

(pp. 20–1, 23); but future studies could do more to situate Homeric ‘narrative desire’ in its historical performance contexts.

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SPACE AND THE *ODYSSEY*

XIAN (R.) *Raum und Erzählung in der Odyssee. (Mnemosyne Supplements 444.)* Pp. xii + 173. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021. Cased, €89, US\$107. ISBN: 978-90-04-37946-6.

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Over the last decade the study of space in Homer has received a fair amount of attention. X.’s book is a welcome addition to the growing secondary literature on this topic. It offers a decent coverage of its theme, i.e. how space interacts with the poem’s narrative, and should be treated as indispensable reading for all those interested in the role of space in Homer.

The book is divided into seven chapters: ‘Einleitung’; ‘*Locus amoenus* und sein Gegenstück in *Od.* 5’; ‘Die Beschreibung des Alkinoos-Palasts und die “spatial Form” des Epos’; ‘Der *Chronotopos* der Ziegeninsel (*Od.* 9.116–141)’; ‘Die Ithakalandschaft in *Od.* 13’; ‘Geschlossener Raum und narrative Spannung in der *Odyssee*’; and ‘Laertes’ baumreicher Garten in *Od.* 24’.

Chapter 1 surveys the relevant literature and offers a summary of each chapter. In Chapter 2 X. argues that the *locus amoenus* of Calypso’s island becomes a seduction landscape regarding the inner space of the cave that is contrasted with the outer space of the island. Odysseus is seduced by Calypso, with whom he is sleeping every night in the cave, while he looks at the boundless sea and longs for Penelope when he stays on his own by the sea. However, this dichotomy does not correspond to Odysseus’ putative oscillation between Calypso and Penelope. His seduction by the beautiful nymph is unavoidable (5.155; see also 4.456–7) and functions as an analogy for Penelope’s forced acceptance of a marriage with one of the suitors (19.156). As regards Odysseus’ behaviour in the outer landscape of the island, his staring at the sea in tears has intertextual ramifications, since it recalls Achilles’ similar behaviour in *Iliad* 1. X. underscores the spatial misdirection of Achilles’ decision in *Il.* 1.169–71 against the spatial realisation of Odysseus’ desire to return to Ithaca, though further discussion would be welcome. For example, in this context both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* trade on the theme of νόστος, which is presented antithetically. Whereas Achilles’ νόστος will provide for him a long and peaceful life in Phthia but deprive him of his κλέος ἄφθιτον, Odysseus’ νόστος is his κλέος.

With respect to the *locus amoenus* of the Sirens’ island, X. maintains that it operates as a doublet of Ogygia. The Sirens represent a complex type of idyllic space pertaining to θέλιξις (‘enchantment’). It consists of the magical sounds produced by their sweet voices and a seductive landscape resonating with the magical words of Calypso (1.56–7; 5.61) and the seductive landscape of her island. This is all fine and well, and X.’s analysis is illuminating. However, it also marks a missed opportunity. The enchantment of the Sirens’ island has, like the enchantment of Ogygia, poetological overtones. The enchanting voice of the Sirens, which remains undisclosed, is about an ‘*Iliad*’ that Odysseus is invited

to listen to if he leaves his ship and stays on their island. Calypso's song (as is the case with Circe's song) is deliberately muted. The common denominator between the adumbration of these songs, which pertain to divine beings living in enchanted spaces, is the hero's attempt to avoid competition with divinities (see A. Karanika, *Voices at Work: Women, Performance, and Labor in Ancient Greece* [2014], pp. 45–51). This meta-poetic filtering is effectively inscribed in the idyllic space of the respective habitats of these divine beings.

In Chapter 3 X. suggests that the three parts of the passage devoted to the description of Alcinoos' palace (*Od.* 7.84–132) correspond to three motifs that play a crucial role in the *Odyssey*: (a) the feast in a palace; (b) the work of the maids; (c) the fertility of the garden. Each of these motifs will be employed later in the poem, in scenes that the audience is expected to interpret against the backdrop of the motif's programmatic function in the description of Alcinoos' palace. The serenity and harmony of Alcinoos' feast will be replaced by the turbulence and disharmony of the feast of the suitors at Odysseus' palace in Ithaca. The work of the maids in Phaeacia and the opposition between shipbuilding and weaving is reflected in Odysseus' seafaring abilities and Penelope's weaving skills. The fertility of Alcinoos' garden is paired with the fertility of Laertes' orchard in Ithaca and contrasted with the potential fertility of the goat island. These insights are not new, as X. himself acknowledges. However, their combined examination amounts to a strong claim about what the author calls the 'spatial form' of the *Odyssey*.

Chapter 4 offers a fresh look at the narrative function of the goat island. Unlike previous approaches that treated it either as an extension of the land of the Cyclopes or in the context of the colonising mobility of the Archaic period, X. claims that the goat island is a *chronotopos*. By recourse to this Bakhtinian term, X. suggests that the temporal and spatial features of the description of the goat island (9.116–41) indicate that it should be related both to the past of the Phaeacians and to their seafaring skills. The potential of the goat island stands in stark contrast to the populated land of the Phaeacians and invites the audience to see the former as the latter's past and the latter as the former's future.

In Chapter 5 the description of the Ithacan landscape marks the transition from external to internal νόστος. Athena offers two descriptions. The first recalls the one Odysseus had given about his island to the Phaeacians, while the second is tagged to the hero's past life on Ithaca. X. argues that the difficulty Odysseus has with respect to recognising his island after so many years of absence should be read as a sign of the painful and difficult process of internal return to his previous status as king of Ithaca and husband of Penelope. This suggestion is corroborated by the fact that in *Od.* 23.94–5 she is presented as oscillating as regards the *anagnorisis* of her husband.

Chapter 6 explores the motif of 'closed space' by examining three case studies: the Wooden Horse, Polyphemus' cave and the main hall in Odysseus' *megaron*, where the slaying of the suitors takes place. X. maintains that the juxtaposition of closed and open space generates narrative tension that reaches its apex in the inner space of the bedroom where the final union of Odysseus and Penelope happens. X.'s analysis is persuasive, though he fails to consider another Odyssean narrative strategy that pertains to the gradual miniaturisation of space: from the threshold of the *megaron* (17.505–88) to the soft δέρματα given to Odysseus (19.96–604), to the *hyperoon*, the hearth and finally the bed in the marriage chamber. This centripetal motion with the infusion of progressively more spatial references mirrors the gradual disclosure of Odysseus' identity until his reunion with Penelope (see D.N. Maronitis, *Homeric Megathemes: War-Homilia-Homecoming* [2004], pp. 48–59).

The chronotopic aspects of Laertes' garden are studied in Chapter 7. The selection of this place for the recognition scene between father and son is effectively positioned at the end of

the epic. The tree list recalled by Odysseus becomes a means for convincing his father about his identity, and the standard number of trees reflects the survival of their family line.

This is a rewarding book. It does not offer an exhaustive treatment of the topic as it is based on a selective presentation of the function of space in several episodes. However, X. puts forward new and convincing ideas. He is also to be credited, and that is perhaps the book's greatest merit, for combining the scattered insights of other scholars and disclosing larger interpretative associations that span the entire *Odyssey*.

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WHAT REMAINS OF THE EPIC HERACLES?

TSAGALIS (C.C.) (ed., trans.) *Early Greek Epic Fragments II. Epics on Herakles: Kreophylos and Peisandros. (Trends in Classics Supplementary Volume 129.)* Pp. xiv + 256, b/w & colour pls. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2022. Cased, £94, €102.95, US\$118.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-076756-8.

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Heracles is a mythical character that has enjoyed many literary lives: a formidable warrior, who could successfully perform twelve highly challenging labours, a hero with a mission to civilise the world, but also a tragic character on stage, who, driven mad by the gods, murders his wife and children, and a comic one, as he plays a glutton and drunkard. Despite his role of protagonist within the epic world and the wide range of mythical plots in which he was actively involved – not only the twelve labours, but also the first sacking of Troy and so forth –, we are doomed not to know much about the epic Heracles of the early times. Even if the Homeric poems reference him and his deeds on more than one occasion, so that some scholars have hypothesised the existence of a now lost ‘Heracleian Cycle’, which matched the ‘Epic Cycle’, none of the epic works about him is fully preserved, with the (partial) exception of the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*. Traces of the epic Heracles, however, survive in fragmentary hexameter poems, such as the pseudo-Homeric *Cercopes*, in the *Aegimius* and *The Wedding of Ceyx*, usually ascribed to Hesiod, and in the *Capture of Oechalia* by Chreophylus of Samos and the *Heracleia* by Pisander of Camirus. After these, one has to wait until the fifth century to see a new Heracleian poem in hexameter verse, by Panyassis of Halicarnassus, which, however, does not survive in full either.

The scarcity of textual evidence has not prevented scholars from collecting and investigating evidence about the archaic epics on Heracles. The nineteenth-century edition by G. Kinkel (1877) has been replaced by three important critical editions, prepared by three of the most influential scholars in the field: A. Bernabé (1987), M. Davies (1988) and M.L. West (2003), whose contribution to the topic of fragmentary early epic poetry also includes several articles and commentaries on the Cyclic epics. Yet, the burgeoning interest in this topic seems not to have touched the Heracleian poems, perhaps for the scarcity of material in our possession; as a result, the reference book for those interested