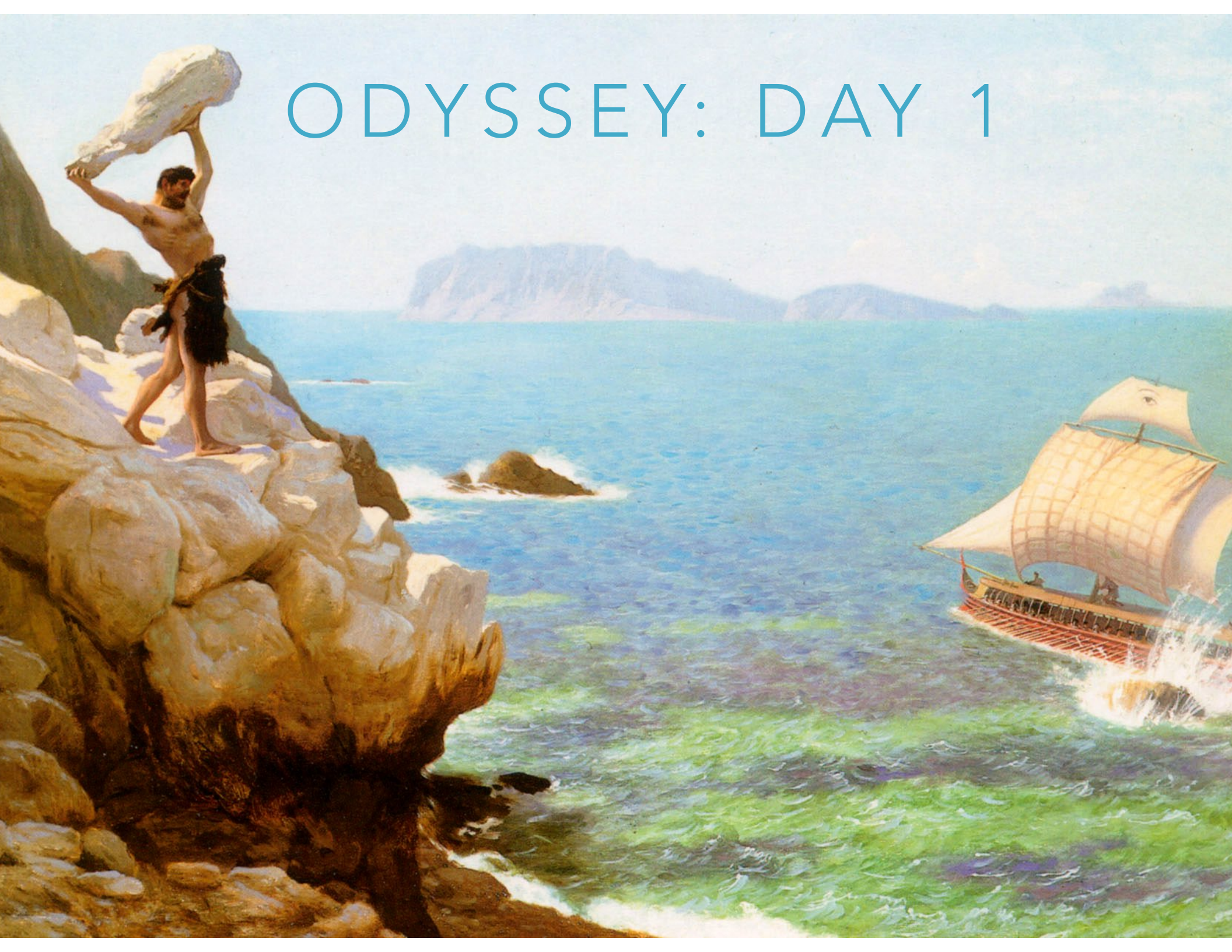
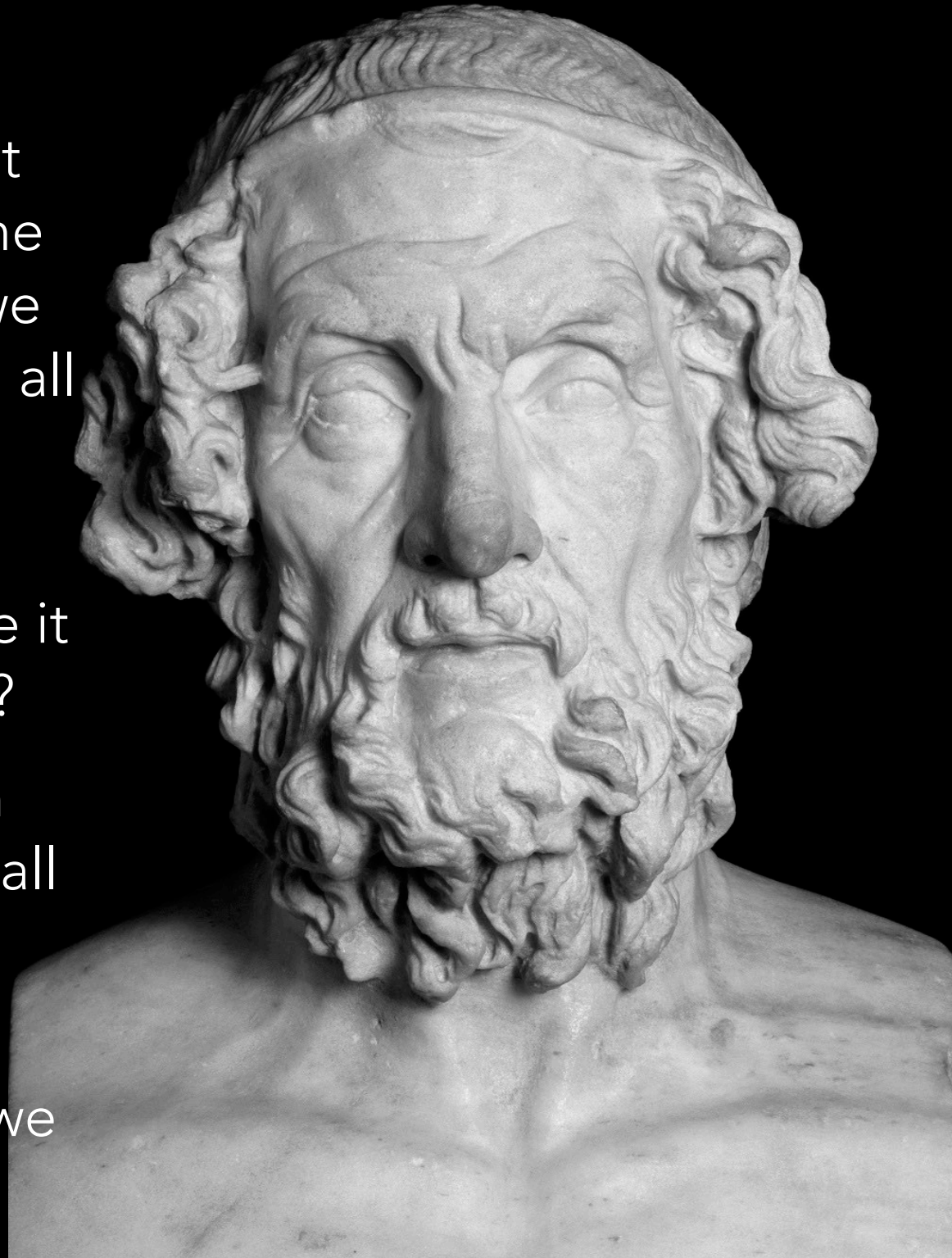


ODYSSEY: DAY 1



HOMER

- existence uncertain; ancient Greeks were unsure when he lived (850 BC? 1250 BC?); we don't have any original MS; all were unified into 'standard edition' in 2nd C. BC
- blind rhapsode? (who wrote it down?) Son of Telémachus?
- if real, he traveled widely in the region; familiar with small details of ordinary life, but favors the aristocracy
- really a convenient label—we will probably never know



Lawrence Alma-Tadema, *A Reading from Homer*, 1885



THE TROJAN WAR

- Myth or fact?
- More like *legend*: a nearly mythical tale that is in fact probably based on an historical fact (see Gilgamesh, King Arthur)
- Greeks claim Troy near Turkey, war c. 1190 BC; corresponds to archaeological evidence
- story comes from many sources other than Homer, all signs point to original oral tradition before being written



THE TROJAN WAR

- The “facts” of the legend are recounted in many, many stories and sources from Ancient Greece. They include:
 - Helen and the oath of the suitors; marries Menelaus
 - The Judgment of Paris
 - The “face that launched 1,000 ships” (~100,000 men)
 - 9 years of siege
 - The Trojan horse
 - The sack of Troy
 - The desecration of temples



125 mi



Oslo

Stockholm

Helsinki

Saint Petersburg

Nizhny Novgorod
Moscow

Kazan

Samara

Saratov

Voronezh

Volgograd

Rostov-on-Don

Krasnodar

Samsun

Tabriz

Tel

Kirkuk

Khorramabad

Isfahan

Basra

KUWAIT

North Sea

Baltic Sea

Black Sea

Mediterranean Sea

Celtic Sea

Bay of Biscay

UNITED KINGDOM

IRELAND

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Bucharest

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Ankara

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Tunis

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Algiers

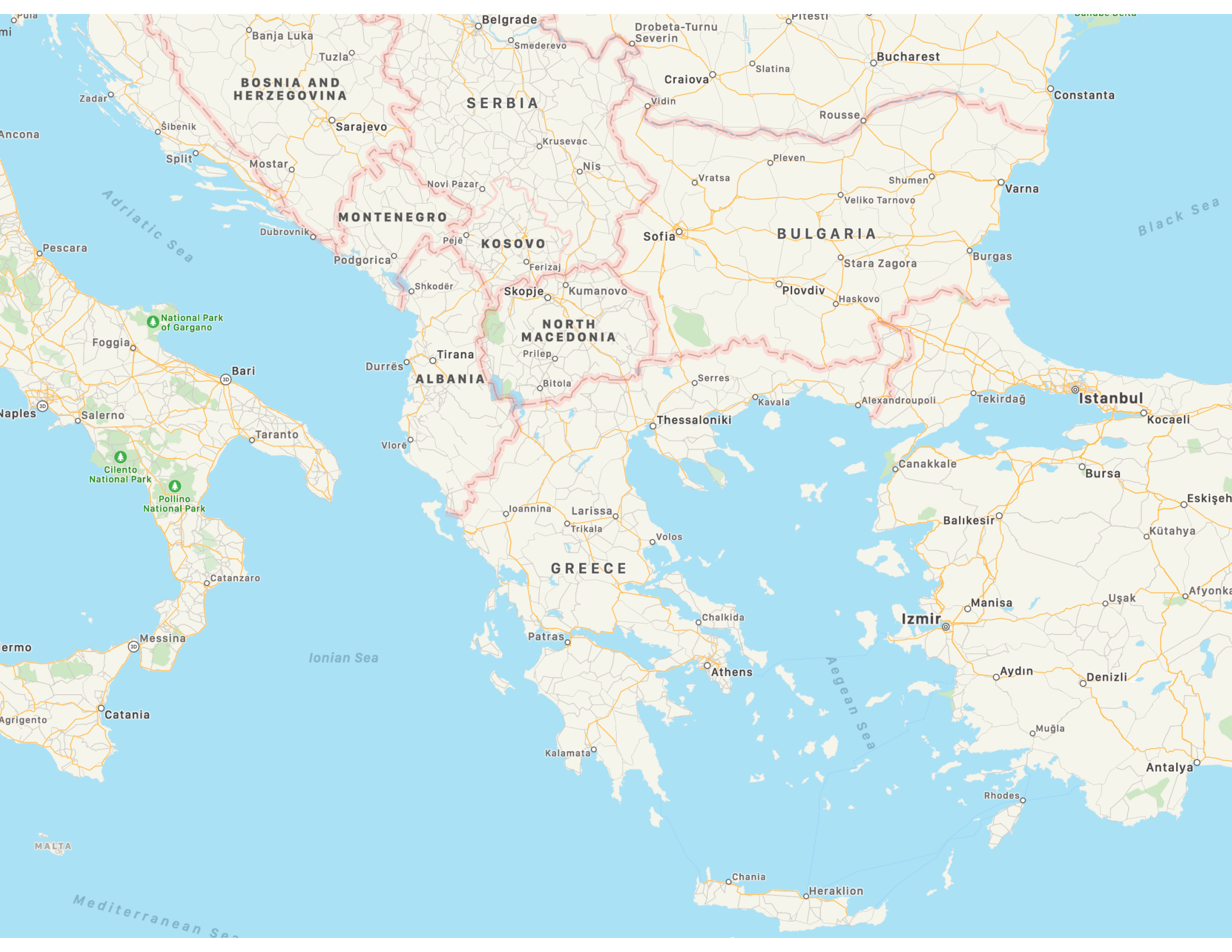
Tripoli

MOROCCO

Casablanca

ALGERIA

LIBYA





Polypoetes
Leonteus

Guneus

Podalirius
Machaon †

Hestiaeotis

Podarces
Protesilaus †

Aetolia

Achilles †
Patroclus †
Phoenix

Eurytus †

Schedius †
Epistrophus

Meges

Odysseus

Thoas

Amphimachus †
Thalpius
Polyxenus
Diores †

Agapenor

Nestor †
Antilochus
Thrasymedes

Menelaus

Pieria

Eumelus

Ascalaphus †
Ialmenus

Philoctetes

Prothous

Eurypylus

Medon †

Ajax †

Elephenor †

Automedon
Neoptolemus

Menestheus

Ajax †
Teucer

Agamemnon
Adrastus
Amarynceus

Diomedes
Euryalus
Sthenelus
Cynus
Cyanippus

Tenes †

Peneleus †
Leitus
Archesileus †
Prothoenor †
Clonius †

Menestheus

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Menestheus

Euphemus †

Acamas †
Peirous
Rhesus †

Pandarus †

Ascanius
Phorcys †

Asius †
Adrastus
Amphius

Pylaemenes †

Aeneas
Archelochus †
Acamas †
Theanus

Hector †

Eetion †

Mynes †

Chromius †
Ennomus †
Eurypylus

Penthesilia †

Epistrophus †
Odius †

Memnon †

Hippothous †
Pylaeus

Mesthes
Antiphus

Nastes
Amphimachus

Glaucus †
Sarpedon †

Phidippus
Antiphus

Nireus †

Tlepolemus †

Idomeneus
Meriones

Adriatic Sea

Ionian Sea



ODYSSEUS AND THE
TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE,
NO-GOOD, VERY BAD
BUSINESS TRIP

LAND OF THE DEAD
(Teiresias)

SERIOUSLY HOW
DO YOU END UP
THIS FAR NORTH?

GREECE

THE BLACK SEA

Ismarus
(cicones)

Dardanelles

OLYMPUS

Scheria

ITHAKA

TROY

HOME SWEET HOME

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

7
Aiaia
(CIRCE)

6
Laistrygones
(cannibals)

9
CIRCE
again

Charybdis

10
sirens

5
Aiolos
(God of
the winds)

11
SICILY
(Cyclops)

12
Skylla

15

Kalypso's
Island

14

4

13

16

3
Lotus-Eaters

1

2

8

9

6

5

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16

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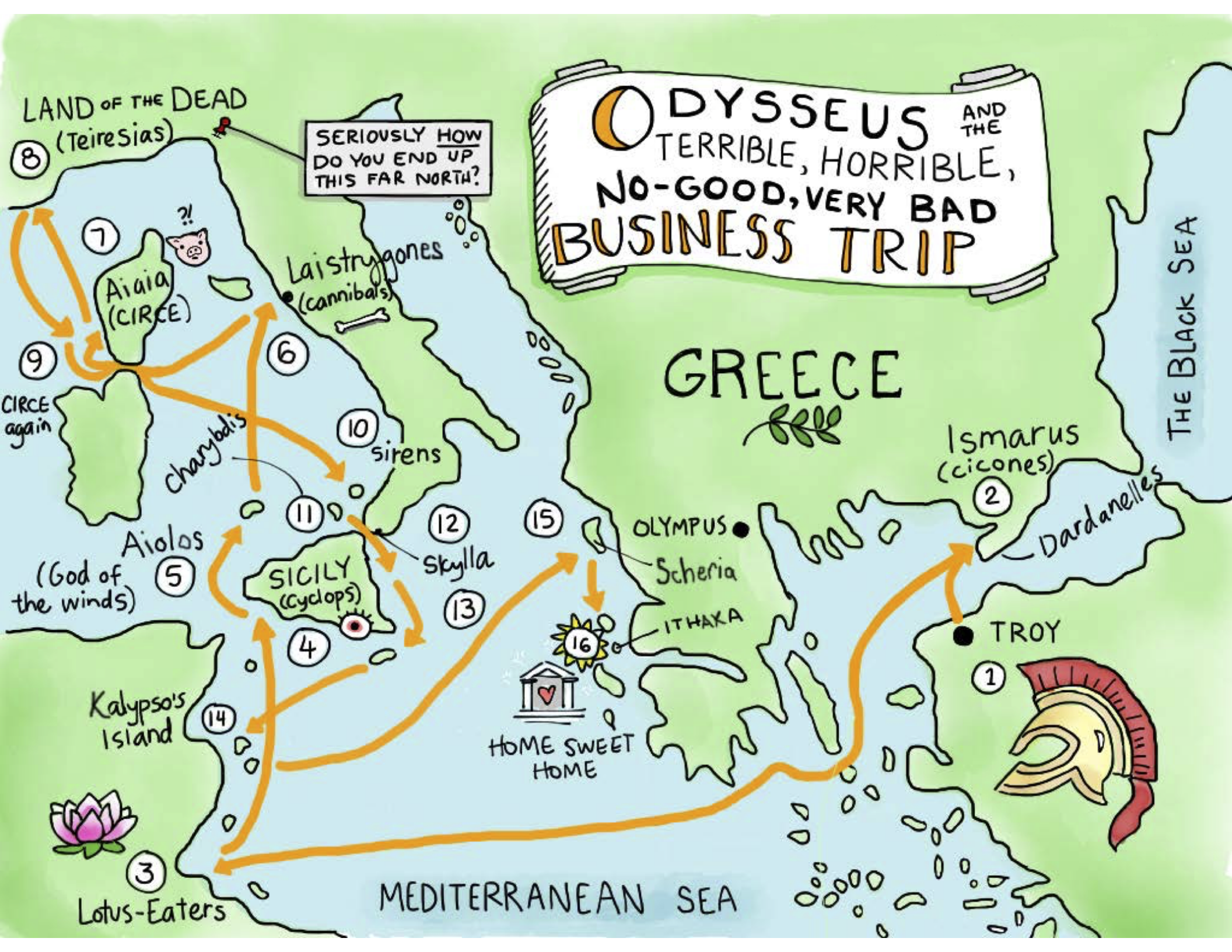
13

16

3

1

2



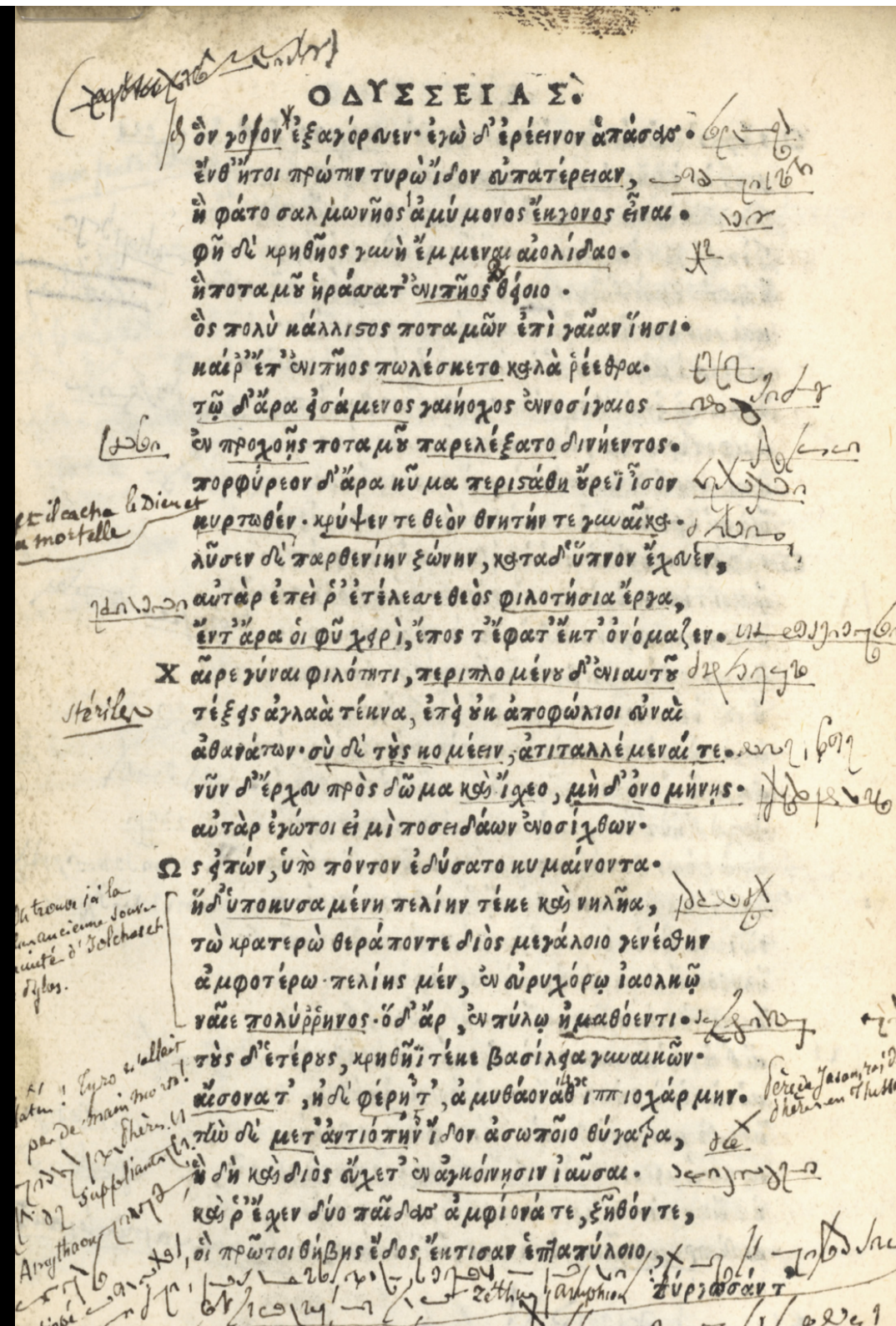
THE ODYSSEY

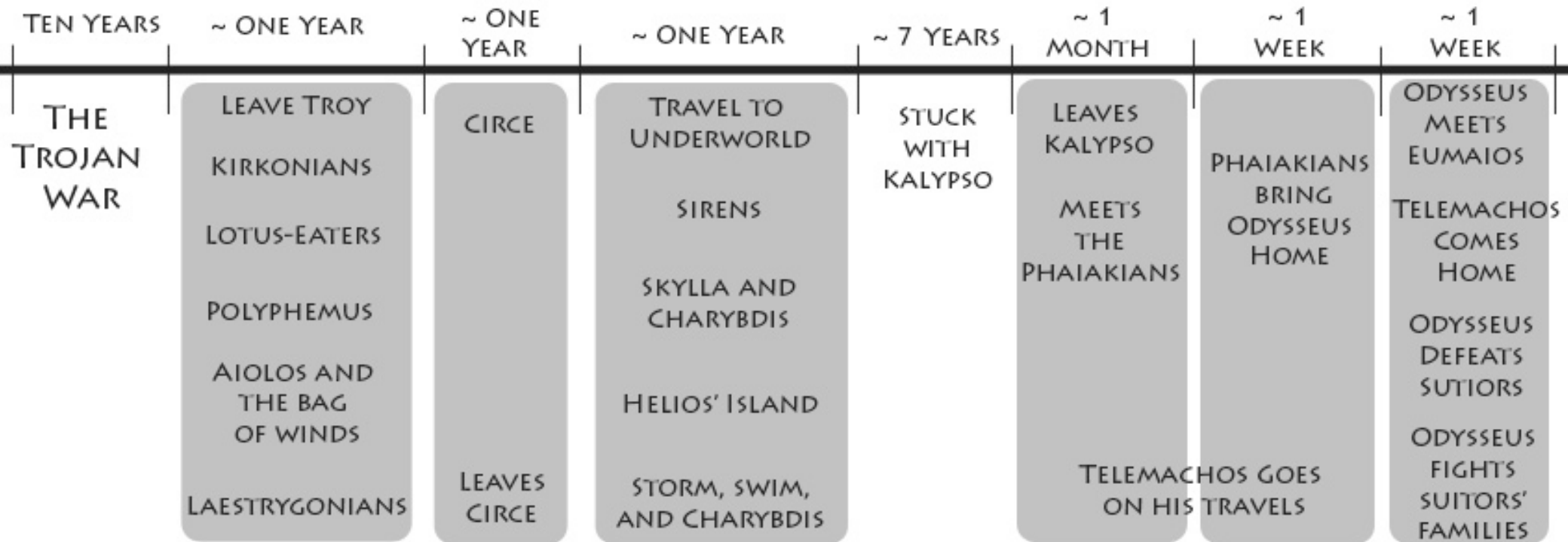
- written ca. 8th century BC
- derived from previous oral tradition; originally meant to be heard, not read
- memorized, along with *Iliad*, by “men of standing”
- canonical by 550 BC (a corrected edition produced)
- along with *Iliad*, remained continuously available; today we have scraps of papyrus from 3rd C. BC, complete text from middle ages



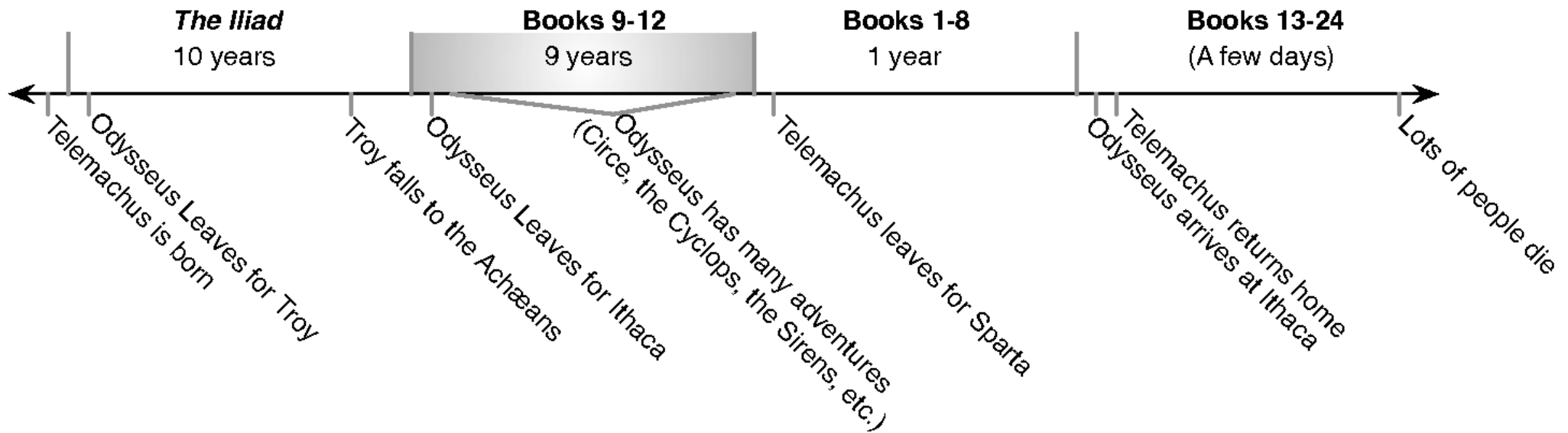
FORM

- complex narrative, largely flashback and stories-in-stories
- highly episodic
- 24 books, 500-700 lines each (not original form, book 24 may have been added)
- dactylic hexameter ("singing in language that dazzles us, poetry just wants the beautiful"); *The Odyssey* is a waltz!
- our translation *iambic* hexameter
- written in "composite" Greek, taking elements from many dialects





Timeline of *The Odyssey*



STYLE

- Epithets: "nymph with the lovely braids," "rose-fingered Dawn," "grey-eyed Athena..."
- Grey eyes? Ancient colors are... different
- γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη (glaukopis Athene) means 'bright-eyed,' suggesting her intelligence (goddess of wisdom) and ferocity (goddess of war in just cause)...
- ...but also STRONG-weak-weak STRONG-weak-weak; a natural metrical unit



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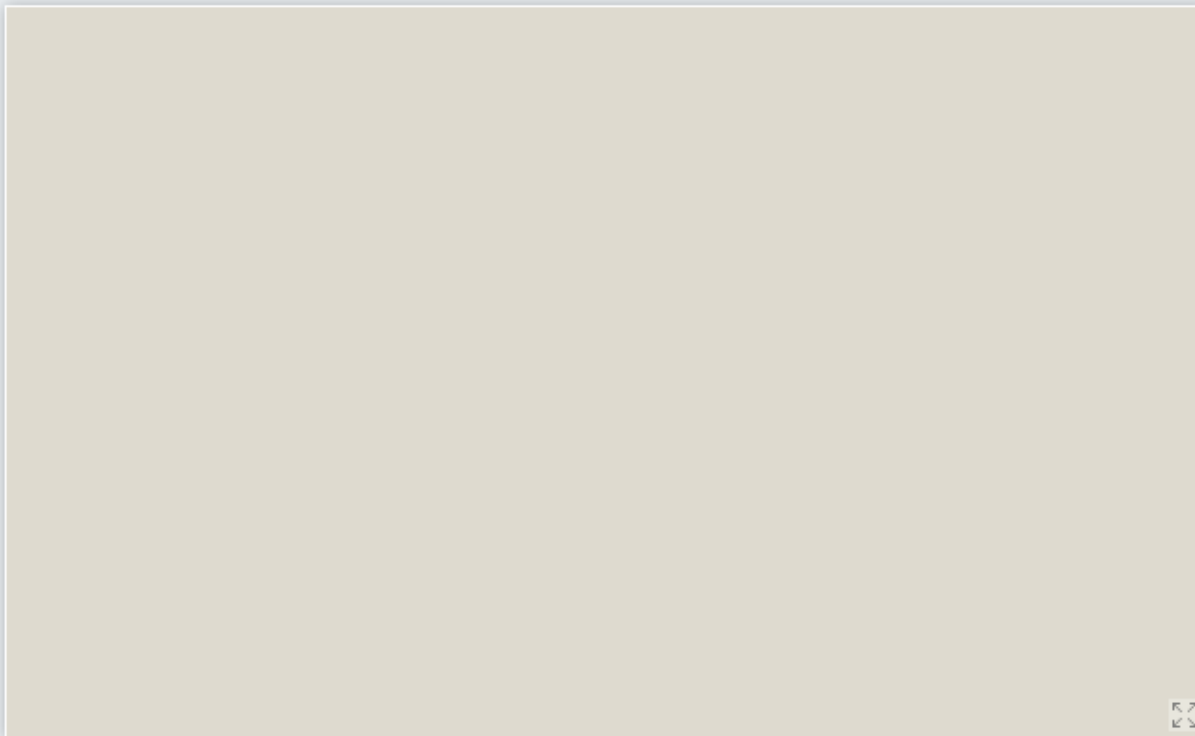
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Color Gallery

Rooms by Color

Main View 

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athena

858

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STYLE

- an exactitude and wealth of detail (shipbuilding)
- an expectation of action and revelation, almost invariably forestalled (Odysseus will finally leave—no, wait, he'll build a raft for four days, have detailed meals, sleep with Calypso...)
- constant *deus ex machina*



Thick, luxuriant woods grew round the cave,
alders and black poplars, pungent cypress too,
and there birds roosted, folding their long wings,
owls and hawks and the spread-beaked ravens of the sea,
black skimmers who make their living off the waves.
And round the mouth of the cavern trailed a vine
laden with clusters, bursting with ripe grapes.
Four springs in a row, bubbling clear and cold,
running side-by-side, took channels left and right.
Soft meadows spreading round were starred with violets,
lush with beds of parsley.

NAMES

- Odysseus means "trouble" (no, no, literally)
- Telemachus means "far from war"
- Polyphemus means "many legends"
- Calypso means "concealed"
- Penelope may be related to weaving (*pele*)
- Agamemnon (very thoughtful)
- Proteus (firstborn)



BOOK 1

- invocation to the muses: this song is their song
- Zeus begins by mentioning Agamemnon; love triangle with an unfaithful wife, vengeful son
- Telemachus: at stake is his development as a man, the purpose of the epic; he is melancholy, dreamy (132-40), pessimistic, resigned (193-96)
- Athena inspires him to manly behavior (341-45)



First by far to see her was Prince Telemachus,
sitting among the suitors, heart obsessed with grief.

He could almost see his magnificent father, here ...
in the mind's eye—if only he might drop from the clouds
and drive these suitors all in a rout throughout the halls
and regain his pride of place and rule his own domains!

Daydreaming so as he sat among the suitors,
he glimpsed Athena now
and straight to the porch he went, mortified
that a guest might still be standing at the doors.

"But now, no use, he's died a wretched death.
No comfort's left for us ... not even if
someone, somewhere, says he's coming home.
The day of his return will never dawn.
Enough."

-TELEMACHUS

“Then,
once you’ve sealed those matters, seen them through,
think hard, reach down deep in your heart and soul
for a way to kill these suitors in your house,
by stealth or in open combat.

You must not cling to your boyhood any longer—
it’s time you were a man. Haven’t you heard
what glory Prince Orestes won throughout the world
when he killed that cunning, murderous Aegisthus,
who’d killed his famous father?”

–ATHENA

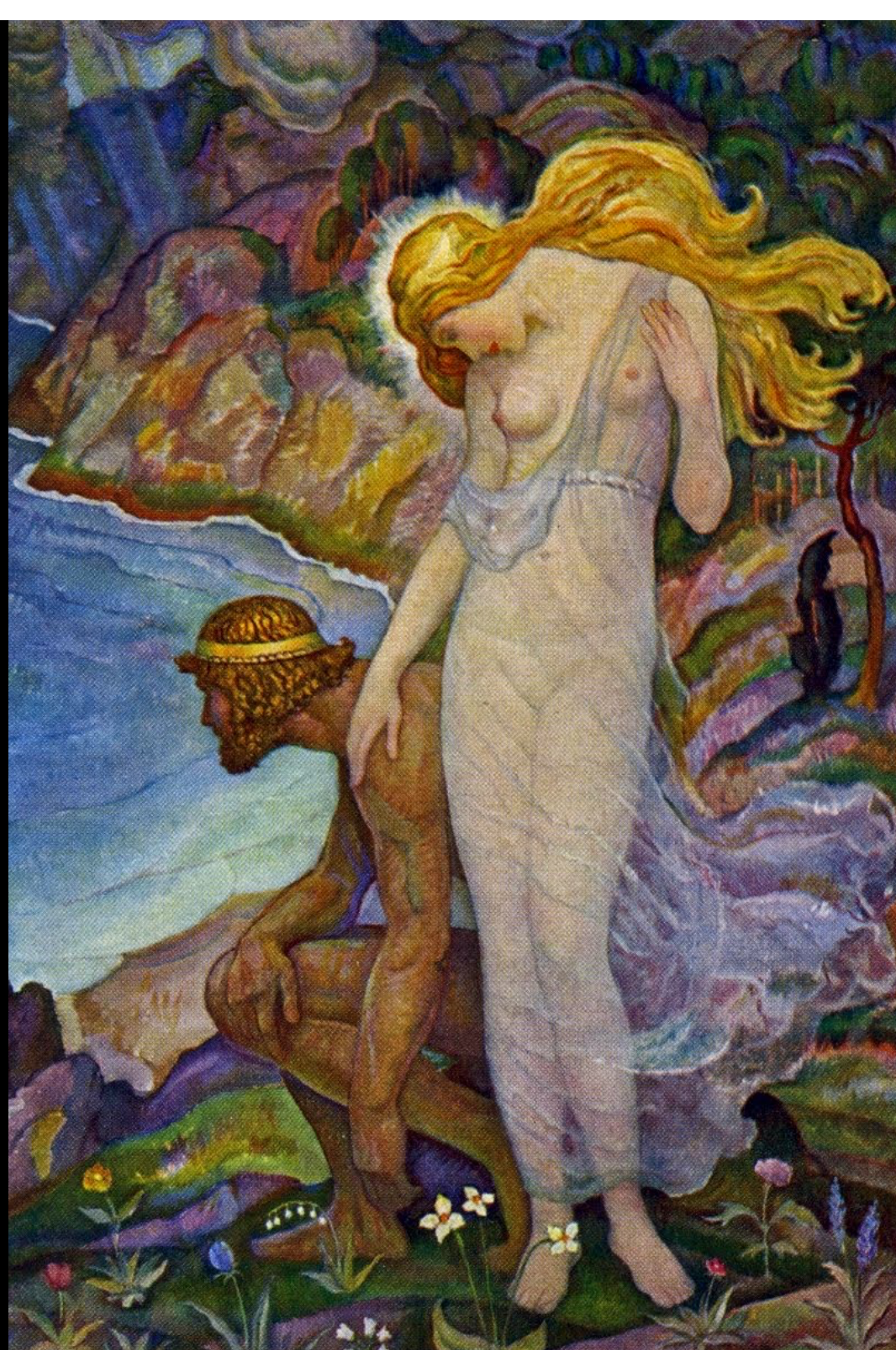
BOOKS 2,3,4

- Book 2: the meeting with the suitors ends in deadlock; Telemachos starts his journey with Athena in disguise
- Book 3: they come to Pylos, where King Nestor recounts the last time he saw Odysseus; then tells story of Agamemnon, killed by his wife and her lover. Athena reveals herself as a goddess.
- Book 4: Sparta: King Menelaus tells stories of Odysseus' cunning (Trojan horse), his own return and struggle with Proteus, who tells about Odysseus and Calypso



BOOK 5

- overwhelming importance of offering food and drink to every person who comes through the door
- Odysseus initially is like Telemachus: weepy, disconsolate, passive
- the sea for the Greeks: boat-building, rivers, storms, reefs
- almost every event is caused by the gods: Zeus, Hermes, Athena, Calypso, Poseidon, Leucothea, Athena again



BOOKS 6,7,8

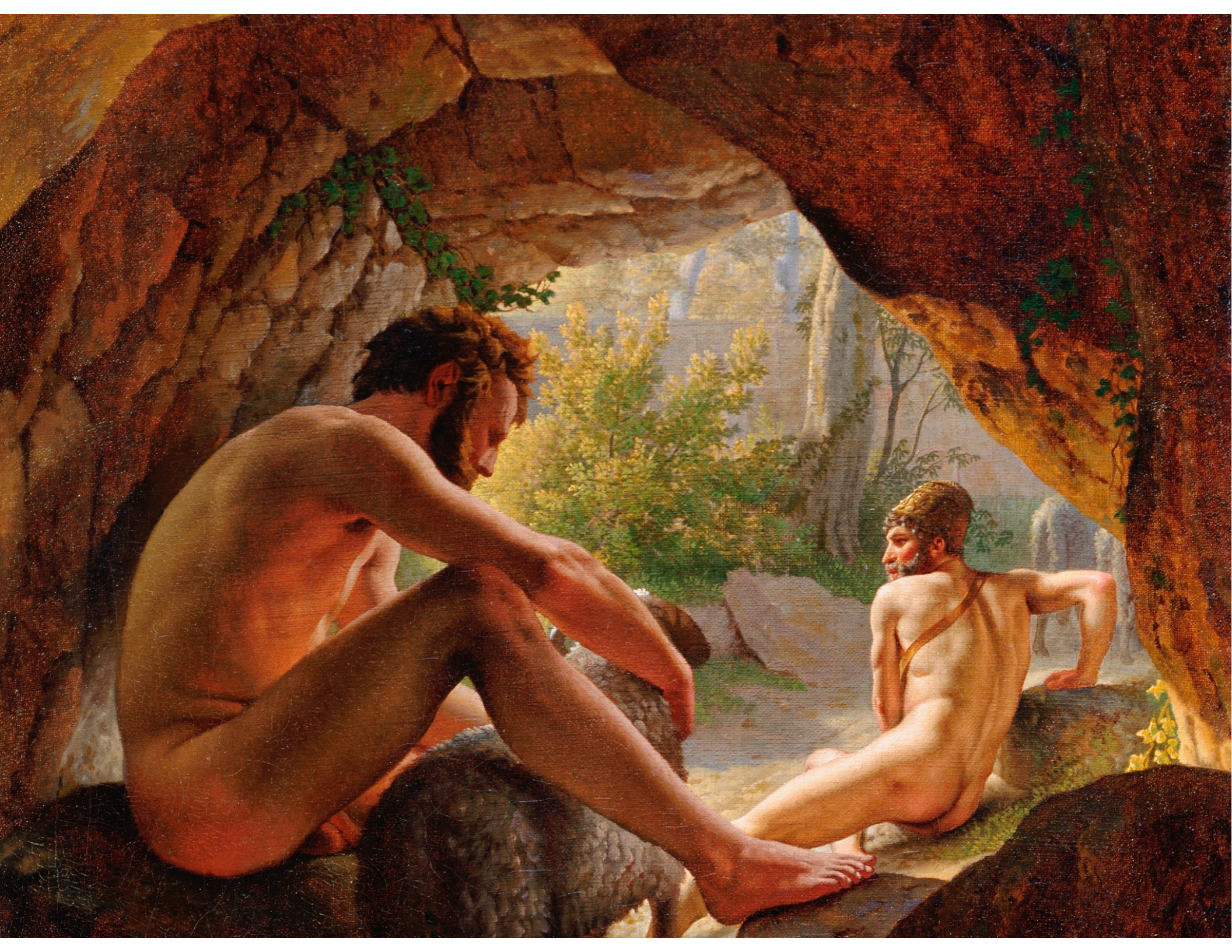
- Book 6: Odysseus meets Princess Nausicaa, who directs him to palace and advises him how to approach Queen Arete
- Book 7: Odysseus so impresses the King and Queen they offer him their daughter, Nausicaa, as wife
- Book 8: They offer Odysseus a ship; the bard Demodocus sings of Odysseus at Troy; he weeps, then beats the local men at all their sports, then prepares to admit who he is



BOOK 9

- prelude: the Lotus-Eaters (loss of will, purpose, direction)
- the cave of Polyphemus: showcase Odysseus' best quality (*metis*, or cunning) and his worst (*hubris*, pride)
- themes: loss of will; hosts and guests; eating and drinking; return home to find it's been invaded
- origin of Odysseus' trouble: the curse. Is it deserved? Everyone is entitled to vengeance











Circeo, Italy







Emperor Tiberius' Villa
Sperlonga, Italy

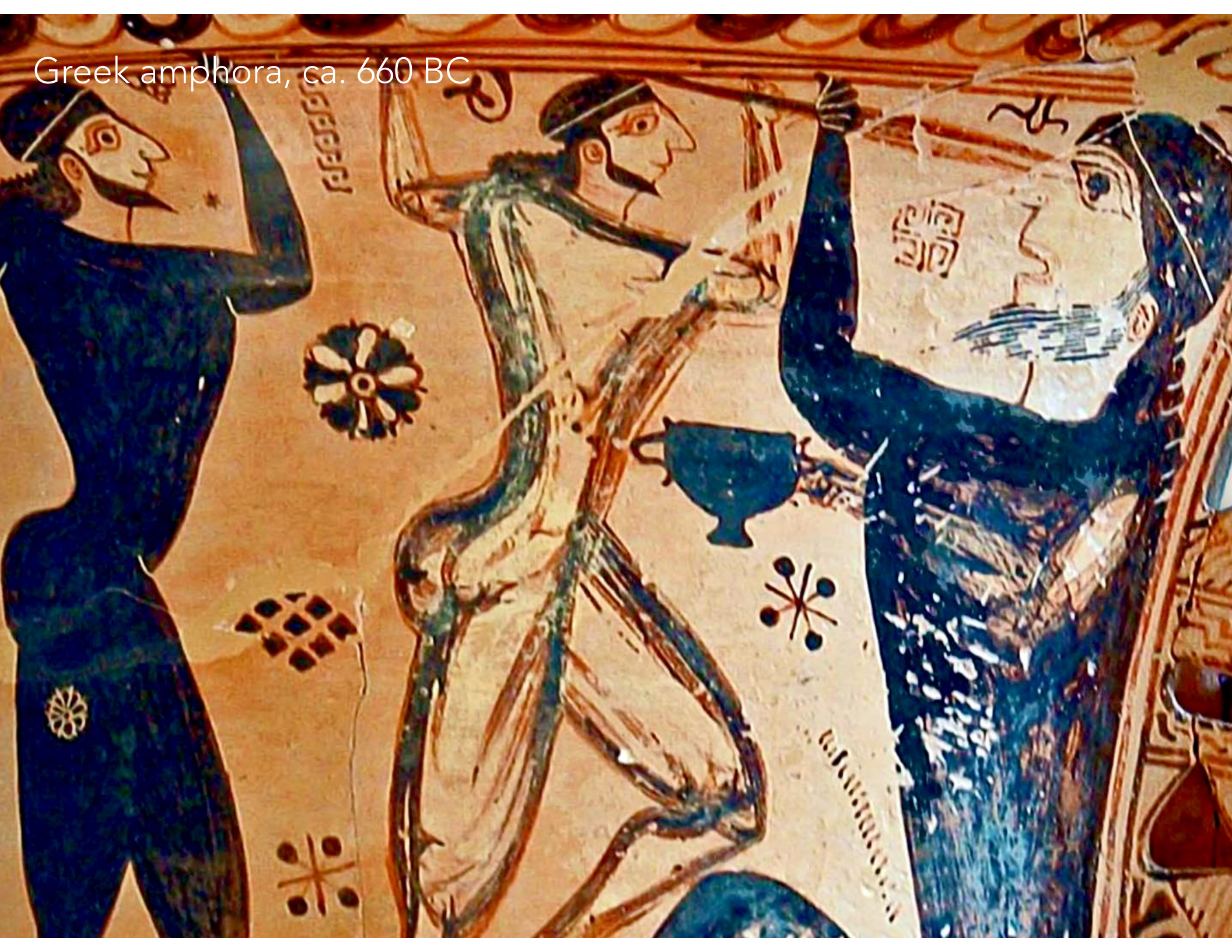




Krater fragment, ca. 650 BC

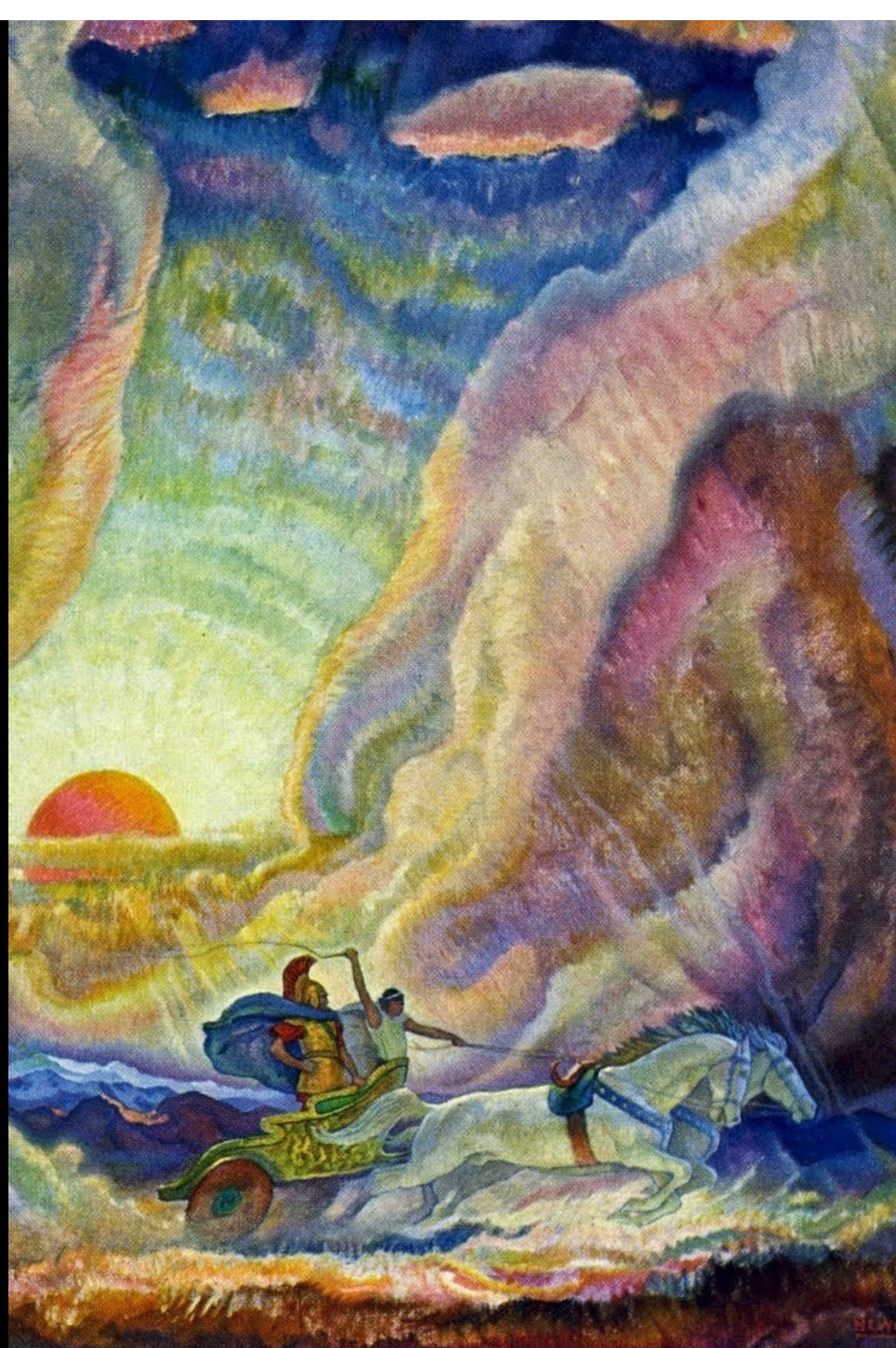


Greek amphora, ca. 660 BC



THOUGHTS

- careful thematic composition: Agamemnon raises questions of wife's fidelity, son's honor
- guests, hospitality, food and drink, taking what belongs to others; Phaeacians are exemplary hosts, Polyphemus a terrible one; Odysseus is an exemplary guest, suitors are terrible ones
- virile epic action set against lethargy, despair (*akedia*); creates a dynamic contrast between the Odysseus of past (active) and present (passive, weepy); Telemachus: passive present; but what about their *future*?



NEXT UP:
HOMER'S *THE ODYSSEY*
BOOKS 10, 11, 12