



THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO

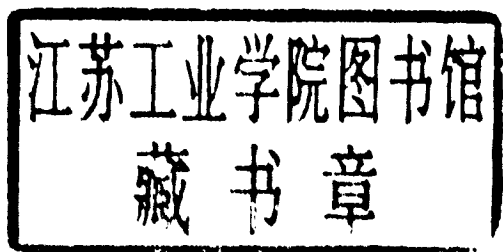
HOMER

Edited by Robert Fowler

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ROBERT FOWLER

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Cambridge Companion to Homer

The Cambridge Companion to Homer is a guide to the essential aspects of Homeric criticism and scholarship, including the reception of the poems in ancient and modern times. Written by an international team of scholars, it is intended to be the first port of call for students at all levels, with introductions to important subjects and suggestions for further exploration. Alongside traditional topics like the Homeric question, the divine apparatus of the poems, the formulas, the characters and the archaeological background, there are detailed discussions of similes, speeches, the poet as story-teller and the genre of epic both within Greece and worldwide. The reception chapters include assessments of ancient Greek and Roman readings as well as selected modern interpretations from the eighteenth century to the present day. Chapters on Homer in English translation and 'Homer' in the history of ideas round out the collection.



10. Blind Billy Blue, the jazz-playing bard, *The Odyssey: A Stage Version* (Royal Shakespeare Company, 1992)

in the play. The Cyclops is presented as an Orwellian tyrant, characterised by the Eye, who reduces people to things and consumes them. In the early drafts of the script the Eye was an Orwellian style television spying on people's movements. In the RSC Stratford-upon-Avon production the Eye was a periscope-like attachment to the grotesque figure of the Cyclops. Links

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PREFACE

Extremely pleased though I was at the Press's invitation to edit this volume, the enormity of its subject induced an unusually acute sense of apprehension. No one could ever do it complete justice. It is also a subject which arouses the greatest passions – as is only right, for Homer is an author whose stature in the Western tradition is approached only by Virgil and Plato, and surpassed only by the Bible. Everything is at stake in him. But apprehension was balanced by the many pleasures of the task, not least that of being able to spend more time in the company of the supreme bard and so many insightful readers. The authors here assembled hope to have done him at least a worthy service; and Homer is surely sublime enough to forgive the inevitable injustice.

I have been fortunate at every stage to have excellent advice from the Press's readers and its Classics Editor, and from my fellow contributors. There was much discussion at the very beginning about the design of the volume, from which I benefited greatly. Perhaps the most noticeable feature of this design is the devotion of much space to Homer's reception. Some of the reasons for this I have sought to make clear in the Introduction. In general, reception of Classics is increasingly seen as part of the subject itself. There is a world of work to be done, and new vistas of interpretation are constantly opening up. Further on in the process of production, drafts were circulated, so that we could take account of each others' views and add appropriate cross-references. The result is a more cohesive and useful book, but not one with a uniform critical perspective: that was never the idea. My warmest thanks to all involved.

Some practical notes for readers: abbreviations in the volume follow standard lists such as those in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn, 1996) or the ninth edition of Liddell, Scott and Jones' *Greek-English Lexicon* (with Supplement, Oxford 1968); and throughout, books of the *Iliad* are cited in Arabic numerals, of the *Odyssey* in Roman. In the matter of Latinisation

Preface

of names, we have allowed contributors their preferences, so that you will find 'Patroklos' in one chapter, 'Patroclus' in the next. Citations of Homer's Greek follow Martin West's edition of the *Iliad* (Stuttgart 1998–2000) and Helmut van Thiel's edition of the *Odyssey* (Hildesheim 1991). Translations of Homer are by contributors, unless acknowledged.

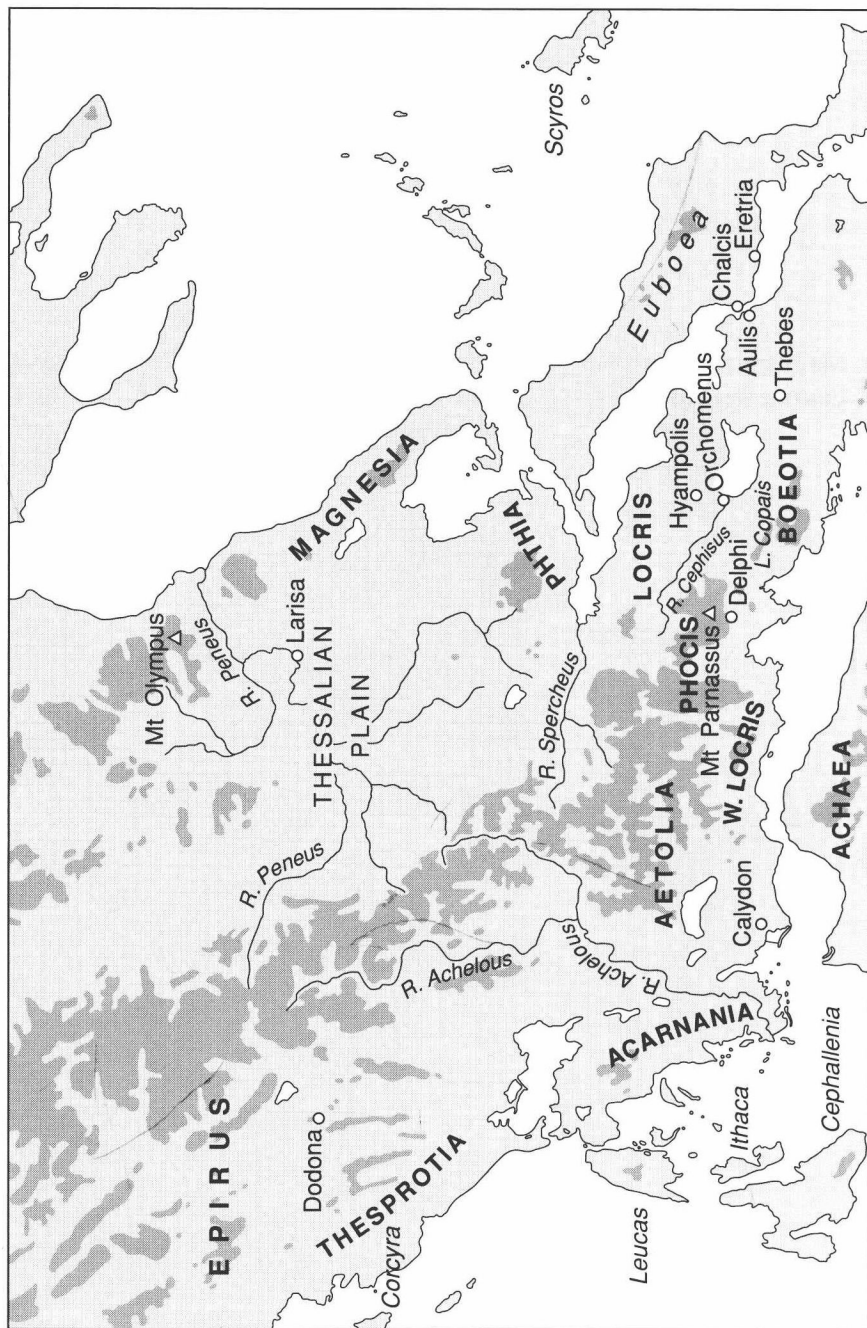
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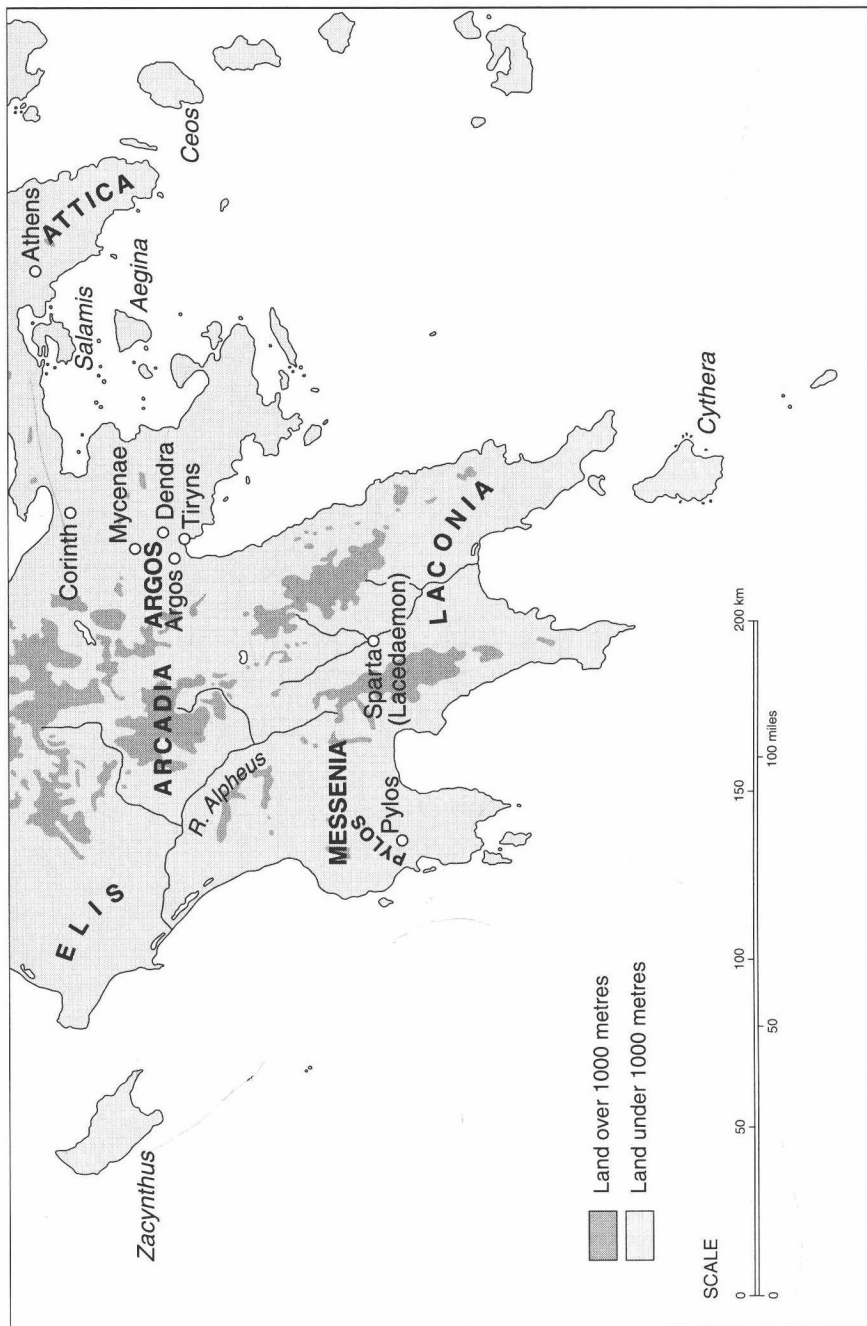
7 November 2003

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- 2 Eastern Aegean

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Map 1. Mainland Greece



Map 2. Eastern Aegean

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