

Approaches to Homer's
Iliad and *Odyssey*

EDITED BY KOSTAS MYRSIADES

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PETER LANG

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Introduction

This collection of ten essays on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* revisits the first literary works of Western culture to find that they are still relevant in the 21st century. Both epics are required reading in most college/university general and world literature courses as is evident from their inclusion in part or in whole in many standard world literature anthologies (i.e., The Norton anthology, the Longman anthology, and the Bedford anthology to name only a few of the most popular texts used in our college/university classrooms). New English translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have appeared at regular intervals since George Chapman's translations in the 16th century, which long remained the standard English versions. The most recent of the over two dozen translations of these two epics in the last 50 years was recently published in 2008 (*The Iliad*, trans. Herbert Jordan, University of Oklahoma Press). Since 1990 alone we have had eight new translations of the *Odyssey* (by Allen Mandelbaum, 1990; Robert Fagles, 1996; Martin Hammond, 2000; Stanley Lombardo, 2000; R. L. Eickhoff, 2001; Rodney Merrill, 2002; Edward McCrorie, 2004; Ian Johnson, 2006) and six of the *Iliad* (by Robert Fagles, 1990; Michael Reck, 1994; Stanley Lombardo, 1997; Ian Johnson, 2006; Rodney Merrill, 2007; Herbert Jordan, 2008). Critical essays and books on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* continue to be published annually in leading scholarly journals and by major university presses throughout this country and abroad, which makes Homer perhaps the bestselling author of all time with a 2800 year track record. Even the graphic novel has appropriated Homer in Eric Shanower's projected seven volume series. Edith Hall in her recent study, *The Return of Ulysses; A Cultural History of Homer's Odyssey* (2008) finds that Homer's influence has pervaded all phases of contemporary culture as works of recent fiction and nonfiction as well as recent film adaptations will attest. One need only mention the recent fiction of Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad*, 2005; Lindsay Clarke's two novels: *The War at Troy*, 2004 and *The Return from Troy*, 2005; Elizabeth Cook's *Achilles*; David Gemmell's Troy trilogy: *Lord of the Silver Bow*, 2005, *Shield of Thunder*, 2006, and *Fall of Kings*, 2007; Dan Simmon's two science fiction novels: *Ilium*, 2003 and *Olympos*, 2005; Barry Unsworth's *The Siege of Troy*, 2003; and Mary Zimmerman's *The Odyssey*, 2006. In recent nonfiction Homer's influence is felt in the social and cultural historian Bettany Hughes' *Helen of Troy; Goddess, Princess, Whore*, 2005, while Wolfgang Petersen's *Troy*, 2004 and the TV miniseries, *Helen of Troy*, 2003 and the earlier *The Odyssey*, 1997 are good examples of Homer's influence on contemporary film. Thus to the answer often asked in academic circles whether Homer is still relevant to us today or if he is even still alive

at our institutions of higher learning, the ten essays in this collection respond with a resounding *Yes*.

This collection offers not only fresh approaches to reading, appreciating, and understanding the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but also attempts to make a case why these works are still relevant for us today. My own contribution, "Are the Homeric Epics Relevant in the 21st Century?" begins the collection by emphasizing the universal concerns of life, death, and immortality that lead us back to the Homeric epics generation after generation. John Miles Foley in "Reading Homer through Oral Tradition" turns back to the oral tradition roots of these epics to show that a reconsideration of their oral origins exerts a great deal of influence on how we approach, understand, and teach these poems in today's educational climate. He suggests that by paying attention to the specifics of Homer's language and the oral tradition, we can deal with the poems more faithfully. Once Foley has set the background from which the Homeric epics emerged, Damian Stocking in his essay, "*Res Agens*: Towards an Ontology of the Homeric Self" poses a question which further supports Homer's relevancy in the 21st century, "what is the nature of the self as presented to us in Homeric epic?" In answering this question he employs Homeric depictions of the corpse and *psuche* to arrive at a full ontological theory of Homeric selfhood and concludes that the Homeric self is conceived in terms of pointed, relational activity, as a "driving, herding thing"—a *res agens*. Kalliopi Nikolopoulou continues the relevancy of Homer by exploring the philosophical question of finitude as it is illustrated in the link between fate and feet in the *Iliad* in her essay "Feet, Fate, and Finitude: On Standing and Inertia in the *Iliad*." Nikolopoulou states that "the standing posture is not simply one of various human characteristics, but an ontological determination of what it means to be human—that is, to be in relation to one's own death." By focusing on careful reading of Achilles' inertia in *Iliad* 9 and 24, as opposed to his violent actions in *Iliad* 22, she makes the claim that "the Achilles who has rendered his feet inoperative is the one who better understands finitude than the Achilles who chases his opponents in an attempt to stand up against his own mortality." From a consideration of the self and finitude, Casey Dué's "Learning Lessons from the Trojan War: Briseis and the Theme of Force," looks at several modern attempts to learn lessons from the Trojan War, the subject around which both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are based. Dué begins with Simone Weil's 1939 essay, "The *Iliad*, or the Poem of Force" and compares some of the arguments made in that essay about the theme of force in the *Iliad* to some of the underlying assumptions of Petersen's *Troy*. Through this comparison Dué concludes that the film *Troy* is the latest example of a type of reading dating back to the 7th century BCE

and speculates about the nature of the *Iliad* as a didactic text and why so many generations have sought truth in the epic.

The next four essays focus on the interpretation of certain key issues and/or scenes in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In "Poulydamas and Hektor" Matthew Clark focuses on a minor character in the *Iliad* who plays an important role in the epic. Clark sees Poulydamas not only as Hektor's double who can express what Hektor is thinking but is unable to express, but Poulydamas serves also as Hektor's wise counselor whose advice Hektor rejects in four different episodes. These carefully arranged passages in which Poulydamas appears, Clark contends, "display the power of variation within a formulaic method of composition; they also reveal important aspects of Hektor's character, as well as aspects of the Homeric view of decision-making and the Homeric view of the complex self." In "Aias and the Gods" William Duffy turns from Poulydamas to another character in the *Iliad*, the Greater Aias and his complicated relationship with two gods. In examining Aias' inconsistent interactions with Zeus and the fact that no god intervenes on his behalf on the battlefield, although he is one of the most prominent warriors in Troy, Duffy develops the conflict he sees between the feelings Zeus and Athena hold for the hero. On the one hand Zeus cares for Aias, but the promise he has made to Thetis earlier in the epic to allow Hektor to excel in battle works against Aias. Athena on the other hand hates Aias as she does throughout the Greek literary tradition, but at the same time needs him to finally see the Greeks defeat the Trojans. In "Homer and the Will of Zeus," Joe Wilson employs the trope of the *boule Dios* (the will of Zeus) to demonstrate how Homer could manipulate the will of Zeus to bestow or withhold *kleos*, the fame one wins on the battlefield and to demonstrate the extent to which the poet was free to use the tradition, and how he was bound by it. Rick M. Newton in "Assembly and Hospitality in the Cyclopeia" turns from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey* and the story of the Cyclops Polyphemus in Book 9. In telling the Phaeacians his adventure with the Cyclops, Odysseus sets his story of violated hospitality within the framework of a Homeric assembly. Thus by conflating these two type-scenes (hospitality and assembly), Homer can establish an "Ithacans as Cyclopes" analogy in which the Ithacans in assembly in Book 2 disband without helping Telemachus recalls the Cyclopes who convene outside the cave of Polyphemus in Book 9 only to disperse without giving the giant aid. In such an analogy the Ithacans emerge indifferent to the suitors' violation of *xenia* (hospitality), and Odysseus is shown to display Ithacan behavior in Polyphemus' cave.

The final essay by Mihoko Suzuki, "Rewriting the *Odyssey* in the Twenty-First Century: Mary Zimmerman's *Odyssey* and Margaret Atwood's *Penelopiad*," examines two contemporary rewritings of the *Odyssey* reflecting

the reassessment of the epic by recent feminist criticism. Suzuki shows that while Zimmerman telescopes the epic by focusing on a number of the *Odyssey*'s female characters as they figure in the comic satire of contemporary feminist playwright Caryl Churchill, Atwood mounts a critique of the epic from a perspective that foregrounds issues of class as well as of gender.

These ten essays, then, by teachers/scholars of Homer and Greek culture provide novel ways of approaching and appreciating the Homeric epics whether they are being studied in the college/university classroom or merely being read for enjoyment.

Kostas Myrsiades
West Chester University

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Why Teach Homer?

Kostas Myrsiades

Almost 3000 years ago, a blind poet(s) living at the dawn of civilization recited/composed two epic poems, the *Iliad*, recounting the wrath of Achilles, and the *Odyssey*, about the 10-year-long adventures of Odysseus. Today the Homeric epics as they are known to us are read and taught throughout our colleges and universities, and they are probably known in one form or another to most educated people around the world. What is it about these two poems that make them the most read works, except for the Bible, in Western civilization?

There are many answers. Anthropologists and sociologists study the epics for their wealth of information on everyday Homeric life; psychologists focus on Homer's heroes to probe people's need for moral values and religion; and folklorists search the texts as an encyclopedia of classical mythology.

Alexander the Great reportedly carried a copy of the *Iliad* with him wherever he went because for him the poem represented the epitome of heroism and the way a warrior had to conduct himself. Leo Tolstoy believed the Homeric epics were the closest thing to nature itself. Victorian poet and critic Matthew Arnold found them the best cure for a headache.

I think, however, most people throughout the ages have read and re-read Homer because of the poet's preoccupation with understanding the essence of human life. Today we still continue to read and teach him for the same reason—because he tells us about ourselves, because what he shows us is as true today as it was almost 3000 years ago.

In Homer we witness the emergence of human beings from a dark theriomorphic world—a world of monsters and beast-gods—to an anthropomorphic world—one in which people create gods in their own likeness. What many of us marvel at in this emergence of people from a world of

darkness into a world of light is the human struggle to understand and accept one's mortality, one's reliance on human intellect, and one's need for identity and recognition.

Achilles, of the *Iliad*, questions his understanding of mortality by struggling to grasp the idea of honor (*timê*) and the qualities that would make him "the best of the Achaeans," the best of the Greek warriors. Early in the *Iliad*, he is dishonored when his commander-in-chief, Agamemnon, takes away his mistress. Achilles sees his loss and Agamemnon's gain as an insult and a dishonor to his manhood and to his position as a warrior, and he refuses to take part in the Greek effort against Troy until he receives an apology from Agamemnon. But when Agamemnon finally relents in *Iliad* 9 by offering to return Achilles' woman, Briseis—accompanied by other women slaves and material prizes—Achilles is no longer ready to accept.

In the meantime Achilles has had time to reflect on the meaning of honor, and he has learned that honor cannot be measured in women, slaves or material goods. Honor, he concludes, is something intangible and internal. The greatest of warriors realizes that if he must die in war, he must die not for material rewards but for a deep-rooted personal and private cause, like friendship. He realizes that his greatness must be measured by the extent to which he is willing to stand up for what he believes no matter what the price. At the end of the *Iliad*, Achilles fights not because of the material rewards (*geras*) he is given, which no longer seem to interest him, but because his friend Patroclus is killed. He wants to act out of friendship. His reward will be that he fought and died for a friend.

Such commitment becomes more poignant when we notice that the Homeric epics are in many ways true to ordinary daily life. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, human beings—unlike the gods—must face death. Greatness for humans, Homer tells us, stems from their realization that their actions may mean life or death, yet they choose to act. The gods act without fear. They have little to lose. In this sense, it is the gods who envy mortals. Being human in Homer becomes the condition to which even the gods aspire. When Kalypso, the beautiful, seductive, eternally-young goddess, offers Odysseus love, youth, and immortality if only he will remain with her and forget his wife, Penelope, and his Ithacan home, Odysseus rejects her offer and chooses instead mortality and life with by now a middle-aged woman. Immortality for him would mean eternal stagnation, inactivity, and boredom—a living death. Odysseus can remain with the ever-youthful Kalypso—her name in Greek (*kalypsein*) suggests her function of concealing or hiding mortals from life—or he can embrace life and the pursuit of knowledge, action, and adventure, along with the human struggle for survival. He opts for life—short and precious, worth fighting and struggling for.

It is not an accident that we first meet Odysseus on Kalypso's island, his next to the last adventure in his quest to reach Ithaca, and that after rejecting the goddess, Odysseus sails to the island of the Phaeacians and from there to his home. It is as if Homer wants us to know that the moment Odysseus comes to terms with his mortality and sees it as the most desired state for human beings, he is able to return home. For seven years before coming to Kalypso, he has been fighting cannibals and one-eyed giants—not entirely the fault of the gods as it is his unwillingness to accept his lot.

Homer's emphasis on mortality vs. immortality is poignantly brought home also in the Menelaos-Helen episode of *Odyssey* 4. Here Odysseus' son Telemachos has arrived in Sparta to seek the whereabouts of his father from his father's comrade-in-arms Menelaos. He finds Menelaos and his wife, Helen, in the midst of a double wedding for their son and daughter, yet both seem uneasy and depressed. To ease their pain and sleep, Helen must drug both her husband's and her drinks. In bed they lie together and yet apart, their comments to each other full of regret, remorse, and guilt. When Telemachos in Helen's presence asks Menelaos to recall anything he might know of Odysseus' whereabouts, Menelaos responds with an incident from the final days of the Trojan War—the tale of the Trojan Horse—which has little to do with what Telemachos is seeking:

Then you came there, Helen; you will have been moved by
 some divine spirit who wished to grant glory to the Trojans,
 and Deiphobos, a godlike man, was with you when you came.
 Three times you walked around the hollow ambush, feeling it,
 and you called out, naming them by name, to the best of the Danaans,
 and made your voice sound like the voice of the wife of each of the Argives.
 Now I myself and the son of Tydeus and great Odysseus
 were sitting there in the middle of them and we heard you crying
 aloud, and Diomedes and I started up, both minded
 to go outside, or else to answer your voice from inside,
 but Odysseus pulled us back and held us, for all our eagerness.
 Then all the other sons of the Achaians were silent:
 there was only one, it was Antiklos, who was ready to answer,
 but Odysseus, brutally squeezing his mouth in the clutch of his powerful
 hands, held him, and so saved the lives of all the Achaians
 until such time as Pallas Athene led you off from us. (*Od.* 4.274-89)¹

Of all the stories Menelaos could offer Telemachos about his father, he focuses on this one, a story showing Helen in an unfavorable light rather than

one providing information on the whereabouts of Odysseus. Menelaos tells us that Helen fought the Greeks right up to the very end of the war, attempting to sabotage the Greeks hiding in the wooden horse's belly by imitating the voices of the warriors' women and enticing them to call out and give up their hiding place. Furthermore, he points out that she came not alone but in the company of yet another lover, Deiphobos, brother of Paris. Odysseus, however, saves the day by preventing the soldiers from being duped by Helen's duplicity. Odysseus, it seems, is here only incidental to the story Menelaos is relating, for his tale is intended more for Helen's ears than for anyone else's and is in response to the story Helen has just finished telling Telemachos about her fondest memory of his father.

Helen recites an incident from around the middle of the Trojan War when Odysseus, dressed as a beggar, came undetected into Troy, "I alone recognized him even in this form," says Helen,

and I questioned him, but he in his craftiness eluded me;
but after I had bathed him and anointed him with olive oil
and put some clothing upon him, after I had sworn a great oath
not to disclose before the Trojans that this was Odysseus
until he had made his way back to the fast ships and the shelters,
then at last he told me all the purpose of the Achaians,
and after striking many Trojans down with the thin bronze
edge, he went back to the Argives and brought back much information.
The rest of the Trojan women cried out shrill, but my heart
was happy, my heart had changed by now and was for going back
home again. (*Od.* 4.251-61)

Here Helen presents herself as the remorseful wife who has realized her mistake long before the destruction of Troy. But why should she add in front of Menelaos that she bathed Odysseus, a function not of a queen but of a servant? That detail disturbs Menelaos who has just finished a ten-year-long battle occasioned by her infidelity. It is no wonder, then, when Menelaos tells his story, he is commenting on Helen's.

Although Helen claims she had repented and come over to the Greek side long before the war's end, Menelaos' story contradicts her. Even on the final evening of the war she is seen with a Trojan lover working in favor of the Trojans. In this episode Homer shows us two people who can neither forget their past nor forgive each other. Helen will constantly remind Menelaos of her disloyalty and interest in other men and the pain and suffering she brought to Greece. Menelaos, the wealthiest of mortals, living with the world's most beautiful woman, can wish only for the Elysian fields—for

immortality and death. Odysseus on the other hand, after struggling for 20 years, having lost all his men and ships, refuses what Menelaos seeks—immortality for life. He accepts the struggle as a better alternative than eternal stagnation. He accepts his lot as a human being, and his choice makes it possible for him to return home a happy man.

Human beings, Homer affirms, must hold tight to life, just as Menelaos had to hold on to the god Proteus through his many changing forms until at the end, exhausted, the god returned to his original form and answered Menelaos' questions concerning his fate and that of his fellow warriors returning from Troy.

Even Odysseus' epithet stresses this admirable quality that Homer associates with human beings—*polytropos*, the man of many ways, the man who can agilely change his course when cornered by life or who has the imagination to go in new directions when necessary, the man who, by changing like the weather, can meet all that life throws his way.

Homer's emphasis on our mortality is plausible because of his insistence on the real and the human. Although his world seems filled with monsters, giants, gods, and godlike heroes, the poet goes to great lengths to accentuate the real and the possible and to downplay the mythic. In the *Odyssey*, Homer limits the mythic to a few lines in each of Odysseus' adventures. In the longest of the Odyssean tales, that of the Cyclops, Homer describes in detail the harbor where Odysseus' ships land, the landscape, the government of the Cyclops, the Cyclops themselves, and Polyphemos' cave and his treatment of his flock. Not until halfway through the episode does the poet finally touch on the unreal, the mythic, and then he hurriedly gets back to the plausible and real:

So I spoke, but he in pitiless spirit answered
 nothing, but sprang up and reached for my companions,
 caught up two together and slapped them, like killing puppies,
 against the ground, and the brains ran all over the floor, soaking
 the ground. Then he cut them up limb by limb and got supper ready,
 and like a lion reared in the hills, without leaving anything,
 ate them, entrails, flesh and the marrowy bones alike. We
 cried out aloud and held our hands up to Zeus, seeing
 the cruelty of what he did, but our hearts were helpless. (*Od.* 9.287-95)

Later in the episode, after Odysseus has blinded Polyphemos and the giant is groping to find Odysseus among his flock, the giant speaks to the largest ram under whose belly Odysseus is hiding, forcing the ram to lag behind the other animals when before it was always the first out of the cave.

Here the Cyclops is described as a sensitive shepherd lovingly looking after his sheep:

My dear old ram, why are you thus leaving the cave last of the sheep? Never in the old days were you left behind by the flock, but long-striding, far ahead of the rest, would pasture on the tender bloom of the grass, be first at running rivers, and be eager always to lead the way first back to the sheepfold at evening. Now you are last of all. Perhaps you are grieving for your master's eye, which a bad man with his wicked companions put out, after he had made my brain helpless with wine, this Nobody, who I think has not yet got clear of destruction. (*Od.* 9.447–55)

Elsewhere in this passage we learn that Polyphemos is the son of Poseidon, or we see the giant busily at his chores, and we listen as he recalls a prophet who long ago predicted that a Greek who would cause him harm. The world of the Cyclops as described in the epic is for the most part Homer's own with the same gods and values. The Cyclops' is an uncivilized land, different from Odysseus' civilized world only because the giants don't build ships or know how to till the soil or know how to follow the rules of hospitality. Otherwise he is Greek in every way, even to the point of becoming eloquent and human at times, as at the end of this same episode after Odysseus has revealed his true identity:

Hear me, Poseidon who circle the earth, dark-haired. If truly I am your son, and you acknowledge yourself as my father, grant that Odysseus, sacker of cities, son of Laertes, who makes his home in Ithaka, may never reach that home; but if it is decided that he shall see his own people, and come home to his strong-founded house and to his own country, let him come late, in bad case, with the loss of all his companions, in someone else's ship, and find troubles in his household. (*Od.* 9.528–35)

The Cyclops adventure occupies 2200 lines of the *Odyssey*, one-sixth of the entire poem. Most of the other five-sixths emphasize detailed and realistic descriptions throughout the poem. Even in these 2200 lines, the poet suppresses or modifies the mythic, giving less time to the folkloric and considerably more time to people and events as revelations of character. He further places these myths, the Odyssean adventures, in the middle of the epic, even though chronologically they occur at the beginning of the Odyssean journey, bracketing them with the more realistic events of Ithaka, a real, identi-

fiable place described at the beginning in the first four books of the *Telemachia* and in the last 12 books of Odysseus' return to his homeland. But even within the eight books relating these adventures, Homer is careful to lead us slowly and cautiously into the world of make-believe.

The Greek gods themselves are left out of Odysseus' adventures, as if Homer was emphasizing the implausibility that the gods should be part of these folktales. The gods' absence and especially that of Athena, Odysseus' patron goddess, who elsewhere in the epic is always around to lend a helping hand, stresses the importance Homer places on the human individual. Odysseus must use his wits and by himself fight the monsters he meets without any divine intervention. Only if he succeeds will Athena deem him worthy of assistance. Man must prove himself worthy of divine intervention.

Homer extends his preoccupation with human mortality to his celebration of the human intellect. To read the Homeric epics is to witness man's discovery of his mind. At the opening of the *Iliad*, when the quarrel of Achilles and Agamemnon has come to an impasse and Achilles is ready to draw his sword to strike his commander-in-chief, Athena, the goddess of wisdom, is quickly dispatched from Olympus to persuade Achilles to stay his anger. She arrives as Achilles is ready to slay Agamemnon, and as his hand goes to his sword, the goddess, unseen by anyone except Achilles, places her hand on his shoulder and says:

I have come to stay your anger—but will you obey me?—
from the sky; and the goddess of the white arms Hera sent me,
who loves both of you equally in her heart and cares for you.
Come then, do not take your sword in your hand, keep clear of fighting,
though indeed with words you may abuse him, and it will be that way.
(*Il.* 1.207-11)²

Nowhere else this early in Western culture do we come across such refinement and respect for human intelligence and for human predominance in the universe. The gods are there to assist man, not order him as in the Old Testament. Athena descends to prevent Achilles from acting irrationally, but she will do so only with his permission. Achilles must find the wisdom in himself to act; he can listen to reason or not. When he relaxes his hand from his sword, it is because Athena's words are rational and to slay Agamemnon would be acting in anger. The gods assist man because they admire his intelligence. Man is seen to be more in charge of his affairs, although he suffers more in proportion to his own mishandling of them.

Perhaps nowhere in Homer is the celebration of the mind more beautifully illustrated than *Odyssey* 6, when Odysseus—ravaged for 19 days and nights by an angry sea—lands on the 20th day exhausted, hungry, naked, and

alone after 10 years of wandering among monsters and cannibals to awake face to face with what appears to be a young human maiden. He is unsure at first, because he has come across beings before who turned out to be semi-gods or monsters in disguise. Although debilitated and not having eaten for days, he thinks fast as the princess Nausicaa approaches him:

from the dense foliage with his heavy hand he broke off
a leafy branch to cover his body and hide the male parts. (*Od.* 6.128-29)

His first act is not to plead for mercy or to ask for food, but to somehow cover his private parts. After all the girl before him could be human, and he might embarrass her.

His intellect is further challenged as he ponders how he should approach her. Should he clasp her knees, as custom dictates if she should be a goddess, or should he stand aloof lest she be human and become frightened? On the other hand to stay aloof would incur the wrath of a goddess, so what he decides must satisfy both the human maiden as well as the goddess:

Then in the division of his heart this way seemed best to him,
to stand well off and supplicate in words of blandishment, for fear that, if he
clasped her knees, the girl might be angry.

So blandishingly and full of craft he began to address her:

“If indeed you are one of the gods who hold wide heaven,
then I must find in you the nearest likeness to Artemis
the daughter of great Zeus, for beauty, figure, and stature.

But if you are one among those mortals who live in this country,
three times blessed are you father and the lady your mother,
and three times blessed your brothers too, and I know their spirits
are warmed forever with happiness at the thought of you, seeing
such a slip of beauty taking her place in the chorus of dancers;
but blessed at the heart, even beyond these others, is that one
who, after loading you down with gifts, leads you as his bride
home. I have never with these eyes seen anything like you,
neither man nor woman. Wonder takes me as I look at you.”
(*Od.* 6.145-61)

Using an intellect that can stem only from someone born into a civilized society, Odysseus submerges his material needs (hunger and sleep) and covers himself, something a Cyclops would never think to do, and then decides to use tact to win over the girl and/or goddess before him. Mesmerized so by her beauty that he cannot move towards her, he claims she reminds him