History of mythology in psychology

Mythology and myths are deeply rooted in various cultures in the world. There are seven continents and nearly all of them are rich in different cultures that have their own separate mythology. The fact that mythology has not deeply woven itself into our day to day life, even more than it is, is shocking but also more shocking that nearly all of us know a story of mythology that was the origin story or the basis of an idea, a word, or even a symbol. Many people learn about myths and mythology while in school or if they are a part of a religion from their place of worship.

Mythology is in our everyday life, for an example, everyone who has an iPhone knows about their virtual assistant Siri. The basis of Siri was the name Iris, which is Siri backward and Iris was a goddess of relaying messages to the gods of Olympus in Greek mythology (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2007). Then another reference that used in today's modern technologically advanced society is that if the Trojan horse. Symantec's Norton Virus Protection best explains it as " a type of malicious code or software that looks legitimate but can take control of your computer. A Trojan is designed to damage, disrupt, steal, or in general, inflict some other harmful action on your data or network" (Symantec, 2018). The original story of the Trojan horse was how the Greeks used a wooden horse to gain entry into the city of Troy by hiding inside the hollowed out wooden horse in order to win a war. Once the wooden horse was brought into the city of Troy the soldiers inside the wooden horse disguised as a gift conquered the city from the inside.

Mythology is all around us now in the modern world as clearly stated before. Even though Psychology may be viewed at by some as an old science as compared to physics or chemistry it still is a science that is used every single

day whether people realize it or not. Mythology has influenced psychology in so many ways. From the way of how we get the word psychology and other names of disorder to the influence of mythology had upon well-renowned psychologists and their theories.

The word Psychology actually has its roots in Greek mythology. The base root word of Psychology is psyche. Psyche in the ancient and dead language of Latin means soul or spirit. The story of Psyche is definitely one story that shows why we named psychology what it is. Diessner and Burk's study of " The beauty of the psyche and eros myth: Integrating aesthetics into introduction to psychology" shows the importance of beauty in human psychological development. Their study " primarily outlines a curricular recipe for infusing beauty into the Introduction to Psychology course at the undergraduate collegiate level" (Diessner & Burke, 2011, p. 97).

The story of Psyche and Eros is that Psyche was the daughter of a king and queen in ancient Greece and was the most beautiful women in the world. Due to jealousy the goddess Aphrodite sends her son Eros to punish Psyche for taking away the attention from his mother. However, Eros falls in love and builds a palace for Psyche to keep her in hiding from his mother which he hid his relationship from. The only thing Eros asked of Psyche was that she should never look upon him and one night she breaks her promise and does.

Eros then flees from his lover and Psyche learns what she did wrong and immediately tries to look for him. She begins to do deeds for the goddess Hera as well as Ceres and soon after doing many deeds she submits herself

to Aphrodite. Expecting to be at the mercy of Aphrodite she was waiting to be punished when Aphrodite makes Psyche do numerous trials to win back the love of her son. After all the tests and trials were completed, Psyche was then given immortality and married her lover.

Diessner and Burke used many different ways to tell the myth in their Introduction to Psychology course such as MP3s, any pieces of art such as paintings and sculptures, as well as poety being recited. While waiting for class to start or while telling the myth to the class Dissner and Burke would play the opera Psyche which was composed by Matthew Locke. They also would play other pieces of music by composers such as Niels Gade, Lord Berners, Ludomir Rózycki, Manuel De Falla, and César Franck. Their most preferred interpretation wa " Franck's Psyche tone poem while conducting the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, with the BBC Welsh Chorus" (Diessner & Burke, 2011, p. 102).

Then for any of the visual art retellings would be various different statues. Two statues of Psyche are being held in the Louvre and as well as the Hermitage. King Louis XV also commissioned series of tapestries of Psyche to be painted. Sir Edward Burne-Jones was a pre-Raphaelite painter who produced nine Psyche paintings for Palace Green, Kensington, as well as over fifty drawings intended to illustrate a section of William Morris's *poem The Earthly Paradise.*

Then there were many poems that were recited in Diessner and Burkes class. The story of Psyche and Eros actually grasped the attention of many of the romantic period's greats such as Keats, William Morris, as well C S.

Lewis. A. S. Bryatt made sure to use the myth in her prize-winning novel Possession. The novel also includes a poem in which she wrote to illustrate one of the trials Psyche did for her love of Eros. Using this Diessner and Burkes during their study infused discussion of issues related to beauty such as the representation of beauty in paintings, representation of beauty in music as well as the recitation of poetry about beauty.

During previous years Diessner and Burke used course evaluations to see their high levels of engagement with the Psyche myth. Though in the spring of 2008 they decided to have a more systematic approach. They gave their Introduction to Psychology students a questionnaire which contained specific questions about their experience with the various presentations of the myth. There were eighty-one students attending the introductory class on any given day in the year that Diessner and Burke did the questionnaires.

The questionnaires gave the two professors some information regarding their class and the presentation of the myth. The study and the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by the Institution Review Board at Lewis-Clark State College and they made sure all ethical research guidelines were followed and enforced. Of the eighty-one students who completed the survey 66 percent were women and the participants have an average age of 22. 2 years. There also was a diversity of majors as 29. 9 percent were natural science majors, 27. 3 percent were humanities, 22. 1 were social sciences, 10. 4 percent were vocational-technical, and then the final 6. 5 percent were undecided majors.

The questionnaire itself four statements which had a Likery scale. With 5 being very true, 4 being true, 3 being neutral, 2 not true, and 1 being very much not true. The first question wanted to know if the presentation of the psyche myth enhanced the achievements of the course goals and the average anger was a 3. 8. Question two it was wanted to know if the myth provided meaningful metaphors about human psychological development and the average answer was a 4. 0. The question three was a reversed score as it asked if the psyche myth was a waste of time with the mean average being a 4. 3. The final question asked if the myth had helped the students reflect and ponder on deeper issues of life and the final average was a 3. 6.

Another myth that is used is the field of psychology is the tale of Arachne and Athena. The myth goes that the goddess challenged a woman by the name of Arachne to a weaving contest. The goddess wove an amazing tapestry with her plate of an olive branch and with gold in the twine as well, but her competitor decided to do something much different. Arachne wove a story on the tapestry of all the secrets of the gods. Of Athena killing a comrade of hers, Zeus seizing women in the form of a swan, as well as many other secrets. In retaliation Athena cast a curse upon Arachne to forever spin tapestries but to have eight arms and to be a small insect who forever has their tapestries destroyed. The story of the creation of the spider had been made by the Greeks.

Phobias around certain animals have been more prevalent than others especially spiders in which the term, arachnophobia comes from. Glotzbach-Schoon and their partners studied on anxiety disorders that were primarily in women who had a specific phobia such as spider phobia, also known as

Arachnophobia. The participants were all women within the study and there was a total of thirty-eight. Twenty of them had spider phobia while the remaining eighteen were non-spider fearful individuals. They were recruited into the study by advertisements around the local areas.

" Specific phobia was confirmed by a trained psychologist using the structured clinical interview for DSM-IV" (Glotzbach-Schoon, et. al, p. 970). During the analysis two of the women who had spider phobia had to be excluded from the data analysts, due to the fact that during the procedure an electrode had come off as well as an acute illness. In order to make sure that during the procedure that the fMRI scan would pick different brain activity there were two separate questionnaires, Spider Phobia Questionnaire and Fear of Spiders Questionnaire.

During the procedure there were pictorial and electrical stimuli for the participants. To experience. The pictorial stimuli were ninety different color photographs. Thirty were spider photos for the phobia relevant trials, thirty were mushroom photos for the neutral trials, and then thirty puppy photos for filler trials. The experiment took about 35 minutes with each of the ninety photos being shown for seven and a half seconds each. Half of the photos for each category were followed by an electrical shock. Since there were three different categories and only two possible outcomes of being shocked or not shocked there was now distributed into six conditions. Within every single consecutive trial every outcome combination with the photos had occurred.

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