

# Mythological and modern-day heroes essay



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Nearly all cultures in the world have heroes. A hero is a person who in his/her exceptional character does deeds mostly geared towards saving others. His/her selfless nature, great courage, determination and brevity are the major traits that enhance the success of his/her deeds. The memories of heroes remain in communities' cultures. Constant reminders of heroic deeds in most communities include monuments, statues, paper bills, coinages, tributes and memorials.

Others include names of streets, towns, states, institutions and buildings. These reminders help to put the heroes as pillars the society. There are two types of heroes, the mythological heroes and the modern-day heroes. The major distinction between these two types of heroes is that the modern-day heroes mainly depend on their intelligence and wit while the mythological heroes depended on their endurance, courage and strength.

A mythological hero, also referred to as a supernatural hero, is a hero whose deeds were extraordinary and lived during the primordial age. This is the period before the world's industrial revolution. Myths and other forms of literature were the tools that the community used to pass the deeds of the heroes from one generation to the other.

Difficult moments in a community defined the moments when a hero would come forth in his/her attempt to bring a solution to the situation and salvation to many. It is thus evident that not everyone could stand out in his/her deeds to rescue the people from their difficulties. This is the basis of not only a mythological hero but also modern-day heroes.

Mythological heroes performed extraordinary deeds, risked their lives for the sake of others, and fell victims to a given difficult situation and managed to come out of it successfully. Most cultures believed that mythological heroes had supernatural aspects within themselves because their deeds usually lacked concrete human explanation. It is important to mention that all generations of a given community had to know about them.

This was a sign that the communities highly valued the contribution of the heroes to the success of the entire community. The word mythological hero has his origin in ancient Greece. This is to say that the Greeks were the first people in history to have mythological heroes. One of such heroes is Achilles.

Achilles is one of the mythological heroes in Greece. Historians consider him as one of the mightiest Greeks. He became a hero during the Trojan War. Her mother abandoned him when he was still a young boy leaving him under the custody of his father. According to Edwards (1985), when Achilles was a boy, the seer Calchas prophesied that the city of Troy needed help in order to take the city (p. 217).

When his mother heard this prophecy she took the boy and went into hiding. She not only hid the boy but also disguised him as a young girl that people would not notice him. It did not take long before he was recognised. In the company of his friend and tutor, Achilles went to Troy to fight.

During the war, he distinguished himself as a great and an inexorable warrior. He proved this by his ability to capture twenty-three towns in the Trojan territory. He took a woman, Briseis, from Troy to his homeland. He also performed many other exploits. It is also important to mention that

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Achilles killed the Trojan hero and this was a great achievement to the Greeks. Achilles' deeds were indeed heroic.

Mythological quest is an important aspect in myths just like in other forms of literature. It refers to a journey towards a goal (Auden, 2001, p. 35). For a mythological hero, it served as a symbol that he came out successfully. To the community, it properly brought out the hero's determination to emerge victorious through his deeds.

To the would-be heroes, it helped to inspire them to become brave and to be selfless whenever it came to bringing solutions to problems facing the society. It also helped people to develop the aspect of setting goals in their lives. Mythological quest brought a revelation to most people in the society about dedication to one's decisions.

Every culture valued their heroes. It did not matter the situation that led to the rise of a certain hero if his deeds were selfless and geared towards saving a particular group of people or even the entire community. Many communities have improvised different types of objects to act as constant reminders of their mythological heroes. Mythological heroes on the other hand act as role models to the rest of the society. This greatly helps in bringing up generations with good traits and helpful to the wellbeing of the entire society.

Auden, H. (2001). The Quest Hero. *Understanding the Lord of Rings: The Best of Tolkein Criticism*, 35-40.

Edwards, A. (1985). Achilles in the Underworld. *Iliad, Odyssey, and Æthiopis*, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies, 26, 215-227.