

A comparison between motives and pertaining emotions in the narrative lines of The Gilgamesh Epic and Peer Gynt of Henrik Ibsen. Emotions are underlined.

(Henrik Ibsen had not read the Gilgamesh epic when he wrote Peer Gynt, it was not yet deciphered and translated)

G – Gilgamesh

P – Peer Gynt

1. *Hybris, arrogance audacity, sexual misconduct, feeling of superiority*

G: Gilgamesh the King harasses and exploit his polulation, Enkidu loses his innocence with the prostitute Shamhat

P: Peer's non-social bahaviour, including histories with women

2. *Naivité, innocence, nothing is serious, safety, feeling of security*

G: Enkidu's innocent life with the animals, having not discovered sexuality

P: Naivité, innocence symbolized by Solveig

G: Gilgamesh' mother, the goddess Ninsun, protects and loves him

P: Peer is protected and loved by Åse

3. *Fights and heroic deeds, bravery, aggression*

G: Travel into the wild forest to kill the troll Humbaba, protector of the ceder-tree forest.

P: The trolls, the infernals

G: Killing the Bull of Heaven

P: The buck at Gendin

4. *Feminae fatales, jealousy and being rejected verses true love/friendship*

G: Ishtar versus Enkidu

P: The Green-Clad One, Ingrid versus Solveig

5. *Catastrophe, tragic change, depression and despondency*

G: Enkidu dies

P: Åse dies

6. *Being left on one's own, loneliness, fear of death*

G: Gilgamesh fear to die

P: Peer leaves Solveig to avoid difficulties

7. *Voyage and adventures*

G: Gilgamesh travels to seek immortality

P: Peer travels to seek success, grandeur, and then to seek "himself"

8. *Dangerous sea voyage 1, fear*

G: Travel over the Sea of death, to Utnapishtim, the immortalized man

P: Travel to Egypt

9. *Dangerous sea voyage 2, fear*

G: Gilgamesh dives to the bottom of the sea to find the herb of immortality

P: Saved as the only one on his way home on sinking ship

10. *Being humbled before the divine*

G: Gilgamesh failed search for immortality, the herb of immortality is stolen by a snake

P: Peer fails to confess his sins before God, the onion has no core

11: *Nostos, return to the origin, feeling of peace, fulfilment of nostalgia, longing for home*

G: Gilgamesh comes home to Uruk and admires the city, reflecting on his toil

P: Per is forgiven by Solveig

12: *Being confined to conditio humana*

G: Gilgamesh comes home full of wisdom, with the acceptance of being a mortal human, though resigned

P: The button moulder makes it clear that Peer after all is just an average person