

Gilgamesh:
significance of the
literature of that
period of time
research paper



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Gilgamesh is considered to be one of the oldest pieces of art in the literary world. The story of Gilgamesh is a wonderful opportunity to go back for more than five thousands years ago and learn past cultures, interests, demands, and beliefs.

This story may serve as one of the most powerful examples of how recorded human thoughts influenced the current state of affairs and how the secret of immortality became the cherished dreams for human beings. The vast majority of people are still eager to participate in the hunt for immortality, this is why this source becomes more valuable where the results of such hunts are perfectly described.

The significance of Gilgamesh is evident indeed due to the variety of factors: this work is still regarded as one of the earliest literary works that are known to the reader, this is a captivating source about the events of the Great Flood and human beliefs, and finally, this story shows the reader the way of how life, death, and people's realization have to be united.

General facts about Gilgamesh story. Gilgamesh was a famous king of Uruk in the middle of 2700 B. C. He made a wonderful attempt to build a wall in order to protect his people against the enemies, envy, and other sources of evil. The actions of this kind attracted the attention of many readers. The oldest civilization tried to take leading positions and prove their rights to existence.

The Great Flood, the ideas of immortality, the grounds of friendship, and eternal memory – all these are the crucial points in the story. Gilgamesh and his friend Enkidu united their powers and skills in order to participate in <https://assignbuster.com/gilgamesh-significance-of-the-literature-of-that-period-of-time-research-paper/>

numerous adventures and achieve success; however, everything that Gilgamesh was able to achieve was memories and recognition but never immortality.

Gilgamesh as an epic poem and the oldest literary work. To comprehend why the poem about Gilgamesh is still of such great importance, it is necessary to clear up what makes it epic, what characteristics of an epic poem are inherent to the story first of all, and what the impact of this story is for the rest literary works. An epic poem is a kind of a work that is written in elevated language and devoted to the actions of one traditional hero.

The characteristics of any epic poem that have to be mentioned are the following: a clearly defined story; a hero that is supported by people; hero's searching for love, a friend, a relative, immortality, or treasure; gods, who are able to influence the development of the events and human lives; and, finally, a historical message that helps the reader to grasp his/her own place in this world and his/her possible heritage.

Gilgamesh is one of the examples that have all the above-mentioned characteristics. Some people may argue that the text of Gilgamesh is usually presented in prose; however, we should admit that this story is too old, and the original text that was written in the form of epic poem is hard to find.

“ The history of the epic itself begins sometime before 1600 B. C., eight centuries before Homer, when a Babylonian author... assembled free translations of the oral versions of some of these tales into a connected narrative” (Lawall 10-11). So, Gilgamesh has to be defined as a brilliant example of true epic story with all the necessary points. The literature of that <https://assignbuster.com/gilgamesh-significance-of-the-literature-of-that-period-of-time-research-paper/>

period of time and before Gilgamesh was hardly recognizable because it was difficult to save other author's attempts to present a worthwhile piece of work and depict the epic characteristics.

Gilgamesh and its connection to the Bible and the Greatest Flood. One of the most noticeable features of Gilgamesh is its close connection to the Bible and the events during the Great Flood. The Biblical times teach the reader to trust the power of God and respect God's decisions even if other people cannot comprehend this choice. " With the first light of dawn a black cloud came from the horizon; it thundered within where Adad, lord of the storm, was riding" (Cunningham and Reich 30). When gods comprehended that people became too numerous, too selfish, and too noisy, they made an attempt to show people their own weaknesses.

By means of the Great Flood, all humankind would be destroyed including plants, animals, and land. Those, who wanted to prove their rights to live and conquer the world, had to survive and accept god's rules in order to become immortal. This part of the story about Gilgamesh plays a very important role for the literature of that period of time and even for literature of current times. The historical message of this story is significant indeed: every human being has unbelievable opportunities and skills, but the point is to use these skills properly and not to break down the grounds, created by superpower.

Relations between gods and mortals or between civilization and nature have to be respected. If a person forgets this simple truth, the possibility to lose everything raises considerably. This is why in order not to lose life, faith, and dignity, it is better to remember about and respect these boundaries.

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Gilgamesh with its concepts of life and death. Very often, people can hardly appreciate the possibility to live, breathe, and communicate. In order to achieve success and power, many people are able to forget about the concepts of friendship and self-respect. The story of Gilgamesh shows the reader how friendship and attitude to life may change people and their attitude to each other.

Friendship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu may serve as a powerful example of how cruel reality and indifference to nature may weaken a person and how human mutual support may save. The story under discussion takes a significant place in the world literature because it proves that people are still able to save each other and keep in mind the idea of self-respect.

However, if it happens that you lose everything, it does not mean that nothing is left behind. Human actions, words, thoughts, and help to other people will be able to make your immortal. And everything is not about life and death only but about the ways of human personal realization and achievements of purposes.

The story of Gilgamesh discloses the essence of immortality in one of the most captivating and clearer way. The fear of death, the desire to find immortality, and the attempts to save lives – all this makes a person closer to death itself. Maybe, it is useless to think about what may happen when the time to die comes, but it is urgent to think about the ways of how people live and use their skills.

Gilgamesh is a significant literary work that demonstrated a brilliant start of how epic poem should look like and what information such works have to <https://assignbuster.com/gilgamesh-significance-of-the-literature-of-that-period-of-time-research-paper/>

present. Further works by Homer were considerably influenced by the story of Gilgamesh, and even the representatives of modern literature admit the importance of Gilgamesh context and absurdity of immortality for mortal people.

Cunningham, Lawrence, S. and Reich, John, J. Culture and Values: A Survey of the Humanities. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2005.

Lawall, Susan. The Norton Anthology of World Literature, Vol. A: Beginnings to A. D. 100. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2002.