

Analysis: homer's approval of odysseus' revenge

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



Homer approves of Odysseus' revenge on the suitors because Odysseus protects his wife and home from those who betrayed him. Although subtly hinted, Homer justifies Odysseus' rage as Athena is sent in the form of Mentor to keep Odysseus on his path of rage, reminding him of his battle with the Trojans and his combat strength, which allowed him to proceed with his slaughter (Od. 22. 214-215). Although necessary for Athena to appear to build the confidence of the suitors to attack Telemachus and Odysseus, the goddess' rage against Odysseus as he asks her to help bear arms (22. 246) seems as if Homer is trying to communicate to us that he agrees with Odysseus' cause. In the manner of how Athena speaks to Odysseus in Homer's writing, it is apparent that she is dissatisfied with Odysseus' request as she states that although he has finally returned home, he doesn't have the spirit to destroy the suitors on his own (22. 233-246). Another reason why Homer supported Odysseus' slaughter was not found in the dialog but was found in the gruesome details of his killings. Homer easily writes about Antinous' death and leaves such a strong impression as he describes how the arrow pierces through his neck, and blood is left spurting from his nose (22. 12-18). Also, the details with the death of Melanthius by torture (22. 180-209). However, if Homer was opposed to the killings, the descriptions would be short and shallow to avoid others from gaining interest in Odysseus' slaughter. Homer also describes Odysseus looking as if he was a proud lion returning with a kill after destroying all the suitors in the hall, which would stand as a strong, positive description of a hero (22. 426-432) and again in Book 23 (23. 48-52). Homer's compassion for Odysseus' cause can be seen not as blood thirsty chaos, but completely thought out and

analyzed. Odysseus has a plan for every kill, and when Telemachus allows Meron free from the slaughter (22. 375-381), it shows that Odysseus still keeps his mind intact during the fights and shows that it is not completely twisted by bloodlust. However, if Homer opposed the slaughter of the suitors, he would have created mass mayhem to negatively reflect Odysseus' fighting. Furthermore, Homer negatively reflects the personalities of the suitors as they mock Eumaeus, Philoetius, Odysseus, and Telemachus (Od. 21). Doing so readies the reader to dislike the suitors which may help them further enjoy the slaughter. Odysseus' fallen suitors are escorted into Hades (24. 10-15) and Antinous' father Eupithes tries to plan a revenge on Odysseus for killing his son (24. 476-484). On the other hand, Odysseus also sought vengeance on those who had invaded his house and home to court his wife. However, Athena doesn't allow the family of the suitors to seek vengeance after Laertes kills Eupithes (24. 576-585). This shows that although the fighting occurs for both sides, Athena allowed only Odysseus to complete his drive to kill while the others were stopped and forced into peace in Ithaca. Although subtle, Homer is able to communicate some of his thoughts and emotions in his writing, which allow us to further understand him and his opinions towards Odysseus.