PONTIFÍCIA UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA DO PARANÁ
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM GESTÃO URBANA – PPGTU
BOLSA DE INICIAÇÃO CIENTÍFICA MASTER INTERNATIONAL

FRANCESCO VISCONTI PRASCA

THE CITY IN HOMER'S ODYSSEY

CURITIBA

2022

FRANCESCO VISCONTI PRASCA

THE CITY IN HOMER'S ODYSSEY

Thesis submitted to the Graduate Program in Urban Management – PPGTU, in the Architecture and Design School of the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná in partial fulfilment of the requirements for degree of Master in Science of Urban Studies.

Adviser: Prof. Dr. Clovis Ultramari

CURITIBA

2022

Dados da Catalogação na Publicação
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná
Sistema Integrado de Bibliotecas - SIBI/PUCPR
Biblioteca Central
Edilene de Oliveira dos Santos CRB/9 1636

V824c 2022

Visconti Prasca, Francesco
The city in Homer's Odyssey / Francesco Visconti Prasca ; Adviser: Clovis Ultramari. -- 2022
144 p. : il. ; 30 cm

Dissertação (mestrado) – Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná, Curitiba,
2022
Bibliografia: f. 123-131

1. Planejamento urbano – História. 2. Cidades e vilas antigas – História. 3.
Cidades e vilas na literatura. 4. Homero. I. Ultramari, Clovis.
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Gestão
Urbana. III. Título.

CDD 20. ed. – 711.4

TERMO DE APROVAÇÃO

"THE CITY IN HOMER'S ODYSSEY"

Por

FRANCESCO VISCONTI PRASCA

Dissertação aprovada como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de Mestre no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Gestão Urbana, área de concentração em Gestão Urbana, da Escola de Belas Artes, da Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my caring family and friends who supported me along the journey, as well as to the PPGTU, especially in the figures of my Adviser Professor Clovis Ultramari and Professor Rodrigo Firmino. Special thanks to the Internationalization Office, to the PIBIC program and to Prof. Cleybe Vieira, who made it all possible. Lastly, a warm heartedly thanks to Prof. Humberto L. Fogassa de Medeiros, a guide and a friend.

”Tell me about yourself now, clearly, point by point.
Who are you? where are you from? your city?
  your parents?
What sort of vessel brought you?
  Why did the sailors land you here in Ithaka?
  Who did they say they are?
I hardly think you came this way on foot!”

[Odyssey, I, 197-201]

ABSTRACT

This master's thesis supports the assertion that literary narrative, poems and other non-scientific sources can foster the discussion about the city within the urban studies. As such, it identifies and charts the design of the settlements described in ***The Odyssey*** by Homer using interdisciplinary approaches and methods. Therefore, the descriptions of the spatial occupation of settlements and landscapes are pursued in the verses of the case study. Three questions regarding the chosen literary source govern the entire research: the relationship between literary narrative and history, its geographical background and its cultural environment. The first step is to identify archetypical settlements belonging to the Greek Dark Ages (ca 1100 – ca 800 BC) by reviewing the relative literature from the archaeological field. That serves to build the material background for further comparisons between literary and historical facts. Subsequently, it is reviewed how the literary city can be typologically categorised depending on multiple factors, such as narration's historical adherence, city's fictionality, and type of spatial description. Thus, narrative devices are crossed with content's characteristics to define four categories of literary cities: cities at the border of imagination, framework cities, witnessed cities and cities of imagination. As a third step, the review moves onto the literary geography. After a quick review of the old proposals, new cartography of ***The Odyssey*** is drafted, so the "space of uncertainty" can finally re-take its place in such graphic representations, as the new theories and approaches to the literary cartography suggest. The following chapter focuses on the reliability, legitimacy, of ancient literary sources, so addressing three so-called *criticalities*: temporal distance, degradation of the document; cultural distance; absence of architectonical matter as a factual witness. In the literary review gloss, it is asserted, that the strongly interdisciplinary nature of this kind of research allows for the availability of precise interpretative tools to analyse literary sources in the interest of the urban sciences. In the second section, all the tools developed in the previous part are applied to the analysis of ***The Odyssey***'s verses, which are collected in three groups: Scheria, identified as a city of imagination for its utopian markings, the primigenial idea of *polis*. Opposed to this, Ithaka represents an older model of settlement, closer to the Mykenean culture, represented as a chaotic and abusive place. The third group gathers the rest of the descriptions regarding the settlements observed by Odysseus, these are a collection of imaginary colonial experiences. In the end, the two main settlements in the narrative are compared to the archaeological remains reviewed in the first part of this work, concluding that Scheria and Ithaka resemble two different types of spatial occupation's stages in the evolution of the ancient Greek cities.

Keywords: Homer, Odyssey, Urban Studies, Urban History

RESUMO

Esta dissertação de mestrado apoia a afirmação de que narrativas literárias, poemas e outras fontes não científicas podem fomentar a discussão sobre a cidade nos estudos urbanos. Como tal, ele identifica e mapeia o projeto dos assentamentos descritos em A Odisséia de Homero usando abordagens e métodos interdisciplinares. Portanto, as descrições da ocupação espacial de assentamentos e paisagens são realizadas nos versos do estudo de caso. Três questões sobre a fonte literária escolhida regem toda a pesquisa: a relação entre narrativa literária e história, seu contexto geográfico e seu ambiente cultural. O primeiro passo é identificar assentamentos arquetípicos pertencentes à Idade das Trevas grega (cerca de 1100 - cerca de 800 aC), revisando a literatura relativa do campo arqueológico. Isso serve para construir o pano de fundo material para futuras comparações entre fatos literários e históricos. Posteriormente, é revisado como a cidade literária pode ser tipologicamente categorizada dependendo de vários fatores, como a adesão histórica da narração, a ficcionalidade da cidade e o tipo de descrição espacial. Assim, os dispositivos narrativos são cruzados com as características do conteúdo para definir quatro categorias de cidades literárias: cidades na fronteira da imaginação, cidades-quadro, cidades testemunhadas e cidades da imaginação. Em uma terceira etapa, a revisão passa para a geografia literária. Após uma rápida revisão das antigas propostas, uma nova cartografia de A Odisséia é elaborada, para que o “espaço da incerteza” possa finalmente retomar seu lugar nessas representações gráficas, como sugerem as novas teorias e abordagens da cartografia literária. O capítulo seguinte enfoca a confiabilidade, legitimidade, de fontes literárias antigas, abordando assim três das chamadas críticas: distância temporal, degradação do documento; distância cultural; ausência de matéria arquitetônica como testemunho factual. Na glosa da revisão literária, afirma-se que o caráter fortemente interdisciplinar desse tipo de pesquisa permite a disponibilização de ferramentas interpretativas precisas para analisar fontes literárias de interesse das ciências urbanas. Na segunda seção, todas as ferramentas desenvolvidas na parte anterior são aplicadas à análise dos versos da Odisséia, que são reunidos em três grupos: Scheria, identificada como uma cidade da imaginação por suas marcas utópicas, a ideia primigênia de pólis. Oposto a isso, Ithaka representa um modelo de povoamento mais antigo, mais próximo da cultura mykeniana, representado como um lugar caótico e abusivo. O terceiro grupo reúne o restante das descrições sobre os assentamentos observados por Odisseu, trata-se de uma coleção de experiências coloniais imaginárias. No final, os dois principais assentamentos na narrativa são comparados aos vestígios arqueológicos revisados na primeira parte deste trabalho, concluindo que Scheria e Ithaka se assemelham a dois tipos diferentes de estágios de ocupação espacial na evolução das antigas cidades gregas.

Palavras-chave: Homero, Odisseia, Estudos Urbanos, História Urbana

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LIST OF ABREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AD	After Death
BC	Before Christ
c.	Circa
Cf.	Compare to
Ead.	*Eadem* (the same – female)
e.g.	*Exempli Gratia*
Ibidem	In the same place
Id.	*Idem* (the same – male)
i.e.	*Id est* (for example)
Il.	*Iliad*
Od.	Odyssey
p.m.a.	*Post Mortem Auctoris*
PPGTU	Programa de Pós-graduação em Gestão Urbana
PUCPR	Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná
Trad.	Translator
Trans.	Translation

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research comes to light in the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Gestão Urbana – PPGTU at PUCPR, where researchers as Clovis Ultramari[1] and Manoela Massuchetto Jazar[2] among others lead studies about the two main themes of this thesis: The city and the literary narrative.

The studies carried out at the reference institute of this research, like many others, turn their attention to the processes involving the cities and the settlements from the modern to the contemporary era, since the issues that characterise the cities which are inhabited now are certainly more immediately relevant than our everyday life. So it is, that even the studies that deal with reading the urban environment through literary testimony mainly focus on the study of the modern novel, which, besides its proximity to our time, is a form of literature that is better able to envelope the contents in the focus of such research. So much so, that not only reading novels like those by E. Zola and J. Joyce – to name a few – is recommended, but sometimes even made necessary for those who take interest in studying the modern city. (ZANNI ROSIELLO, 2013)[3]

This work chose to study a literary masterwork set remotely in the past instead, which deals with equally remote ideas of anthropic environment. This is *The Odyssey* by Homer, one of the most ancient poems of Greek literature, which means that the research focuses on the Greek Dark Ages (ca. 1100 – ca. 800 BC)[4], period that

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[2] Doctor by the Graduate Program on Urban Management (PPGTU) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Parana (PUCPR), Curitiba/PR, Brazil.

[3] Isabella Zanni Rosiello mentions how the modern novels have been long use as a source for historiographical studies, sometimes recommended, in other cases even necessary.

[4] Also called the Homeric Age, it is a period in Greek history starting with the end of the Mycenaean palatial civilization, which collapsed at the outset of the Bronze Age for no clear cause. During that time occurred seemingly little commercial exchanges and it has been found no trace of written documents. By saying *"pre-political",* it is intended the fact that till the c. 800 BC the *polis* was not a consolidated system.

precedes and eventually leads to the consolidation of the *polis*, a socio-political model, as well as, an idea of territorial organisation that characterised the Hellenic world from ca. the V century BC until its fall at the end of the Romans in 146 BC.

The choice has been made, because my hypothesis is that the poem holds traces of those models of urban organisation and it is, indeed, able to effectively describe the ancient literary cities[5]. As a matter of fact, the study of the antiquity has always involved scholars of different fields of scientific interest, since it is not only important to deepen the understanding of the origin of our society but has strongly grown the belief that the comprehension of past phenomena helps – by comparison – the study of present and future issues. As other researchers would summarise:

> Many of the great urban theorists have recognized the need to understand the ancient roots of urbanism as a way to observe long-term social dynamics relevant to the cities in which we live today.
> (CREEKMORE; FISHER, 2014, p. 21)

In this fashion, a precious antique as *The Odyssey* has been deeply studied by philologist and philosophers: from Joyce[6] to Adorno and Horkheimer[7], from Kavafis[8] to Tennyson[9], eastern literature stands in awe in front of this ancient poem (VISCONTI PRASCA, 2012) and still there is much to learn from its verses, as Turchi (2004, E-book edition) asserts writing about the process of imagining new literary geographies, ”countless poems, stories, and novels have been based on or influenced by Homer’s

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[5] A review on the epistemological meaning of “ancient city” takes place in chapter 3.1, surprisingly it will be uncovered that such a definition is anything but widely shared.

[6] The famous *Ulysses* by J. Joyce, published in the early 1922, establishes structural parallelisms between the modern characters and the hero and his family.

[7] In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Originally: *Dialektik der Aufklärung*), published in 1947, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno depicted Odysseus as the *homo faber*.

[8] K. P. Kavafis (1863 – 1933) was a Greek poet, who tried to encompass the meaning of life in his poem *Ithaka* using the voyage of Odysseus as metaphor.

[9] One of the many interpretations of the character of Odysseus (in Latin: Ulysses) is the one by Lord Tennyson, who at the time of writing was mourning his closest friend Arthur Henry Hallam, and uses the analogy between the journey of life and the journey of Odysseus, probably thinking of the verses of Dante’s Inferno.

Odyssey, including works by writers who, like Dante, never had the opportunity to read it."

Nevertheless, if *The Odyssey* is generally the story of the hero's coming back home, Ithaka[10], it is also the story of his sorrowful exploration of the world, a limited and ancient world, whose borders are misty and definitely wrapped in mystery and legend, yet a world full of proto-urban experiences and different populations. Two settlements are mainly described in the text, Ithaka and Scheria[11], and others appear in contrast to those. The differences between these two main towns underline the transient nature of both the epoch in which they are set and the idea of 'city' itself.

As a matter of fact, this work aims to answer the question, if it is possible to understand the characteristics of the settlements narrated in the poem, and whether they might be the archetypes of other ideas of city. So, bolstering the major research on this theme within the Urban Studies. However, some difficulties arise when dealing with the uncertainty of literary narrative, poetry and – in this case – epic poetry: those questions, however, can be faced by broadening the field of research to interdisciplinarity, hence the contributions from other seemingly distant fields.

By discussing these arguments, this thesis tries to briefly encompass all the themes of debate around the city in the literary narrative and finally suggests a road to recollect all the sparse knowledge on the topic, which by diverse reasons did not have the chance to meet yet. The next pages articulate the discourse in three main steps: the review deals with a recollection of archaeological research, which builds the material background against which the verses of the poem are compared. To do so, it is also part of the discussion he very meaning of 'ancient city, since it is a controversially allusive locution, even if its significate is very specific.

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[10] Greek Island located in the Ionian Sea, off the northeast coast of Kefalonia and to the west of Greece, generally associated with the Homeric Ithaka, homeland of Odysseus, thesis supported by Bunbury (1879), Bérard (1933) and Wolf (2004) among others.

[11] Also known as Phaikia, the Phaikians' land.

This conceptual introduction precedes the central debate on the literary city onto a path of dematerialisation, idealisation, which defines typologically the diverse manifestations of the city in the literary narrative by considering the multitude of factors that influence it. To this same section belongs the review of the literary cartography and the methods of representation which are proper to map the literary narrative, so giving a contribution to a long-lasting debate on the geography of *The Odyssey*. Notwithstanding, first of all, it is observed the most delicate and perilous topic of this work, such is the reliability of ancient documents, especially in the form of epic poems, when used to investigate morphological and topological features of space.

1.1 Motivations

To why this research come into being, one could answer with the famous verses of Lord Alfred Tennyson from *Ulysses* (1833):

> […] Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
> we are not now that strength which in old days
> moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.[12]

With this Tennyson interprets the weak and transient human nature, but with the strength of an inquisitive mind, and in an alike manner this research starts out of curiosity. It is not only curiosity, of course, which guided the work, but passion for the ancient poems, the so-called 'classics', whose importance nowadays is underlined by many, not last the great Italian literate Italo Calvino (2005b). Clearly the classics as first pieces of literature are fundamental bricks of our society, in the specific case of the Homeric poems[13] it is even argued, that they are the stem of historiography. (MARICOLA, 2011; STRASBURGER, 1972).

Nonetheless another important input, beside curiosity and passion, has been the ongoing discussion in the PPGTU, where Ultramari and Jazar (2016, p.119) first gave their contribution igniting the debate:

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[12] One of the many interpretations of the character of Odysseus (in Latin: Ulysses) is the one by Lord Tennyson, who wrote this poem in memory of his closest friend Arthur Henry Hallam. In this poem he uses the analogy between the journey of life and the journey of Odysseus, probably remembering the lines of Dante's Inferno. See also Visconti Prasca (2013).

[13] For an overall yet extremely competent view of the Homeric poems this works refers to the *Cambridge Companion to Homer* edited by Fowler (2006), but to whom is not well acquainted with the ancient literature there are also authoritative website as the ones of *Enciclopedia Treccani* or the *Encyclopædia Britannica*: HOMER In: ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. [Chicago, IL], 2022 Available: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Homer-Greek-poet. Access: 01/01/2022.

> [The article's main intention] was to provoke a discussion on possible research void in the interdisciplinary field of literature and city. We endeavour to demonstrate this intention by means of providing possible additions between these two fields. We begin with an exploratory discussion on approximations identified between cities and literary works, highlighting how urban issues can be identified and investigated.[14]

I accepted that provocation and started my exploration of the classics in search of those urban features and issues that are a *fil rouge* in the conversation about the 'city'. However, the choice I made brought this research in to the belly of a vast world such are the classics and I found that understanding the Homeric poems in their entirety is a never-ending effort, many are the blanks that the time left to be filled, starting from the identity of the *aoidós*[15], known as 'Homeric Question'[16], which this work will simplify for brevity by considering Homer as a collective entity[17], as other authors would agree, ignoring other hypothesis, also and most of all the most audacious ones[18]. However, this enterprise is necessary if we are to fully understand some pages of history and to renew the link between past and present.

In this exploration, I personally felt that a part of the general research on *The Odyssey* was unclear and not systematically covered, so leaving a 'void'[19]: As a matter of fact, while separate elements such as 'the house', 'the ship', 'the palace' find their

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[14] Original text in Portuguese, trans. by the author.

[15] *Aoidós* is a Greek term that identifies a figure comparable to a singer, a storyteller or a bard. This term is still used in the modern Homeric scholarship to specifically refer to those singers belonging to the epic Greek tradition.

[16] To have a quick but deeper insight of the topic, see Fowler (2006, p.220-235)

[17] Theory supported mainly by Boardman (2002) and Lord (1953; 1960).

[18] An interesting hypothesis was made by one of the greatest translators and reviewer of the poem, who suggested that the poet might have been a woman, sadly this idea had been quickly rejected at the time: BUTLER, S. **The Authoress of *The Odyssey***: where and when she wrote, who she was, the use she made of the *Iliad*, & how the poem grew under her hands. London: Jonathan Cape, 1922.

[19] The locution 'investigative void' is used throughout the text with the meaning attributed to Ultramari and Jazar (2016), although the original translation from the Portuguese 'vazio investigativo' was 'investigative emptiness'. The translation adopted here seemed more appropriate and effective.

places in a nourished collection of specialised works[20], 'the city' seems to be of marginal interest to the ongoing research in the field of classical literature, despite the works by Annette Giesecke (2003; 2007; 2008), whose research focuses on an epistemological value of the city more than discussing its morphological qualities. Moreover, as it is also argued by Armin Wolf (2004), in trying to understand the Odyssean settlements I found that the discussion about the geographical setting of the poem is rather confused, so I am trying to systematise and update those studies by following recent works on the literary cartography. (PIATTI et al., 2009 and PIATTI; REUSCHEL; HURNI, 2009).

Not last, in the general effort of this research, other questions arose stimulated by the words of Lewis Mumford (1961 p.34):

> No single definition will apply to all [the city's] manifestations and no single description will cover all its transformations, from the embryonic social nucleus to the complex forms of its maturity and the corporeal disintegration of its old age. The origins of the city are obscure, a large part of its past buried or effaced beyond recovery, and its further prospects are difficult to weigh.

So, the sequence of questions that I try to answer are: if in the Homeric Age people were discussing about the spatial organisation of their communities; if it would be proper to address the Odyssean settlements as cities; and if there could be a general definition for those settlements.

[20] In the unravelling of the argumentations some of those ideas have been mentioned and discussed. however, to whom might have a more specific interest those concepts have been studied in the following works respectively: (House/Palace) KNOX, 1970; LANG, 2002; NANNINI, 2017; MAZARAKIS, 1997; ROUGIER-BLANC, 2005; (Ship) MARK, 2005.

1.2 Objectives

This thesis aims to fulfil the main objective of understanding the city in Homer's Odyssey in its multiple aspects: the layout, the social texture, the power relations, its relationship with the landscape. To do so it is proposed to develop and discuss the knowledge of the buildings around the Homeric Age, creating the categories by which classifying the literary cities, identifying the space of narration, defining the tools of literary cartography and finally consolidating the reliability of the Homeric poems as sources for our discourse.

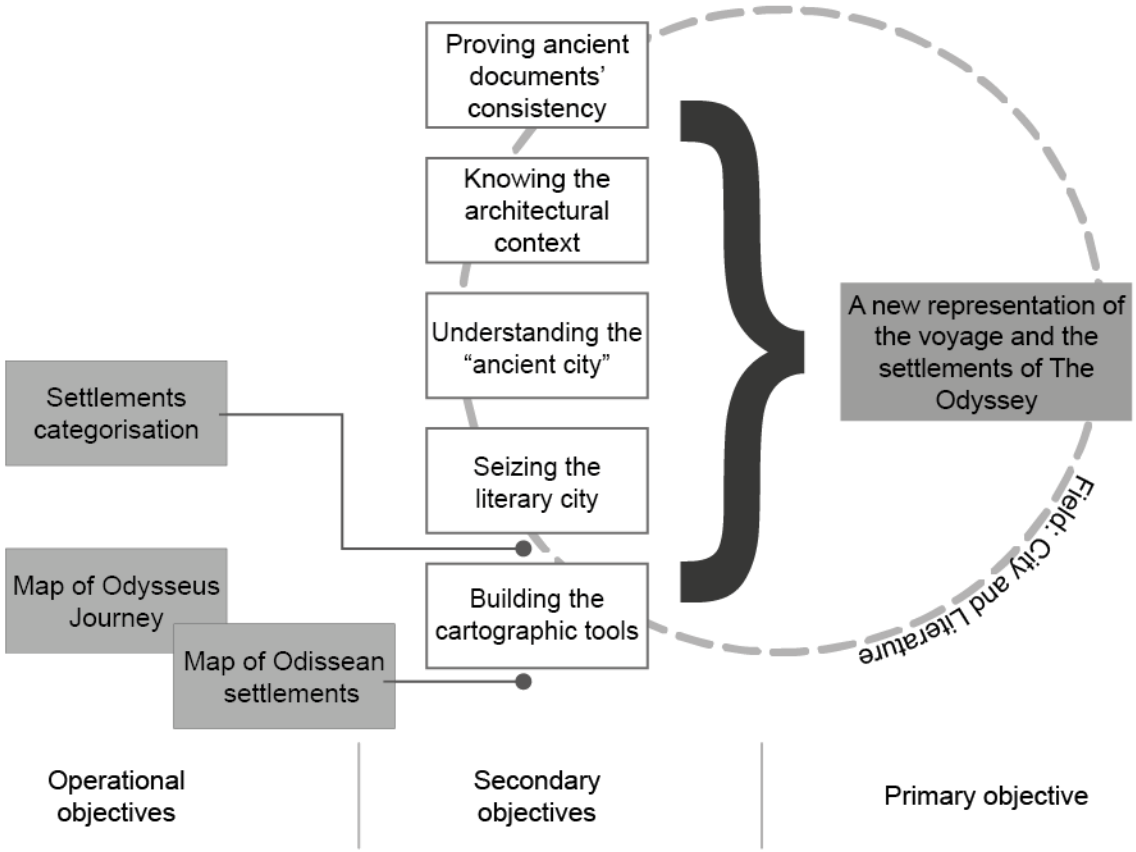

Figure 1 – Objectives (Created by the author, 2022)

The main objective is to build a new representation of the voyage and the settlements of *The Odyssey*, this is met with an analysis of the text and described at the end of the case study section. While the substructure of the research is built during the literary review and composed by the five passages illustrated in Figure 1, they represent the secondary objectives: proving the consistency of ancient documents is a necessary step to give credit to the whole analysis, as knowing the architectural context of the poem is important for the analysis of the text. A

fundamental achievement is the understanding of the meaning of ancient city as an expression and as a category to which the subcategories of the literary cities are applied. This step allows for the categorisation of the Odyssean settlements into categories. The last secondary objective deals with the geographical definition of uncertain space and the cartographical tools to draw such literary spaces. Operatively this translates to a new map of the journey of Odysseus and the representation of the main settlements of the poem, namely Ithaka and Scheria.

By reaching these objectives it is aimed to answer few questions in the interest of contributing to the major research in the urban studies involving the literary narrative, first question being, if in the Homeric age people were discussing about the spatial organisation of their community; and second is if they recognised a difference between the diverse ways of organising the life in different spatial distributions of the described settlements.

In the next item I summarise the story narrated in *The Odyssey* and the origins of the poem, in order to establish the context of the work.

1.3 *The Odyssey*

Here it is presented the content of Odyssey's 24 books and it is drawn the main structure of the narrated events. As a reference for the pieces of information that follow have been considered – apart from the reading of *The Odyssey* itself – the comments to the edition of *The Odyssey of Homer* by R. Lattimore (2007), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* edited by R. Fowler (2006), Manguel's *Homer's The Iliad and The Odyssey* (2007), and Snider's *Homer's Odyssey. A Commentary* (1895).

What is generally known of the second major Homeric poem is that it mainly focuses on Odysseus, king of Ithaka, and his journey home after the fall of the great citadel of Troy. The other name of Odysseus, Ulysses, is the translation in Latin by Livio Andronico, who brought West the Homeric poem in an adaptation for the Roman public and called it *Odusía*. (FLORES, 2011).

The poem is written in an amalgam of several Greek dialects comprising over twelve thousand lines of dactylic hexameters[21]. It has the same general structure as of *The Iliad*, it is divided in twenty-four books, of which the first starts with the *proemium*, which is the invocation of the Muse, characteristic of epic poems. Both Iliad and Odyssey share many formulas and epithets, which are repetitive adjectives or lines to describe similar objects or situations, e.g., "rosy-fingered" or "swift-footed" referred to Dawn or Achilles.

The date of its written composition is generally set between 725 BC and 675 BC in Athens, while the cultural sedimentation of its content dates back to the so-called Greek Dark Ages. It is also difficult to set a location for its origin, since – like many literates agree – it might be a re-composition of many sparse poems, yet it is believed

[21] The dactylic hexameter or heroic hexameter is a meter or rhythmic scheme used in Ancient Greek poetry (mostly epic) which is composed by six feet. A foot is generally composed by three syllables, the first of which is long, the other two short (dactyl). A foot with two long syllables is called a spondee.

it was first conceived somewhere in the region of Ionia[22], while the first printed copy was made in Florence in 1488 AD.[23]

The Odyssey and the Iliad have been devised to re-create the mythical past of the VIII century BC Greeks as Boardman (2002) suggests, and it is also plausible that the recollection of experiences stored in the poems is not older than one century before the VIII BC (GIESECKE, 2007). Thus, just the existence of the poems suggests some degree of contamination, which must have been aggravated by the personalisation that each *polis* or rather each court made to glorify one or the other deity or to focus on some other aspect of its own interest.

However, *The Odyssey* is not a totally independent composition, on the contrary, it is part of the so-called Trojan Epic Cycle[24], which groups eight works of various authorships, among them the Homeric poems (Iliad and Odyssey) are the largest. This group can be chronologically represented as follows in Figure 2. While the number of poems can be misleading, the extension of time covered by the narration is mainly focused Trojan war and the return home of the heroes, therefore the whole cycle deals with a period of time about 20 years long.

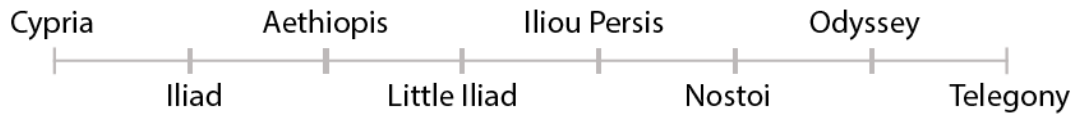

Figure 2 - Epic Cycle (Created by the author, 2022)

[22] As suggested by D.C.H. Rieu (2003 p. xi)

[23] As already mentioned, both in note 13 p.18 and in the introductory paragraph of this chapter, this thesis has its own academic references, nevertheless on some topics are suggested some quick insights to whom might not be well-versed in the Greek Ancient Literature. Here it is suggested the reading of Naomi Blumberg's ODYSSEY In: ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. [Chicago, IL], 2022 Available: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Odyssey-epic-by-Homer. Access: 12/03/2019.

[24] Cf. WEST, M. L. **Epic Cycle**. Oxford Classical Dictionary. 2015-07-30. Oxford University Press. Available at: http://classics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.001.0001/acrefore-9780199381135-e-2436. Access 4 Jan. 2018,

While Cypria, the Iliad, Aethiopis, Little Iliad and Iliou Persis narrate the events leading up to the Trojan War, the defeat of Hector and Achilleus[25], the building of the Trojan Horse[26] and the sack of Troy, the five books of the Nostoi are dedicated to the return home of the Greeks, including kings Agamemnon and Menelaos. To the same context belongs *The Odyssey*, the second major work attributed to Homer. At last, the *Telegony* narrates the death of Odysseus at the hand of Telegonus, an illegitimate son.

The Trojan Cycle is not the only exemplar of such literature, the Argonautic and the Theban cycles also exists, however, sadly, those poems as parts of the Trojan cycle did not survive to our days intact, while the Homeric poems, apart from some contamination of time, have arrived at our time with no relevant gaps.

The narration of *The Odyssey* starts *in medias res*, just after the introductory chant, the invocation of the Muse. The assembly of the gods decides to allow Odysseus to be freed from his captivity on Kalypsos' island. Meanwhile, Telemachos and Penelope (Odysseus' son and wife respectively) have to deal with the unruly suitors, who during the many years of the king's absence are grown tired of waiting for the queen's hand and are resolute to finally take it. Penelope buys time, while Telemachos, encouraged by Athene, attempts to impose his authority as prince and arranges to sail to other kings' courts to know more about his father's fate.

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[25] As stated in the Glossary, where are listed some of the most relevant characters of the poem: The spelling of names I follow the practise of Lattimore (2007), who in some cases, however, made exceptions and followed familiar usage; and sometimes translated (Dawn, Graces).

[26] Referring to the Trojan Horse, the cleverness with which the Achaians entered the city and after the long war, finally, conquered. Recently, the archaeologist Francesco Tiboni, University of Marseille, stated, that the famous horse was in fact a ship: this long-lived misunderstanding originated from the "wrong" translation of "Hippos", which commonly means horse, but it is also referred to a specific type of Phoenician boat. Cf. TIBONI, F. **The Dourateos Hippos from allegory to Archaeology**. A Phoenician Ship to break the Wall, in Archeologia Maritima Mediterranea, 13.2016, pp. 91-104, 2016 Available: www.academia.edu/26945391/F._Tiboni_2016_The_Dourateos_Hippos_from_allegory_to_Archaeology._A_Phoenician_Ship_to_break_the_Wall_in_Archeologia_Maritima_Mediterranea_13.2016_pp._91-104. Access: 13/02/2018

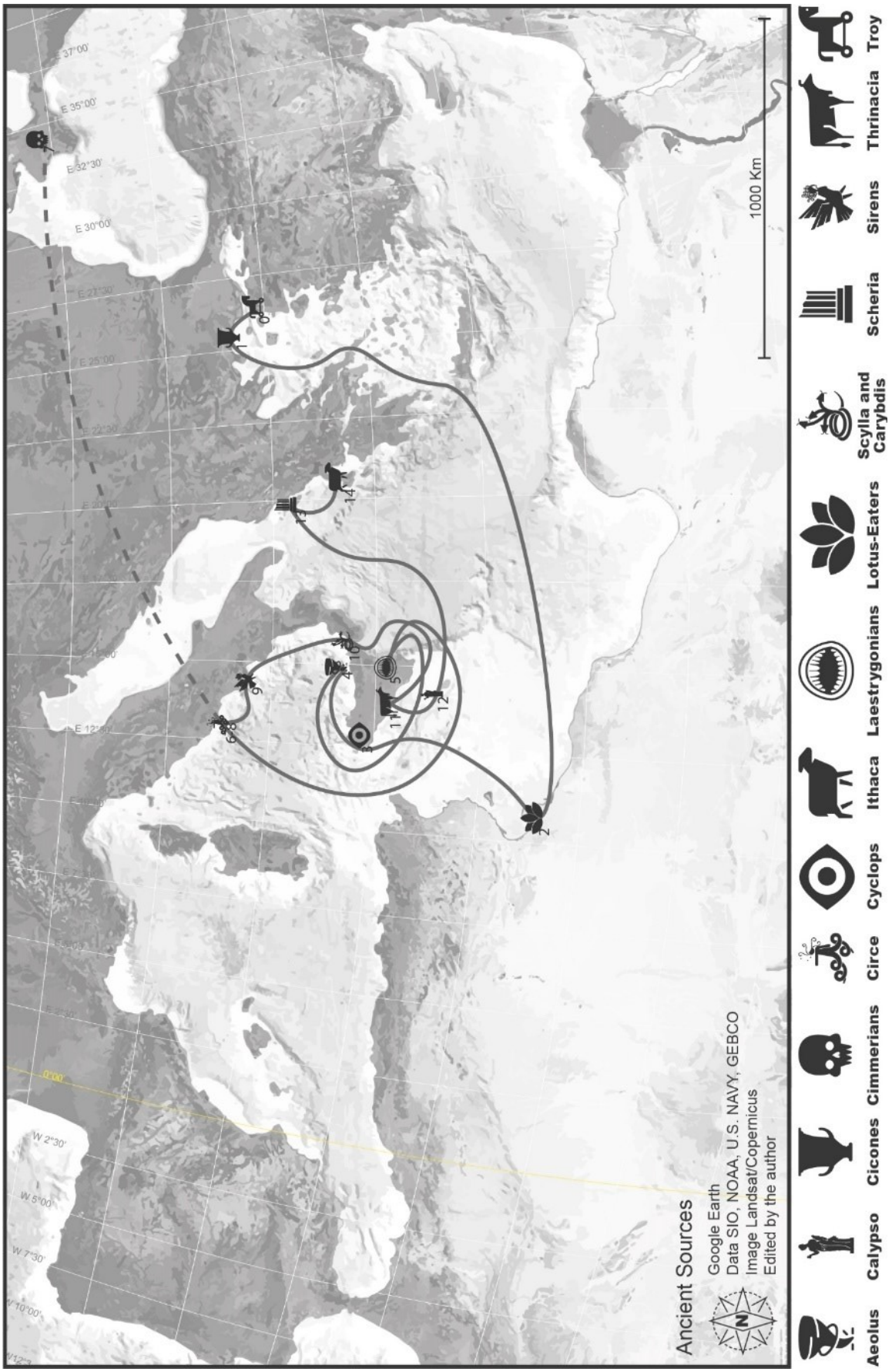

Figure 3 – Odysseus' Voyage as imagined by ancient authors
(Edited by the author, 2022)

This first part is narrated from book I to VI, when lastly the hero arrives at the court of Alkinoôs where he unfolds his adventures in the form of a flashback. It takes Odysseus ten years to reach Ithaka after the ten yearlong Trojan War: during that long time the hero and his crew travel through many lands finding the help or the hatred of many gods like Circe, Hermes and Poseidon among others; and discovering different folks as the deceitful Lotus-Eaters, the monstrous Laistrygones and the kind Phaikians.

Figure 3 represents the voyage of Odysseus as it was imagined by ancient authors like Herodotus, Polybius' Histories, Strabo, and Pliny. In the figure the encounters the hero faces are sorted from 0 to 14 and a symbol representing the character of the encounter. Following this representation, we can divide the voyage of Odysseus as described in *The Odyssey* in fourteen of such encounters:

It all starts at the end of the Trojan War, when the Greeks follow Odysseus' idea to build the Horse and infiltrate the city. During the sack Odysseus is forced by his peers to kill Astyanax, son of Hector[27], causing the anger of Zeus and Athene.[28] After that, with the ships full of treasures and slaves Odysseus departs from Troy to sack the Trojan allies, the Kikonians in Ismaros[29] (encounter 1), where eventually the arrival of the reinforcements helped by the angered deities causes the Hero to flee and cry the death of several soldiers. On the flee, Odysseus and his companions are pushed ashore by a supernatural storm. Once they gain the favourable wind, they are brought to double the Cape of Maleia, yet forcibly driven past Kythera[30], to the land of the Lotus-Eaters (encounter 2). Behind the hospitable appearance of the place rests hidden the

[27] Hector is the first-born son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba, Trojan prince, heir to the throne and the greatest fighter for Troy. He distinguishes himself in the battles of the *Iliad* and as a wise and peace-loving man. His son Astyanax (or Scamandrius), the crown prince, is killed by Neoptolemus in the *Little Iliad* or by Odysseus in the *Iliou Persis*.

[28] The exact cause of the wrath of Zeus and Athene, that from the start, before the intervention of Poseidon, pushed Odysseus and his companions away from home is not certain (the murder of Astyanax is an hypothesis), but is confirmed throughout the poem: I.326-327; III.130-135, 152, 160, 288; IV.502; V.108; IX.38, 552-555; XII.415.

[29] Located in Thracia.

[30] Or Kithira, island of the southern tip of Greece, strategically relevant for the trade routes between Peloponnese and Crete.

sweet temptation of the drug-induced oblivion, from which Odysseus saves his companions by dragging them onto the ships again.

So, vigorously rowing further along, the Achaians encountered the country of the lawless outrageous Cyclopes (encounter 3), who live in separate habitations with no place for assembly and no institution. While admiring the prosperous land and its products, the Achaians fell asleep in Polyphemos cave, where eventually they are trapped by the Cyclopes, who eats some of them. However, while the monster is asleep the warriors manage to escape by blinding Polyphemos with a scorching pole. The giant opens the door of the cave to call for help, so giving a chance for escape to the men hid among the cattle. However, a curse is cast upon them. Sailing further the Achaians arrive at the island of Aiolos (encounter 4), who favours Odysseus' return by giving him the bag holding the winds. Almost arrived at Ithaka, the crew decides to disobey Odysseus orders opening the bag from which all winds burst out sending the ships back to Aiolos' Island. The king, annoyed by Odysseus' request and frightened by the gods' wrath, does not concede his favour twice, Odysseus departs without the king's aid.

After six days of navigation the hero and his men arrive at Lamos, Telepylos of the Laistrygones[31](encounter 5). Three men are sent to explore the land and to know the inhabitants, cannibal giants, who in the end destroy all the Achaians ships except one. Odysseus manages to escape from death and sails away with the last survivors arriving at the island of Aiaia (encounters 6 and 8), home to the goddess Circe, who tries her spells on Odysseus and his men, who resist the enchantment with the help of Hermes. Stranded on the island, the Achaians live a year by Circe until the goddess listens to their desire to travel back home. Before departing from the island, Odysseus visits the realm of the dead, Hades (encounter 7).

Following the indications given by Circe, Odysseus and his men arrive at the land of the dead where the hero summons the ghosts: Elpenor, Teiresias and

[31] Lamos, also called Telepylos, city of the Laistrygones was not identified with the homonymous river in Cilicia, neither with the archaeological excavation also in Cilicia, Turkey.

Antikleias in addition to the many queens of the past and the Achaian heroes of Troy[32]. There Odysseus is told his fate and is informed of the situation in Ithaka. Finally, he travels back to Circe, where is given instruction to get back to Ithaka. Then Odysseus and his crew sail and encounter the Sirens (encounter 9), Skylla and Charybdis[33] (encounter 10), and, after some losses, the cattle of Helios[34] (encounter 11), which, despite the goddess' warnings, they eat and sacrifice, thus causing the rage of the god of the Sun. So, Zeus punishes Odysseus by striking his vessels with thunders and bolts and sending them back to Skylla and Charybdis, which he alone survives.

Adrift, Odysseus providentially arrives on the verdant island of Kalypso (encounter 12), a dreaded goddess, by whom the Hero lives as her husband for years, until the assembly of the gods gathers and resolves that Odysseus might now return home and Hermes is sent to order Kalypso to let the hero go (Book I). Odysseus builds his raft and sails toward the Phaiakian country, but again Poseidon intervenes and wrecks the raft, Odysseus is promptly saved by Leukothea[35] and aided by Athene finally comes ashore on the land of Alkinoös (encounter 13).

Marooned on Scheria, Odysseus is found by Nausikaa, Phaiakian princess. The princess decides to assist the hero and to guide him to the city, where he must enter alone. Odysseus is left at the sacred grove of poplars, from where he walks to the great estate of the king Alkinoös following Nausikaa's directions. Odysseus describes the layout of the city around which the territory is well organised. At the court he is warmly received, is given food, clothes and gifts, and feasts and games are thrown in his

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[32] Elpenor, companion of Odysseus, killed by accidentally fall from the roof in X.552; Teiresias, Theban seer; Antikleia, mother of Odysseus, died of grief; *The queens*: Alkmene, mother of Herakles, Epikaste, mother of Oidipodes (Oedipus), Leda, mother of Kastor and Polydeukes (Pollux) and Ariadne among the others; *The Heroes*: Agamemnon, Achilleus, Herakles and others.

[33] Sea monsters guarding a route between two pieces of land, probably the Straits of Messina, renowned for the strong currents passing through it, which makes it hard to pass.

[34] Helios posses seven herds and seven flocks, representing the nights and the days of a week, each of them counts fifty animals, one for each week of the year.

[35] Ino, daughter of Harmonia and Camus, aunt of Dionysos, mortal queen of Boeotia transfigured and worshiped as a goddess.

honour. He does not reveal his identity until the song of Demodokos[36] about the Tojan War make him cry. Only at this point Odysseus is asked to recount his voyage before being safely sent home.

Safely arrived on one end of Ithaka (encounter 14) while sleeping, Odysseus hides his possessions in a cavern and disguised by Athene in the clothes of an old tramp reaches the house of his swineherd, Eumaios. Returned from his expedition, Telemachos the two. Eumaios is sent ahead to the city to inform Penelope of Telemachos' arrival and the return of Ithaka's king, while Odysseus and his son plan the revenge against the suitors. Separately they all walk to Odysseus' palace. There the Hero pretends to be a beggar waiting for the right moment to reveal himself. Inspired by Athene Penelope appears before the suitors suggesting she is ready to be married again: the next day she proposes the archery competition. As last competitor to his wife's hand, Odysseus is given the bow, with which he slaughters the suitors, while Telemachos and Eumaios execute all the maids who have been prostituting to the suitors. Finally, Odysseus is reunited with his beloved wife and the order in the house is restored. In the end the hero and his companions flee in secret to Laertes' estate, there he is reached by the suitors' kinsmen who want him dead. Eventually Athene intervenes and reconciles the parts.[37]

Schematically drawn, regardless the directions, the voyage of Odysseus is quite linear, as represented in Figure 4, two exceptions being the voyage to the land of the Dead, as he comes back to Circes to receive final instructions, and the attempted return home with the help of King Aiolos. Even among those two exceptions there is a relevant difference: If in the case of the episode of Hades, Odysseus and his crew are on a deliberate round trip, from Aiolos' island to Ithaka they are on the straight course to reach home, and their tragic return is unintentional.

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[36] The blind singer of the Phaiakians.

[37] The whole story is almost devoid of assemblies or councils to appease dissent and administer justice, a peculiar fact, given the whole story seems to try exemplifying the good and the bad ways to govern, emphasizing the qualities of the assemblies that will characterise the *polis.* About this fascinating matter, which is of utmost interest for the Urban Management, Elton Barker (2009 p.89-134) explains clearly what seems to have been the intention of side-lining the debate for the whole poem.

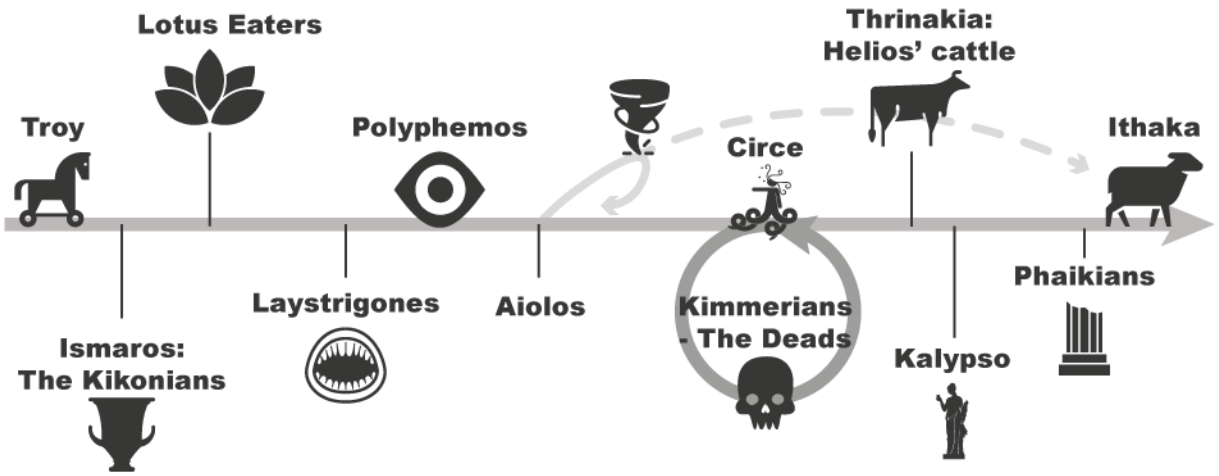


Figure 4 - Odysseus' Voyage Scheme (Created by the author, 2022)

However, in terms of alleged geographical localisation, the path of is definitely more complex and tangled, in some theories even too tangled to be realistic. About these theories on the geography of *The Odyssey* the next chapters attempt to make a synthesis and a coherent structure. To conclude, in the next section are presented the methodological aspects of the discussions constituting the core of this master's thesis. Consequently, the literary review represents the first block of items discussing the theoretical content of this text, while the case study represents the last and second block of empirical considerations, which needed an 'embedded' chapter describing its own methodology.

2. METHODOLOGY

The composition of this work is split into two parts: (1) The theoretical discussion, the literary review and (2) the analysis of the Homer's Odyssey (the case study). Consequently, two different methods had been used to uphold the discussions contained in each of the constituent parts of the thesis. Subsequently, it is listed each item of the two main parts of this text and for each is specified the methodology, thus considering the method, the technique, the sources, the criteria and the expected results. In doing so, the first two sections have been skipped: The Introduction and the Methodology itself, so the list below starts from section three, the Literary Review. Therefore, here it is recreated the same structure of the whole work, so that the discussion about the methodology for each chapter is schematically introduced in the list by the respective title.

Literary review: In general, for this section it has been used a monograph method (MARCONI, LAKATOS, 2003). The sources mainly bibliographical and the data contained are the concepts and the theories that have been qualitatively described by the argumentation in the text. The technique of discussion is content dependent; therefore, the bibliographic survey prevails. The separate results are grouped in the last item and aim to answer the hypothesis that literary narrative, might it be modern or ancient, is able to foster the research for the understanding of the 'city'.

The ancient city: it is the first chapter of the literary review, there takes place the epistemological discussion around the ancient city and its complexity. As a result, it is chosen a definition of 'ancient city' that can be used in the case study to differentiate among the various settlements described in the poem, which one of them can also be called a city. In this discussion appear the works of: M. Cacciari (2004), L. Mumford (1977), M. Finley (1977), G. Childe (1950), Storey (2006), Marcus and Sabloff (2008), Creekmore and Fisher (2014), Zuiderhoek (2016), Kostof (1991), Osborne (2006), Sjölberg (1955), Hansen (1993), P. Horden and N. Purcell (2000), M. Smith (2019).

The Greek settlements: With this item starts the second part of the literary review, here are discussed the collected sources, which deal with the ancient city and in particular with the Mediterranean city of the Homeric Age (i.e., Greek Dark Ages). The result of

this comparative discourse is a brief guide on the architectural evidence of the settlements of that age, so that it can be used further in the text to understand whether or not there is a link between the historical evidence collected in modern times and what can be enucleated from the Homeric text, which is object of inquiry. In this part appear the following sources: Benevolo (2016), Coppa (1968), Gates (2011) Mumford (1977), Oliveira (2016), M. Smith (2019).

*Consistency of ancient documents for contemporary studies***:** This chapter deals with the concernment about the validity of ancient sources[38], which might have suffered a strong manipulation over time, and therefore they might be discredited as sources for a scientific discussion. The bibliographical material upholds a theoretical solution, although identifying three *criticalities* to be overcome. Finally, it has been asserted that not only *The Odyssey*, but also other of such texts have the authority to speak for a remote time of which little material trace has come to us. In this chapter appear: Lima (2008), Zanni Rosiello (2013), De Federicis (1998), Ford (2015), Le Goff (1986), Marincola (2011), Parry (1971a, 1971b), Strasburger (1972), Taplin (1986), Gomes (1997), Giesecke, (2003), Boardman (2002), Turchi (2004), Calvino (1990).

Cities in literary narrative: Following the general methodology of this section, in this item has been reviewed the discussion about the relations between city and literary narrative. In *Types of literary cities,* I discuss the different categories of cities that can be encountered in the literary narrative, so defining four types of literary cities. In this item and its parts appear the following authors: Cacciari (2009), Lazzarini (2010), Calvino (2005a), Gomes (1994, 1997), Choay (2015 [1965]), Zanni Rosiello (2013), Bresciani (2002), Ultramari and Jazar (2016), De Federicis (1998), Calvino (1990), Lima (2008), Marincola (2011).

[38] Especially when discussing about Greek civilization, 'ancient' is the period from about 1200 BC to the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. Another subdivision is possible in this time span, so defining three sub-periods: Archaic (to the end of the VI century BC), Classical (V-IV century BC), Hellenistic and Greco-Roman (III century BC onward). See S. Hornblower's ANCIENT GREECE In: ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. [Chicago, IL], 2022 Available: https://www.britannica.com/place/ancient-Greece. Access: 25/03/2019. and D. W: Lucas *et al.* GREEK LITERATURE In: ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. [Chicago, IL], 2022 Available: https://www.britannica.com/art/Greek-literature. Access: 25/03/2019.

Literary cartography: Here the discussion deals with the cartographic methods to represent a literary space, leading to a method to be used to draw a new cartography for *The Odyssey*; while *The cartography of The Odyssey* holds the review of the literature that produced cartographic representations of the voyage described in the poem, lastly *Space of narration and descriptions' catalogue* adds narratological tools to the previous discussion, so completing the set of instruments to be used to understand and describe the space of *The Odyssey*. As results I built a categorisation for the literary cities, a method to draw a literary cartography, an analysis of the cartography of *The Odyssey* produced so far, and lastly a multidimensional coding for the description identified in *The Odyssey*. In this item and its parts appear the following authors: Lima (2008), Sharp (1904), Piatti, Reuschel and Hurni (2009), Piatti et al. (2009), Turchi (2004), Engberg-Pedersen (2017), Wolf (2004), Bunbury (1879), Dougherty (2001), Stilman (1888), Halliburton (1927), Bérard (1933), Hennig (1934), Golding (1955), Bradford (1963), Lattimore (1965)[39], Lessing (1965), Obregón, (1971), Severin (1987), Roth (1999), and Geisthövel (2010), Edwards (1993), De Jong (2012).

The second part of this master thesis is the case study, which is based upon the analysis of *The Odyssey*. In the text I have searched for description of urban and architectural spaces, as well as, for description of landscape when opposed to or part of the anthropic space. Those description are analysed and categorised with the methods built in the literary review. In the end I proceed with the attempt to propose a new cartographic representation of the literary spaces which the hero of the poem travels through. The precise methodology and the articulation of the second section are explained in a proper chapter. As appendices to the work, I propose a glossary that lists all the name of characters and places appearing in the verses analysed in the case study as well as in the first chapters introductory to the Homeric masterpieces. Also, in Appendix A are quoted the whole passages analysed in the second part of this research for the reader to be able to read first-hand the words of *The Odyssey.*

[39] Referring to the date of the first edition, which is required during the discussion of the chronological variation of the localisation of Homer's narrative. However, in the text, is used the first Harper Perennial Modern Classic edition published in 2007, as in the bibliography.

3. LITERARY REVIEW

The section is divided into five chapters, which present the four main theoretical questions announced in the previous pages, and a last chapter gathers the conclusions of the discussions developed so far. Thus, in the first chapter it is reviewed the epistemological discussion around the ancient city and its complexity While in the second chapter there is a consideration on the actual knowledge on the Greek settlements around the Greek Dark Ages, in the third chapter are considered the *criticalities* that the use of ancient literature suggests, in order to understand the weaknesses those kinds of documents have when facing a scientific analysis; the fourth chapter deals with the types of representation of the city in the literary narrative, a qualitative consideration is made taking into account the pieces of information that each different type of representation can give.

3.1 The ancient city

What the city is, is a question about the humankind that many have tried to answer to - and still do -, and perhaps it has been asked one time too many, since it is a too great effort to define the city: meaning an absolute idea of what the city is in itself, for the people who build it and for whom lives in it. In recent times it has been experienced how many declinations a single phenomenon can have: the metropolis, the garden city, the megapolis or megacity, the edge city, the satellite city, the global city, the digital city and so on… So many are the meanings of *city*, as many are the contradictions that live in the cities themselves, which are embodied in the everlasting effort to balance the request for services and the need of efficient productivity. In this regard an Italian philosopher, Massimo Cacciari (2004), states:

> The city is subject to contradictory questions. To want to overcome such contradictions is a bad utopia. Instead, it must be given shape. The city in its history is the perennial experiment to give shape to contradiction, to conflict. (p.5)

Thus, in both in the contradictory responses to our contradictory demands and in the mutability of the object city lie the impossibility to absolutely define the city. Nevertheless, it is possible to describe and understand any given form of the city at any given moment producing a number of models varyingly appliable to the existing manifestations of such a social phenomenon, as well as it is possible to create models

of desired cities of course. One could also remember the words of Lewis Mumford (1977, p.34), who stresses how no single definition is applicable to the multitude of manifestations and transformations of the city, as well as, that the origins of the city are obscure and its future difficult to weigh.

At this point, it is needless to say that a similar hardship is there in finding the definition for ‘ancient city’. Nonetheless many have been the voices trying to formalise an idea that is apparently shared by everyone, but nobody can put into simple words. This problem has been known for a long time now, about how much as an historical category the city is difficult to grasp, one of the most preeminent experts on the matter, Moses Finley (1977) in his famous essay states:

> It will not have escaped notice that I have so far avoided defining what I mean by a city. Neither geographers nor sociologists nor historians have succeeded in agreeing on a definition. Yet we all know sufficiently what we mean by the label, in general term […]. The block in definition arises from the difficulties, apparently insuperable, of incorporating all the essential variables without excluding whole periods of history in which we all know cities existed, and on the other hand, of settling for a least common denominator without lodging on a level of generality that serves no useful purpose. (p. 307-308)

So, *when* does *ancient* apply? And *what* is a *city* for the ancient peoples?

In the specific case of this dissertation, since its dealing with Greek settlements, it might be simply applied the most common definition that calls *ancient* everything happened before the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD, which leads to the European Middle Ages. This definition is evidently Eurocentric and not synchronic, so it does not take into account what is happening in the rest of the world at that time, where complex layered societies existed as well, which might have been in a different period of their evolution: In China the so-called *ancient* period ends already in c. 221 BC, in India in c. 322 BC, while in Japan in 538 AD; Moreover, while Northern Africa and Middle East are the outlines of the Mediterranean region that follows an Eurocentric view, South and West Africa have a different and very diversified history in which the Colonial Period marks the abrupt transition into modernity for a whole continent.

This incongruity in the development of different regions and communities in human history make impossible to determine a temporal bracket in which cities around

the globe are all *ancient*, and is, therefore, necessary to find other ways to describe the *ancient city* throughout history and across the Earth. Thus saying, it is not strictly *when* that determines, whether a city or a settlement is *ancient*, but *how* the city is determines that. Paradoxically *ancient* is not a temporal attribute.

These different ways to define the *antiqueness* of a city are certainly models that describe the quantitative and qualitative features of each settlement to determine whether to address it as a city. Building such models is nevertheless a perilous enterprise. Indeed, going back to Finley's essay, when he speaks of *generality*, probably he hints at the model of Gordon Childe (1950) and his ten points, to which, nonetheless, is necessary to recognise the effort to gather in a single definition all settlements of every and each culture all over the (ancient) world. The point that Finley makes is that every model extends or narrows its focus on a larger or smaller geographical area, often the focus falls only on the Greek-Roman cities, totally forgetting its ancestors or coevals in Asia, North-Africa, in the Americas. Of course, that is due to the stronger relation the dominant modern western society has with the evolution of the Greek-Roman urban model and also to the greater amount of documentation that came to our era from those societies.

Recently authors like Storey (2006), Marcus and Sabloff (2008), Creekmore and Fisher (2014) and Zuiderhoek (2016) thanks to the increasing number of archaeological experiences at their disposal have collected in their works the voices of various experts in order to draw a more complete picture of the features of the ancient cities using a comparative approach, indeed legacy of Childe's *The Urban Revolution* (1950). Zuiderhoek (2016) summarises some of the main approaches to the matter, specifically focusing on the Greek-Roman city, while Creekmore and Fisher (2014) offer a wider view on the application of such models world-wide. And both provide examples of different model at work, starting from the firsts, which suffer the most influence from the studies on the modern cities to the most recent, which seem to gradually come to terms with the contradictions Cacciari (2004) – among others – refers too.

To have a compass in the evolution of this discussion, here follows a summary of the main approaches to define and describe an ancient town starting from the most

immediate, the demographic approaches: those naturally focus on the quantity and quality of the population of a specific settlement to establish if such a settlement bears importance among other settlements in the same context. Some distinctions derive from the work of Storey (2006, p. 1-23). To measure the population magnitude, meaning the number of inhabitants of a settlement, is surely objective and supposedly impartial, however, as Zuiderhoek (2016, p.4) reminds, in certain contexts as the one studied here, the majority of the settlements would be then disqualified if compared in population with the cities in the near east. Kostof (1991) and Osborne (2006), instead, stress how the density and nucleation of a population qualifies the importance of a settlement, however, overlooking the so-called *dispersed cities*, which existed in other continents. Another approach would be to evaluate the population make-up, which is a qualitative approach, that considers various social, political and economic factors, so possibly enlarging the extents of a city beyond a built environment that serves as a nucleus.

An approach which has been already mentioned is to define the cities by the urban landscape, as per Childe's ten points and the observations of Gideon Sjölberg (1955), for instance: this approach allows to draw connections between very distant cities in time and space, as they might present similar layout, building with the same function, as well as infrastructures with similar quality (paved roads, walls and gates…). This approach is rather unique, as it stands out among the demographic approaches and the socio-economic ones, and it is of particular interest for this research as it focuses is on the built environment, which is the object of this master thesis.

Other relevant perspectives that give coverage of further layers of this complex matter, as previously mentioned concentrate on legal, political, economic and systemic aspects: the political approach focuses on the administrative structure and the political organisation of a settlement (HANSEN,1993), while an economic approach focuses on the size, the frequency and the variety of commercial exchanges between the settlements to determine the power relations among them, and finally, the ecological approach weighs the multitude of interactions between settlements in a given region as well as the interaction between settlements and the region itself. In this last approach the role of the environment is of particular importance, and it is, indeed, the most complex and complete approach to describe urbanism at a large scale, even if it

cannot, paradoxically, precisely render the distinction between a city and a town. The most interesting and extensive work that uses this approach has been brought on by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell (2000), who criticise most of the theories produced from Weber to Osborne.

However, all of these models are viable and neither of them should be discarded *a priori*, since they depict the disparate characteristics of such settlements and of the environments (social, economic…) where those are set in a way that is mostly measurable. Indeed, by the number of archaeological remains and their typologies it can be determined a range of inhabitants, which craftsmanship they were specialized, how they were organised; if there were places of cult, temples, main buildings, storages; and also which were, if there were, exchanges of goods *etc.* An example of such an application is the definition of city provided by Smith (2019):

> […] a city is defined as a place that has some or all of the following characteristics: a dense population, multiple ethnicities, and a diverse economy with goods found in an abundance and variety beyond what is available in the surrounding rural spaces. A city's structures often include ritual buildings like temples, mosques, or churches, but there are other large buildings beyond those religious ones. In keeping with a multifunctional economy and an intensity of habitation, there is a landscape of verticality that includes residential units, courts, government offices, and schools. There are formal entertainment venues, whether a sports stadium or a theatre or a racetrack or an opera house. There is an open ground that fulfils a multipurpose function […]. There are at least some broad avenues and thoroughfares that connect the world of wealth and privilege, contrasting with the winding streets of ordinary neighbourhoods. And above all there is an interdependence of people in the city for the most fundamental human needs of water and food. (e-book version)

The aspects listed above are precisely measurable or at least deductible from reports of ancient historians, legends, myths, and documents of various nature. However, not every ancient city has for example a 'formal entertainment venue', so as the study proceeds one should start making exceptions, since the definition was either too general or too strict as, once again, remembered by Finley (1977).

Leading to a conclusion, it has been succinctly exhibited the variety of approaches with which is possible to identify a city, but also and mostly the incurable evanescence of the definitions so accomplished, however necessary and justified they are. In the specific case of this dissertation, it is even more perilous than road that leads to a definition of city, since as it is further explained in the next chapters dealing

with literary cities also means dealing with the *uncertainty of imagination*. However, to differentiate an imagined settlement from an imagined city, it is required to recognise in the literary source elements that lead the reader to think that such a place has those qualities listed by Monica Smith, which can also be suggested by some of the “too general” considerations of Gordon Childe (1950) like the “true monumentality” of public buildings.

As a matter of fact, such unmeasurable, unobjective considerations are difficult, if not impossible to be evaluated by the study of the remains of a city, but those can be seen through the eyes of those who lived in those ‘city’ and passed on their sensations to the next generations with vivid and passionate descriptions, as those can be read in the Homeric poems.

3.2 The Greek Settlements

As it has been noted, the origin of the city is somehow obscure and remote, it accompanies the history of man from the Neolithic onwards. It is around the ninth millennium BC that are attested the oldest remains of 'cities' ever found at Jericho, Palestine (GATES, 2011). Therefore, at the time told in the Homeric verses, the cultural inheritance on the construction and composition of the settlements is almost ten thousand years old. Coppa (1968), for instance, attributes the first models of urban development to Emperor Sargon I and King Hammurabi[40], which are believed to have influenced not only the Fertile Crescent, but also the urban development of the Nile and Indus valleys. The Greek city of the Homeric era (Greek Dark Ages or Iron Age), according to Mumford (1977), belongs to the Mycenaean and post-Mycenaean period, however it is not to be neglected the Minoan influence that must have already been part of the cultural baggage of the travellers of that time. Undoubtedly, it is hard to forget the passage Odyssey XIX, 172-179:

[40] Hammurabi (c. 1810 – c. 1750 BC) was a king of the first Babylonian dynasty, while Sargon I (c. 1920 BC - c. 1881 BC) was the king of the Assyrian Empire.

> There is a land called Crete in the middle of the wine-blue water,
> a handsome country and fertile, seagirt, and there are many
> peoples in it, innumerable; there are ninety cities.
> Language with language mix there together. There are Achaians,
> there are great-hearted Eteokretans, there are Kydonians,
> and Dorians in three divisions, and noble Pelasgians;
> and there is Knossos, the great city, the place where Minos
> was king for nine-year periods, and conversed with great Zeus.[41]

These lines clearly denounce the strong awareness the Greek peoples had of their own identity, the accurate genealogy of the occupants of the island of Crete underlines the existence of an alterity with respect to those populations. Odysseus is a representative of the Achaians, Argives or Danaans, as we can remember since from the first verses of the *Iliad* (e.g., Iliad I, 135-139 named among the Achaians), therefore, the last occupants of the island, who enjoy the urban heritage of the cultures that pre-dated them.

At this point it is necessary to clarify the chronology within which this discussion moves, and within which are the examples of settlements that lead back to the time interval that interests this research. Table 1 shows the temporal scan of the different cultural periods that followed one another in the geographical area that interests Odysseus's travels. The reference time limits are the end of the Minoan period and the Early Archaic period (c. 1200 – c. 600 BC).

Table 1 - Cultural periods of ancient Greece
(adapted from GATES, 2011 p. 118)

Minoan Crete	c 1930-1200 BC
Mycenaean Greece	c 1650-XI century BC
Sub-Mycenaean and Sub-Minoan	XI century BC
Protogeometric	c. 1000-900 BC
Geometric	c. 900-700 BC
Early Archaic	c. 725-600 BC
Archaic	c. 600-479 BC

[41] The mix of populations that apparently lived together in the Homeric-Age Crete is the result of a stratification caused by successive migrations, the last caused by the Dorians, an invading population from the northern regions of Greece, who entered in conflict with the Achaians (Mycenaenean-era Greeks). Other populations are: Eteokretans: lit. “true Cretans”, probably the original population of Crete; Kydonians: people from the city of Kydonia, now Chania, Crete; Pelasgians: the *native Greeks*.

As a first influence, on the idea of city in the Homeric poems, there is certainly the Minoan architecture and its settlements, whose morphology appear to be a sort of fractal image of the ground plan of the Knossos' palace. It is certainly evident that the typical density of the rooms of the palaces is reflected in a similar density of the more modest dwellings in the urban scale, despite the fact that the scale of the building is far greater than that of the other architectures.

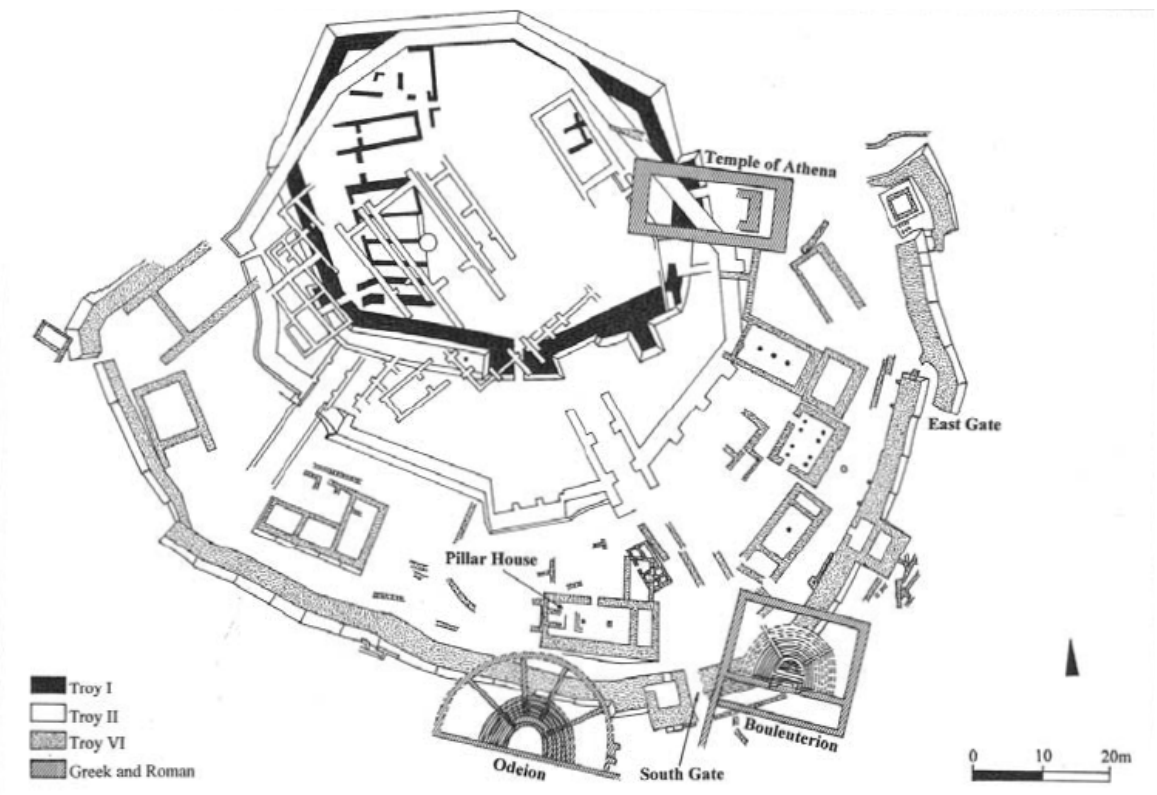
The city of Gournia (Figure 5), in the far east of Crete, is a vivid example of the density of those settlements. Gournia, like others towns on the island, has at its centre the palace-like building, which dominates the hill on whose slopes lies the rest of the settlement. The blocks of houses are extremely dense and divided by paved streets. The buildings were two-storied and covered by a flat roof of light materials. From the density of the dwellings the space of the palace and the void of the court emerge.

Figure 5 - Plan of Gournia, Crete (GATES, 2011 p.126)

A different example is given by the remains of Troy (Figure 6), whose remains dates from the c. 2900 BC to the c. 1100 BC, the researchers (GATES, 2011) divided them in nine subsequent periods. The take of the destruction of Troy by the hand of the Achaians is still to be proved, however, it is renown the vicissitude of its discovery.[42]

In the morphology of this Anatolic city is preeminent the presence of the thick wall that defends the settlements of each period from the outside. This characteristic is not to be found in the Minoan settlements of the same periods and is probably due to the absence of the sea as a natural barrier, even though similarly to the city of Gournia, Troy sits above a promontory too. The buildings inside the walls are the so-called *megaroi*, long rectangular structures with just one floor and one large room with no internal subdivisions. This kind of building is typical of the Mycenaean culture. The lack of separation of the functions of the house is a main difference between the Minoan and the Mycenaean buildings, this testifies to a greater cultural advancement by the palatial Cretan civilization.

Figure 6 - Plan of Troy (GATES, 2011 p.140)

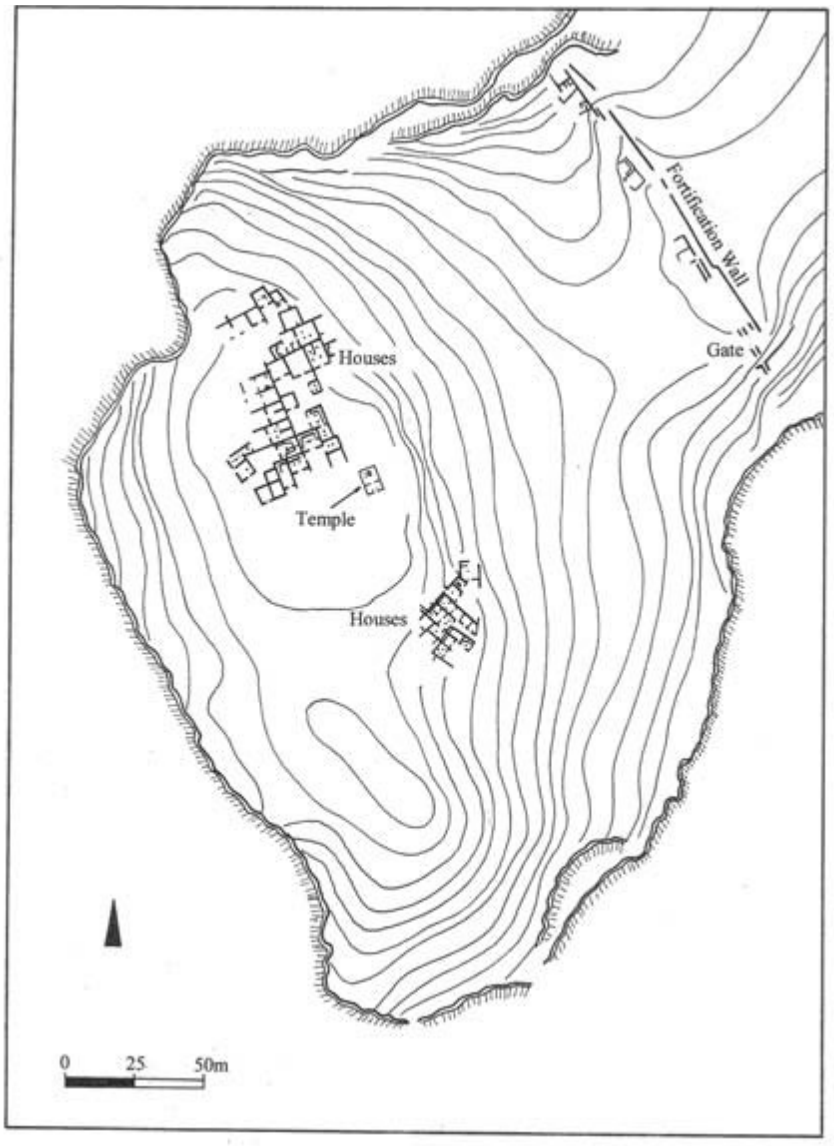


[42] See note 66.

However, the city of Zagora (Andros Island, Greece) (Figure 7) demonstrates the overcoming of this fundamental difference. The settlement of the VIII century BC dominates the hill protected by a wall at the base of it, the houses are grouped together and share the walls. While similarly to the buildings of Troy the dwellings are just one-storey, they present a multiplicity of rooms each dedicated to the storage of goods and the shelter of animals. The peculiarity of this place is that a temple stands alone near the main aggregation of houses, while the fortifications with a little group of buildings stand far from the settlement. The temple has a simple structure, not different from the *megaroi* of Troy.

All those three settlements are belonging to three different places and periods: On one hand they are part of the heritage that is stored in the Homeric poems which

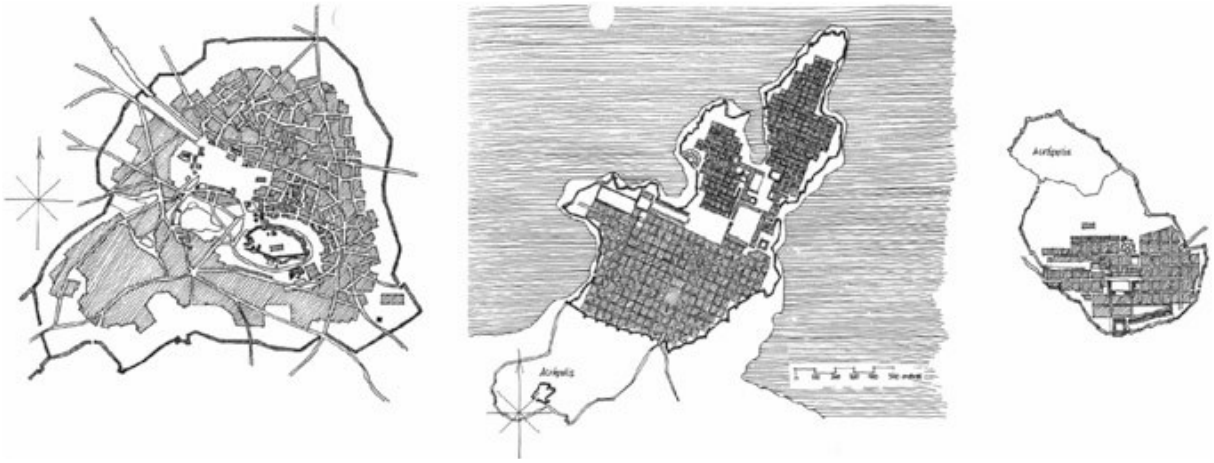
Figure 7 - Plan of Zagora (GATES, 2011 p.210)



leads to the birth of the polis around the VIII century BC, but on the other hand, they differ completely in the clear planning, which can be observed both in the cities of the Middle East in Babylonia and Assyria, for instance, and the *poleis* of Athens, Mileto and Priene showed in Figure 8.

As a matter of fact, the *polis* as a formal and political structure clearly shows signs of planning. At the centre lies the acropolis with defensive and religious functions, while the *agora,* the place of gathering, is outside of it and surrounded by houses. The entire city is surrounded by defensive walls. The buildings are dense, the paved streets are narrow, and they can follow schematic or non-schematic paths mainly depending on the nature of the territory they occupy. Mileto for instance has a regular plan, while Athens has adapted to the irregular features of the region.

Figure 8 - Plan of Athens, Mileto and Priene (OLIVEIRA, 2016 p.51)



Leonardo Benevolo (2016) underlines that a polis must have three fundamental places: the *prytaneion*, a sacred place where the fire of the city is stored, which is also in the most cases (in early Athens too) the seat of the government; the *buleuterion*, the council of the people (known as the Council of 500 in Athens); and the *agora*, a versatile public space used for the market and for public meetings among other public activities.

Finally, with those samples it has given a broad idea of the main characteristics and the main aspect that the cities had among the 1200 and the 600 BC, some of those characteristics are exclusively site-specific, while others are general characteristic that

can be found in similar coeval settlements. Those characteristics, which are summarised in Table 2, are the ones that can possibly be found in the verses of *The Odyssey*, which have been analysed in the second part of this work, so that by identifying those characteristics in the text, it is possible to know to which of those ways of building and organising the city Homer was thinking of, i.e. in which of those cultures the *aoidós* ideally identifies himself the most.

Table 2 - Morphological characteristics of the cities of 1200-600 BC
(Edited by the author, 2022)

	Gournia	Troy	Zagora	Athens – Mileto - Priene
Civilisation	Minoan	Trojans[43]	Mycenaeans	Mycenaeans - -
Age	ca. 1700–1450 BC	ca. 2900 – 1100 BC	c. VIII BC	c. VI BC
Localisation	Crete (east)	Anatolia (west)	Andros Island, Greece	Attica – Anatolia (west) -
Characteristics	Density Hierarchy Paved streets Two-storied buildings Elevated ground	Fortifications Megaròn (promiscuous space) Public Buildings (mainly Greek Period) Elevated ground	Fortifications (far) Density Elevated ground Temple (isolated)	Fortifications Density Planned ground Public buildings (bouleuterion, prytaneion, agora) Elevated ground (Athens) Division of near lands

As it can be observed, comparing these general qualities with those used by Smith (2007) to identify a city, that all those cities (so now reasonably called) are characterised – for instance - by population/building density, a web of streets, possibly with hierarchical relations, public buildings (temples, place of assembly, palaces…).

The work now proceeds considering the city in another context, which is no more the material plane of archaeological findings, but the realm of the mind, where the imagination has design of its own and establishes connections with golden paved roads.

[43] Today it is still unknown which population inhabited the citadel of Troy in the Homeric age. Homer in the Iliad describes the Trojan army as a multitude of various origins: "*Hektor, on you beyond all I urge this, to do as I tell you // all about the great city of Priam are many companions, // but multitudinous is the speech of the scattered nations: // let each man who is their leader give orders to these men, // and let each set his citizens in order, and lead them."* (*Il*. II.802-806). However, recent findings suggest the Trojans might have been in some relation with the Hittite Empire and the Luwian language was used as a *lingua franca.* (LATACZ, 2004)

3.3 Consistency of ancient documents for contemporary studies

The previous chapters gave the necessary structures to understand the reference which one should have in mind when approaching the matter of the Greek settlements/cities in the Homeric Age Now the text deals with the consistency of the literature as an instrument to understand the city. Under the spotlight there is the ancient literature, which more than anything requires the researchers to take care, since for being remote is not obvious nor immediate.

Indeed, approaching the matter of Urban Studies from the perspective that narrative literature can offer is not simple. It presents several obstacles starting from the great endeavour of applying the methodology of science in a piece of art, that more than anything seems to offer leisure and lacks architectural materiality, thereby it might be proper spend some lines considering if *"would an architectural critic without the visibility of the presence be possible?"*[44] (LIMA, 2008, p.5)

Moreover, it is unusual to attempt this effort on a text like the Homer's Odyssey, considering that even the word "city" should be employed with some care, since the composition is set in a *pre-polis context*. Nonetheless, not only it is a shared idea, that in literature it may be found a fertile ground for scientific – primarily historiographic – analysis, but it has also been acknowledged – at least for what concerns modern novels – that in other fields literary narrative has been long used to understand sociological and historical questions. (ZANNI ROSIELLO, 2013).

In point of fact, if it was to take the Homeric corpus as an example, it could be observed, that in various fields – from the geographical and archaeological, recalling the rather rocambolesque discovery of Troy by Schliemann[45], to the medical[46] and

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[44] Original text in Portuguese, trans. by the author.

[45] See note 66.

[46] Cf. THOMPSON, A. R. Homer as a Surgical Anatomist [Abstract]. **Proceedings Of The Royal Society Of Medicine**, [S.l.], v. 11, n. 45, p.765-767, 1952. Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/003591575204501107>. Access: 10/5/2018.

even to the psycho-analytical[47] field – those texts have been used in two ways other than narrative: as an archetype of historiographical narration, as for Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenofon (cf. FORD, 2015; MARINCOLA, 2011; STRASBURGER, 1972); and as documents for scientific research by the literary critic, archaeologists *et coetera*.

Besides, these two critical points: the potential lack of **materiality** of literary cities and the complex **context** in which the narrative is set; It should be added that an extreme care should be used in handling such ancient texts, since the manipulation they could have undergone might be profound, factious and still their translation grows the distance from the original document to the reader, distant in **time** and ideology. However, ancient texts might still be, on one hand, an insight, a testimony to the structure of cities at the time it was written or the ideal form a city should have had in the epoch; on the other hand, it offers an original point of view in the discussion of Urban Studies, however ancient and indirect it might be.

Thus, three main issues are identified while handling the ancient literature to understand the city:

a. **Time:** The aging ruins, distorts the physical materials, but also the ideas. During the centuries the documents could have been partially lost, recomposed, manipulated. This matter is rather delicate, and it should be entrusted to the word of the philologists, who possess the right tools to verify the truthfulness of these documents.
b. **Context:** as it has been experienced by great masters like Mumford and then verified by other authors like Bresciani (2002) and Ultramari (2019), the concept of ‘city’ is protean in modern times, but when looking at the years when the first urban experience that set the example for the western civilisation was still to come, the problem should not be understanding this shifting concept, but questioning its very existence. Thus, was there the concept of city at the age and in the region the document was written?

[47] Cf. SHAY, J. Learning about combat stress from Homer'sIliad. **Journal Of Traumatic Stress**, [s.l.], v. 4, n. 4, p.561-579, oct. 1991. DOI: 10.1002/jts.2490040409.

c. **Materiality:** The lack of a material direct reference to what the ancient text is describing, what Lima defines the *"visibility of presence"* (LIMA, 2008), i.e., the material structure of the city the ancient author is describing, makes of the text's interpretation a difficult step, which can be overcome by having the right instruments to make a legitimate extension of a similar experience.

These issues, or critical point are thereby called *criticalities*, as they do not question the feasibility of the study, such as this, but are unresolved, shifting questions intrinsic to the matter at hand. De facto, despite such *criticalities*, a potential in using literature as a source for discussing urban topics is still considerable, it is observable how many are the areas of study not only legitimately taking inspiration, but also operating factual analysis from literature, even if completely fictional. Notwithstanding the fictional nature of literature, the act of mentally figuring a city is an act of planning not dissimilar from drawing on a canvas, as reminded by Gomes (1997).

Thereby it has been generally introduced what might be defined a criticality in the use of an ancient poem such as *The Odyssey* to render an epistemological discussion on the city. By the word 'criticality' it is intended a theoretical point where the consistency of the choice of the case study is more fragile, due to intrinsic problems inherent the nature of the Homeric poem. In the end while reading *The Odyssey* three of such criticalities – just introduced – must be paid attention to: time, context and the materiality of presence.

3.3.1 Time

This part proposes the considerations made about the distance in time between us and the ancient documents, which one might choose to study so to seek additional sources to understand the urban phenomena in the past. As it was suggested, studies in the field of philology integrates the resources, of which the field of Urban Studies lacks, thus stressing once more that interdisciplinarity is a required quality of this field of research. As it is in the interest of this research, it is used *The Odyssey* as example for the general argumentations that follow.

Three are the questions regarding the action of time on a document: the first regards the relation between the document and the pieces of information that it gives,

i.e. the temporal distance between the document's composition and the narrated facts or stories; the second is about the reliability of a document known for having been manipulated over time; the third and last question deals with the change of audience, which might not have the cultural background to understand the message conveyed by the text, which also suffers the manipulation by translation.

The first question is moved by the consideration that it always passes time between the actual facts' happening and the report or the story is written, in that time the memory of the facts might be altered, especially in a time in history when the means of preservation of the memory were few. Nowadays every report, every story based on real facts is supported by photographs, videos, recordings, written documents of every kind, but before the nineteenth century the only ways to hand down an experience was by writing, by telling or by drawing, which dilate the separation between the time of the event and its recording.

Technology and literacy are the determining factors in this matter. Going back in time both the technologies of communication and the literacy necessary to communicate have been restricted to a small number of people. This is surely true about writing, of exclusive use of the aristocracy, but could also be said about the drawing, as figurative arts were mostly privilege of the few. It is not now discussed at which time who had the access to each and every mean of communication, but the interest goes the consideration that the oral communication for a long time has been the fastest and the most largely used way of passing on pieces of information. This consideration is even truer it is considered a period like the Greek Dark Ages, when the events in the Mediterranean determined a considerable loss of the use of writing, which was anyway used mainly for administrative reasons.[48]

Even so, the act of writing takes time, since before the diffusion of the paper the media were either the clay or the parchment, which requires preparation and do not

[48] Till c. 1200 BC the writing systems in use before the Greek have been the Cretan Hieroglyphic (c. 2100 – 1700 BC), Linear A (c. 1800 – 1450 BC) and Linear B (c. 1450 – 1200 BC), which eventually has been lost with the collapse of the Mykenean society. The Greek Dark Ages (c. 1200 – 800 BC) owes its name to this lack of a consolidated and prolific written form.

allow to write long texts. Therefore, if the oral transmission was the main way to transmit pieces of information, how could the message remain the same over time?

In the oral tradition important ideas in a culture survive for few generations, generally after a century those values, those pieces information go through transformation or are lost, especially in a culture different than the contemporary-western one for which memory has great importance. (GIESECKE, 2003) Yet, while the idea can survive for a few generations, the details are deformed, and the facts become stories absorbed by the collective memory of a population: this type of material is called *monument*.

On this point it should be taken into account the consideration of Jaques Le Goff discussed in his extensive work, *Histoire et Mémoire* (1986):

> Collective memory and its scientific form, history, apply to two types of material: documents and monuments. In fact, what survives is not the complex of what has existed in the past, but a choice made both by the forces working in the temporal evolution of the world of humanity and by those who are delegated to the study of the past and past times, historians. These materials of memory can be presented in two main forms: monuments, inheritance of the past, and documents, choice of the historian. […] The characteristics of the monument are that it is linked to the ability – whether voluntary or not – to perpetuate historical societies (it is a legacy to collective memory) and to refer to testimonies that are only a small part of written evidence. (p.443)[49]

The *monuments*, the material created by a society to perpetrate its memory, have their historical relevance, which cannot be diminished. On the contrary, when studying the *monuments* of a society, one should take into account that it is the image, that, voluntarily or not, that very society wanted to give of itself or of the pieces of information that are given. Thus, indirectly it is given another type of information, the one about the self-consciousness of the people who handed the massage down.

The *monument* is what happens between the events and the document – so answering to the first question – , on the macro scale it is the sedimentation of an idea in one's mind, which for how transformed it could be, it does not cease to be the truth. In the case of the Urban Studies, the *monuments* of a society are the sociological

[49] Original text in Italian, trans. by the author.

essence, the view of a society on the space it inhabits, thus an indispensable information to understand the urban phenomena.

However, at some point after the facts, there might have been the will to write down or draw the events, thus giving birth to another type of material, the *document*. The *document* may not suffer the manipulation by the many people passing on the story, can nevertheless be biased.

> The document is not harmless. And the result, first of all, of a conscious or unconscious editing of the history, of the epoch, of the society that produced it, but also of the successive epochs during which it continued to live, perhaps forgotten, during which it continued to be manipulated, perhaps by silence. (Ibidem, p. 454)[50]

Even the *document*, the authoritative source, is naturally manipulated, somehow so it is from the origin giving the reader no choice but to process the events from the author's point view. Answering the second question, the candid hope to conduct a debate using impartial sources should be put at rest. Le Goff refers to source of any time, so that the preoccupation of this research about the consistency of the ancient sources in the scientific discussion about the city should not be different from the preoccupation about the consistency of modern sources. *Monuments* and *documents* of any time period are subjects to the same considerations: both are factious sources; therefore, one should not evaluate the quality of the source in this differentiation.

Manipulation does not discredit the source; it should be recognised though. The harm that a source can bring is not related to its nature, but to the possible misinterpretation. The reader should be aware of the manipulation as an *a priori*, thus equipping himself of the necessary instruments to detect the variations and identify the true events behind the curtain of time.

By answering these two fist questions, from the point where this research stands, it has been scratched the surface of a very larger topic regarding the relation between literature and history, whose exhaustion cannot be reached by these few

[50] Original text in Italian, trans. by the author.

pages, it shall not go further. This research develops further refers to what Lidia De Federicis holds in her book *Letteratura e storia* (1998), in which also reminds:

> The topic is unlimited […]. The binomen 'literature and history' is such to open to the reader almost unlimited perspectives on literature's theory and critical method matters, all concerning the social history of art. (p.5)[51]

Still stands the last question to be answered. Evidently, living the past is impossible as it is having the same perspective as the receivers of an old message, yet it is possible to understand both the contexts and the different reception of that message at different times, to realize the shift of perspective. Again, the reader needs the sufficient instrument to understand and recreate in his mind the historical and geographical context where the message was meant to be received, although the linguistic barrier is hard to overcome. The simplest action would be to get acquainted to the source in its original language, otherwise the choice of the translation must be attentive. In this case later in the text it has been substantiated the choice made on the translation of *The Odyssey*.

Eventually the third question about time has been answered giving the chance to extend them to the case of this study. Actually, about what has been recalled on collective memory, an interesting work about the Homeric Poems has been done by John Boardman in his *The Archaeology of Nostalgia* (2002), in which he explains through everyday objects (vases, paintings, texts…) how the Greeks have transported their imagination to the physical world, thus giving real geographic collocation to mythical events. Moreover, it may be useful to consider the studies of Milman Parry (1971a; 1971b) and the consequent discussion on the identity of Homer.[52] As a matter of fact, it is now impossible to admit the unitarian origin of the Homeric verses, which on the contrary should be considered as the product of an oral tradition which used a

[51] Original text in Italian, trans. by the author.

[52] It is not in the intents of this thesis to discuss the "Homeric Question", which I will consider as a basis to start this research. To get acquainted with this matter, it is suggested the reading of the homonymous chapter in FOWLER (2006).

particular formulary system of composition, hence in a way the product of a collective mind, a *document/monument*.

All things considered, it might be concluded, that *The Odyssey* as a document/monument like any other work of literature belonging to the contemporary as to the past may be used as a new tool to contribute to a new study in Urban Studies, as it includes pieces of information, which enrich in various ways the multiples discussions emerging from the most eminent object of our times, the city. Even more so in the field of Urban Studies, where the power relations (which state the difference between a document and a monument)[53] are a study of extreme importance, since those can perform profound alteration it the city's structure, even in its form.

3.3.2 Context

A relevant aspect of this discussion has already been the language, which in time changes or even one is needed to read a translation, which is a critical choice. Particularly important of this matter are the keywords: for the Urban Studies, the important keywords are – for example – *city* and *settlement*. Yet now the city is the modern city, and each city of our time has its peculiarities, that make so difficult to formulate a global concept of *city* as it has already been mentioned.

That is because the context in which the city is, is different. It definitely depends on time and space, so what one should do when tries to understand the *city* starting from the view of an ancient document? Certainly, as it has been achieved in the previous chapters, one should understand the context, i.e., one should prepare all the knowledge at disposal about the city at the time the document is set. If no such document exists, then it is agreeable that the only choice would be to understand the city before and after the time period one has interest into and to understand the city nearer the geographical area relevant to the research.

This operation is easily achievable when dealing with modern literary narrative, since the sources at disposal are numerous and there is still the favour of **materiality**.

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[53] LE GOFF, *Ibidem, p. 452*

However, when studying ancient periods one can refer to little texts and archaeological excavations. Taking *The Odyssey* as an example, it should be taken into consideration that it was first written as a single document only around the VI century BC, yet it narrates episodes that supposedly take place between the 12th and the 8th century B.C. (Bronze Age – Greek Dark Ages), therefore, before the concept of *polis* as city-state entity was born.

Therefore, it most certainly happened what it was discussed about the action of time on the document, but more than that, about the Homeric Poems it should be reminded that the first canonical written form there is knowledge of dates back to the Peisistratos Tyranny.[54] Actually, if the sedimentation happened in the VIII century BC, it is only in the VI century BC, that there has been a major interest in archiving the Poems. This is relevant, since in other *poleis* there were many versions similar to the one of Peisistratos, each of those versions was customized to celebrate the *polis* to which it belonged.

Each *polis* had its own cultural context, its own political and economic interests, so when reading documents like the Homeric Poems, one should always question the context in which it was produced. And again, what is settlement and what is city, in some contexts may not be clear, as in the one in which *The Odyssey* is set.

The settlements of the Greek Dark Ages or Homeric Age (c. 1100 – c. 800 B.C) were of various nature: as it is known, this was a period of transition from the Mykenean palatial and the Minoan maritime civilizations to the first Greek *poleis.* While the main reasons of the tragic course of events are still debated and uncertain, evidences show clearly that the Mykenean settlements were abandoned, and population decreased, meanwhile the Dorians from the land and the Sea People from the Mediterranean Sea arrived in the region, also crunching the Minoans. The investigation of the historical

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[54] **Peisistratos**, also spelled **Pisistratus**, (VI century— 527 BC), tyrant of Athens whose policies helped to make possible the city's later preeminence in Greece. (See Chester G. Starr's PEISISTRATUS In: ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. [Chicago, IL], 2022 Available: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Peisistratus. Access: 28/03/2019.

facts within the region is of second importance, yet the identification of the context in which it is to identify the city is of utmost relevance. Thence remembering the examples of Lefkandi, Nichoria and Pylos[55] should give a general idea of which typologies of settlements were in fact present at the time.

3.3.3 "The visibility of presence"[56]

The last criticality one can think of about approaching the city with a tool such as *The Odyssey* – or any piece of literature with the same characteristic – is the lack of material reference to what is told in the poem. Therefore, one might ask how it is possible to conduct an epistemological discourse on something that is usually material as the city with its roads and walls made of stones, if the instrument used has no physical comparison.

On one hand it might be answered that time left no traces of the material testimonies matching the descriptions of the Odyssean settlements or, if any trace really exists, it is still hidden underground and might wait for long time till its discovery, since as it is shown, there is no certainty on the location of each settlement.

The only Homeric cities that came to us are Mykene, Pylos and Troy, even if the recklessness of Schliemann[57] might have destroyed the famous Troy of Helen and Paris, and Pylos and Mykene are not extensively described in the Homeric poems. Besides, stressing the point, the uncertainty and the plurality of opinions about the probable localization of the other Homeric settlements makes pointless the effort to try comparing the texts to a material parallel. Therefore, the discussion on the Odyssean cities has to withdraw from any preposterous intention of finding materiality, it is an epistemological discussion on the idea of 'city'.

Thus, supposing that all the cities depicted in the text were completely fictional, then their relevance would be conceptual. Like for the *Invisible Cities* (CALVINO,

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[55] See chapter 3.2

[56] LIMA (2008).

[57] See note 66 p.62.

1990), the message Homer transmits through the words of Odysseus is ideologic, i.e., it declares a vision, an ideal form – utopic or dystopic – the city should or should not have, or ultimately one of infinite plausible possibilities.

Up to now it has proven that a document/monument such as *The Odyssey* is the repository of a people's memory, which suggest that any description within the text is the product of a collective imagination. It has also been hinted, that the process of imagining a city and describing it has the same value as a drawing its plan with the high stone-walls and the silhouette of the house and palaces.

Turchi in his *Map of Imagination (2004)* considers how maps were drawn to stress some contents, some specific characteristics of the landscape, landmarks, all the things that could help someone finding the right way from A to B and to locate oneself, of course. Turchi compares this process of mapping to the process of describing: one recalls in one's mind all the marks he or she thinks to be important, the rest is left blank or filled with sea-monsters or mythical figures. Nevertheless, those descriptions, as complete as a fictional description, even if just partially charted, render a clear image in the author's and reader's mind.

What fills the gaps in the description is the imagination, which varies for everyone. Although, when such a description is made for a specific target, a target with which the author shares his cultural background, or in this case, if the author is the same collective identity as the audience, then the image, those descriptions evoke, is shared by all the audience, it is almost a sharp photograph. It is the cultural ground that guide the rendering of the full image, that fills the blanks.

In the case of *The Odyssey*, Homer is the people's imagination and the people's memory, therefore, the descriptions within the text must had been an immediate reference to a common reality. Thereby, the poem promptly recalled the materiality of a palace or a wall by appealing to the memory, to the experience of the reader, which also filled the blanks around the description. Finally, to vision the materiality of a whole, one needs to understand the society that produced those memories, those documents that are taken into analysis.

To conclude, it has been shown that the criticalities *The Odyssey* suffers can be surmounted, the choice of this Homeric poem is, therefore, consistent and it represents a solid source for the Urban Studies.

3.4 Cities in Literary Narrative

Architectonical elements of the city have been always depicted or sculpted in the figurative arts: from the Assiro-Babylonian bas-reliefs[58] to Edward Hopper's paintings[59], the urban-scape is recurrent. The theatre was also born in the *polis* and with it as background, and the city undoubtably is recounted in historiographers' reports of every epoch. Literary narrative is not excluded from this tradition, as the city is present in very ancient stories as in those of the *Gilgamesh Saga*[60], in the *Iliad* and even in religious texts as important as *The Bible*.[61] The narrative of humankind starts with a first image depicting a simple settlement, a hut or a rock formation used as a cover, in a way the act of a people narrating something about itself was born with the community gathered.

The connection between the human and its settlement, which eventually becomes the city, is biunivocal[62]: the city is a human product, and the human society cannot be without gathering in a settlement, even temporarily, since it is in the gathering that the society founds its expression, yet they mould one-another, once again following the rhythm of contradictory questions direct from the city to the user

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[58] An example is the plate from the VII century BC from the palace of Niniveh depicting the siege of the city of Lakish in the reign of Judah, conserved at the British Museum in London.

[59] Edward Hopper (1882-1967) was an American painter famous for depicting the solitude in the American contemporary life. The setting of his paintings is often a urban environment.

[60] Gilgamesh is the heroic godly King of Uruk, whose heroic enterprises are narrated in the Epic of Gilgamesh, written in Sumerian around the 2100 BC. The story moves from the city if Uruk and its inhabitants complaining with the Gods for the oppression by Gilgamesh.

[61] In the *Ancient Testament* we found the cities of Jericho, Sodoma and Gomorra

[62] In mathematic: said of a law that determines a strict correspondence between elements of different groups, for which for any elements of a group A exists only one corresponding element in A' and vice versa. In this case the meaning is broader, the city cannot be without the humanity, the humanity cannot be without the city. A transformation of the city is mirrored by a transformation of the people that constitutes it.

and vice versa that Cacciari (2009) suggests. Through the written means of the literary narrative, it is possible to understand something about both the person in front of the mirror and its reflection, the city.

Not only the city is recognisable and readable in the narrative, but it also can be interpreted as a text itself as the buildings were words and their inter-relations were the structure of a sentence. So that, in all, the city is a text with its own messages, which are placed there by the writer, who ultimately is the community that plans and builds the city piece by piece, layer above layer. (LAZZARINI, 2010; GOMES, 1997)

However, despite the city or just the simpler settlement has always been present in the narrative (figurative or literary), it is only in modern times that it came in the foreground at the same level of the characters of a story. It became an active character as well remembered by Gomes (1994; 1997) and Lazzarini (2010). So, it is assumed a radical difference between the role of the city in the narrative in two different periods, whose separation is the Industrial Revolution. There is a city before and a city after the Industrial Revolution.

> The relationship between literature and urban experience becomes more forceful and radical in modernity, when the city transformed by the Industrial Revolution presents itself as a new phenomenon dimensioned in the metropolis that gradually loses its métron. [63] The unmeasured space affects the relations with the human. Under the sign of progress, not only the urban profile and ecology are altered, but also the set of experiences of its inhabitants. This city of the crowd, which has the street as a strong trait of its culture, becomes not only the scenery, but the great character of many narratives, or the embodied presence in many poems.
> (GOMES, 1997, p.1)[64]

From the point of view of Gomes, it is clear that great change is bound to the proportions: the man is made little in front of the tall skyscrapers, the huge crowds, the large streets for the cars. Those and more transformations, on a different side, a less visible one, eventually determined the loss of contact between the city and the citizen.

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[63] It seems that the author tried to set a connection between *metrópolis* and *metrón*, if that were the intention, the reader must be advised that there is no actual connection - if not an assonance – between the two words. Literally, *metrópolis* origins from *méter* (Greek for 'mother'), to indicate the city which the colonists came from.

[64] Original text in Portuguese, trans. by the author.

In this context of rapid transformations was born the modern novel, which recounts a personal point of view on the city which the author is living or is imagining in the future as well as in the past or in the present. In a way the novel has a pivotal role in the relevance of the modern city against the city before the Industrial Revolution in the literary narrative: the detailing allowed by the means of the novel cannot be found in the theatre, nor in the poetry, where respectively the scenography is not described, or the structure of the verses is limited; on the other hand, the urban-scape became inevitably dominant in the human things.

The city – as it has been discussed in chapter 3.1 p. 34- cannot be defined in absolute terms, since its structure, its life depends on a multitude of different aspects, which are variable on a natural matter, so there is the city by the sea or in the valley among the mountains, or even the dark cold city and the sunny hot one; but it also depends on cultural, economic, technological aspects and many more. Finally, the city is multi-layered and multifaceted, and its variations can be infinite, as Italo Calvino (2005a) through the mathematical iterations of his eleven cities tries to demonstrate. This is also because there is no pure scientific way to define it, what is known about the city is subordinate to who or what is looking at it.

Undoubtedly, the attempts to define the city have been many, as both Choay (2015 [1965]) and then Bresciani (2002) remember. The failure in rendering completely the city is the success of creating the knowledge about it and igniting the debate on the city of today and of tomorrow. An interesting consideration, for what is to come, is the approximation of scientific literature and literary narrative in the debate on the city in this fashion: the various studies conducted on the city in order to understand it are relative to their time and space, and to the point of view of the researcher, the philosopher, the sociologist or whomever on a social scientific basis attempted the definition. Thus, as the authoresses state and it can be agreed upon, there is no “[…] possibility of asserting a purely technical and neutral character for urbanism. “ (2002 p. 18)

Bresciani also adds that there cannot be a unique interpretation of the history of urbanism or urban history and stresses the point made by Choay, that there is a close relationship between the possible definitions of the subject and the orientation to study

it, so concluding that, "*in an irrefutable way, […] no reading of cities can be definitive or naive."* (2002 p.18)

In other words, there is always a bias in the reading one makes of the city, starting from the choice of approach to the matter, e.g., using an ecological approach instead of a demographic approach to define ancient cities means including or excluding one or the other group of settlements. In that respect, the literary narrative also has biases, the one of the readers and the one of the writers, nonetheless there is truth in it: through the descriptions of a literary city one can understand the author's point of view on it and get a perspective to build a more complex image of a city.

Recalling the metaphor of Gomes (1997) about the city as a text, it can be finally said, that:

> to investigate the representations of the city in the written scene constructed by literature is basically to read texts that read the city, considering not only the physical-geographical aspects (the urban landscape), the more specific cultural data, the customs, the human types, but also the symbolic cartography, in which the imaginary, the history, the memory of the city and the city of memory intersect.[65]

Therefore, scientific measurements and poetic narrations of the city shoot photographs, various perspectives of the same phenomenon, given they are referring to the same place and time. Of course, the literary narrative, lack the rigorous methodology of a scientific analysis and the objectivity of it, but on the other hand the narrative is enriched by all the flavours of personal ideas and feelings. Thus, all together scientific theories and literary descriptions render the complexity of the urban phenomena by completing the picture with the body and the soul. Finally, the literary narrative ends up being a rich source of information for the scientific debate, and "for a long time now that this type of usage is recommended, and in certain pieces of research even necessary" (ZANNI ROSIELLO, 2013, p.1).

The authors quoted so far are mainly concerned about the city from the '800s to the present day, however, it is in the hypothesis of this work that the same logic can

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[65] Original text in Portuguese, trans. by the author.

be applied to the citis of older times. So, to read the *ancient city*, it is needed an equally ancient literature, one that is near to those ruins and remains that once were the crib of an ancient civilisation. The ancient literature survived to our days is limited, but still some literary city can be found in these old texts.

The most renown example is found in the *Iliad* and in the archaeological excavations of Schliemann[66], who driven by the desire to localize and find the palaces of the Greek heroes, eventually found the citadel of Troy and the tomb of Agamemnon mainly by interpreting the Homeric poem. In addition to the practical example there is an analogy between the VII century BC and the Industrial Revolution, both have been time of great change for the stance about the city: in one side it was the incipit of the experience known as *polis* – as well as of the *civitas -,* on the other it has been the start of the modern city.

Therefore, it is likely that in such a time of change for the Greek society, a central thematic of the narratives could have been the birth of a new concept of settlement. However, although the figurative arts have gone through a great time of innovation and change both in the style and in the object of representation, thus passing from the geometric style to more naturalistic figures and human figures, it cannot be identified a real interest for the city, not in foreground neither in the background.[67]

The Greek literature between the VIII and VII century BC is identified in the poetry of Homer and Hesiod, who mainly deal with myths and mythology, therefore they did not explicitly write about the city with an interest toward its planning, while there was an eminent preoccupation toward its administration and towards the

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[66] Heinrich Schliemann (Neubukow, 6/1/1822 – Naples, 26/12/1890) started the excavations on the site of Hisarlik in 1868 pursuing a life-time dream, going against every academic and encountering huge criticism from the National Geographic Society due to extensive use of dynamite during the "archaeological" excavations, which may have destroyed the main layers of the real Troy. Cf. SCHLIEMANN, H. **Selbstbiographie**. Mit der Geschichte der Arbeiten. Berlin: Berler Ausgabe, 2014. available: <http://www.zeno.org/Geschichte/M/Schliemann,+Heinrich/Selbstbiographie> access: 04/12/2017

[67] To set some examples, of this period are the Dipylon Vase (c. 750 BC), the Kore of Nikandre (c.650 BC).

composition of the society and the role of each of its components.[68] For example, Hesiod in *Works and Days* asserts the importance of agriculture and suggests methods of work. Moreover, the assemblies and meetings among *basileuses* and *anax*[69] in the *Iliad* is a possible photograph of the politics in the Homeric Age.

Finally, despite the analogy of those pivotal historic periods, the focus that the modern literature poses on the city is much greater and evident, than the attention expressed in the archaic Greek literature. However, it does not mean that traces cannot be found and read from such ancient literature, as it is proposed in this work, which also takes the necessary precautions to deal with this matter. Moreover, the same fact, that there is little known evidence that allow us to understand and discuss the concept of the city of that time, require us to seek every little help to have a clearer image.

That is the case of *The Odyssey* by Homer, who through the eyes of Odysseus describes a number of different people, each living in a different context and a different settlement. Of those two are particularly relevant and allow an analysis and even a schematic reconstruction. However, since not every literary city is exactly the same, but there are relevant similarities, a starting point to understand the literary city is to introduce a categorisation. To do so, as a start, it has been borrowed the categorisation developed by Ultramari and Jazar (2016).

3.4.1 Types of literary cities

As stated, *The Odyssey* is a poem of many settlements, some of them are more exhaustively described than others, some can be considered entirely imaginary, other might have links with the reality, as for Troy, as well as some might be described in first person, other might be just heard of from a third person. Thus, relating on the mix

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[68] This interest is underlined by the works of Edwards (1993), Finley (1954; 1983; 1985), Giesecke (2003; 2007; 2008), Osborne (2009), Seymour (1907) and Vidal-Naquet (1986), who among others read the Homeric Epic to study the social structure of the Homeric Greece.

[69] While the *anax* or *wanax* is the chief of kings, as Agamemnon and Priam in the *Iliad* and as Alkinoôs in *The Odyssey*, so a political and military chief, who exercises a leadership on minor kings, *basileus* are the kings as Achilleus, Odysseus, Ajax the Greater, Menelaos among others, whose power is limited to their own city the neighbouring regions.

of narratological expedients and subjects of the descriptions, it could be defined the cosmos of various settlements described in *The Odyssey*.

There certainly is a connection between the narratological expedients, meaning the way one sets the relation between historical facts and narration, and the types of descriptions, for which Ultramari and Jazar (2016) devised four categories defining the degree of intervention of the imagination. While De Federicis (1998) points out five categories of narration, which in a way are related to the work of Ultramari and Jazar, since overall structure of the narration of course influences the content:

First, there are the cities devised by the author in the manner of Marcel Proust, Gabriel García Márquez e William Faulkner, writers coming from diverse literary traditions: those are Combray, Macondo e Yoknapatawapha respectively. Such creations, nonetheless, hence their mutual belonging reveal an immediate identification with the author's hometown. The elements described by Proust and Faulkner in the reproduction of Illiers (France) and Lafayette (Mississippi, USA) are well known; in the case of Macondo instead, the pieces of evidence are fewer, yet it is accepted to interpret the city portrait in the novel as Aracataca (Colombia). Such narrations, set in real spaces partially transfigured but still referable, are therefore on the border between fantasy and history, thence called by De Federicis "border's narrations".

Then, there are the cities described by the author. As examples, in Queirós[70], *A Cidade e as Serras* (1901), the description of a metropolitan Paris, which for the first time lived the great Baron of Haussmann's works, in opposition to the corners of the Portuguese rural world. Further from Queirós, *Os Maias* (1888), which presents Lisbon failing in the European urban scenery, when trying to reproduce the Parisian model of the boulevards. In the case of Dostoevsky, in *Crime and Punishment* (1866), Saint

[70] José Maria de Eça de Queiroz (1845–1900), also known with the modern standardised name of Eça de Queirós is Portuguese journalist and novelist considered to be the greatest representant of the realist style in Portugal. He has been municipal administrator in Leiria (Portugal) and was stationed with the consular service at Havana (Cuba) and Newcastle (England, UK) for several years. Eventually, he has been invested with the position of Consul General in Paris, which he held from 1888 till he died of tuberculosis.

Petersburg, in a known passage its streets might be decoded thanks to a fictional space overlapping them: "In one of these warmest afternoons of the early July, a boy came out of the small room that rented, in Alley S., heading, with slowly, wavering step, to the K Bridge. Luckily, he didn't find the landlady in the stairwell.” In those cases, history and imagination are mixed altogether forming the kind of narration that De Federicis defines as “imaginary in history”.

Cities described in a generic way – the urban universe, life in the metropolis –, described with specificities and that transform them into unique by the author, having little concern of their insertion into a larger network of cities, now centred, now constituting themselves on the periphery of a globalized world. In the first case, perhaps paradoxically, we remember the Paris of Baudelaire, in the *Flowers of Evil* (1857). Events there narrated cannot occur at any other time, otherwise, especially in another city. As an example, they have: James Joyce, in *Ulysses* (2013), with the everyday life of Leopold Bloom on the streets of Dublin on June 16, 1904; and Émile Zola, in *Travail* (1901), literary criticized, but with precious reporting from the point of view of the urban of an era (industrialization, segregation of the working class, works of "beautification and improvements" and urban organisation for a big event (1900 Universal Exhibition). One might identify those narration as “witness stories” since the exploration of the self and the exploration of the historically real surroundings are merged one into the other.

Truly fictional cities, with urban structures and social interactions that seem to deny any link to our realities, as referenced by Calvino (1990, p. 31), in the “Invisible Cities”. In this work, the narrator himself wonders about the fact that Kublai Khan believes in everything that Marco Polo, his traveling interlocutor, says about the cities he has met. Those types of narration are “form of invention”.

In all these four typologies of relationship between literature and the city, the latter is a stage of fiction, a scenario (fictitious or real, specific or generic) for narrated events. From this one can enucleate that there is a wealth to be explored in the literature to understand a specific city or even urban transformation occurring in specific times, that they repeat throughout history and that may happen-or not-in more than one type of city or urban compartments. In literary narrative, it is possible to find:

> [...] The legibility of their spaces, the violence of their territories or the urban cultural diversity and experiences experienced in these spaces. [...] [The city] is not only scenery, but the great character of many narratives, or the presence of full-bodied in many poems. Thus, it is Paris for Victor Hugo, Balzac and Zola, or to Baudelaire in his poems; or London for Dickens. [...] You can ask what Buenos Aires means to Borges, or Roberto Arlt, or the contemporary Ricardo Piglia; or Lisbon for Eça de Queirós and Caesarion Green, or to José Cardoso Pires; Rio de Janeiro for Machado de Assis, Lima Barreto, João do Rio, Marques Rebelo or Rubem Fonseca.
> (GOMES, 1997 p.1)[71]

Moreover, in the referenced work there is no category for cities' depictions included in the historical narrative. Which suggests various scenarios: it might have been a lack of production of that particular kind of literature; perhaps this specific literature is obscure to the most and has generated little interest for research, which anyways, confirms that this field of research can be further explored.

Surely, there is plenty of works discussing the importance of the cities in literary narrative and their relations with both author and history focusing on the span from the XVIII century to the present days, as the birth of the poem took place concurrently with the consolidation of the modern urban transformations, while this research through the study of Homer's *The Odyssey* expands the perspectives on a least known type of literature. Consequently, it is necessary to adapt the considerations contained in the works of Ultramari and Jazar (2016), Gomes (1997), presented above, of Lima (2008), Zanni Rosiello (2013), quoted in the previous chapter, but also of De Federicis (1998), to the different context in which the work in analysis is inserted and, moreover, it is interesting how Homer have been a reference in the development not only of storytelling, but also of historiography, since:

> As in other areas of ancient literature, the influence of Homer on the Greek and Roman historians was profound and abiding. He was important in giving the Greeks their first sense of a historical past and a geographical place in the world, as well as in providing for the historians themselves the subject matter and methods for creating historical narratives.
> (MARINCOLA, 2011 p.1)

Consequently, it might be supposed that a categorization of urban descriptions is possible in *The Odyssey* and it could be applied chronologically trough-out Greek

[71] Original text in Portuguese, trans. by the author.

literature's history and transversally in various genres of literature, those concepts could be subsequently adopted for further research.

3.5 Literary cartography

The history of literary geography starts with the first epic poems that see great heroes travelling through real and fantastic territories as for the Argonauts and Odysseus, when the geography of the physical and the fantastic world were mixed together. It is needless to say, that along the centuries there has been no such interest in the geography of literature as it has been in the geography of the real world with some exceptions, e.g., the long debate on the location of the Odyssean settlements. However, the interests on the geography of literature and its ancillary discipline, the cartography of literature has seen an increase starting from the works of Bunbury (1879) and Sharp (1904).

In the last two decades the growing interest in the literary cartography has seen the consolidation of a methodology of mapping literature especially by the team working with Barbara Piatti (PIATTI, REUSCHEL; HURNI, 2009; PIATTI et al., 2009) at the Institute of Cartography, ETH Zurich. Indeed, this team was not alone in developing the debate around the cartography of literature, since many authors like Peter Turchi (2004) and the ones that contributed to the volume edited by Anders Engberg-Pedersen (2017) made their contribution to the debate.

By many of those authors has been remarked the potential of this new discipline as an aid to bolster the tourism in locations used as settings for modern novels or to renew the way literature has been taught until now. In this instance it comes in support of the discussion about the importance to use literary narrative in the Urban Studies, but more specifically, it is intended to apply the principles of this matter to the purpose of evaluate the discussion about the cartography of *The Odyssey* and eventually to make a new cartographic representation that serves as a context to discussion about the Odyssean settlements. So, to abandon the genealogy of literates, who gave their opinion about which exact place was the setting of *The Odyssey* (WOLF, 2004).

However, the first question that literary cartography must answer is to set the difference between the mappable and the unmappable. But as to do so, it is first

necessary to indulge on another concept, i.e., the difference between *internal mappability* and *referential mappability*.

> [The latter] applies to cases in which all of the descriptions of geographic features rendered by a fictional text are consistent with each other and with the rules of Euclidean geometry, such that the world created by this text can be unequivocally depicted on a map. [While the last] applies to cases in which geographic features in a given fictional text correspond to features included on maps that are, at a given time, accepted as being useful for purposes other than mapping literature (e.g., world or cadastral maps). (STOCKHAMMER in ENDBERG-PEDERSEN, 2017)

To make an example, the *internal mappability* applies to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1720) (whose island is represented in Figure 9) or to Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), or even to the huge settings of Tolkien's *The Lord of The Rings* (1955), since the respective authors provided their own representations of the settings, so building new internally coherent cartographic systems. While the best example of referential mappability might be Joyce's *Ulysses* (2013), given the author wanted "to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of my book." (JOYCE apud STOCKHAMMER in ENDBERG-PEDERSEN, 2017, e-book)

Figure 9 - Crusoe's Island
(From DAFOE, D. **Serious Reflections During the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe: With his Vision of the Angelic World. Written by himself**. London: W. Taylor, 1720. Available at: shorturl.at/ady28 Last access: 10/7/2019)

Thus, the concept of (un)mappability is not dependent on the degree of fantasy that characterize the setting of the novel, i.e., how much the setting is physically real. Unmappability occurs when the descriptions are somehow not coherent, as it happens in *The Odyssey*, where the time of travel is exceedingly longer than what our real experience suggests; or as for Proust's *Combray*, for which the incompatibility of various spatial description given within one and the same text makes the walk *du côté de chez Swann* go in the opposite way of the walk *du côté des Guermantes*, which in the end are reconciled becoming *the nicest walk.*

Now that the limits within which literary cartography operates have been clarified, the operational questions come, it is therefore necessary to define in what way literary cartography differs from common cartography. So, with the help of the authors that are accompanying this discussion, it is given answer to the question: "*how to actually map literature and to what end?"* (PIATTI; REUSCHEL; HURNI, 2009 p. 4) Which, in a way, is the consequent logical step that authors like Bunbury (1879) tried to answer: *which is the extent of the geography of the ancients?* Thus, the researchers of the Institute of Cartography thought about two different branches of literary cartography:

1. The mapping of a single text and its spatial elements;
2. The mapping of groups of texts or aspects related to the texts, leading ultimately to statistical and quantitative approaches.

It is possible to see the reasons of this binary division, since the study of a multitude of literary works may start from focusing the research's interest on a collection of works of a single author, or on a single location that has been described by many authors. In the case of this research, it focuses on a single text and its spatial elements, i.e. *The Odyssey* and its settlements. So, statistical and quantitative approaches are not present in the second part of this thesis, while a qualitative approach does take place.

However, literary cartography presents two main problems that may regard this thesis directly: The first is about the *locability*, which concerns the possibility of locating directly any narrated place to its physical counterpart. If it is not a case of unmappability, it might be overcome with an attentive reading and the acquaintance

with the physical regions familiar to the author; the second about the possible c*hanges in geospace*, such are vanished places, whose knowledge must be obtained through scrupulous research or a profound expertise in the area. Thus, in the next section there is a strong presence of literature that comes to support the reading of *The Odyssey*.

Given those definitions that help understand the position of this research in the universe of literary cartography and where are the limits of mappability, a more operative aspect must be explained: Among the concepts borrowed from the work of Piatti *et al.* (2009) there surely is the system to create the maps of literary narrative. A concept that goes together with this system is the *imprecision*: literary narrative has no exact boundary, since the eye of the narrator often omits details and makes rather impossible the effort to point the exact location where a given character is supposed to stand and where the same character is looking at exactly.

So, if it is not the case of an internally mappable system, whose map might be given by its creator, e.g., Tolkien or Defoe, a referentially mappable system must have as basis a *real* cartography (not depicting an imaginary setting), on which are identified the areas described in the narrative. The operation of identification and tagging of the areas that are described in a narrative cannot, however, superimpose on an exact representation of the physical world an equally precise geometric shape to outline an imprecise literary description.

The team of the ETHZ suggests the use of *fuzzy shapes* to solve the problem of the imprecise representation of a literary region. The method seems sound, since it responds the need to encircle geographical areas that are without shadow of doubt described in the narrative, yet could not be limited by rigid lines, like it wouldn't be possible to exactly limit one's perspective without a frame. Moreover, these authors propose five categories to encompass every topographical or geographical notion within the narrative (See Table 3).

Table 3 - Categories in literary cartography (from: PIATTI et al., 2009 p.185)

Category	**Explication/definition**
Setting	Where the action takes place (i.e., a village)
Zone of action	Several settings combined (i.e., a city, a region)
Projected space	Characters are not present here, but are dreaming of, remembering, longing for a specific space
Marker	A place which I mentioned, but not part of the categories above; markers indicate the geographical range and horizon of a fictional space
Route	Along which characters are moving: by foot, by train, on horseback etc.

These categories are part of the vocabulary which is used to identify the elements of the narrative and to discuss the mapping, so they frequently appear in the next section, where the cartography of *The Odyssey* is reviewed and discussed. To each of those categories is represented by a specific visual information that is drawn on the map, those are tags, points and coloured areas. The coded also a colour scheme to identify the areas that refer to the *Settings* and the *Projected Space*, which might also be differentiated depending on the extent of the fantastic manipulation that influences them. An *imported* element is described in the narrative as it is in the physical world, while on the contrary an *invented* element is a figment of pure imagination. A *transformed* element corresponds to a real element, but some of its distinctive features, such as its name or exact geographical position, have been omitted or transformed.

While the application of those concepts awaits in the case study, in the next item I am introducing the long debate on the cartography of *The Odyssey*.

3.5.1 The cartography of *The Odyssey*

The Odyssey has a special place in the history of cartography, to the point that Bérard[72] even asserts that the poem was based on the old Phoenician navigational maps, called *peripli*[73] (WOLF in ENGBERG-PEDERSEN et al., 2017), while Bunbury (1879) sets *The Odyssey* as the first element in his *History of Ancient Geography*, so remarking the importance of the tale of Odysseus' voyage not only as a tale of exploration, but almost as a geographical report. Therefore, when one comes to understand which are the places, the regions or even the stereotypes that Homer has taken inspiration from to sing the story of Odysseus, one is nearer to understand the extent of the known world in the Greek Dark Ages by the populations that called themselves Achaians, Danaans or Argives.

The understanding of the *zone of action* of Odysseus helps this research to contextualise the spatial organisation of the settlements that the Achaians visit during their (mis)adventures in the Mediterranean Sea, and to have a geographical perception of the ethnographical testimony that *The Odyssey* represents (DOUGHERTY, 2001). Moreover, as a preliminary action to determine whether a region of narrative space is of pure fantasy or is imported from the physical world, the mapping of *The Odyssey* with the new methods of literary cartography speeds up the analysis of the verses warning the reader about what to expect in the text.

However, since the mapping of *The Odyssey* has been at the centre of a long debate started with Strabo and Pliny, but which will see the first maps appearing only around the XVI century AD, it is necessary to know the evolution of the theories regarding the cartography of the adventures of Odysseus, in order to decide what will be the starting point for a coherent representation of a new literary cartography of

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[72] Victor Bérard (1864 – 1931) was a French diplomat and politician renowned for his work about the geography of *The Odyssey*: *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée* (1902-1903), *Les navigations d'Ulysse* (1927-1929) and *La Résurrection d'Homère* (1930).

[73] A *periplus* is a list of ports and coastal landmarks in order of appearance along the route one captain could navigate. Such manuscripts were diffused among the Phienicians, the Greeks and the Romans. The Greek *peripli* are particularly rich in notes that the sailors, often geographers, added to describe the coast.

Homer's work. However, it would be a long journey through more than thirty attempts in mapping *The Odyssey*, most of which have the tendency to agree with the opinion of their most ancient predecessors. This inclination has been condemned by authors like Bunbury (1879), who writes:

> It is only quite in recent times that modern writers have shaken themselves clear of that blind reverence for the opinions of the ancients which led men to accept without hesitation the conclusions of Strabo or Pliny, and receive as established truths the interpretations that had been put upon the ideas of the poet by traditions of much later date, or by the attempts of rationalizing critics to bring them into accordance with the known facts of geography. The simple and vague ideas of Homer have been disfigured and disguised by the desire to reconcile them with the scientific knowledge of after ages, and to adapt them to a system of which neither the poet nor his contemporaries had the slightest conception. (p.32)

Similar critics are moved by Armin Wolf (2004), who accuses past authors to have expressed mere opinions with little real interest in applying scientific methodology. It undeniably seems that each author sets the Odyssean episodes in whatever place they are most familiar with. Only a few tried to experience Odysseus voyage by embarking in a similar adventure like Bérard (1933) and Severin (1987). Among these theories there are the most bizarre and even ironical.[74] Finally, it is difficult to accept any of these theories *in toto*, since none of them tries to reach a compromise between the denial of a possible relation with the real world and the blind attempt to locate every single rock in the physical landscape.

In Table 4 are reported in chronological order the most recent theories about the route of Odysseus compared to the theories by Strabo and Pliny (in the second column). It is observable that, excluding Troy, Ismaros, Scheria and Ithaka, on the other locations there is little agreement. However, it is evident the common effort to set those locations within the borders of the *Magna Graecia* (Gr. Μεγάλη Ἑλλάς, Megálē Hellás). This reveals the sedimentation of the idea that sees *The Odyssey* as book to reflect upon the transition from an old to a new age, and a guide on how to face the process of colonisation. (DOUGHERTY, 2001)

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[74] See Wolf (2004), who reports of a rare German text, whose author hides under the pseudonym of *Eumaios* (Odysseus swineherd).

Table 4.1 - Geographical localisation of *The Odyssey*'s episodes
(Edited by the author, 2022)

	SOURCE	Ancient texts	Stilman (1888)	Halliburton (1927)	Bérard (1933)	Golding (1955)	Bradford (1963)
SETTLEMENTS	Troy	Troy, Turkey					
	Ismaros	Maronia, Thrace					
	Lotus-Eaters	Coast Of Libya; Djerba	Djerba				
	Polyphemos	Sicily	Sicily; (An Aegadian Island)	Sicily; (Favignana)	Posillipo, Bay of Naples; (Nisida)	Sicily	West Sicily; (Favignana)
	Aiolos	Lipari Islands, North Of Sicily	n.d	Stromboli, Lipari Islands	Stromboli		Ustica
	Laistrygones	Sicily (Lentini); Formia North Of Naples	n.d	Cefalu	Porto Pozzo, Sardinia	Sicily	Bonifacio, Corsica
	Circe	Monte Circeo, North of Naples	Monte Circeo(?)	Monte Circeo			
	Kimmerians	Lake Avernum; Enna	n.d				
	Sirens	Galli Islands, Near Naples; Cape Pelorum	n.d		Galli Islands		
	Skylla and Charybdis	Strait of Messina					Strait of Messina
	Thrinakia	Sicily	n.d	Taormina	Messina	Sicily	Taormina
	Kalypso	Gozo; Atlantic; An Adriatic Island; Capo Della Colonne	Island South of Sardinia	Gozo, Near Malta	Perejil Island, Strait of Gibraltar	Malta Or Gozo	Malta
	Phaikians	Corfu; Atlantic	Corfu	Corfu	Corfu	East Corfu	Corfu
	Ithaka	Ithaka					

Table 5.2 - Geographical localisation of *The Odyssey*'s episodes
(Edited by the author, 2022)

	SOURCE	Lattimore (1965)	Lessing (1965)	Obregón (1971)	Severin (1987)	Roth (1999)	Huler (2008)	Geisthövel (2010)
SETTLEMENTS	Troy	Troy, Turkey						
	Ismaros	Maronia, Thrace						
	Lotus-Eaters	Coast Of Libya	Djerba	Coast Of Libya	Cyrenica, Libya	Djerba		
	Polyphemos	Acireale, Sicily	Posillipo; (Favignana)	Mallorca; (Cabrera)	Near Paleochora, Crete; (Paximada)	West Sicily; (Favignana)		Matmata, Tunisia; (Kerkennah Islands)
	Aiolos	n.d	Stromboli	Isla Del Aire, Balearic Islands	Gramvousa Island, Off Crete	Marettimo, Aegadian Islands	Vulcano, Lipari Islands	Malta
	Laistrygones	Sicily	Bonifacio	Sardinia	Mezapos, Sw Peloponnesos	Bonifacio		Mozia, West Coast Of Sicily
	Circe		Monte Circeo	Ischia, Near Naples	Paxos, Ionian Islands	Monte Circeo		Ustica
	Kimmerians	Crimea	n.d					
	Sirens	n.d	Capri; Galli Islands	Faraglioni, Capri	Lefkas, Ionian Islands	Galli Islands		Cape Pelorum, Ne Sicily
	Skylla and Charybdis	Strait Of Messina			Cape Skilla And Lefkas Channel	Strait Of Messina		
	Thrinakia	n.d		East Sicily	Meganisi, Ionian Islands		Taormina	Messina
	Kalypso	n.d		Malta	Saseno (Island Off Albania)	Gozo	Malta	Panarea, Lipari Islands
	Phaikians	Korkyra (Corfu)	Corfu	Cyprus	Corfu	Corfu	Corfu	Tiriolo, Calabria, Italy
	Ithaka	Korkyra (Corfu)	Ithaka					

In fact, there are several authors that focus their attention on the deep sociological and ethnographical relevance of the books of *The Odyssey*, rather than trying to find the exact match between literary geography and physical world. It seems that to the Greeks the fact to identify oneself as descendant of Odysseus, or of the Phaikians is of great importance (HENNIG, 1934) in a time of evolution from the old, scattered society that revered and feared the Hero for his might, as it is Ithaka, to the society of the assemblies, as it is Scheria, and eventually the *polis*. (EDWARDS, 1993).

This becomes relevant in the mapping of *The Odyssey* since one should be careful in accepting one or the other settlements' claims of mythical ancestry to base his own theory about the route of Odysseus' voyage. Moreover, another aspect that might misguide the mapping is one's familiarity with the places of *The Odyssey*: as already mentioned, one might try to locate the settlements of *The Odyssey* in familiar places, rather than surrender to the fact that the settlements described by Odysseus might not have been even existed. To avoid these and other difficulties a methodical approach is essential. Eventually, this discussion identifies some relevant points, which might be summed up by saying, that:

> […] there are two parties or sides with little or no communication between them. One takes Homer's geographic reality for granted and discusses only the Where. The other party maintains that The Odyssey has nothing to do with real geography at all, and that the epic -west of Cape Maléa, Cythera and Ithaka- was played out in the realm of fancy. Neither case, however, has ever been proved. (WOLF, 2004 p. 321)

With this justification Armin and Hans-Helmut Wolf tried to develop a new method, that takes into account the instances about the (un)mappability advanced by Stockhammer (in ENGBERG-PEDERSEN et al., 2017) by underlining the mixture of known and unknown places. Which are, however, not totally new to the cartographic experience of *The Odyssey*, e.g. Bunbury (1879) proposes a similar and very *avant-garde* approach considering how he schematically drew the map also leaving unmapped white areas (Figure 10).

Indeed, the works of Bunbury and Wolf have some points of convergence, although, if Bunbury draws a sort of quasi-real map, Wolf prefers to project his schematic reconstruction onto an accurate physical cartography, which ends up to

bringing his clever approach to repeat the greedy mistake of forcing a precise location on an unprecise tale. However, his method is promising.

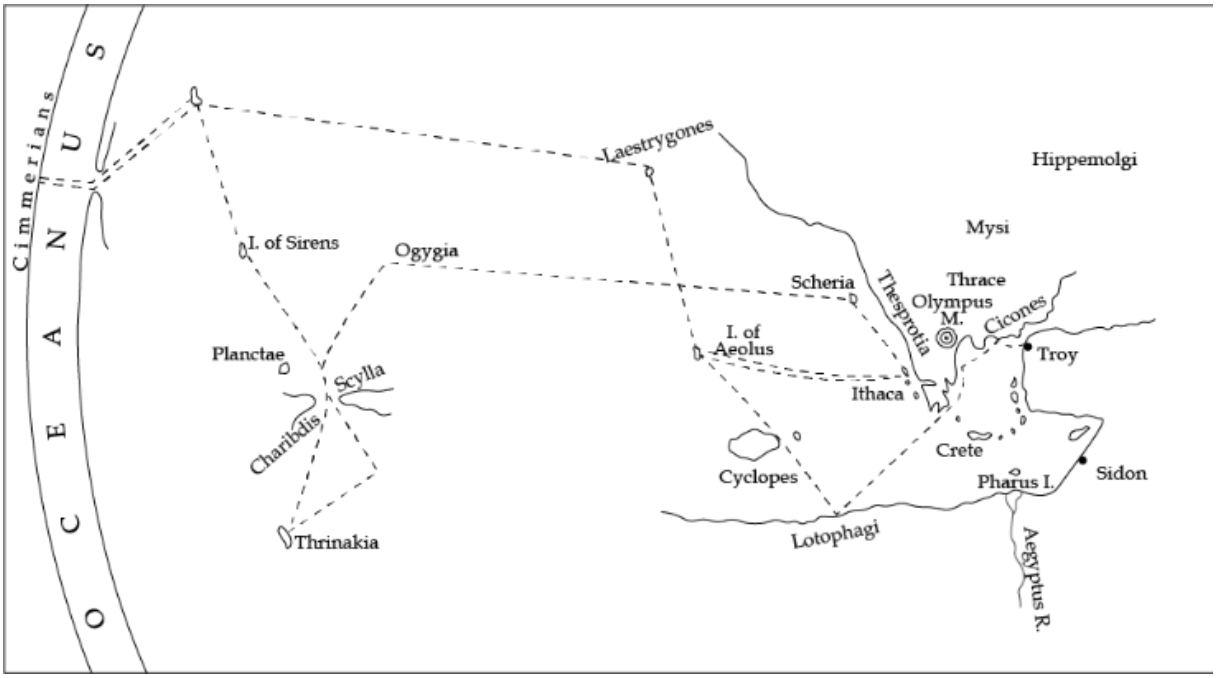


Figure 10 - Bunbury's map of Odysseus wanderings
(Edited by the author, from BUMBURY,1879 p.85)

The first consideration of both Bunbury and Wolf is about the reference system that Homer uses to describe the navigation: In *The Odyssey* there is no mention of the four cardinal point (North, South, East and West), but the main references are the winds Boreas, Notus, Zephyrus and Eurus, respectively coming from North, South, West and East. In addition, the stars are the other references that guide Odysseus to the land of the Phaikians:

> Glorious Odysseus, happy with the wind, spread sails
> and taking his seat artfully with the steering oar he held her
> on her course, nor did sleep ever descend on his eyelids
> as he kept his eye on the Pleiades and late-setting Boötes
> and the Bear, to whom men give also the name of the Wagon,
> who turns about in a fixed place and looks at Orion,
> and she alone is never plunged in the wash of the Ocean.
> (Odyssey V, 269-275)

The four constellations that Homer mentions maintained their names to our days and have always been cardinal points for sailors: the Pleiades are nine stars part of the Taurus constellation, they are clearly visible in the east of the night sky

from May to October in the northern hemisphere where they indicate the East; [75] Boötes in the myth represents the herdsman and Arcturus, its brightest star is the fourth brightest star in the sky. This constellation is especially visible in spring, and it is said to be “late setting”, since it sets almost at noon (in the Mediterranean Sea), it marks the West. The Bear or the Wagon, is Ursa Maior, the major constellation in the northern night sky, it points towards Polaris, which is the navigational marker for the North Pole. For the fact that it is circumpolar, it is visible for the whole year, and “turns about in a fixed point”. Lastly, Orion, the hunter, is an equatorial constellation, mainly visible in autumn and winter, when it shines brightly looking south just above the horizon.

The last element of Odyssey V, 269-275 is the river Oceanus, that surrounds the earths and the sea, from which is clearly a separate object. In fact, if the Mediterranean, the Aegean, and the Ionian Sea do not appear to have been known with separate names, but are just “the sea”, Oceanus, is a fictional element that sets the limit to the known world. Therefore, Wolf proceeds by drawing a diagram following those elements with which Homer gives the directions of Odysseus’ journey. (Figure 11 - Wolf's diagram of Odysseus wanderings (WOLF, 2003 p.322))

One might notice a point of contiguity between Bunbury’s attempt and the theories on the space of uncertainty, since both try to represent known and unknown places: if Bunbury places a randomly shaped island in the middle of a blank space, to state its imaginary nature; Wolf uses a dotted line. This Is not the only similarity, of course, the representations are both schematical and, even if Bunbury roughs out some geographical outlines, the real space is left just on the background. For the effort of dematerialisation, Wolf’s diagram is certainly to be considered a breakthrough in the cartography of *The Odyssey*, that after many centuries has been freed from the rigid rules of physics.

However, if the diagram strongly supports his theory, when Wolf traces those lines on the physical map, he goes against the previous tradition and even his own

[75] The rising of the Pleiades announces the start of the harvesting season, as well as of the sailing season;

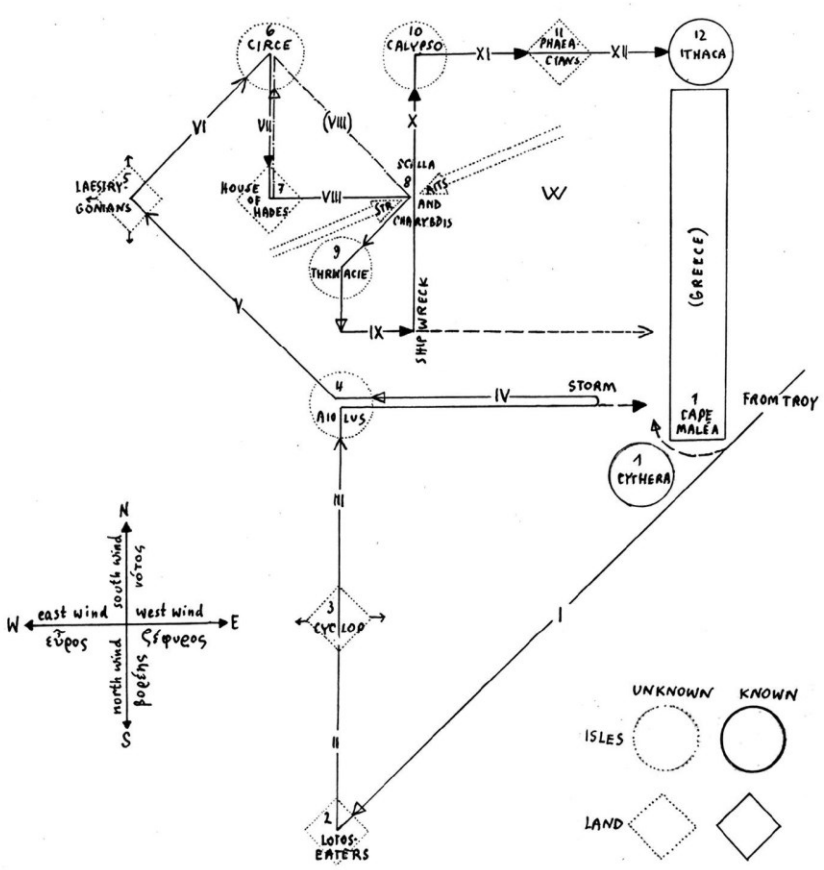


Figure 11 - Wolf's diagram of Odysseus wanderings (WOLF, 2003 p.322)

logic, which is to identify the settlement accordingly to the diagram, but only if the historical occupation of that territory is proven. As a matter of fact, he places the Kikonians in the island of Chios, which is very well known to the Greeks, since it was one of the twelve founding cities of the Ionian League at the end of VII century BC, and definitely could not be confused with Ismaros, which has been solidly identified with Maronia, in Thrace (North-Eastern Greece). Even the text does not support such a choice, since in *Odyssey IX*, 39-66 is just mentioned that Odysseus crew sailed from Troy to Ismaros by the Kikonians, where they pillage the city, but eventually are repelled by the allies who came from the inland to defend the coastal village, which hardly can be said of a relatively small island.

The rest of the locations are properly placed, primarily Scheria, the island of the Phaikians. The idea that *Odyssey V*, 281 could suggest that the land of the Phaikians could be in the coast-line of the isthmus of Calabria between the Gulf of Sant'Eufemia and the Gulf of Squillace is a clever answer to a number of oddity in the poem. However, again Wolf should have concluded his argumentation at the identification of

the region, without deepening into the assertion that the archaeological rests of Skylletion-Scolacium[76] are by matter of fact the Scheria of *The Odyssey*. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the presence of an important Greek settlement in that position might have been source of inspiration to the poet.

This example is certainly helpful to understand the next paragraphs, where it is reinforced the idea that the poems by Homer have not necessarily a direct association with a physical environment, but they mostly convey an idea of space which must have been known or familiar to the audience, thence an indirect connection between written and real is certainly not rejected, but - although it is nevertheless welcome - a direct connection must be viewed with scepticism. As a matter of fact, in the next item, it is discussed how the descriptions, on which all the above-mentioned authors have based their theories, are related to the history on a narrative level, which type of literary city they describe and by which narratological expedients the literary space is described.

3.5.2 Space of narration and descriptions' catalogue

First of all, it should be accepted what is reported by various author on the subject, i.e. that there is no specific and detailed description of the environment in Homer, since as it is the sedimentation of a society's knowledge, the public is already familiar with the landscape and "the Homeric narrator inserts – or makes his characters insert – settings or props at the exact moment when the action demands them" (JONG, 2012), yet spaces are depicted with great zeal right when a character enters in place, as for the Kalypso's cave (Odyssey V.59 - 75) or in advance as for the Nausikaa's laundry (Odyssey VI.26, 58-59, 74, 91), since it is functional to the narrator, who makes use of the details so introduced to either enrich the presentation of a character or to justify its actions.

Nonetheless, it has been shown how scientific methods of tracing the course of Odysseus and to *imprecisely* map the geography of the Odyssean adventure can give

[76] Squillace is now an Italian comune of about 3600 inhabitants, located on the Gulf of Squilace, South Italy, at an elevation of 344m it is now in a strategic location for the road system, while at its foundation, it dominated the Gulf and the trade routes within it. Archeaological documents suggest the presence of a settlements prior to the c. VI a.C., some attributes its foundation to Ulysses.

the general setting, where the settlements and the cities are depicted. Moreover, one should take into consideration the narratological aspect of the descriptions, so to create a new set of categories, which can encompass the type of literary city described and the narratological expedients that are used to depict the literary space.

From the work of DE JONG (2012) I am borrowing those last categories of descriptions: Panoramic description; Detailed description; First person Description and "Description by Action". Those characterize the Homeric poems and present relevant differences:

A. *Panoramic Description:* is the kind of description that starts from a panoramic standpoint, from which the narrator (*narrator-focalizer*) describes a vast scene often moving through the landscape in a omniscient way. But it could also be part of hybrid narration that shifts from the *narrator-focalizer* to the *character-focalizer*, there the panoramic description and the detailed description follow one another with continuity. It can be structured in form of a list of elements or in a spatial arrangement (around, parallel…), or even in a combined structure.
B. *Detailed Description:* on the opposite side of the panoramic description, it presents a detailed scenery or an object as a weapon or an armour, often it is a close-up made by the *narrator-focalizer* or the *character-focalizer*. However, it does not use the same structure of the "*description by action"*, which is very specific.
C. *First Person Description:* A witness or the protagonist describes the personal experience while living it in first person (even if the *narrator-focalizer* often intrudes), it often is a kind of panoramic description, but limited to the space the character is perceiving. It can be structured in both forms: as a list or a in a spatial arrangement.
D. *"Description by Action":* the *narrator-focalizer* describes the features of an object or a scene following the creation of the object (Achilles' armour made by Hephaestus or the making of the thalamus in Odyssey XXIII.184-202) or the transformation of the scene by the moving characters (the ambush in Il. XVIII.513-529).

Now, this research possesses two sets of categories with which it is possible to more fully analyse the verses that transmit relevant information about the settlements in *The Odyssey.* Thus, in Table 6 they are brought in three columns: as the first two columns refer to the types of literary cities discussed in item 3.4.1, which are intrinsically linked to the relation of the narration with history, since a *truly fictional city* would have no relation to history at all, so it would be part of a *form of invention* type of narration; while, on the contrary, a city *described by the author* as she experienced it is most probably inserted in a type of narration which brings some elements of *imagination in history*. Those four couples are then numbered from 1 to 4. Moreover, it should be mentioned, that among the categories conceived by De Federicis (1998), it has been ignored the 'historical narration', since *The Odyssey*, although being a related to historical events as the fall of Troy, it was born before the idea of historiography[77]

Table 6 - Descriptions' categorisation (Edited by the author, 2022)

	Literary City	Narration-History		Literary Space
1	Devised by the author	Border Narration	A	Panoramic
2	Described by the author	Imagination in History	B	Detailed
3	Truly Fictional	Form of Invention	C	First Person
4	Generic	Witness Story	D	"Description by Action"

In the third column, I listed with the letters from A to D, without any particular order, the categories by De Jong (2012). By assigning those definitions to the description I selected from The Odyssey, I expected to obtain a maximum of 16 couples of the type 1-A …1-D …4-B etc., that would have encompassed the totality of cases with which such description could have been devised, however, as it can be recognised in Table 7, the spectrum of variations is quite narrow. In Table 7 is so organised: for each description is considered the position in the text (book, initial and

[77] The first historian is said to be Herodotus of Halicarnassus (484 – c. 425 BC), who lived centuries after the time of the Homeric narrations and did not influence the conversion into written form of the Homeric poems, yet there are studies that confirm that Herodotus' style was influenced by the Homeric poems. (FORD, 2015; MARINCOLA, 2011; STRASBURGER, 1972).

final verse), the episode they are part of, the settlement or the city that they are describing, the category they belong to and finally the content.

From the results of this evaluation, it can be generally noted that the most descriptions are concentrated in the first half of the poem (26 over 41), especially in the books from IV to VII and books IX and X. These correspond to the stay of Odysseus at Kalypso's, then Scheria and to the narration of Odysseus' journey at the court of the Phaikians, while in the first cases the narration is mainly brought on in third person and following the time of the events and regard Scheria especially; the second main group of description is in the form of a flashback and mainly narrated in first person by Odysseus himself and deal with the various places the hero has visited.

Most of the descriptions depict Ithaka, although there are some repetitions, and in second place Scheria of which, it can be evaluated a quite detailed description of the city's surroundings and of its general morphology. In the end, as might have been expected by now, half of the descriptions are of the type that describe truly fictional places, so even if the elements which they describe definitely belong to the Homeric era and are not out of their time, they cannot be reconciled with any existing (archaeological) place.

Although, on the other hand, the other half of the descriptions outline generic spaces, in a way that the narrator seems to be remembering the actions of the characters passing across spaces that, indeed, have the features of the Greek buildings and settlements of that time, however, those places do not have an exact match in the real space, but many resemblances.

Table 7 List of analysed verses and their categorisation
(Edited by the author, 2022)

	Verses					
Book	Start	End	Episode	Settlement	Category	Content
I	185	186	Telemachiad	Ithaka	4-B	Harbor position, Rheithron
III	386	403	Telemachiad	Pylos	4-A	Nestor's palace
IV	600	608	Telemachiad	Ithaka	4-A	Landscape
IV	844	847	Telemachiad	Ithaka	4-B	Nearby Isles
V	55	74	Kalypso	Ogygia	3-A	Kalypsos' hide/cave
V	269	281	To Scheria	Scheria	3-A	Directions to Scheria
V	394	405	To Scheria	Scheria	3-A	Landscape
V	438	443	To Scheria	Scheria	3-A	Landscape
VI	1	12	To Scheria	Scheria	3-D	Hypereia
VI	191	197	By the Paikians	Scheria	3-C	Territorial organisation
VI	262	272	By the Paikians	Scheria	3-C	Outside the city
VI	289	309	By the Paikians	Scheria	3-C	Directions to the city
VII	43	45	By the Paikians	Scheria	3-A	Outside the city
VII	81	131	By the Paikians	Scheria	3-C	Alkinoos' palace
IX	21	28	Phaikians	Ithaka	4-C	Landscape
IX	79	86	Lotus-Eaters	Lotus-Eaters	3-C	Landscape
IX	105	115	The Cyclopes	Cyclopes' island	3-C	Landscape
IX	116	148	The Cyclopes	Goat-Island	4-A	Landscape
IX	181	192	The Cyclopes	Cyclopes' island	3-C	The Cave
IX	237	244	The Cyclopes	Cyclopes' island	3-C	The Cave
X	1	5	Aiolus Court	Aiolian Island	3-C	Landscape
X	88	111	Laistrygones	Laistrygones	3-C	Landscape
X	148	160	Circe	Aiaia	3-C	Landscape
X	210	219	Circe	Aiaia	3-C	House of Circe
X	508	516	Underworld	Kimmeria	3-B	Directions to the Kimmerians
XI	14	19	Underworld	Kimmeria	3-C	Landscape
XIII	96	112	Phaikians	Ithaka	4-B	Harbor position, Phorkys
XIII	241	249	Arrival on Ithaka	Ithaka	4-C	Landscape, resources
XIII	345	351	Arrival on Ithaka	Ithaka	4-C	Landscape, Sacred Place
XIV	1	21	Eumaios	Ithaka	4-B	Eumaios' place
XIV	96	104	Eumaios	Ithaka	4-A	Eumaios' place
XVI	338	344	Eumaios	Ithaka	4-A	Odysseus' palace
XVI	471	474	Eumaios	Ithaka	4-C	Landscape
XVII	204	211	Hero’s return	Ithaka	4-A	Outside the city
XVII	264	268	Hero’s return	Ithaka	4-C	Odysseus' palace
XVII	339	341	Hero’s return	Ithaka	4-B	Odysseus' palace
XIX	30	54	The Slaughter	Ithaka	4-A	Odysseus' palace
XIX	172	179	The Slaughter	Crete	2-A	Territorial organisation
XXII	126	128	The Slaughter	Ithaka	4-B	Odysseus' palace
XXII	330	337	The Slaughter	Ithaka	4-B	Odysseus' palace
XXII	440	445	The Slaughter	Ithaka	4-C	Odysseus' palace

As this section proceeds towards its synthesis, by now one should have gathered that in the next section, it is mainly uncovered the fact that while the poet of *The Odyssey* describes landscapes and settlements of his era and from his land, he or she does so in a way, that cannot be reconciled with a precise cartography, since the very form of the epic poetry does not concede such tools.

3.6 Conclusion

As it has been discussed, it is now evident which difficulties – here called *criticalities* – may be encountered in reviewing such ancient texts in order to achieve specific pieces of information related to the field of urban sciences: not only it cannot be excluded the possible manipulation of those works during time, but also it should be noted their geographical relativity, or – to better say – their relation with the cultural context, in which those documents grow, and finally, a highlight on the lack of a material prove of the ideas described in the poem suggest the abstraction of the consideration that follows, stressing though their validity in epistemological terms.

Furthermore, a city in literary narrative is subject of a various type of categorisation: it could be evaluated in its narratological aspects, in the design one could extrapolate from the descriptions, and the relation each description has with the historical context. It has been proved that some of those categories are related one to another and are independent from the narratological expedients used to generate the descriptions, so creating a variability of category pairings, which is further analysed in the next section. Thus, it can be safely said that it is possible to define and apply categories to the spatial description of the settlements rendered in the ancient poems.

Those literary settlements represent a double epistemological challenge: on one side those deal with the relation with the poetic invention, while on the other side with the real struggle to define an ancient city. At this point, would it be appropriate to design the epistemological category of *ancient literary city*? Or would it be an unnecessary formulation? When dealing with the materiality of such settlements, it has been discussed how however imaginary the settlements of *The Odyssey* are to be treated in epistemological terms as real settlements with their own existential dignity, because it would be not the un-locatability of those places to affect their integrity, but their

possible dissimilarity with real environments, which it has never placed into discussion, exception made for the land of the Undead.

Concluding, it is so devised a method to give the dignity of reality to the fantasticality of literary spaces, with its own cartographic system, which can build a bridge between the real space and literary one, since it is a direct expression of the culture that generated it, which has in itself the memory and the conscience of familiar places. In the next section it is presented *The Odyssey*, the literary as well as the historical context in which it developed and are unfolded the items specifically designed to discuss the content of the case study.

4. CASE STUDY: *THE ODYSSEY*

For this study it has been chosen the translation of *The Odyssey* by Richmond Lattimore (2007). This choice answers two instances: On one hand the need to have a text easily approachable to most of the readers, as well as present on the shelves of most of the libraries all over the world; on the other hand, Lattimore's translation mimics the rhythm of the original text, therefore, it emphasizes the original style of narration, which is important to the ends of this research, while other translations, even popular as Rieu's (1946), separate the form from the content and provide a distorted vision of *The Odyssey*'s original. On the other hand, Lattimore's vow to respect the original text is the guarantee of reading the original text in English with no omissions, therefore, there is no lack of content, and the vision of Homer is rendered as in the original verses, which is the quality needed for this research. (DIMOCK, 1967)

After the selection of the translation and after some accurate readings, it is possible to start the analysis of the text following three steps: as first I selected the relevant passages by reading the integral text in order to identify the collection of verses that describe settlements, cities, particular landscapes that suggest anthropic elements or are relevant to the discussion; the this material has been organised and categorised as summarised in Table 7; lastly, by analysing, commenting and interpreting the selected passages, I have produced schematic representation of these settlements.

Thus, in this section it is discussed the *The Odyssey* by Homer as a source to bolster the discussion on the city. Through the verses of the poem is possible to understand the point of view of Homer on the urban environment, remembering that through the voice of the Greek bard a whole civilisation expresses its concerns, its mythical past and its preoccupation toward the future. So, *The Odyssey* is put under the magnifying glass to unveil these instances and – possibly – to understand the spatial occupation that has been ideally configured for the Greeks.

Each of the following chapters is dedicated to different settlements: the first two items focus on the main settlements of *The Odyssey* Ithaka and Scheria respectively, while the third contains the verses about the minor settlements we are told about in

The Odyssey. In fact, if at the very beginning it was mentioned that the settlements of the Odysseus' voyage are twelve, yet of those only two are protagonists of more extensive descriptions, which allow a more profound understanding. So, the contents of the other descriptions, if it is possible, as for Pylos and Crete, are evaluated with other sources, that would give the perception of how much the Homeric narration is distant from the reality.

The descriptions of Ithaka and Scheria allow to draw schematically the spatial occupation of the land on which are set, of course, the results that are obtained are merely ideal representations, lacking metric information, which is not possible to infer from the text. However, the spatial relations between the relevant elements of the city are described through the eyes of the characters that cross the land, the woods and visit the cities. Particularly in the case of Scheria, the elements of the city are presented in order of appearance, similarly to what happens in the *City of the Sun* by Tommaso Campanella (1995)[78] and in its archetype, Plato's *Timaeus* (2014). This literary expedient unveils the preoccupation about the planning of the city and the progression of relevant elements that make the city.

The description of Scheria has counterpart in the description of the Island of the Goats, appearing during the episode of the Cyclopes. The contrast between city and country is a *leitmotiv* of the narration (EDWARDS, 1993), in this case both Scheria and the Goats' Island are given a positive evaluation, since if Scheria is the ideal city, the Goats' Island is the ideal place where to settle. However, the relevant point is that there actually is an interest in suggesting the audience how and where a city should be built. This idea is present in the works of various authors, who from different points of view outline this matter: the ethnographic analysis of DOUGHERTY (2001), the study of FINLEY (1954), the focus on the utopic idea of GIESECKE (2003; 2007; 2008), and the sociological focus of VIDAL-NAQUET (1986) among others underline how *The Odyssey* is about the early colonial experience, thus serving as a guide to build the

[78] *The City of the Sun*, a philosophical work by the Italian Dominican philosopher Tommaso Campanella, is an important early utopian work. The work was written in Italian in 1602, shortly after Campanella's imprisonment. The narration develops as a dialogue between "a Grandmaster of the Knights Hospitaller and a Genoese Sea-Captain", who describes the city of a theocratic society.

ideal society outside the *metrópolis*. It is not just about the society, the environment in which it should live is relevant to the same extent.

Moving forward, in the next pages the analysis is divided into three chapter: two for the main settlements of *The Odyssey,* one for the rest. A last chapter focuses on the drawing of a new cartography for the poem. In the end as material results of this work, I have drawn schematic representations of the settlements, which aided in formulating epistemological definition and in recognising some of those settlements as cities by the definition of Smith (2019). The first settlement to undergo analysis is Ithaka, the home of Odysseus, identified by many authors (see Table 4) with the homonymous island in the Adriatic Sea.

4.1 Ithaka: the spread city

By watching Table 7, it is striking that Ithaka is the most described of the settlements of *The Odyssey* with 18 of 41 passages. The descriptions are all generic and the narration in these is of the type of the *witness story* rendered by panoramic, detailed or first-person view without a particular preference. That already synthesises what one should expect from the following paragraphs: We are looking at a city that feels real to the Homeric audience and as Hauboldt (2005) states: “it is from the beginning good post-Heroic materials.” (p.40) Indeed, compared to the other Odyssean cities, Ithaka is humbler in look, less majestic, definitely less monumental, but “*dear and durable*” and not less vast in influence of the territory as the others.

The first details about Odysseus’ Island are presented in the first book just after the council of the gods, who decided to listen to Athene’s prayers to finally let the hero free. The goddess decides to visit Ithaka in disguise to send Telemachos on the tracks of his father. So, preposterously telling the young prince where she set anchor, names two toponyms, Rheithron and Neion, but away from the city:

> And my ship stands near by, at the country, away from the city,
> at the harbor, Rheithron, underneath wooded Neion.
> (Odyssey I. 185-186)

These two lines already reveal the dichotomy between country and city, so in the poet’s mind there is a clear distinction between what is the space of the settlement and the space outside it. The harbour is probably not a building, but a favourable place

where to set anchor, a shore, or a strand, which is said to be *near by* the palace, but outside the city. The meaning of "*Rheithron, underneath wooded Neion*" is questioned: Butler (1900), for instance translates Mt. Neritum (Neritos in Lattimore) instead of Neion, so identifying the two mountains as the same. Following the translation of Lattimore, however, the sentence should indicate a harbour in a riverbed (*rheithron* = stream, river, riverbed) underneath the Mt. Neion covered by vegetation.[79]

The hypothesis of Butler is certainly influenced by *Odyssey* IX.21-28, where the mountain Neritos is described once again as covered by vegetation (*leaf-trembling*), however, the sequence of the return of Telemachos and the suitors, after the futile ambush (*Odyssey* XVI.324-353) seems to confirm the hypothesis of a harbour visible from the palace, where some of the suitors are standing. This harbour is said to be particularly narrow and deep ('many-hollowed', 'the depths of the harbor'). The verses of book IX also describe the sequence of islands (Doulichion, Same and Zakynthos) that ends with Ithaka, *last of all in the water,* which is the western end of the line

More outlines of the island are given in book IV by Telemachos, who declines Menelaos gift of horses, because on Ithaka *"there are no wide courses in Ithaka, there is no meadow; // a place to feed goats; but lovelier than a place to feed horses; // for there is no one of the islands that has meadows for driving horses; // they are all sea slopes; and Ithaka more than all the others."* (*Odyssey* IV.605-608), which is confirmed n *Odyssey* XIII.241-249; and by the narrator who indicates that a *rocky island*, Asteris, between *towering Samos* and Ithaka has a double anchorage to hide the ships in order to ambush Telemachos. (*Odyssey* IV.844-847). Thus, now five islands create a linear archipelago and those are in order from east to west: Doulichion, Zakynthos, Same (or Samos), Asteris and Ithaka. Those islands and their people are referred by Laertes as the Kephallenians, which in this case it is not used as the name of the main island of the Ionian archipelago, where the real Ithaka is. (*Odyssey* XXIV.355,377)

[79] Both Mt. Neion and Mt. Neritos are spoken of various times in the poem in different occasion: Neion is mentioned by Telemachus in III.81 with the same structure as in I.186 ("upó-néion" = underneath the Neion), while Rheitron appears just one time, the etymon of the name means river as in Iliad VIII.369, XXI.218, or riverbed as in Iliad XXI.382.

Another *harbor* is revealed later in book XIII, it is the “harbor of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorkys”, of which at first (Odyssey XIII. 96-112) it is told that is in the countryside and that is protected from the winds by two promontories, then it is added (Odyssey XIII. 345-351) that it also hosts the *wide over-arching* cave sacred to the Naiads[80], just where the mount Neritos rises with its trees. The fact that Phorkys is away from the city is consolidated by the fact that is a good hide for Odysseus renewed wealth and it is in proximity to the swineherd’s house, who would reasonably live in the countryside, where the great number of animals of its flocks and herds would have space to graze. In fact, in the incipit of book XIV (1-21) it is described the house of Eumaios, at which Odysseus arrives by passing across *the wooded country along the heights* indicated by Athene.

The house is confirmed to be away both from the palace and form Laertes’ estate, which is also in the countryside away from the city (*Odyssey* XXIV.212), it is built with stones and covered with shrubbery enclosed in a large fence where also find place twelve pig pens, each with fifty sows (600 in total), while the 360 males are resting outside within the perimeter of the fence together with 4 guardian dogs. It is reasonable to imagine that this property must have had a great extension to host all those beasts, even if the numbers are hyperbolically exaggerated for poetic reasons. However, Eumaios himself enumerates the great number of goats and sheep that are in the possession of the king of Ithaka:

> “[…] Not one of the heroes over on the black mainland had so much, no one
> here on Ithaka, no twenty men together had such
> quantity of substance as he. I will count it for you.
> Twelve herds of cattle on the mainland. As many sheepflocks.
> As many troops of pigs and again as many wide goatflocks,
> and friends over there, and his own herdsmen, pasture them for him.
> And here again, at the end of the island, eleven wide flocks
> of goats in all are pastured, good men have these in their keeping.”
> (Odyssey XIV. 96-104)

[80] Freshwater nymphs, associated with springs, rivers, and lakes, which they often personify. Their name is etymologically related to νάω, "to flow" and νᾶμα, "what is flowing, river." (FINKLEBERG, 2001 p.549)

In this passage, more important than the impressive numbers of animals that are in the possession of Odysseus, which are thousands[81], it is referred to the mainland in contrast to the end of the island, where Eumaios lives. This confirms that the control of the king of Ithaka extends not only on the surrounding islands where the suitors come from, but also to the territories on the *terra firma*, the continent, where he has control and allies. Thus, Ithaka is the centre of a larger territory administrated by the kings, parents of the suitors, of which Odysseus is the *wanax*, this territory is Kephallenia, as told by Laertes and one of its cities on the mainland is Nerikos (Odyssey XXIV.378) now identified with a fortified settlement across Lefkas, north from Ithaka. (FINKLEBERG, 2011 p.570)

Three other descriptions give us details on the island: in book XIII Athene describes to Odysseus his land reporting again that the island is not suited to ride the horses and it is small in size, but thanks to the mild climate and the fertility of the terrain it is possible to produce enough grain and wine to feed the people and the cattle, and it also has good watering places. (*Odyssey* XIII.241-249) The other piece of information comes with the words of Eumaios who from an elevated point sees the ship of the suitors coming back from the failed ambush:

> I was above the city, where the Hill of Hermes is, making
> my way along, when I saw a fast vessel coming into
> our harbor, making inshore, and many men were aboard her,
> and she was loaded with shields and leaf-headed spears.
> (Odyssey XVI 471-474)

If from the Hill of Hermes is possible to see the boat of the suitors approaching the harbour (*rheithron*), it must be in line of sight of the palace as for *Odyssey* XVI.324-353, in a way that all the city is visible. The last description is found in book XVII:

> Now as they went down over the stony road, and were coming
> close to the city, and had arrived at the fountain, sweet-running
> and made of stone; and there the townspeople went for their water;
> Ithakos had made this, and Neritos, and Polyktor;
> and around it was a grove of black poplars, trees that grow by
> water, all in a circle, and there was cold water pouring
> down from the rock above; over it had been built an altar

[81]Numbers which might be highly exaggerated to corroborate the greatness of the hero's image in front of the audience, however, they give an idea of the importance of Ithaka as the capital of Kephallenia.

of the nymphs, and there all the wayfarers made their sacrifice; […].
(Odyssey XVII. 204-211)

Many are the interesting details described here, the first is of course *the stony road*, which does not indicate a path paved with stone, but on the contrary a rugged, craggy road, which is also suggested by Odysseus' remark at XVII.196: "[…] They say the road is very slippery." The second detail is the fountain, described as a little waterfall that probably pours the water in a sort of tank made in stone, it is surrounded by poplars, and it represents also a sacred place (the altar) for the nymphs. Finally, the narrator attributes the works on this spring to three subjects Ithakos, Neritos and Polyktor, of which only the last one is mentioned again as father to Pisander (Odyssey XVIII.299), one of the suitors killed by Odysseus, while Neritos and Ithakos according to Acusilaus (apud FOWLER, 2006) are sons of Pterelaos, and founder of Kephallenia and Ithaka, which was named after one of the brothers, while Neritos is the name of one of the mountains of the island (Odyssey IX.21-28).

It is now possible to schematically sketch the island remembering the main elements that characterise it:

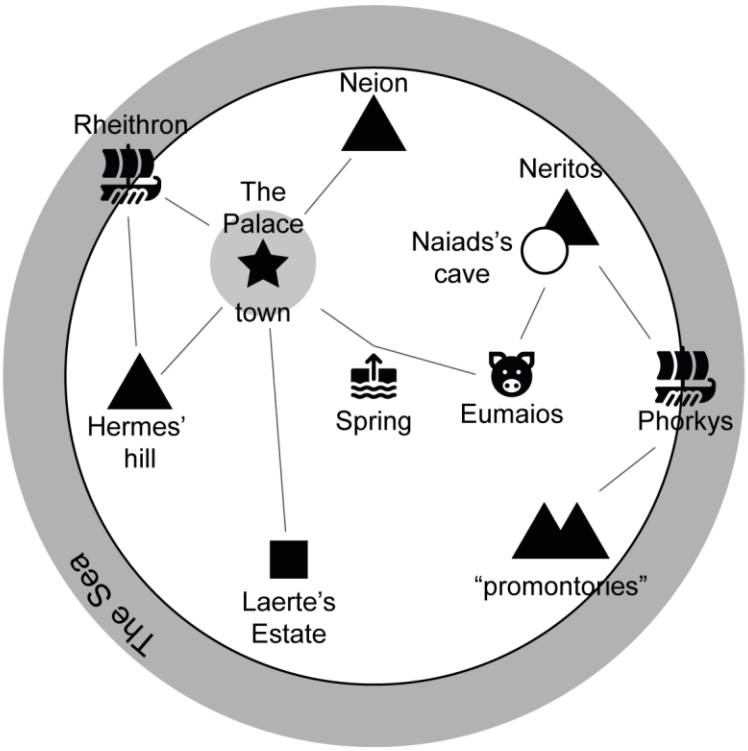


Figure 12 - Ithaka, diagram of the relative positions
(Created by the author, 2022)

By the descriptions given in the poem, it is not possible to have certainty of neither the relative positions of such elements, nor of the reciprocal distances, however, it gives us a general idea of the disposition of the main elements and their dependencies, so that once it has been identified the area in which this literary island can be placed in the real world, it would be possible to identify the morphological elements that inspired the poet, even if the toponyms have been lost.

The palace of Odysseus is at the centre of the narration as it is imaginable it is at the centre of the city's activities, since it is its administrative and economical heart, the harbour (*rheithron)*, the Mt. Neion and Hermes' Hill are orbiting around it. At this point it is difficult to exclude if the Hermes' Hill is part of the Neion in Homer's view, nonetheless the fact, that the hill is a sacred place, therefore marked by human presence, at least by paths and roads if not by buildings, is significant for the tracking of possible rests of a real settlement corresponding to the literary one.

The other pole of this scheme is the house of Eumaios, which is said to be near to the Phorkys and the Mt. Neritos, but far from the estate of Laertes, which also is in the countryside, so it is drawn as an isolated element. The connection between the city and eventually the palace is the *stony road*, which in the proximity of the city encounters the spring with the altar. Even if, the pieces aren't many, it is possible to see how Ithaka in the mind of the author is polycentric, in fact a major pole gathers the administrative and manufacturing functions (the smith at XVIII.328), while around it at least two productive nuclei orbit in distance, Eumaios' shack and Laertes's Estate, but also another estate which is mentioned by Eurymachos in XIX.358.

There is an unmistakable differentiation of functions and identities (city - countryside), which is also stressed by events in the narration, which identify the countryside as the place of the allies and supporters of Odysseus, while the city is the abusive space, where the suitors mistreat the prince and offend the sacred custom of hospitality. (EDWARDS, 1993; GIESECKE, 2003) However, there is no indication of any type of fortification around the city, as there is around the house of Odysseus (XVI, 342-344), which is also surrounded by neighbouring houses (Odyssey XXIII. 135).

Finally, projecting this scheme onto the real Ithaka, which has been by the most authors identified as the Ithaka of Homer (see Table 4 p.73), by using the methods of

literary cartography of which has been discussed in the literary review (3.5 Literary cartography p.66), the result is the following:

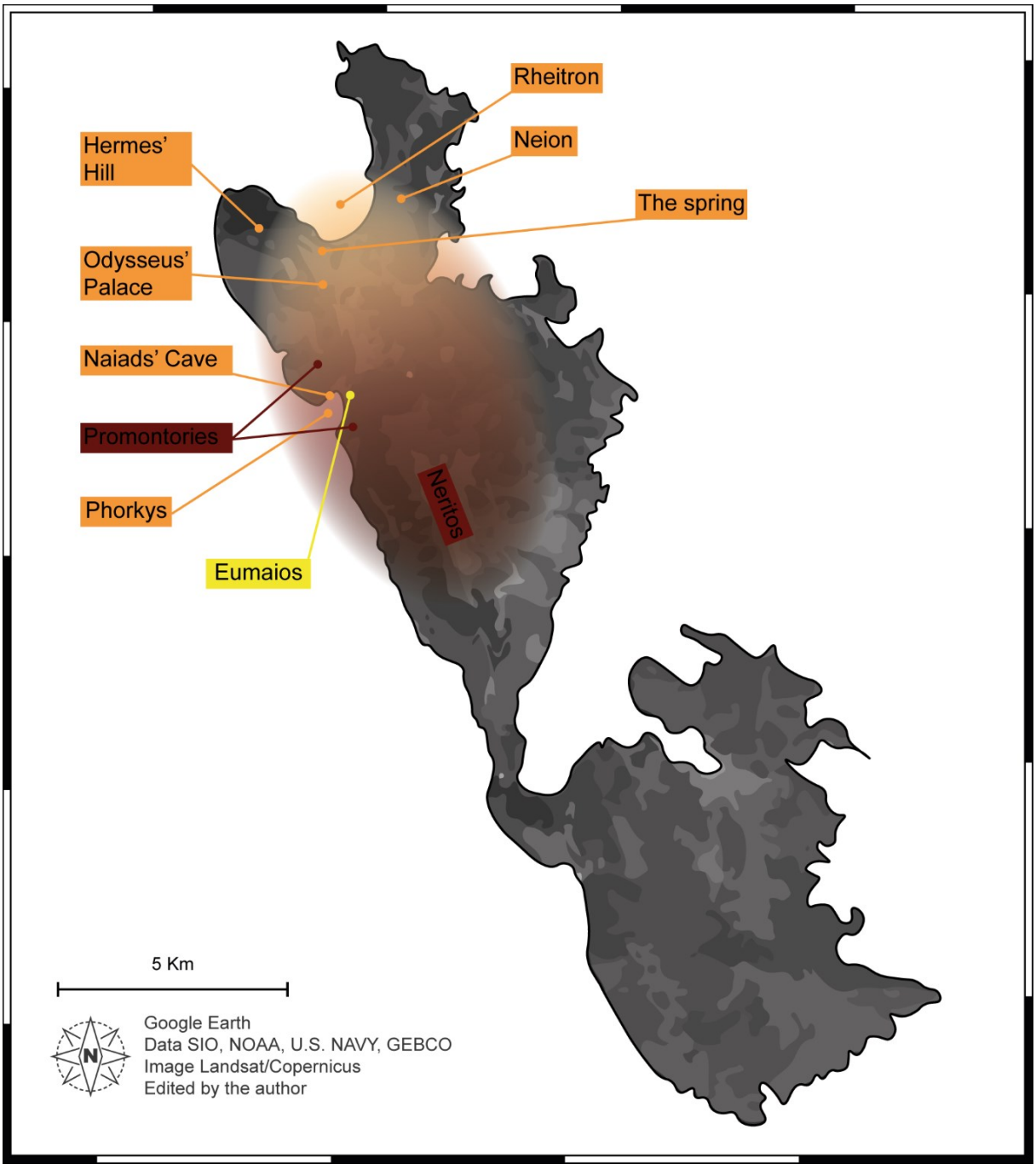


Figure 13 - Ithaka's literary cartography (edited by the author, 2022)

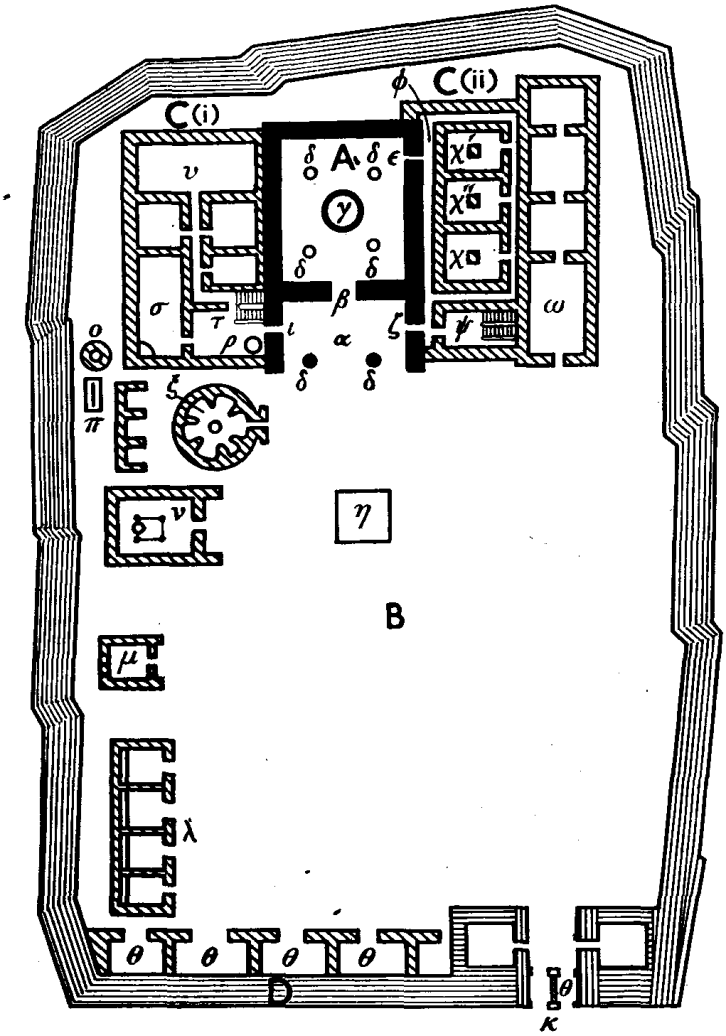
Figure 13 - Ithaka's literary cartography (edited by the author, 2022) represents one of the various possible projections of the literary Ithaka onto the geographical one. All the position I attribute to the literary place reflect the presence of an attested archaeological remain as for the Palace of Odysseus or a geographical feature as the spring, which I placed over the Fountain of Kalamos. Archaeologist might argue that the cave where Odysseus hid his treasure and the dwelling of Eumaios are in the southern part of the island in the places that nowadays are renowned for this, but that interpretation would not see the cave at the roots of the mount Neion close to Phorkys. In the same way I admit having surrendered to some contradictions, as Rheitron should be narrower in the word of Homer. Nevertheless, I respected the relative position of each narrative place, even if the position of the fountain in respect to the village and the palace of Odysseus poses a question.

The method of mapping is the one used by Barbara Piatti and her collaborators (2009): the spaces are marked in three colours from red to yellow, as they are crossed in the time of the narration and they might be real places projected into the poem – in red – or transformed in the narrative – in orange – or again completely invented – in yellow -. The only place I interpreted as purely fictional in the space of the narration is the dwelling of Eumaios, as there is no evidence that can ascertain that his hut was anywhere specifically on the island, but if there was, Palikata is a plausible location that would reconcile with the other hypothesis. Finally except from the mount Neritos and the promontories protecting the hypothetical harbor of Phorkys, everything else has been transformed by the verses of Homer.

If the details about the city are few and little has been said about them, certainly there is not a lack of works around the house of the king of Ithaka: around the reconstruction of this house, it can be assisted to a similar evolution of the subject as it has been for the cartography. In fact, if scholar like Gray (1955) attempt to virtually rebuild the house in a very scrupulous and detailed way, also borrowing elements from archaeological excavations; others like Nannini (2017) and Rougier-Blanc (2005a) approach the matter with narratological awareness, in a way that is comparable to the work Barbara Piatti and her team (PIATTI et al., 2009; PIATTI; REUSCHEL; HURNI, 2009).

Indeed, reading the poem the direction given by Homer regarding the rooms and elements of the house are rather vague and often the space is transformed by theatrical effects, nonetheless the resemblance to Mycenaean structures is clear. So, the reconstruction made by Gray (Figure 14 - The House of Odysseus from Gray (1955, p.13)) should be kept in mind as an example to which even the poet might have taken inspiration from.

Figure 14 - The House of Odysseus from Gray (1955, p.13)



It can be imagined that the palace is not at the centre of the city, since it has a view on the *Rheithron*, which lies in front of the gate and the wall (Odyssey XVI 343-344), since the suitors just outside the palace can see their ship arriving and taking the sails down. (Odyssey XVI 345-357) Therefore the neighbouring houses must be on the sides and behind it, unless the house itself rises above the town, but of that there is no mention in the poem.

Anyways, as the palace of Alkínoös, the house of Odysseus has a courtyard, which is mentioned several times and it is a distinctive trait of the palace:

> ‘Eumaios, surely this is the handsome house of Odysseus.
> Easily it is singled out and seen among many,
> for one part is joined on to another, and the courtyard is worked on
> with wall and copings, and the doors have been well made, with double
> panels. Nobody could belittle this house. […].’
> (Odyssey XVII. 264-268)

It is mentioned that the masonry is well executed and has wooden finishes, the *towering* (Odyssey XVIII. 32) doors made of cypress wood are the product of the work of a fine craftsman:

> He sat down then on the ashwood threshold, inside the doorway,
> leaning against the doorpost of cypress wood, which the carpenter
> once had expertly planed, and drawn it true to a chalkline; […].
> (Odyssey XVII. 339-341)

And while the walls and the tall columns are made of stone, possibly cut and well-ordered as for the house of Circe (Odyssey X. 210), the sloping roof is made of fir:

> Eurykleia barred the doors of the strong-built great hall.
> The two men, Odysseus and his glorious son, sprang up
> and began carrying helmets, shields massive in the middle,
> and pointed spears, and before them Pallas Athene, holding
> a golden lamp, gave them splendid illumination.
> Suddenly Telemachos spoke a word to his father:
> ‘Father, here is a great wonder that my eyes look on.
> Always it seems that the chamber walls, the handsome bases
> and roof timbers of fir and tall columns sustaining them,
> shine in my eyes as if a fire were blazing. There must be
> surely a god here, one of those who hold the high heaven.’
> (Odyssey XIX. 30-40)

If from the great hall it is visible the structure sustaining the roof, in more occasions it is mentioned that the house has a staircase and a second floor, where Penelope has her room, from which the queen can overhear the suitors talking. However, it is difficult to imagine that the same room of Penelope could be the room with the sumptuous marital bed carved directly in an olive tree stump, which was enclosed into the house as Odysseus reports in XXIII.190-201.

Many are the contradictions, and Gray (Figure 14 - The House of Odysseus from Gray (1955, p.13)) adds elements that are not introduced in the poem such as the kitchen (σ in C(i)), the workrooms and the other bedrooms (labelled C(ii) in the image) and a staircase to reach them (ψ); while the other elements have their place in the text: Of the great hall (megarón) are depicted the porch (Odyssey XXII. 258) with its pillars and columns (Odyssey I. 333 etc.), the main entrance (Odyssey I. 104, 255), the fireplace (Odyssey XIX. 389) and two lateral doors giving access to a passage/alley (one at XXII.126, 333, 341; and the second XXII.137), but also other generic doors (Odyssey XIX. 30; XXI.382; XXII.399);

It is also revealed the existence of a megaron for the women in the upper level (Odyssey XVIII. 185 and following), which can be reached by a staircase (Odyssey XXIII. 1 and followings). There is no indication about where the spinning takes place (Odyssey I. 356), if in Penelope's chamber or in the women's megaron or again in a dedicated room. The same consideration is made for another space reserved for the activities of the maidens is the mill (Odyssey XX. 105), while the bedrooms of Odysseus (Odyssey XXIII. 190 and followings) and Telemachos (Odyssey I. 425) are probably both detached from the main building, since the first was built around the olive tree and the second is far from the light of the fireplace and Telemachos needs a torch to get to it (Odyssey XIX. 48). In the courtyard, beside the separate bedrooms there is the altar of Zeus (Odyssey XXII. 334), a portico (XXVIII.102; XX.176; XXI.390), the stables where the dog Argo is lying on a pile of dung (Odyssey XVII. 298), the pens for the geese (Odyssey XIX. 536) near the round house where the grain is stocked (Odyssey XX. 466) and the spring (Odyssey XIX. 504; XX.154).

From the features of the city and the palace of Odysseus that have been listed above can be recognise some of those that are held in Table 2: the two-storied

buildings and the inclusion of the promiscuous space into a multiplicity of rooms dedicated to different activities, as well as the presence of structures dedicated to the storage of the livestock and the grain – stored in a *tholos* - suggest an evolution of both the Minoan and Mycenaeans examples, as it is the fact that the palace is autonomous from the neighbouring buildings, yet it is not isolated as the estates of Laertes and the other noblemen like Eurymachos. Interesting is the suggestion made by the same Eurimachos, who seems to hint to a multiplicity of houses and estates that he possesses inside and outside of the city. In fact, Odysseus and his father own both the palace in Ithaka, as kings, and the estate in the countryside.

Moreover, the differentiation of specialised workers, who orbit around the king's palace, therefore in the city (Odyssey XVII. 384 and followings), the presence of one or more sacred places (Hermes' Hill, the fountain by the road), the precious materials and the goods earned from the trade and exchanges with other people that can be found in the palace and its furniture (Odysseus' bed is detailed in ivory and gold), the interdependencies of people (Odysseus being the king of kings in Kephallenia, the allies on the mainland…), not last the monumentality of the king's palace, all make think of the definition given by Monica Smith for the 'ancient' city.

From a literary perspective, as can be found in De Jong (2012), Nannini (2017), Rougier-Blanc(2005a) and it has been evaluated following the categories of literary city (see Table 6 and Table 7) the episodes on Ithaka is the type that describe a generic urbanscape of that time, and it does so true the eyes both of the hero and the common people (Eumaios, Eurykleia) using all the narratological expedients, from the panoramic description of the *harbor* to the "description by action" of Odysseus' *thalamus.* Thus, these descriptions, although they live in the realm of the narrative, are reliable as witnesses of a period that surrounds the Homeric poems.

However, as also underlined by Barker (2009) in the Homeric Ithaka there is no room for public confrontation and debate, everything is consumed inside the walls of Odysseus palace, where the suitors are attempting to overthrow the prince Telemachos as king's regent and are certain of Odysseus' death, without any attempt of rescue, while the hero is eager to find justice as judge and executor for the crime of violating the customs of the island. The two assembly that are called to solve the issues

on the island eventually end in the simple exposition of a decision, by Telemachos to travel on the father's tracks (OdysseyII.1-257) and by Athene, who magically brings peace among the fighting parts (OdysseyXXIV.421-ff).

To the lack of dialectics there is the parallel of a lack of a more open public space, even if there is a council of the aristocracy, which, however, does not function properly, as there no debate is carried out. Ithaka, compared to Scheria and Troy lacks a house for the city's fire, as well as a built temple, which becomes increasingly present in eight century's poleis. However, the relation between Ithaka and the gods underlines a substantial progress: If Scheria's fate is still dependent on the gods' will, Ithaka's depends on the good management and politics of its inhabitants (Raauflaub, 1992). So, if many characteristics are recognisable in the political influence, the territorial domain and in the differentiation of functions within the territory, Ithaka is still on the road to be structured as an archaic *polis* since it still carries the memories of the past of Greek peoples.

4.2 Scheria: a utopia

The picture of Ithaka is given in various pieces scattered through the tail that once put together render the articulation of the spaces of the Odyssean city, while Scheria is drawn in fewer passages with longer descriptions, for example, a long poetic description is dedicated to the garden of Alkinoös, while Odysseus' palace is reconstructed in its entirety with several glimpses.

The first words dedicated to the Phaikians are spoken by Kalypsos (Odyssey V. 269-281), who gives Odysseus nautical directions[82] to their land. Those directions have been studied by all scholars of the Homeric geography and it has been recognised a certain degree of competence in astronomy to Homer, even though there is no demonstration of such a mastery in the ancient Greek culture like it is attributed to the Near Eastern peoples instead.

[82] About the Pleaides, Boötes, the Bear (the Wagon) and Orion and the position of Scheria it has been discussed in chapter 3.5.1, p.64.

However, Kalypsos' directions are quite accurate and lead Odysseus to sail east from the island, his travel lasts seventeen days, when finally on the eighteenth day he sees *the shadowy mountains of the Phaiakian land*, which looks like a shield on the face of the water. This description among other elements has led Wolf (2004) to place Scheria in Calabria (Sothern region of Italy), but now our interest is in the characteristics of the landscape, which is said to be rugged, outlined by mountains and rich in slopes, almost inaccessible from the sea, without harbours, so much so that at first it seem that the hero cannot find a safe landing place and is condemned to certain death (Odyssey V. 394-405), however, finally in front of Odysseus appears the mouth of a river without rocks and even protected from the harsh winds (Odyssey V. 438-443).

At this point in the story, however, the dramatic sequence of the shipwreck fades out and, in its place, the edifying images of the divine land of Hypereia emerge (Odyssey VI. 1-12), the place from which Nausithoös, founder of the Phaiakian, son of Poseidon, led a migration, so that his people would be far from men, but also from the Cyclopes, their specular negative. This brief passage gives to the reader an insight on the origin of such a godly people as the Phaiakian and it is also a connection to the peaceful hiatus occupied by the episodes of Odysseus among Alkinoös' people.

Scheria is particularly interesting as it is a bridge between two worlds, Hypereia, a city of a golden era, and Ithaka, the utopia projected into reality, which in a way makes of it the most utopian *polis* in the poem. (HANSEN, 2005) As a matter of fact, the descriptions analysed outline a product of imagination, where for a narratological need the spaces dilate enormously as it happens for the palace and the garden of Alkinoös but shrinks when it is necessary to give a panoramic view of the city and the landscape together. Not only, Scheria is a place of total harmony, free of any of the human conflicts announced as the main theme of the poem by Zeus in *Odyssey*I.32-ff., that is due to their dependency on the gods' will and not to their freedom, which is lastly confirmed by their fate of being punished by Poseidon. Hansen (2005), Hauboldt (2005) and Raauflaub (1992) among others support in this fashion the identification as imaginary *polis*, or even more specifically as *utopian polis* of Scheria opposed to Ithaka.

Nonetheless, the story of Scheria carries some important pieces of information starting from the narration of the process of foundation of Scheria, which might serve as a guide, or anyway it is a testimony of the main feature that a new colony must have had in the Homeric era:

> […] and driven a wall about the city, and built the houses,
> and made the temples of the gods, and allotted the holdings.
> (Odyssey VI. 9-10)

In these lines four main actions can be read as the steps to properly build a city: First of all, the erection of the walls, which is not only the building of a defensive element, certainly not necessary for the Phaiakians, favoured by the gods and peaceful people, but also as an element of separation between the space of the city, of men, and that of the nature of the gods and beasts. (HAUBOLD, 2005) Of course, the archetype of the enclosing the herd in a safe space is in place, however, as it is proven more relevant to Homer, the focus is to differentiate the space of the civilised men and the space of the chaotic and sometimes violent nature.

The second action is the construction of the dwellings, built inside the perimeter of the walls, that functions as a protection and separates the places of production, manufacturing, assembly, and worship from the places of rest. Not much else is said about the houses, but surely, they would not stand a comparison to the great palace of Alkinoös (Odyssey VI. 301-302), even if they represent a polar opposite to the cave of the Cyclopes, Phaikians' former neighbours prior to the migration; Then comes the constitution of the temples, which are actually described as monumental buildings differently from the altar dedicated to the Nymphs in Ithaka (Odyssey XVII. 204-211) or the grove of poplars sacred to Athene in the countryside of Scheria (Odyssey VI. 291), which are outdoor spaces typical of the Epic age's cults (HAINSWORTH, 1982).

Finally, the partitioning of the lands surrounding the urban area, which in this case is mentioned generically, so it cannot be inferred that this idea of partitions defines either allotments or *temenoi* as the estates of Odysseus or Alkinoös. It is however interesting the division of the surrounding areas among the inhabitants: it represents the clear and methodical intent to occupy the territory establishing not only the structures needed for the sustenance of the people, but also a wider are of political influence. Anyways, this also suggests an idea that is repeated later in the text

(Odyssey VI. 195), namely, that the city extends its administrative power over the surrounding territory and that this is an integral part of the city's functions, despite the physical limit imposed by the walls.

In the same sequence (Odyssey VI. 191-197), as in VI.12, we are told that Alkinoös rules over the city, but his power does not seem to be hereditary, even though he is the son of the founder. In fact, later it is said that the city and its territories are governed by twelve kings in addition to Alkinoös himself:

> For here are twelve who are marked out as kings in our country
> with power, and they act as leaders, and I myself am the thirteenth.
> (Odyssey VIII. 390-391)

This kind of state is very alike to what is said about Troy in *The Iliad*, even if the state of Troy is in the hand of the whole royal family in comparison to Scheria, where the character of Alkinoös functions as a representative of the Phaikian aristocracy. Ithaka, is supposedly organised in the same way, however, there the political harmony has sunk into the void of power left by Odysseus' absence.

Moving on with more specific considerations, with the next passages the city of Scheria takes form in the words of Nausikaa, Phaikian princess, daughter of the *basileus*, who, after finding Odysseus stranded near the river's mouth, takes the hero into the city. In fact, once the hero has been found, he is given bath and new clothes, then he follows the wagon of the princess and her maidens in the country until the city is in sight, at this point, not to raise malevolent gossip around the girl Odysseus must walk alone to the palace of the king following the indication given him by the princess:

> But when we come to the city, and around this is a towering
> wall, and a handsome harbor either side of the city,
> and a narrow causeway, and along the road there are oarswept
> ships drawn up, for they all have slips, one for each vessel;
> and there is the place of assembly, put together with quarried
> stone, and built around a fine precinct of Poseidon,
> and there they tend to all that gear that goes with the black ships,
> the hawsers and the sails, and there they fine down their oarblades;
> for the Phaiakians have no concern with the bow or the quiver,
> but it is all masts and the oars of ships and the balanced vessels
> themselves, in which they delight in crossing over the gray sea;
> […] (Odyssey VI. 262-272)

This description projects the audience into a walk in first person towards the city, of course the first element that strikes the eye is *towering wall joined with palisades*

(Odyssey VII. 43-45) that surrounds the city from its foundation, then *two harbors with a narrow causeway*, one each side of the city. This mirrors the fact that Odysseus was not able to easily find a landing, until he finds the river's mouth (Odyssey V. 394-405 and V.438-443), and that the Phaikians are an isolated population, but at the same time, that they have an easy access to the sea. Along the roads from the harbors to the city, the narrator describes the slips in which the ships are sheltered, then a *paved square, the place of assembly*, built around the *precinct of Poseidon*. There, just outside the city, on the road to the harbors, around or in the same place of assembly, the Phaikians produce, repair, and store all the tools and the gears relevant to the navigation. It can be seen as place of crafts, this time outside the city and not inside the city as in Ithaka.

Subsequently, "*as far from the city as the shout of a man will carry"* (Odyssey VI. 295) Nausikaa places "*a glorious grove of poplars sacred to Athene"* (Odyssey VI. 292), a spring and a meadow all by the road, there also lies Alkinoös' "*estate and his flowering orchard"* (Odyssey VI. 294). Like Odysseus, also the Phaikian possesses an estate outside the city, and a palace inside the walls, which as the audience is told by Nausikaa, it "*is easily distinguished […] // for there are no other houses built for the other // Phaikians anything like the house of the hero Alkinoös".* (Odyssey VI. 299-301) The estate differently from the palace is a *temenos*, a private property given to the hero-king as an honour for the foundation of the city or his remarkable deeds. In this *temenos* the king produces the goods that are necessary to maintain the rich life of the palace inside the city.

Reviewing the elements that have been analysed so far, it can be produced a diagram depicting the city of Scheria (Figure 15): it starts from the shape of the land, which as underlined by Wolf (2004) has the shape of a typical shield, as an isthmus. On both sides of this isthmus there should be the two harbors, one each side of the city, which is drawn in the centre. If two roads connect the city to the harbor and their narrow causeways, a third path should be the one crossed by Odysseus and the maids, coming from the river's mouth. On the paths from the sea to the city there are the ships and their shelters and the square for the assemblies built around the precinct of Poseidon, while on the road traversed by the hero can be found the poplar grove sacred to Athena, a meadow and a spring, not far from it, the estate of Alkinoös.

It is now difficult to bring on the same work that has done with Ithaka by projecting the diagram onto the real world, since the region to which Homer took inspiration from - as per Wolf (2005) - is much too vast to make realistic for Odysseus to be landed on the coast of the Gulf of Sant' Eufemia, which is characterised by an almost uninterrupted beach of 9km, and then to depart from the east coast on the Gulf of Squillace without some narrative stretch. Undoubtedly, if archaeological remains support the growing importance of the region since the VIII century BC, it cannot be identified a specific place in the region to perfectly justify Homer description.

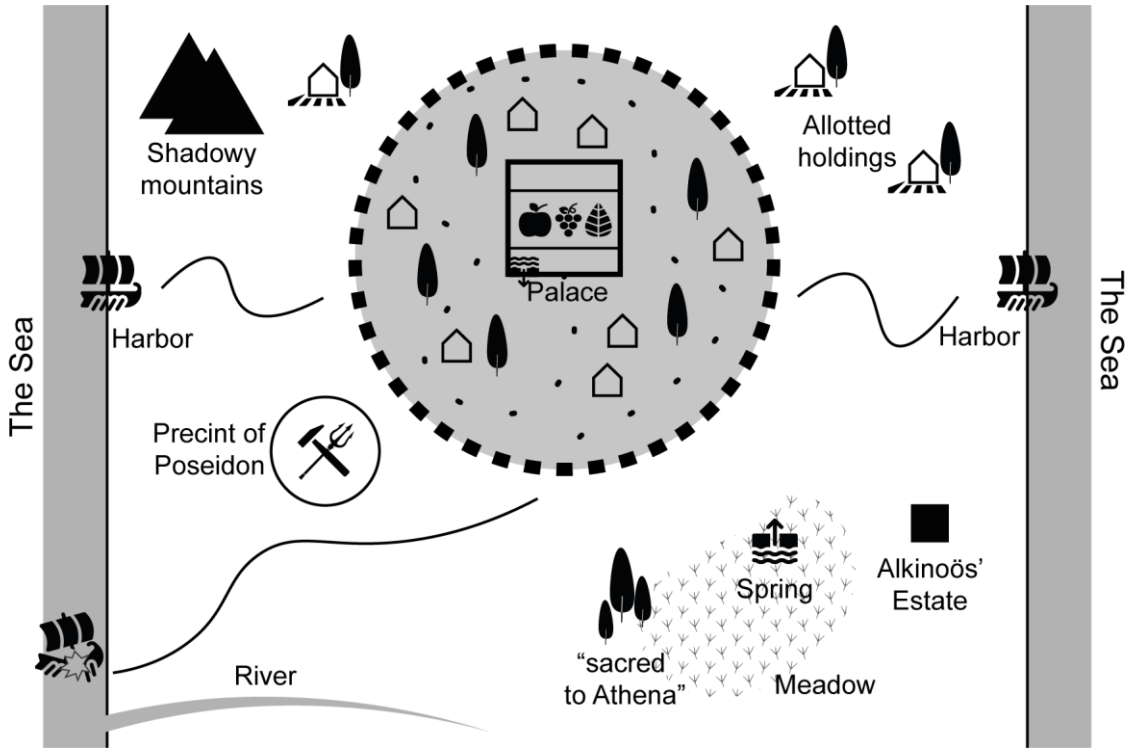


Figure 15 - Diagram representing the *polis* of Scheria
(Created by author, 2022)

I will divert here the focus from a macroscopic perspective to a mesoscopic analysis of iconic places of Scheria, the vast orchard and the shiny palace of *basileus* Alkinoös, which reflect the utopic features and the near-eastern influence of the whole city.

However, even the palace in the city has its garden rich in trees and plants. As matter of fact, if Nausikaa just recounts that the king and the queen sit on their thrones surrounded by servant and maids in a large room with pillars bathing in firelight (Odyssey VI. 304-309), while the narrator following Odysseus as he walks through the

palace depicts the *grandeur* and the luxury of the *high roofed house* of Alkinoös and its garden: from the long description from VII.81 and VII.131 it can be rebuilt the house.

The walk through the palace starts with Odysseus staring at the bronze threshold, then the narrator describes what waits ahead with detail: there are golden doors with jambs[83] and lintel of silver and golden handles, the entrance is guarded by statues of dogs of gold and silver on both sides; past them, a room so bright as the sun or the moon is closed on the sides by walls of brass with cobalt blue encircling. Walking to the inner rooms (of Nausikaa VII.7-13, or of the other children VII.170) on the sides will see the thrones covered by delicate cloths woven by women, here the kings of Scheria use to gather to feast and talk until late lit by the torches held by statues of young men of gold. (Odyssey VII. 81-103)

The narrator then stresses the glory and immensity of the palace by counting the servants: fifty women (Odyssey VII. 101) who grind the grains or weave shiny cloths, such a great number of servants, who sit behind the throne of Arete (Odyssey

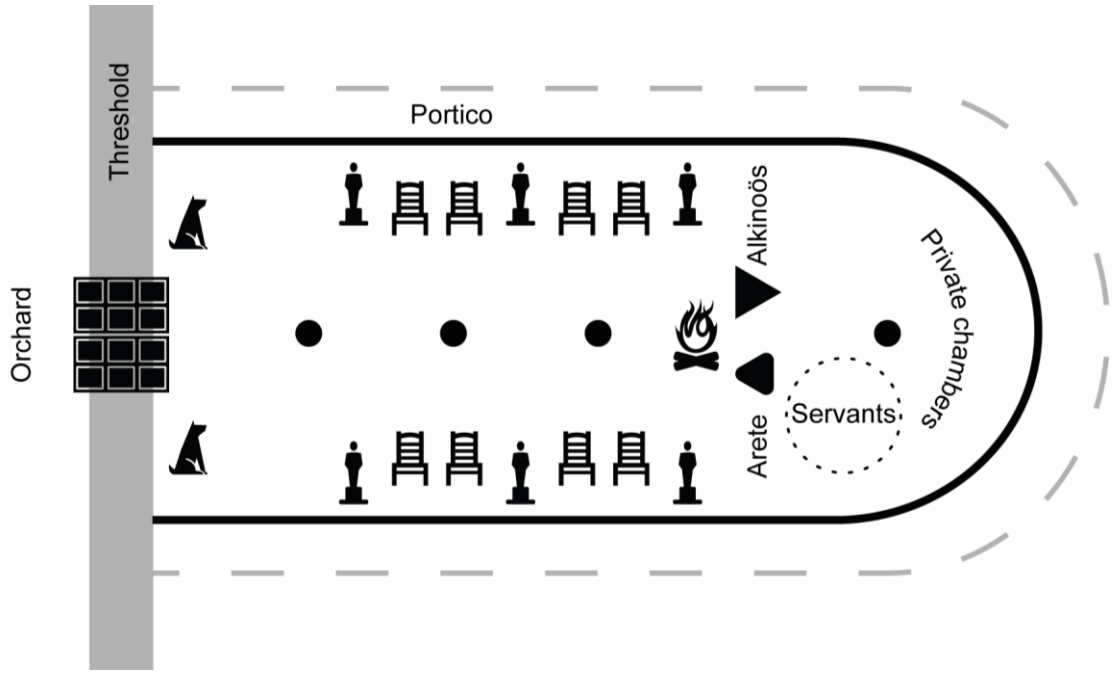


Figure 16 - Alkinoös Palace as a megaron
(Created by the author, 2022)

[83] Here I prefer the interpretation of Franco Ferrari (2005), preferring “jambs” to “columns”, even if the interpretation of Lattimore would better suit the theory of the central structure as in the megaron of Lefkandi.

VI. 304-307), must have been held in an equally large room. Arete and Alkinoös sit on their thrones against a column in front of the heart of the house, the fire. However, Odysseus does not sleep in the inner chambers, but in the portico around the house (Odyssey VII. 345). Cook (2004) suggests that the palace of Alkinoös is of the type of the megaron in Lefkandi, since the doors let access directly in the main room, the people sat on the thrones lit by the torches are on the sides, against the brazen walls, while in the centre of the structure there are only the fire and the thrones of the *basileus* and the queen against a column, which might be one of series on the same line from the entrance to the end of the building, here the supposedly are the private chambers.

However, elements such as the statues of gold and silver, the bronze-cladded walls and the immense orchard are characteristic of Near-Eastern influence probably arrived to Homer passing by Crete or Cyprus (COOK, 2004). Indeed, Assyrian in origin is the orchard, which is as impressive as the interior: four land measures, around 1.000 square meters[84] surrounded by a fence hold a treasure of nature, tall pear trees, pomegranate trees, apple trees, fig trees and finally olive trees, but also a vineyard and some green herbs. (Odyssey VII. 113-126) Those plants, however, have nothing of natural, since they geminate fruits all the year in abundance, so to insist on the fact that Scheria is still attached to its divine roots and still partially lives in the golden era despite the migration.

However, the garden, as Ford (2015) helps to figure, is articulated in three areas: on one side the fruit trees, at the centre the vineyard, on the other side the green herbs. If on the side of the courtyard there is a spring "*where townspeople come for their water*" (Odyssey VI. 131), on the opposite side, another spring distributes the water through the garden. (Figure 17 - Alkinoös' orchard (adapted from FORD, 2015 p. 148-149))

[84] On the meaning of the "4 lands" measure various authors have debated determining that the garden of Alkinoös is somewhere between impressive extension of a hectare and the more reasonable 900sqm of a square 30x30m big. However, I would not search for an exact measure, but, given the poetic nature of the poem, I would settle for any hyperbolic dimension that delivers the idea of the vastity of such a lavish garden.

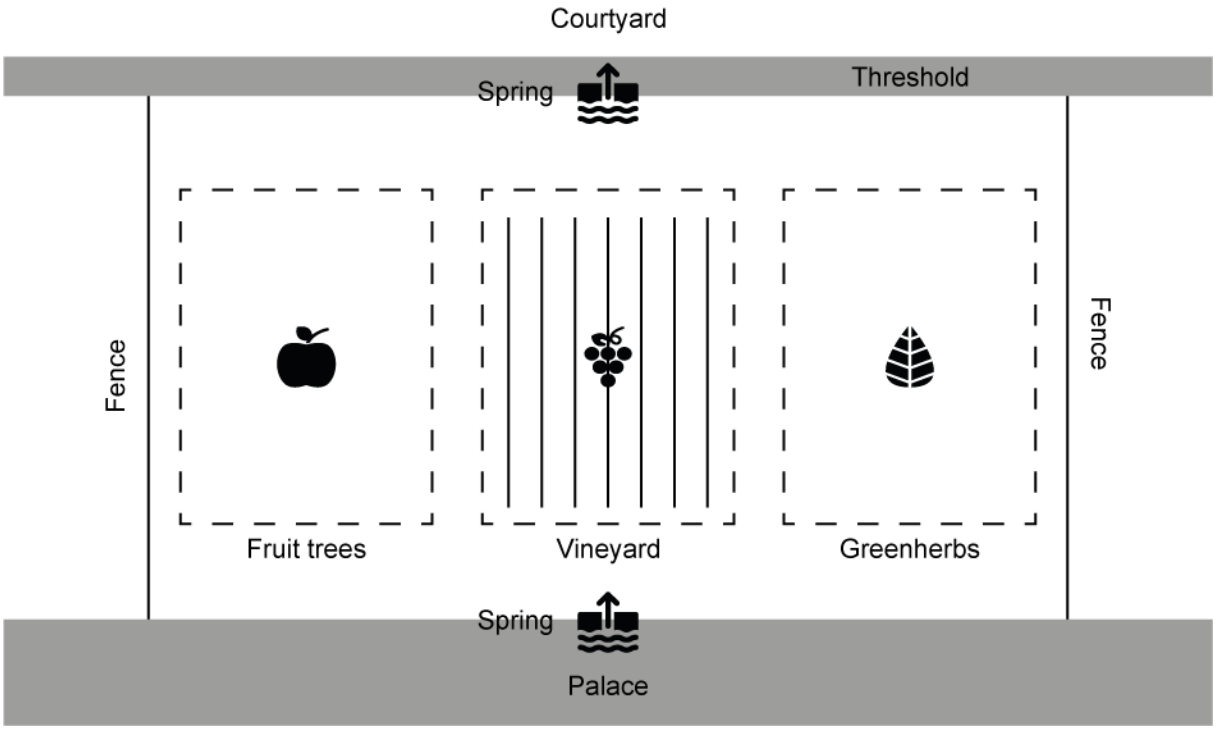


Figure 17 - Alkinoös' orchard (adapted from FORD, 2015 p. 148-149)

As Cook (2004) argues, a garden of these dimensions and opulence cannot be found in any Greek settlement of any era, especially in a *polis*, where the density of the *astu* would not allow for an extensive farm such as the garden of the king of Scheria to find place.

The elements gathered might suggest that Scheria – by all means a city as per Smith's definition (2019) - belongs to the category of *polis* of the VI century BC, as the Mycenaeans Athens, Mileto, Priene: the paved streets, the public spaces, the temples, the fortifications, and the planned countryside. However, other elements such as the palace place Scheria as far back as the X century BC and push it as far as Babylon. This amalgam of elements is naturally poetic, it intensifies the exotic flavour of the Phaikians as an unknown, godlike people, but at the same time it must be familiar enough to the audience to provide an understandable ground to the audience. All these element makes of Scheria a mixed reality, a fantasy, where the best of multiple architectural cultures can merge in an inspiring image, something which the audience might aspire to in terms of opulence, splendour, and harmony, but in a recognisable, friendly political formula.

In fact, the political and social structure is similar to the one in Ithaka, as Odysseus also is a king among kings, although his prowess as hero makes of him a leader above the others, differently from Alkinoös, who is an equal to his fellow kings. Moreover, many more are the social and political aspects that differentiate Scheria as a utopia from Ithaka and also Pylos pointed out by Giesecke (2003, 2007, 2008), Hansen (2004) and Hauboldt (2004), but also Raauflaub (1992) and Finley (1954). On an architectural and urban level, the utopistic qualities are recognisable in the hyperbolic exaltation of the wealth of the city, of the excellence of the materials, and the presence of out-worldly architectural elements. In the end, if Scheria represent a colonial example on one hand, on the other it also represents a point of reference for Odysseus to reform and improve Ithaka both in a political and architectural way.

4.3 Other dwellings: scattered tales

Scheria and Ithaka are not the only settlements - or to better say, cities - described in *The Odyssey.* In fact, in its wanderings, Odysseus encounters different peoples living in as many different dwellings or settlements or even cities, starting from the primitive caves of the Cyclopes to the noble *polis* of Pylos. The last is the first to be described in book III and it is the only Odyssean city that has a considerable archaeological parallel, it is located in Messenia, Greece, and its rests are dated back to 1300 BC. The Palace of Nestor is now the best-preserved palace of Mycenaean origin (Figure 18).

While from the remains it is easier to rebuild the shape of the palace, from the Homeric poems it is harder to draw an image, even if the entire book III is dedicated to the stay off Telemachos in Pylos. As a matter of fact, in this episode the Ithakian prince visits the old ally of his house and listens to the story of the facts happened after the sack of Troy. There is little movement of the characters around the house, all the narration is focused on the words of Nestor, which function as a bridge between the two Homeric poems. Therefore, the only details given regard a generic description of the megaron and the presence of a portico. (Odyssey III. 385-403)

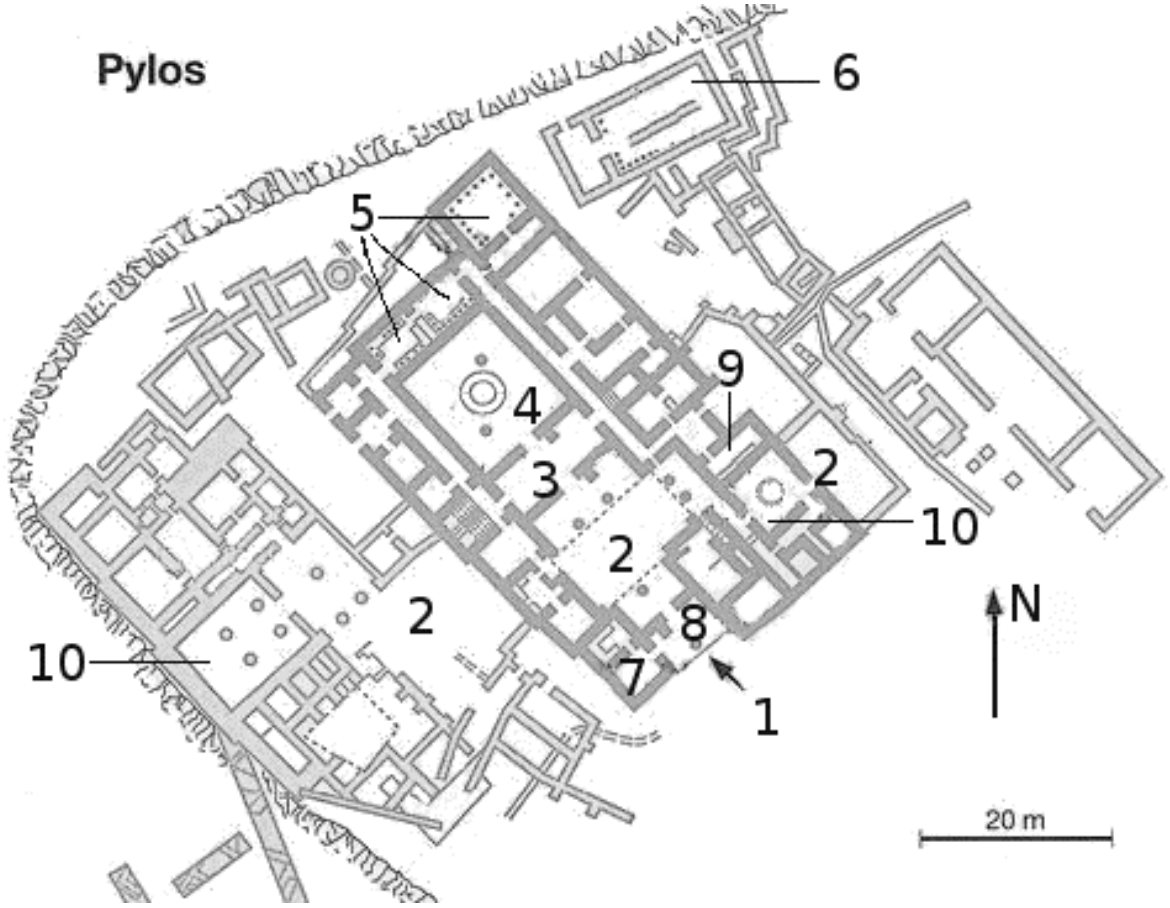


Figure 18 - Plan of the Palace of Nestor at Pylos, Greece.

1 - Entrance; 2 – Court; 3 – Anchamber; 4 – Megaron (main hall); 5 - Storerooms with olive oil; 6 - Storerooms with wine; 7 – Archives; 8 – Propylon; 9 – Bath; 10 - Small megaron.
(Released under CC BY-SA 4.0, from: WIKIPEDIA, Available: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palace_of_Nestor_plan.png#/media/File:Palace_of_Nestor_plan.png Accessed: 8 April 2022.)

If the architectonical and urban morphology is not sufficiently described, something more can be said about sociological aspects: we are told that Nestor has been reigning for three generation, there has been no resistance to the return of the *basileus* after the Trojan war, unlike for Agamemnon of Argo or the same Odysseus. This means that nobody challenges the authority of Nestor, and his life is somehow extended by his godly virtues. This and the religious ceremony in which all the episode is set make of Pylos – as Sparta - a city frozen in a godly atmosphere, which reminds of Hypereia: the stability of the government and the inhuman long life of the king reveal the suspension of any social attritions or evolutions both stimulated by inside or outside Pylos' territory. If for Scheria, the arrive of Odysseus represents a disrupting event, that determines the passage from an era to the other, the stay of Telemachos in Pylos

does not stir up any wind of change. Thus, the Mycenaean polis of Pylos remains threaded to the old ways.

Starting from Odysseus flashback, the poet opens the catalogue of settlements belonging to a mythical past era: first of all is the cave of Kalypso, the nymph that wants to make of Odysseus his immortal husband, lives isolated in a cave on a remote island, Ogygia, which in V.55-74 is described as lavishly green and wild paradise of vegetation and beasts. This vision is specular to the garden of Alkinoös for its glory, yet it is expressed in the opposite direction, the wilderness instead of the discipline of a human labour. In both scenes, there is the element of divine timelessness, which is the expression of a mythical past where the presence of the gods is crucial to the human life.

A similar flavour can be perceived in the episode of the Lotus-Eaters (Odyssey IX. 79-ff.), a peaceful people, “who live on a flowering food”, whose effect is to suppress any longing for home and make the mind of the Achaians slip into the oblivion. Again, the settlement of this people is not described, as their mindlessness prevails making them mor akin to the beasts than to the men, especially to the hero of intellect *par excellence.*

The catalogue continues, a crucial episode is the one of the Cyclopes, the mighty giants, sons of Poseidon. These creatures are described from the beginning as lawless (Odyssey IX. 106) uninterested in the agricultural activities and unaware of basic technologies as the plow since the gods provide food for them to collect. Moreover, to stress their primitive nature the poet adds:

> These people have no institutions, no meetings for counsels;
> rather they make their habitations in caverns hollowed
> among the peaks of the high mountains, and each one is the law
> for his own wives and children, and cares nothing about the others.
> (Odyssey IX. 112-115)

Thus, Odysseus face a group of monstruous people so different form the civilised men who live in the cities, who establish law, exchange good and care for the society as a whole. The point of the whole encounter is from a narrative perspective to create the *casus belli* which will provoke once again the anger of Poseidon, increasing the distance between men and gods, so defining – in a socio-cultural perspective - the

end of the heroic era and the start of an era where men must care for themselves and build a society as it is the polis. In fact, the poet through the eyes of Odysseus describes an old world of beastly people who survive by collecting fruits and breeding the cattle and live in caves (Odyssey IX. 181-192) with rudimentary a design (Odyssey IX. 237-244), even barbaric if compared to the cave of Kalypsos. And opposes this to the land of Scheria, the cities of Pylos and Sparta, and even to Ithaka, land of men and civilisation, of built houses and places and tamed nature.

The contrast between nature and city, the wild space of the beasts and the gods and the plotted land of the men, is a central theme of the whole poem- as it has been said – and in IX.116-148 the poet describes an idyllic island with a rich soil to grow crops, green pasture to herd the flocks, springs with clear water and an easy harbor. Odysseus looking at this land thinks of the possibilities of making of the island a strong settlement as it has all the requirements to become a perfect colony. Indeed, these verses function both as another point of comparison with the Cyclopes, who would not be able to settle a colony, and as a generic description of a landscape of an undisturbed and rich land, where the people should aim to migrate and thrive as a society. Here again the typical elements of the landscapes are the same of Ithaka and Scheria: black poplars, a spring, a harbor, and the forests, in addition, with the intervention of men, there would be crops, grapes and flocks of goats.

Of these elements noting is said, when Odysseus and his crew come to the Aiolian island, where they find a fantastic scenery:

> ‘We came next to the Aiolian island, where Aiolos
> lived, Hippotas' son, beloved by the immortal
> gods, on a floating island, the whole enclosed by a rampart
> of bronze, not to be broken, and the sheer of the cliff runs upward
> to it; […].
> (Odyssey X. 1-5)

Huge brazen walls surround a floating island, of course, it is a place fit for a king demigod capable of controlling and holding the winds, as a deity. In this island there are beautiful houses (Odyssey X. 13) beside the great the Mycenaean palace of Aiolos (Odyssey X. 62), where the king and his family live afar from the rest of the world, so isolated that his sons and daughters are married one with the other. This episode ends with Odysseus’ crew opening the bag trapping the winds, so delaying their return home

and forcing them to Telpylos of the Laistrygones. Here the Achaians arrive in a harbor enclosed by high cliff on both sides, which protect the innermost part from dangerous waves. All the Achaian ships take advantage of this, except Odysseus' which remains at the mouth of the entrance (Odyssey X. 80-102). The king of Ithaka sends three explorers ahead, who

> […] left the ship and walked on a smooth road where the wagons carried the timber down from the high hills to the city,
> and there in front of the town they met a girl drawing water.
> This was the powerful daughter of the Laistrygonian
> Antiphates, who had gone down to the sweet-running wellspring,
> Artakie[85], whence they would carry their water back to the city.
> My men stood by her and talked with her, and asked her who was king of these people and who was lord over them. She readily pointed out to them the high-roofed house of her father.
> (Odyssey X. 88-111)

Unfortunately, this encounter does not end well, Odysseus' sees his companions trapped in the straight and slaughtered by *tens of thousands* Laistrygones, who suddenly, as their stance turns aggressive become horrific cannibal giants. Although this episode does not end in a favourable way for the hero, as he encountered a belligerent people, unlike for the Cyclopes, whom he describes in an alike manner, the Laistrygones seem at first a civilised society using wagons to transport raw materials into town on a paved road and living in high-roofed glorious palaces as the Phaikians. It is possible that with this the poet wants to once again stress that the barbaric peoples not belonging to the cultural area of the Achaians are barbaric and monstruous. Indeed, Homer introduces the episode with a different landscape, no more the familiar black poplars and the goats, but smoke that rises in distance and sheer cliffs. Elements that announce the tragic end of the sailors and build a polar opposite to the warm welcome the hero received in Scheria.

After escaping from the Laistrygones, what is left of Odysseus' crew arrives in a totally different place, Aiaia, the island of Circe, a goddess, who as other characters of the poem lives isolated in a dwelling, this time a house, hidden in the forest (Odyssey X. 148-160). Again, the landscape is of an unknown land, no black poplars, but a thick

[85] This toponym is present in a similar encounter made by the Argonauts in the poem of Apollonius Rodius, who places it in Cizicus, in the Anatolian region of Mysia.

forest. The house of Circe is briefly described as *“put together from stones, well polished”,* surrounded by beasts tamed by the magic of the goddess. (Odyssey X. 210-219) As magical is the travel into the underworld, where ethe crew has been sent by Circe before she can allow them to travel back to Ithaka.

Although the land of the dead lies across the stream of the Ocean, an imaginary sea that surrounds the known lands, the landscape of the underworld is familiar to the audience that finds again the black poplars on the shores. In X.508-516 Circe names four of the five rivers of the underworld: Pyriphlegeton, Kokytos, Styx and Acheron, which, except from the Acheron, located in Epirus in the north-western coast of Greece, refer to characters of the Greek mythology and have no place in the physical world. Of the same mythical origin are the grove of Persephone. In this imaginary landscape live the Kimmerians settled in their city (Odyssey X. 14-19), identified with a nomad people living in the regions among the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean Sea on the Anatolic coast. Probably once again this people is named here to feed an exotic flavour of distance to the imagination of the audience, as it has been noted for Scheria, elements of eastern cultures are used in such a poetic manner to depict foreign spaces.

Last in the catalogue of peoples that Odysseus encounters or mentions there are the peoples of Crete. In this case Odysseus is making up a story to cover his real identity to Penelope, in the verses XIX.172-179 he mentions a number of peoples that indeed inhabited the Island of Crete from the ca. 1400 BC onwards:

> There is a land called Crete in the middle of the wine-blue water,
> a handsome country and fertile, seagirt, and there are many
> peoples in it, innumerable; there are ninety cities.
> Language with language mix there together. There are Achaians,
> there are great-hearted Eteokretans, there are Kydonians,
> and Dorians in three divisions, and noble Pelasgians;
> and there is Knossos, the great city, the place where Minos
> was king for nine-year periods, and conversed with great Zeus.
> (Odyssey XIX. 172-179)

The Eteokretans were the population that originally dwelled on the island and was not of Greek language, while the Minoan people of the Kydonians lived in the western part of the island and their city, Kydonia, lied near to the today’s Chania. The Dorians are the population that invaded the Peloponnese around 1100 BC and represent one of the four main ethnic group in the history of the Greeks, Pylos for

instance was a city of Doric origin. The Pelasgians is another pre-Greek population, who inhabited the Aegean islands, as Lemnos, before the Hellenization. Achaians is the generic name with which the characters of the Homeric poems identify themselves, if these were a separate population from the Dorians, originally occupying the Peloponnese, it is still debated. In the world of Odysseus certainly they are identified as two different peoples.

The description of Crete is certainly impressive as it depicts an ancient melting-pot that shares a common region and is settled in a very dense urban area if it must be believed the presence of ninety cities. In my opinion, this is yet another hyperbolic number given by the poets to exaggerate what indeed is an archaeological fact. The Knossos' palace is the symbol of the interesting urban phenomenon developed in Ancient Crete, whose building density was impressive. (WHITELAW; BREDAKI; VASILAKIS, 2006)

To conclude, in the past items have been listed and interpreted the various descriptions that Homer draws of the landscapes in the Odyssey, those are either urban or rural, imaginary or linked to the reality in a variable degree. All the considerations that have been mad e reflect the results of the analysis synthesised in Table 7. As a matter of fact, if places like Sparta, Pylos and Ithaka are described through the eye of a witness, who might really have visited those places and adding some material of fantasy reports a personal experience from his particular point of view, other places as the land of the Kimmerians, the city of the Laistrygones, the house of Circe and the cave of Kalypso, but also the cave of the Cyclopes are truly fictional, even if the single elements of the landscape are known to the audience, as the poet did not imagine something totally outside of his world. Undoubtedly, the exoticism evoked by architectural and natural aspects borrowed by near-eastern lands must have had an extraordinary distancing effect for the Homeric audience. However, Homer must have had experience of such details or must have been told so.

From these descriptions stand out the island of the goats and Crete. In the first case the island is so devised to gather in one generic place all the things that would make of it the perfect land into which settle a thriving community. It cannot be said that it is truly fictional, but in the same way, it cannot be said that such place exists either,

since several could exist in the geographical area known by the poet. In the second case Homer has revealed his encyclopaedic knowledge of the ethnic groups living in the region surrounding the Aegean Sea. That is marvellous, but it should not surprise if one thinks of Homer as a collective identity. For that reason, I consider that particular description of the type of the imagination in history, even if it has elements of myth.

In the following chapter, all these comments serve to draw the map of the voyage of Odysseus by the means of literary cartography and thus is revealed the extent of the Homeric world and the places that are to be identified somewhere in a physical space and which not.

4.4 A new literary map

From the analysis of each settlement, I would now enlarge the focus to seize the entire perspective of the poet on Odysseus voyage. As it has been mentioned din the first section of this work, the attempts to properly map The Odyssey are at the roots of the literary geography, therefore, I felt compelled to propose an update of the cartography of the poem using the method borrowed from Barbara Piatti (2009).

In the previous chapter the settlements, the dwellings of each episode have been differentiated by their proximity to the physical reality and the historical facts, but also, they have been categorised by the type of descriptions in which they are portrayed. With the same icons used in the representation of the voyage of Figure 3, I draw Figure 19. This time the locations of the episodes are the ones identified by Wolf (2004), except from Ismaros (1), for the reason I previously mentioned, which I place in Maronia, Thrace, in accord with other authors a per Table 4.

Each icon has been coloured in the shades of blue, if in the narrative it is a location remembered by the character, in the shades of yellow and orange if the character described the location crossing it. As done for Figure 13 - Ithaka's literary cartography (edited by the author, 2022), Ithaka’s cartography, a lighter colour indicates that location is purely fictional (cyan and yellow), while orange and blue indicate that the location was transformed in the poem compared to the reality. Since it has been asserted in various occasions the poetic nature of this piece of narrative, and more specifically that none of the analysed description are of the type of the *city*

described by the author, it should not come as a surprise that no place is neutrally projected form real space to narrative space.

The only places that are in nearer proximity to the reality of the geographical space are the ones that suffered some transformations but in the core of their descriptions remained closer to the reality as Scheria, Ithaca, Ismaros and Troy.

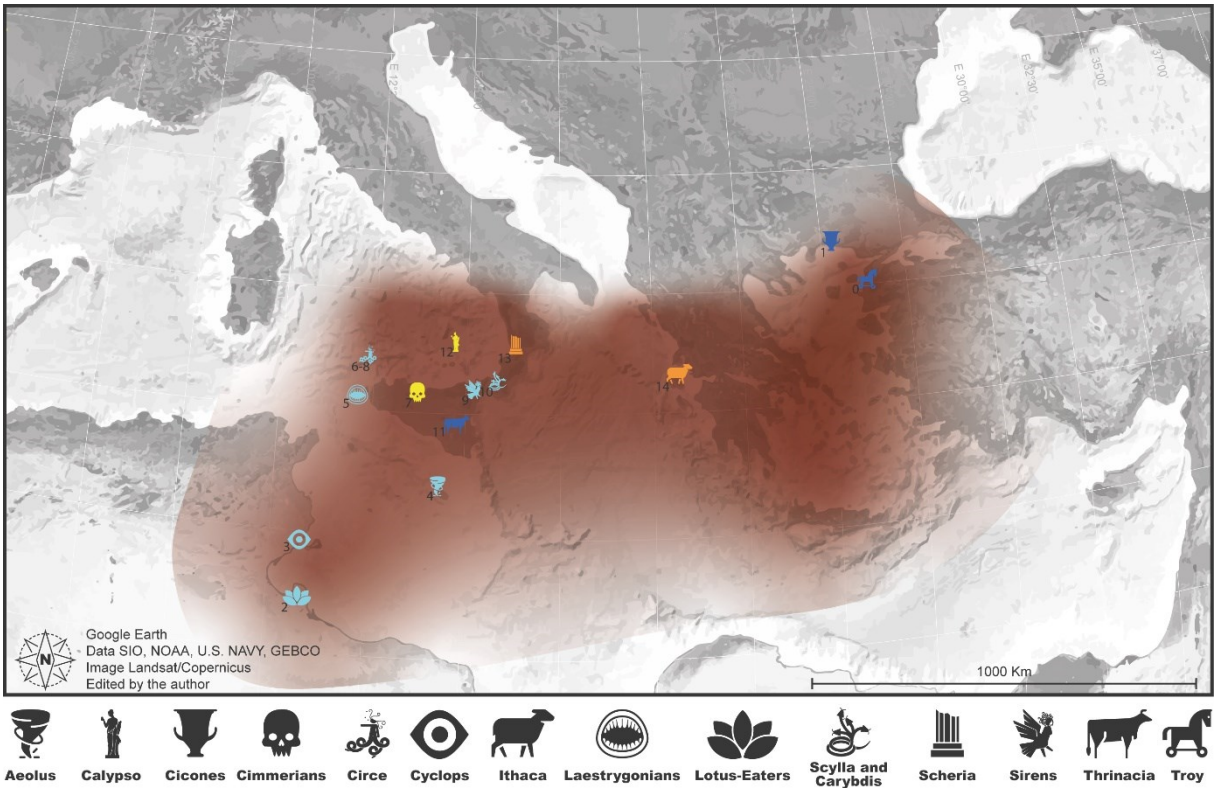


Figure 19 - A proposal for a literary cartography of *The Odyssey*
(Created by the author, 2022)

Finally, by interpolating the position of the location and the route of Odysseus across the Mediterranean Sea, it can be mapped the *fuzzy shape* (PIATTI, 2009) encompassing the zone of action of the poem. That is not only the narrative environment, but it also is the space in whose boundaries thrived the Ancient Greeks and from which they built their image of the world, their world. In this shape fit all the Aegean Sea, the coasts of Anatolia, Ionia - where the Achaians came in contact with the near-eastern populations as the Babylonians – Crete, the Peloponnesus and the whole modern Greece, in the west almost to the coast of Sardinia, and in the south the coasts of Tunisia.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Through this master thesis, I approached various topics regarding the ancient literary city: first, it has been given a broad definition of ancient city, or to better say, I identified some methods to determine what a city is in the ancient history. From the various approaches to the matter, Monica Smith (2019) proposes a broader concept that better adapts to a literary investigation, since it is a qualitative approach that seeks the essence of a city in the presence of determined building, their localisation in the urban texture and most of all in their look from the eyes of the spectator. Other approaches, such as quantitative approaches, might not find enough data to build a model in the literary narrative, as such an objective description is seldom in the interest of the literary authors. Not to mention the fact that such a method must be applicable to the greatest variety of settlements in terms of geographical position, historical setting and overall outlook to comprise all the city from the ancient African to the contemporary Asian, and even the utopistic, dystopic or realistic cities of a hypothetic future.

In that respect, it is my opinion that the epistemological discussion on the nature of a literary city is deeply enriched by the addition of a theory that helps identify and describe a city in general terms. As a matter of fact, if this line of research has to grow with the proper scientific dignity and strength, it needs the right tools, as objective and scientific they could be, so that it can fend off the criticism of being desultory or even solipsistic and on the contrary catch the interest of more researchers. In the end, if it has been proved that the literary world has something to bring at the table of the discussion on the city, then it must do so with its own structured language, which by nature is an inheritance of various fields of research.

To strengthen this concept, it has also been reviewed the state of the art of the archaeological knowledge on the Ancient Greek cities, with which it is possible to recognise the characterising architectonical and urban elements of the settlements of the geographical and temporal context crossed by the Homeric poems. Undoubtedly, it is an indispensable passage to build a layered language to discuss about the literary city. To stay in the metaphor, the language of this field of research must develop some specific jargons when crossing different contexts and different types of literature.

It is the case of the Odyssey by Homer, which has stimulated another relevant discourse about the reliability of the source. Indeed this has to be part of the DNA of this speculation too, as the three criticalities, *time, context,* and *materiality,* are constituents of the research within the literary narrative. Here I must proudly stress the importance to have brought attention to this aspect, not unknown, but underlying, hidden, and sometimes ignored. Indeed, if the main purpose of this work is to be a substantial addition to a choir, the merit shall be to have brought renewed concepts, if not original ideas.

Nonetheless, I defined four categories of literary city by adding to a speculation lead by Ultramari and Jazar (2016) a perspective on the relation between the narrative and history. As a result of this speculation it has been determined that in a narrative text one can find: the *cities devised by the author*, which find themselves in a limbo between history and fiction; the *cities described by the author,* which are the most adherent to the historical facts, as the characters are projected into historical events that function as a background for the narration; the *cities described in a generic way*, which are bound to the movement of a specific time period, but they can either be not identified with any city or they can be recognised in every city; finally there are the *truly fictional cities*, those are the ones that take form from the purest invention, generally utopic or dystopic.

Not last, it was necessary to find a method to project those literary cities in a broader space that puts them in relation, so I review the theories on the literary cartography, whose origin point is the same *Odyssey*. The tools provided by the team of the ETH Zurich, certainly needing refinement and as such in continuous evolution, are original and appropriate for this discussion. This also stresses the importance to enlarge the spectrum of competences needed to build a complete picture of the topic, which calls for a collaboration with geographers, cartographers and graphic designers as well as historians, architects, sociologists and literates.

With all these tools, it is then possible to explore the settlements described in *The Odyssey* and to identify which of them are to be called *cities.* As a matter of fact, Scheria and Ithaka have both the qualities to represent two different examples of literary city. If Scheria has been defined a *utopian polis*, Ithaka is the portrait of a Greek

city in the tides of intense cultural change, but both are indeed cities, as they have a central political institution that guides the people and promulgates the laws, a place for the people's assembly, some type of monumental religious architecture, be it a temple or a shrine, an impressive extension both in political influence and territory, which also hosts a considerable number of inhabitants among other architectonical and social features described by Smith (2019).

To conclude on the objectives reached by this work, beside their fictional imprint both Scheria and Ithaka belong to their time, since the cultural references are borrowed - even in the case of the utopia – from the cultural basin whose boundaries are defined by the voyage of Odysseus itself (Figure 19). The city of the Odyssey, which emerge in a brighter light by the contrast with the rudimentary settlements of the savage population that haunt Odysseus, are then the symbolic synthesis of the passage from an era of the gods to an era of the men, who not only reclaim their physical spaces in the Mediterranean, but also claim the free will and their right to the auto determination.

The recognition of Scheria and Ithaka as *ancient literary cities* now bears a significance, which opens a road to further explore with proper means the investigative void that lays before us with the questions regarding the relations between the fiction and the reality, the measurable and the incommensurable dimensions of the urban phenomenon even in remote places in time as it is for *The Odyssey*. This should not stop as a mere theoretical exploration, but it might have its practical use, especially when drawing and mapping such places of fiction, as proper means of diffusion can by now developed to show at different level of education the unmappable spaces of the literary narrative, which can also carry the meaningful experience of the urban environment.

As implications of the results of this research, I believe, that the specific collocation of the places described in the poem should not be in the interest of whom studies The Odyssey, as they represent models multiplied in a broad, yet seemingly homogeneous, geographical area, as underlined by Figure 19, whereas their meaning and their configuration can bring greater contribution to our understanding of the evolution of the *city* in its multiple aspects: architectonical, political, social and even managerial. As a matter of fact, if the identification of a broad geographical area as a

stage of The Odyssey is important to understand the cultural background of the poem and to which audience it was addressed to, there is little advantage brought by restless research of the exact places that hosted Odysseus through his perils. The greatest interest lays in the picture of these literary settlements in order to start studying all the relations between the elements of the landscape.

Following in this direction, about the managerial aspect that can be searched in the literary narrative - also answering to the question of the presence of researches as this in a program of Urban Management many are the questions that may now follow: e.g., what is to say about the position of the main water sources around and in the cities of Scheria and Ithaka? What might be the analogies with the management of water resources thru history? As preposterous might this example be, in my opinion, many are the paths that can start form here: on the side of education, a more structured investigation of the literary city, might contribute to the same understanding of the literary narrative, its message and therefore bring to a better, more complete picture to pass over to the generations in the schools; not only, the use of refined cartographic representation might as well improve the communication of such teachings. On the epistemological speculation, much can be still discussed as the fire of philosophical interrogation is hardly extinguished.

Moreover, surely there are more details to be discussed on a sociological level from the extrapolation of new information from the literary sources, mainly regarding the perception of the city as described by the characters and narrators, which tell us much about the relations within the city among its buildings, its people, its powers both on the morphological and even emotional level which in the end constitute the body and the soul of the city. Of course, strongly present in The Odyssey, as well as in the modern literature the study of the relation of the city with its surroundings is important even on the administrative view, especially if it has to be looked at the management of the territory and its resources.

To conclude poetically, with this work, I have cast a stone into an ocean, in whose waves, I hope and wish, the restless waters of research will find energy to thrive on.

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GLOSSARY

The spelling of names I follow the practise of Lattimore (2007), who in some cases, however, made exceptions and followed familiar usage; and sometimes translated (Dawn, Graces). The exceptions are: Achaians, Apollo, Argives, Athens, Circe, Crete, Cyclopes, Cyprus, Danaans, Dawn, Dorians, Egypt, Elysian Field, Graces, Hades, Helen, Hermes, Jason, Lotus-Eaters, Ocean, Penelope, Phoenicia and Phoenicians, Priam, Roving Rocks, Sicilians, Sirens, Thrace, Trojans, Troy.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Odysseus: grandson of Arcesius and Autolycus, son of Laertes and Anticleia, husband of Penelope, father of Telemachos, king of Ithaka and the surrounding islands.

Penelope: daughter of Icarius, wife of Odysseus, mother of Telemachos, queen of Ithaka.

Telemachos: grandson of Laertes and Anticleia, son of Odysseus and Penelope, heir to the throne of Ithaka.

OLYMPIAN GODS

Aphrodite: goddess of love, daughter of Zeus and wife of Hephaistos.

Artemis: daughter of Zeus and Leto, sister of Apollo, goddess of childbirth and hunting.

Ares: son of Zeus and Hera, god of war, lover of Aphrodite.

Athene: or Pallas Athene, goddess, daughter of Zeus, defender of the Achaians. A patron of human ingenuity and resourcefulness, whether exemplified by handicrafts, such as spinning and weaving, or by skill in human relations, such as that possessed by Odysseus, her favourite among the Greeks.

Demeter: goddess of the grain crops, sister of Zeus and mother of Persephone.

Hephaistos: God of fire, the great artificer, son of Hera, husband of Aphrodite.

Hera: goddess, daughter of Cronus and Rhea, wife and sister of Zeus.

Hermes: god, son of Zeus and Maia, messenger of the gods, giant-killer, and guide of dead souls to the underworld.

Phoibos: epithet of Apollo, translated as Lord Apollo.

Poseidon: God of the sea, son of Cronus and Rhea, younger brother of Zeus, father of Polyphemos, throughout *The Odyssey* an inveterate enemy of Odysseus.

Zeus: king of the gods, son of Cronus and Rhea, brother and husband of Hera, father of the Olympians and many mortals too. His spheres include the sky and the weather, hospitality and the rights of guests and suppliants, the punishment of injustice, the sending of omens, and the governance of the universe, controlled to some extent by Fate as well.

MINOR GODS

Aiolos: master of the winds.

Helios: The Sun.

Persephone: goddess of the underworld, daughter of Demeter, and wife of Hades.

POPULATIONS

Argives: alternate name for the Achaians.

Danaans: alternative name for the Achaians.

Laistrygones: legendary clan of giant cannibals.

KINGS, QUEEN AND HEROES

Achilleus: son of Peleus and Thetis, grandson of Aeacus, and commander of the Myrmidons, Achaian allies, at Troy.

Aigisthos: son of Thyestes, seducer of Klytaimestra and murderer of Agamemnon, killed by Orestes.

Agamemnon: king of Mykene, son of Atreus, husband of Klytaimestra, murdered by her and Aigisthos; brother of Menelaos, supreme commander of all Achaia's armies and leader of the largest contingent at Troy.

Atrides: "son of Atreus," patronymic of Agamemnon or Menelaos.

Alkinoôs: king of the Phaikians, husband of Arete, father of Nausikaa.

Arete: queen of Phaikia, wife of Alkinoôs, mother of Nausikaa.

Atreus: father of Agamemnon and Menelaos.

Aias: (1) Achaian, son of Telamon, Telamonian or Great Aias, defeated by Odysseus in the contest for Achilleus' armour; (2) Achaian, son of Oileus, Oilean or Little Aias.

Klytaimestra: daughter of Leda and Tyndareus, queen of Argos, wife of Agamemnon, lover of Aigisthos, and mother of Orestes.

Eumaios: swineherd of Odysseus.

Laertes: son of Arcesius, husband of Anticleia, father of Odysseus.

Menelaos: son of Atreus, king of Lakedaimon, brother of Agamemnon, husband of Helen.

Nausikaa: daughter of Alkinoôs and Arete.

Orestes: son of Agamemnon and Klytaimestra, and the avenger of his father.

Patroklos: son of Menoetius, brother-in-arms of Achilleus, killed by Hector at Troy.

Peisistratos: son of Nestor, who accompanies Telemachos to Sparta.

Priam: king of Troy, son of Laomedon of the line of Dardanus, father of Hector and Paris.

Teiresias: blind seer of Thebes (2), who retains his prophetic powers even in the underworld.

PLACES

Achaia: general, collective name for mainland Greece.

Ismaros: Tracian home of the Kikonians

Ithaka: home of Odysseus, Ionian Island off the western coast of Greece.

Lakedaimon: city and kingdom of Menelaos, in the southern Peloponnese.

Mykene: (1) legendary heroine from whom the Argive city took its name; (2) City in the Argolid, Agamemnon's capital, just to the north of the city of Argos.

Phaikia: a kingdom whose alternative name is Scheria.

Pylos: Nestor's capital city and also the region surrounding it in the southwestern Peloponnese.

MONSTERS

Charybdis: monster in the form of a giant whirlpool, located across from Skylla.

Polyphemos: Cyclops, son of Poseidon and Thoosa, blinded by Odysseus.

Skylla: man-eating monster that lives in a cliffside cavern opposite the whirlpool of Charybdis.

APPENDIX A – VERSES FROM *THE ODYSSEY*

Ithaka

And my ship stands near by, at the country, away from the city,
at the harbor, Rheithron, underneath wooded Neion.
(Odyssey I. 185-186)

'[…]
And let the gift you give me be something that can be stored up.
I will not take the horses to Ithaka, but will leave them
here, for your own delight, since you are lord of a spreading
plain, there is plenty of clover here, there is galingale,
And there is wheat and millet here and white barley, wide grown.
There are no wide courses in Ithaka, there is no meadow;
a place to feed goats; but lovelier than a place to feed horses;
for there is no one of the islands that has meadows for driving horses;
they are all sea slopes; and Ithaka more than all the others.'
(Odyssey IV. 600-608)

There is a rocky island there in the middle channel
halfway between Ithaka and towering Samos,
called Asteris, not large, but it has a double anchorage
where ships can be hidden. There the Achaians waited in ambush.
(Odyssey IV. 844-847)

I am at home in sunny Ithaka. There is a mountain
there that stands tall, leaf-trembling Neritos, and there are islands
settled around it, lying one very close to another.
There is Doulichion and Same, wooded Zakynthos,
but my island lies low and away, last of all on the water
toward the dark, with the rest below facing east and sunshine,
a rugged place, but a good nurse of men; for my part
I cannot think of any place sweeter on earth to look at.
(Odyssey IX. 21-28)

There is a harbor of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorkys,
in the countryside of Ithaka. There two precipitous
promontories opposed just out, to close in the harbour
and shelter it from the big waves made by the winds blowing
100 so hard on the outside; inside, the well-benched vessels
can lie without being tied up, once they have found their anchorage.
(Odyssey XIII. 96-112)

'[…] See now,
this is a rugged country and not for the driving of horses,
but neither is it so unpleasant, though not widely shapen;
for there is abundant grain for bread grown here, it produces
wine, and there is always rain and the dew to make it
fertile; it is good to feed goats and cattle; and timber
is there of all sorts, and watering places good through the seasons;
so that, stranger, the name of Ithaka has gone even
to Troy, though they say that is very far from Achaian country.'
(Odyssey XIII. 241-249)

‘[…]
This is the harbor of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorkys,
and here at the head of the harbor is the olive tree with spreading
leaves, and nearby is the cave that is shaded, and pleasant,
and sacred to the nymphs who are called the Nymphs of the Wellsprings,
Naiads. That is the wide over-arching cave, where often
you used to accomplish for the nymphs their complete hecatombs;
and there is the mountain, Neritos, all covered with forest.’
(Odyssey XIII. 345-351)

But Odysseus himself left the harbor and ascended a rugged
path, through wooded country along the heights, where Athene
had indicated the noble swineherd, who beyond others
cared for the house properties acquired by noble Odysseus.
He found him sitting in front, on the porch, where the lofty enclosure had
been built, in a place with a view on all sides, both large and handsome,
cleared all about, and it was the swineherd
himself who had built it, to hold the pigs of his absent master,
far from his mistress and from aged Laertes. He made it
with stones from the field, and topped it off with shrubbery. Outside he had
driven posts in a full circle, to close it on all sides, set close together and
thick, the dark of the oak, split out
from the logs. Inside the enclosure he made twelve pig pens
next to each other, for his sows to sleep in, and in each of them
fifty pigs who sleep on the ground were confined. These were the breeding
females, but the males lay outside, and these were fewer by far, for the
godlike suitors kept diminishing
their numbers by eating them, since the swineherd kept having
to send them in the best of all the well-fattened porkers
at any time. Now, they numbered three hundred and sixty, and four dogs,
who were like wild beasts, forever were lying
by them. […].
(Odyssey XIV. 1-21)

“[…] Not one of the heroes over on the black mainland had so much, no one
here on Ithaka, no twenty men together had such
quantity of substance as he. I will count it for you.
Twelve herds of cattle on the mainland. As many sheepflocks.
As many troops of pigs and again as many wide goatflocks,
and friends over there, and his own herdsmen, pasture them for him.
And here again, at the end of the island, eleven wide flocks
of goats in all are pastured, good men have these in their keeping.”
(Odyssey XIV. 96-104)

But the swineherd stood very close to Penelope and told her
all the message that her beloved son had entrusted
to him to tell, but when he had given her all the message,
he went back to his pigs, leaving the palace and courtyard.
But the hearts of the suitors were disturbed and discouraged. They went
out of the palace and stood by the great wall of the courtyard,
and there in front of the palace gates they held an assembly. (XVI, 338-344)

I was above the city, where the Hill of Hermes is, making
my way along, when I saw a fast vessel coming into
our harbor, making inshore, and many men were aboard her,
and she was loaded with shields and leaf-headed spears.
(Odyssey XVI 471-474)

Now as they went down over the stony road, and were coming
close to the city, and had arrived at the fountain, sweet-running
and made of stone; and there the townspeople went for their water;
Ithakos had made this, and Neritos, and Polyktor;
and around it was a grove of black poplars, trees that grow by
water, all in a circle, and there was cold water pouring
down from the rock above; over it had been built an altar
of the nymphs, and there all the wayfarers made their sacrifice; […].
(Odyssey XVII. 204-211)

'Eumaios, surely this is the handsome house of Odysseus.
Easily it is singled out and seen among many,
for one part is joined on to another, and the courtyard is worked on
with wall and copings, and the doors have been well made, with double
panels. Nobody could belittle this house. […].'
(Odyssey XVII. 264-268)

He sat down then on the ashwood threshold, inside the doorway,
leaning against the doorpost of cypress wood, which the carpenter
once had expertly planed, and drawn it true to a chalkline; […].
(Odyssey XVII. 339-341)

So, in front of the towering doors, and upon the threshold
polished smooth, these two hurled jagged words at each other; […].
(Odyssey XVIII. 32-33)

Eurykleia barred the doors of the strong-built great hall.
The two men, Odysseus and his glorious son, sprang up
and began carrying helmets, shields massive in the middle,
and pointed spears, and before them Pallas Athene, holding
a golden lamp, gave them splendid illumination.
Suddenly Telemachos spoke a word to his father:
'Father, here is a great wonder that my eyes look on.
Always it seems that the chamber walls, the handsome bases
and roof timbers of fir and tall columns sustaining them,
shine in my eyes as if a fire were blazing. There must be
surely a god here, one of those who hold the high heaven.'
(Odyssey XIX. 30-40)

There was a side door in the strongly-constructed wall, and also,
next the edge of the threshold into the well-made palace,
a way through the alley, with the door leaves fitting it closely.
(Odyssey XXII. 126-128)

Phemios the singer, the son of Terpias, still was skulking away from death.
He had been singing among the suitors
under compulsion, and stood with the clear-toned lyre in his hands
by the side door, and his heart was pondering one of two courses:
either to slip out of the hall to the altar of mighty
Zeus of the court, and crouch at the structure, where once Odysseus
and Laertes had burned up the thighs of many oxen,
or rush up and make entreaty at the knees of Odysseus.
(Odyssey XXII. 330-337)

'[…]
Then, after you have got all the house back in good order,
lead all these maidservants out of the well-built palace
between the round-house and the unfaulted wall of the courtyard,

and hew them with the thin edge of the sword, until you have taken
the lives from all, and they forget Aphrodite, the goddess
they had with them when they lay secretly with the suitors.'
(Odyssey XXII. 440-445)

Scheria

Glorious Odysseus, happy with the wind, spread sails
and taking his seat artfully with the steering oar he held her
on her course, nor did sleep ever descend on his eyelids
as he kept his eye on the Pleiades and late-setting Boötes,
and the Bear, to whom men give also the name of the Wagon,
who turns about in a fixed place and looks at Orion,
and she alone is never plunged in the wash of the Ocean.
For so Kalypso, bright among goddesses, had told him
to make his way over the sea, keeping the Bear on his left hand.
Seventeen days he sailed, making his way over the water,
and on the eighteenth day there showed the shadowy mountains
of the Phaiakian land where it stood out nearest to him,
and it looked like a shield lying on the misty face of the water.
(Odyssey V. 269-281)

And as welcome as the show of life again in a father
is to his children, when he has lain sick, suffering strong pains,
and wasting long away, and the hateful death spirit has brushed him,
but then, and it is welcome, the gods set him free of his sickness,
so welcome appeared land and forest now to Odysseus,
and he swam, pressing on, so as to set foot on the mainland.
But when he was as far away as a voice can carry
he heard the thumping of the sea on the jagged rock-teeth,
for a big surf, terribly sucked up from the main, was crashing
on the dry land, all was mantled in salt spray, and there were
no harbors to hold ships, no roadsteads for them to ride in,
but promontories out-thrust and ragged rock-teeth and boulders.
(Odyssey V. 394-405)

He got clear of the surf, where it sucks against the land, and swam on
along, looking always toward the shore in the hope of finding
beaches that slanted against the waves or harbors for shelter
from the sea, but when he came, swimming along, to the mouth of
a sweet-running river, this at last seemed to him the best place,
being bare of rocks, and there was even shelter from the wind there.
(Odyssey V. 438-443)

So long-suffering great Odysseus slept in that place
in an exhaustion of sleep and weariness, and now Athene
went her way to the district and city of the Phaiakian
men, who formerly lived in the spacious land, Hypereia,
next to the Cyclopes, who were men too overbearing,
and who had kept harrying them, being greater in strength. From here
godlike Nausithoös had removed and led a migration,
and settled in Scheria, far away from men who eat bread,
and driven a wall about the city, and built the houses,
and made the temples of the gods, and allotted the holdings.
But now he had submitted to his fate, and gone to Hades',
and Alkinoös, learned in designs from the gods, now ruled there.
(Odyssey VI. 1-12)

‘But now, since it is our land and our city that you have come to,
you shall not lack for clothing nor anything else, of those gifts
which should befall the unhappy suppliant on his arrival;
and I will show you our town, and tell you the name of our people.
It is the Phaiakians who hold this territory and city,
and I myself am the daughter of great-hearted Alkinoös,
whose power and dominion are held by right, given from the Phaiakians.’
(Odyssey VI. 191-197)

‘But when we come to the city, and around this is a towering
wall, and a handsome harbor either side of the city,
and a narrow causeway, and along the road there are oarswept
ships drawn up, for they all have slips, one for each vessel;
and there is the place of assembly, put together with quarried
stone, and built around a fine precinct of Poseidon,
and there they tend to all that gear that goes with the black ships,
the hawsers and the sails, and there they fine down their oarblades;
for the Phaiakians have no concern with the bow or the quiver,
but it is all masts and the oars of ships and the balanced vessels
themselves, in which they delight in crossing over the gray sea;
[…]’ **(Odyssey VI. 262-272)**

‘[…]. Then, stranger, understand what I say, in order
soon to win escort and a voyage home from my father.
You will find a glorious grove of poplars sacred to Athene
near the road, and a spring runs there, and there is a meadow
about it, and there is my father's estate and his flowering orchard,
as far from the city as the shout of a man will carry.
Sit down there and wait for time enough for the rest of us
to reach the town and make our way to my father's palace.
But when you estimate that we shall have reached the palace,
then go to the city of the Phaiakians and inquire for
the palace of my father, great-hearted Alkinoös. This is
easily distinguished, so an innocent child could guide you
there, for there are no other houses built for the other
Phaiakians anything like the house of the hero Alkinoös.
But when you have disappeared inside the house and the courtyard,
then go on quickly across the hall until you come to
my mother, and she will be sitting beside the hearth, in the firelight,
turning sea-purple yarn on a distaff, a wonder to look at,
and leaning against the pillar, and her maids are sitting behind her;
and there is my father's chair of state, drawn close beside her,
on which he sits when he drinks his wine like any immortal.’
(Odyssey VI. 289-309)

But Odysseus now admired their balanced ships and their harbors,
the meeting places of the heroes themselves and the long lofty
walls that were joined with palisades, a wonder to look at.
(Odyssey VII. 43-45)

[…] But now Odysseus
came to the famous house of Alkinoös, but the heart pondered
much in him as he stood before coming to the bronze threshold.
For as from the sun the light goes or from the moon, such was
the glory on the high-roofed house of great-hearted Alkinoös.
Brazen were the walls run about it in either direction
from the inner room to the door, with a cobalt frieze encircling,
and golden were the doors that guarded the close of the palace,
and silver were the pillars set in the brazen threshold,
and there was a silver lintel above, and a golden handle,
and dogs made out of gold and silver were on each side of it,
fashioned by Hephaistos in his craftsmanship and cunning,
to watch over the palace of great-hearted Alkinoös,
being themselves immortal, and all their days they are ageless.
And within, thrones were backed against the wall on both sides
all the way from the inner room to the door, with fine-spun
delicate cloths, the work of women, spread out upon them.
There the leaders of the Phaiakians held their sessions
and drank and ate, since they held these forever, and there were
young men fashioned all of gold and in their hands holding
flaring torches who stood on the strong-compounded bases,
and shed a gleam through the house by night, to shine on the feasters.
And in his house are fifty serving women, and of these
some grind the apple-colored grain at the turn of the hand mill,
and there are those who weave the webs and who turn the distaffs,
sitting restless as leaves of the tall black poplar, and from
the cloths where it is sieved oozes the limpid olive oil.
As much as Phaiakian men are expert beyond all others
for driving a fast ship on the open sea, so their women
are skilled in weaving and dowered with wisdom bestowed by Athene,
to be expert in beautiful work, to have good character.
On the outside of the courtyard and next the doors is his orchard,
a great one, four land measures, with a fence driven all around it,
and there is the place where his fruit trees are grown tall and flourishing,
pear trees and pomegranate trees and apple trees with their shining
fruit, and the sweet fig trees and the flourishing olive.
Never is the fruit spoiled on these, never does it give out,
neither in winter time nor summer, but always the West Wind
blowing on the fruits brings some to ripeness while he starts others.
Pear matures on pear in that place, apple upon apple,
grape cluster on grape cluster, fig upon fig. There also
he has a vineyard planted that gives abundant produce,
some of it a warm area on level ground where the grapes are
left to dry in the sun, but elsewhere they are gathering others
and trampling out yet others, and in front of these are unripe
rapes that have cast off their bloom while others are darkening.
And there at the bottom strip of the field are growing orderly
rows of greens, all kinds, and these are lush through the seasons;
and there two springs distribute water, one through all the garden
space, and one on the other side jets out by the courtyard
door, and the lofty house, where townspeople come for their water.
(Odyssey VII. 81-131)

The other dwellings

Pylos
Now the Gerenian horseman Nestor led the way for
his sons and his sons-in-law back to his splendid dwelling.
But after they had reached the glorious dwelling of the king,
they took their places in order on chairs and along the benches,
and as they came in the old man mixed the wine bowl for them
with wine sweet to drink which the housekeeper had opened
in its eleventh year and loosed the sealing upon it.
The old man mixed the wine in the bowl and prayed much, pouring
a libation out to Athene daughter of Zeus of the aegis.
When they had poured and drunk, each man as much as he wanted,
they went away each one to sleep in his own dwelling,
but Nestor the Gerenian horseman gave Telemachos
the dear son of godlike Odysseus a place to sleep in
upon a corded bedstead in the echoing portico.
Next him was Peisistratos of the strong ash spear, leader
of men, who of his sons in the palace was still a bachelor.
But Nestor himself slept in the inner room of the high house,
and at his side the lady his wife served as bedfellow.
(Odyssey III. 286-403)

Kalypso's island
But after he had made his way to the far-lying island,
he stepped then out of the dark blue sea, and walked on over
the dry land, till he came to the great cave, where the lovely-haired
nymph was at home, and he found that she was inside. There was
a great fire blazing on the hearth, and the smell of cedar
split in billets, and sweetwood burning, spread all over
the island. She was singing inside the cave with a sweet voice
as she went up and down the loom and wove with a golden shuttle.
There was a growth of grove around the cavern, flourishing,
alder was there, and the black poplar, and fragrant cypress,
and there were birds with spreading wings who made their nests in it,
little owls, and hawks, and birds of the sea with long beaks
who are like ravens, but all their work is on the sea water;
and right about the hollow cavern extended a flourishing
rowth of vine that ripened with grape clusters. Next to it
there were four fountains, and each of them ran shining water,
each next to each, but turned to run in sundry directions;
and round about there were meadows growing soft with parsley
and violets, and even a god who came into that place
would have admired what he saw, the heart delighted within him.
(Odyssey V. 55-74)

The Lotus-Eaters
And now I would have come home unscathed to the land of my fathers,
but as I turned the hook of Maleia, the sea and current
and the North Wind beat me off course, and drove me on past Kythera.
'Nine days then I was swept along by the force of the hostile
winds on the fishy sea, but on the tenth day we landed
in the country of the Lotus-Eaters, who live on a flowering
food, and there we set foot on the mainland, and fetched water,
and my companions soon took their supper there by the fast ships.
(Odyssey IX. 79-86)

The Cyclopes
'From there, grieving still at heart, we sailed on further along, and reached

the country of the lawless outrageous
Cyclopes who, putting all their trust in the immortal
gods, neither plow with their hands nor plant anything,
but all grows for them without seed planting, without cultivation,
wheat and barley and also the grapevines, which yield for them
wine of strength, and it is Zeus' rain that waters it for them.
These people have no institutions, no meetings for counsels;
rather they make their habitations in caverns hollowed
among the peaks of the high mountains, and each one is the law
for his own wives and children, and cares nothing about the others.
(Odyssey IX. 105-115)

But when we had arrived at the place, which was nearby, there
at the edge of the land we saw the cave, close to the water,
high, and overgrown with laurels, and in it were stabled
great flocks, sheep and goats alike, and there was a fenced yard
built around it with a high wall of grubbed-out boulders
and tall pines and oaks with lofty foliage. Inside
there lodged a monster of a man, who now was herding
the flocks at a distance away, alone, for he did not range with
others, but stayed away by himself; his mind was lawless,
and in truth he was a monstrous wonder made to behold, not
like a man, an eater of bread, but more like a wooded
peak of the high mountains seen standing away from the others.
(Odyssey IX. 181-192)

Next he drove into the wide cavern all from the fat flocks
that he would milk, but he left all the male animals, billygoats
and rams, outside in his yard with the deep fences. Next thing,
he heaved up and set into position the huge door stop,
a massive thing; no twenty-two of the best four-wheeled
wagons could have taken that weight off the ground and carried it,
such a piece of sky-towering cliff that was he set over
his gateway. […]
(Odyssey IX. 237-244)

The idyll
‘There is a wooded island that spreads, away from the harbor,
neither close in to the land of the Cyclopes nor far out
from it; forested; wild goats beyond number breed there,
for there is no coming and going of human kind to disturb them,
nor are they visited by hunters, who in the forest
suffer hardships as they haunt the peaks of the mountains,
neither again is it held by herded flocks, nor farmers,
but all its days, never plowed up and never planted,
it goes without people and supports the bleating wild goats.
For the Cyclopes have no ships with cheeks of vermilion,
nor have they builders of ships among them, who could have made them
strong-benched vessels, and these if made could have run them sailings
to all the various cities of men, in the way that people
cross the sea by means of ships and visit each other,
and they could have made this island a strong settlement for them.
For it is not a bad place at all, it could bear all crops
in season, and there are meadow lands near the shores of the gray sea,
well watered and soft; there could be grapes grown there endlessly,
and there is smooth land for plowing, men could reap a full harvest
always in season, since there is very rich subsoil. Also
there is an easy harbor, with no need for a hawser
nor anchor stones to be thrown ashore nor cables to make fast;

one could just run ashore and wait for the time when the sailors'
desire stirred them to go and the right winds were blowing.
Also at the head of the harbor there runs bright water,
spring beneath rock, and there are black poplars growing around it.
There we sailed ashore, and there was some god guiding
us in through the gloom of the night, nothing showed to look at,
for there was a deep mist around the ships, nor was there any moon
showing in the sky, but she was under the clouds and hidden.
There was none of us there whose eyes had spied out the island,
and we never saw any long waves rolling in and breaking
on the shore, but the first thing was when we beached the well-benched
vessels.
(Odyssey IX. 116-148)

The Aiolian island
'We came next to the Aiolian island, where Aiolos
lived, Hippotas' son, beloved by the immortal
gods, on a floating island, the whole enclosed by a rampart
of bronze, not to be broken, and the sheer of the cliff runs upward
to it; […].
(Odyssey X. 1-5)

The land of the Laistrygones
There as we entered the glorious harbor, which a sky-towering
cliff encloses on either side, with no break anywhere,
and two projecting promontories facing each other
run out toward the mouth, and there is a narrow entrance,
there all the rest of them had their oar-swept ships in the inward
part, they were tied up close together inside the hollow
harbor, for there was never a swell of surf inside it,
neither great nor small, but there was a pale calm on it.
I myself, however, kept my black ship on the outside,
at the very end, making her fast to the cliff with a cable,
and climbed to a rocky point of observation and stood there.
From here no trace of cattle nor working of men was visible;
all we could see was the smoke going up from the country.
So I sent companions ahead telling them to find out
what men, eaters of bread, might live here in this country.
I chose two men, and sent a third with them, as a herald.
They left the ship and walked on a smooth road where the wagonscarried
the timber down from the high hills to the city,
and there in front of the town they met a girl drawing water.
This was the powerful daughter of the Laistrygonian
Antiphates, who had gone down to the sweet-running wellspring,
Artakie, whence they would carry their water back to the city.
My men stood by her and talked with her, and asked her who was
king of these people and who was lord over them. She readily
pointed out to them the high-roofed house of her father.
(Odyssey X. 88-111)

Aiaia, Circe's island
I climbed to a rocky point of observation and stood there,
and got a sight of smoke which came from the halls of Circe
going up from wide-wayed earth through undergrowth and forest.
Then I pondered deeply in my heart and my spirit,
whether, since I had seen the fire and smoke, to investigate;
but in the division of my heart this way seemed the best to me,
to go back first to the fast ship and the beach of the sea, and give
my companions some dinner, then send them forward to investigate.

But on my way, as I was close to the oar-swept vessel,
some god, because I was all alone, took pity upon me,
and sent a great stag with towering antlers right in my very
path; he had come from his range in the forest down to the river
to drink, for the fierce strength of the sun was upon him. […]
(Odyssey X. 148-160)

In the forest glen they came on the house of Circe. It was
in an open place, and put together from stones, well polished,
and all about it there were lions, and wolves of the mountains,
whom the goddess had given evil drugs and enchanted,
and these made no attack on the men, but came up thronging
about them, waving their long tails and fawning, in the way
that dogs go fawning about their master, when he comes home
from dining out, for he always brings back something to please them;
so these wolves with great strong claws and lions came fawning
on my men, but they were afraid when they saw the terrible big beasts.
(Odyssey X. 210-219)

Land of the dead by the Kimmerians
But when you have crossed with your ship the stream of the Ocean, you will
find there a thickly wooded shore, and the groves of Persephone,
and tall black poplars growing, and fruit-perishing willows;
then beach your ship on the shore of the deep-eddying Ocean
and yourself go forward into the moldering home of Hades.
There Pyriphlegethon and Kokytos, which is an off-break
from the water of the Styx, flow into Acheron. There is
a rock there, and the junction of two thunderous rivers.
There, hero, you must go close in and do as I tell you.
(Odyssey X. 208-516)

There lie the community and city of Kimmerian people,
hidden in fog and cloud, nor does Helios, the radiant
sun, ever break through the dark, to illuminate them with his shining,
neither when he climbs up into the starry heaven,
nor when he wheels to return again from heaven to earth,
but always a glum night is spread over wretched mortals.
(Odyssey XI. 14-19)

Crete
There is a land called Crete in the middle of the wine-blue water,
a handsome country and fertile, seagirt, and there are many
peoples in it, innumerable; there are ninety cities.
Language with language mix there together. There are Achaians,
there are great-hearted Eteokretans, there are Kydonians,
and Dorians in three divisions, and noble Pelasgians;
and there is Knossos, the great city, the place where Minos
was king for nine-year periods, and conversed with great Zeus.
(Odyssey XIX. 172-179)