

“So Glad to be at Home Again”: L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as a Rereading of Homer’s *Odyssey*

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, L. Frank Baum’s literary fairy tale *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (first published in 1900) is read against the backdrop of Homer’s *Odyssey* as its possible hypotext. It is demonstrated that Baum’s novel reenacts three key narrative motifs from the *Odyssey*: homecoming, transgression, and transformation. In analogy to the epic hero Odysseus, the fairy-tale child protagonist is not subject to maturation and growing-up, but is projected as a quasi-adult person from the beginning of the novel.