

# The role of women in the epic of gilgamesh



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Men always are symbol of power and change but women have played a crucial role through the history. As Beyonce said: "Who run the world? Girls!" Maybe she was right. We have seen many times during the history that a man was the king and ruler but many times because of a woman, peace and war was created. Before females were considered very important because they are able to continue human life by giving birth. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the woman plays a very significant role and had tremendous influence.

A prostitute took Enkidu from wild animal life and put him in the human world. Shamhat lures Enkidu, protector of nature, into her arms with the fruits of her womanhood by offering him sexual satisfaction. She was a prostitute who lived in the city of Uruk. She was left in the forest so she can sleep with Enkidu and make the other animals abandon him. Enkidu was living as an animal, surrounded by animals. Nonetheless, he is drawn to the prostitute. She was wise and knew nature, so it wasn't hard for her to seduce him. She used to mention Gilgamesh to him and seduce him to go and meet him by saying : "You are just like him. You will love him like your own self." (Foster 13) . Then he didn't got accepted anymore by the animals in the forest. He was an innocent taken by the spell of a woman. Then he met Gilgamesh and they journey started there.

Ninsun gives Enkidu to Gilgamesh as a brother as well as her knowledge. Ninsun, Gilgamesh's mother, adopts Enkidu and allows him to have a human family. Ninsun was a loving, caring mother and also provided guidance. Gilgamesh decides he wants to meet Humbaba in battle, so he can leave his mark on the world. Humbaba was a terrible monster who personifies evil.

Enkidu describes him as a force of nature itself, with a mouth of fire (The Epic of Gilgamesh Summary and Analysis of Tablet II and Tablet III) . Ninsun fears about Gilgamesh's life. She prays to Shamash to protect Gilgamesh and paces a sacred pendant around Enkidu's neck. After she adopted Enkidu their bond between Enkidu and Gilgamesh gets stronger. They became brothers that will follow each other into the most dangerous battles.

Ishtar makes Gilgamesh crazy by taking Enkidu's life and sends him in the trip for Immortality that changes Gilgamesh forever. Because of Gilgamesh rejected her she asked for Bull of Heaven to be released to kill Gilgamesh. Both Enkidu and Gilgamesh fought together and won the fight. After Ishtar sees what happened, she curses Gilgamesh. Gods were angry and were deciding if Gilgamesh or Enkidu should die as punishment. Later Enkidu tells Gilgamesh about a wired dream that predicts his death. Gilgamesh asked for help from Gods but they gave Enkidu a slow and painful death for killing the Bull of Heaven. After Enkidu dies, Gilgamesh's personal journey begins to learn the secret of immortality.

During this journey he meets he looks out for Utnapishtim to learn the secret of immortality but on his way he talks to Utnapishtim's wife and learns a valuable lesson.

In conclusion , women in the Epic of Gilgamesh were full of knowledge and they knew this knowledge was useful to others. If it wasn't for their impact and actions maybe we would have never heard about the Epic of Gilgamesh.