

Kirk, G.S., "Objective Dating Criteria in Homer" 1960

p. 178

1. cremation as a regular peace-time practice . . . cremation became common in Athens around 1050 and then spread to the Ionian settlements in Asia Minor, where it was maintained - in Colophon at least - down to 800 B.C. or later. It was very rare in Mycenaean times, except for use in war and overseas - an exception which may be deduced from its universality in the Iliad. The rare assumptions in Homer that cremation is the normal means of disposal of the dead . . . must be Protogeometric or Geometric in origin.
2. The pair of light throwing-spears, as seen on late-Geometric vases and often assumed as standard armament in the Iliad, was a post-Mycenaean innovation. (The single heavy thrusting-spear . . . was used down to the end of the Mycenaean age and re-introduced in the 8th century as part of hoplite armature. References to it are impossible to date with security, unless by the aid of other criteria.)
3. The silver work-basket on wheels which was given to Helen by Alkandre of (Egyptian) Thebes . . . is probably based on a fashion introduced from the Near East around the beginning of the first millennium B.C. . . . the Egyptian association is probably caused by memories of Egyptian luxury in the Mycenaean age (rather than being a reflexion of new relations with Saite Egypt in the 7th century) . . .
4. The omission of references to scribes and writing, particularly from the peace-time descriptions of the Odyssey, presumably reflects the common conditions of the Dark Ages down to the probable time of the introduction of alphabetic writing into Greece in the late 9th or 8th century.
5. Phoenician ships in Greek waters are mentioned both in the Iliad and in the Odyssey. There is no evidence either in Homer or in archaeology that their penetration was particularly widespread or persistent; it probably began around 900 and must have terminated by the 8th century when Greek trading interests were protected by Greek warships.

p.179

Of the preceding list only the last three subjects can be further localized, with some probability, within the long period from the 11th to the end of the 8th century B.C.

Practices mentioned in Homer which could belong either to the Geometric or to the post-Geometric age (preferably the former)

1. the second temple . . . in the main a post-Mycenaean development. . . Thus the few references to separate temples in Homer . . . are unlikely by this criterion to be earlier than the 9th century in origin. . .
2. Hoplite tactics . . . was placed until recently early in the 7th century. . . this date must be raised to around 720 at latest. . . clear hoplite references in Homer cannot be safely put earlier than about 725 - nor can they now be necessarily put down into the post-Homeric period. . . Such passages are therefore not necessarily so late in invention as round 725 - indeed their formular quality often suggests that they are considerably earlier.