

Myth

Literature



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Tricksters in Greek Mythology Many Greek gods are described as envious, vicious, cruel and quite negative personalities. It is possible to several gods that could be called tricksters. For example, such gods as Cronus, Zeus, Hermes and Prometheus can be regarded as some of the major tricksters in the Greek mythology. However, first, it is important to provide major characteristics of a trickster. These are intelligence, thievery and deceitful nature.

For instance, Evans (2010) notes that the trickster is cunning, knowledgeable and intelligent. Of course, all of the gods mentioned above were intelligent, wise and knowledgeable. However, they were also cunning. Cronus tried to trick the destiny and swallowed his children, as he knew that one of his children would overthrow him. Zeus was very cunning and he did not always use his might (destructive power) to punish. When Zeus desired to punish people, he did not simply destroy their world, but he sent the beautiful Pandora, who set horrible disasters free and people's lives became miserable.

The trickster is also a “ consummate and continuous trick-player and deceiver” (as cited in Evans, 2010, p. 111). Zeus during his love affairs often used various tricks taking shapes of animals or turning into rain or turning into a particular man. Of course, Hermes was the major trickster as he used to play tricks since his birth. For example, he left his cradle to play and pretended to be a little baby to get away with his theft. Prometheus can also be seen as a trickster as he wanted to deceive Zeus during the discussion of the sacrifice and the parts people should give to Gods.

Finally, the trickster is characterized by typical “ deceitful thievery” (as cited in Evans, 2010, p. 111). Hermes stole Apollo's cattle when the former was

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was only a baby. Prometheus also was a thief as he stole fire from gods. Therefore, all the gods mentioned above can be regarded as tricksters.

Reference List

Evans, R. C. (2006). A Midsummer Night's Dream (William Shakespeare) "This sport well carried shall be chronicled: Puck as trickster in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream". In H. Bloom & B. Hobby (Eds.), *The trickster* (pp. 109-121). New York, NY: InfoBase.