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Period 2 Ms. LG

Compare and Contrast of Norse and Greek Mythology

**Introduction**

Dated back in the early 1200's, Norse was in Scandinavia started by Northern Europeans. The books Poetic and Prose Edda were the source of Norse Mythology written by many people. Norse Mythology was started by story-telling of great heroes and heroines from many tribes and was combined thus diffuse to all tribes and became unified.

Greek goes back in 500 B.C. when they were first written. Greek religion goes back longer than 500 B.C., but this was when it was written. Greek was started by small tribes meeting one another and mixing their knowledge and rituals into one belief. When more people got intermingled in this belief, the more the belief becomes unified. While Norse and Greek are both polytheistic religion, they're different in beliefs of death, beliefs of creation.

**Beliefs of Death**

In Norse, there’s no information on what happens to the person’s body when they die. There are three worlds they would go to. Those three worlds are Helheim, Valhalla, or Folkvang

The dead would rest in the Helheim(underworld). Hel, the ruler of Helheim is the daughter of Loki. Valhalla is where fallen warriors who were chosen by Odin and his valkyries. Folkvang is similar to this except they are chosen by Freya.

Greek mythology says that when someone dies they go to the Underworld. Hades is the ruler of the underworld and brother of Zeus. Depending on the kind of person they use to be, there are 5 parts of the Underworld.

Tartarus is beneath the Underworld and is where banished Titans and Kronos reside. Fields of Punishment is for souls that caused a serious crime and crimes against gods. They suffer eternal torture. Asphodel Meadows are for souls that never committed any crime, but they also haven’t done anything great that could put them into Elysian Fields. Elysian Fields is for the distinguished and granted by the gods. People who live righteous and virtuous life can be granted entrance. This is where they do no labor and have easy afterlife. Isles of the Blessed are for souls that decided to stay in Elysium or be reborn. If they are reborn 3 times and went to Elysium 3 time, then they were sent to Isles of the Blesses for eternal paradise.

**Beliefs of Creation**

In Norse, the world was created by Ymir’s body. Ymir was killed by Odin and used Ymir’s body to grow Yggdrasil. Through Ymir's blood was the sea; his flesh, the earth; his skull, the sky; his bones, the mountains; his hair, the trees.

The new Ymir-based world was Midgard. Ymir's eyebrow was used to fence in the area where mankind would live. Around Midgard was an ocean where a serpent named Jormungand lived. He was big enough to form a ring around Midgard by putting his tail in his mouth.

In Greek, the beginning was only chaos. Erebus, where death dwells and Night were the cause of the chaos. That is until Love came and brought order.

Through Love, Light and Day came and then Gaia, the earth was born. Gaia alone then gave birth to Uranus, the heaven.

**Rituals/Ceremonies**

Norse has three types of rituals. Runes, they’re use for symbolization of Odin. Seid, as used for divination and interpretation of omens for positive as well as destructive purposes. Blót, during the Viking Age, it meant sacrifice. It’s unclear if Norse rituals has anything involves sacrificing humans.

Odin is associated with Seid. When using seid, if it involves a sorceress doing sorcery, it’s socially acceptable when doing it. Sorcerers doing this is taboo and will be persecuted if found out. Blot was a Norse pagan sacrifice to the Norse gods and the spirits of the land. The sacrifice often took the form of a sacramental meal or feast.

Greek conducts rituals and ceremonies as an offering to the gods of Olympus. Many temples were created to devote to an individual god.

They give foods, drinks, and even domesticated animals as sacrifices as an offering.

Both Norse and Greek are polytheistic religion which means a religion with multiple gods. Greece has 12 main gods/goddesses called Olympians, but the minor gods are hard to count since there are a lot of them. Norse has many gods just like Greece except there’s less main gods/goddesses.

**Conclusion**

The early Greek, Pre-Socratic philosophers attempted to explain the world around them in more natural terms than those who relied on mythological explanations that divided the labor among human-looking (anthropomorphic) gods. The philosophy of Norse tells that there are nine virtues in their life. Courage, which applies everything they do and make their choice. Truth, believing in their beliefs and be truthful. Honor, it defines your integrity and dignity. Fidelity, means faithful. Discipline, there life lives up to their code. Hospitality, treat others with respect and dignity. Industriousness, means that the person is willing to work hard on whatever they do. Self-reliance, take care of themselves and their family. Lastly, perseverance, the people shouldn’t give up what they started. Right now, both mythologies is popular in the media. Books, movies, actors, etc. plays their role as the gods in religions. Historians make documentary and talk about their beliefs, how they live, and their gods. Today, there are still followers of both religions, but very few do.

While Norse and Greek are both polytheistic religion, they're different in beliefs of death, beliefs of creation, and world.

Work Cited

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