

Odyssey essay

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



11/24/12 Concealed Within The Odyssey Plenty of things in the world are tangible. It's the things we can't touch like love, loyalty, freedom, friendship, and imagination that are concealed within everyone's lives. These universal ideas can also be motifs; a motif is a dominant idea or distinctive feature in an artistic or literary composition. Motifs are used to teach a lesson to others throughout out dance, art, or literature. Motifs have been around and hidden in literature for a very long time. Almost 3, 000 years ago there was a tale told by Homer, his story is now translated into an epic poem called The Odyssey. The story is based around king Odysseus and his 20 year voyage home from war. This Greek folklore conceals many motifs throughout the story such as revenge, temptations, and women whom possess power. To begin, revenge has been inflicted throughout The Odyssey multiple times. An example of this is after Eurymachus bribed and pleaded for the suitors lives Odysseus replies with, " No, Eurymachus! Not if you paid me all your father's wealth- / all you possess now ... not even then would I stay my hands from slaughter / till all you suitors had paid for all your crimes! " (22. 65-68) . The suitors also treated their king horribly when he was disguised as a beggar, and they all were trying to seduce his wife. The suitors are finally realizing their dooms and understanding how important it is to stay loyal. No matter what they say they are seeing their deaths right before their eyes. This specific quote represents Odysseus showing no mercy towards any of the suitors after all they've done. This is important because revenge it is the climax of the story and the readers finally get some relief and hope that Odysseus will take his thrown back. Furthermore, revenge also relates from the gods to humans in the epic poem. Poseidon seeks revenge involving

Odysseus. In order to escape from the cave of the Cyclops Odysseus blinds Polyphemus. Unfortunately, Odysseus blinded Poseidon's son. As a result, " But now Poseidon, god of the earthquake, saw him- / just returning home ... it made his fury boil even more ... with that he rammed the clouds together- both hands / clutching his trident- churned the waves into chaos. " (5. 309-322). This represents after Odysseus is released from Calypso's Island onto his voyage to Phaeacia, Poseidon ship wrecks him. This is important because Poseidon is Odysseus's worst enemy. He cannot kill Odysseus, but will help fulfill his blinded son's wish that he come home to Ithaca late and alone. Odysseus is lucky because his fate is returning to Ithaca, but on the other hand he's one of the unluckiest men alive considering all the horrible events he went through. Revenge is a tricky concept because saying holding onto anger is like grasping a hot coal with the idea to throw it at someone, who gets burned? In other words, revenge is almost like a temptation something you shouldn't give into because it's simply not worth the trouble. Next, Odysseus has to deal with temptation on his voyage home from Greece. One of his first obstacles was the Lotus Eaters. Homer stated, " Any crewman who ate the lotus, the honey —sweet fruit, / lost all desire to send a message back, much less return, / their only wish to linger there with the Lotus-eaters, / grazing lotus, all memory of their journey home / dissolved forever. But I brought them back. " (9. 106-110). This shows how Odysseus didn't give into temptation by dragging his crew back onto the ship to continue their journey. Temptation is important because it has a lot to do with religion and beliefs. Homer is hinting at any children in the audience at this point because he and other adults know how important it is to make good decisions in life.

They want to drill into their little heads right from wrong so choices like keeping up grades, picking the right people to be friends with, staying pure, etc. doesn't cause any problems. Hey need to keep children on the right path in life because it's the kid's choices and decisions that influence the future. In addition to this, the sirens take a toll on Odysseus. Homer states, " I was alone to hear their voices, so she said, / but you must bind me with tight chafing ropes, / so I cannot move a muscle, bound to the spot, / erect the mast-block, lashed by ropes to the mast. " (12. 174-178). This shows Odysseus telling his crew what to do when they get to the sirens. This all could be avoided if Odysseus did not give into the temptation of hearing the sirens. This is important because the goal of Odysseus and his crew is to return home, but Homer adds a desire using the rest of the world almost as a bribe. As a final point, a major theme was women whom possess power. These women are goddesses like Calypso and Circe, but the most powerful was Athena. Homer created Athena to be a very big part of The Odyssey right in the beginning of the story. Book 1 is named Athena Inspires the Prince, in this book she disguises herself and helps Telemachus find out more about his father. She also gives him hope Odysseus is still alive and to hold his throne in Ithaca. This is important because she doesn't just inspire the prince she is used to inspire the audience listening to the story. She has many powers like transformation, bestowing strength/endurance, protection in war, appearing in dreams, and interacting with humans' emotions. She uses these powers to help Odysseus stay protected in war, return home, and fight off suitors. She is very important in Greek Mythology she has powers controlling two features, war and wisdom. These two combined no doubt she

can control the world. Without a doubt, vengeance, inducement and powerful goddesses make The Odyssey a wind whirl of lessons, but motifs is what makes this tale so special. Even 3, 000 years ago a man thought of a glorious story hiding themes throughout the poem. One story from so long ago has taught so much to so many students it was just a matter of time that someone started to think of this as more of just an old story, but a life lesson worthy of a translation. People have been using literature as a way to get a point across and help understand the world. It can help see form a different view, culture, and situations. It's what concealed within literature that supports The Odyssey to its noble stand today.