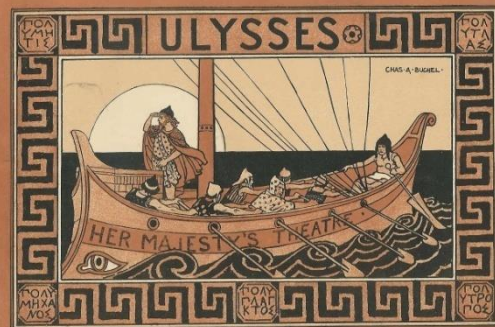


ODYSSEUS: THE POLYTROPOS HERO

*Teaching the Odyssey at GCSE and A
Level for Classical Civilisation*



KING'S
College
LONDON



Epithets of Odysseus Alone

- ▣ Much-praised polyainos
- ▣ Very crafty polykerdes
- ▣ Of grievous homecoming polykedes nostos
- ▣ Of many stratagems polymechanos
- ▣ Much-enduring/ daring polytlas
- ▣ Versatile, complex, polytropos

Other Epithets

- ▣ Master mariner
- ▣ Hero
- ▣ Great-hearted
- ▣ Wise
- ▣ City-sacker
- ▣ Kingly
- ▣ Of many sorrows
- ▣ Much prayed for

What Kind of Hero?



Navigator



Barbarian-tamer



Lesson-Learner



Favourite of the Cleverest Goddess



Athlete and discus-thrower



Carpenter



Hunter (on Circe's Island)

As the stag came from the water I struck him on the spine with my bronze-spear, in the centre of his back, and it pierced right through, so he fell in the dust with a groan, and his spirit passed. Then I planted my foot on his carcass, drew the bronze spear from the wound, and laid it on the ground while I gathered willow shoots then wove a rope, six foot long, by splicing them together end to end. Next I tied the great creature's feet together, and carried him down to the black ship on my back, using my spear to lean on, since he was too large to sling over my shoulder and steady with my hand.

Swimmer



Boxer: Fight with Irus



Archer



Trickster



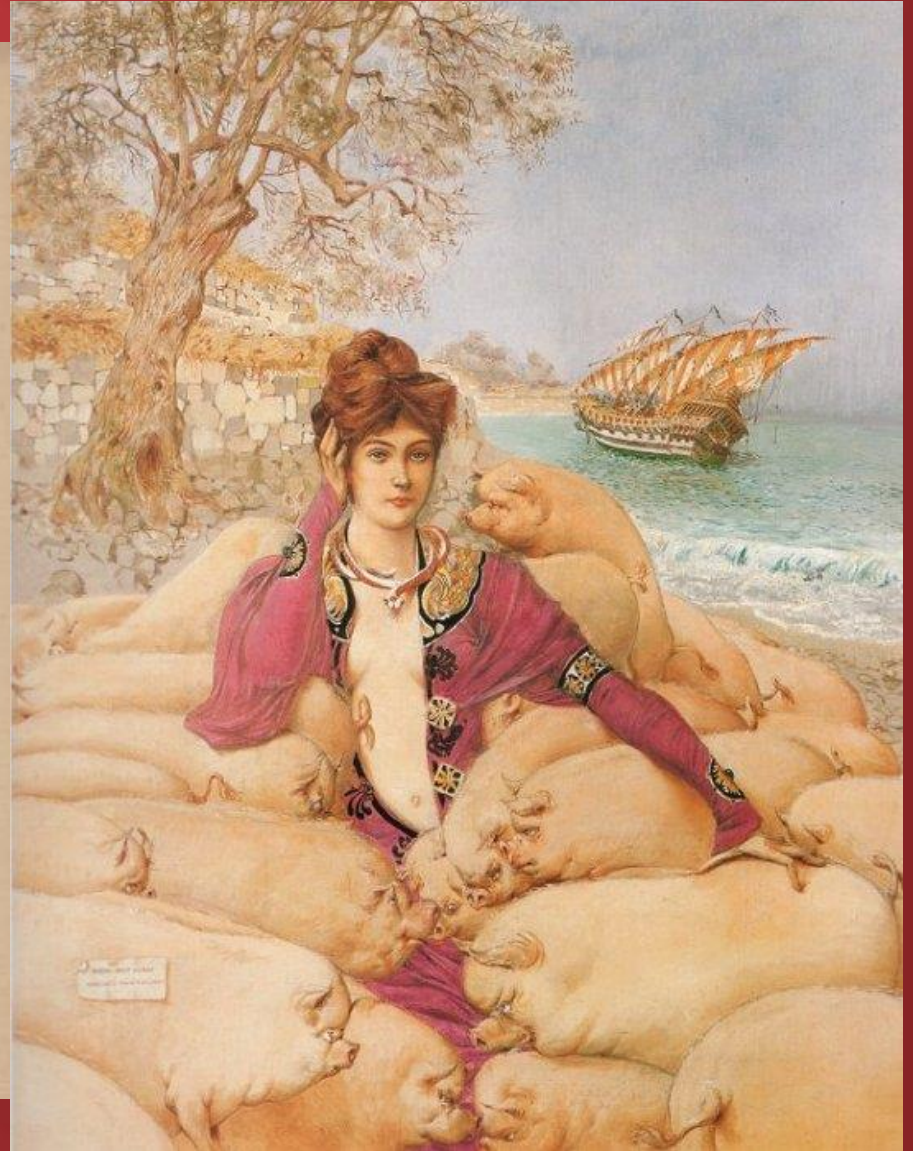
Desired by Calypso and Nausicaa



Witch-Tamer



The unhappy Greeks turned into Swine.



Investigative Scientist



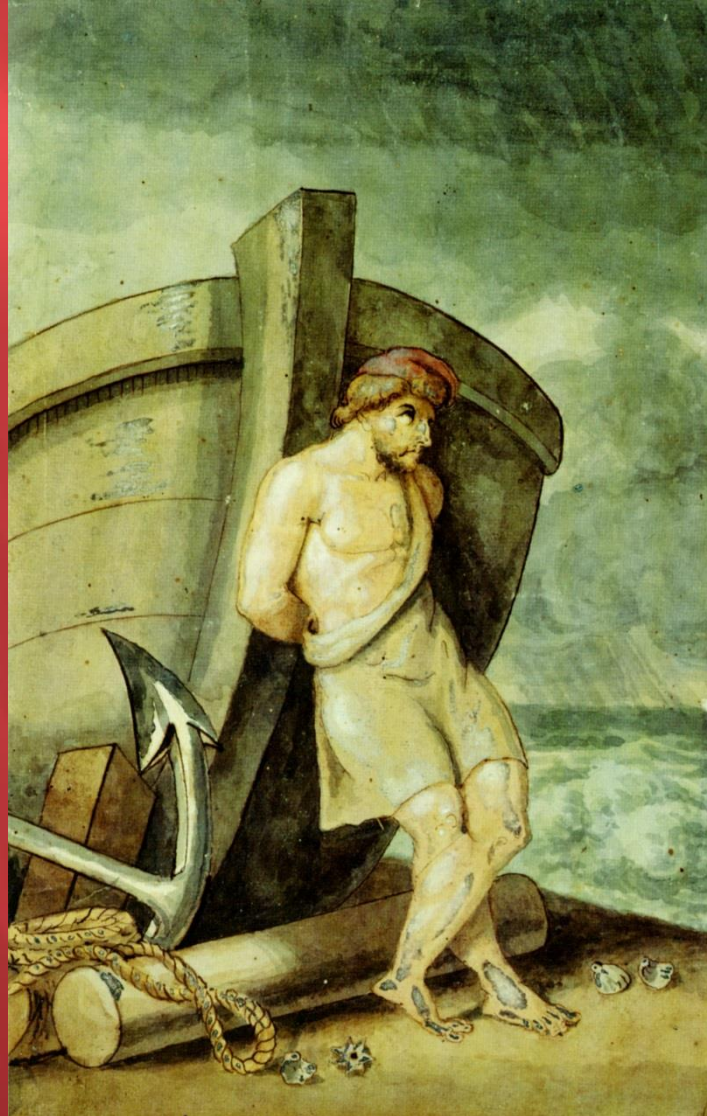
Storyteller and Autobiographer



Visitor to the Land of the Dead



Philosopher



Employer and Pet-Owner



Not so great for the maids...



Father?



Husband?



Son of an Orchard-Keeper



The Father of all Heroes; the Mother of all Stories

- ▣ Quest Hero
- ▣ Action Hero
- ▣ Disaster Movie Hero
- ▣ Revenge Hero
- ▣ Travelogue “Road Movie” Hero
- ▣ Episodic Hero with Superpowers
- ▣ Romantic Hero
- ▣ Proto-Sci-Fi-Hero
- ▣ Initiation Hero (or is that Telemachus?)

So who would *you* cast as
Odysseus?

