

Odyssey's last rhapsody

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



1 For this writing assignment I've chosen question number one. In a way ending the Odyssey with book 23 would make sense to a point because in 23 it talks about the meeting or rejoining of Odysseus and Penelope. Although at first Penelope is in disbelief when Eurycleia tells her about the return of Odysseus. However, by ending with book 23 you're leaving the readers hanging with not letting them know what happens with the suitors, and the meeting between Odysseus and his father. The main theme of book 23 is the meeting of Odysseus and Penelope. How Penelope tells Eurycleia to move her bed which makes Odysseus suddenly flare up and tells Penelope how the bed was made and how its unmovable. By doing so Penelope knows that this man must be her husband. After they get reacquainted, Odysseus tells Penelope where all he's been on his wanderings. Main theme of book 24 is the suitors being led by Hermes in Hades. Agamenon contrasts how Penelope with the treachery of Clyemnestra. Also in this book, Odysseus then travels to the Laertes farm (which is in Ithaca) so he can meet with his father. As a whole, I believe they both relate to the main theme of the story as an entirety. Previously throughout the book, Homer talks about Penelope and how she would react if and when Odysseus returned home. When they are together again they will know each other better, and speak with signs that only the two of them will understand. As for book 24- it also relates to the story as a whole because during Odysseus' travels the suitors were a big part. In conclusion, I feel that by ending the Odyssey with book 24 most readers will feel that they now know what happened to everyone that was mentioned throughout the story. If by leaving the book end at 23, that leaves tons of questions from readers unanswered. Struck notes, Book 23, Week 4

Lecture 7 [www. sparknotes. com/lit/Odyssey/section12. rhtml](http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/Odyssey/section12.rhtml) 2 What I chose is the Option 4, which is about the analysis of the idea of time in the Odyssey and its significance for the making of myth. During the process of learning the videos, I found that there is one crucial idea Professor Struck had specifically mentioned, which is Ring Composition. From my perspective, it is this technique that turns out to be the key to solve the problem. The structure we called " ring composition " could be defined as a structure that touches on a number of topics until a significant topic is reached, then continues on in the narrative by retracing in reverse order the topics which were mentioned on the way to the significant point. Ring Composition is an important element in the epic poetry, for instance, the Ring Composition appears several times in the whole text of Odyssey. The first one that I remember is when Odysseus arrived at King Alcinous' Palace, Homer made a long digression on tales of the extraordinary wealth of Alcinous's Palace. Professor Struck has already fully analyzed the Ring Composition here, and we could then find other examples of Ring Composition like the circuit of the suitors, or the speech of Alcinous. Besides, the significance and profound meaning of this writing method cannot be ignored. Time is able to actually expand and explode inside these rings. Like when the structure initially appeared at the threshold of Alcinous' Palace, Rings provide a way for Homer to dilate certain very pregnant scenes to let us pause for a moment usually inside someone's head as something grand happens right before our eyes. Just as in this case, we could all feel Alcinous' grand palace. In conclusion, Homer made excellent use of the method, Ring Composition, to illustrate and fulfill the myth. Additionally, this method did nothing but great favor to the

whole book as I stated above. In Odyssey Book 7, Odysseus arrived at the threshold of Alcinous's palace (Fagles, 183) 3-While book 23 serves as a ending: Odysseus has finally made his way back to Penelope's bed and that part of the story is concluded. Yet, as pointed out by Bernard Knox, there are a number of " loose ends... to be tied up"[1]. These include the consequence of the death of the suitors and the meeting of Odysseus and Laertes. This makes finishing the poem at book 23 unacceptable. Its worth noting, though, that the story of Odysseus erecting the temple for Poseidon, as decreed by Tiresias[2] and mentioned by Odysseus himself[3] is not included. Is there any reason why the other " loose ends" could not just as easily be left out? Probably. Greeks listening might have been unsure if Odysseus' actions were really acceptable. After all the suitors where the " sons of the very men who are your finest here!"[4] Book 24 helps to highlight that Odysseus' actions were acceptable. Agamemnon, salutes the actions of Odysseus and Penelope[5] and even Zeus accepts Odysseus' revenge[6]. Book 24 also has the reaction of the families of the slaughtered suitors. They want to extract revenge, an action that was expected of them[7]. They go to attack Odysseus but after one death, Athena stops it and forces them to make peace[8]. It's interesting to note that the one death is Eupithes, the one who roused everyone to rise up against Odysseus. Could this be a sign not too question the gods motives, especially since Medon had informed them that he " saw an immortal fighting at his[Odysseus'] side"[9]. This helps to show that while book 23 might be an acceptable ending for modern readers. The Greeks of antiquity would have more than likely needed a justification of the actions of Odysseus, especially in a mythical tale. A clear indication that his

were the correct actions to take, acceptable by all. Book 24 answers these questions. Both the gods and the heroes in the underworld praise and accept Odysseus' actions, and you can't argue against them. 1. Introduction to the Odyssey (Fagles, 2006, Pg59) 2. Odyssey, Bk11. Tiresias, build a temple to Poseidon (Fagles, 2006 Pg253, L139) 3. Odyssey, Bk23. Odysseus, build a temple to Poseidon (Fagles, 2006 Pg464, L306) 4. Odyssey, Bk2. Telemachus addresses the assembly (Fagles, 2006 Pg95, L55) 5. Odyssey, Bk24. Agamemnon praises Odysseus/Penelope (Fagles, 2006 Pg474, L210) 6. Odyssey, Bk24. Zeus to Athena (Fagles, 2006 Pg483, L537) 7. Dr Peter Struck Video Lecture 2-2-2. 3 (c. 10: 00) 8. Odyssey, Bk24. Athena ends fighting (Fagles, 2006 Pg485 L584) 9. Odyssey, Bk24. Medon (Fagles, 2006 Pg482 L492)