

Sample essay on literary analysis of the many woman troubles in the odyssey and t...

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The Odyssey is one of the oldest Greek poems associated with Homer. The poem starts by introducing the main character; Odysseus who embarks on his journey back home after the fall of Troy. After the Trojan War ends, Odysseus takes another period of ten years before arriving back home in Ithaca. During this period, his wife Penelope and his son Prince Telemachus languishes in pain and suffering, bearing in mind that Odysseus had died in the war zone area. One of the major challenges that threatened disintegration in Odysseus family is a bunch of suitors who seduced Penelope to replace Odysseus absence. The suitors were in oblivion that Odysseus is alive while Telemachus is not courageous enough to chase the suitors away. The suitors, Penelope, and Telemachus are not aware that Odysseus had been captivated in Ogygia Island by a beautiful lady by the name Calypso, who had fallen for Odysseus love. Odysseus means had been curtailed since he had neither a ship nor the crew to facilitate his escape. The hunger for the kingdom's leadership influences one of the suitors; Antinous to devise a plan of killing Telemachus and inherit the leadership throne. (McDevitt, 2006)

Women are the most vulnerable to social instability in the society. They suffer because their role in the society is not recognized, and only men are allowed by the society culture to contribute and make decisions about any issue in the society. Women cannot inherit leadership roles when their husbands die or are incapacitated. The same problems affect womanhood as narrated by Homer in this poem. Penelope faces the problem of suitors who seduce her to accept either of their hands in marriage because they had presumed Odysseus had died in the battle. Seduction is a mental torture that women encounter in their everyday lives. Women face the dilemma of

choosing the best man who will protect them and feed their families.

More specifically, single or widowed women are the most challenged in their efforts to provide the necessities for their children and maintain the families' standard of living. When Odysseus is away for 20 years, Penelope faces the challenge of multiple suitors whose intention is to inherit her together with the kingdom. For instance, Antinous and other suitors seek for Penelope's hand in marriage. Women are required by the society to maintain sexual fidelity. Penelope family had to persevere the economic hardships of raising her family alone and the captivating suitors' wealth. (McDevitt , 2006)When Telemachus assembles the meeting, he reprimands the suitors for torturing his mother's mind and eating his father's oxen in a bid to inherit them and the kingdom's throne and orders them to leave and instead approach Icarus; Penelope's father and seek his support to marry his daughter(2: 96)

Another challenge that engulfs women in their daily endeavors is male chauvinism. Women have been reduced by the society's norms as objects subjective to man's authority. This is demonstrated by Telemachus when he reprimands his mother for complaining about the bard's songs. He reminds her that Odysseus was not the only person who died in the battle and, therefore, should stop whining every day. Additionally, Telemachus tells his mother that he held the reins and the power in the absence of his father. (1. 414)This constant reminder of the reality describes the authority of a man over a woman regardless of age or social status.

Additionally, women employ all tactics in their seductive nature to woo a man's love. Calypso applies all tactics including holding Odysseus captive to prevent him from leaving for Ithaca to see his wife and son . Calypso pleads

with Odysseus not to leave because she had fallen for him. In her quotes “ So than royal son of Laertes, Odysseus, man of exploits still eager to leave and hurry back to your own home.. but if only you knew the pains that are fated to fill your cup, you would stay here with me. (5. 223-232)These are words that Calypso used to lure and retain Odysseus in the island of Ogygia. She promises him to give Odysseus the power of immortality if he agreed to accept her as her husband and forget Penelope. Women are also susceptible to rape. For instance, a Greek warrior had attempted to rape Cassandra at the temple and, therefore, Athena cursed the Greeks with storms.

The “ Arabian Nights” is a collection of short stories that reflect the extent of civilization of the Islamic world between ninth and thirteenth century. The story starts with two kings in different kingdoms. King Shahzman is angered when he finds his wife sleeping with a kitchen boy. He kills both of them and then moves to his brother; Shahrayar in his kingdom. Shahzman observes the infidelity that Shahrayar wife is committing with paramours and informs his brother about it .(Johnston and David, 2000)They leave for a journey, and when they return Shahrayar kills his wife and authorizes his vizier to search for the daughter of a prince. They get married, and he kills her the next morning. Shahrayar continues this habit until he marries one of the cunning vizier’s daughters.

The successive events in the collection of stories describe the environment surrounding women as oppressive and inhuman. When married women are faithful to their husbands, they are beaten and put to death. Additionally, men have the privilege of sleeping with many women without reprimand from the society or their own wives. However, women must remain

submissive to their husbands by accepting to have sex only with them . Additionally, men can beat their women for infidelity or when the husband realizes that his wife has kissed another man. Men apply male chauvinism to oppress their wives. However, it is the wits of the women that sometimes save them from the cunning tactics of men and their chauvinism. For instance, Shahrayar tells her sister that he will get her on her wedding night to request the king to narrate a story so that the king would stop her heinous practices and help deliver other innocent lives from the King's wrath. (Story of the frame of the nights). (Johnston and David, 2000)

This tactical approach overpowered the king thus saved lives of innocent girls who would have died. Moreover, women's' wits are demonstrated in the story of the seventh night when a man made his sales and decided to lure a beautiful girl they saw in tatters. The girl agreed, and when they tossed to select who was to remain with her, the girl turned into a she-demon and escaped with his new husband. She said, " My husband, I have saved you from drowning for I am one of those demons who believe in God" This character of wits in women is what enables them to survive in the shadow of men. The Arabian night's collection of stories portrays women as objects of sex that men capitalize on oppressing them.

Conclusion

For a long time, women have been exploited by men under the disguise of social and cultural notions. The society requires that women should be loyal to their husbands and always submit to their demands. In the Homer's poem " Odyssey", Penelope is the object of male chauvinism . She has endured the power dominance of her son and the infidelity of her husband. However, the

cunning nature of women has helped them navigate the hurdles of men to participate in leadership roles. Oppression of women demonstrated in the collection of short story novel “ The Arabian nights” has escalated adversely even in the current century. Sexual demands, rape and beating, have been the problems that have engulfed women environment for a long period. Both authors of “ Odyssey” and “ The Arabian nights” revolve around the predicaments faced by women in the society.

Work cited

McDevitt, Jack. *Odyssey*. New York: Ace Books, 2006. Print.

Johnston, David C. *The Thousand and One Nights: Or, the Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Co, 2000. Print.