

Film vs. text:

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Film vs. Text: A Comparative Analysis of Homer's Epics

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Homer created two ancient Greek poems which are commonly known in the Literature. These are "The Iliad" which has the film version entitled "Troy" and "The Odyssey" which has also the film version. Though these poems played in movie version, there are some differences from the book that is maybe cut, change or re-modified. In Iliad, all the actions happen because of the Greek Gods and Goddesses. Paris asked to decide which of the Goddesses Hera, Athena and Aphrodite was the fairest, as she would get the Apple of Discord. He chose Aphrodite, who offered him the most beautiful woman in the world as his wife, and Hera and Athena then hated him that's why they were on the side of the Greeks and want to destroy Troy. Everything which happens in the war is controlled by Gods and Goddesses and humans are purely their pawns. While in Troy, the Gods and Goddesses has only few appeared in the film like Thetis, mother of Achilles. There is no "sword of Troy" it is all invented by the filmmakers and Aeneas, in the Iliad, is already well-known by Paris. They were relative while in the movie, Paris asks his name and then gave the so called "sword of Troy". Menelaus was not killed by Hector. In Iliad, he survived from war and returns to live with his retrieved wife Helen. The fight of Menelaus and Paris, in Troy, Helen portrayed happy because Paris was not killed but in Iliad, Helen was so disgusted with the cowardly he showed. Achilles, a great warrior, is cousins with Patroklos (not friend) and Achilles did not know what his cousins planning to do in the movie. In both versions, Partoklos decided to wear Achilles armor and pretend he was Achilles to fight the Trojans. Then Hector killed Patroklos in the movie and Achilles decided to take revenge to

Hector. Although Hector was portrayed as a brave man in the movie, Homer portrays Hector as cowardly. He gets scared and runs away. The scene between Priam and Achilles seems true to the book. In both versions, King Priam goes to Achilles, kneels down and kisses Achilles' hand to ask his son's body to have a proper burial. In the movie, Briseis is a member of the family of King Priam and a composite of Iliad characters Chryseis and Cassandra. She's just a slave girl from another country. Agamemnon does not die at Troy (does not die at the hands of Briseis). He returns to Mycenae where he is murdered by his wife Clytemnestra. Andromache, wife of Hector, does not escape using the secret tunnel taught by her husband, but is captured. And their son Astyanax is killed. Homer says the war took ten years, but in the film; it's all done just a couple of weeks. In Odyssey, both versions are a little bit different to each other but mostly, the scenes in the film were faithful to Homer's poem. There are characters I didn't notice or should I say I haven't seen in the film of Odyssey. Laertes did not appear in the movie while in the book, at the end of the poem, Odysseus went to Laertes to tell that he was back in Ithaca. The sirens and the man-eating Laestrygones are in the book but they are omitted in the movie. Another character who appears somewhat differently is Anticlea, Odysseus' mother, from what she says one can't see that extreme feelings she possesses for Odysseus, feelings that were supposedly so great they drove her to kill herself. From their interaction, one can't see they have that much of a mother and son bond as it suggests in the film. The thunder that serves as a good omen to Odysseus to continue on ambushing the suitors sent by Zeus doesn't appear in the movie. The character Tiresias, the prophet whom Odysseus goes to the underworld for advice, has notable changes. He

doesn't seem to have such a powerful presence on the movie. On the contrary, the film makes him look frightening, seeing as Odysseus himself seems rather scared when he is speaking with him. I believe this may be because the movie wants to portray Odysseus as being so much favorable than everyone else. From closely having read both versions and watching the film, I was able to gain a great understanding for the characters; probably a greater understanding than I would've acquired from just reading one translation or having just seen the movie. Although the characters did somewhat differ from version to version, the basics of their nature remained the same. Since there have been so many retellings of The Odyssey, its almost impossible to tell which description comes closest to that of Homer's original; but in the end I find that it is up to the reader to decide what they personally view each character as being, regardless to as how they are described by the author. In both Homer's epics, the Iliad is somewhat 65 percent faithful in the text and Odyssey is almost faithful to the text, but still, there are some differences from version to version.