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Instructor Name

Course Number

26 May 2019

Title: Greek/Roman values and beliefs

In Ancient Greek and Roman lives, mythology played a central role in shaping their way of life. To modern people, these myths provide a glimpse of the beliefs, values, traditions, and lives of past civilizations reflecting their priorities, morals, and social structures. An understanding of how mythology was central in influencing the lives of people back then can provide us with a hindsight of how modern methods of control work.

In Ancient Greece and Rome, people would pray to the gods for the same things that we yearn, safety, prosperity, health, wellbeing, etc. Praying to the gods would be a communal activity involving sacrifices, offerings, and incantations to please the deities whom they thought could profoundly influence and control their lives. Each of these gods would have numerous myths associated with them that were often meant to teach important life lessons. Additionally, these myths would control the people’s behavior because the supposed power of the mythological gods would scare and intimidate the people in following certain ways (Slater). The people were fascinated by the stories about the interaction between goddesses and in addition, these myths also exploited the Greeks’ yearning for meaning, and to understand the nature of the divine. Thus both the common people and the intellectual portion of the society would rely upon these myths to derive a common history, a common heroes, a common literature, and a common religion (Slater).

The other way myths influenced the values, beliefs, and lives of the people were through associating the notion of good and evil with the archetypes it created. For instance, *The Odyssey* would journey its readers through a brave hero’s quest serving as a model for the youth to emulate, adopt the society’s definition of virtues, and accept adult responsibilities. Besides good and evil, it would showcase how ordinary people could achieve greatness, and thereby inspire the readers to adopt virtuous traits that would lead them too to greatness (Buxton). Homer‘s *Iliad* for instance, not only depicted the interaction of Greek gods in battles, but also depicted an inner human struggle between evil and good.

Another important aspect about myths is that they come ubiquitous to all cultures. At times, myths famous in a different culture are essentially a retelling of an archetypal story that has been modified to fit the other culture. In today’s world, fictional myths remain just as popular, however, the types of myths that influence modern society are often highly different. Modern mythology is about psychological and technological mind control, and it serves an important purpose just as Ancient mythologies did. Exposing the mind to propaganda and advertising through technology is intended to target its self-image. It created the modern consumerists culture by turning a want into a need. Moreover, the control works subtly letting the people believe that they live in a free country wherein they are free to believe or think what they want (Taylor). However, an invisible fence exists to imprison the people’s freedom of thought by means of various myths the government uses to limit how far they can explore. An example of this is perpetuating the myth of scarcity, in order to create fear and an environment of us vs them. Immigrants are then made a scapegoat to turn the people’s sentiments in their direction.

To conclude, it is important to know how mythologies influenced the Ancient Greeks and Romans to the extent that they became central to their lives, cultural practices, and religion. It provided them an explanation of the world alongside information about why things were how they were. Although, modern myths do not involve gods and monsters, they are still relied upon by authorities to maintain the status quo, and require a higher state of consciousness to see through their subtle influences.

# Works Cited

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