

The Lost Books of the Odyssey by Zachary Mason.

Jonathan Cape 2010.

Postulating a textual fluidity similar to that associated with the Hebrew Bible before its canonisation, Zachary Mason's debut novel 'reproduces' 44 stories that never made it into the final edited version of Homer's Odyssey.

Mason writes with an authenticity and power that are admirable, and the reader who suspends their disbelief, whether they have read the Odyssey in the distant past or more recently, will find themselves swept along by this collection of evocative tales, each one a gem in its own right, and will also be persuaded to reconsider some sections of the Homeric original and the perspective that Mason's 'apocryphal texts' shed on them.

A splendid debut and a most original idea!

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh