

Violence in the ancient world

[History](#)



You're Mythology 5 November 2005 Violence in the Ancient World Acts of brutality to gain dominance and control are prevalent in the ancient world. They can be seen through the many stories written such as in Homer's "Odyssey". This is especially true of the area in the story where the Cyclops drinks of wine, and therefore the opportunity presents itself to Odysseus to be able to stab out one of the monsters eyes in order to gain the upper hand of control.

Further verifying the fact of violent acts in the ancient world, in present day, the portrayal of violence depicted by Hollywood offers a myriad of bloody battles. These movies often depict the valor of a soldier, pursuing an ideal to become worthy of nobility, in order to exert power and have influence over others. These interpretations offer an open-eyed view into what it must have been like in an ancient civilization and culture.

Falling back on Homer's Odyssey once again, it provides good examples of how violence was used for dominance though; it is being carried out in the name of self-protection and preserving the lives of others. The example this research will use to prove the often times, brutal and violent forms of survival will be directly from the book, "Odyssey XI" and the primary focus on the battle with the Cyclops.

The idea on the prevalence of violence in the Ancient world is so vivid in the battle with this monster of mythology. First, the Cyclops presents a form of early control and power over Odysseus and his crew which is clearly evident in the following verse, "As thus he spoke, our very souls were crushed within us, dismayed by the heavy voice and by the monsters self; nevertheless I answered thus and said" (Odyssey Book XI).

Violence begets fear and the Cyclops girth alone was enough for the crew to
<https://assignbuster.com/violence-in-the-ancient-world/>

feel already beaten before the battle. Though Odysseus tried to use tricky talk, in an attempt to persuade the Cyclops to spare killing any of his men, it did not work and a violent scene spewed forth from the books pages.

Following was one of the more horrid and brutally descriptive violent acts depicted. This passage details how the Cyclops dashed members of the crew to the ground, ripping and tearing their limbs and crushing their skulls, whilst their brains spilled to the earth and dampened the grass. This actually makes the reader cringe due to such abundant and grotesque violent behavior (Odyssey Book XI). It also brings home the point to how violence was excessive in the ancient world.

The main ideal to be made from this, in comparison to the thesis is again, showing how violent acts can exhume a huge amount of power and control over a person, making them feel belittled and worthless. The more violence presented and the more varied the brutality, the less a person begins to feel as a human being.

This is definitely one of the chapters that this research would explore in order to expand on the theory of notable violent acts and the reasons behind them in the ancient world. The battle with the Cyclops is the primary example to prove the thesis in the paper, and how violence was perceived to gain strategic maneuvers, and win favor in an opposition.

Works Cited

Polyphemos: Odyssey, Book XI accessed at: <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/MINOA/Poly.html>