

*A HUNDRED YEARS OF CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY IN SPANISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS**

I. Introduction

During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Spain underwent a varied political history that encompassed several stages: the restoration of the monarchy with Alfonso XII (beginning in 1874), the period of the Second Republic (*Segunda República*, 1931–1939), the Francoist dictatorship (1939–1975), the years of the so-called Transition (*La Transición*, that is, the transition to democracy, 1975–1982), and the emergence of modern democracy. Over this time, Spain has also experienced substantial social changes that have radically altered education and have given rise to a number of national education plans.

The aim of this paper is to sketch a brief history of the uses of classical mythology in the Spanish educational system from the monarchical period at the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day. Different political systems and circumstances, with different aims, have shaped different education programmes and uses of mythology. Through analysing these changes and usages, the importance of classical content in Spanish primary and secondary school systems emerges, leading to a need for a rethinking of the value and role of classical studies in contemporary educational practice.

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2. Setting the Stage: The Nineteenth Century

In the modern era, and until very recently, the relationship between the Spanish educational system and Graeco-Roman classical mythology has been complex and problematic, largely as a result of religious issues, but also due to questions of ideology and politics. Before the 1990s, mythology was not included in the curricula in the form of standardized, systematic content; nevertheless, its importance was often acknowledged in a utilitarian sense, in that it enabled recognition and understanding of cultural models of European art and literature from different eras. For this reason, it is possible to trace its relatively constant presence over time, mainly in the subjects of language, arts, and Latin and Greek literature.¹ For example, already during the reign of Ferdinand VII (1814–1833), the *Reglamento General de Escuelas de Latinidad y Colegios de Humanidad*, dated 1825, aimed to foster the teaching of Latin language and classical literature, and regulated the creation of humanities schools. Here we find that the schools of Latin studies taught, over a two- or three-year period, content such as Latin grammar, Spanish grammar, antiquity, and mythology.²

During the nineteenth century, classical mythology studies became emancipated and took on a certain autonomy as an independent area of scholastic knowledge, beyond its practical function of facilitating proper comprehension of literature and art. As Angélica García-Manso suggests, the nineteenth century is “el siglo de la divulgación de la Mitología Clásica o, en otras palabras, de la ‘mitología divulgativa’” (the century of the divulgation

¹ However, the presence of mythology was not exclusive to these subjects. Very significant in this respect was the Pidal Plan (named after Pedro José Pidal, Minister of Governance) of 1845 (Royal Decree of 17 September 1845), where great impetus was given to the humanities in general, and to Latin specifically. Although this plan was only in effect for a short time, it included a subject called *Mitología y Principios de Historia General* in the first year of secondary education. Moreover, in the modern era, it must be noted that teaching Latin language and literature has been a constant in the Spanish educational system at least since the *Ley de Instrucción Pública* of 1857, known as the *Ley Moyano*. Nonetheless, its presence has been reduced gradually over the years. Greek was generally a compulsory subject for students of the *Bachillerato en Humanidades* (the Spanish Baccalaureate in the Humanities) since the 1938 plan, until it became an elective subject even for humanities students under the *Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa* (LOMCE), dated 9 December 2013, *Boletín Oficial del Estado* (BOE), 10 December 2013.

² See Antonio Medina Medina, “La formación del Sistema Educativo español y las ideas pedagógicas de la Educación Liberal”, in Olegario Negrín Fajardo, ed., *Historia de la educación española*, Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2006, 219–267 (on Latin schools, see p. 245).

of Classical Mythology, or, in other words, of “informational mythology”).³ This phenomenon was a direct result of the Enlightenment, which weakened the position of the Christian worldview, and it accounts for the appearance of a textbook by writer and pedagogue José de Urcullu Baterruri (1790–1852), *Catecismo de mitología*, where the word “catechism” loses its religious content and takes on an exegetical value.⁴

Even though Romanticism in Spain rejected the classical model to some extent, leaning more towards other historical periods, especially the Middle Ages, mythology as a key to knowledge of the past sparked renewed interest across Europe during this era, and Spain was not immune to this influence. Thus, the mid-nineteenth century saw a surge in publications about mythology, whose didactic intent was clearly reflected in their titles by words like “compendium”, “elements”, or “course”.⁵

Despite this sudden emergence, in Spain’s case it cannot be said that these texts were entirely free from the influence of the Catholic Church, although it is true that more progressive, moderate voices can be seen, which downplayed the inherent danger that the Catholic mindset had attributed to the Classics for centuries in Spain.⁶ Very illustrative in this regard are the ideas of Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo (1856–1912), Spanish polygraph

³ Angélica García-Manso, “Mitología para niños: el relato fabuloso grecolatino según Fernán Caballero”, *Epos* 32 (2016), 102. All translations of cited fragments in this article are mine.

⁴ The text was published in London, at the Ackerman publishing house. See García-Manso, “Mitología para niños”, 102–103.

⁵ The more notable publications included: Rafael Reinés, *Compendio de mitología y de las Metamorfosis de Ovidio: con un extracto de la historia romana. Arreglado por D. Rafael Reinés para uso de los estudiantes de retórica, poesía y conocimiento de los autores clásicos de la antigüedad*, Barcelona: Imprenta de J. Oliva, 1840; Patricio de la Escosura, *Manual de mitología. Compendio de la historia de los dioses, héroes y más notables acontecimientos de los tiempos fabulosos de Grecia y Roma*, Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de D.F. de P. Mellado, 1845; Juan Miró, *Curso de mitología para uso de las universidades e institutos*, Cádiz: Imprenta de la Enciclopedia Política, 1846 (classical mythology occupies the greater part: pp. 21–124); José María Antequera, *Compendio de mitología ó historia profana: comprendiendo en esta la de los pueblos más célebres de la Antigüedad hasta la destrucción del imperio romano, escrita en forma de diálogo para el uso de los niños*, Madrid: Imprenta del Diccionario Geográfico, 1847 (classical mythology also occupies the greater part: pp. 9–62); Francisco Lorente, *Compendio elemental de la mitología: para la mejor inteligencia de toda especie de libros que maneja la juventud estudiosa*, Madrid: Imprenta de Repullés, 1847. These data are taken from Antonio Ramón Navarrete Orcera, “Manuales de mitología en España (1507–2002)”, *Tempus. Revista de Actualización Científica sobre el Mundo Clásico en España* 31 (2002), 5–107, which provides the most complete available catalogue on this material.

⁶ Christianity has faced (and solved in many different ways) the problem of how to relate to classical culture since at least the second century CE, but a detailed analysis of this history falls beyond the scope of this paper. Among the many existing references, it is worth mentioning

at the pinnacle of nineteenth-century Spanish scholarship. In his monumental *Bibliografía hispano-latina clásica*, he presents certain interesting ideas about the formative value of the Classics, and also plays down any dangers:

Cierto que la lectura de los paganos ofrece inconvenientes y peligros, como todas las cosas en el mundo, pero ni tantos ni tales como imaginan los que nunca los han leído. Creer que el arte de la antigüedad está reducido a las Venus de la decadencia, a los poetas eróticos y a las novelas de Petronio y Apuleyo, arguye ignorancia tan crasa que más provoca a indignación que a risa. ¡Pluguiera a Dios que la literatura de las épocas y pueblos tenidos por más cristianos estuviera tan libre y exenta de manchas e impurezas morales, como el arte religioso, severo y profundo de los cuatro más grandes poetas helénicos: Homero, Píndaro, Esquilo y Sófocles! ¡Pluguiera a Dios que abundasen en las sociedades modernas filósofos como Aristóteles, moralistas como Epicteto y Marco Aurelio! Realmente no hay para qué lamentarse de la perversión intelectual que tales libros lleven al ánimo de nuestra juventud, solicitada hoy por lecturas perniciosas de muy diverso y nada clásico linaje. No ignoro que en alguno de los líricos, y en estos mismos bucólicos (leídos en su original), y en Tibulo y Propertio, y aun en Horacio, hay pasajes y aun composiciones enteras, merecedoras de expurgarse e indignas de correr en manos de la juventud, aunque a los doctos siempre ha consentido su lectura la Iglesia *propter elegantiam sermonis*. (230–231)⁷

It is true that reading the works of the pagans has its disadvantages and dangers, like everything else in the world, but they are fewer and less than what people who have never read them imagine. To think that the art of antiquity comes down to nothing but the Venuses of decadence, the erotic poets, and the novels of Petronius and Apuleius speaks of such gross ignorance that it provokes more indignation than laughter. Would to God that the literature of the eras and peoples held to be most Christian were as free and exempt from moral stain and impurity as the religious art, severe and profound, of the four greatest Hellenic poets: Homer, Pindar, Aeschylus, and Sophocles! Would to God that in modern society there were

Wolfgang Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Mythology in the Christian Empire", *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 2 (1995), 193–208.

⁷ Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, *Bibliografía hispano-latina clásica: códigos, ediciones, comentarios, traducciones, estudios críticos, influencia de cada uno de los clásicos latinos en la literatura española*, Madrid: Tipografía de. Vda. e Hijos de M. Tello, 1902. The quotation is taken from the 1952 edition (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas), vol. 10: *Miscelánea y notas para una bibliografía greco-hispana. Apéndice: notas para una bibliografía greco-hispana: Bucólicos griegos*. Hereinafter numbers in parentheses after the quotations are used to refer to page numbers of the cited publications.

an abundance of philosophers like Aristotle, moralists like Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius! There is really no reason to lament the intellectual perversion that such books might bring to the heart of our youth, tempted as they are today by pernicious reading of very diverse texts of non-classical origin. I am not unaware that in some lyrical texts, and in these same bucolic ones (read in the original), and in Tibullus and Propertius, and even in Horace, there are passages and even entire compositions worthy of censorship and unfit to be found in the hands of youth, even though the Catholic Church has always allowed scholars to read them *propter elegantiam sermonis*.

Notwithstanding, most of these textbooks are full of explicit moral and religious precautions about the content of classical mythology. An example may be found in one of the most well-known texts of this group, a book which continued to be used in Spanish schools in the 1960s, *Elementos de mitología, ritos y costumbres de los antiguos romanos, y nociones elementales de retórica y poética*, by Raimundo de Miguel y Navas (1816–1878), arranged in a question-and-answer format.⁸ The first question in its introduction (see Fig. 1) clearly sets the tone:

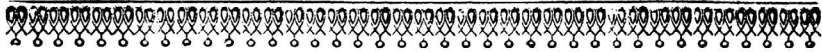
P. Qué es la Mitología? – R. La historia de las fabulosas divinidades del gentilismo adoradas por los pueblos hasta que la luz del evangelio vino a disipar las tinieblas de la ignorancia. [...]

P. Y era falso cuanto creían? – R. Muchas de sus fábulas eran alegorías ajustadas por los filósofos a algunos hechos notables, así históricos como religiosos, las cuales envolvían algunas verdades morales; otras carecían hasta de la más remota verosimilitud. (3)

Q. What is Mythology? – A. The story of the imaginary deities of the heathens, worshipped by people until the light of the gospel came to dissipate the darkness of ignorance. [...]

Q. Was everything they believed false? – A. Many of their fables were allegories that the philosophers fitted to certain notable facts, both historical and religious, and they contained some moral truths; other fables lacked even the slightest authenticity.

⁸ Raimundo de Miguel, *Elementos de mitología, ritos y costumbres de los antiguos romanos, y nociones elementales de retórica y poética: dispuestos para uso de los jóvenes que estudian el tercer año de latín*, 2nd ed., Burgos: Imprenta de Timoteo Arnaiz, 1861 (ed. pr. ca. 1842, with several later editions). The question-and-answer model was inspired by the work of François-Antoine Pomey, *Pantheum mythicum. Seu fabulosa deorum historia*, Lyon: Molin, 1659, who had a great impact later on. In this regard, see Josep Closa Farrés, "Humanisme classicista i humanisme cristià en l'ensenyament de la mitologia al llarg dels segles XVIII i XIX hispànics", *Faventia* 5 (1983), 131–139 (esp. 138).



NOCIONES ELEMENTALES

DE

MITOLOGÍA.

INTRODUCCION.

P. Qué es la Mitología?—R. La historia de las fabulosas divinidades del gentilismo adoradas por los pueblos hasta que la luz del evangelio vino á disipar las tinieblas de la ignorancia.

P. Quién fué el primero que tributó culto á los dioses falsos?—R. Nino, rey de los Asirios, quien para hacer inmortal á su padre Belo ó Nemrod, le honró con los honores que se tributan á la divinidad.

P. Bajo qué nombre se le dió culto?—R. Bajo el nombre de *Jove*, segun unos, ó el de *Saturno Babilonio*, segun otros.

P. Adoraban tambien á los irracionales?—R. No solo á los irracionales, sino á las criaturas insensibles. El sol, la luna y las estrellas, el agua, el fuego, los vientos, la oveja, el perro, el cocodrillo tenian templos y altares; y llevaron su increíble insensatez hasta el extremo de adorar á los puerros y cebollas. Esto hizo exclamar con gracia á Juvenal:

¡O sanctas gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis Numina!

P. Y era falso cuanto creian?—R. Muchas de sus fábulas eran alegorías ajustadas por los filósofos á algunos hechos notables, así históricos como religiosos, las cuales envolvian algunas verdades morales; otras carecian hasta de la mas remota verosimilitud.

Figure 1: First page of the textbook by Raimundo de Miguel, *Elementos de mitología, ritos y costumbres de los antiguos romanos, y nociones elementales de retórica y poética*, Burgos: Imprenta de Timoteo Arnaiz, 1861, 3. Reproduced with permission from the owner – Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

This brief citation demonstrates two elements that were very present in this period of interpreting the stories of classical mythology: moralization, from the point of view of Catholic doctrine, and Euhemerism, or the intent to rationally justify certain accounts. Both approaches are also clearly recognizable in another text that was produced shortly afterward (1867), specifically targeting children and youth, *La mitología contada a los niños e historia de los grandes hombres de la Grecia*, by Fernán Caballero, a pseudonym of Cecilia Böhl de Faber (1796–1877).⁹ The presence of a woman is unusual in this group of authors of educational texts on mythology, but is explained by her German origin and the training she received in her country as the daughter of German Hispanist Juan Nicolás Böhl de Faber.

In the following passage from this work, the exercise of “Christian humanism” can be seen, a label that has been used to characterize the approach to mythology, justified by the target audience of the work, that makes direct allusion to the fallaciousness of these stories:

Esto es, pues, la Mitología o Fábula, esa religión de los paganos, disparatada, descompuesta y hasta criminal, que habría caído entre nosotros los cristianos en el olvido y desprecio que merece, a no ser porque la embellecieron los afamados poetas griegos y latinos, cantándola, y los excelentes artistas atenienses con sus obras maestras, que siempre se dirigieron al culto de sus falsos dioses. Así, embellecida y poetizada, ha seguido dando imágenes y alegorías a los poetas, y modelos a los artistas, por lo cual se presentan de continuo a nuestra vista producidos esos lindos emblemas que creó la florida imaginación de aquellos poetas, y vemos copiadas sus perfectas obras artísticas; y sucede que aquel que no sabe a lo que se

⁹ On this work, cf. Closa Farrés, “Humanisme classicista”, 138–139; Pilar Hualde Pascual, “... Soñaba con los héroes de la *Ilíada*: La obra de Homero en la literatura infantil española de tema clásico (1878–1936)”, *Estudios Clásicos* 118 (2000), 73–76; María Carmen Encinas Reguero, “Los mitos griegos en la literatura infantil y juvenil del s. XIX”, *Thamyris* 6 (2015), 104–106. On the way that Euhemerism is adopted here, see García-Manso, “Mitología para niños”, 106–111. This author underscores the work’s amphibological use of the word “fable”, as an “implausible narrative” and as a “didactic genre” (112). The word “myth” (s.v. *mito*) would not be included in the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* until its 11th ed. (1869), and its definition relies precisely on the former: “fábula, ficción alegórica especialmente en materia religiosa” (fable, allegorical fiction, especially in religious matter). In this regard, see Marta González González, “Aproximaciones al estudio de la mitología en la España del XVIII y comienzos del XIX”, in Francisco García Jurado, Ramiro González Delgado, and Marta González González, eds., *La historia de la literatura greco-latina en España: de la Ilustración al Liberalismo (1778–1850)*, Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2013, 211–223 (esp. 212).

refieren, ni lo que significan, pasa en sociedad por un ignorante y se expone a no comprender ni las cosas que ve ni las cosas que oye. (26–27)¹⁰

This, then, is Mythology or Fable, the religion of the pagans, nonsensical, chaotic and even criminal. Among the Christians of today, it would have fallen into oblivion and the disregard that it deserves, were it not for the famed Greek and Latin poets who embellished it, singing its verses, and the excellent Athenian artists with their masterpieces, which were always oriented towards the worship of their false gods. Thus, embellished and poeticized, it has continued to supply images and allegories for poets, and models for artists, so that we continually find before us the lovely emblems created by the flowery imagination of those poets long ago, and copies of their perfect artistic works; such that if someone does not know what they refer to, or what they mean, he is taken to be ignorant, and risks being unable to understand what he sees or what he hears.

The didactic function of this work – republished after the Civil War, since Böhl de Faber was considered to be an eminent pedagogue by Francoist educational authorities – provides the stories it presents with an accompanying commentary. In these “comments”, the author warns about the “imaginary” nature of these narratives, an emphasis resulting from the fact that, generally speaking, all these textbooks wrongly identify mythological accounts with religious belief.¹¹

3. The Early Twentieth Century

At the turn of the century, Spain continued to be an extremely rural society with low literacy rates and clearly underdeveloped elementary schooling.¹² This educational situation, in effect, was a continuation of the dichotomous

¹⁰ Fernán Caballero, *La mitología contada a los niños e historia de los grandes hombres de la Grecia*, 4th ed., Barcelona: Librería de Juan y Antonio Bastinos, 1888 (ed. pr. 1867).

¹¹ Cf. García-Manso, “Mitología para niños”, 103–106.

¹² See Clara Eugenia Núñez, “Educación”, in Albert Carreras and Xavier Tafunell, eds., *Estadísticas históricas de España. Siglos XIX–XX*, vol. 1, Madrid: Fundación BBVA, 2005 (ed. pr. 1989), 164, who indicates that after some educational development during the second half of the nineteenth century, we can observe stagnation in the early twentieth century: “El 51% de la generación de 1876 no tenía estudios, frente a un 78% de la generación de 1832 y a un 58% de la de 1907. Sería la generación de 1915 la primera que superaría a la de 1876” (51% of the generation of 1876 were uneducated, compared to 78% of the generation of 1832, and 58% in 1907. The generation of 1915 would be the first to surpass that of 1876).

system developed by the nineteenth-century European bourgeoisie: basic education was available to the working classes, and secondary education, based on classical culture, was exclusively for the elite. The "Disaster of 98", that is, the loss of Spain's last colonies (Cuba and the Philippines) in the Spanish-American war, became a determining factor in raising awareness of the need to improve the Spanish educational system. As Antonio Francisco Canales Serrano¹³ points out, the intellectual movement called Regenerationism, which sought to make an objective and scientific study of the causes of Spain's decline as a nation and to propose remedies for this downturn, convinced politicians that Spain's weakness and its lack of technological and economic development could only be remedied if the state intervened decisively in the deplorable educational situation.

A radical overhaul of the Spanish educational system followed, adopting the French model (according to the reforms of Jules Ferry); this modernization was accompanied by an important social transformation in Spain, which was evolving into an urban society. The French pattern, however, imposed secularization on the educational system, which gave rise to growing reservations on the part of Catholic conservatives in Spain, and ended up causing tensions with the proponents of religious ideology. Thus, any modernizing position was ultimately identified with anticlericalism, and any progress in the state school was interpreted as an attack on the Catholic Church.¹⁴

All of these factors had a striking effect on the sphere of education under consideration here: both the progressivism that was hailed by certain social sectors, and the way that certain content was identified with Catholic ideology, gave rise to a drastic reduction in the teaching of Classics in primary and secondary education. To illustrate this, let us recall one noteworthy reform: the Bugallal Plan (1903),¹⁵ under which two years of Latin at the end of secondary education were instituted, in stark contrast to the usual seven years of Latin and three years of Greek in countries like Italy, Germany, and Austria. At the heart of such decisions was the idea that, in order to progress

¹³ Antonio Francisco Canales Serrano, "La modernización del sistema educativo español, 1898-1936", *Bordón* 65.4 (2013), 108.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 110. As Canales Serrano points out (111), this peculiarity is exclusive to Spain. Even countries where one might have expected a greater presence of the Catholic Church in the educational system, such as Italy, had systems that were much more secular (in this case, the reason was the pope's prohibition of Catholics collaborating in the Italian state). See also Valentina Garulli's chapter in this volume ("Our Mythical Fascism? Classical Mythology at School during the Italian Fascist Twenty-Year Period", 69-91).

¹⁵ Developed by the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, Gabino Bugallal Araújo.

and be competitive in the European context, Spain had to rid itself of the burden of the past.¹⁶

The modernizing programme of Spanish liberalism, however, was unable to overcome the backwardness of Spain's elementary education; the same cannot be said, however, despite its anti-democratic, anti-liberal character, of Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship which followed (1923–1930). Although the ultimate objective was to spread the values of the regime throughout Spanish society, schools received an important boost at this time, and the educational system became increasingly widespread with the creation of many new schools. The aims of modernization, which persisted during this era, continued the trend of the previous period, further reducing the Latin and Greek content in the curricula. As shown in the comparison in Table 1, the Reforma Callejo of 1926 was unique among European countries in terms of the low priority given to these subjects in the curriculum.¹⁷

Table 1: Comparison of the presence (in percentage) of certain subjects in the first four years of the curriculum of secondary education under the Callejo Reform, in contrast to their distribution in other European countries.

	Spain	France	Germany		Austria		Italy	
			Gymnasium	Ober-realschule	Gymnasium	Realschule	Ginnasio	Istituto tecnico
Latin and Greek	6.25	34.15	27.73	0.00	16.39	0.00	34.41	23.96
Modern languages	25.00	35.37	16.41	38.10	14.75	27.27	39.78	39.79
History and geography	18.75	14.63	10.16	9.52	12.30	12.40	18.28	12.50
Science and mathematics	25.00	15.85	17.97	20.63	22.13	23.97	7.53	12.50

Source: Table derived from Antonio Francisco Canales Serrano, "La modernización del sistema educativo español, 1898–1936," *Bordón* 65.4 (2013), 113. Available online at <https://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/BORDON/article/view/Bordon.2013.65407> (accessed 1 July 2020). Translated by L.U.G.

¹⁶ It may be for similar reasons that the only instructional textbook about mythology to be published in the first two decades of the twentieth century (Manuel Ciges Aparicio and Felipe Peyró Carrió, *Los dioses y los héroes: mitología popular: oriental, greco-romana, escandinava, celtolibera, americana*, Madrid: Daniel Jorro, 1912) was not limited to classical mythology, although the latter was its primary focus (pp. 49–598).

¹⁷ Royal Decree of 25 August 1926. The plan is named after Eduardo Callejo de la Cuesta (1875–1950), Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera.

Apart from certain translations from other languages, the first textbook on classical mythology produced during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship was *Estudios elementales de Mitología*,¹⁸ also published in 1926. This is a radical Catholic interpretation of Greek myths, which are conceived of as a degradation of the Holy Scriptures, corrupted little by little by the descendants of Adam and Noah after the flood; it was only with the arrival of Jesus Christ, according to this interpretation, that the absurdities were clarified.¹⁹ Hence, it was a text appropriate for that time. It should also be noted that the translation of the well-known French textbook *Mythologie grecque et romaine* by Jean Humbert was also published in 1928, and, in fact, is still in print today.²⁰ The work, which aimed to be informative and accessible to a young audience, was acceptable in that era thanks to its brief introduction on the origin and utility of mythology, which offered an interpretive framework in allegorical and moralizing terms.

During the following period, the Second Republic, efforts at reform were again resumed, and secularism was promoted. This was clearly reflected in education, and also influenced how classical mythology was approached.²¹ Full access to manuals for classical languages produced during this period is not possible, but two notable works give us an idea of the trends with regard to mythology. The first of these is *Los dioses que se fueron* by the unjustly forgotten Luis de Oteyza (1883–1961).²² Although the first edition is dated 1929, it seems to be the second edition in 1931 that had real

¹⁸ *Estudios elementales de Mitología. 2ª, 3ª y 4ª clase*, Barcelona: Librería Católica Internacional, 1926.

¹⁹ See Navarrete Orcera, "Manuales de mitología", 32.

²⁰ Jean Humbert, *Mitología griega y romana*, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 1928 (translation of the 24th French ed.).

²¹ This period was fundamental for classical studies in Spain; the degree in Classical Philology was officially created by decree on 27 January 1932. Likewise, a ministerial order on 28 February 1933 established the Classical Studies section in the Center for Historical Studies, where the journal *Emerita* began publication immediately thereafter. In this regard, see Francisco García Jurado, "Los estudios de Filología Clásica", in Santiago López-Ríos Moreno and Juan Antonio González Cárcelos, eds., *La Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de Madrid en la Segunda República. Arquitectura y universidad durante los años 30*, Madrid: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2008, 297–305; and Francisco García Jurado, "El nacimiento de la Filología Clásica en España. La Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de Madrid (1932–1936)", *Estudios Clásicos* 134 (2008), 77–104.

²² Luis de Oteyza, *Los dioses que se fueron. Mitología*, Madrid: Compañía Iberoamericana de publicaciones Renacimiento, 1931 (ed. pr. 1929). Regarding his literary production, see José Ignacio Rodríguez Hermosell, "Las letras del exilio extremeño: un repertorio bibliográfico de autores", *Revista de Estudios Extremeños* 66.1 (2010), 493–534 (esp. 515–518). The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War found him in Venezuela, where he occupied a diplomatic post; he was never to return to Spain.

impact. The book is organized into fifty-eight chapters, each of which is devoted to a mythological character (either a god, mythical being, or hero), who is briefly described in a colloquial, ironic, modern style, with frequent allusions to the contemporary world. This can be seen, for example, in the chapter devoted to Vesta:

Ahora bien; ¿dónde se agrupaban sus individuos?... Me refiero a los pasados tiempos, cuando no había Casinos para los caballeros, Asociaciones benéficas para las señoras y Hoteles de té con baile para las señoritas, ¿eh? ¡Entonces la familia se agrupaba en torno a la llama del hogar! (111)

Now then; where did individuals get together?... I refer to times past, when there were no Casinos for the gentlemen, charitable Associations for the ladies, or Hotels with tea and dancing for the young maidens, eh? At that time the family gathered around the hearth!

This light-hearted manner made for a less awkward approach to the traditional accounts, with candid acknowledgement of their sometimes unedifying nature. Very illustrative in this regard is the entry for Venus, who is compared to a *varietés* star (90):

Disfrutaron de sus favores Júpiter, Marte, Apolo, Adonis, Mercurio, Anchises, Baco... Pero dar la lista completa de los amantes de Venus saldría carísimo. Algún día, si se abarata el papel, será ocasión de publicar un apéndice a esta obra que contenga la referida lista. Hoy por hoy, sin embargo, puedo daros una idea de lo que ha de ser la lista tal diciéndoos que entre los títulos de Venus hay uno que la califica de Pandemos, palabra griega que quiere decir "la de todos". (92)

Among those who enjoyed her favours were Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Adonis, Mercury, Anchises, Bacchus... But to offer the complete list of Venus' lovers would be rather costly. Someday, if the price of paper comes down, that would be the right time to publish an appendix to this work to contain the complete list. At this time, however, I can give you an idea of what that list would be if I say one of Venus' titles refers to her as Pandemos, a Greek word meaning "of all the people".²³

Since it was neither an educational text, nor a children's book, de Oteyza's work was well suited to a broad spectrum of readers, who now had easy access to the main stories of mythology. By contrast, *Flor*

²³ Compare this passage to the allusion to the goddess Venus cited below in section 4.

de leyendas, by Alejandro Casona,²⁴ targets a young audience and clearly reflects the pedagogical concerns of the Second Republic. This children's anthology, consisting of fifteen adaptations of world literature, such as the *Ramayana*, *La Chanson de Roland*, and *Cantar del mío Cid*, also includes a story entitled "Héctor y Aquiles". It is an adaptation from the *Iliad*, apparently following the translation by Luis Segalá y Estalella (1908), although it changes the order of the episodes given in the Homeric account.²⁵

4. The Franco Years

This breath of fresh air with regard to the educational approach, however, was cut short by the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and the Francoist educational programme that followed, which conclusively separated Spain from its European context and created an anomaly that lasted many years.²⁶ After the Civil War, Spain remained under the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco Bahamonde for thirty-six years (1939–1975), a regime that set the country back at every level, including in education. As Olegario Negrín Fajardo indicates,²⁷ the Franco regime led to a reversal of the liberal educational model of the Spanish Republic. Through the repression imposed by Franco during the first years of his regime, a process known as "purging", he attempted to wipe out any trace of the Republic's educational reforms.²⁸ The "national-Catholic" school system was characterized by a considerable amount of religious content and was under the direct control of the Catholic Church.²⁹ In a 1937 interview, Franco stated the following with regard to his educational ideals:

²⁴ Alejandro Casona, *Flor de leyendas*, Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1933 (with myriad reprintings until our day). Casona was awarded the National Prize for Literature in 1932 for this work.

²⁵ See Hualde Pascual, "... Soñaba con los héroes de la *Ilíada*", 86–92.

²⁶ This diagnosis is given by Canales Serrano, "La modernización", 115.

²⁷ Olegario Negrín Fajardo, "El Nacional-Catolicismo franquista: de la involución escolar al desarrollo tecnocrático", in Olegario Negrín Fajardo, ed., *Historia de la educación española*, Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2006, 411–447 (esp. 421–424).

²⁸ See Francisco Morente Valero, *La escuela y el Estado Nuevo. La depuración del magisterio nacional (1936–1943)*, Valladolid: Ámbito, 1997.

²⁹ The *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* defines the term *nacionalcatolicismo* (national Catholicism) in the following way: "Durante el régimen franquista, situación caracterizada por la estrecha relación entre el Estado y la Iglesia católica" (During the Franco regime, the situation characterized by the close relationship between the State and the Catholic Church). On the impact of religion on education, see Enrique Gervilla Castillo, *La escuela del nacional-catolicismo. Ideología y educación religiosa*, Granada: Impredisur, 1990.

Si nosotros exigimos a los hombres del mañana que vivan conforme a los ideales que las generaciones presentes están amasando con su sangre, es evidente que, desde su tierna infancia, se les educará en principios patrióticos e ideas eternas. Por moderno que un sistema de educación sea, siempre será compatible con las enseñanzas cristianas y se apoyará en tres principios fundamentales: patriotismo, despertado desde los primeros años, ausencia de toda influencia extranjera y moral cristiana. (177)³⁰

If we demand from the men of tomorrow that they live according to the ideals that present generations are shedding their blood to uphold, it is evident that they must be educated from the earliest age in patriotic principles and eternal ideas. Regardless of how modern an educational system is, it will always be compatible with Christian teachings and will be supported by three fundamental principles: patriotism, awakened in the earliest years; an absence of every foreign influence; and Christian morals.

These three values were vigorously supported by the revival and promotion of classical content, as a way of getting back to the roots and to the essence of Spanish identity, a move that in all likelihood was much influenced by the Italian model of fascism and Benito Mussolini's reclamation of Roman antiquity.³¹ This renewed emphasis was made explicit in 1938 (Franco's first year as president over the rebel zone) in the Ley sobre la Reforma de la Enseñanza Media (*BOE*, 23 September 1938):³²

³⁰ *Palabras del Caudillo (19 de abril de 1937–31 de diciembre de 1938)*, Barcelona: Ediciones FE, 1939. This idea would take shape in the 1938 Ley sobre la Reforma de la Enseñanza Media (*BOE*, 23 September 1938), in the following terms: "Consecuentemente, la formación clásica y humanística ha de ser acompañada por un contenido eminentemente católico y patriótico. El Catolicismo es la médula de la Historia de España. Por eso es imprescindible una sólida instrucción religiosa que comprenda desde el Catecismo, el Evangelio y la Moral, hasta la Liturgia, la Historia de la Iglesia y una adecuada Apologética, completándose esta formación espiritual con nociones de Filosofía e Historia de la Filosofía" (Consequently, classical and humanistic training should be accompanied by eminently Catholic and patriotic content. Catholicism is the sum and substance of the History of Spain. Solid religious instruction is therefore essential, its scope should cover from Catechism, the Gospel and Morals, to Liturgy, History of the Church and proper Apologetics, completing this spiritual training with notions of Philosophy and the History of Philosophy).

³¹ On the appropriation of Latin in Mussolini's regime, see Han Lamers and Bettina Reitz-Joosse, "Lingua Lictoria: The Latin Literature of Italian Fascism", *Classical Receptions Journal* 8.2 (2016), 216–252. On its presence in education, see Paolo Fedeli, "Studio e uso del latino nella scuola fascista", in Giovanni Semerano, ed., *Matrici culturali del fascismo*, Bari: Università di Bari, 1977, 209–224. See also Valentina Garulli's chapter in this volume ("Our Mythical Fascism? Classical Mythology at School during the Italian Fascist Twenty-Year Period", 69–91).

³² Enrique Herrera Oria, who collaborated with the National Education Minister, Pedro Sainz Rodríguez, on the draft of this bill, offers several arguments in his *Historia de la educación española*,

La cultura clásica y humanística se ha reconocido universalmente como la base insuperable y fecunda para el desarrollo de las jóvenes inteligencias. Una apologética copiosísima y convincente pudiera invocarse a su favor. Bástenos enunciar entre sus decisivas ventajas: el poder formativo inigualado del estudio metódico de las lenguas clásicas; el desarrollo lógico y conceptual extraordinario que producen su análisis y comprensión en las inteligencias juveniles dotándolas de una potencialidad fecundísima para todos los órdenes del saber; el procurar esta formación, camino seguro para la vuelta a la valorización del Ser auténtico de España, de la España formada en los estudios clásicos y humanísticos de nuestro siglo XVI, que produjo aquella pléyade de políticos y guerreros – todos de formación religiosa, clásica y humanística – de nuestra época imperial, hacia la que retorna la vocación heroica de nuestra juventud; poder formativo político corroborado todavía notablemente con el ejemplo de las grandes Naciones imperiales modernas; y bastaría, finalmente, la consideración de la necesidad de dar en las circunstancias mundiales presentes, su plena valoración a los fundamentos clásicos, greco-latinos, cristiano-romanos, de nuestra civilización europea. (1385–1386)

Classical, humanistic culture has been recognized universally as unequalled, fertile ground for the development of young intelligences. An extremely copious, convincing defence could be asserted in its favour. Suffice it to outline here its decisive advantages: the unmatched formative potential of the methodical study of classical languages; the exceptional logical and conceptual development that is produced by their analysis and comprehension, equipping youthful intelligence with a most fertile capacity for every order of knowledge; that to obtain this training is a sure pathway back to the appreciation of Spain's authentic Being, to our sixteenth-century Spain that was educated in classical and humanistic studies, and produced that myriad of politicians and warriors of our imperial era – all of them with religious, classical, and humanistic training – to which the heroic calling of our youth harks back; political formative ability, still notably corroborated in the example of the great modern imperial Nations; and, finally, the worldwide circumstances of present day suffice to consider it necessary to fully appreciate the classical, Graeco-Latin, Christian-Roman foundations of our European civilization.

Barcelona: Ediciones Veritas, 1943, 413–419, on the importance of classical training for youth, further supporting them with the presence of classical content in educational systems of other European nations.

Specifically, the teaching of classical languages was formalized as follows:

Un ciclo sistemático de Lengua Latina durante los siete cursos, acompañados en los tres últimos del estudio de su Literatura. Y cuatro años de Lengua Griega, con el estudio de sus clásicos en los dos últimos años. (1389)

A systematic sequence of Latin Language over seven years, to be accompanied by the study of Latin Literature in the last three. And four years of Greek Language, with the study of Greek Classics in the last two.

Such attitudes demonstrate a reaction against the progressiveness of the educational reforms that preceded them, which reduced classical content, sometimes drastically (see section 2, Table 1), in the belief that other technical or scientific content was more necessary for the modernization of the country.³³

Following the end of the Civil War, although a few translations of foreign reference works were published, such as the well-known German work by Gustav Schwab, *Die schönsten Sagen des klassischen Altertums*,³⁴ and a few dictionaries,³⁵ there was a lack of scholarly work³⁶ and little was geared to schoolchildren or youth. Works for children, however, began to appear in the 1960s, concomitant with the developmentalist, liberalizing era of the Franco regime, which allowed a certain relaxation of the dogmatic nature of education of the preceding period.³⁷ Some of the most notable works

³³ Regarding this phenomenon, Herrera Oria, *Historia de la educación española*, 417, indicates, with excessive drama, that in the modern era “el latín y el griego en los Centros medios se habían refugiado en los Seminarios y en algunos claustros religiosos. Los claustros, desde hace ciento cincuenta años, han salvado en España de la barbarie masónico-liberal del siglo XIX los tesoros de Grecia y Roma, como los salvaron los monjes benedictinos en sus célebres claustros medievales. Hay excepciones honrosas, pero en la Universidad” (Latin and Greek in the halls of secondary learning took shelter in the Seminaries and in a few religious cloisters. In Spain, some 150 years ago, the cloisters saved the treasures of Greece and Rome from the Liberal-Masonic brutality of the nineteenth century, just as the Benedictine monks saved them in their famous medieval cloisters. There are honourable exceptions, but at the University).

³⁴ Gustav Schwab, *Las más bellas leyendas de la antigüedad clásica*, Barcelona: Labor, 1952 (translation of the 4th German ed. [Wien and Heidelberg: Verlag Carl Ueberreuter]).

³⁵ Thus, e.g., Federico Carlos Sainz de Robles, *Ensayo de un diccionario mitológico universal*, Madrid: Aguilar, 1944; Antonio G. Gavalda, *Diccionario mitológico*, Barcelona: Sintés, 1962.

³⁶ The *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine* by Pierre Grimal, e.g., was originally published in 1951 but not translated into Spanish until 1965.

³⁷ As is seen in the Ley de Ordenación de la Enseñanza Media, dated 26 February 1953 (*BOE*, 27 February 1953).

were *La mitología contada con sencillez* by Emilio Gascó Contell,³⁸ *Leyendas heroicas de la antigua Grecia* by Rafael Ballester Escalas,³⁹ an adaptation of the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes and other legends, such as those on Hercules and Theseus, with illustrations by Óscar Daniel and L. Beltrán Máñez, and *Mitología griega y romana: sus leyendas y metamorfosis*, by Luis R. Córdova Arvelo.⁴⁰ Some adaptations of the *Iliad* were also published during this period, including those by Ramón Conde Obregón and Martín Alonso.⁴¹

5. Case Study: Analysis of Mythological Content in Certain Latin Textbooks from the Late 1950s and Early 1960s

The omnipresence of Catholicism, however, which has already been noted in both the political and educational spheres, had clear effects on the selection, manipulation, or omission of mythological topics in the curricula. A brief review of a few Latin textbooks from this time gives an idea of the ways in which classical mythology was suppressed or manipulated ideologically. For this analysis, necessarily incomplete, four textbooks have been selected.

³⁸ Emilio Gascó Contell, *La mitología contada con sencillez*, Madrid: Escelicer, 1958.

³⁹ Rafael Ballester Escalas, *Leyendas heroicas de la antigua Grecia*, Barcelona: Mateu, 1960.

⁴⁰ Luis R. Córdova Arvelo, *Mitología griega y romana: sus leyendas y metamorfosis*, Madrid: Ograma, 1963. Although the author claims, in his introduction, that the work mainly targets Spanish and Latin American youth (13), not many concessions are made to this young audience, either in form or in content. The author's objective for this work was primarily utilitarian (it is indispensable to be fully familiar with classical and even Renaissance works; 13–14), and I do not find the same precaution visible in earlier works. The prologue by José María Pemán, however, while more conciliatory, provides the ideological framework in which the work was to be read: "[D]esde el momento en que el hombre vislumbraba la existencia de una realidad divina, de una exigencia de divinidad, tenían que ocurrir una de estas dos cosas: o Dios se hacía hombre o el hombre se hacía Dios. La Mitología es el máximo esfuerzo que pudo hacer el humanismo puro por convertirse en religión. Fuera de estas dos posiciones – Cristianismo o Mitología – no quedan más que roturas y divorcios de lo humano y lo divino" (9; From the moment when man first glimpsed the existence of a divine reality, of the demand for divinity, one of two things had to take place: either God were to become man or man would become God. Mythology is the greatest effort that pure humanism could make in order to turn itself into religion. Outside these two positions – Christianity or Mythology – there is nothing left but ruptures and divorces between the human and the divine).

⁴¹ Ramón Conde Obregón, ed., *La Ilíada*, Barcelona: Instituto de Artes Gráficas, 1963, with illustrations by Vicente Segrelles; Martín Alonso, ed., *La Ilíada*, Madrid: Aguilar, 1965, with illustrations by J.A. Sánchez Prieto.

The first of these is *Método de lengua latina* by José Vallejo (1896–1959).⁴² This text includes grammatical explanations and an ample selection of brief texts on alternating topics, as displayed in Table 2. The limited representation of mythological topics is apparent.⁴³ This distribution is remarkable when compared to the 1957 guidelines for the Bachillerato curriculum (the Spanish Bacalaureate, to which this manual belongs), which expressly recommends the use of mythological texts.⁴⁴

Table 2: Distribution of topic areas represented in the selected texts of two Latin manuals.

Topic areas	José Vallejo (1959)		Ángel Pariente (1959)	
	Number of texts	Percentage	Number of pages	Percentage
Historical	51	35.2	51	56.1
Fables	25	17.2	13	14.3
Religious	23	15.9	6	6.6
Mythological	11	7.6	7	7.7
Other	35	24.1	14	15.3
Total	145	100.0	91	100.0

A somewhat different situation (with less prevalence of religious texts; see Table 2) is found in another manual for the same educational level: *Ludus Latinus. Método de latín para 3º y 4º año de Bachillerato* by Ángel Pariente (1909–1982),⁴⁵ where the selection of Latin texts is grouped according to topic.⁴⁶ The first topic area is entitled “Fabulae Latinae”⁴⁷ and includes

⁴² José Vallejo, *Método de lengua latina. III–IV cursos (plan de 1957)*, Madrid: Estades, 1959.

⁴³ The average length of religious texts is much greater than the rest, and includes both liturgical texts and texts from the Gospels. The historical texts are mainly about the history of Rome, although there are also some about Greece and even about Church history. The mythological texts, finally, appear to be selected because they include some type of moral message.

⁴⁴ “Los ejercicios de análisis y traducción se harán sobre textos sencillos (textos litúrgicos y narrativos del Nuevo Testamento, textos de latín simplificado, mitológicos y de Eutropio, etc.)” (The analysis and translation exercises will be performed on simple texts [liturgical texts and narratives from the New Testament, simplified Latin texts, mythological texts and texts by Eutropius, etc.]). *Plan de Bachillerato de 1957. Programas de tercer curso (con orientaciones metodológicas)*, Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1957, 13.

⁴⁵ Ángel Pariente, *Ludus Latinus. Método de latín para 3º y 4º año de Bachillerato*, Palencia: Diario-Día, 1959.

⁴⁶ The historical texts appear under different headings: first a miscellaneous group under “Ex historia romana narrationes”, with equal selections from Nepos and Caesar. The religious texts are mainly lives of saints, and appear under the heading “Ex christianis et medii aevi scriptoribus”.

⁴⁷ On the use of the word “fable” (*fábula*) in Spanish mythological tradition, and its resonances in the Spanish language, see above, n. 9.

nine texts on mythological topics.⁴⁸ In addition to the moralizing message that can be discerned in most of the selected myths (possibly a decisive factor in their selection), a clear intent to avoid any of the more salacious details can be seen. Typical of this procedure is the account of the Oedipus myth, where, after narrating that he killed his father and liberated Thebes from the threat of the Sphinx by solving its puzzle, it concludes:

Oedipus rex Thebanorum fuit et magna iustitia civitatem rexit. Postremo vita eius misera fuit, nam di immortales eum pro scelere necati patrisulti sunt. (44)

Oedipus was the king of the Thebans and governed the city with great justice. In the end, his life was unhappy because the immortal gods took vengeance for the crime of his father's death.

Nevertheless, these two textbooks are not the most lacking in mythological content; Luis Penagos (1908–1995), a Jesuit priest, produced a *Florilegio latino* in four volumes for the religious publisher Sal Terrae. It was intended for use both in Baccalaureate and in seminary, and has been reprinted on multiple occasions.⁴⁹ The editions adapted to the 1957 Baccalaureate curriculum also followed guidelines from the *Ordinationes ad Constitutionem Apostolicam "Veterum Sapientia" rite exsequendam*, a general curriculum specifically designed to implement the Apostolic Constitution *Veterum Sapientia*, promulgated by John XXIII on 22 February 1962, in order to encourage the study of the Latin language.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ "Proserpina rapta", "Prometheus", "Tantalus", "Orpheus", "Midas", "Oedipus", "Daedalus", "Theseus", "Troia expugnata". These texts occupy pp. 47–58 of the referred textbook.

⁴⁹ The most recent that I am aware of is the 27th ed. from 1998. The editions taken into account for this study are: Luis Penagos, *Florilegio latino (Volumen 1). Método de la lengua latina. 3º y 4º de Bachillerato y 1º de Seminarios*, 15th ed., Santander: Sal Terrae, 1964, and Luis Penagos, *Florilegio latino (Volumen 2). Método de la lengua latina. 5º de Bachillerato y 2º Seminarios*, 15th ed., Santander: Sal Terrae, 1971. According to the prologue of the first volume, it contains "textos sencillos para análisis, traducción, ya simplificados, ya en su original, tomados especialmente de Eutropio, Nepote, Fedro, César, Cicerón y de los Evangelios" (simple texts for analysis, translation, whether simplified or in their original, taken especially from Eutropius, Nepos, Phaedrus, Caesar, Cicero, and from the Gospels).

⁵⁰ The publication in Spain was *Sacra Congregatio de Seminariis et Studiorum Universitatibus*, "Ordinationes ad Constitutionem Apostolicam 'Veterum Sapientia' rite exsequendam", *Revista Española de Derecho Canónico* 50 (1962), 435–460. On its application, see José Jiménez Delgado, "Aplicación de la 'Veterum Sapientia'", *Helmantica* 49–51 (1965), 209–234.

In the first volume of the *Latin Anthology*, the first texts prepared for translation, after explanations and morphology exercises (starting from p. 42), there is a *ramillete de sentencias* (selection of maxims), the first of which have to do with God.⁵¹ Similarly, in the section titled “Narraciones escogidas” (58–71), brief fragments from Nepos, Eutropius, Sallust, Pliny the Elder, Seneca, and Cicero (letters) precede the account of the origin of the world according to Genesis (59–61) and episodes from the life of Christ (birth, worship of the Magi, etc.) as reported in the Gospels according to Luke and Matthew (61–65). Other historical texts and fables follow, but not one example of mythological content.

The same may be said of the second volume, where the only mythological text appears at the end (130–132) and, significantly, tells the episode of Hercules and Cacus.⁵² The choice is no coincidence, both on account of its moral teaching (*caco* is used in Spanish as a common noun, synonym for “thief”), and the fact that Hercules was considered the first king of Spain in medieval and humanistic chronicles.⁵³ Finally, a very short appendix on “Instituciones y costumbres romanas” includes a page and a half (134–135) on “Mitología”, with a very cursory description of the main deities (see Fig. 2). All this demonstrates a clear correlation between (lack of) mythological content and religious ideology.

The foregoing statement is confirmed even more clearly when this last manual is compared with the one by Santiago Segura Munguía (1922–2014). His Latin manual for the Baccalaureate constituted a great methodological advance, due to the interaction between linguistic and cultural content. In the material on Roman institutions found in the Year 5 volume,⁵⁴ the long chapter devoted to religion stands out (77–95).

⁵¹ These are the following: “§170. Deum non vides, tamen Deum agnoscis ex operibus eius. Cic. *Tusc. Disp.*, I, 29. Nihil est, quod Deus efficere non possit. Id. *De Divin.*, II, 41. Nihil rerum humanarum sine Dei numine geritur. Cor. Nep. *Timol.*, IV, 4. Non universo generi hominum, sed etiam singulis a diis immortalibus consuli et providere solet. Cic. *De Nat. Deor.*, II, 66”.

⁵² According to the narrative of Ovid, *Fasti* 1.539–82.

⁵³ Certain monarchs reinforced this tie – e.g., Charles V, who included the two Pillars of Hercules in his coat of arms; Francisco Franco joined this tradition in 1938 by incorporating the two pillars, abandoned in previous eras, into his coat of arms. See Benjamín García-Hernández, *El desafío de la rana de Salamanca. Cuando la rana críe pelos*, Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 2009, 142–147, 160–161.

⁵⁴ Santiago Segura Munguía, *Método de latín. 5º curso*, Salamanca: Anaya, 1964. After the part dedicated to syntax, the cultural contents continue as follows: family life, city life, economic life, religion, war, social, political, and administrative life, Caesar, Sallust, Cicero, Virgil. All of these begin with an explanatory section followed by a selection of illustrative texts in Latin.

3.º MITOLOGÍA

349. SATURNO. El Cielo se desposó con la Tierra. De este matrimonio nacieron Titán y Saturno. Titán como primogénito pretendía reinar; pero su madre con promesas y caricias consiguió que Titán dejase reinar a Saturno, pero con la condición de que éste exterminase a todo hijo varón que de él naciera. Saturno se casó con Cibeles y conforme el pacto devoraba a todos sus hijos varones; pero se escapó del desastre Júpiter, quien al llegar a la juventud destruyó a su padre. Saturno se retiró al Lazio y juntamente con el dios Jano civilizó aquella región y enseñó a los habitantes las artes útiles. En Roma todos los años en el mes de diciembre se celebran las fiestas Saturnales.



Minerva

JUPITER. Después de derrotar a su padre, compartió el imperio del mundo con sus dos hermanos. Asignó a Neptuno los mares y las aguas, a Plutón los infiernos, y él se reservó los cielos. Era el dios principal y soberano de todos, *diuum pater omnia hominum*. Los romanos le llamaron *Optimus Maximus*. Se le representaba sentado en un trono de marfil, teniendo en la mano derecha el cetro y en la izquierda un haz de rayos; a sus pies un águila, símbolo del dios.

JUNO. Esposa de Júpiter y reina de todos los dioses. Era la protectora de la familia.

MARS. Dios de la guerra. Era muy venerado por los romanos, pueblo eminentemente guerrero; y además por ser, según la antigua tradición, el padre de Rómulo y Remo.

MINERVA. Diosa de la sabiduría, de las ciencias y de las artes de la guerra. Júpiter sufría grandes dolores de cabeza, y ordenó a Vulcano le abriera de un hachaño el cráneo. De éste salió Minerva, armada de punta en blanco y doncella de unos veinte años. Se suele representar a Minerva con casco empenachado, coraza, una pica en su mano derecha y un escudo; a sus pies un buho o lechuza o serpiente.

VENUS es la diosa de la primavera, de las flores, de la belleza y del amor.

BACO. Dios del vino. Es representado bajo la figura de un joven molietudo, coronado de hiedra o pámpanos.

PLUTÓN. Dios de los Infiernos. Son éstos unas moradas subterráneas a donde iban las almas de los muertos para ser juzgados según sus obras y recibir luego su pena en el Tártaro o su premio en los Campos Elíseos.

MERCURIO es el correo de los dioses; el dios del comercio. Se le representa ordinariamente con un caduceo en la mano y alas en los pies.



Mercurio ('Ερμής)

APOLLO, dios de la poesía y de la música. Grecia y Roma sentían un respeto extraordinario por sus oráculos, siendo los más célebres los de Delos.

DIANA, llamada también Luna, diosa de la caza. Se la representaba con un carcaj lleno de flechas y una cierva a sus pies.

VULCANO, dios del fuego y del metal. En su fragua se fabricaban las armas de los héroes (de Aquiles, de Eneas, de Hércules, etc.).

VESTA, diosa del fuego. En Roma tenía un templo en el que se mantenía encendido el fuego sagrado, símbolo de la permanencia del imperio. Las Vestales eran las sacerdotisas de Vesta, cuya misión era conservar siempre el fuego encendido. Debían guardar rigoroso celibato, con pena de enterrarlas vivas si no lo hacían.

Las MÚSAS eran protectoras de la poesía, de la música y de las demás bellas artes. Se enumeran nueve.

Las PARCAS son tres hermanas, Cloto, Laquesis y Atropos. Cloto tiene en sus manos la rueca, de la que penden hilos de todos los colores y calidad (de seda, de oro de lana); según sean los mortales que representen: felices, ricos, pobres, etc. Laquesis da vuelta al huso. Atropos intermite la labor de sus hermanas y cuando quiere, con sus tijeras corta el hilo fatal de la existencia de los mortales sin distinción de categorías.

Los PENATES O LARES son los dioses protectores de cada casa y familia.

Los MANES son las almas de los muertos.

Las NINFAS

4.º LA FAMILIA ROMANA. EL MATRIMONIO. LA CASA

350. LA FAMILIA ROMANA. El *paterfamilias* (genitivo arcaico en *-as*), padre o cabeza de la familia, era el único propietario, pues él solo podía vender, adquirir, legar. Tiene autoridad absoluta sobre su mujer (en el matrimonio *cum manus*), sobre sus hijos y sus esclavos.

La *matrona o domina*, la madre. Es más respetada que en Grecia. Hila, teje pero no está obligada a trabajos rudos como guisar, moler el trigo, etc. Cuida de sus hijos, sale poco de casa. Poco a poco la alición decaída al uso y la corrupción griega se introdujo en Roma; por esto aumentan las desavenencias entre los esposos, causa de muchos divorcios.

351. EL MATRIMONIO. CONDICIONES PARA CONTRAER MATRIMONIO.

1.º *Ius connubii*, derecho al matrimonio legal. Al principio sólo lo tenían los patricios; después del año 445 a. de C. los plebeyos y desde el año 14 a. de C., también los libertos. Los esclavos no tuvieron nunca el *ius connubii*.

2.º *Edad competente*. De 12 años para las mujeres y 14 para los hombres; pero en la práctica no se casaban antes de los 17 años.

3.º *Consentimiento del paterfamilias*.

El matrimonio entre parientes estaba prohibido; v. gr.: entre primos hermanos, primos segundos, etc.

FORMAS DEL MATRIMONIO. Dos son las formas.

1.º El matrimonio *cum manus* (poder, facultad), es decir, en el cual el poder del cabeza de familia pasa del padre de la futura esposa al esposo. La mujer en

Figure 2: Pages dedicated to mythology in the cultural appendix to Luis Penagos, *Florilegio latino* (Volumen 2). *Método de la lengua latina. 5.º de Bachillerato y 2.º Seminarios*, 15th ed., Santander: Sal Terrae, 1971, 134–135. Reproduced with permission from Grupo de Comunicación Loyola, © Editorial Sal Terrae, 1971.

There are sections devoted to the main deities and their mythical stories,⁵⁵ which are presented at length, although the more scandalous details are skipped over. For example, it is said of Vulcan: "Su esposa era Venus, lo que dio lugar a leyendas poco piadosas" (81; His wife was Venus, which gave rise to impious legends).⁵⁶ In the following section of Latin texts, however, the topics dealt with are not mythological, but about Roman religion, again except for a summary of the Hercules and Cacus episode, adapted from Livy (90).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The following of the great gods are dealt with: Jupiter, Juno, Minerva; Venus, Mars, Mercury; Vulcan, Vesta, Neptune, and Pluto; Apollo and Diana; Ceres and Bacchus.

⁵⁶ Recall the description of the goddess Venus in *Los dioses que se fueron* by de Oteyza (section 3).

⁵⁷ The episode reappears in the next volume (Santiago Segura Munguía, *Método de latín. 6.º curso*, Salamanca: Anaya, 1964, 96–98), in Ovid's version.

Despite all these facts, in the *Diccionario ilustrado latino-español, español-latino* from the publisher Spes, the scholastic dictionary *par excellence*, students of these generations (and up to the modern day) had access to additional, if rather cursory, information about a certain amount of mythological content, through its twenty-four illustrations on religion and worship.⁵⁸ For example, the print dedicated to Jupiter and Juno (see Fig. 3), besides presenting the iconography of several gods, including a few allegorical deities, offers summarized information about the myth of the Ages, the upbringing of Zeus/Jupiter, the fact that he was brother and husband to Juno, and goes as far as to mention Ganymede, though omitting the homosexual dimension of this myth.

6. End of the Franco Dictatorship, and the Transition

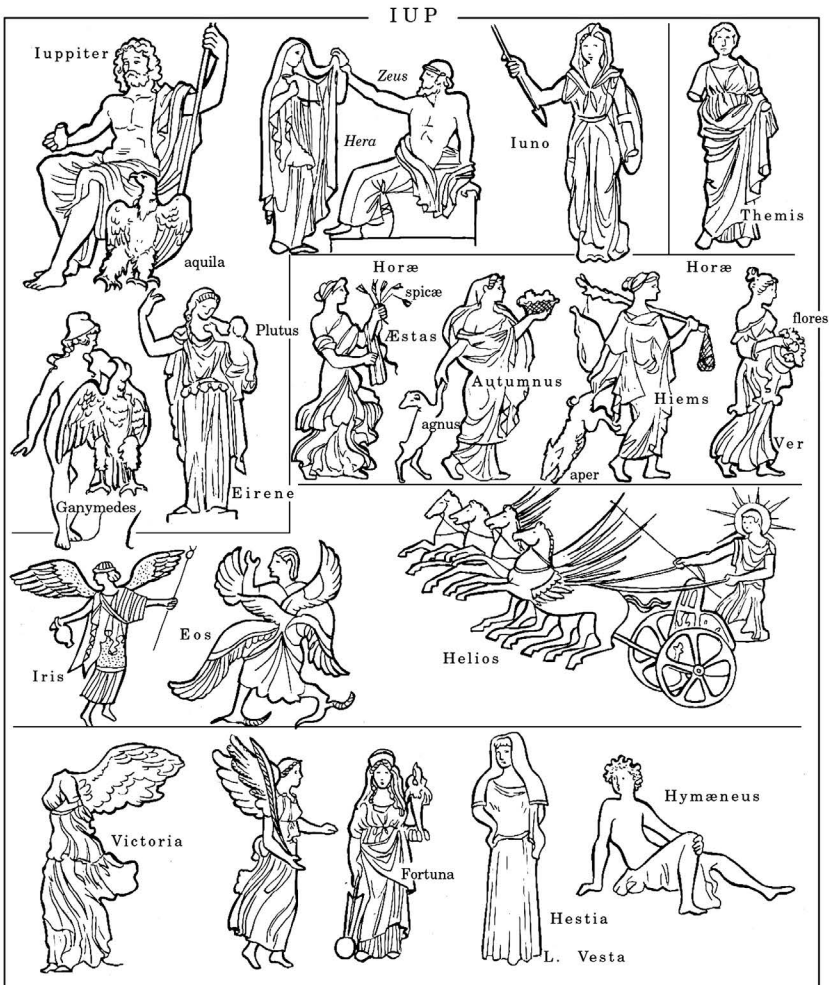
In 1969, with the Franco regime in its decline, and José Luis Villar Palasí (1922–2012) as Minister of Education, the Spanish educational system faced a new, substantial reform, for which a white paper was published: *La educación en España. Bases para una política educativa. Proyecto de Ley General de Educación y Financiamiento de la Reforma Educativa*. After bitter ideological opposition from the Catholic Church and the more conservative sectors, the Ley General de Educación y Financiamiento de la Reforma Educativa was passed on 4 August 1970, whereby primary education (ages six to thirteen), referred to as Educación General Básica (EGB) became compulsory and free of charge.⁵⁹

In 1975, the year of Franco's death, a textbook by Latinist Antonio Ruiz de Elvira Prieto was published,⁶⁰ and provided definitive support for the academic study of mythography in Spain, conferring on it the character of an independent discipline, with its own methodological framework. Significant academic works on mythology and mythography only began to be published after this development.

⁵⁸ The first edition from the Spes publishing house is dated 1943. The same publisher's dictionary of Ancient Greek does not include information of this type.

⁵⁹ BOE, 6–7 August 1970. In this regard, see María Concepción Álvarez García, "La reforma educativa española de 1970, la transición democrática y la España constitucional", in Olegario Negrín Fajardo, ed., *Historia de la educación española*, Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2006, 449–495.

⁶⁰ Antonio Ruiz de Elvira Prieto, *Mitología clásica*, Madrid: Gredos, 1975.



JÚPITER Y JUNO.—El culto del Zeus griego nació probablemente en Tesalia, aunque su templo se hallaba en las cumbres del Olimpo. Zeus era hijo de Chronos (Saturno), el dios que devoraba a sus hijos por miedo de ser destronado; luego de nacido su madre Rhea lo libró de la voracidad de su padre Chronos, dándole a comer, en vez de a Júpiter, una piedra envuelta en pañales; y así salvado lo hizo criar ocultamente en Ida (Creta), donde con la leche de la cabra Amalthea (símbolo de la humedad fecundante) pronto fue más poderoso que su padre, al cual arrojó del Olimpo. || Al lado de Zeus figura su hermana y esposa Hera (Juno), que tiene también los atributos y la dignidad de la autoridad suprema. || En Roma el culto de IUPPITER y IUNO era inmemorial. Se les atribuía todo el poder supremo; Júpiter era el del rayo, fulgor; Juno la de la moneta, etc. ¶ GANYMEDES es un adolescente de Frigia, a quien Zeus hizo arrebatado por un águila para llevarlo al Olimpo. ¶ IRIS es la mensajera de Juno. ¶ Eos, la aurora, es la distribuidora de rocío. ¶ HELIOS, el sol, se identifica a veces con Apolo, dios de la luz.

Figure 3: Sample illustration and explanations of mythological content in the *Diccionario latino-español, español-latino Spes*, 30th ed., Barcelona: Larousse Editorial, S.L., 2018, 270. Reproduced with permission from Larousse Editorial, S.L.

Following the death of Franco on 20 November 1975 and after Juan Carlos I was proclaimed king, Spain embarked on a complex process of restoring democracy and developing a constitutional system. This period takes the name of the *Transición española* and is usually considered to last until Partido Socialista Obrero Español won the October 1982 elections.⁶¹

7. The Era of Democracy: Mythology on the Rise

During the 1980s and 1990s, the socialist government (1982–1996) under Felipe González promulgated two fundamental laws for modernizing the Spanish educational system. The first of these, the Ley de Reforma Universitaria (LRU), dated 25 August 1983 (*BOE*, 1 September 1983), brought about a radical reorganization of the university system and had some important consequences for classical studies. Latin lost ground: apart from within a degree in Classical Philology, its presence was reduced from two years to a single academic year in some humanities degrees, and eliminated entirely in others. At the same time, however, the law established Classical Philology as a bachelor's degree across the map of Spain, with some twenty universities beginning to offer it. It also allowed for the creation of elective subjects available to other degree programmes. Classical mythology was always the most popular of the classical subjects offered within this framework, attracting students from every discipline.⁶²

The second law was the Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo (LOGSE), dated 3 October 1990 (*BOE*, 4 October 1990), which replaced the Ley General de Educación promulgated by Franco in 1970. The new law extended compulsory education until the age of sixteen, but the presence of Latin and Greek was limited to the Baccalaureate in the Humanities and Social Sciences.⁶³ With this modification, it is estimated that the teaching of Latin, which formerly

⁶¹ In addition to many other references, see Santos Juliá, *Transición. Historia de una política española (1937–2017)*, Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2017. However, some recent analyses, such as Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, ed., *España en democracia, 1975–2011*, Barcelona: Crítica, 2017, limit the duration of the Transition to 1978, when the Constitution took effect.

⁶² Data are borrowed from Antonio Alvar Ezquerro, "Estado actual de la enseñanza del latín y del griego en España y perspectivas de futuro", *Estudios Clásicos* 123 (2003), 69–84 (esp. 69–72).

⁶³ Until this time, Latin had been compulsory for all second-year students of the Bachillerato Unificado Polivalente (BUP, a university preparatory programme for all disciplines); the Baccalaureate, however, was not compulsory under this plan.

reached about 40% of the school population, was reduced to about 11%.⁶⁴ By way of compensation, however, a new academic subject was created: *Cultura Clásica*. While an elective course for students in *Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria* (ESO), it was a required offering at all schools. The opportunity afforded by this subject was that, for the first time in the history of the Spanish educational system, standardized study of classical mythology was established.

While the ESO did not come into effect officially until the 1994/95 academic year, from 1992 certain secondary schools were implementing it on an experimental basis. That same year, the Ministry of Education and Science published a guide whose purpose was to offer "orientación al profesorado que, a partir de octubre de 1992, impartirá las nuevas enseñanzas de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en los centros que anticipan su implantación" (orientation to teachers who, starting in October 1992, would teach the new material of *Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria* at early-implementation schools) and "facilitar a los profesores el desarrollo curricular de las correspondientes materias optativas, proporcionándoles sugerencias programación y unidades didácticas que les ayuden en su trabajo" (to facilitate their curriculum development for the corresponding elective subjects, providing suggestions for syllabuses and teaching units that would assist them in their work).⁶⁵ The three pillars of this new academic subject were:

1. the classical languages – the origin of the Romance languages;
2. the man of the classical world – his mark on the world of today;
3. the Romanization of Europe and Spain.

Two conceptual divisions are established under the second category: "El universo religioso: mitología" (The religious universe: mythology) and "El individuo y la sociedad" (The individual and society). The first subtopic, which is of interest to the present study, is in turn divided into the following sections: (a) mythology, religion, superstition, and magic; (b) reflections in Western culture: art, literature, music, cinema, language, folklore, etc.;

⁶⁴ See Alvar Ezquerra, "Estado actual", 71.

⁶⁵ Emilia Fernández de Mier, Nieves Gallardo Lucas, and José Antonio Pinel Martínez, *Cultura Clásica*, Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1992, 3. The design that was provided there, however, was later modified (*BOE*, 16 November 1994, 35136–35139). The second proposal put forward two levels of Classical Culture (A and B), the former focusing on cultural content, the latter having literary emphasis. While certain textbooks were drafted for the second level, it was never actually implemented.

(c) Spanish lexicon based on mythology.⁶⁶ Concerning mythological content, the guide proposes the following assignments in order to cover these concepts (19):⁶⁷

1. discovery of the principal Graeco-Latin myths through contemplation of pictorial works;
2. relating the myths to names of the stars;
3. analysis of texts by classical authors, identifying their literary contribution to works of Spanish literature.

It is clear, therefore, that great emphasis is placed on aspects of classical reception that favour the acquisition of mythological knowledge.

The detailed curriculum of this new subject was yet to be defined, however, and the resulting uncertainty led to the publication of works that sought to create and give structure to content that was not yet standardized, and, in the absence of prior mythological works, to guide the creation of new materials.⁶⁸ Seminal in this line was the eloquently named book *Pautas para una seducción*,⁶⁹ whose objective was to suggest ideas, focuses, or approaches that would be relevant and attractive in an introduction to the classical world. In their foreword, the editors state the following:

⁶⁶ Fernández de Mier, Gallardo Lucas, and Pinel Martínez, *Cultura Clásica*, 18. In any case, it must be taken into account that the transfer of powers from the central to the regional governments requires these regions to legislate 35% of the curriculum (45% in regions where there is more than one official language, that is, Galicia, Basque Country, Catalonia, Valencia, Balearic Islands), while the central ministry regulates the rest: 65% and 55% respectively.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 19.

⁶⁸ It is only fair to recognize, however, that certain experiments had been carried out earlier, and they served as the basis for these new developments. Beginning in the late 1980s, within the framework of the so-called EATP electives (Enseñanzas y Actividades Técnico-Profesionales), some schools began to offer content such as etymology, cinema and history, astronomy workshops, and mythology, in lieu of subjects like home economics or drawing. For example, Mythology was offered in 1988/89 at the Herrera Oria secondary school in Madrid. And we can go back further still, to the late 1970s, when there was innovative work in etymology and mythology in the Movimientos de Renovación Pedagógica. The final deliverable from the Mythology seminar was the book titled *Los dioses del Olimpo*, by Grupo Tempe, which I will refer to shortly.

⁶⁹ Francisco Javier Gómez Espelosín and Joaquín L. Gómez-Pantoja, eds., *Pautas para una seducción. Ideas y materiales para una nueva asignatura: Cultura Clásica*, Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, Instituto de Ciencias de la Educación, 1990. Many other proposals had been implemented at earlier times, including, e.g., Benjamín García-Hernández, "Cultura Clásica. Una disciplina para la primera etapa de la educación secundaria (14–16 años)", in *Actas del VI Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Clásicos*, vol. 3, Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Clásicos, 1989, 839–844.

El nacimiento de una nueva asignatura, más si esta lleva por título la vaga e imprecisa denominación de Cultura Clásica, presenta siempre nuevos problemas al profesorado respecto a la determinación concreta de sus contenidos. [...] Se viene a unir a esta circunstancia de índole general la incertidumbre existente entre el profesorado de lenguas clásicas respecto a la orientación adecuada que la tal nueva materia ha de recibir, teniendo siempre a la vista no solo las inmediatas preocupaciones de subsistencia académica, sino también unos objetivos más a largo plazo que pueden derivar en el asentamiento y dignificación de nuestros estudios. Creemos en efecto que se nos ofrece una oportunidad inmejorable para llevar a cabo una tarea de esta envergadura si sabemos utilizar adecuadamente los medios con que contamos y no dejamos pasar la ocasión sin obtener de la misma el máximo partido posible. (7)

The emergence of a new subject, especially if its title is as vague and un-specific as Classical Culture, always presents teachers with new problems in defining its specific content. [...] Added to this general circumstance is the uncertainty among teachers of classical languages about how to properly orient this new material, keeping in view not only the immediate concerns of academic survival, but also longer-term objectives that would lead to the establishment and expansion of our studies. In short, we believe that we have been given an outstanding opportunity to carry out this far-reaching task if we know how to make adequate use of the means at hand and do not let this occasion pass us by without using it to the fullest.

Even so, content related to classical mythology was not strongly represented in this volume.⁷⁰ That same year, however, María Teresa Hernández Lucas published a volume devoted specifically to this issue: *Mitología clásica. Teoría y práctica docente*.⁷¹ The book contains contributions presented at a course held at the Centro de Profesores (in-service teacher development centre) in Madrid, including both studies from Spanish specialists and pioneering classroom experiences, with specific proposals and materials.

⁷⁰ From a total of seventeen contributions, the volume includes three that relate to mythological content. Shortly thereafter, when the Classical Culture subject was already in place, Francisco Javier Gómez Espelósín published the volume *Lecciones de Cultura Clásica*, Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, Instituto de Ciencias de la Educación, 1995, in an attempt to offer new ideas and guidance for teachers. Mythology again finds a token presence: another three papers out of the total sixteen contributions.

⁷¹ María Teresa Hernández Lucas, ed., *Mitología clásica. Teoría y práctica docente*, Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 1990.

As a result of this change, and of the applied, systematic teaching of mythological content, new textbooks and teaching publications began to multiply in the 1990s. Worthy of special mention are those published under the name of Grupo Tempe,⁷² a group of very active secondary teachers who were involved in the design and implementation of the Classical Culture syllabus, and who published their proposals resulting from the Dirección General de Renovación Pedagógica. One of their notable publications was *Los dioses del Olimpo*,⁷³ divided into fourteen chapters, with a judicious selection of classical texts and a sampling of how the different myths are received in the arts, literature, and music.

Their Classical Culture textbook, *Europa, Europae. Cultura Clásica A. 2º Ciclo de ESO (3º y 4º)*,⁷⁴ moreover, will serve to exemplify how Spanish education experienced a radical paradigm shift in the 1990s. Chapter 8 of *Europa, Europae*, dedicated to "Religión: de dioses y hombres", opens (175), under the subheading "Cosmogonía según la Biblia", with the beginning of Genesis, a text that had already appeared (see section 3) among the selected texts in Luis Penagos's *Latin Anthology*. The same choice of text, however, demonstrates very different interests and the effects of the two examples are diametrically opposite. While in the Penagos selection, the choice of the Genesis text in lieu of similar texts from the Graeco-Roman culture is explained by the religious factors underlying this textbook, in the case of *Europa, Europae*, its inclusion right before the treatment of the Hesiodic cosmogony places the two texts on an equal footing, and gives the Genesis account a mythological treatment that would scarcely have been accepted during the Franco dictatorship. Even so, this example should not be interpreted as an active questioning of the Catholic religion, but merely as an effect of normalizing the teaching of classical mythology, whose interest to students is not primarily for theological concerns.

⁷² Its members are: Elena Cuadrado Ramos (I.B. "María Moliner", Coslada), Pilar Jiménez Gazapo (I.B. "Príncipe Felipe", Madrid), Mariano Martínez Yagüe (I.B. "Mirasierra", Madrid), Mercedes Morillas Gómez (I.B. "Enrique Tierno Galván", Parla), Francisca Morillo Ruiz (I.B. "Cardenal Herrera Oria", Madrid), M. Rosa Ruiz de Elvira Serra (I.B. "Cardenal Herrera Oria", Madrid). The acronym I.B. means "Instituto de Bachillerato" (high school). With this note I also express my very sincere appreciation for the help received from some of these individuals (Pilar, Francisca, and M. Rosa) in drafting this paper, which owes a great deal to their materials and to the account of their experiences.

⁷³ Grupo Tempe, *Los dioses del Olimpo*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998.

⁷⁴ Grupo Tempe, *Europa, Europae. Cultura Clásica A. 2º Ciclo de ESO (3º y 4º)*, Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas and Edelsa, 1995.

Although, seen from today's perspective, the rise of cultural content has meant a significant waning of linguistic content, a great deal of enthusiasm was experienced at that time, as some of the main players recount (members of Grupo Tempe in personal communication), and there was a hope that classical content would become stronger in the secondary curriculum. Beyond any doubt, this change created a lasting place for classical mythology in Spanish education; it has not been abandoned in later educational legislation that modified specific aspects of the LOGSE, without, however, revoking it entirely. For example, Royal Decree 1105/2014, dated 26 December 2014, which established the basic curriculum for compulsory and post-compulsory secondary education (*BOE*, 3 January 2015) and is currently in effect, affirmed that "merece especial atención el estudio de la mitología, cuya influencia resulta decisiva para la configuración del imaginario occidental" (the study of mythology deserves special attention, having had a defining influence in shaping Western consciousness). This statement is repeated on no less than three occasions, in reference, respectively, to the subjects of Greek, Latin, and Classical Culture (315, 350, 469).

8. Conclusions

The relationship between Spanish education and the classical languages has been problematic in modern times, and the same is true of mythological content, with the religious dimension having differing amounts of influence over time and in the varying educational systems. Despite the defence of classical studies during the Franco regime, the weight of Catholicism had the effect of limiting mythology content in the curricula; it was considered a minor area of knowledge, and its teaching continued to be justified in purely utilitarian terms, as an interpretive key for artistic and literary works. The teachings of mythology, generally speaking, were not considered to be edifying, nor could most myths be put to use for students' moral training. In that era, education in the classical subjects was closely tied to the grammatical study of Greek and Latin, and much less to cultural aspects, which were relatively problematic.

Later, although the tension between secularism and religion characterized the different educational systems under democracy, and religion prevailed in part, mythological content was gradually normalized. With the LOGSE and the establishment of Classical Culture as a school subject, a significant

nucleus of humanities subjects has been formed within compulsory secondary education. Although official data are not available, it can be said that Classical Culture is a popular subject, and this popularity has undoubtedly been helped by the increase and success of contemporary, youth-oriented products that make extensive use of mythology, such as Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* novels, or the recent films with mythological themes, which have created different expectations among learners.

Finally, as a result of this structural incorporation of mythological content into the Spanish educational system, and its attractiveness to students, it should be noted that early twenty-first-century Spanish society boasts a significant percentage of youth, roughly between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, who know much more about classical mythology than their predecessors in most of the twentieth century. This fact can explain, for example, the large increase in mythological references in the press in recent decades. Offsetting this, however, the study of classical languages is at a low point, while the knowledge of biblical references has also clearly declined, given their limited study even within the subject of religion.