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A Study on Usage of Greek Mythology in the Harry Potter's Series

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Abstract:

J.K. Rowling takes many inspirations from Myth and Religion in her writing of seven Novels in the Harry Potter's series, as consider her degree in Classics; it anticipates that much of the material she draws from Greek Classics.

In present scenario, her use of Classics-specifically Greek-Religion and Mythology are been explored. From, obvious derivation of things such as names, to the more nuanced symbols and plot points that seem to indicate a deep contemplation of ancient Greek practices and beliefs. In addition, examines how she uses them in a modern context and what significance they have to the plot. The elements of cult and hero worship in her writings are intrinsic elements of Greek religion.

The school houses are very much like different cults dedicated to different Gods, and the way founders of Hogwarts gets tribute from the students are very similar to the ways, in which the ancient Greeks used to worship Heroes and Gods. The structure of Hogwarts students into houses, value certain personalities and aspect over other, has a cult aspect that falls well in line with the worship of ancient Gods.

In many ways, Greek Myth inspires the names of Rowling's characters. Moreover, the myths fulfill similar functions in the Harry Potter's narrative as Greek Myth would have fulfilled in Greek classics. The writer is very adept in weave fantasy to mythology in the fabric of her narrative. Her storyline appears very real and genuine.

Keywords: Classics, Cult, Greek-Religion, Harry Potter Hogwarts, Mythology,

Introduction

J. K. Rowling is a British writer, best known for her children novels-Harry Potter's series. This effort had gained global attention and won numerous awards and honors. The writer had created something that is not merely a typical children's book but a truly a rare marvel. The clamor has been overwhelming since their release, debates and discussion are raging universally. The

proffered apprehensions and opinions span quite a spectrum, which reinvigorated a genre of aficionados.

The sorting of Hogwarts students in four different assemblages centered on their personalities remindsthe Academy, school founded by Plato.The Sorting Hat judges traits and temperamentof each student and placed them into four different assemblies called ‘houses’, named Slytherins the cunning,Gryffindors the brave,Hufflepuffs the arduous,Ravenclaw the intellectual. These houses are nameafter founders of Hogwarts and are place inhigh esteem like the Gods of myth.

In ancient Sparta young boys, around seven years old entered the State own boarding school. The boys were assigns cluster known as the ‘Agela’ to live in a communion herethey endured a rigorous and painful curriculum of training. The Teachers, Coaches and Instructors impart enormous discipline on these boys. The goal of these programs was to produce men, physically fit and psychologically disciplined. Similarly, “Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry” is ran by Ministry of Magic, according to the school caretaker, Argus Filch, serious misdeeds at Hogwarts are punishable by detention in addition to loosing points from house. The detention means subjection to various forms of corporal punishment. However, Hogwarts is co-ed.

The parallels with Greek gods are evident in the second book of the series, when Harry enters the Chamber of Secrets in order to save Ron’s sister Ginny, and discoverthe Basilisk hidden in the student’s chamber. The duel with the Basilisk had proven a true Gryffindor in Harry. His demonstration of bravery and ability to pull the Gryffindor sword out of The Sorting Hat,it was a magical token given to Harry to help him defeat the Basilisk. The gods of Greek mythology would often favor Hero’s in theirtriumph, for example the adamantine sword given to Perseus by Zeus in order to defeat the gorgon Medusa.

The creation of founder’s stories mirrors Greeks Myths. The most subtle ways in which writer takes influence from Greek myth and religion comes in the form of the way myth functions in the Harry Potter universe. The writer wrote only seven Harry Potter novels but was able to create a complex universe with its own lore and tradition, these myths function as stories within stories while at the same time filling a very analogous role to that of myth in Classics. Themyth of the Hogwarts founders are quite akin to those surrounding ancient Greek gods and goddesses, not only in the plot but also rather in the function.

The writer had skillfully threaded tales and fables in her narrative with mythologies of archaic Greeks. This provides authenticity, genuineness and legitimacy to the allegories interweave by the writer and the thin line between her anecdotes and Greek classics is blurred. The folklore of Ravenclaw's diadem is a perfect example, It enhances the intelligence of the wearer, however legend that it had vanished. Her daughter Helena stole and hid it in a tree at Albania. The writer made it discovered by Voldemort to turn it into a Horcrux.

The writer's other fascinating usage of mythology comes in the form of 'The Tales of Beedle the Bard' wizard's world answer to fairy tales, the stories most children born into wizard's families grow up with, comparable to Grimm's Fairy Tales. The Tales of Beedle the Bard contain such stories as The Warlock's Hairy Heart, Babbity Rabbity and her Cackling Stump, The Tale of the Three Brothers etc. These tales prove to be more than just bedtime stories for wizard's children they generate an atmosphere for growth of storyline. In the 'Tale of the Three Brothers' the death gave three items to three brothers that turn out to be 'The Three Deathly Hallows'. These three magical items when combined let the wielder to conquer death itself. Harry becomes the owner of all three items and exploits them to protect the wizard - world from Lord Voldemort's retribution. The function that this story in particular fills is very alike to the mythoi of primeval Greek religion. Often purpose of myths is to explain the reason and presence of certain things, customs and traditions, especially in the case of festivals and carnivals. Like the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, that gives the story of Demeter and her daughter Kore, and is an origin myth for some of the practices of the Eleusinian mysteries. It also explains the existence of corn. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* Harry saves Cedric's body from desecration by Lord Voldemort, unlike in the Homer's Iliad, King Patroclus of Troy salvaged Hector's death body from sacrilege by Achilles who defeated and killed him in a duel battle. The idea of the defilement, vandalism, sacrilege or desecration of a death body to profess intense hate for the person or their affiliates, existed in various mythologies around the globe, and Greek myths are not an exempt.

The writer introduces numerous mythical creatures adapted from ancient folktales like Veela, a race of semi-human, semi-magical humanoids, evocative of Sirens of Greek mythology, these mythical characters appear in narrative of the following

- *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
- *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*
- *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

As Apolline Delacour a half-Veela, thus her children Fleur and Gabrielle are quarter-Veela, and Fleur's children Victoire, Dominique and Louis are eighth-Veela. The sirens were the earliest recorded race of Merpeople. They lived in Greece. In mythology, the sirens were island-dwelling maidens that sung beautiful songs to travelling mariners to lure them into sailing closer and crashing on the treacherous rocks around their island homes.

The weaving of myth into the fabric of her story, the writer gave the world of Harry Potter an amazing realness, veracity and inherent history, one that are built on the fundamentals of mores in classics, mythology and ancient Greek -Religion.

Conclusion

The writer lent heavily from the classics, mythology and religion throughout the themes and plots, cogitate her background as a classics student. The lengths to which she goes to incorporate, integrate and entwine classical elements into her chronicle are incredible, adroit, adept and very proficient. This flair of writer to plait elements of fantasy to mythology not only add a very real dimension to her work, but fashion a pseudo-world with real like phenomenon, incidence and occurrences with character having their own unique histories and saga.

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