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Is Antigone and Star Wars a Myth?

Myth is something that cannot be defined easily. As time passes, the definition constantly changes. So, it is very difficult to depict whether if something is a myth or not. The current generation myth, George Lucas’ *Star Wars* films, is comparable to *Antigone* in many ways. They both deal with similar themes and morals. They are both myths.

*Antigone* is about a main heroine named Antigone. She is enraged because her brother, Polynices, does not receive a proper burial. Her kingdom ruled that Polynices is a traitor, so he did not receive the proper treatment. Creon—the king of Thebes (the kingdom) -- stated that anybody who buries Polynices will receive death as their punishment. Despite the possibility of death, Antigone was obsessed with honor and glory. She wanted to bury her brother anyway.

In *Star Wars: Episode VI- Return of the Jedi*, the main protagonist, Luke Skywalker, has a destiny to defeat the evil empire that is taking over the galaxy. Along with his friends, family, and allies, they fight the evil empire to restore balance and peace to the galaxy. In order for this to happen, Luke is forced to fight and kill his very own father—Darth Vader.

*Star Wars: Episode VI- Return of the Jedi*, is a myth. It fits many of the general conceptual frameworks involved in definitions of a myth. Myths “Involve Heroic Characters (possibly proto-humans, super humans, or gods) who mediate inherent, troubling dualities, reconcile us to our realities, or establish the patterns for life as we know it” (Magoulick, 2). This very much relates to Luke Skywalker. The obvious is that he has the power of the force—unique ability that is only for the Jedi Knights. Luke also has troubling dualities. The movie is focused on the two sides; the dark side and the light side. Luke is conflicted on whether he should partake in a revenge against Darth Vader for the murder of his mentor, Obi Wan Kenobi, or focus more on the rebellion. If Luke focused too much on revenge, he could have fallen to the dark side. Luke had this confliction between the dark side and the light side.

Another characteristics of myths are that they are “metaphoric, narrative consideration/ explanation of ‘ontology’ (study of being)” (Magoulick, 4). Myth tries to answer life’s fundamental questions like “’Why are we here?’ ‘Who are we? ’What is our purpose?’” (Magoulick, 4). Which, this is closely related to Luke. In the movie, it was Luke’s destiny to bring down the evil empire. That was the reason for his existence. Luke was an important being, in which, since he was born, Darth Vader wanted to kill him because he was a threat to the dark side. Since a long time ago, people knew that a Skywalker would bring peace to the galaxy.

*Antigone* does not have a grand quest like other myths have. But, there are many characteristics a myth would have that is in *Antigone*.

In *Antigone*, it “depicts events that bend or break natural laws” (Magoulick, 4). Tiresias—a blind prophet—can determine the future. Tiresias informs Creon that “All men make mistakes, it is only human. But once the wrong is done, a man can turn back on folly, misfortune too, if he tries to make amends, however low he’s fallen, and stops his bullnecked ways.” (Fagles, 112). Tiresias is foreshadowing that Creon’s decision to kill Antigone is going to later bring misfortune to Creon. Tiresias has the power to predict the future, which bends the natural laws.

Myths also has “the narrative aspect of a significant ritual (core narrative of most important religious practices of society, fundamentally connected to belief system; sometimes the source of rituals)” (Magoulick, 4). Antigone wanted to bury her brother, because in their beliefs, the dead cannot pass on and rest in peace without a burial. Antigone falls under this myth trait.

Like *Star Wars*, *Antigone* also seek to answer life’s fundamental questions. Antigone wants honor and glory from her own death. This play portrays how important honor and glory was at that time. Antigone wanted all the honor for herself, so that her death could be more important/significant. When Ismene—Antigone’s sister—wanted to die with Antigone, Antigone responded by “Never share my dying, don’t lay claim to what you never touched” (Fagles, 87). The purpose of life for this time was probably honor and glory, which the main heroine wanted.

Although *Antigone* and *Star Wars* are not like the traditional old myths, with gods, goddesses, old settings in Greece, etc., they are no doubt myths. *Antigone* is somewhat close to the traditional myths with old settings and references to Greek mythology gods, but it does not include any non-human characters or many supernatural abilities. *Star Wars* at first does not capture the image of a myth. Though, through analytical thinking for both pieces of content, there is characteristics present of what myths tend to have.

George Lucas’ *Star Wars* films, is a modern myth. It is interesting to see how myth has changed over the years, and how myths could be different and unique in many ways. It is also very fascinating to see how myths could be applied to modern films and maybe almost anything. There might be possibly a lot more myths like *Antigone* and *Star Wars* that people has yet to realize.

Works Cited:

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