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Greek Mythology and British Culture

Celtic Culture (700-55 BC)

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my family who has supported me throughout the process of studying.

To my beloved parents, thank you for your support and encouragement

I also would like to dedicate my work to all those who contributed to its accomplishment.



Acknowledgement

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Abstract

This research paper offers a glimpse to the concept "Myth" and Mythology, and its origin and types. It mainly studies both the Greek Mythology and the Celtic culture in Britain (from around 700 BC to the arrival of Romans) and the way in which the Greek myths and mythology influenced the Celtic England, its culture, way of life, art and religion. It examines the origins and development of Greek Mythology, gods and goddesses as it depicts the cultural landscape of the so-called 'Celtic people' with identifying two of their cultures Hallstatt and la Tène. More specifically it gives a picture of Celtic religion and their primary dieties. Finally, it explains how Greek mythology influenced British culture during the Celtic period (700Bc.41AD) indirectly by the conquest of Romans.

Key words :

Myths ; Mythology ; Greek Mythology ; Culture ; Celtic Culture ; Celts ; Hallstatt ; La Tène ; Romans

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The past may be forgotten but it never dies. Each culture built up some kind of mythological system, which included components of its history, religious traditions, and stories about its legends. The part of myths was, for instance, to legitimize a war, or the structure of the general public. Additionally, myths made impressions of a blessed space, a kind of the center of the universe. Some of the time they built up peace in the general public, by showing divine source or awesome reason for specific traditions and happenings. The myths impacted the main social orders. The stories made individuals love certain things and wonders, and made them perplexed of others. Among these myths there is Greek mythology which has been over centuries a source of continuous inspiration for many people across the world.

In earlier times Britain was inhabited by the CELTS (500 BC-100 BC). The Romans called these people 'Britons'. They spoke the Celtic Brittonic language, while Ireland was inhabited by a different group speaking Gaelic. These first settlers were warriors, farmers and hunters. They found out how to make iron tools and weapons, hence this period is known as 'The Iron Age'. Social life was organized in clans, bound together with other clans into tribes. They built a number of hill forts, small ditches on hilltops mainly to defend themselves and keep out intruders. They lived in scattered villages and rounded huts with a thatched roof. They were pagan, believed in many gods and goddesses and worshipped natural elements; druids were main figures in society, they were priests, teachers, political advisors and were the link between the supernatural world and the ordinary human one. They were able to predict the future and had a good grasp of medicine and mathematics.

The word "myth" may be associated primarily with the myths of the ancient Greeks. The legends of gods and heroes like Athena and Zeus embodied the central ideals and values of Greek civilization. These myths described the Greek religion.

More specifically, from the lectures of the module of history of ideas of last year which make a great interest and curiosity to know more about how Greek mythology related to British culture. Thus this thesis studies the influence of Greek mythology over Celtic culture in Britain by providing an answer to the following problematics: how did Greek mythology impact the Celtic culture? Thus this research depicts the impact of

General Introduction

Greek mythology over Celtic England; its religion and culture by answering the following sub questions:

1. What does the concept mythology mean?
2. What is Greek mythology and its origins?
3. What does the concept culture mean?
4. Who are the Celts? What is Celtic culture?
5. How does Greek mythology differ from Celtic mythology?

Therefore, this research paper consists of three chapters; the first chapter gives an overview of Greek mythology. It begins by defining the concept myth and identifying its origins and types. Then it depicts the Greek myths, its origins and development. It also depicts the major gods and goddesses of Greek peoples. Second chapter shed light on the Celtic culture by defining the term Celts at the beginning. Then it demonstrates the cultural landscape of the Celts, their mysterious religion and mythology. The third chapter studies the relationship between culture and mythology. It also studies a comparison between Celtic and Greek mythology. And finally, it explains how Greek mythology influenced Celtic culture indirectly by the invasion of Romans to Britain.

General Introduction

Chapter One

An Overview of Greek Mythology

1. Introduction

Each civilisation, throughout the history, that emerged in many parts of the universe, thanks to several factors that forms its own culture. However, cultures have different perspectives which change over time. Cultures also made and said stories as well as ‘Myths' or "Mythology".

This chapter deals with the term mythology and its characteristics. Then, it sheds light on the origins and development that occurred within this antique mythology. It also highlights the most important themes and mythical figures with different illustration from the Greek mythology.

2. The Concept of Mythology

It is notoriously difficult to arrive at any single definition of myth, for example, myths can be stories about ancient events that define and sustain nations of community¹. However, myth can be simply stories which have several meanings. Further, myths are the oldest and most powerful of all forms, they often carry an important message for a culture or group-myths are stories that give people a relations hip with the universe, the passing of time, and with their environment. Some myths give the official view of creation; others are a way to explain natural events. Myths were passed on by spoken word, and their function was to explain, to teach lessons, and to entertain.

Furthermore, the word "Myths" comes from the Greek word ‘‘*Mythos*’’ which means "to tell a story"². A mythology is derived from a whole culture and not just an individual. In this sense, it can be seen as an emergent property of society³, in particular,

¹ A Parna, Halpé; *Between Myth And Meaning :The Function of Myth in four post-Colonial Novels, of Doctor of Philosophy*, Department of English, University of Toronto 2010,p :03.

² Mark P.O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, introduction to *Classical mythology*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1.

³ Marcarron ; P.A Network *Theoretic Approach to comparative Mythology* PhD thesis deposited in curve June 2015.

it is a story concerning the distant past. Mythology is a collection of myths; they are most commonly described as religious or sacred narratives⁴.

The simple and most direct way to approach mythology is to look at its subject matter. In the broadest terms myths are traditional stories about gods, king and heroes. Myths relate the creation of the world and sometimes its future destruction as well. They tell how gods created men. They depict the relationships between various gods and men they provide a moral code by which to live. And myths largely deal with the significant aspects of human and superhuman existence⁵.

The majority of myth author's are unknown since numerous tales are rooted to the pre writing era but some are of known source⁶.Homer is well-known example which shows a known individual who reported myths. Indeed, Myths has special Features; it explains how life started, or explains natural events, it involves Somme supernatural power.

In addition, many authors make specific distinctions between different types of myths. Nilson, distinguishes between divine and heroic mythology. Divine mythology concerns the gods and what he calls cult myths Heroic myths however, often begin with folktales and end with incidents that may have a historical appearance.⁷

2.1. Major Types of Myths

One reason so many scholars have tried pinning down the definition of myths is that myths can be similar across cultures, even in distant cultures. Some stories frequently recur in all cultures. Here are a few of them⁸:

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ .James Weigel, *Introduction To Cliffs Notes :Mythology*, Gary carey ed.,(New York :Wiley publishing,1973),9.

⁶ Ibid.11.

⁷ MarCarron, (2014 unpublished thesis Coventry university).

⁸ Kees W. Bolle, Richard G.A. Buxton, Jonathan Z. Smith. 2017. *Myths: Types of Myths*. Accessed on January 27th,2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/myth>

- a. **Creation Myths:** Everybody wants to know where the world and its creatures came from. Generally the world emerges from primordial darkness, often in the shape of an egg, through the work of a creator deity.
- b. **Cosmogony:** Many myths describe the way the world, the heavens, the sea, and the underworld are put together and how the sun and moon travel around them.
- c. **The Origin of Humanity:** Humans had to come from somewhere, and many mythologies describe their origin. They're often the pet creation of a deity dabbling in mud.
- d. **Flood Stories:** Many mythologies have a story about gods who were unhappy with their first version of humans and destroyed the world with floods to get a clean start. Usually one man and one woman survive.
- e. **The Introduction of Disease and Death:** Myths often describe the first humans as living in a paradise that is marred when someone introduces unhappiness. The Greek story of Pandora's box is one of the best-known myths.
- f. **Afterlife:** Many people think that the soul continues to exist after the body dies; myths explain what happens to the soul.
- g. **The Presence of Supernatural Beings:** Every body of mythology features deities and other supernatural entities. Individual deities often are in charge of particular aspects of the world or human life. Some supernatural beings are good, and some are evil; humans and the good gods fight the evil ones.
- h. **The End of The World:** Although the world has already ended at least once in most mythologies (usually through a great flood), some myths also have a plan for how it will end in the future.
- i. **The Dawn of Civilization:** Humans had to learn to live like people, not animals, and often the gods helped them. A common story tells of the theft of fire by a deity who brings it to humans.
- j. **Foundation Myths:** People who founded empires like to believe that historical reasons help to explain why it was inevitable that they vanquished their enemies and built a city in a certain place. A myth can help to explain these reasons.

Finally, mythology is no more concerned with only the investigation on the old or on other types of literature. Mythologists are at the present time anthropologists, philologists, etiologists, ethnologists and maybe the majority of them psychologists. Then, there are through the mentioned fields of study ritualists, diffusionists,

structuralists, Jungians, Freudians and culturalists but without everlasting exclusive mutuality. Acquiring knowledge about the most important theorists and theories may help the temporary mythology's learner to find the suitable approach⁹

3. Greek Mythology

For centuries, myths helped the early Greeks understand phenomena, or puzzling events, in nature and in human life, a wild storm could be explained as the act of an angry god; falling in love might be caused by the goddess of love; or the creation of the four seasons may be explained by Zeus' sympathy for humans. Whether these myths included gods, goddesses, or mortal heroes, their actions and adventures were as lessons that taught important Greek values to future generation¹⁰

It is important to know that the history of Ancient Greece falls into four major divisions¹¹. First, the archaic period, when the civilization's main features were evolving, lasted from the 8th to 6th centuries BC to the end of the antiquity (c.600 AD). It saw the emergence of polis which was an autonomous political unit covering a small territory: (Sparta, Argos, Corinth, Athens, and Thebes). Second, the Classical Greece flourished during 5th to 4th centuries BC. It was the beginning of the early Middle Age and the Byzantine era. This was marked by the period of the Persian Wars (c.510 – 479 BC). The third phase is known as Hellenistic period (323 – 146 BC). This period begins with the death of Alexander the Great and ends with the Roman conquest. At that period, Greek culture and power expended into the near and Middle East. It was a period of decadence and the invention of new deities. Next phase is the Greco Roman period. It was a period between Roman victory over the Corinthians at the battle of Corinth in 146 BC and the establishment of Byzantium by Constantine the emperor. The final phase of Antiquity is the period of Christianization during the late 4th to the early 6th centuries AD.

⁹ David Adams Leeming. *Introduction to mythology :the voyage of the hero 3 rd. ed.*(New York : Oxford University Press,1998).1

¹⁰ Fritz Graf, *Greek Mythology: An Introduction*, trans. Thomas Marier (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 57.

¹¹ Marshall Cavendish. 2011. *Ancient Greece: An Illustrated History*, New York.
www.marshallcavendish.us

The origins of ancient Greek religion go back thousands of years. The Greeks took some of their ideas from the ancient Minoan civilization 3000c 100 .BC located primarily on the island of Crete, and some from the Mycenaean civilization (c.2000.c.1100Bc), centred primarily on the Peloponnesian peninsular of southern Greece .they also borrowed from Egyptian religions and from West -Asian civilization by about 90Bc these numerous gods and goddesses had begun to be organized into the pantheon, or collection of deities honoured in ancient Greece¹².

3.1. Definition

Greek mythology is a collection of myths that Greeks used to explain their world, although nowadays view these stories as fiction and fantasy. The Greeks believed them to be true, the convictions related to spirituality, religion and cult actions were taken from the Greek mythology Investigation on this mythology sheds light on institutions, the acquired behaviours pattern regularly followed until they became almost involuntary, customs and rituals of the Antique Greek.¹³

Humankind and his feelings ;were the centre of interest in the whole art and ideas in Greece ;nowadays we still find known places where the Greek deities used to communicate with human beings, like the place where Zeus was brought up called mount Ida, on the Island of Crete and the habitation of Heracles ‘in Thebes’¹⁴

3.2. Origins and Development

The Greek mythology is most likely rooted to the old religious of Crete (kriti), an area (island) in the Aegean sea where about 30000 B.C the earliest civilization in his area emerged. Those individuals were convinced that the totality of natural things acquired spirits, and some things or fetishes acquired exceptional supernatural capacities. Throughout times, changes occurred within those convictions and became a group of legends including natural things. Animals and gods acquiring human kind

¹²Gregory Nagy, *Greek Mythology : Homer and Greek myths*. Andrew V.V.Raymond.(ed). Cambridge Collections online© Cambridge University Press 2009 : 5-7

¹³ Greek Mythology: *Greek Myths and Greek Mythology*, accessed February16th,2015.
<http://www.greekmyths.com/Greek-Mythology.html>

¹⁴ Kathleen N. Daly, *An Introduction to Greek and Roman Mythology*. Marian, Rangel .ed. (New York: Chelsea House,2009).Vii.

shape. Then, among those legends, there were certain legends remaining within the classical Greek Mythology.¹⁵

Further, mythology and religion of the Greeks had not only fixed form rather it changed according to places and circumstances. When mentioning Greek we are referring to people who lived in Greece and not to a society with a government. Myths witnessed development and modification since they moved from Asia Minor to Greece or from Greece to the Islands of the Aegean sea, to Italy and Sicily. In addition, persons were free in Greek states and had their self-thought because of the absence of government's control and the absence of tough unfair controlling priests, which promoted diversity, so there was liberty in making transformation on tradition by artists and poets as to represent their ideas in their own way, this enriched Mythology.¹⁶

Furthermore, on mountainous area, there was the greatest fear from the Sky and the Storm god; on the plane lands with fertility the earth and harvest gods were feared; and on seashore men claimed the favour of the story gods who controlled the sea and guarded trade. Also stories of heroes were gathered by themselves. And as a result of local pride significant occurrences were established by individuals, like the god's birth or god's significant power display appeared where located.¹⁷

Moreover, the Greeks came into contact with other individuals and became acquainted with the stories of their. The stories and the excessive rite celebrations linked to Asiatic and sensuality within his characteristics than one Greece. Hence, Mythology appeared from persons soul and did not emerge from authoritative source, mythology followed this flow; as Greeks life and way of thinking change, social circumstances were not the same, art¹⁸ became better, poetry and philosophy became complex, so utterance of the mythical stories and their meanings were no more the same and were transformed. Mythology was not a fixed and unchanging system; rather it witnessed development and change. Greek mythology has to be considered as a collection of legends passed down through individuals and persons who used poesy

¹⁵ A History of Ancient Greece, Mythology ;Introduction world History projection, accessed February 15,2015, <http://history.world.org/greek-mythology.htm>

¹⁶ Jessie M.Tatlock, *Introduction to Greek and Roman Mythology* (U.S.A:the century,1917),xxii.

¹⁷ Ibid. xxiii

¹⁸ Ibid-xxiii

during generations; constantly depicting the growing life and soul of a significant race of the "GREEK".¹⁹

At last, explanations of the development of Greek mythology were given even by the earliest Greeks. For instance, a mythology from 300 BC called Euhemerus registered in sacred history. Wide accepted conviction which reflected the myths were just a history deformity, in addition, gods were in fact heroes who gained more and more glory as time was passing. Another instance is the idea that natural phenomena like sun; moon, winds and water were personified by gods, taught in the 400s B.C by a philosopher called Prodicus of Ceos. Also, in the 400s B.C a Greek historian named Herodotus was persuaded that numerous rituals of Greeks held their origins of Egypt's people²⁰

3.3. Creation

Most cultures have myths that help to explain the creation of the universe and the beginning of time, because the origin of universe is unknown. Each culture has tried its best to make sense of this mystery. Further, Myths of beginnings are often called creation myths²¹. Thus type of myth tries to answer important questions about life and the universe .For example: How were people created? Where did the universe come from? Different cultures answer their questions in stories. Learning about creation myth is the study of cosmology (the cosmos/is the universe).

However, the Greek creation story and myth comes through two important writers. Homer(c900.BC) in his Iliad, Odyssey gave order to the chaos of all the separate myths that existed at the time, he explained the family relationship between the various gods, gave each one a title and a specific power or responsibility, such as Zeus, Poseidon, Ares He also gave them very human qualities. Homer is held responsible for raising twelve gods over the others and giving them Mount Olympus as their living place. This place of Greek religion is called Homeric, after the poet. And Hesiod in his poems called the Theogony (a family tree of gods) and work and they established the

¹⁹ Ibid-xxiv

²⁰ A history of Ancient Greek Mythology. Accessed on February 09th, 2017
<http://www.history.world.org/greek/mythology.html>

²¹ Michelle M. Houle, *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology*. 2001:18-19

Olympian gods at the center of Greek Religion, and poets from Roman mythology and Pantheon of gods by adapting the Greek myths²².

Moreover, in the Theogony, Hesiod appeals to the Muses, the patronesses of the arts, for inscription and wisdom as he begins to relate the succession of gods and the story of creation. Invoking the Muses' help was a common way for poets to begin their work²³:

Tell how at the first gods and earth came to be, and rivers, and the boundless sea with its raging swell, and the gleaming stars, and the wide heaven above, and the gods who were born of them, givers of good things, and how they divided their wealth, and how they shared their honours amongst them. . . . These things declare to me from the beginning, you Muses who dwell in the house of Olympus, and tell me which of them first came to be.

Furthermore, according to Greek myths, the world was empty. There were no sky, no land, no sun and no moon. There was only the so called Chaos. Chaos were immortals and virtual. They couldn't be seen. Then, Chaos split caused a terrible explosion. After that, the mother earth was created with no mother and father, namely Gaia. And she became pregnant by herself, and she gave birth to her son Uranus who became the god of sky and husband of Gaia. After, they became parents of their immortals children.²⁴

Before there was land or sea, people or gods, nothing existed, except Chaos. Chaos was a space of neither order nor disorder. During Chaos's reign, there was no organization of any kind in the universe. There was no sun or moon. There were no mountains or rivers, nor any such features on earth. In fact, there was no earth at all. It was a period of vast emptiness. Even time did not exist. Eventually, Chaos divided itself into the earth, the sky, and the sea. When the division was complete, everything was peaceful and perfect. After Chaos

²² Gregory Nagy, *Greek Mythology* : Andrew V.V.Raymond. ed. Cambridge Collections online© Cambridge University Press 2009 : 18-19

²³ Ibid : Hesiod and Greek myths : 83-84

²⁴ Michelle M. Houle, *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology*. 2001:19

divided into the earth, sky, and sea, one goddess came into being without being born to any mother. Her name was Gaia, which means earth, and she took control over the earth as it took shape. Mountains became separate from the plains, and rivers and oceans were formed. Like an artist at a canvas, Gaia was busy creating a beautiful masterpiece. Soon, however, the goddess began to long for children to help populate and rule this magnificent new world...

3.4. Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology

The ancient Greeks worshipped a wide array of gods, namely Pantheon. Many of whom were believed to dwell on Mount Olympus. Worship was usually carried out openly, although more secretive mystery cults were also popular. Greek religion was polytheistic in nature. Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses. They believed that these deities had a profound influence on life and on earth. Most of the gods, according to their beliefs, have human form and although they were immortals, they had many mortal defects, being prey to list, jealousy, anger, and other human failings.

In order to propitiate a god, the Greeks offered prayers, sacrifices, and public festivals to win divine approval and help in their human endeavours. As well as they honored Dionysus, god of wine, by sacrifice a goat.

3.4.1. Principal Gods

The first generation of gods marked by the first great goddess or mother earth Gaia / Gaea who nourishes all life²⁵. And Uranus, son and husband of Gaea, the ruler or the lord of sky. The second generation concerns the children of Gaia and Uranus. Their first children were hundred-handed. They were triplets, giants and immortals. The best known was Brirareus. Their second children were Cyclopes, who were triplets too, one eyed. They were metal smiths and servants of Zeus. Titans were the last children of Gaea and Uranus. They were 30 immortals who with their children ruled the universe before the gods conquered them. Cronus, youngest child of Titans, ruled sky after

²⁵ Ibid : 18

Uranus. He and Rhea, sister and wife of Cronus, were the parents of the first six Greek gods: Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, Hera, Demeter, and Hestia.

Therefore, the third generation of gods were the children of Cronus and Rhea. Zeus is the most intelligent and most powerful child, Lord of sky after Cronus, ruler of the gods. He maintains order in the world of mortals. He protects strangers and guests, and the king of Mount Olympus²⁶. Poseidon is the brother of Zeus, and the lord of the sea. Hades is also the brother of Zeus and the ruler of the underworld and the lord of the dead. Hera is Zeus's sister and wife. She is goddess of marriage and childbirth.²⁷

Indeed, Zeus has immortal children. Athena is the goddess of arts and crafts. She is the protector in war. She helps heroes. And she is the goddess of wisdom in late Greek Roman mythology. Hephaestus is the metal smith of gods. He is famous for his creativity and skill. Hermes is the Zeus's messenger. He guides travellers and leads shades of the dead into the underworld, he helps merchants and thieves.²⁸ Third and fourth generations formed the Greek Pantheon: twelve Olympians.

The twelve Olympians, known in Greek as the Dodektheon, were the most important gods and goddesses in the ancient Greek pantheon. Believed to dwell on Mount Olympus in Greece, they were central to the Greek mythology that developed from around 1000 BCE. According to Hesiod's seventh-century BCE *Theogony*, the first written work on Greek Mythology, they were third- and fourth-generation gods, all descending via the union of Kronos and Rhea, and, before that the union of Uranus and Gaia. Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and Demeter are the third-generation gods of the twelve, and Dionysus, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Athena, Ares, Aphrodite, and Hephaestus are the fourth-generation. All of the fourth-generation Olympians are children of Zeus, who is the king of the twelve.²⁸

²⁶ Carle Takes, Purpura .D. *The twelve Olympians and their stories: an introduction to Greek Mythology* (n.d), 7

²⁷ Ibid: 08

²⁸ Robert Arp ed., *1001 Ideas That Changed the Way We Think*, pre. Arthur Caplan (New York: Atria Books, 2013), 125.

3.5. War between Olympians and Titans

Gaia and Uranus bore many children. Most of them were terrible monsters. Uranus feared these powerful creations and hid them deep in the earth (place of Tartarus). This caused Gaia pain, as she loved her children, she became angry and plotted to destroy her husband. However, she gave birth to several gods and goddesses who were not fearful monsters. Among them was Cronus who was strong enough to overthrow Uranus²⁹. However, Cronus became king of the sky instead of his father Uranus. He created the first race of men made of gold (Golden Age) when men didn't have to work, and there was no suffering or death. Hence, Cronus was feared of his children that the curse of his father followed him and the history will repeat itself again. Thus, he swallowed each child as soon as he was born, so by eating his children he would never be overthrown³⁰.

On the other side, Rhea was horrified and became sad by this, and with the help of her mother Gaia, managed to give birth to her sixth son "Zeus" secretly on the island of Crete. However, she gave her husband a stone wrapped in baby clothes. He swallowed the stone in one gulp. Unfortunately, Zeus grew quickly and became the most powerful god. When he had grown he became a servant of his father, that one day offered him a cup of wine which contained some poison which made Cronus throw all that he swallowed. So, Zeus and his brothers and sisters escaped in fear of Cronus to stand and eat them all again³¹.

The war was terrible between Olympians and Titans and went on for years and years³². Zeus returned with an army of Gaia's monsters and the rest of the gods to overthrow Cronus. The hundred-handed and one-eyed Cyclopes joined Zeus and fought with the Olympians against the Titans. In addition, the two brothers, Prometheus and Epimetheus joined the Olympians when Prometheus, who had the ability to see the future, knew that the victors would be the Olympians.

²⁹ The Creation of The Titans and the Gods, from Hesiod's Theogony. P 1-2

³⁰ Michelle M. Houle, *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology*. 2001:28

³¹ Ibid 29

³² Ibid 30

After war, and after the victory of Olympians Zeus and his siblings went to the palace of Olympus where he ruled the earth, and all gods palace of Tartarus and men. Most of the Titans were sent to the palace of Tartarus and locked there. Atlas, the leader of the Titans Army was forced to hold the world on his back for ever; While Cronus was sent to live on the island of the dead³³.

3.6. Prometheus and Mankind

According to Greeks, Prometheus referred to as symbolic father of creativity, and which known as mankind's greatest helper. He is foresight god he had ability to see the future, his name means "one who think ahead". He is the one who learned human how to live, How to read, etc. His brother, Empimtheus, means the one who think after word, that is he think after he finished his work³⁴.

Prometheus was terribly punished for his many tricked plans of gods of Olympians, especially when he stole the fire from Olympus. He was chained to a rock on the crest of one of the Caucasus Mountains and every day an enormous eagle was fierce and relentless attacked Prometheus and each day it swooped down and peaked away at Prometheus's liver, devouring the greater part of it .Because Prometheus was immortal, his liver grew back every night and he never died. Until Hercules come and freed him after 30years of punishment³⁵.

3.7. Constellations

The first mentioning of the Greek constellations mythological meaning is likely to be cited during the 7th Century B.C in Homer achievements. There are several stories about stars in the galaxy and Milky Way. For instance, Andromeda: the chained lady, Major and Minor Bear constellations, the Orion constellation and many others. The three following constellations are just examples which depict some myth of constellations according to Greek myths.

³³ Ibid 34

³⁴ Ibid 40

³⁵ Ibid 44-45

3.7.1. Aquarius – The Water Bearer³⁶

The name most often associated with the constellation Aquarius is that of Ganymede, son of Tros, King of Troy. Ganymede was an extremely handsome young man, the most handsome the gods and goddesses had ever seen. While attending to his father's flocks on Mount Ida, Ganymede caught the attention of Zeus. Zeus sent his messenger eagle, Aquila, down to earth with instructions to bring Ganymede back up to Mount Olympus. On Mount Olympus, Ganymede served the gods by bringing them water whenever they needed it. He also served as cup bearer to Zeus. He was honored for his service by Zeus, who placed a constellation called Aquarius, which means water carrier, among the stars.

3.7.2. The Pleiades – Seven Sisters³⁷

Of all the constellations in the sky, no group of stars has been known longer nor had more different stories, legends, or myths told about it than the Pleiades. There are at least 43 different stories or names for them. However, there are only two that are closely related to the Greek heroes or gods. The Pleiades, according to the first Greek myth, were the seven daughters of Pleione and Atlas, the giant who bears the world upon his shoulders. These seven maidens, along with their sisters the Hyades, (these are the small stars forming the face of Taurus) were transformed into stars because of their "amiable virtues and mutual affection" and because of their great sorrow at the burden imposed upon their father, Atlas

While the second myth concerning the Pleiades tells how they were so beautiful that Orion was constantly chasing them, which caused them a great amount of discomfort. They appealed to Zeus for help and in pity for them he changed them into doves. As doves they then flew up into the sky and found a hiding place among the stars.

³⁶ Cathy Bell, *The Mythology of the Constellations*, www.comfychair.org, accessed March 28, 2017
<http://www.comfychair.org/~cmbell/myth/myth.html>

³⁷ Ibid

4. Conclusion

The origin of Greek mythology is still unknown. It adopted most of myths from Egyptian mythology. Greek mythology speaks of great tales of the unexplainable. It tells great stories of mortals who participated in dangerous adventures and heroic deeds. The appearance of gods was a major deal. The gods are formed as elegant and gorgeous beings (they have eyes, hair, muscles ...etc.). These stories of gods and goddesses interacting with mortals are still familiar, and still enjoyed, by humans worldwide, thousands of years after they were written and told merely as simple tales to explain the unexplainable in life.

Chapter Two

Culture and Mythology of British Islands

(Celtic Culture)

1. Introduction

Numerous books, and several television's programs and documentaries narrate and depict the past and its culture. Among them the mysterious culture of the Celts which is still surviving today in the four Celtic nations: Ireland, Scotland, England, and Cornwall.

Thus, The aims of this chapter is to define the concept of culture, then it aims to present the Celts in Britain and their culture which had a great influence on the development of civilization in the British Isles.

2. The Concept of Culture

The term culture comes from Middle French culture, from Latin *cultūra*, from *cultus*, perfect passive participle of *colō* (related to *colōnus* and *colōnia*).

It seems difficult to find out one unified definition of the concept "culture". Culture is a notorious difficult term to define. However, culture can be defined in different ways. In the words of Geertz, Culture is: the framework of beliefs, expressive symbols, and values in terms of which individuals define their feelings and make their judgements" (Geertz1957, 59:32-54). He adds that culture is 'an historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means which men communicate' (1973: 89). The following extract in some ways provides an interpretation to the term "culture":

Much of the difficulty [of understanding the concept of culture] stems from the different usages of the term as it was increasingly employed in the nineteenth century. Broadly speaking, it was used in three ways (all of which can be found today as well). First, as exemplified in Matthew Arnolds' Culture and Anarchy (1867), culture referred to special intellectual or artistic endeavours or products, what today we might call "high culture" as opposed to "popular culture" (or "folkways" in an earlier usage). By this definition, only a portion – typically a small one – of any social group "has" culture. This sense of culture is more closely related to aesthetics than to social science.³⁸

³⁸ Spencer Oatey, H. (2012) *What is culture? A compilation of quotations*. Global PAD Core Concepts. <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>. (Accessed on 18/03/2017).

Further, the Oxford English dictionary states that culture is the arts, customs, lifestyles, background, and habits that characterize a particular society or nation. It the beliefs, values, behaviour and material objects that constitute a people's way of life³⁹. While the Business Dictionary defines culture as: "Broadly, social heritage of a group (organized community or society). It is a pattern of responses discovered, developed, or invented during the group's history of handling problems which arise from interactions among its members, and between them and their environment. These responses are considered the correct way to perceive, feel, think, and act, and are passed on to the new members through immersion and teaching. Culture determines what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable. It encompasses all learned and shared, explicit or tacit, assumptions, beliefs, knowledge, norms, and values, as well as attitudes, behaviour, dress, and language."⁴⁰

In anthropology culture refers to any knowledge passed from one generation to the next. While another definition sustains that The term 'culture' refers to the language, beliefs, values and norms, customs, dress, diet, roles, knowledge and skills, and all the other things that people learn that make up the 'way of life' of any society. Culture is passed on from one generation to the next through the process of socialization. Although there are many aspects of everyday life which are shared by most members of society, there are different conceptions and definitions of culture within this general approach⁴¹.

Furthermore, In terms of communities organizing to solve problems in the long-term, Ed Schein defines culture as: "A set of basic assumptions – shared solutions to universal problems of external adaptation (how to survive) and internal integration (how to stay together) which have evolved over time and are

³⁹ Oxford English dictionary: culture, etymology. <http://Wiktionary.org>

⁴⁰ What is culture? *Definition and meaning*. Business dictionary .com <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/culture.html> (accessed on 23/03/2017).

⁴¹ <http://www.polity.co.uk/browne/downloads/sample> (accessed on 23/03/2017).

handed down from one generation to the next”⁴². According to Schneider & Barsoux (2003), while problems are considered universal in that every group needs to resolve them, the solutions are considered to be unique to that particular group. They are manifested in the way people behave, and in what they believe and value.

“Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour” (Spencer Oatey2008: 3)

2.1. Dimensions of Culture⁴³

- 1) **Topical Culture**: consists of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organization, religion, or economy.
- 2) **Historical Culture** is social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations
- 3) **Behavioural Culture** is shared, learned human behavior, a way of life the total way of life of a people
- 4) **Normative Culture** is ideals, values, or rules for living a way of thinking, feeling, and believing
- 5) **Functional Culture** is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together
- 6) **Mental Culture** is a complex of ideas, or learned habits, that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals
- 7) **Structural Culture** consists of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviours
- 8) **Symbolic Culture** is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared by a society

⁴² Mr. R.L. Janssen. “*Exploring the impact of culture*” *Technology transfer to five African countries - A study at Soil & More International*. Master thesis. University of Twente, the Netherlands June 2010: 13.

⁴³ Ibid. 14-17.

Furthermore, culture is considered as a primordial component of an individual without he or she cannot be a complete individual. So, a person is able to share numerous cultures and subcultures, for instance: somebody living in Algeria is able to share both the culture of his nation and other culture like the British culture, a community of religion, or a group's heritage and others.⁴⁴ Moreover, each culture made and says stories; also the creation of a myth is a significant practice depicting human kind creativity. Mythical stories, stories, legends, folklore, long tales reflect important comprehensions (insights) within the way individuals look at and consider their globe⁴⁵

3. British Culture

Historically, Great Britain was a great empire. There was no limit of its expansion in many other world's places. There was a worldwide control and exchange especially in terms of culture. Thus, Celtic is still surviving in Great Britain, its art, music, festivals and folklore.

3.1. Celtic Culture

Before concerning with Celtic culture, it should be concerned with the term " Celts". The words Celt and Celtic originally came from Latin (Cletus) and from Greek (Κελτοί: Keltoi). These words are used by historians to denote European peoples who spoke a Celtic language. They were described as barbarians, and they had no organized government or nation. They had vast tribes. The name Celt originated with the ancient Greeks, who called the barbarian peoples of central Europe *Keltoi*. Rather than being a broad cultural genetic 'race,' the Celts were a broad cultural-linguistic group. The area where they lived became a constantly changing collection of tribal 'nations.' The Celts were never an 'empire' ruled by one government.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Erin Long Crowell, "What is Culture, -Material and nonmaterial culture," Study.com, accessed on 23/03/2017 <http://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-culture-material-and-nonmaterial-culture.html>

⁴⁵ Cora Agatucci, "Culture, Religion & Myth: Interdisciplinary Approaches," accessed 23/03/2017 <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/CoursePack/culture.htm>

⁴⁶ *Celtic History; briefly*. Accessed on March 27,2017 <http://www.Joellessacredgrove.com/Celtic/history.html>

“The Celts were a group of related tribes linked by language, religion and culture that gave rise to the first civilization north of the Alps. They emerged as a distinct people in the eighth century BC, about the time that Homer was composing his Iliad and Odyssey, the Olympics were starting, and the legendary Romulus and Remus were founding Rome.” (National Geographic Magazine: Volume 15 #5, May 1977)

When it comes to Celtic history, separating reality from myth is not easy⁴⁷. The origins, cultural traditions, and historical evolution of the European peoples who so called Celts are all highly obscure. Most of historians don't know precisely where Celts came from, nor how they integrated with the indigenous cultures they encountered. (Their relationship with the Scottish Picts, for instance, is quite obscure.) There appears to be no clear or continuous archeological record of Celtic migration or occupation, and little consensus between scholars concerning Celtic genetics and language. The ancient Celts had no tradition of written history. Instead, Celtic history, customs and laws were passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth: this, despite the existence of a respected intelligentsia caste of Druids, who were steeped in Celtic culture and heritage⁴⁸.

“The three principal endeavors of a Bard:
 One is to learn and collect sciences
 The second is to teach
 And the third is to, make peace
 And to put an end to all injury;
 For to o contrary to those things
 Is not usual or becoming to a Bard”
 ~ The Triads of Britain ~

Celtic culture is very ancient. Throughout Celtic history, the fourth century was a high point of Celtic influence in Europe. The Celtic culture and language were an active force throughout the entire continent, from Black sea to the Atlantic, and from the Baltic to the Mediterranean where Celtic tribes controlled a number of important

⁴⁷ William, D.G.(1885). *Historical Characteristics of Celtic Race*. Accessed 23/03/2017 <http://en.m.Wikisource.org/wiki/>

⁴⁸ Desmond ,Johnston. *Some thoughts on the Celts*. Accessed,Mars,25,2017 <http://www.knowth.com/the-celts.htm>

trading routes across Europe. Thus, archaeologists findings and dating distinguished two distinct periods of the Celtic culture. Their earliest culture known as **Hallstatt** and the second known as **LA Tène**.⁴⁹

Hallstatt culture emerged from post 1000 BC to around 500 BC. This culture was a wealthy one being centred on a salt mining region. Therefore, their trade was widely with European areas generally and even further afield⁵⁰. The use of iron was highly developed in this area by the end of the Hallstatt period. This paved the way for the next phase in Celtic development. The **La Tène** period⁵¹

LA Tène culture emerged around 500 BC. This period is characterized by a new phase in Celtic expansion. It was not just immigration and trade but war which endeavoured to spread Celtic influence. However, Celtic movement, at that time, was southwards rather than westwards. The La Tène art forms were a definite success with the spread of beautiful bronze and iron work over Western Europe. This period's culture was influenced by Greek, Etruscan, and Scythian styles.⁵²

3.1.1. Social Structure

Celtic society was organized into different feudal systems headed by a king or queen. Generally speaking the Celts knew three classes in their society: a warrior upper class (headed by a king), druids (priests, judges and educators) and the commoners (freemen and slaves)⁵³.

3.1.2. Way of Life

The Celts were farmers when they weren't fighting. One of the interesting innovations that they brought to Britain was the iron plough. Earlier ploughs had been awkward affairs, basically a stick with a pointed end harnessed behind two oxen. They

⁴⁹ Celtic Britain (The Iron Age - 600 BC - 50 AD), accessed on March 25th, 2017
<http://www.Britainexpress.com/history/culture-britain.htm>

⁵⁰ Desmond ,Johnston. Some thoughts on the Celts. Accessed, March, 25, 2017
<http://www.knowth.com/the-celts.htm>

⁵¹ Arnold, B. 1999. *Drinking the Feast: Alcohol and the Legitimation of Power in Celtic Europe*. Cambridge Archaeological Journal 9. pp. 71-93

⁵² Ibid, 71-93

⁵³ Cunliffe , Barry, *In search of the Celts*, in: Chadwick, N. *The Celts*. New Edition. London: Penguin History, 1997, 116-117

were suitable only for ploughing the light upland soils. The heavier iron ploughs constituted an agricultural revolution all by themselves, for they made it possible for the first time to cultivate the rich valley and lowland soils. They came with a price, though. It generally required a team of eight oxen to pull the plough, so to avoid the difficulty of turning that large a team, Celtic fields tended to be long and narrow, a pattern that can still be seen in some parts of the country today.

Furthering, the Celts were a very clean people, using soap long before the Romans did. The Celtic men and women of Britain sometimes wore swirling blue tattoos or paintings on their bodies. All Celts played lyres and harps, loved song, music, and recitation of legends and epic adventures. They used metal or ornamented natural horns for drinking⁵⁴.

In the early cultures, both men and women had huge rectangular cloaks pinned at the right shoulder. These cloaks were generally woven in bright plaids, checks or stripes. Later, they wore large hooded capes reaching to the knees⁵⁵. In addition, Both sexes loved jewellery: brooches decorated with gold filigree, cuttlefish shell, garnets, lapis, and other stones; buckles of gold filigree and stones; pins and linked pins with animal-style decoration; necklaces of amber, granulation and chip carving. They wore torques, pendants, bracelets, pins and necklaces. The women sometimes sewed little bells on the fringed ends of their tunics.⁵⁶.

Celtic women painted their fingernails, reddened their cheeks with roan, and darkened their eyebrows with berry juice. They wore their hair long and braided or piled up on the head. Their usual dress was a sleeved tunic tucked into a large, gathered, belted skirt or simply an ankle-length tunic with a belt. While Celtic man on the continental mainland wore trousers with a tunic, but in Britain and Ireland the men wore a thigh-high tunic and a cloak, the ever-present dagger or sword, and leather or fur

⁵⁴ David, MacDowall. *An Illustrated History of Britain*, Long Man: 08. www.longman.com

⁵⁵ Ibid, 08

⁵⁶ Heather, P.Savino& Buryess, Karen, 2002. *Celtic project, inc.* Accessed on March 23th, 2017 <http://www.celtlearn.org/html>

footgear tied around the legs. Mustaches were common, and the hair shoulder length. A horned helmet indicated a powerful warrior⁵⁷.

Moreover, Celtic woman was more independent than any women in other civilizations. In his work, David McDowall stated the power of Celtic women and described Boadicea who was strongly defeated the Romans an example:

During the Celtic period women may have had more independence than they had again for hundreds of years. When the Romans invaded Britain two of the largest tribes were ruled by women who fought from their chariots. The most powerful Celt to stand up to the Romans was a woman, Boadicea . She had become queen of her tribe when her husband had died. she was tall , with long red hair, and had a frightening appearance .In 61 AD, she led her tribe against the Romans. She nearly drove them from Britain, and she destroyed London, the Romans capital... Roman writers commented on the courage strength of women in battle ,and leave an impression of a measure of equality between the sexes the among the rich Celts ⁵⁸

3.1.3. Celtic Religion and Mythology

Celts were polytheists. They worshipped multiple gods and goddesses. Druids were the Celtic version of priests. They were spiritual leaders who led rituals and told prophesy, but they were also known as educators and judges. Julius Caesar once said that they were a very religious people who had a moral code that distinguished right from wrong. In the Celtic religion moral salvation was considered the responsibility of the individual.⁵⁹

There is a rich mythology of Irish and British origin. It may refers to the Irish hero Cú Chulainn, who faces the forces of Queen Maeve, to defend his county. Another basic narrative is that of Book of Invasions, which tells the legend of the sons of Mile Espáine, the soldier of Hispania, or Milesius, the ancestor of the inhabitants of Ireland, who represent the Goidelic Celts. As for

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ David, MacDowall. *An Illustrated History of Britain*, Long Man: 08. www.longman.com

⁵⁹ *Celtic Polytheism*- wikiwand. Accessed on March 23th, 2017 <http://www.wikiwand.com/en/celtic-polytheism>

the British, there is always the legendary King Arthur and Boadicea who fought against the Romans. Another myth in Britain, arguably one of the oldest in Western Europe, but of which little is known, is the myth of Cernunnos, also called Slough Feg or horned God. He seems to be the god of fertility and prosperity but is also known as god of the underworld⁶⁰

3.1.4. Celtic Rituals Including The Human Head

No object was more venerated than the human head for the Celts. They thought that the head was the center of the soul, and contained the essence of the individual. The soul survived the death of the body, and furthermore the Celts believed that a severed head could move, speak, sing and ward off evil. Thus, heads of those vanquished in battle were highly prized and kept as family heirlooms, even serving as drinking cups after decorating them⁶¹.

3.1.5. Other Celtic Beliefs

The number three was also sacred to the Celts and there are many surviving artifacts that have a three sided head and three statues at a well. Water also had special meaning for the Celts, and many artifacts have been found that were probably deliberately thrown into the rivers and lakes⁶²

3.1.6. Festivals and Primary Deities

There were four great Celtic festivals, Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasa, and Samhain, celebrated on February 1st, May 1st, August 1st, and November 1st. When the Celts became Christianized two of these holidays were adopted by the church, February 1st became Candlemas Day and November 1st became All Saints Day with the night before celebrated as Halloween. May Day was never accepted by the Christians⁶³.

⁶⁰ *The Big Myth*©2011, Distant Train Inc, accessed on March 27th,2017 <http://www.distanttrain.com>

⁶¹ *Celtic Britain* (The Iron Age - 600 BC - 50 AD), accessed on March 25th, 2017 <http://www.Britainexpress.com/history/culture-britain.htm>

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Patricia, Monaghan. 2004. *The Encyclopedia of the Celtic Mythology and Folklore*. Facts on File, Inc, XIV-XV

3.1.7. Celtic Pantheon

The ancient Celts, as it is noted above, believed in hundreds of gods and goddesses. Some of them were half-gods and some were humans that became gods because of their close contact with the underworld. Celtic gods were often tied to one particular place such as a town or a spring, yet many of them shared similar characteristics. Their names could be spelled differently but they were worshipped for the same reasons. The Celts had an oral religious culture, which is why much about the Celtic religion remains a mystery today. Below are some of the most important gods which we know a lot about through stories written down by Roman observers and Irish monks, or through the images that were found in Celtic art⁶⁴.

- 1) BRIGANTIA was the goddess of victory and healing. She ruled over sacred sources and medicinal waters like the ones in Bath, England. She was often portrayed with a crown, wings, spear and shield.
- 2) CAMULOS was a god of war, worshipped widely across the Celtic world. In Ireland his name was Cumal and the word ‘cumal’ in old Irish means ‘warrior’ or ‘champion.’
- 3) CERNUNNOS means "horned one." Cernunnos was a very important Celtic god, often connected to death and the underworld, as well as to fertility. He was also the lord of the animals and portrayed with horns on his head, a long mustache and sideburns.
- 4) DAGHDA was the ‘good god’ who symbolized plenty and rebirth. His two most important attributes were a large club, of which one end could kill while the other end could give life, and an enormous cauldron that could never be emptied.
- 5) DANU was the mother goddess. From her sprang the waters that formed the river Danube. Out of this water grew an oak tree from which all the Celtic gods came into the world.
- 6) EPONA was the horse goddess and was always portrayed on or around horses, and sometimes with a dish full of corn, baskets of fruit, a dog, and a key. She was connected to fertility, healing, death and rebirth. In Wales she is called Rhiannon.

⁶⁴ Ibid, XV

- 7) ÉRIU was the Celtic goddess that gave Ireland its name. She would offer each new and mortal king of Ireland a golden goblet filled with red wine, as a symbol of his bond with the country as well as the prosperity he could bring.
- 8) LUGH was the most important of all Celtic gods, known to Celts across Europe. Lugh is also known as “the radiant one.” He is the god of light and a Celtic summer festival is named after him: Lughnasad. Lugh was a war hero, a magician and a master craftsman. Many European towns still show traces of him through their names: Lyon, Leiden, Leignitz.
- 9) MATRES DOMESTICAE were three Celtic Mother goddesses, normally worshipped in a triad. The Latin word Matres mean "mothers." They were often portrayed in art, particularly sculpture, usually as three seated women, wearing long robes and accompanied by various symbolic objects. Their symbols included cereal crops, bread, fruit, and other symbols of plenty as well as babies and children.
- 10) MORRIGÁN was one of the Celtic goddesses of war who could appear on the battlefield in the shape of a raven. This meant death was near. At the same time she was symbolic of fertility.
- 11) NANTOSUELTA (NANTOSVELTA) was a goddess of nature, valleys and streams. Her symbol, the raven, suggests that she may be associated with Irish war-goddess Morrigan.
- 12) NUADU was the king of the Tuatha Dé’, children of Danu. He lost his arm in a battle but another god made him a new one made of silver. His name can also mean ‘cloud maker,’ indicating that he was also a weather god.
- 13) OGMIA (SUN FACE) was a hero god, who had gold chains that hung from his tongue and attached to the ears of his followers. He is the patron god of scholars and eloquence. Ogmia invented the runic language of the Druids. He is represented as an old man, with a bald head, and dressed in a lion skin.
- 14) SUCELLUS was a Celtic hammer god usually portrayed as an older bearded man with a long-handled hammer. He was the guardian of forests and the patron of agriculture and is often shown with the goddess Nanotsuelta. Sucellus and Nanosuelta are often accompanied by other symbols such as barrels, pots, dogs and ravens. That’s why we believe that they were associated with beneficence, domesticity and prosperity. The hammer may denote a connection with thunder, rain and fertility.

15) TARANIS was the god of thunder, worshipped by Celts under different names across the Continent and the British Isles.

According to Mircea Eliade, Romanian philosopher, the myth is a vital ingredient of human civilization, that far from being a vain fable is instead a living reality, is not an abstract theory or an artistic fantasy, but a true encoding of primitive religion and practical wisdom. As it is noted by someone: “We should not ignore the mythology of the past as we face the future.”

3.1.4. Celtic Language

Celtic is a branch of the language tree known as INDOEUROPEAN, a tree that took root about 4500 years ago somewhere between the Carpathian Mountains of Eastern Europe and the Ural Mountains of Russia. Indo-European is the most prolific language tree in the world. All of the Indo-European languages have words in common. Various branches flowered into such tongues as Greek, Latin, Germanic and Slavic. Some of these limbs developed offshoots. From Latin came Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Rumanian⁶⁵.

3.1.5. Celtic Art

Celtic art is one of their most distinguishing characteristics. One of the most productive periods began about 450 B.C.E., which was later known as La Tene by art historians. Celtic art is intricate with highly stylized whorls, spirals, and curling tendrils. Though incorporating borrowings from the Greeks, Etruscans and others, Celtic art is very distinctive and imaginative. Later on their artists made beautiful illuminated manuscripts when they became Christian, such as the *Book of Kells*⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Celtic culture. Accessed on March 23th, 2017. <http://www.britishmuseum.org/celtic-language.html>

⁶⁶ Celtic culture and Art. Accessed on March 23th, 2017. <http://www.britishmuseum.org/celtic-Art.html>

4. Conclusion

The Celtic peoples occupied at least the greater part of British isles. At the time of their greatest power and extends the political divisions of the land were Celtic, their rulers had Celtic names, their laws and institutions and their economy and way of life were all Celtic. From Scotland to Kent, and from the Aran islands to the north sea. Indeed, Celtic peoples of the British isles formed a part of the great Celtic peoples who occupied and ruled a large part of Europe before their conquest by the Romans.

Celtic culture has had a deep influence on European society and religion. Versions of their language are still spoken in parts of France, England and Ireland. Back around 100 BC Celtic craftsmen anticipated many of the tools we use today, such as the plough, and many names of European towns and rivers are derived from Celtic names.



**Chapter Three Greek Mythology and
Celtic Culture (700-55BC)**

1. Introduction

When the Romans invaded Greece absorbed and borrowed the Greek mythology and religion. This was later known by the Greco- Roman mythology which has a great impact on the European civilizations, specifically on British civilization. The existence of this mythology in British islands can be traced back to the earlier inhabitants who were migrated to British territories. These earlier inhabitants were called “Celts” who had a Celtic pantheon especially in the period of Roman conquest.

Thus, this chapter examines the relationship between culture and mythology on one side. On the other side, it shows main differences and similarities between Greek mythology and that of the Celts. This chapter also explains how Greek mythology impacted the Celtic culture in the hands of the Romans.

2. Culture Vs Mythology

The previous chapters mentioned the definitions of both the concept mythology in the first chapter and the concept culture in the second chapter. So this chapter will examine the nature of relationship between culture and mythology.

Culture shapes the way the people think, it holds these people by providing them with a shared set of customs, values, ideas, and beliefs, as well as common language. On the other hands, myths are not only stories telling and writing by peoples, but myths are things do in the real. Myths are therefore expressed through a person's daily life, customs, religion, language, folklore, and other rituals and practices, and the annals of human actions.

Moreover, all societies make and recount stories, and myth-production is an essential human innovative movement. Myths, stories, legends, old stories, fanciful stories give important bits of knowledge into how individuals see and consider their reality In each culture, the language, customs, rituals, values and morals reflect the impact of mythology. That means that every culture has its own mythology. Every culture views the world through a type of lens which helps them understand the reality

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around them. Every culture established and constructed some kind of mythological system.

Mythology and mythological ideas permeate all languages, cultures and lives. Myths affect us in many ways, from the language we use to how we tell time; mythology is an integral presence. The influence mythology has in our most basic traditions can be observed in the language, customs, rituals, values and morals of every culture, yet the limited extent of our knowledge of mythology is apparent. In general we have today a poor understanding of the significance of myths in our lives. One way of studying a culture is to study the underlying mythological beliefs of that culture, the time period of the origins of the culture's myths, the role of myth in society, the symbols used to represent myths, the commonalities and differences regarding mythology, and the understanding a culture has of its myths. Such an exploration leads to a greater understanding of the essence of a culture¹

3. Greek Mythology Vs Celtic Mythology

Both the Greek Mythology and Celtic Mythology, their stories, legends, and folktales try to glimpse and explain the nature and the mystery of these ancient people. These myths and stories show how these people - Greeks and Celts lived and what was important to them. However, their myths are a key to understand Celtic what the Celts and Greek thought about the world and about their place where they lived in.

The ancient Greeks knew about the existence of Celts since the 6th century BC. It was the time of the second Greek colonisation during which the ancient Greeks founded colonies in the Western Mediterranean. The ancient Greeks were using two names for the Celts: Keltai and Galatea. The names derive from the Celtic language meaning probably strong, valiant or prominent.

The Ancient Greeks actually created myths about the origins of the Celts. According to one tradition, the Cyclops Polyphemus and the Nereid Galatea were the parents of Galatis (meaning Gaul the ancestor of Gauls) while in an alternative version

¹Pedro Mendia-Landa, "Universal Myths and Symbols: Animal Creatures and Creation," the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, accessed Mars 27th, 2017, <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1998/2/98.02.05.x.html>

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Hercules who wandered in Western Europe was the father of Galatis. The ancient Greeks also considered the Celts among the nations with the largest population in the world and the first Greek colony to develop contacts and diplomatic relationships with the Celts in Gaul where the Massilia which could go either peaceful or hostile depending.

Furthermore, another myth or legend told about the origin of Celts according to a 1st century BC Greek poet, Parthenius, the Celts were descendants of Heracles. As Heracles travelled back to Greece with the cattle of Geryon, Celtine, daughter of Bretannus, saw and fell in love with the hero. One day, she hid the cattle, and would not tell Heracles their where about until he made love to her. Heracles slept with her, and Celtine became the mother of Celtus, ancestors of the Celts. According to another legend about Heracles, written by Diodorus Siculus, the hero met and seduced a nymph named Galata. She was the mother of the Galatians.

But there are no literature survived from Cornwall and Brittany. Breton literature on myth and legend survived only through the writings of French writers. Thus, the majority of the literature Celtic myths come from Irish and Welsh, and to a lesser extent from the Scots².

Taranis³

Probably the an obvious similarity to the Ancient Greeks would be Taranis; the Celtic god of thunder who was worshipped in Gaul, Gallaecia, the British Isles and also in the Rhinelands and Danube regions along with others.

Taranis was depicted with a thunderbolt; exactly like Zeus and was shown to be bearded as well however he was also shown with a wheel in his hand; much like the Cyclops Brontes “Thunder” in Greek Mythology. Later on, Taranis was syncretized with the Roman version, Juptier.

²About celtic myths, accessed March 30th, 2017 <http://www.timelessmyths.com/celtic/aboutceltic.html>

³ The gods of Celtics, accessed March 30th, 2017 <http://www.druidry.org/library/gods-goddesses/taranis-thunderer>

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The Dagda⁴

The leader of the gods in Irish Celtic Mythology was The Dagda. He was the figure with all male humans and other deities were based because he embodied the ideal Irish traits. The particular character of the Dagda was as a figure of burlesque lampoonery or sharp, virulent satire that he directed at individuals and some authors even conclude that he was trusted to be benevolent enough to tolerate jokes at his own expense. This can be drawn to Zeus in the sense that some authors in Ancient Greece depicted Zeus to also have this satire about him where he would often find amusement out of others but he also made jokes about himself to make others laugh - though nobody else was allowed to do so. Again, Zeus also embodied the ideal traits for Greeks; for some-unknown reason being

The Morrígan⁵

The Morrígan was a tripartite battle goddess of the Celts of Ancient Ireland: known as the "Phantom Queen" or the "Great Queen" and often appeared as a crow flying over the battle fields. She was primarily associated with fate. The sections she divided into where Nemain, Macha, Anu and Badb (lesser common names were also there) and each goddess that was divided from the Morrígan represented different aspects of combat. The Morrígan also represented the Shape-Shifter, The Crone and The Warrior. The Morrígan would possibly have links to the Greek goddess Athena with Ares due to her personality and connections to battle and war.

4. The Impact of Greek Mythology over Celtic Culture

The seventh, sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. saw the development and full flowering of the Greek city state; Greek Orientalising, Archaic and Classical art; and the writing of Greek poetry, history and philosophy⁶. Moreover, To the Greeks, the "Celts" could be objects of ridicule (in comedy), of fear (as invaders), of exploitation (as mercenaries), and even of aesthetic appreciation (in art), but they were always and

⁴Celtic gods, accessed March 30th, 2017, <https://spirituality.knoji.com/the-celtic-irish-god-dagda/>

⁵ Encyclopedia mythica, accessed Mrch 30th, 2017 <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/m/morrigan.html>

⁶ Celtic" and Mediterranean Interaction, accessed May 02th, 2017; <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/Barbarians/Essays/interaction.html>

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irreducibly barbarians⁷. Post-Renaissance history specialists have embraced this view unquestioningly; obviously, by present day gauges, the absence of urban and state structures, and practices, for example, trophy execution of foes, unmistakably check the "Celts" as "savage." Explanatory models have joined this judgment, regularly unequivocally. A significant component in a diffusionist model is the self-evaluation of the acculturated gather as substandard compared to the way of life to be imitated; this is the inspiration driving the acknowledgment and fuse of "impact" from the higher culture. Pauli carefully plans the relationship consequently:

It is particularly in the peripheral areas of higher-developed cultures that interchanges take place, which were not limited solely to material exchanges of goods and superficial assumption of ways of living. When the Greeks, and also Etruscans, saw the peoples of the North as barbarians, as strange cultures with curious customs and incomprehensible language, the latter, on the other hand, correspondingly felt a newly-awakened consciousness of otherness, an important basis for the formation of their "we"-group identity⁸.

The Greek impacted the Celtic Britain indirectly. In earlier times, there were wars between Gauls or Celts and Greeks. But the Greek Art influenced the Celtic culture. More specific, the Celtic culture and customs were impacted by the time of Romans.

It is known that Romans absorbed ,Greek myths and Mythology. Thus, Roman Mythology was created by the Roman peoples as a religion, and it was adopted from Greek Mythology. Indeed, the Green and Roman myths are similar in many ways. They are both considered Great pieces of work. Greek Mythology on one hand, speaks of great tales of the unexplainable world, on the other hand, Roman Mythology consists of many battles and stories between immortals.

Therefore, It seem so clear that both Greek and Roman mythologies close on storytelling because of their rich tales of immortals. They differ only in their view to mortals; Green myths telles Great stories of mortals who participated un dangerous

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Pauli, L. *The Celts in Central Europe (Die Kelten in Mitteleurop)*. Salzburg 1980

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adventures and heroic deeds such as the stories of Perseus and Hercules ,while Roman myths disregarded the idea of mortality.

As It is noted above that Roman gods and creation borrowed from Greek Mythology.they have same godes and goddesses with different names but they have the same function in many times.for example,Zeus on greek Mythology became ‘‘Jupiter’’ in Greco -Roman Mythology, with the same trait, that is he is the king of Olympians and lord of sky .the following table show same major gods on Greco Roman version .

Therefore, what was written was just a background of how Roman absorbed Green myths to explain how Greek religion influenced Celtic Britain indirectly through the Roman invasion. McDowall in his work explain why Romans conquered Britain during the Celtic period:

The Romans had invaded because the Celts of Britain were working with the Celts of Gaul against them. The British Celts were giving them food, and allowing them to hide un Britain. There was another reason. The Celts used cattle to pull their ploughs and this meant that reacher, heavier and could be farmed. Under the Celts Britain had became an important food producer because of its mild climate .It now exported corn and animals ,as well as hunting dogs and slaves ,to the European mainland .The Romans could make use of British food fort their own army fighting the Gauls⁹

Julius caesar initially came to Britain in 55 BC yet It was not until very nearly a century later ,in AD 43,that a Roman armed force really involved Britain .the Romans were resolved to overcome the entire island. They had little trouble ,aside from Boadicea's revolt ,since they had a superior prepared armed force and in light of the fact that the celtic tribes battled among themeselves .the Romans considered the celtes as war-mad."high vivacious and snappy for the fight to come ".a depiction some would at present give the scots ,Irish and welsh today¹⁰.

The Romans built up a Romano-British culture a cross the southern portion of Britain ,from the River Humber to the River Severn .This piece of Britain was inside the

⁹Mcdowall , op. cit 09.

¹⁰ Ibid. 09

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empire. Beyond were the upland zones, under Roman control yet not built up. These areas were viewed from the towns of York, Chester and Caerleon in the western peninsula of Britain that later wound up noticeably known as Wales. Each of these towns was held by a Roman army of around 7,000 men, the aggregate Roman armed force on Britain was around 40,000 men¹¹.

They fabricated a solid divider along the northern outskirts, named after the Emperor Hadrian who arranged it. At the time Hadrian's divider was essentially planned to keep out bandits from the north. But it additionally denoted the fringe between the two later nations, England and Scotland. Eventually, the outskirts were set up a couple of miles further north. Efforts to change it in matter hundreds of years did not succeed predominantly moved toward becoming on either side of the fringe an attacking armed force framed its supply line overstretched. A regular purpose of adjustment had been found.

The most evident normal for Roman Britain was its towns, which were the premise of Roman organization and civilisation. Many became out of Celtic settlements, military camps or market centres. Broadly, there were three various types of towns set up in Roman Britain. These were the *Coloniae*, towns inhabited by Roman settlers, and the *municipal*, large urban communities in which the entire populace was given Roman citizenship. The third kind, the *civitas*, included the old Celtic tribal capitals, through which the Romans controlled the Celtic populace in the farmland. At first these towns had no walls, then, probably from the finish of the second century to the finish of the third century AD practically every town was given walls. At first huge numbers of these were close to earthworks yet by AD 300 all towns had thick stone walls¹².

4.1. Religion

Greco-Roman writers typically tell horrified accounts of the barbarous Celtic practice of human and animal sacrifice. Nevertheless, both Greeks and Romans sacrificed animals to the gods, and sometimes even humans (as did King Agamemnon with his own daughter). The Romans also famously organised games in which human beings fought each other in arenas to death for the pleasure of spectators. Furthermore,

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

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the Romans crucified political opponents and had prisoners killed or eaten alive by wild beasts in arenas. Overall, Celtic religious sacrifices were certainly less cruel and barbaric than what the Romans did.

The Romans conveyed their state divine beings to Britain (Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Mars, Mercury, and so forth.) and the supreme faction (love of the virtuoso, or watchman soul, of the ruler). This state religion was likewise political, a method for communicating devotion to the state, and Britons, as different provincials, will have been required to agree. However it was additionally Roman custom to adore the divine forces of the vanquished, as at Bath, where the intruders venerated British Sul at her "extraordinary" hot spring. They distinguished her with their own goddess Minerva, a typical Roman practice which made local gods clear to Romans – and Roman ones understandable to Britons¹³.

Essential similitudes of Roman and British religions supported this; both were polytheistic, with divine forces of spots, nature, people groups, war, and so forth. Numerous local divine beings came to be venerated in Roman style, in brick work sanctuaries, shaping crossover "Romano-Celtic" factions. The conflict with the Druids is a moderately uncommon case of religious narrow mindedness in the Roman world, the other surely understood clashes being with Jews and Christians. Apparently, the Romans protested the Druids since they rehearsed human relinquish, but the genuine explanation behind the conflict was political; the Druids were a supra-tribal request which may co-ordinate and incite insubordination. Other than bringing their own divine beings, the Romans likewise conveyed to Britain a significant number of the lords of different regions, from the Greek world and the East, including Egyptian Isis, and Christianity¹⁴.

Trade with the more developed civilisations of Greece and Rome had affected the Celts for a considerable length of time, as can be seen from their craft and numerous arrangements can be made between the divine forces of the Classical Mediterranean.

¹³ Roman Britain : A consideration of the process of Romanization, accessed March 30th, 2017
https://www.britishmuseum.org/PDF/british_museum_roman_britain.pdf

¹⁴Ibid

4.2. Language and literature

The Celtic people were largely non-literate. They had no written records or developed any skill of writings until the arrival of the Romans who brought the skills of reading and writing to British islands

In any event in the Midlands and the South, under majestic under imperial encouragement the local British tribal privileged sought to end up noticeably socially Roman, and to wind up plainly legitimately Roman by winning the citizenship through support of the legislature in common organization or the armed force. The models of Roman life they needed to work from were: the (to a great extent commonplace) armed force; the early military states it established, at Colchester, Gloucester, and Lincoln; in addition to the new exchanging blast town of London. These models themselves drew intensely on models in Roman France and the Rhineland. Thus, Romano-British towns and estates, for instance, were British reinterpretations of Gallo-Roman adjustments of Italian thoughts. Romano-British refined and town life and culture were along these lines altogether different from those in Italy. In any case, the broad thought that they were socially substandard compared to the last is a present day esteem judgment, itself eventually roused by the surviving compositions of Roman blue-bloods like Cicero and Caesar, which support Western originations of what "human progress" is. We have been impacted by the Roman senatorial respectability's own particular better mental self view and states of mind than 'brutes'. from those in Italy. In any case, the boundless thought that they were socially sub-par compared to the last is a cutting edge esteem judgment, itself at last roused by the surviving works of Roman blue-bloods like Cicero and Caesar, which support Western originations of what "human progress" is. We have been affected by the Roman senatorial respectability's own particular better mental self view and demeanors than 'savages'.

There were also important changes through time¹⁵. It took eras to develop the Romanized foundation of streets towns, and so on. And for Roman culture to scatter generally and profoundly. For instance, the greater part of the "palatial" estates (never

¹⁵ Roman Britain : A consideration of the process of Romanization, accessed March30th, 2017
https://www.britishmuseum.org/PDF/british_museum_roman_britain.pdf

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more than a couple of dozen) date to the fourth century, late in the occupation. Then again the armed force, which on its entry was a focal point of Roman culture, yet commonplace Roman culture, experienced a significant change; it actually went local as it changed to neighbourhood enlistment. In the third and fourth century, most Roman troopers in Britain were British conceived, not outsiders. Everyday life

Most Roman Britons lived in the countryside, so the normal daily round for most people was farming, planting and ploughing, storing and processing crops, managing woodlands, tending flocks and herds, butchering, maybe tanning, spinning, weaving, basket making, perhaps potting or smelting and smithing. We know less than we would like even of life in towns, since no Roman town in Britain is preserved like Pompeii; everything is far more fragmentary, and we lack the many inscriptions and other writings which tell us so much about Roman town life on the continent. In addition, if only because the weather and the people were different, Colchester, say, would have felt very different from Roman Naples, just as any two cities feel different today.

In addition, Many textbooks imply that everyone lived in townhouses or villas. In fact, most people continued to live in Iron Age-style round houses of timber and thatch which could be sturdy and quite warm and comfortable. Most villas actually lacked hypocausts ("central heating"), bath-houses or mosaics. They were not necessarily a big advance in comfort, but did represent the yearning of the wealthy to be Roman. Truly luxurious villas with baths and mosaics were always the exception; in fact most belong to the last century of Roman rule.

4.3. Art

The investigation of "Celtic" craftsmanship has been significantly influenced by the predominance of diffusionist thought ever. From the earliest starting point, early and mid-nineteenth-century revelations of what we now call "Celtic" finds were differently viewed as Roman, Teutonic, British, Germanic, Helvetian, Italic, Gallic, or Celtic. "Amid the Second Empire the finds were credited, as per the impulse existing apart from everything else, to the Gauls or to the Romans".

4.3.1. Celtic And Roman Art

The difference between Roman and Celtic art is not really about what sort of objects they made. Both carved statues and reliefs, both made helmets, swords, shields, tools, household objects, pottery, silverware, jewellery, and so on. Furthermore, the Romans made mosaics and painted pictures on dividers, which to the extent we know the Celts did not. Be that as it may, both the Romans and Celts attempted to make customary items not simply straightforward and useful, but rather excellent in their own specific manners. For instance, a shield would have plans or examples on it, as would a mirror or a vase. Hence, the distinction is additionally not about what materials the Romans and Celts used to make these things. Both utilized metals like bronze, silver, iron, and gold, and stone, stoneware, glass, wood, and bone.

Hence, Jacobsthal's comprehensive learning of Greek decoration and his observing eye empowered him to separate what was unique and un-Greek about "Celtic" craftsmanship. Notwithstanding his energy about "Celtic" inventiveness, in any case, Jacobsthal, soaks as he was in the established custom, bemoaned that the "Celts" were not all the more emphatically affected by Greek imports: "they didn't choose for Greek mankind, for gay and neighborly symbolism: rather they picked the strange enchanted images of the East"¹⁶. His decision on "Celtic" craftsmanship communicates the profound uncertainty of the traditional excavator gone up against with a workmanship contemporary with yet outsider to the natural established collection, and impervious to regular Western translation:

their art also is full of contrasts. It is attractive and repellent; it is far from primitiveness and simplicity, is refined in thought and technique; elaborate and clever; full of paradoxes, restless, puzzlingly ambiguous; rational and irrational; dark and uncanny -- far from the lovable humanity and the transparency of Greek art. Yet, it is a real style, the first great contribution by the barbarians to European arts¹⁷

The Celtic culture still exists in some areas to this day, although much modified to suit modern times. Celtic history, literature, and spirituality are enjoying renewed interest and popularity. It is also a subject for serious study.

¹⁶ Jacobsthal, *Early Celtic Art*. Oxford: Clarendon Press:1944/1969,P.162.

¹⁷ Op.cit.163

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Archaeologists, historians, linguists, and other scholars are still working to piece together all of the information culled from historic records and archaeological digs. By studying the evidence of these ancient people, they hope to draw an even more accurate picture of Celtic life. It is a vibrant field of study, with new discoveries and theories perhaps just around the corner¹⁸

¹⁸ Matson, Gienna. Jeremy Roberts. *Celtic mythology, A to Z*; 2nd ed. New York, Chelsea House publishers, 2010,p: xi

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the Celts represents a great culture .they had a vast influence on the language, religion, art, thinking, education and social society structure of western Europe in the pre-roman era. In their earlier manifestation (Hallstatt) they influenced areas such as France , Spain, Portugal, the British Isles through trade and settlement. Because their systems were admired they were adopted and adopted – later (LA Tène) came a more aggressive military expansionist phase with incursions into Italy, successful than earlier more peaceful penetration.

The Romans and Celts lived around a similar same time, a couple of hundreds of years prior and then afterward Christ, and both were extremely talented at making works of art like statues, jewellery, weapons and armour, and everyday objects like mirrors and coins. The Greek influenced Celtic people through Latin which used Greek alphabets.

However, many accepted traditions of Western culture—in philosophy and government as well as in art and architecture—were first defined in Greece centuries ago. The Greek concept of beauty was based on a pleasing balance and proportion of form. The design of graceful columned Greek temples has influenced architecture from the Renaissance to modern times. Greek sculpture established an ideal standard for the human form that served as a model for artists in ages to come.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Myths may be very old, or may be new because myths exist in every culture all over the world. The word myth is derived from the Greek *mythos*, which means word or story. Mythology is the study of myths. It is the body of the myths of certain people or culture. Myth can simply be defined as a fantastic story about extraordinary events. Indeed, it can be said that myth is a tradition which people inherit from their forefathers. Myths are often used to explain the beginning of the universe and how the world was made. Some myths even explain why disasters happened. For example one could imagine a world where angry god throw bolts of lightning at earth; this commonly called Zeus in Greek mythology.

Myths can be divided into three categories according to scholars: pure myths which help to explain natural phenomena often involving magic and divine beings. Heroic saga is tales of action set in the past describing the adventures of victorious heroes. Folktale is stories told for enjoyment. It tells stories about ordinary people and animals. However, mythology plays an important role in interpreting and understanding the mysteries of people, cultures and civilizations of the past.

Furthermore, myths were very important for the ancient Greek. It shaped a great part of their belief and religion. The Greek mythology existed before thousands years. But its origin is still unknown. The Greek mythology traced back to the old religions of Crete from where the Greeks took some of religious ideas of ancient Minoan civilization. They also adopted most of myths from Egyptian mythology and borrowed from Asian religions. Greek mythology is a collection of myths which speaks of great tales of the unexplainable. It tells great stories of mortals who participated in dangerous adventures and heroic deeds. The ancient Greeks worshipped a wide array of gods and goddesses because they were polytheists. Thses collection of gods and goddesses called pantheon. They propitiate their god by praying and making sacrifices, and making public festivals to win divine approval.

The term Celt is derived from the Greek word *keltoi*, a generic term used to call European barbarians from the Danube to the Atlantic. The Celts were the early inhabitants of Britain and they are considered the ancestors of modern British people. But the true origin of these people is still subject of debate. According to several historical records, researchers, scholars and historians disagree about the origin of the so- called Celts. They cannot know for sure and what they exactly did come from. Other scholars point out that the shores of the Black sea as the possible homeland of the Celts. All what the scholars do agree about is that

General Conclusion

these people came to Britain by the early seventh century BC, as well as they agreed that these people migrated in different progressive waves. Moreover, all the information and knowledge about the Celtic peoples based upon different resources: in the work of classical writers especially Greek and Roman writers, in the work of Strabo, Herodotus, and Caesar Julius and other writings of medieval age. And from Their oral traditions which survive through storytelling. And finally, the archaeological findings which tried to piece out a picture of Celtic culture.

Hence, Celtic mythology referred to stories and legends which had been told by the ancient race of Celt. These people have common language, they shared same culture, customs, traditions and they shared the same mysterious religious rituals. The Celtic society consists of three different classes: a warrior class, Druids who are the religious men in Celtic society and the third class consists of free men and slaves. The Celts were pagan and polytheists. As well as ancient Greeks, they have Celtic pantheon. Nevertheless, Celtic culture personifies the Iron Age in Britain. Scholars distinguished two main periods of Celtic culture. The early Celtic culture was known as Hallstatt. This period has seen a rich and flourishing trade between Greeks and Celts. The second period was known as La Tène culture. It characterized by new distinctive style of arts which the Celts adopted from Greek and other cultures. In this period the Celtic society had become more warlike. However, the Celts covered a broad area of British islands and they considered the parents of British civilization and of many other European civilizations.

At last and as conclusion, since the Celts were Indo- European people, there were many similarities between their religion, arts and those of Greek and Latin. Thus, the Greek myth had impacted Celtic culture, their art, religion as it provides written records about them. That impact was indirectly vehieculed by the arrival of the Romans to British islands who brought their culture, civilization, arts and artefacts. The Romans were absorbed Greek pantheon and were mixed with Celtic people together, which later made it difficult to distinguish between the two cultures.

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