Preface

This volume represents some thirty years of teaching and writing about the *Odyssey*. Seven of the ten chapters have been previously published, but all of them have been revised for this volume. Although I have not changed the substance of the original publications, I have recast, abbreviated, or expanded some sections and added some new points of detail. I have divided the study of the Phaeacians, originally published as a single article, into two parts (Chapters 2–3) to bring it closer to the scale of the other chapters. I originally wrote the fourth chapter as a sequel to my study of the Phaeacians, and I am happy to have its thematic affinities here restored. Chapter 7 was originally delivered at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association in December 1992 and is here published for the first time. Chapter 8 is also previously unpublished, although an earlier version of the last section will appear in a Festschrift for Giovanni Tarditi.

While I have tried to make these studies more accessible to a general audience, I have not attempted to disguise the differences in approach between essays that were written, in some cases, thirty years apart. Readers will doubtless be struck by the shift from the more individual-centered psychological orientation of Chapters 2–4 to the social and anthropological approaches of Chapters 6–8 and may find it interesting to observe how a single interpreter's work may undergo changes in method and emphasis over a period of scholarly activity that moves from New Criticism to structuralism and poststructuralism. There are continuities too, however, as the relation between Chapter 10 and Chapters 2–4 will show.

It is a testimony to the popularity and importance of the *Odyssey* that
the secondary literature continues to increase at an extraordinary rate. In the case of the older essays (Chapters 2–5), I have added a few references to major more recent discussions and some cross-references to the later chapters, but neither here nor in the later essays do I attempt bibliographical completeness. To make the book accessible to the wide readership that the *Odyssey* has always had and deserved, I have translated all the Greek (in two instances borrowing from the fine poetic versions of Robert Fitzgerald and Richmond Lattimore respectively) and transliterated individual words. Translations from other languages are also my own unless otherwise noted. In my translations I try to stay reasonably close to the original; I make no claim to literary merit.

These essays could not have been written without the opportunities for study and research made possible, at different times, by the American Academy in Rome, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences, and the National Humanities Center, where the volume received its final form during my fellowship in 1993–94. To all these institutions I express my deep thanks. I would like to recall the original dedication of Chapter 5 to the memory of Gabriel Germain, whom I had the pleasure of meeting a few years before his death, and the influential work of Bruno Gentili (for whose Festschrift Chapter 9 was originally written) on oral poetics, performance, and the continuities between epic and later folk traditions. I thank the many students and colleagues from whom I have learned about the *Odyssey* over the years and also the friends and colleagues who have given advice, comments, and copies of their publications. I particularly thank Joseph Russo of Haverford College, Stephen Scully of Boston University, and William F. Wyatt, Jr., of Brown University for memorable Homeric conversations. To Gregory Nagy I owe a particular debt of gratitude for steady, expert, and enthusiastic guidance in the shaping of the volume. It has been a pleasure, once again, to work with Bernhard Kendler of Cornell University Press, whom I thank for useful and timely suggestions. I am indebted to the Press’s anonymous reader for helpful comments and to Nancy Malone for meticulous copyediting. I thank P. Lowell Bowditch and Jessica Eichelburg for help in the preparation of the manuscript.

I thank the following editors and journals for permission to use, in revised form, material that originally appeared in their publications:

Chapter 1, Introduction: Pages 12–14 of my essay “Classics and Com-


I cite the Greek text of the *Odyssey* from Peter Von der Mühll’s third Teubner edition, *Homeri Odyssea* (1945; reprint, Stuttgart, 1984), although I do not always accept his excisions. The text of the *Iliad* is cited from David B. Monro and T. W. Allen’s Oxford Classical Text, *Homeri Opera*, volumes 1 and 2, *Ilias*, 3d edition (Oxford, 1920). Other authors are cited from the standard Oxford or Teubner editions. The transliterations of Greek aim at clarity for Anglophone readers rather than at any particular system. I use a macron to mark a long vowel where this seems helpful or necessary. To avoid confusion in matters of prosody, I transliterate Greek upsilon as u. I use the “equals” sign to indicate verses that are repeated in different parts of the poem. Because of the *Odyssey*’s place in the mainstream of European culture, I have preferred the Latinate form of its more familiar proper names (e.g., Circe and Alcinous rather than Kirke and Alkinoos).

My dedication (διάγον τε φίλον τε) expresses my constant gratitude to my wife, Nancy Jones, for much sage advice and for her ever present and loving support.

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