

Significance of the characters in the journey to the west essay samples

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Characters in any piece of literature carries the message or at times they act as guides for a particular message. Additionally, it will be easier to determine the significance of these characters through the way they conduct themselves in the novel. Therefore, this paper will focus on the significance of the main characters in the novel “ The Journey to the West.”

Notwithstanding, characterization will be discussed based on the novel, “ The Journey to the West.” This literature is considered to be one of the greatest classical novels. The literature was initially published in the 1590s during Ming Dynasty. The classical literature was then ascribed to Wu Cheng'en since 20th century. This tale is also commonly known as Monkey. The novel is a fictionalized account of legends who were associated with the Buddhist monk Xuanzag's journey to India. This was during the Tang dynasty and the monk was on a journey to obtain Buddhist text referred to as the sutras. Working under instructions from the Buddha, the monk is given the responsibility of bringing the sutras under the protection of three protectors who acted as his disciples.

Therefore, from these characters, it is easier to depict their qualities and features through their interaction with other people, the environment and how they act on individual basis. The features of a character can also be identified through the interaction with the main character. For instance, we can deduce that the protectors who acted as disciples to Xuanzag are loyal and obedient. This shows that through a third party it is easier to identify the features other characters. This paper will discuss in details the roles the characters in the novel have played, their significance to the main message

found in the novel. The paper will also elaborate on the key points that certain characters carry with them.

The main characters

Zhū Bājiè Monkey King

This character was also given the name Zhu Wuneng' and nicknamed pig. He is characterized with being immoral. Zhu Bajie was once an immortal and he lost his immortality because he drank excessively and tried to flirt with the goddess of the moon. It was this fact that resulted in the banishment of him to the mortal world. It is this character that defined what his later to be physic.

He is identified as a strong person. This lies with the fact that he had exceptional fighting skills after Wukong. He could travel on the clouds, as well as fight under water. Zhu Bajie is also characterized with glutton, pervert and somewhat cowardly. Despite all these features, he is also loyal to his allies and very trusty. His significance in the novel is to make the novel humorous. This is because he brings comic relief. There is a collaboration between Zhu Bajie and Wukong since they were all put on the same quest.

Tripitaka or Xuánzàng

Tripitaka or Xuánzàng is one of the main characters discussed in the story. The character plays a significant role throughout the novel and that is why he is characterized among the main characters of the novel. The name depicts from the reference to the Tripitaka which was presumed as a tradition that designated for a Buddhist monk that articulated to retrieve the Buddhist scriptures for the China nation.

Tripitaka is characterized as helpless when it comes to self protection as the

bodhisattva Guānyīn assists him get some powerful disciples that defend him all through the journey. In this case, we can note that the author decided to give the main character this quality of helplessness. Why? In my deep analysis, the character gave him that quality so that we as readers could learn about the bravery of the three disciples with whom he had been selected for. Therefore, some characters are used not only to bring out their qualities but also to identify the qualities of other characters that revolve around him. Additionally, we can learn of the desperation facing the three disciples. From the novel, we notice that the disciples who protected him were supposed to attain level of enlightenment and compassion in return but this was thought to be articulated when the whole journey is complete. Because they want to be immortal again, they have no option but become loyal and obedient to the course set out for them. They meet some monsters along the way; however Giancarlo is helped as they defeat all of them. In that perspective, it is noted the monsters want to get Xuánzàng's flesh since he was considered more attractive and this has been seen in various contexts within the novel. The fact that these three disciples fight off the monsters and defeat them in the course of protecting Tripitaka shows how brave they are.

Additionally, Tripitaka has been used as tool towards the portrayal of a particular theme. Through him, we are able to know that Buddhist Scriptures are missing. Therefore, the inclination towards a particular culture can be seen through this character. The central role that this character has played lies with the fact that he brings out that aspect of religion.

Shā Wùjìng

The character plays equally a significant role in the novel in the sense that he also brings out that aspect of loyalty and also Chinese culture. He takes a risk by accompanying Tripitaka and the others to the west. The character was banished to the earthly world and articulated to look just like monster since he unintentionally damaged a crystal chalice that was owned by Heavenly Queen Mom during Peach Banquet. Though, he was restrained by Zhū Bājiè and Sūn Wùkōng during the period that Xuānzàng party took place. They subsequently derailed him join those individuals who were classified in the excursion to the Western side (Cheng'en, 67).

The weapon of Shā Wùjìng is depicted as Moon-Fang-Spade". Apart from that aspect, he has been affiliated with eighteen changes and is extremely appropriate in under water combat. The essence presumed by the character is strong like Bājiè and even stronger to Wùkōng under water. Though, the novel points out that Bājiè can defeat Wujing during endurance test and Wùkōng and on the other hand he can defeat him out of the water. Shā Wùjìng was identified as most obedient, ethical, and polite amongst the three followers. This is because he is said that he takes much care of his leader than the rest of the disciples. He is always accessible and reliable, he takes care of the traveler's belongings and that is the reason as most people consider him as a supervisor or monitor in most cases becomes of his distinguishing features. Towards the end of the novel, Wùjìng eventually befits an Arhat as the journey comes to an depicting a unique level of adoration than Bājiè who was consigned to be scrubbing every single altar at each Buddhist sanctuary for infinity, however is quiet lower internally than Xuānzàng and Wùkōng who are established Buddhahood. In the Japanese

culture, Sha Wujing is depicted as Sha Gojō based on the innovative embodiment's name that has been romanized as the as Kenren Taijō in Gensōmaden Saiyūki.

Sūn Wùkōng

The role of this character is anticipated in the Chinese Taoism that extensively teaches on the reincarnation of the followers. The character also plays a significant role as he demonstrates about Chuang Tzu which advocates for the existence without limits. This shows the continuity in understanding the Buddhism as well as Taoism. He is also loyal and obedient as he is tagged along on a quest to retrieve the Buddhist scriptures.

In conclusion, from the novel we can deduce that indeed the characters have played their roles well. We have been able to identify the important themes that have been defined by the characters. For instance, in the context where the character was exiled to the earthly world and articulated to look just like a monster since he unintentionally damaged a crystal chalice that was owned by the Heavenly Queen Mother during the Peach Banquet. In addition, some situations indicate the collaboration presumed between Zhu Bajie and Wukong since they were all put on the same quest. Collaboration comes by virtue of the fact that they all have to work together to protect the Tripitaka. The three have been characterized as loyal and obedient thus the reason they tagged along on that quest. However, these three characters might be having their own agenda. For instance, the need to be immortal again. The characters have to come together because of they have one mission. Therefore, collaboration was the only option because they had to work together so as to attain their set goals.

Work Cited

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