

Imaginary life-motifs essay



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Ovid experiences a large transformation when he is exiled into the Getae tribe. In Rome Ovid lived as any other Roman and was considered to be a normal person. However, when he was introduced into this new environment he was no longer comfortable with his surroundings and was labelled as an outsider. The child goes through a very similar transformation.

He is taken into an unknown environment and is forced to live and act like a normal boy. The similarities that these two share make a comparison that gives you an idea of who the child really is. The child in this sense represents not only Ovid himself but Ovid's childhood. Like Ovid the child is seen as an outsider as soon as he enters the tribe.

His home used to be among the wolves in the wilderness with no one to rely on but himself. However, this all changes once he is taken into the Getae tribe. An example of this transformation occurs within the first days of winter when the child would sleep outside in the freezing weather with no clothes on and would not even shiver. This was because the child had adapted to these conditions while living in the wilderness.

However, after a while of being rapt in warm clothes, his seeming immunity to the cold disappeared. The child undergoes a number of other significant transformations. A while after being introduced into the Getae tribe the child develops a very dangerous illness and is seen by many as having "evil spirits" that control him. This wicked transformation into deadly sickness eventually spreads to other members of the tribe including the chief. Ovid describes the child's transformation on page 127 "all his limbs straining against the breaking out through him of whatever beast it is that is coming

to birth in him". This transformation is solely due to the sudden change in the child's environment.

The journeys of Ovid and the child together and separately range from physical journeys to spiritual ones. The child is first introduced in this story during Ovid's childhood. At this time only he can see the child, however, when once again introduced into Ovid's life he is a real person. The child seems to appear only in the stages of Ovid's life where he experiences his greatest confusion and hardship. This may be why the child becomes "real" during his exile as that is when Ovid needs the most guidance. It does seem however, that the child follows Ovid through his whole life as he is born at the beginning of Ovid's life and almost reaches the point of mortality at the time of Ovid's death.

In this case the child represents part of Ovid himself. Ovid is fascinated by the idea of teaching the child his way of life e. . language. In doing this the child also teaches Ovid which helps Ovid achieve both greater understanding and inner satisfaction. This ties in with the spiritual journey that Ovid undertakes by passing the river of Ister (which represents the boundaries of this world) towards his eventual death.

Ovid's death however, is not displayed as a sad event but as a freeing of himself beyond the boundaries of reality to his own transcendence. As Ovid dies he becomes one with mother earth as the child himself is. In this journey the child is in fact the one who leads him away from his safety within the Getae tribe. In this sense the child acts as Ovid's destiny as well as Ovid's sense of what he must do to achieve ultimate independence and

release from this world. Regeneration is another reoccurring idea in this novel.

As the child represents among other things Ovid's childhood, the child in this sense is a regenerated form of Ovid as a young boy. Transformation and journey as well as regeneration all draw similarities between the child and Ovid and give us a picture of who the child really is.