

Swiss mythology assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A Swiss Myth; Barbering Introduction The definition of myth varies greatly amongst scholars, some have a functionalist approach where myths serve as approvals for social action, and others have a structuralism view where myths serve to facilitate conflicting or dualistic elements of society and life (MacDougal, 2003). A classical definition of myth from William Bassos (1965) is that they are tales believed to be true, usually sacred, in distant or past worlds with extra human, inhuman characters.

This essay will be mostly guided under McDowell (1998) definition, that myths are a story, capturing events real or imaginary where the extraordinary feats and traits of myths are only possible because they are attached to a period in the growth and development of civilization. Although this definition may not be fruitful in understanding myths more than others, however it is one that most closely resembles my understanding and ties into my example of Swiss myth. This essay will outline a typical Swiss myth and describe its placement in the historical timeline and culture of Swiss people.

Explanation and Relation to Culture Switzerland is a country where I truly grew up in, and I adopted their culture and radiation quickly. A large part of Switzerland culture lies in the mountains, and only once more and more people went to visit or inhabit the mountains did this myth emerge. One popular myth that is told in all parts of Switzerland is about gnome type creatures that live in the mountains called Barbering. The name derives from French; "barber" and "glace" meaning beard and frozen, together frozen beard.

These creatures are characterized by their big feet; which they use to ski on, long frozen beards and mostly live in caves until the first big snow fall of the year. The first time I came in contact with this legend was when I went on a school ski day. In the region I lived, the Barbering is used to scare children, such as when the ski instructor would tell us to stay with the group and not venture off on our own. However other regions say the Barbering are known to be able to whistle in warning of avalanches.

By McDowell definition this myth is a true story, with imaginary events; such as Barbering skiing on their big feet, whistling to warn for avalanches.

Furthermore in the way I experienced it, it was a part of the development or growing up of children. Huntington 1993 article on the clash of civilizations has a strong point of view that civilizations will clash along the lines of culture more than ideologically or economically. He specifically stated that there are specific cultural fault lines where conflict will arise.

In this sense I don't believe this particular myth will cause any however it is not necessary for the continuation of civilization. Conclusion In further reflection of Huntington 1993 article I don't believe myths should facilitate the clash of civilizations. As much as they may be part of a country culture, and even if cultures do collide, a story is more often than not known to have extra or inhuman characteristics and are known to facilitate conflicting elements for society to reflect on.