave that dominate the interaction. Since Eumaeus' self as a
master speaks rather than is spoken to, Odysseus' self as a slave has to be the other.
Here is the whole picture of the complex interaction. This picture seems to be about
the class tension between the slave class and the master class, but the interweaving of
Eumaeus' double identity and Odysseus' double identity produces a cushioning effect on the class conflict, especially when we take into consideration the seemingly unbreakable master-slave relationship between Eumaeus and Odysseus. If we divert our attention from the class conflict to Eumaeus and Odysseus' good relationship and then back to the class conflict, we will discover that Eumaeus' general remarks do not apply to his relationship with his master. This contrast between the class tension and Eumaeus' good relationship with his master reveals that Eumaeus' voluntary submission is sincere and of his own free will. To clarify this point further, the master-slave tension comes more easily and more naturally than the master-slave love, and since he does not lapse into the master-slave tension, Eumaeus' voluntary submission must be a rational choice driven by the bond of love.

A few more words need to be said before we go into the next section. By becoming a master, Eumaeus, like Odysseus, strikes a balance between absolute freedom and absolute slavery, though Eumaeus may not have the idea of freedom at all. And this balance helps relieve the master-slave tension between Eumaeus and the suitors. While Odysseus is absent, the suitors, or the young lords of Ithaca, court Odysseus' wife, squander Odysseus' property, insult Odysseus' slaves, order Eumaeus to do things that he isn't willing to do. Eumaeus often curses them behind their back. In view of this situation, his becoming a master makes him avoid a direct conflict with the suitors. He becomes a master, but essentially he is still a slave: "Not his style to bed indoors, / apart from his pigs" (318). Like Odysseus, he is a working master, and unlike Odysseus, he is a slave-master rather than a master-slave, as Odysseus is. That is also why he does not dare to deal with the young lords as equals. He is still unable to disalienate the absolute other in masters, especially in Odysseus whose affection towards him, whether sincere or not, makes him stay within the bond of love willingly.

**Emotion, Intellect and Voluntary Submission**

Plato is well known for opposing emotion to intellect. He may be justified in thinking that emotion is the enemy of philosophy, but only to a certain extent. Nietzsche and Bergson both are great philosophers, but their emotions do not affect their philosophical meditation. On the contrary, their emotions seem to be conducive to their philosophical thoughts. This is especially true of Nietzsche, whose works, *On the Genealogy of Morality* for example, are full of emotions. At the other extreme, we find Hegel whose pure thought tries to intellectualize and swallow up everything.
In the dialectical movement of pure thought, the self "negates the independent existence of objects and turns them into media for its own fulfillment" (Marcuse 192). By negating the independent existence of objects, the self-consciousness blurs the boundary between entities, which is only clear when these entities are independent of each other. Interestingly, we may find the similar tendency in emotions whose outbursts overflow the boundary between subject and object, that is, between a master and a slave in the case of The Odyssey. We don't need to elaborate, as Havelock does, on how in emotional outbursts the subject is identified with the object. Let us take it as truth and use it in the analysis of Eumaeus' emotional outbursts.

My analysis of emotional outbursts' relationship with voluntary submission is to begin with a quotation from "The Loyal Swineherd". Eumaeus is talking to his anonymous master about his master whose whereabouts are unknown:

My master? Well, no doubt the dogs and wheeling birds
have ripped the skin from his ribs by now, his life is through—
or fish have picked him clean at sea, and the man's bones
lie piled up on the mainland, buried deep in sand ...
he's dead and gone. Aye, leaving a broken heart
for loved ones left behind, for me most of all.

Never another master kind as he!
I'll never find one-no matter where I go,
not even if I went back to mother and father,
the house where I was born and my parents reared me once.

Ah, but much as I grieve for them, much as I long
to lay my eyes on them, set foot on the old soil,
it's longing for him, him that wrings my heart—
Odysseus, lost and gone!

That man, old friend, far away as he is...

I can scarcely bear to say his name aloud,
so deeply he loved me, cared for me, so deeply.

Worlds away as he is, I call him Master, Brother! (305 - 306)

Eumaeus' emotional outbursts derive from his imagination of Odysseus' miserable death and his deep love of Eumaeus. His imagination fills him with the sorrow that cannot be expressed except by emotional hyperboles. These emotional hyperboles obscure various kinds of boundaries, the boundary between Ithaca and Odysseus'
burial ground, the boundary between a slave and his master's family, the boundary between his master and his parents, the boundary between the slave class and the master class, and above all the boundary between the self and the other. In transcending all these boundaries, Eumaeus develops his emotions to the extreme. Emotions, when developed to the extreme, may lead to either madness or reason. If emotions are suppressed for too long, their outbursts may end in madness. But in Eumaeus' case, in fact in the case of ancient Greeks in Homer's time when the emotional way of self-expression is prevalent, as Havelock tries to tell us in his Preface to Plato, emotional outbursts often lead to reason due to the timely release of suppressed emotions. At the end of Eumaeus' emotional release, he calls Odysseus “Master” and “Brother” that are emphasized by capitalizing the first letter. Eumaeus gives Odysseus the Master full recognition, which is a rational choice. This rational choice is immediately followed by an emotional choice, that is, brotherhood, another recognition. As a matter of fact, neither choice is pure. The rational choice is influenced by emotions and the emotional choice reason. Anyhow, full recognition is there. And full recognition, whether rational or emotional or both, indicates Eumaeus' willingness to submit to Odysseus' authority, either as a slave or as a younger brother. For Eumaeus, voluntary submission is emotional submission, since the emotional way of expressing oneself, including one's rational choice, prevails in ancient Greece, before and in Plato's time of course. For the same reason, Eumaeus's loyalty to Odysseus is also emotional.

Emotional Loyalty and Obligatory Loyalty

Emotional loyalty finds its best expression in emotional submission, loyalty being a moral concept and submission being an act. But emotional loyalty does not necessarily involve emotional submission. That is because there is the question of loyalty between two friends, or two equals, too. Only insofar as a superior and an inferior are concerned, loyalty is best illustrated by submission.

After this slight digression, I shall now deal with the relationship between emotional loyalty and obligatory loyalty. In Hegel's master-slave relationship, there is only obligatory loyalty. The reasons are as follows. First, the master-slave relationship derives from a life-and-death struggle that the slave can never forget, though it is already over. Second, the slave's loyalty results from his fear of his master. His master has the power to discipline and punish him. Third, he resents his master, who appropriates the knowledge of nature through appropriating his work.
Therefore, the slave’s loyalty to the master is compulsory. One might raise a question here. Is the slave’s loyalty to the master entirely compulsory? The answer might be no, if the master treats the slave kindly. But Hegel does not seem to have tackled this issue. Then we won’t pursue this issue further. Rather, let’s ask the question in a different way. Is Eumaeus’s loyalty to Odysseus totally emotional? The answer is also no. Obligation is the fundamental basis of loyalty, but the form of its expression may be emotional. In other words, loyalty may be latently obligatory, but manifestly emotional. But when the master and the slave bear profound affections toward each other, as Odysseus and Eumaeus do, loyalty may be, in the main or even essentially, emotional. This may apply to Eumaeus’ loyalty to Odysseus.

There remains a question: how loyal is Eumaeus to Odysseus? Homer praises Eumaeus’ staunch loyalty by calling him “the loyal swineherd” over and again. This shows that Homer views loyalty as the most praiseworthy virtue in a slave. Here we may let Nietzsche come in. According to Nietzsche, loyalty in origin is a virtue in the master. (22) But human history is the triumph of “the slave revolt in morality” (17). What Nietzsche wants to say is that due to the slave’s revolt, loyalty as a virtue is transferred to the slave. If Nietzsche is right, it follows that in Homer’s time the slave revolt is already victorious. But Nietzsche holds that the slave revolt in morality begins with the Jews, or the Jewish religion. (17) The doubt I raise here may well be left to a historian to solve, since it is not relevant to the question of voluntary submission. What I am concerned with is the transfer of loyalty as a virtue from the master to the slave. Suppose Nietzsche is fully justified in asserting the triumph of the slave revolt in morality. As far as submissive loyalty is concerned, though he deprives the master of this virtue, the slave does not turn it against its former owner, the master who swears submissive loyalty to a still greater master. Instead, the slave uses submissive loyalty to the master’s advantage because his submissive loyalty testifies to the master’s charisma. In The Odyssey, Homer devotes a whole book, Book 14 entitled “The Loyal Swineherd”, to the praise of Eumaeus’ loyalty to Odysseus. The real purpose, however, is not to extol Eumaeus’ loyalty, but to eulogize Odysseus from the standpoint of a slave. We need to keep in mind the fact that The Odyssey is not Eumaeus’ epic, but Odysseus’. Simply put, Odysseus is the hero of Homer’s epic. When Eumaeus’ risk of death serves as the test of his loyalty rather than the instrument of helping him to gain freedom from slavery, Odysseus’ heroic charisma appears to be all the greater. At the end of The Odyssey, Eumaeus and Philoetius stand side by side with Odysseus in the fight against the
suitors, who far exceed them in number. This proves that Eumaeus is "loyal to the death" (431). Here we see a non-Hegelian risk of death, which expresses Eumaeus' voluntary submission.

Loyalty and submission are indispensable for maintaining any hierarchy, actual or imagined. In The Odyssey, there are both actual hierarchy and imagined hierarchy. A brief explanation of actual hierarchy and imagined hierarchy is to be given before an elaborate illustration about the relationship among actual hierarchy, imagined hierarchy and voluntary submission is made. Actual hierarchy refers to the hierarchy in which the master and the slave both are present. As regards imagined hierarchy, it means the hierarchy that the slave constructs in his imagination in the master's absence.

**Actual Hierarchy and Imagined Hierarchy**

Actual hierarchy and imagined hierarchy may be used to distinguish voluntary submission from involuntary submission. The slave who voluntarily submits to his master may submit to his master voluntarily regardless of whether his master is present. If his master is not present, the slave may submit to the surrogate of the master voluntarily. This does not mean that it's always the case. Melanthius the goatherd obeys Odysseus' order willingly while Odysseus is present, but he betrays Odysseus when Odysseus is absent. He rejects the authority of Odysseus' son Telemachus and becomes the slave to the suitors. But since our discussion is confined to Eumaeus, who does things under Telemachus' leadership in Odysseus' absence, the above assertion holds true. And the assertion may be more firmly grounded if the voluntary submission in question is essentially emotional, again as in the case of Eumaeus. As for involuntary submission, it gives itself away when the master is absent: "[...]. Slaves, / with their lords no longer there to crack the whip, / lost all zest to perform their duties well." (364) Generally speaking, for the slave who submits to his master involuntarily, there is no imagined hierarchy that oversees his work. The hierarchy collapses the moment his master leaves. The slave will only work in the actual hierarchy, either this one or that one. Only a loyal slave like Eumaeus will shift from the actual hierarchy to the imagined hierarchy, and then back to the actual hierarchy if his master returns.

The question of how Eumaeus constructs the imagined hierarchy remains unresolved. As I have mentioned, the imagined hierarchy is built with imagination. To clarify this concept, I need to add that memory also plays a role in constructing
the imagined hierarchy. As a matter of fact, however, there is no sharp line between memory and imagination. Memory is not based purely on facts. That is to say, imagination is involved in memory. Nor is there pure imagination. Memory is an element of imagination. I shall push this issue no further, since it is not much relevant to my topic. I will use the two words in a broad sense. In Eumaeus’ imagined hierarchy, memory is interwoven with imagination. He often recalls his master’s kindness and imagines his master either dying a miserable death or wandering like a beggar somewhere. His memory increases his determination to be loyal to his master to the death. His imagination, on the other hand, betrays his eagerness to see his master soon so as to return his master’s kindness by fulfilling his duty, that is, emotional loyalty. Therefore, the imagined hierarchy he builds becomes the framework within which he continues to perform his duty until his master comes back.

In the next section, I shall illustrate why Eumaeus is so loyal to a hierarchy that rests on inequality and also how full recognition is possible in a hierarchy that accommodates relative equality.

**Hierarchy, Relative Equality and Full Recognition**

Hegel’s master-slave hierarchy is founded on absolute inequality, maintained by absolute inequality and ended as a result of absolute inequality. The self treats the other as an unessential object and this absolute contempt leads to a life-and-death struggle, which gives birth to the master-slave hierarchy. The master wields his absolute power to discipline his slave and forces his slave to work for him in order to stabilize the current hierarchy. To his disappointment, however, he has no way of gaining full recognition from his slave due to their absolute inequality. The slave, by contrast, discovers his due worth and garners the concept of freedom in his work. He begins to resent his master’s absolute oppression. His accumulated resentment finds its outlet in a life-and-death struggle for freedom. The hierarchy collapses. Thus, it is evident that the slave cannot possibly be content to live with a tyrannical hierarchy for good and that full recognition is impossible in a tyrannical hierarchy.

Now attention is to be diverted to the master-slave relationship between Odysseus and Eumaeus. This hierarchy is derivative from the slave trade, which becomes a turning point in Eumaeus’s life. Eumaeus is lucky enough to be purchased by benevolent Laertes who saves him in a sense. Odysseus, the working master, treats him well, so much so that in an emotional outburst Eumaeus calls his supposedly
absent master Master and Brother. While his master is in exile, Eumaeus buys a slave and becomes a master. Later, Odysseus returns, but disguises as a slave, in order to accomplish his revenge scheme. He tests Eumaeus's loyalty that is demonstrated in the fight against the suitors. Eumaeus's risk of death betters his already good relationship with Odysseus.

From this brief summary I shall single out the factors that contribute to relative equality and full recognition: emotions, work, role reversal, and death. Emotional outbursts overflood the slavery hierarchy, which is suppressed, obliterated and forgotten. Equality alone exists at these moments when Eumaeus and Odysseus become brothers. This equality forms the basis of full recognition. Eumaeus, Odysseus' brother, acknowledges Odysseus as his Master. In another emotional outburst, Odysseus and Eumaeus kiss each other. By kissing him, Odysseus gives Eumaeus the full recognition due to a human being who is no different from another human being in species. The two human beings recognize each other as equals in emotional bursts. Work produces the same effect. Odysseus and Eumaeus both work and in fact both are proud of working because it is gods who give work the grace and fame it deserves. They share the identity of worker as well as the view of sacred work. In so doing, they become one, and yet they are still two, two equals who see their self in the other. The self as a worker and the other as a worker are exchangeable. The exchangeability of the self and the other indicates their mutual recognition, full and complete. Their role reversals facilitate and complete the equalizing process in question. This time the self and the other share double identity. Being slaves, they are equals; being masters, they are still equals. They exchange their mutual recognition, again full and complete. There is yet another kind of equality, that achieved in standing together face to face with death. Before death, everyone is equal, equal as a mortal, whether he is a master or a slave. Also before death, Odysseus and Eumaeus recognize in each other the courage to face up to death, to rise above natural existence.

In short, full recognition occurs only in a hierarchy that allows a certain degree of equality. Relative equality secures the hierarchy that is built on inequality. Because of relative equality, class oppression is reduced, or even does not seem to exist. This is especially true in the case of Eumaeus, though he may not have the concepts of equality and recognition. So long as his relationship with Odysseus accommodates relative equality of whatever sort, submission is welcomed by Eumaeus, both on this ground and because he is offered the chance to gain and enjoy...
Stoicism and Individualism: By Way of a Conclusion

Does Eumaeus submit to Odysseus' authority in a stoicist manner? Hegel defines the stoicist principle as "consciousness is a being that thinks" and "consciousness holds something to be essentially important, or true and good only in so far as it thinks it to be such" (121). "In thinking, I am free, because I am not in an other, but remain simply and solely in communion with myself" (120). Here we see a self-sufficient, innerly free and thinking individual who regardless of social status, lives like a sage, as a stoicist is widely held to be. This individual definitely is not Eumaeus. Eumaeus thinks in the way of emotions rather than concepts, is not a mentally independent individual, and above all has no notion of freedom, which is to some extent the result of the development of individualism. Therefore, Eumaeus is not a stoicist slave.

Thus far a detailed characterization of Eumaeus's voluntary submission to Odysseus has been given in order to demonstrate that Hegel's chiefly retrospective and partly prophetic view of lordship and bondage may not be applicable to all cases, though it admirably captures the essence of the master-slave relationship situated in our real history and bears fruit, for example, in Benjamin's cogent feminist interpretation.

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