

= Greek Zeus =

Latin Jupiter = Old Norse Tyr ". The question of Greek mythology 's place in Indo @-@ European studies has generated much scholarship since Müller 's time . For example , philologist Georges Dumézil draws a comparison between the Greek Uranus and the Sanskrit Varuna , although there is no hint that he believes them to be originally connected . In other cases , close parallels in character and function suggest a common heritage , yet lack of linguistic evidence makes it difficult to prove , as in the case of the Greek Moirai and the Norns of Norse mythology .

Archaeology and mythography , on the other hand , have revealed that the Greeks were also inspired by some of the civilizations of Asia Minor and the Near East . Adonis seems to be the Greek counterpart ? more clearly in cult than in myth ? of a Near Eastern " dying god " . Cybele is rooted in Anatolian culture while much of Aphrodite 's iconography may spring from Semitic goddesses . There are also possible parallels between the earliest divine generations ( Chaos and its children ) and Tiamat in the Enuma Elish . According to Meyer Reinhold , " near Eastern theogonic concepts , involving divine succession through violence and generational conflicts for power , found their way ... into Greek mythology " . In addition to Indo @-@ European and Near Eastern origins , some scholars have speculated on the debts of Greek mythology to the pre @-@ Hellenic societies : Crete , Mycenae , Pylos , Thebes and Orchomenus . Historians of religion were fascinated by a number of apparently ancient configurations of myth connected with Crete ( the god as bull , Zeus and Europa , Pasiphaë who yields to the bull and gives birth to the Minotaur etc . ) Martin P. Nilsson concluded that all great classical Greek myths were tied to Mycenaen centres and were anchored in prehistoric times . Nevertheless , according to Burkert , the iconography of the Cretan Palace Period has provided almost no confirmation for these theories .

= = Motifs in Western art and literature = =

The widespread adoption of Christianity did not curb the popularity of the myths . With the rediscovery of classical antiquity in the Renaissance , the poetry of Ovid became a major influence on the imagination of poets , dramatists , musicians and artists . From the early years of Renaissance , artists such as Leonardo da Vinci , Michelangelo , and Raphael , portrayed the Pagan subjects of Greek mythology alongside more conventional Christian themes . Through the medium of Latin and the works of Ovid , Greek myth influenced medieval and Renaissance poets such as Petrarch , Boccaccio and Dante in Italy .

In Northern Europe , Greek mythology never took the same hold of the visual arts , but its effect was very obvious on literature . The English imagination was fired by Greek mythology starting with Chaucer and John Milton and continuing through Shakespeare to Robert Bridges in the 20th century . Racine in France and Goethe in Germany revived Greek drama , reworking the ancient myths . Although during the Enlightenment of the 18th century reaction against Greek myth spread throughout Europe , the myths continued to provide an important source of raw material for dramatists , including those who wrote the libretti for many of Handel 's and Mozart 's operas . By the end of the 18th century , Romanticism initiated a surge of enthusiasm for all things Greek , including Greek mythology . In Britain , new translations of Greek tragedies and Homer inspired contemporary poets ( such as Alfred Lord Tennyson , Keats , Byron and Shelley ) and painters ( such as Lord Leighton and Lawrence Alma @-@ Tadema ) . Christoph Gluck , Richard Strauss , Jacques Offenbach and many others set Greek mythological themes to music . American authors of the 19th century , such as Thomas Bulfinch and Nathaniel Hawthorne , held that the study of the classical myths was essential to the understanding of English and American literature . In more recent times , classical themes have been reinterpreted by dramatists Jean Anouilh , Jean Cocteau , and Jean Giraudoux in France , Eugene O 'Neill in America , and T. S. Eliot in Britain and by novelists such as James Joyce and André Gide .