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Literary Masterpieces, L213
8 October 2005

~~Original question:~~ Identify two characteristics you believe are essential to the definition of a "heroic" individual. Having done so, describe an incident in THE ODYSSEY, where Odysseus embodies one or more of these characteristics, explaining why he fits them. Then describe an action that you think would make Odysseus heroic in the eyes of his peers, but not in your own. What accounts for the difference?

Thesis: Odysseus was a true hero he showed this through his determination and courage.

Odysseus, A True Hero?

What is a hero? The dictionary defines a hero as being a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability; an illustrious warrior; a man admired for his achievements and noble qualities; one that shows great courage. Odysseus was a true hero; he showed this through his determination and courage.

The dictionary definition of a hero includes courage, strength and great ability. Odysseus fits the dictionary description of a hero. Two characteristics that I believe are essential to the definition of a heroic individual are determination and courage. Odysseus embodies these characteristics through out the whole story. After all the whole story is about his determination to get home; he doesn't let all the battles he has to fight along the way stop him from getting to where he wants to be. Odysseus persevered through everything the gods through at him. Imprisoned by Calypso for seven years and never lost sight of his goal, survived Poseidon's wrath, beat the Cyclops and made his way back to sea, got past the sirens, any ordinary man would have given up after the battle or two. Odysseus was no ordinary man he was a hero.

To say Odysseus had courage means that he (according to the dictionary) used mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. Using that definition Odysseus displayed courage in each and every battle he fights on his journey.

An action that would have made Odysseus heroic in the eyes of his peers, but not in my eyes would have to be if he killed everyone he came into battle with. Like instead of just blinding the Cyclops he killed him but he choose to go another way.

"My heart beat high now at the chance of action, and drawing the sharp sword from my hip I went along his flank to stab him where the midriff holds the liver. I had touched the spot when sudden fear stayed me: if I killed him we perished there as well, for we could never move his ponderous doorway slab aside." (Homer ix. 312-318),

This also could have been true in various other situations like instead of just leaving Calypso he killed her, or if had made and attempt to kill the God Poseidon. I don't perceive killing every man or woman you come into battle with as a heroic action. Sometimes to be the hero of a situation you must be the bigger man and walk away from a battle letting the other man live. The difference being that his peers see the death of an enemy as a victory whereas I see it as a loss. Killing someone doesn't make you a winner

it only makes you a loser, a true victory is one that both people walk away alive and yet one person may have the upper hand on the situation.

A hero is a person that thinks about others before themselves, whether it be physical or emotional. A hero puts others in perspective with every aspect of their life. Odysseus shows this when sail past the sirens. Odysseus and his men must sail past the island of seductresses. He plugs the ears of the men so they would not hear the sexy music and go mad, ultimately causing them to be killed. But he had himself tied to the mast so he could enjoy the music, but not physically be able to act on it. To me this is a scarafice he made maybe a little bit selfish but he made sure everyone was taken care of before he thought of himself.

When Odysseus arrived home and killed all the suitors and the suitors' harlots, his peers found his actions to be heroic because he was defending his home against anyone who mocked it. This is not heroic to me. It is cold-blooded murder. I have to take into account, though, that we live in a very different time. It seems as if Odysseus could have banished these suitors and harlots from their homeland instead. Disposing of all the mockery and shame inflicted without having to kill so many people is heroic in my eyes.

Odysseus may have had the help of Gods to win this battle but even without their assistance he would have been a hero in his own right. He fought each and every one of his battles using his own intelligence and determination; eventually he got home and got his family back in order. Odysseus was a very determined and extremely courageous man and embodying these two characteristics made him a hero. Odysseus was a man who did not let any mortal man, god, or goddess stand in his way of getting what he wanted no matter how long or how hard he had to fight, Odysseus a true Greek Hero.

Works Cited

Homer. *The Odyssey. The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*. Ed. Sarah Lawall. 7th ed. New York: Norton, 1999.