

The Unknown Odysseus - Thomas Van Nortwick

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The Unknown Odysseus is a study of how Homer creates two versions of his hero, one who is the triumphant protagonist of the revenge plot and another, more subversive, anonymous figure whose various personae exemplify an entirely different set of assumptions about the world through which each hero moves and about the shape and meaning of human life. Separating the two perspectives allows us to see more clearly how the poem's dual focus can begin to explain some of the notorious difficulties readers have encountered in thinking about the Odyssey. In The Unknown Odysseus, Thomas Van Nortwick offers the most complete exploration to date of the implications of Odysseus' divided nature, showing how it allows Homer to explore the riddles of human identity in a profound way that is not usually recognized by studies focusing on only one "real" hero in the narrative. This new perspective on the epic enriches the world of the poem in a way that will interest both general readers and classical scholars. ". . . an elegant and lucid critical study that is also a good introduction to the poem." ---David Quint, London Review of Books "Thomas Van Nortwick's eloquently written book will give the neophyte a clear interpretive path through the epic while reminding experienced readers why they should still care about the Odyssey's unresolved interpretive cruces. The Unknown Odysseus is not merely accessible, but a true pleasure to read." ---Lillian Doherty, University of Maryland "Contributing to an important new perspective on understanding the epic, Thomas Van Nortwick wishes to resist the dominant, even imperial narrative that tries so hard to trick, beguile, and even bully its listeners into accepting the inevitability of Odysseus' heroism." ---Victoria Pedrick, Georgetown University Thomas Van Nortwick is Nathan A. Greenberg Professor of Classics at Oberlin College and author of Somewhere I Have Never Travelled: The Second Self and the Hero's Journey in Ancient Epic (1992) and Oedipus: The Meaning of a Masculine Life (1998). Jacket art: Head of Odysseus from a sculptural group representing Odysseus killing Polyphemus in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Sperlonga, Italy. Photograph by Marie-Lan Nguyen. Author: Van Nortwick, Thomas Publisher: University of Michigan Press Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: The Unknown Odysseus Pages: 00160 (Encrypted PDF) On Sale: 2010-02-01 SKU-13/ISBN: 9780472116737 Category: Literary Criticism : Ancient and Classical

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