



Most of us know Odysseus' voyage since he left victorious with his comrades from Troy until he returned to Ithaca after 10 years. It is also known that, during the last month before the end of the adventure with the assassination of the suitors and the reunification of Odysseus with Penelope, the major events of the epic have happened in two major and three secondary "theaters" either sequentially or simultaneously. More specifically within thirty days, Odysseus and Telemachus and the other heroes of the poem moved on Ithaca and Corfu on one hand and on Ogygia, Pylos and Sparta on the other hand,

During the recent years, efforts have been made by two scientific groups to determine the dates on which all of the above have happened.

The first was by C. Baikouzis and M. Magnasco, who made an announcement in 2008 and identified April 16, 1178 BC as the day of the murder of the suitors.

The second was by St. Papamarinopoulos, P. Preka – Papadema, P. Antonopoulou, E. Mitropetrou, A. Tsironi and P. Mitropetrou, who announced their own conclusion in 2012. Both were based on the partial solar eclipse made at the time of the assassination of the suitors according to the poem (Rhapsody Y).

Without a scientific judgment about which of the two views is the most correct, we accept as such the most recently published research, namely that the above partial eclipse of the sun and therefore the massacre of the suitors occurred on 30 October 1207.

It should be noted that the key element of our action is not the exact date of the assassination but rather the dating of the events in reference to a specific date even if it's not certain. Obviously, if new information emerges in the future, it is likely that we will change the dates of the events we organize accordingly.

Based on the above date of assassination (October 30, 1207), we specify the other dates of the above mentioned itineraries of the epic heroes.

Our idea is that on the specific dates and at the specific locations (Ogygia, Corfu, Ithaca, Pylos, Sparta) and in cooperation with:

- the School of Greek Language and Culture "ALEXANDER THE GREAT", the Organization for the Dissemination of the Greek Language (ODEG), the Ithaca Association of the Friends of Homer
- other schools, colleges, universities
- local municipalities, cultural and sports clubs
- other interested clubs in Greece and abroad as well as
- interested citizens both Greeks and foreigners,

we will organize "theatrical" recitations in Greek and other languages of the specific Rhapsodies of the epic in the places and at the times resulting from the above. We will also organize other relevant actions related to the return of Odysseus such as:

- Theatrical and musical performances,
- Athletic games,
- Rowing - sailing races from Corfu to Ithaca,
- Respectively from Ithaca to Pylos and return,
- Running or walking from Pylos to Sparta and return, etc.

All these actions will be repeated and expanded each year to include other Odysseus' travel sites and other educational or cultural institutions all over the world interested in the Odyssey. This way we will also create an "Odyssey Network".

Finally, we will gradually include in the program actions concerning literary and artistic works from all over the world that are related to the Odyssey as well as for the adventures of people who individually or collectively walked or run or sail their own "Odysseys" trying to return to their home country or looking for a new homeland.

During the execution of our project we will follow Odysseus' journey as described by the French author and sailor Gilbert Pilliot in his book "The Secret Code of the Odyssey: Did the Greeks sail in the Atlantic" which was originally written and published in French.

According to this work, Ogygia (where Calypso lived) coincided with Iceland, a view that many of the other authors who have written on the same subject do not share. On the other hand, the same author identifies the main points of the journey as follows:

- The Lotus-eaters were located south of Morocco on the Atlantic coast
- The Cyclops lived on Tenerife in the Canary Islands
- The island of Aeolos coincides with Madeira
- The port of the Laestrygonians was in West Ireland
- The island of Circe coincides with the island of Bara, the southernmost of the Hebrides
- The Cimmerians lived on the northern coast of Ireland at the estuary of the River Foyle
- The island of Sirens and also Scylla and Charybdis are located in the island area west of Scotland.

It is possible in the course of the project to work on the basis of other books that have been written both earlier and more recently to determine the course of Odysseus from Troy to Ithaca both within and outside the Mediterranean or even within the Black Sea. Besides the research that has already begun 2500 years now, it is possible to continue for centuries as Odysseus moved, moves and will forever move us.

Note: The idea for all the above belongs to Konstantinos Karkanias.

The implementation of the actions is undertaken by the Association "THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS", based on the work of its members and other volunteers from all over the world, as well as on the support and possible sponsorships of interested organizations. The administrative support will be provided by the School of Greek Language and Culture "Alexander the Great".

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