

The Iliad and Odyssey Background

MS. LISONBEE

The Iliad - Homer

- Thetis, an nereid, is married to Peleus, a mortal
- Gods and goddesses attend the wedding, but nobody invites Eris, goddess of discord
- To get revenge on the other gods, Eris throws an apple with the words “for the fairest” between Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite
- Each goddess claims the apple and Zeus appoints Paris, prince of Troy, as judge
- Each goddess offers a bribe and Paris picks Aphrodite

The Abduction of Helen

- Aphrodite's bribe was the love of Helen, daughter of Zeus and Leda and the most beautiful mortal woman.
- While Paris visits Sparta, he takes advantage of her husband's absence, seduces Helen, and takes her to Troy



The Retaliation



- Helen's husband gathers other Greeks who promised to support him if he ever went to war
- They sail to Troy and start a war to get Helen back
- Among the Greeks are Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Achilles
- The war lasts 10 years because the gods are divided in their support

Advocates of Greeks- Thetis

- Achilles' mother
- Nereid, goddess of the ocean
- Dipped Achilles in the river Styx when he was a baby (not in Homer's account)
- When Achilles is offended, asks other gods to stop supporting the Greeks



Advocates of Greeks- Hera

- Goddess of marriage and queen of the gods
- Sided with the Greeks because Paris chose Aphrodite as the most beautiful goddess
- Offered Paris kingdom
 - Europe and Asia



Advocates of Greeks- Poseidon

- God of the Sea
- Symbols include a trident, dolphins, and the horse
- Supported the Greeks because Thetis petitioned for her son
- Turned against Odysseus on the way home from Troy
- Normally opposed Athena's favorite heroes because she won the patronage of Athens



Advocates of Greeks- Hermes

- Messenger of the gods
- Symbol is the caduceus
 - Makes ill mortals sleep
 - Represents healing



Advocates of Greeks- Athena

- Goddess of wisdom and strategy
- Symbols include helmet of invisibility, owl, and spear
- Offered Paris wisdom, fame, and glory in battle
- Supported the Greeks because they were intelligent and brave (and due to jealousy of Paris' judgment)
- Supported Odysseus on his way home



Advocates of Trojans- Aphrodite



- Goddess of love and beauty
- Supported the Trojans because Paris declared that she was the most beautiful of the goddesses
- Put a spell on Helen so she would run away with Paris

Advocates of Trojans- Ares

- God of war and love of fighting
- Supported the Trojans because he was Aphrodite's lover
- Also rewarded Greek bravery
- Through Athena, he was wounded in battle then left



Advocates of Trojans- Apollo

- God of the sun, poetry, and music
- Symbols include the lyre and the laurel tree
- Was not firmly on the Trojan's side, but punished the Greeks with disease when they displeased him
- Guided Paris' arrow to Achilles' heel because Achilles killed his son while worshipping



Advocates of Trojans- Zeus

- King of the gods
- Symbols include lightning and an eagle
- Helen's father
- Some of his favorite heroes were Trojans, but he eventually supported the Greeks to win



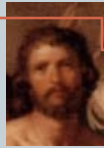
Achilles



- Fought for Greeks
- Demigod- son of Thetis and Peleus
- Sacked a temple of Apollo near Troy
- Became offended when Agamemnon (leader of Greeks) demanded Briseis (captive women were traded like possessions)
- Refused to fight for the Greeks until Hector, a Trojan, kills Patroclus
- Dies when Paris shoots him

Let's Recapitulate

Goddess



Thetis marries Peleus

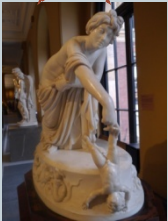
Hera



Athena



Zeus seduces Leda, who bears Helen



Thetis bears Achilles, tries to make him immortal

At the wedding, Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite argue about who's prettiest

Aphrodite



Many Greeks draw straws to marry Helen, Menelaus wins.

Half-mortal



Achilles grows up to be a hero in the Trojan war.

Paris runs away with Helen as a "reward" for choosing Aphrodite as the most beautiful



Helen's other suitors promise to support Menelaus in war, so they go to Troy when Helen runs



The Rest of the War

- Prophecy- Achilles will either live a peaceful long life and be forgotten or die young, a hero remembered forever
- Achilles' mother tries to hide him, but he ends up going
- Achilles' men kill priests and desecrate temple of Apollo
- After 10 years, Odysseus convinces men to build the Trojan horse and pretend to be defeated
- Trojans bring the horse into the city, have a party, and go to bed
- At night, concealed Greeks slaughter the Trojan men, sack the city, and carry off the women as "war prizes"



The Odyssey

- After 10 years of war, it took another 10 years for Odysseus to get home
- He left his wife, Penelope, and son, Telemachus, at home when he left for war
- The anger of gods and meddling of sorceresses and monsters kept him from home

Characters- Odysseus

- Odysseus means “trouble” in Greek
- The Odyssey is the story of his 10-year journey home from Troy
- Pride offends Poseidon who sends challenges to slow him down



Characters- Penelope

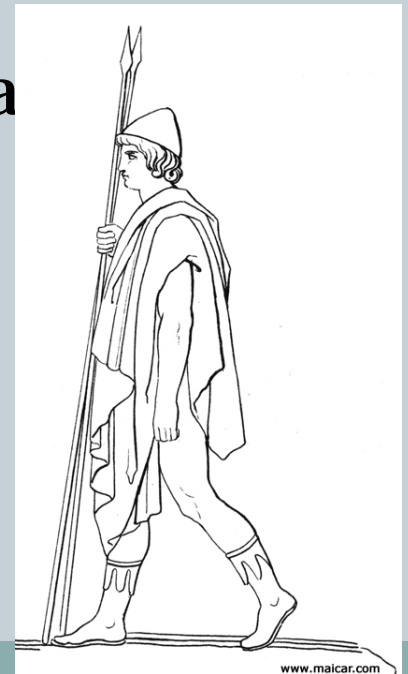
- Had a child right before Odysseus left for war
- Pursued by 108 suitors when her husband didn't come back



- Waits 20 years for her husband to come home
 - Delays suitors by weaving
- Unravels work nightly

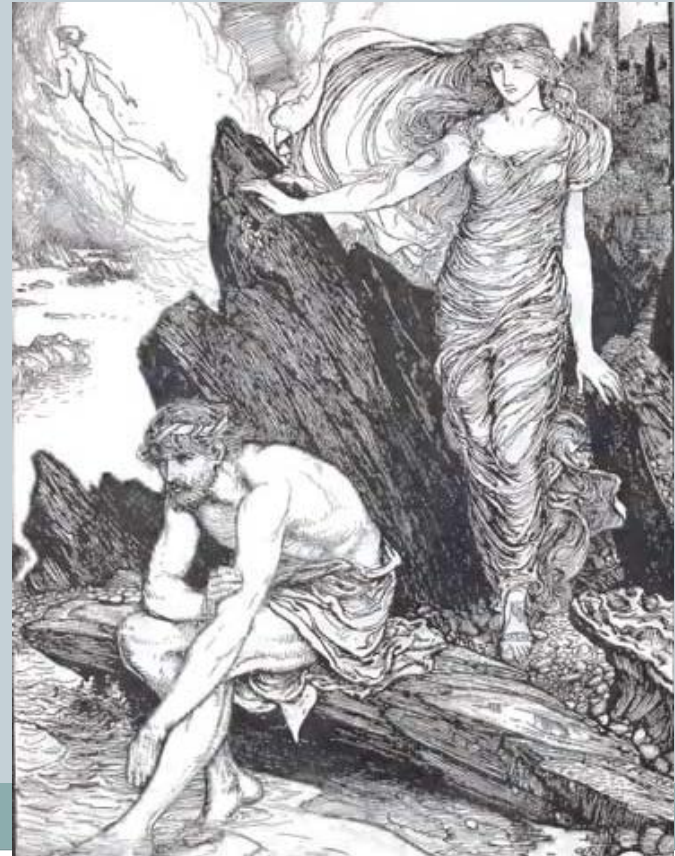
Characters- Telemachus

- Odysseus' son
- Raised by mother and grandmother
- Struggles to protect Penelope from her suitors
- Follows the advice of Mentor
- Goes to seek news of Odysseus at Sparta



Sorceresses- Calypso

- Nymph that falls in love with Odysseus
- Keeps him on the island of Ogygia for seven years
- Offers Odysseus immortality



Sorceresses- Circe

- Lives on an island with enchanted animals
 - Men she changed
- Is an immortal goddess
- Cursed Scylla out of jealousy
 - Changed her from nymph to monster



Monsters- Polyphemus



- Cyclops- giant one-eyed monster
- Live in a cave near other cyclopeses
- Son of Poseidon



Monsters- Scylla and Charybdis



Scylla and Glaucus



- **Scylla-** had six dog heads that grabbed sailors from ships
 - Formerly a beautiful nymph
- **Charybdis-** lives under water and swallows ships whole
 - Lives near Scylla so ships have to choose one or the other

Monsters- Sirens

- Part woman, part bird
- Drove sailors mad with music- lured them to death



Other- Lotus Eaters

- Lotus flower- magical plant that causes forgetfulness
- Lotus eaters live only on that plant
- Keeps them calm

