

Mythology: epic of gilgamesh



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The paper seeks to explain Levi-Strauss's Opposing Forces Theory with reference to the Epic of Gilgamesh. The paper will discuss the opposing forces that are at play as well as how the heroes reconcile those conflicting forces. The other aspect that will be discussed in the paper is about the lesson to be learned by the audience from these results of the paper.

Basically, Levi-Strauss's Opposing Forces Theory states that myths consist of opposing and contradicting elements. The two opposing forces portrayed in the story of Gilgamesh are historical and mythical. The historical Gilgamesh was the “king of Uruk, built walls, led Uruk in war of independence against Kish” (Epic of Gilgamesh). On the other hand he is mythologized as having divine powers. It is suggested that he is $\frac{2}{3}$ God and the other remainder is human. Gilgamesh is cherished for his prowess in defeating different opponents and is portrayed as a great hero. He somehow seeks immortality by trying to find Utnapishtim. However, the myth of immortality is dismissed by Utnapishtim who explains to Gilgamesh that death is inevitable after he was distressed by his behavior of fighting the ferryman to cross the lethal waters to reach him.

The myths of immortality and immorality are portrayed in the story of Gilgamesh. However, his character opposes the myth suggested that he is divine since he is seen as over demanding and is a womanizer. Immoral actions such as womanizing do not seem to be compatible with the behavior of a divine person. This led to his defeat by Enkidu in the first days after the citizens of Uruk had called for help from the gods. This explains that Gilgamesh is not divine as widely believed since he can also be defeated by other forces. Utnapishtim also explains to him that all people are mortal and death is inevitable. It is just a myth that one cannot die. This contrasts

with the other beliefs held by people that individuals with supernatural powers are immortal.

The lesson to be learned is that it is a fallacy that there are some people who are viewed as perfect and divine in character. The main theme presented in the story of Gilgamesh is that every human being is immortal. The other issue is that it is a myth that people who are seen as divine do not engage in immoral behavior. This has been reflected by the character of Gilgamesh.

The other part of him is divine and the other part is immoral since he is known as a womanizer. His behavior has brought discontent to the very people who cherish him as divine. This only explains the nature of man that it is not true to believe that there are some people who are perfect and therefore cannot engage in immoral behavior.

Over and above, the story of Gilgamesh portrays different myths that are held by people. Some people are often mythologized as divine but their behavior and character often prove that they are not superhuman beings. They can also behave immorally as opposed to the view that such people are perfect. The myth that divine people can win every battle is also dismissed after Gilgamesh was defeated by Enkidu after they wrestled. The main issues portrayed are that all human beings are immortal and they are not perfect in everything they do.

Works cited

“ The Epic of Gilgamesh.” <http://nebula.wsimg.com/b9ae00b49f656aef0e5f3b563e2ab0e7? AccessKeyId=4FEE79117BDB62A3A505&disposition= 0&alloworigin= 1> Web. 09 March 2015.

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