

I. The Odyssey

A. Oral Tradition (translations)

1. Purpose=to entertain/to teach lessons (religion/society)
2. Homer-Oral Poet/Bard "Singers of Tales"
 - a. really exist? Blind?
 - b. *Iliad* = epic of war (Trojan War) prior to *Odyssey*
3. Compose from memory while reciting
4. Poetic Devices
 - a. "In Medias Res" - "In the middle of things"
 - b. Epithets = Odysseus=Laertes' Son, Zeus=lord of cloud, Poseidon=earth shaker
 - c. Figurative Language
 1. Homeric/Heroic Simile=extended comparison
 - d. Appositives
 - e. Read as prose w/punctuation-not line by line

B. Epic

1. Epic Hero

- a. Special class of aristocrats (between gods/ordinary human beings)
- b. Larger than life stature (legendary?)
- c. Remarkable traits reflect values of culture (quest)
- d. Odysseus/Ulysses most famous?

2. Characteristics:

- a. long, narrative poem about hero (so told over series of days)
- b. hero's actions determine fate of many
- c. large vast setting w/journey to countries?
- d. plot=supernatural beings & events
- e. universal themes (good vs. evil, life vs. death)

C. The Odyssey

1. Odysseus = "hero in trouble"
 - a. return from Troy = return from violence
2. Gods = "alter ego" (Athena=wise & Poseidon=arrogance)
3. Quest of father & son for identity