Hour 14

Champions of dikē ‘justice’

The key word is dikē ‘justice’ (long-range), ‘judgment’ (short-range)
The opposite of this word is hubris ‘outrage’.

Passage A. Iliad XVIII 497-508
Meanwhile the people were gathered in assembly, for there was a quarrel [neikos], and two men were wrangling about the blood-price [poimēν] for a man who had died,[500] the one claiming to the population of the district [dēmos] that he had the right to pay off the damages in full, and the other refusing to accept anything. Each was seeking a limit [peirēρ], in the presence of an arbitrator [histrō], and the people took sides, each man backing the side that he had taken; but the heralds kept them back, and the elders sat on their seats of stone in a solemn circle, [505] holding the scepters [skēπτρα] which the heralds had put into their hands. Then they rose and each in his turn gave judgment [dikē], and there were two measures of gold laid down, to be given to him whose judgment [dikē] should be deemed the fairest.

Passage B. Odyssey xix 107-114:
“My lady,” answered Odysseus, “who on the face of the whole earth can dare to chide with you? Your fame [kleos] reaches the firmament of heaven itself; you are like some blameless king, who upholds righteousness [= good dikē], as the monarch over a great and valiant nation: the earth yields its wheat and barley, the trees are loaded with fruit, the ewes bring forth lambs, and the sea abounds with fish by reason of his virtues, and his people do good deeds under him.

Passage C. Hesiod Works and Days 1-10
Muses of Pieria, you who make kleos with your songs, come and tell of Zeus, making a song about your father, on account of whom there are mortals both unworthy of talk and worthy, both worth speaking of and not—all on account of great Zeus.
Easily he gives power, and just as easily he ruins the powerful.
Easily he diminishes the distinguished, and magnifies the undistinguished.
Easily he makes straight the crooked and withers the overweening
—Zeus, the one who thunders on high, who
Heed me, seeing and hearing as you do, and with dikē make straight the divine laws [themis plural].
While you do that, I am ready to tell genuine [etētuma] things to Perses.

Passage D. Hesiod Theogony 65-97:
And they {the Muses}, sending forth a lovely voice, sing and dance and make kleos for the norms [nomoi] and accustomed ways of all the immortals, as they send forth a lovely voice.
Anyway, back then, they went to Olympus, glorying in their beautiful voice with immortal song. And the dark earth resounded all around them as they sang, and the lovely stepings of their feet made a sound from below as they proceeded towards their father, the one who is king in the sky, with sole possession of the thunder and the gleaming thunderbolt, having defeated, with his power [kratos], Kronos his father. Each thing was well arranged by him, as he assigned the norms and marked out the honors [timai] for the immortals. These things, then, the Muses sang, they who have abodes in Olympus, the nine daughters begotten by great Zeus, Kleio {Clio} and Euterpe and Thaleia {Thalia, ‘Festivity’} and Melpomene and Terpsichore and Erato and Polyhymnia and Ourania {Urania} and Calliope {Calliope}. That one {Calliope} is the most important of them all, for she accompanies revered kings.
Whosoever among sky-nourished kings is given honor [timē] by these daughters of great Zeus and is beheld by them when he is born,
for such a man they pour sweet dew upon his tongue, and from his mouth flow sweet words. The people, all of them, look towards him as he sorts out the divine ordinances [themis plural] by way of straight judgments [dikai]. And he, speaking without stumbling and with his powers of understanding, can even put an end to a great quarrel [neikos]. It is for this reason that there are kings, kings with good thinking [phrenes], namely, because they can easily turn right around the {wrong} things that are done to people who are wronged in the assembly [agora]. They can do it by persuasion, using soft words. And when he {such a king} goes to a gathering [agōn], the people turn to him as if he were a god, with his gentle command of respect [aidōs], and he stands out among the assembled. Such is the sacred gift of the Muses for humankind. For it is because of the Muses and far-shooting Apollo that there are singers {poets} and players of the lyre [kitharis] on this earth. And it is because of Zeus that there are kings. Blessed [olbios] is he whom the Muses love. And a sweet voice [audē] flows from his mouth.

Passage E. Theognis 213-218

My thumos! Keep turning and showing a new side of your versatile nature in each encounter with every philos.

214 Keep mixing your temperament to match that of each philos.

216 Have the temperament of a complex octopus,

218 who always looks like whatever rock he has just clung to.

218 Now be like this; then, at another time, become someone else in your coloring.

It is true to say that sophia is better than being atropos.

Like Odysseus, the figure of Theognis is extrinsically base but intrinsically noble. In the poetry of Theognis, he complains of failing to achieve justice in his own lifetime. Beyond his lifetime, however, the prospects are different. Once dead, the hero can return as a ghost, revenant (especially in 337-350). This theme is evident elsewhere as well in Theognis:

Passage F. Theognis 1123-1125:

Do not remind me of my misfortunes! The kinds of things that happened to Odysseus have happened to me too.

1124 Odysseus, who returned, emerging from the great palace of Hades, and who then killed the suitors with a pitiless thumos.