

Occasions of supplication in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are strikingly similar to one another, as well as to descriptions of supplication in later Greek literature. Identical gestures, such as the grasping of the knees or chin, are used, and when physical contact is impossible, a specialized vocabulary figuratively indicates the same motions (i.e. γουνάζομαι). Although the poems describe supplication in similar terms, there is a striking difference between the outcomes of supplication scenes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: most supplications in the *Odyssey* are successful, while the *Iliad*'s suppliants, in all cases but one, fail. In his 1973 article "Hiketeia", John Gould addresses the question of what may cause a supplication to fail, suggesting that it depends on the completeness of the act, and whether or not contact between suppliant and supplicated is maintained (p. 77). The outcome may also be influenced by the setting in which the supplication takes place; perhaps the rules of warfare, as explained to Menelaus by Agamemnon, do not allow for supplication on the battlefield (*Il.* 6.55-65). What is most distinctly different, however, is the degree to which the gods are present in the act. The supplication of Priam by Achilles (the only successful supplication in the *Iliad*) takes place inside Achilles' home, and—unlike all other *Iliad* supplications—includes the participation of the gods and, in particular, of Zeus. In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, Zeus ἱκετήσιος, the guardian of suppliants, is commonly invoked. Moreover, the household setting of Priam's supplication and the involvement of Zeus draws connection between the institution of supplication and ritualized *xenia*, in which Zeus also plays the role of guardian.

The aim of this paper is to identify the presence of Zeus ἱκετήσιος in the *Iliad*, where he remains unnamed. The supplication scenes I will discuss are: Priam to Achilles, Odysseus to the Cyclops, and Odysseus to Arete; *xenia* will come into play through the simile at the beginning of the Achilles and Priam sequence, which juxtaposes the situations of guest and suppliant. Zeus, protector of both the suppliant and the guest, is also called upon by Odysseus in his supplication of the Cyclops. The supplication of Arete by Odysseus is nearly identical to that of Achilles and Priam, allowing us to see the events of Priam's supplication to Achilles replayed in the *Odyssey* with the explicit involvement of Zeus the guardian of suppliants.

Gould, J., "Hiketeia", *JHS* 93 (1973) 74–103.