The Greek Set Book 2012/13: Homer: The Odyssey

Tutor: Dr Maria Fragoulaki
m.fragoulaki@history.bbk.ac.uk, mfragoulaki@gmail.com

A selection of books/units from books 5-12 and 19-20 is taught from the original. The course aims at a familiarity with, and appreciation of, the poem’s distinctive character: language and style; its oral features (e.g. the folk-tale element, typical scenes, frequent types of similes); thematology (nostos ‘homecoming’ being the big theme); geography (‘far-off’/marvellous lands and near ones/Ithacan society and the world of the (royal) oikos); ethics and society/ies; heroic attributes; the gods and their relationship with humans; the sophistication of the epic narrative; analogies and differences with the Iliad; intertextual resonances. Classes are interactive, and translation and commentary of the text (from the linguistic, metrical, historical and socio-cultural perspectives) will occupy us for the most part of the class, but selective secondary reading will also be discussed in the sessions.

Translations (two recommended prose ones)
Hammond, M., with intro by J. Griffin (2000, Duckworth, London)
Shewring, W., with intro by G. S. Kirk (1980, Oxford World’s Classics)
[The Loeb edn., containing the original, with A. T. Murray’s (1919) trans. revised by G. Dimock (repr. with corrections, 1998) is useful to have].

Commentaries - Companions

Vocabulary, language, metre
LSJ\(^{3d}\) [= Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon] is of course indispensable, especially until some Homeric vocabulary and mastery of the dialect have been acquired.
Autenrieth, G., Homeric Dictionary, 1984 [1873] is also very good and saves time.
West, M. L., Introduction to Greek Metre (Oxford, 1987) [See also ‘Metre’ in the Introductions of Rutherford 1992 (his section on ‘Grammar’ is also very helpful) and Garvie 1994 (above)].
Bibliography

Some introductory reading
Griffin, J., *Homer* (Bristol, 1980a) (with short notes on further reading and translations at the back).

General
Cohen, B. *The Distaff Side. Representing the Female in Homer’s Odyssey* (New York, 1995).
Crotty, K. *The Poetics of Supplication* (New York, 1994).
Foley, J. M. Homer’s Traditional Art (Pennsylvania, 1999).
Nagy, G., *Homer the Preclassic* (California, 2009), (esp. ch. 4).
— *Homer the Classic* (Harvard, 2009)

**On Homeric society**
Haubold, J. *Homer’s People: epic poetry and social formation* (Cambridge, 2000).

**Religion**
Griffin 1980 (see above), pp. 144-204.

**On narrative technique**
Grethlein, J. and A. Rengakos (eds) *Narratology and Interpretation* (Berlin, 2009) [containing contributions on Homer and the *Odyssey*].

**On orality**
Minchin, E., (ed.) *Orality, Literacy, and Performance in the Ancient World. Mnemosyne Suppl.* (Leiden, 2012) [chs 1 and 2, on the *Odyssey*].

**Collective volumes**
Myrsiades, K (ed.) *Approaches to Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey* (New York, 2010).
Afterlife

A useful online resource is that of the Centre for Hellenic Studies of Harvard University http://chs.harvard.edu/wa/pageR?tn=Publications&bdc=12&mn=0

Assessment
• **BA degree (final exam + coursework)**
Final examination counts for 70% of the course mark. Each of the two 2,500 words essays counts for 15% of the course mark.
Essay 1 (Autumn term): to be submitted by **Mon 10 December 2012, by 6pm.**
Essay 2 (Spring term): to be submitted by **Mon 18 March 2013, by 6pm.**

• **MA degree (coursework)**
One 5,000-word essay to be submitted by **1 May or 15 June 2013.**
Please arrange in time with me to submit a draft to comment on before the deadline.
Homer, odyssey 13. The odyssey contents. Book 1. Athena & Telemachus Penelope & the Suitors. BOOK 2. Departure of Telemachus. BOOK 3. The odyssey book 13, translated by a. t. murray. So he spoke, and they were all hushed in silence, and were spellbound throughout the shadowy halls. And Alcinous again answered him, and said: Odysseus, since thou hast come to my high-roofed house with floor of brass, thou shalt not, methinks, be driven back, and return with baffled purpose, even though thou hast suffered much. And they lifted out the goods which the lordly Phaeacians had given him, as he set out for home, through the favour of great-hearted Athena. Every Greek edition of Homer that I am aware of has a small or very small Greek font. This edition has by far the largest font of any Greek text. It is 2x to 3x larger than the Loeb fonts. It is as large or larger than your typical giant print Bible. This volume contains the complete Greek text of the Odyssey in large font, but it lacks running headers indicating the book number, and most problematically, it has no line numbers within each book. This greatly diminishes its usefulness. The Greek text is nicely large, but the font is very heavy, as if bolded, and the lines are much too run together with little space between lines, making it an eyestrain to read and very difficult to mark or annotate. I also bought the Iliad (Greek Edition) that parallels this text. The Project Gutenberg EBook of The Odyssey, by Homer. This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. This passage is not given in the abridged Story of the Odyssey at the beginning of the book, but in the Translation it occurs in these words: When they were within he took her spear and set it in the spear-stand against a strong bearing-post along with the many other spears of his unhappy father, and he conducted her to a richly decorated seat under which he threw a cloth of damask.