Student Name

Instructor Name

Literature

Date

Was Odysseus a Hero?

**Introduction**

A hero is one with above average human characteristics. However, the concept and definition of a hero in the Greek antiquity is completely different than normal heroes. In Greek concept, a hero must embody qualities that reflected Greek traditions and cultures. According to Greeks, a hero must have characteristics like courage, intelligence, loyalty, and strength. It is notable to mention that Odysseus fulfills all these characteristics of a hero. According to ancient scholars, undoubtedly, Odysseus demonstrates to be an amazing hero with the help of his articulate speaking characteristic (Barnouw). The stories related to mythological gods and creatures are in abundance in the Greek culture. In these stories, one can easily find the archetype of an epic hero. Here, the focus is to determine various characteristics of Odysseus which made him an epic hero during Greek times.

**Discussion**

First of all, it is highly necessary to determine various characteristics that were possessed by Odysseus. According to the Greek culture, a hero should be of a divine birth. It is necessary to mention that Odysseus had a divine birth which made him an epic hero. As per ancient mythologies of Greek cultures, the birth of Odysseus is unclear. However, according to a famous book, “The Odyssey and the Illiad,” it is made clear that he's the grandson of Hermes. From that reference, it is obvious that Odysseus was the god of the wind and the messenger of the gods. Another important characteristic of Odysseus was his superhuman abilities. It is essential to consider the fact that Odysseus contains various hero like instincts such as unusual physical strength and bravery (Montiglio). These instincts of Odysseus made him one of the greatest heroes of all time. There are many mythologies that comprised of the stories of his bravery. He used to combat an entire army of men without any assistance. Moreover, he was known for his unique and super-intelligence. In any difficult situation, he always managed to find a way out. There are a number of circumstances when he used his intelligence in order to overcome tough situations.

The high intelligence and cleverness of Odysseus can be observed as distinctive characteristics of any hero. Furthermore, a hero often faces many challenges and quests in his life. Same was the case with Odysseus as he was given an arduous task for which he sacrificed his time for his family. The dangerous arduous task made him stay in the wild for more than ten years. On the basis of his intelligence, bravery, and physical strength, he managed to win his quest regardless of tough circumstances (Seidensticker). His divine birth and superhuman abilities allowed him to face a challenging environment. His quest at sea was one of the toughest quests of his life where he had to face many villains. According to Greek mythologies, Odysseus had bad blood with Poseidon who made many troubles for him during his quests. Every time Odysseus planned to sail, Poseidon made troubles for his ship. It is noteworthy to mention that a normal human being cannot defend himself from foul creatures on this earth. However, Odysseus possessed superhuman characteristics that helped him to combat these giant creatures.

During his quest at sea, Odysseus faced the Cyclops, the dead, the Sirens, and Charybdis. These creatures made his quest very difficult, but Odysseus managed to complete his quest regardless of these circumstances. However, Odysseus does possess some flaws such as excessive pride which proved to be problematic for him along the way on the sea (Robinson). Regardless of this, Odysseus always received assistance from supernatural powers. Supernatural help that he received from the gods helped him along his journey. Odysseus can be categorized as a hero because he possessed a great form of thinking approach. He distinguished his position as a proactive thinker who had the ability to successfully and timely react to tough situations in life. It is one of the most prominent features of his character that he successfully apprehended his ability to think proactively and find solutions in any situation (Fitch III). His complex nature as a Greek hero eventually made him strong enough to successfully react to any unexpected situation and utilized his personality domain of intelligence. Another prominent feature of his personality was established by the author is that he was a man of faith who was always interested to follow codes of honor (Hopman).

**Conclusion**

To conclude the above discussion, Odysseus was indeed an epic hero with superhuman characteristics. Odysseus is recognized as one of the most frequently acclaimed characters in English literature and is portrayed as a strong character for the audience. It is interesting to critically assess all the factors or attributes of Odysseus that helped the audience to recognize him as the hero although he never killed any of his enemies. It is critical to establish all the factors that actively contribute to the overall character development of Odysseus. It is noteworthy to mention that the character of Odysseus is recognized as an epic hero due to his active role as the King of Ithaca, who actively participated in the war. The overall prospect of his journey towards home is another critical perspective when it comes to distinguishing him as the hero. The character of the hero is defined as the one who has some great form of abilities, such as the factors of intelligence, physical strength, and the successful depiction of bravery when it is needed.

**Works Cited:**

Barnouw, Jeffrey. *Odysseus, Hero of Practical Intelligence: Deliberation and Signs in Homer's Odyssey*. University Press of America, 2004.

Fitch III, John. "Archetypes on screen: Odysseus, St. Paul, Christ and the American cinematic hero and anti-hero." *Journal of Religion & Film* 9.1 (2016): 1.

Hopman, Marianne. "Narrative and Rhetoric in Odysseus' Tales to the Phaeacians." *American Journal of Philology* 133.1 (2012): 1-30.

Montiglio, Silvia. *From villain to hero: Odysseus in ancient thought*. University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Robinson, Tony, and Richard Curtis. *Odysseus: The Greatest Hero of Them All*. Vol. 1. Canelo, 2016.

Seidensticker, Bernd. "Archilochus and Odysseus." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 19.1 (1978): 5-22.