Mythology in Greek and Roman Societies

Starting in Greece the Iliad was distributed at least 700 years before the roman society. The Iliad was an epic poem where was set in the Trojan War. The Iliad was known also by the “Song of Ilium” because the time period of the story was set within 10 years in the city of Troy by a group of Greek states. This epic poem tells the battles and a dispute between a king and a warrior. The Iliad refers to a lot of the Greek legends and had many of the Gods and Goddesses has the main characters. This is where the Greeks get their main beliefs and myth of the Gods from and their deities mainly were Zeus, Hera, Artemis, Apollo, Hades, Aphrodite, Ares, Athena, Hermes, Poseidon and Hephaestus. In Greek mythology were basically collections of many stories that about their Gods within the natural world and the heroes that attributed in society. The traits of their Gods and Goddesses were based on human like traits specifically on personality. Each God had their own traits based on their roles as well. For example, Zeus is the God of the Gods just as his role is the shy and weather. When it came to the afterlife to the Greeks unlike the Romans, later on, the Greeks focused on the importance of what you did on earth than having a great afterlife. Mortals were rewarded for good deeds they have portrayed on earth. It also had something to do with Gods and mortals being captured from the afterlife most of the time. When it came to the mortals, the Greeks viewed their contributions to the society just as the Deities were important for the progression of life. In Greek mythology the Gods were very human like and were compared to the mortals. They said the Gods lived on Olympus in the mountain very high in the sky. They never died and sometimes the mortals would meet them face to face but they were disguised mainly. When it came to physical forms of the Gods and Goddesses they were beautiful, had perfect bodies and features. They had gorgeous hair and eyes and when they speak it was beautiful as a song some say.

The origin of Greek mythology is unknown but some speculate that they could have originated from the Egyptians. This possibly could be true since the Egyptians have been around before the Greeks and believed in many Gods as well.

As for the Romans the Aeneid is a Latin epic poem written by Virgil and tells the legendary story of Aeneas who traveled to Italy and became an ancestor of the Romans. This is the start of Roman mythology. It is where they also adopt many of Greek mythology and made it into his own. The Roman Gods were Jupiter (Zeus), Venus (Aphrodite), Phoebus Apollo (Apollo), Mars (Ares), Diana (Artemis), Minerva (Athena), Ceres (Demeter), Bacchus (Dionysus), Cupid (Eros), Pluto (hades), Trivia (Hecate), Sol (Helios), Vulcan (Hephaestus), Juno (Hera), Mercury (Hermes), Victoria (Nike), Faunus (Pan) and Neptune (Poseidon).

Just like the Greeks each God was a God of a specific thing. Jupiter was king of all Gods, Venus was Goddess of love, Phoebus Apollo was God of the sun, Mars was God of war, Diana is the Virgin Goddess of the hunt and childbirth, Minerva is the Goddess of wisdom, Ceres is the Goddess of grain, Bacchus is the god of wine, Cupid is the god of love, Pluto is the God of the underworld, Trivia is the Goddess of justice, Sol is the God of the sun, Vulcan is the God of fire, Juno is the Queen of Gods, Mercury is the messenger of the Gods, Victoria is the Goddess of victory, Faunus is the God of the woods and pastures, and Neptune is God of the sea.

Roman Gods and Goddesses were not central to any myths like the Greeks. They came about 1000 years after the Greeks. In Roman Mythology the afterlife was greater than the mortals and circled around only the Gods good deeds and bravery. The Roman Gods and Goddesses did not have any physical appearances and only was in the imagination of people. The Roman Gods were named after objects unlike the Greeks where they were named after human like traits. In Greek mythology mortals were rewarded on earth when doing good deeds whereas the Romans were rewarded in the afterlife. How the Romans worshiped their Gods were different than the Greeks. The Greeks worshiped their Gods outside of the temple and assembled ceremonies outside. For the Romans they worshiped their Gods inside and held ceremonies inside. Scriptures of stories of the Gods played more of an important role in Greek religion than the Romans. The Romans felt rituals and cults were more important. The Roman Gods resembled the important needs of the daily life they lived in.

Other than The Aeneid, there is another form of how the Roman Mythology was created. It started out with two men named Remus and Romulus. They were sons of God Mars and Rhea Siliva, which was a mortal. The Two boys lived with their Uncle and when the parents died the Uncle killed both the Remus and Romulus so they received the powers of their father, God of Mars. Remus and Romulus fought and Romulus killed his brother Remus to have the main power and ran off. He ran off to a city and named it Rome.

Overall Greek and Roman Mythology are fairly the same when it came to the Gods and goddesses but the Gods played a different role to each society. It was because it was a different times period and different views. The Greeks was more unified within the civilization and their Gods. They were one and the only thing that really separated them was their powers and roles. Their Gods played a bigger role in people’s eyes but the role of mortals were just has important as the Gods. For the Romans it was more separate when it came to mortals and their Gods. They worshiped their Gods not knowing if they will be rewarded with a good after life. They did not know for sure how their Gods looked like so they had to build their own mindset of what they did.