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The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity [Review]

Erwin F. Cook

Trinity University, ecook@trinity.edu

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Irad Malkin, The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1998. Pp. 331 + xiii.
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Reviewed by Erwin Cook -- The University of Texas - Austin
efcook@mail.utexas.edu

The Returns of Odysseus will be essential reading for specialists in Homer, early Greek history, and ancient ethnology. They and others willing to expend the time and energy necessary to read this densely argued and worded book will win a perspective on Greek (pre)colonization and its mythology unavailable from any other source. I myself required a full week for a careful reading, after which I noted to my surprise that I had taken over 50 pages of notes, many of which now belong to my permanent files. If, in what follows, I concentrate on some illustrative problems with Malkin's (M.) use of archaic epic, it is in order to spare BMCR and its readers a commensurate review, and because I am counting on you to go out and buy a copy (you will want your own to mark up). [[1]]

The focus of the book is the role of myth in Greek exploration and settlement of Northwest Greece and Italy. M. argues that myths of return (nostoi) involving heroes who fought at Troy (Nostoi) played an important role in filtering and shaping the perceptions not only of Greek (proto)colonists, but also of indigenous peoples. In particular, myth was used to conceptualize ethnicity, and to mediate relations between groups. In this, Homer's Odyssey played a decisive role.

Heroic genealogy was used to articulate identity. The nonGreek peoples who adopted Nostos-genealogies were usually peripheral to the colonies, while those in direct contact did not: Odysseus was an ancestor in Latium, but not Campania (207). Sometimes, a Trojan hero followed his Greek captor west, and remained there to settle as the Greek continued home (138; 199). The Etruscans, for example, inherited traditions pairing Odysseus with Aeneas, while the Romans, in an act of differentiation, sided with Aeneas (203). Nor did myth travel in only one direction: sailors returned from Pithekoussai to Khalkis with accounts making Odysseus father to Latinos and Agrios. Hesiod, who records the genealogy, could have heard it from the Khalkidians himself when he sang at the funeral of Amphidamas (179).

M. thus accepts the biographical tradition of Hesiod, and elsewhere of Archilochos "that true-to-life hardy mid-seventh-century poet-soldier and colonist" (181). He also accepts the authenticity of Theogony 1011-18, and interprets 1015 to mean that Latinos and Agrios ruled the inland Etruscans "from" sacred islands: "by analogy one

could say ‘and the British ruled the Chinese from the island (Hong Kong)’ without implying that all Chinese were island dwellers or that the rule was effective or far reaching” (185). The word order does not easily accommodate this interpretation of mala tele, and I would argue that mukho situates Latinos and Agrios in the “recesses” of an island chain, but more importantly Hesiod says they ruled over “all” the Etruscans. M. also defends the reference to Telegonos in verse 1014 on the grounds that it “provides a context for the rest (in spite of the fact that it scans badly)” (190). The problem does not involve just scansion, but syntax, which makes Telegonos a ruler of the Tyrsenoi.

M. argues that Greek myth could serve a mediating function, in part because ethnic identity is “aggregative” rather than “oppositional” in the Dark Age, where “we will find no Greeks in the sense of self contrasted with non-Greeks as absolute others” (18). Genealogical traditions thus initially served to “heroize” rather than “Hellenize” nonGreek peoples (136). NonGreeks may have appropriated these myths and genealogies because of the “authority” and aesthetic superiority of Homeric poetry and its ability to provide them with a “full past” (170f.). With the development of oppositional models of ethnic identity, the very myths that once served to mediate, sometimes became tools of an expansionist policy by Greek colonies that had begun to claim Nostoi as their ancestors.

M. presses this supposed lack of ethnic consciousness rather hard, but his overall model of Greek cultural diffusion is coherent and often illuminating. His arguments reminded me at once of the Homeric Kuklopes, whom I was disappointed to see him dismiss together with the Laistrugones as “nonhuman” (120). Yet Homer defines the Kuklopes with a ‘negative catalogue’ of cultural institutions and ethical norms shared—as M. agrees—by the audience, so that an oppositional model seems clearly in evidence. [[2]] In panHellenic epic, of course, the implied ‘positive catalogue’ becomes a definition of ‘Greekness’. At any event, this constructed other is primitive but not inhuman, nor would a cultural catalogue have much point if it were. Homer thus describes Poluphemos as an agrios aner born to a member of the Greek pantheon, and he even gives the Laistrugones a polis with basileus and agore.

M. observes that the nostoi of other Homeric heroes, and the nonHomeric sequels to Odyssey, were also soon localized in the west and for similar purposes: in fact “the entire ethnography of the Mediterranean could be explained as originating from the Big Bang of the Trojan War and the consequent Nostos diffusion” (3). Odysseus had special resonance, however, during the protocolonial phase. On the basis of the first tripod dedications in the cave at Polis Bay on Ithake—early to mid 9th century—M. concludes that “the Odyssey, as we know it, existed in the ninth century” (45). Yet the first half of the 9th century seems implausibly early for the degree of Euboian protocolonial activity

implied by such dedications. M. himself suggests that the earliest tripods may be Ithakan, in which case a perceived analogy between Odysseus and the protocolonists who landed at Polis Bay cannot have been an original motivating factor in making the dedications. Evidence for Ithakan protocolonial activity in the 9th century is also lacking, so we are left with local interest in emulating Odysseus in Book 13 of our Odyssey as the sole explanation for the tripods. One might also ask why M. is invested in a written text earlier than some would date the Greek alphabet, especially since “almost none of the applications of the nostoi in the west is derived from Homer himself; rather, they come from alternative versions” (159). The answer seems based on his ideas about the nature of oral poetry, together with a historian’s impulse to periodize the nostoi-traditions.

But whose protocolonial outlook would be reflected in an early to mid 9th century Odyssey? It is surely not eastern. The nascent political communities of Asia Minor were still consolidating at this time: their perspective was colonial, in that their own settlements were comparatively recent and in some cases ongoing, but not protocolonial, since they were not yet mature enough to be preoccupied with exploration of their own. Their first western colonies are probably Siris and Gela (Rhodian and Cretan), founded roughly 2 centuries after M. dates Odyssey, as are those to the Black Sea region, in which the Ionian states were mainly interested. The early settlers of Abydos and Kyzikos seem to have left their Homer at home, for the region is chiefly associated with the Argonautic Saga.

M. nevertheless uses eastern Greek experience to dispose of two passages commonly assumed to reflect western colonization. Thus, when Odysseus describes ‘Goat-Island’ in Book 9 as a prospective colonist, he echoes Ionian settlement patterns, which only coincidentally resemble those in the west: “the possibility of finding a ‘land good to settle’ ... had been a realistic option in the minds of protocolonial sailors throughout the Dark Age” (14; cf. 160). It seems to me that M. uses ‘protocolonial sailors’ to unite largely independent frames of reference in 9th century Greece. To put this concretely: I find it hard to visualize the historical audience of M.’s Odyssey.

M. also identifies Skherie as an Ionian settlement: “If this is not another case of deliberate “distancing”...the reality reflected in the Odyssey seems to be that of a world in which sea raids are still commonplace, most Greek cities are inland, and colonization has not yet taken place. Accordingly, Phaiakia is indeed modeled on Ionian sites in the eastern Mediterranean, but the realities of navigation in the west are those of the protocolonial period” (14). M. infers that western colonization has not taken place from a supposed lack of coastal sites in Homer. Of course definitions are somewhat relative, but I find no such lack in either poem.

It seems to me that ‘Homer’, however understood, would have had every motivation to allow émigrés throughout the Mediterranean to find their communities mirrored in Skherie and that once again M.’s only argument against this remains his putative date for the texts. Yet Odysseus’ route from Ogugie clearly implies a western location for Skherie, as does his 18 day voyage without making landfall. On Skherie he encounters a people for whom Euboia is telotato, but who know the bay of Phorkus on Ithake. A Euboian (proto)colonist would have surely appreciated the joke. The story that Skherie was founded as an organized agricultural colony led by an oikist who supervised the division of farmland and the building of a monumental agore with fixed stone seating and adjacent temple, city walls, and municipal water supply, reminds one of western settlement patterns and traditions—and sits ill in a 9th or even 8th century epic of any kind.

That the Phaiakes despise merchants (Od. 8.161-4) sounds neither especially Ionic nor protocolonial as M. understands the term. M., however, argues that when Eurualos taunts Odysseus by calling him a merchant-captain, it “does not, as has been thought, indicate any general derogation of trade. In one of the lying tales Odysseus makes a point of attributing to himself the reputation of being a superb profit maker” (89; cf. 132). M. is not the first to challenge the—admittedly simplistic—view that Odyssey is an instrument of elite ideology. Yet it is hard not to see Eurualos as making a generic class-distinction in which a merchant-captain is derisively characterized as kerdeon ... harpaleon precisely on account of his mercantile ethos. Homer makes no attempt that I can detect to accommodate an implied audience that does not share these sentiments, and seems rather to reinforce them when the characteristically restrained Odysseus finds Eurualos’ remarks so offensive that he loses his composure and insults his hosts. Odysseus and his slave Eumaios both derisively refer to the Phoenicians, the merchant-captains par excellence in Homer, as ‘nibblers’, so that a derogation of seeking profit through trade is made to cut across class-lines (14.289; 15.416).

In Book 19, on the other hand, Odysseus does not speak in propria persona but as a lying bastard when he claims that ‘Odysseus’ surpasses other men in knowing kerdos (19.285). The word itself could point to many things other than trade, which in fact it cannot mean in this passage: one could scarcely imagine anything more unHomeric than Odysseus setting out his Phaiakian xenia on the beach to barter them for profit. With only such gifts in his possession, kerdos can only refer to further xenia, together with the network of personal relationships such gifts represent. Finally, Hesiod allows us to distinguish between a professional merchant class and landed aristocrats who engage in occasional necessary trade, so there is potentially a world of difference between the

merchant-captain derided by Eurualos, and Mentos, another aristocrat M. identifies as a merchant on the basis of his voyage to exchange iron for bronze.

M.'s views on *Odyssey's* text and its protocolonial *Weltbild* detract little from the larger scene he paints in these chapters. M. begins a diachronic survey by noting that Ithake lies on the principal route taken by early protocolonists as they ventured northward along the mainland coast and westward to Italy and Sicily. Specifically, they would have passed through the narrow channel separating the western shore of Ithake from Kephallonia. Polis Bay offered the only good anchorage on the west coast of Ithake and was thus a frequent port-of-call for those whose destination was not Ithake itself.

The first major island on the route northward is Corcyra, already identified as Skherie in the Archaic period. Corcyra is a natural basing station for exploration to the north and west, and M. links its foundation to that of Pithekoussai. He thus accepts the tradition that Corinthians expelled an earlier Euboian colony, and dates the expulsion to 733. From Corcyra, prevailing winds lead to Sicily: the first natural landfall, Naxos, was also the first to be settled, by Euboians, followed one year later by the arrival of Corinthians at Syracuse. At about this time (proto)colonists were also advancing northward from Corcyra, the Euboians settling Orikos by mid 8th century, the Corinthians Apollonia and Epidamnos. Protocolonial activity in Salento, across the strait from Orikos, was especially intense in the first half of the 8th century, commencing at Otranto as early as 800. M. thus traces two paths of diffusion for Homeric epic: one leading from Corcyra to Epiros and Salento, and another from Pithekoussai to Campania, Latium and Etruria. Sicily plays a negligible role in this narrative.

M. claims the early visitors of Polis Bay knew their Homer, and on this basis dedicated a number of bronze tripods in the cave of the nymphs. M. concedes that historical reconstruction of the cult is speculative. For example, the stratification within the cave is hopelessly confused, both by a reorganization of the sanctuary in the 4th century and by the early excavations, so the data will never be able to support or refute M.'s conclusions. The date of the early tripods is also insecure and that of their dedication even more so, since the cult underwent a major reorganization in the 4th century. Moreover, explicit references to Odysseus are not simply "few and late" (100), but completely lacking until the cult was reorganized and even then our direct evidence consists of a single graffito on one of numerous votive masks. On this basis, C. Antonaccio denies that Odysseus was associated with the cave before the Hellenistic period (as M. freely admits). I agree with M. that the cave was probably identified early on as the place Odysseus stored his treasure. That it was the site of a 9th century hero-cult is implausible, however, for there are no securely attested examples of this before the

second half of the 8th, and following Antonaccio's distinction between tomb-cult and hero-cult even that date may be early.

Against the view that Homer is alluding to historical cult, M. offers the following: Odysseus does not dedicate his tripods in the cave, but only stores them there. Interpreting *Odyssey* as an *aition* "seems oversophisticated and hypercritical" (97). The number of tripods in Homer and the cave is a red herring, and it is unlikely that one would have removed the tripods from another shrine at the time the cave was reorganized. Dedication of tripods in a cave or to nymphs is essentially unparalleled—assuming, of course, that we exclude Ithake. The cave was probably sacred to chthonic gods before it was associated with the Olympians—an argument that if accepted only excludes the Olympians, as heroes and nymphs are both chthonic and are not necessarily linked.

Few would doubt that stories of Odysseus were already in circulation by the time Greek protocolonists arrived at Polis-Bay. The moment those stories included an Odysseus who returns to kill Penelope's suitors, it would have been natural to have him arrive at a remote location, ideally one in which he could also store his treasure. That treasure could as easily be Trojan plunder as Phaiakian *xeinia*, although a revenge-story lends itself to the motif of lone return. It is thus easy to see how a poet who needed a location for Odysseus' landfall would have chosen a remote harbor sporting a sacred cave that was well known as a port-of-call for protocolonial explorers whose experiences had a natural affinity to those of his hero.

Less clear is the priority of the dedications and the narrative of our *Odyssey*. Much rests on the claim that dedicating tripods in a cave sacred to nymphs requires external explanation. But tripods are not commonly dedicated to heroes either, although M. could have strengthened his argument by mentioning the 6th century cult of Ptoios in NE Boiotia. [[3]] It seems plausible to me that western (proto)colonists would have exercised their rivalries by making dedications at an established sanctuary. The location of this particular sanctuary at the gateway to the beyond, and the status of tripods as the prestige artifacts par excellence during the period, may be adequate explanation for a singularity that remains by any interpretation of the material.

As soon as Odysseus hid his treasure in the cave at Polis Bay, dedications already on display acquired heroic precedent. Perhaps those dedications included tripods of such quality and number that word reached Homer, who then included them among Odysseus' possessions. M. seeks to increase the implausibility of this by asserting that *Odyssey* would then be a mere cult-*aition*, though it seems to be precisely this in the case of Ino-Leukothea. Even so, not every allusion to cult needs to be an *aition*, nor as a consequence

must every narrative parallel to cult be exact to be valid. I also see no reason why Homer could not be alluding to the cult's own aition when Odysseus vows to give gifts to the nymphs as he had formerly done (13.356ff.). It remains, however, that there is no need for a 9th century text in any of this, or even an Odyssey that included Phaiakis. All that must be assumed is the ability of oral traditions with an anchor in interstate cult to preserve the story that Odysseus once left tripods in the cave.

M. notes that Odyssey-sequels focus on mainland regions opposite Ithake. He then attempts to connect these sequels to the prophecy of Teiresias in Book 11. M. begins by asserting as well known that “Teiresias’s prophecy and the last book and a half of the Odyssey thoroughly contradict each other” (121). He explains this supposed discrepancy with appeal to the “oral complexity” of the epics, so that it is wrong to impose our notions of internal consistency on them. He offers a similar explanation for Odysseus’ remark that in fulfilling the prophecy he will travel “from city to city”—though I fail to see why this should be found “rather curious in terms of the Odyssey itself” (123) since Teiresias indicates an extended journey inland. M. follows the commentators in claiming the prologue inaccurately describes Odysseus as having seen “many cities”; and on this basis he links both passages to sequels in which Odysseus goes into exile after killing the suitors. He finds similar allusions to the sequels when Alkinoos asks Odysseus to narrate his wanderings (Od. 8.572-76), and when the beggar-Odysseus says to Eumaios that “wandering through the many cities of men I come here” (15.491-92).

The Kimmerioi, Kikones, Laistrugones, Aioloioi, and Phaiakes all inhabit poleis, and in his Apologoi Odysseus indicates he reached Maleia before being blown off course. This leaves a gap between Thrace and the southern tip of the Peloponnesos which can be filled in with stays at numerous poleis, including those of fellow war veterans, along the coast. There is no reason to be surprised by the wording of the prologue, and if Odysseus’ remarks to Eumaios have any truth value they likewise refer to his adventures, as they claim to do. Alkinoos merely supposes—correctly—that any aristocrat who washes up on his remote shores must be well traveled. M. thus conflates four different narrative voices in a superannuated mode of Analysis that may blind some scholars to the possibility that Odyssey does indeed reflect extra-Homeric tradition in some if not all of these passages.

M. next attempts to periodize Odyssey’s sequels: “a useful yardstick for early elements in stories about the non-Odyssey Odysseus would be their adherence to the main elements of the prophecy of Teiresias.” (122). M. concludes that the Thesprotian Epirote stories date at least to the 7th century and are earlier than those from Aitolia and Arkadia. In reaching this conclusion, M. assumes ex halos at Od. 11.134 refers to a death that comes “from” as opposed to “away from” the sea, although he keeps both meanings

open in his translation. Of course, one could also argue that the passage is deliberately ambiguous so as to accommodate alternative traditions. [[4]]

Corroborative evidence for periodizing the sequels is less than compelling: M. builds one argument, for example, on a problematic reference to Ephure in Odyssey 1.259: “Athena says that Odysseus was in (Thesprotian) Ephyra, where he stayed with Ilos, son of Mermeros” (128). M. adds that according to Pausanias (2.3.9) the epic Naupaktia describes Mermeros as living in Corcyra and dying in Epirote Thesprotie. From this he concludes: “The Corcyrean localization has obviously been created after the Greeks settled there ... but Ephyra, the land of the oracle of the dead, explicitly mentioned in the Odyssey, clearly points to a version at least contemporary with the Odyssey itself. In sum: since Mermeros’s home in Ephyra appears to have been common to the Odyssey and the early Argonautica and since both refer to Epirus, it would appear that the case for the Odyssey’s allusions to Epirote traditions is now more secure” (129).

Well no. Neither Pausanias nor Homer explicitly mention Epiros and neither locate Ephure there. Pausanias, moreover, says that Mermeros died on the mainland “just opposite” Corcyra, whereas Thesprotian Ephure, to which he does not refer, is located about 70km to the south. Homer does mention an Ephure, but its location is highly uncertain. It seems to be the same one mentioned in Iliad 15.531, on which R. Janko remarks: “this Ephure must be in Elis There is no need to assume that Homer knew of Thesprotian Ephure, later Kikhuros”. [[5]] Odysseus, on the other hand, indicates that Pheidon was “king of the Thesprotians”, that he lived on and ruled the coast, and that they were xeinoi (14.316). Who then is Ilos and why does Athene indicate that Odysseus stayed with him and not Pheidon if Ephure is located on the Thesprotian coast? The suitors group Ephure together with Pulos and Sparta as they joke about places Telemakhos may have gone for help. Even without observing that Iliad 11.670-72 apparently locates Pulos in Triphylia—so that Ephure would naturally belong to the same trip—the collocation could imply that Ephure is located south of Ithake.

But my larger problem with M.’s analysis is that it places Homer in a vacuum. As M. notes, Odyssey must have developed and achieved its canonical form in the context of a rich narrative tradition that includes alternative sequels, some of which it alludes to or incorporates while contradicting and silencing others. Attempts to date a tradition as M. does are based on models in which the concept of fluidity within oral tradition has been inflated to the point that “tradition” ceases to be meaningful, so that narrative allusions are textual and relationships between narratives are stemmatic (despite his sensible objections to just such an approach in ch. 1, M. then stresses the singularity of Homeric epic). If the prophecy of Teiresias implies contemporary sequels to the narrative, then

“adherence” to the terms of the prophecy by later authors fails even to demonstrate awareness of Odyssey. Neither is divergence a secure basis for diachronic analysis: if a sequel diverges, it could be ignorant of the prophecy because it is earlier, it could belong to contemporary and competing traditions, or it could be later as M. argues. If these contemporary traditions had some sort of basis in, say, Aitolian cult, this could explain how they survived despite the authority of the Homeric version.

M. next turns to the Greek colonies of Campania. M. uses the so-called “Nestor cup” found at Pithekoussai to strengthen his case that Odyssey’s text was known to the 8th century Euboians living there. In making his argument, M. conflates Iliad and Odyssey under the rubric ‘Homer’ so that knowledge of one epic indicates knowledge of the other. M. goes on to assert that “most scholars who have written about the inscription on the cup found at Pithekoussai agree that the allusion loses its point unless it refers to the cup in the Iliad” (157). [[6]] Although the cup itself was inscribed after its manufacture and deposited in a grave around 720, M. finds that: “Because it is symposiac, this Nestor cup assumes the shared familiarity of the entire symposiac group, namely, the generation of the boy’s parents, around 750 or perhaps a little earlier. Since the cup of Nestor figures in the Iliad and possibly in the Odyssey, it is safe to see in it also an implied knowledge of Odysseus, a major hero in both epics” (158).

By dating Odyssey with Iliad, by asserting that the kotyle implies disseminated knowledge of Odyssey among 8th century “Greeks”, and by pressing the date of the allusion to before 734, M. is able to conclude that: “the Pithekoussai cup provides a way out of a familiar loop [I]f as I have been suggesting, Greeks had Homer in their heads, say, in the third quarter of the eighth century, then the Odyssey would be less a reflection of colonization than a commonly recognized frame of reference that had long been familiar to the colonizing Greeks. The Nestor cup from Pithekoussai swings the pendulum rather decisively toward the latter approach” (160).

Each of the assumptions on which this conclusion is based is problematic. The Nestor cup, a “Rhodian” kotyle, may have been inscribed in Euboea. The inscription probably reads “I belong to Nestor”, but the kotyle has nothing in common with the shape or fabric of the Homeric depos. There is no guarantee that its Pithekoussan owners used the cup in symposia, could read Greek, or recognized its presumed allusion to an Iliadic cup it fails to resemble. Yet granted that all this is so, we would only be entitled to infer that Nestor was associated with an impressive cup at the time and place the kotyle was inscribed: the age of the so-called “symposiasts” is irrelevant, and their location may be too. There remain, however, more significant obstacles to M.’s argument. What M. wants is to use the cup as evidence for knowledge of Odysseus the wanderer. But this Iliad

cannot do without further assumptions about the authorship, date, and early diffusion of both epics, as there would be no reason to identify Odysseus as a cultural mediator on the basis of his Iliadic role. Perhaps for this reason, M. entertains D. Ridgway's speculation that Odyssey 3.51-53 reflects awareness of Nestor's cup in Iliad, although this is based on misidentifying Nestor as subject of the action at verse 51 (157-58; cf. 122). [[7]] The plausibility of the connection is again irrelevant, for even if it had any basis beyond the unremarkable fact that Nestor drinks out of a special cup in one scene and his son Peisistratos hands Athene a cup in the other, Odyssey's knowledge of Iliad would do nothing to prove knowledge of Odyssey on Pithekoussai.

M. again relies on the assumption that oral poetry is inherently too fluid to preserve a scene like the one involving Nestor's cup in Iliad 11 for any length of time. Yet the approach is misguided, because once again it associates elements in a vacuum that exists for us, but not for the owners of the Pithekoussan kotyle. Objects may thus appear isolated to the modern reader that once belonged to a dense network of associational pathways leading directly to other epic and non-epic narrative traditions, and to the material culture. That oral tradition could preserve a single "unremarkable" scene over centuries or even millennia will thus always seem miraculous or simply incredible to scholars who fail to make allowance for the larger context to which those traditions once belonged.

It can only be the determination of some scholars to identify the inscription on the Nestor cup as a terminus for the manuscript tradition that explains their failure to appreciate the generic basis of the reference. As is absolutely typical of such poetry, the symposiast defines himself by contrasting his activities and values with those celebrated in epic: heroic grandeur, martial exploits, and the poems that praise them serve as foils in the praise of eros, the symposion and its poetry. [[8]] Of course, this does not require a specific allusion to the text of our Iliad, and if the pervasive contrast between love and war in symposiastic discourse informs the poem inscribed on the kotyle then the already weak case for an Odyssean allusion disappears altogether.

It may not be entirely insignificant that Homer places a Mycenaean cup in Nestor's hands, since libation seems to have been an exceptionally important feature of cult activity in BA Pulos: a Linear B tablet (Tn 316) mentions golden Mycenaean-style kulikes and Minoan-style chalices, already heirlooms in their precious metallic forms, that are offered to deities in designated shrines (e.g., *potnia and Poseidon). [[9]] Clay versions of over 600 such drinking cups were discovered in the main 'pantry' (Room 9) of the palace, where they could serve in the commensal banqueting ceremonies reconstructed by Mycenologists from textual evidence. The main 'kylix pantry' (Room

19) contained an extraordinary 2,853 kulikes. [[10]] It is thus interesting to note that not only does Nestor drink from a Mycenaean goblet in Iliad but he officiates over the most impressive sacrifices, including libations, in archaic epic: the entire Pylian narrative of Odyssey Book 3 is in fact structured as a series of rituals bracketed by an arrival and a departure scene. Also relevant is the importance of libation, and with it special drinking cups, in Homeric religion and the ideology of Homeric kingship: Akhilleus (Il. 16.220-32), Peleus (11.774), and Priam (24.234) are associated with valuable cups, while Menelaos gives Telemakhos a krater said to be the most valuable heirloom in his palace (Od. 4.614-19).

It thus seems entirely plausible, as some have argued, that Nestor was associated with special cups in other narrative traditions, including those from Northwest Greece and the cyclic epics. There could also have been alternative Iliads in which Nestor's cup played a more prominent role, along the lines of the golden depas with which Akhilleus offers libations before sending Patroklos to his death, or which he later uses during the funeral. Nestor himself might have performed similar duties at Antilokhos' funeral in Aithiopsis. Why indeed does Homer describe the cup in such detail and award it such prominence in Book 11 if none of these factors were in play?

Having argued that Euboians bring knowledge of the Homeric epics to Italy by around 750, M. then seeks to trace their dissemination into the interior, where the blinding of Poluphemos turns up in early vase-paintings (166). To make his case, M. rebuts what he claims to be Burkert's argument that the early vase paintings illustrate the folk-tale version of the episode: "the generic blinding of a Cyclops (a folk motif) and the blinding of the Cyclops Polyphemos apparently coalesced at some point. A Greek of the mid-seventh century observing the Eleusis amphora or the Aristonothos krater ... would have to have been particularly blinkered not to recognize them as depicting the narrative-specific Odyssey scene.... That it did not evoke Polyphemos requires some very special pleading" (41).

M.'s rebuttal is again based on his belief that the manuscripts of Homer are earlier than the 7th century, which in this case is precisely what Burkert is arguing against, together with the use of the vases as a terminus. Moreover, Burkert nowhere argues that the vases are based on folk-tradition—a position taken by Röhrich and Snodgrass—but only that "we cannot be at all sure which form of an Odyssey was known to the artists in the first half of the seventh century". [[11]] M. also ignores the century separating the vase paintings from his own terminus for the arrival of the epics in Italy, or for that matter the century plus separating the kytyle from the tripods. That Cyclopeia is the only Odyssean episode to be illustrated in the 7th century has serious implications for any

attempt to date the entire epic on the basis of a scene that also belonged to a popular folk-tale. Although I agree that the vases illustrate the story found in Homer, I see no reason why it could not have circulated independently even with Odysseus and Polyphemos and both before and after Odyssey got written down.

In the final 2 chapters, M. turns to other Nostoi, chiefly Nestor, Epeios, Philoktetes, Siris, and Diomedes. In some cases, these Nostoi may have been adopted by non-Greek peoples because of the presence of Greek families among native populations. They differ from the proto-colonial Odysseus in being identified with specific communities, as opposed to entire peoples and lands. Yet they could also serve analogous functions: “heroes of mediation, convergence, and acculturation, they would come to serve different political purposes over the centuries and would eventually be appropriated by some of the Greek city-states in Italy and used to justify war and annexation” (210). Actually, M.’s earliest example is that of Metapontion, in which a Greek colony is said to adopt Nestor as its founder in the face of expansion by Spartan Taras towards Sybaris. Lagaris, a non-Greek settlement, adopted Epeios as its founder, which Metapontion would eventually use to justify annexation. Philoktetes seems initially to have been the hero of non-Greek communities between Sybaris and Kroton. By the late 6th century, however, Kroton asserted its own antiquity by adopting Herakles as its ancestor, and then by appropriating the cult of Philoktetes in an expansionary move culminating in the destruction of Sybaris.

Diomedes is the most complex Nostos: he reaches the west in diverse ways, and at different times, serves a variety of functions, and is associated with more than one kind of site. Early on, he has an Aitolian pedigree, which “may explain why most Greek sailors used Diomedes only marginally; he was neither a pan-Hellenic Odysseus nor a Corinthian or Euboian hero but part of a regional, northwestern cultural koine” (242). This early figure is not a founder: his myth is non-territorial, reflects a maritime perspective, and involves brief ad hoc encounters with indigenous populations. At this early stage, he is guest to the eponymous king Daunus of Italy, and associated with the Tremiti islands where he was worshipped as a god. In later accounts, he is made founder of an unparalleled number of cities.

M. interprets Metapontion as adopting a Homeric hero to assert its antiquity in rivalry with Taras, and as selecting the Ionian Nestor under the influence of neighboring Siris. M. is surely right to identify Siris as the source of the genealogy, given its prior claim to Nestor as a Kolophonian settlement. It would seem more economical and pointed, however, to see the adoption as an outgrowth of Metapontion’s rivalry with Siris itself. In assessing the role of Nestor/Neleus in these myths one should also bear in mind

the probable derivation of their names from the PIE root *nes, which is well attested in BA Pylian nomenclature and which seems to inform Nestor's narrative function in Homer (cf. PY Fn79.5: ne-e-ra-wo=*Nehelawos; and PY Cn 599.1 and Cn 40.1: ne-ti-ja-no = *Nestianor). [[12]] On the other hand, I note that Herakles is a generation earlier than Philoktetes, another sacker of Troy, an archer, and a greater hero. Adoption of Herakles at Kroton subordinates Philoktetes even as it establishes a connection to him. M. himself furthers this strategy of subordination by repeatedly identifying the weapons of Philoktetes as the hiera of Herakles, and Philoktetes himself as Herakles' "trusted companion" (217). There is no evidence for either identification in Archaic authors, and their association could be an invention of the Attic tragedians (cf. P. Oxy. 2455 fr. 17 col. xviii; although the Sch. Pi. P. 1.100 indicates Bacchylides, who had patrons at Metapontion, knew the story). I am also unsure why Diomedes should be seen as a less Panhellenic figure than Odysseus, or how the "northwestern koine" to which Diomedes belongs could possess this degree of autonomy and authority if the Homeric epics were freely circulating in Italy. Belief that deified heroes, including Diomedes, spent eternity on the nesoi makaron may be relevant to traditions associating him with the Tremiti islands. No source makes the islands his initial destination, so I wonder about the protocolonial perspective M. imputes to them.

To conclude: in responding to M.'s use of the Homeric material I have remained with his actual arguments because his theoretical models largely derive from other scholarship. He departs from the mainstream most notably in his 9th century date for the manuscripts and in his attempt to reconcile this with the widespread view that the social conditions described in the epics are roughly contemporary with the poet and his audience. Weighing against a basic premise of all such attempts to date Homeric society is the demonstration by C. Morgan and others that the communities of Dark Age Greece developed along different lines and at different rates. There is no such thing as a monolithic "9th century Greece" to which Homer can be compared. As late as the 5th century, Greeks could time-travel simply by visiting their neighbors, and the contrast would have been far more striking in the late 7th and early 6th centuries when sites such as Olympia and Delphi began to attract visitors from throughout Greece, potential audiences of Panhellenic epic. I suggest that the knowledge to create a convincing portrait of pre-political life would have been available to epic poets throughout the 8th to 6th centuries; and moreover that the relatively more developed political communities of Archaic Greece would have had no difficulty seeing their own early histories reflected in such accounts.

Overall, I get the impression that M. is torn by a number of competing loyalties, but would like to use his historical research to support text-based models of epic diffusion against the ‘crystallization model’ of Nagy, which he directly challenges, and misrepresents. He also attacks Lord’s pathfinding study of Homer as a traditional poet, though he generally attempts to accommodate more conservative proponents of the Parry-Lord model, such as B. Powell and I. Morris. The apparent result is a non-committal stance on a wide range of issues, which together with an occasional use of shifting and alternative terminology makes his arguments hard to pin down at times. The problem is not helped by the scores of typographical and citation errors that were allowed to remain in the published manuscript, which I hope will be corrected in the paperback edition. And I sincerely hope that an edition is forthcoming, for despite my reservations I found The Returns of Odysseus an original and rewarding book, one that deserves a wide audience, especially among graduate students who may find that it opens important new doors onto the future of the Wissenschaft and their own research.

[[1]] This review should be read in conjunction with that of C. Antonaccio (AJP, forthcoming).

[[2]] E. Cook, The Odyssey in Athens (Cornell, 1995) ch. 3.

[[3]] P. Guillon, Les trépieds du Ptoion. Paris 1943

[[4]] Jim Marks, The Motif of the Dios Boule in Archaic Greek Epic (Diss. UT-Austin, forthcoming).

[[5]] The Iliad: A Commentary, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1992) ad loc.

[[6]] Somewhat misleading: cp. A. Dihle, Hermes 97 (1969) 257-61; W. Burkert, WS 10 (1976) 5-21; K. Stanley, The Shield of Homer (Princeton, 1993) 403; S. West, ZPE 101 (1994) 9-15; M.L West MH 52 (1995) 203-19; C. Faraone, CA 15 (1996) 77-122; J. Burgess 126 TAPA (1996) 77-99; E. Cook, BMCR 10.3.96; S. Lowenstam TAPA 127 (1997) 21-67.

[[7]] Citation missing: The First Western Greeks (Cambridge, 1992) 55-7.

[[8]] Nick Dobson, Typologies of Invective in Homer (Diss. UT-Austin, forthcoming).

[[9]] T. Palaima, “Kn 02 - Tn 316,” in S., Deger-Jalkotzy et al. eds., Florent Studia Mycenaea (Vienna, 1999) 2.437-61.

[[10]] C. Blegen and M. Rawson, The Palace of Nestor (1996) 102, 124; cf. J. Killen BICS 39 (1994) 67-84.

[[11]] W. Burkert in Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World (Malibu, 1987) 43-62; L. Röhrich, Fabula 5 (1962) 48-71; A. Snodgrass, Homer and the Artists (Cambridge, 1998) ch. 4.

[14]

[[12]] Cf. D. Frame, The Myth of Return in Early Greek Epic (New Haven, 1978).