


*"TELL ME, MUSE, OF THE
MAN OF MANY DEVICES..."*
Homer's Epics - The Iliad & The Odyssey

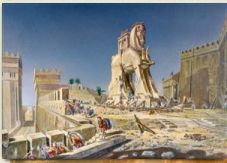


*A LONG AND
DIFFICULT JOURNEY*

- What is an *Oral Epic*?
- What are some of the stylistic devices of the Oral Epic?
- What do we know about Homer? Can he be trusted as a historical source? Did the Battle of Troy and the wanderings of Odysseus actually happen? What do the Homeric epics reveal to modern readers/historians?



A LONG AND DIFFICULT JOURNEY



- What were the causes of the Trojan War?
- What mistakes did the Trojans make that led to their downfall?
- Compare and contrast the characters of Hector and Achilles. Which seems more heroic to you and why?
- What major themes about Greek culture did the film reveal, and how did these also help enable the success of the Greeks at Troy?

A LONG AND DIFFICULT JOURNEY

- In your study groups, find 2-3 examples (specific ones!) from *The Iliad* (Troy movie) and *The Odyssey* that reveal something about how the Greeks perceived the following ideals and motifs:
 - Respect for the Gods, Order, & Fate
 - Homecoming, Vengeance, & Restoration of Order
 - Loyalty
 - Hospitality & Generosity
 - Intelligence
 - Experience
 - Growth & Maturation
 - Courage, Strength, & Determination



A LONG AND DIFFICULT JOURNEY



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- What were Odysseus' heroic characteristics? What are some examples of his heroism? How does he display his *Metis* (cunning/wisdom)? Do the Greeks view heroism differently than we do, if so, how?
- How does *The Odyssey* present a double standard for women? Why is Odysseus so fearful of Penelope's allegiance and faithfulness when he's plotting his return? Where are there symbols of misogyny? What does the epic reveal about Greek idyllic characteristics of women?
- Can a cycle of violence ever really be stopped? What does the story reveal about violence, war, and mankind?

A LONG AND DIFFICULT JOURNEY

- In book 1, Zeus tells Athena:

"Ah how shameless — the way these mortals blame the gods.
From us alone, they say, come all their miseries, yes,
but they themselves, with their own reckless ways,
compound their pains beyond their proper share."



A LONG AND DIFFICULT JOURNEY

- In what ways did Odysseus create his own problems? Do you think Odysseus was humbled by his experiences, or did he view them as another mark of his *metis* & *kleos* (glory & renown)?
- What are the different ways in which characters in Homer's epics sought *kleos*?
- Analyze the Greek ideal of hospitality. Why is this such an important ideal? What are some examples in the story of this ideal, and the antithesis to it?
- In what ways do the sacking of Troy compare to the slaughter in the halls of Odysseus? Is Odysseus justified in killing the suitors and all who associated with them?
- Are there varying degrees of guilt for the suitors (do some deserve harsher punishment than others)? Provide examples. The Ancient Greeks believed that there is nothing worse than a cowardly and shameful death. Did the suitors get what they deserved?
