

# Comparing themes in gilgamesh and ramayana

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The theme of love in Gilgamesh and Ramayana The theme of love in Gilgamesh appear to be both in the form of erotic and platonic which serves as a major agent of change in the story. The theme is made relevant in the life of Enkidu who is moved by love to transform from a wild man into a noble person as a result of his association with Gilgamesh. As a result their friendship transits from that of a bully and a tyrant to that of an exemplary king as well as a hero. Love motivates them into a life of interdependence as Enkidu ensures checks and balance on the restless and powerful energies of Gilgamesh while Gilgamesh on his part assists Enkidu to come out of his self-centered attitude. This association allows Gilgamesh to identify closely with the people thus paying more attention to their interests and needs. This form of love between the two friends is one that seek to bring out the best out of every person thus making them better people in both actions and deeds. The love extends to the point of death which is evident upon the death of Enkidu which compels his friend Galgamesh to consider options that may lead into immortality (Tigay, 101).

The epic seem to lack a female love interest, but erotic love still plays an important role. Enkidu's education as a man begins with his sexual initiation by the temple harlot and the two heroes' troubles begin with their repudiation of Ishtar, the goddess of love. The factor of the goddess of love in the story brings out the theme of love in the story as people have to submit to the goddess so that they can achieve endless love from her. Erotic love affects all people in the society irrespective of their social status. It is the love for Ishtar that motivates him to consider being immortal. However, reality dawns when he realizes that the path he is trying to pursue cannot be attained and he has to return to Uruk to resume his kingship while Ishtar has <https://assignbuster.com/comparing-themes-in-gilgamesh-and-ramayana/>

to return to her original place of honor.

On the other hand, in the epic of Ramayana, affectionate love is made evident in the epic of Ramayan by how Sita who is the wife of Rama begs to accompany him to the forest upon being banished. This is indeed an act of true love. He allows Sita and her brother Lakshmana out of love for her.

Bharata demonstrates love for his brother Rama by insisting that he must be the one to take over the throne from their late father. He is ready to sacrifice for his brother to rule and this is evident by the fact that he follows him to the forest and insists that he has to come back to claim his rightful position as the next king.

Bharata offers to rule in the place of his brother for the fourteen years that he was going to be banished in the forest and will surrender it to him upon his return. This is a demonstration of love and concern for a close family member. Love motivates Rama to rescue his wife Sita who had been taken captive by the evil king of Lanka known as Ravana. His demand for purity does not show unconditional love as such should not be demanded from the person one claims to be in love with. There is less manifestation of erotic love in Ramayana as compared to Gilgamesh. In both epics sacrificial love is made evident when characters have to give up some things so that they can maintain their positions (Buck, et. al, 34-45).

#### Work Cited

Buck, William, Shirley Triest, and Vālmīki. *Ramayana*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000. Print.

Tigay, Jeffrey H. *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic*. Wauconda, Ill: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2002. Print.