



$\int f(x) dx = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} (f(a)\Delta x + f(x_1)\Delta x + \dots + f(x_n)\Delta x)$

μιθολογία *mitologia*

$\sum a_i = a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_n$
 itan aye atijo

μυθολογία

OUR MYTHICAL EDUCATION

Edited by Lisa Maurice

神話 *mythologie*

$(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \begin{pmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \\ \vdots \\ y_n \end{pmatrix} = x_1 y_1 + x_2 y_2 + \dots + x_n y_n$ $\left(\frac{u}{v}\right) = \dots$

$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n} = 2$ ∞ *mitologie* *מיתולוגיה*

$f(x) = \frac{1}{\sigma\sqrt{2\pi}} \exp\left(-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}\right)$

$F(x) + C$ *μιθολογία*

$y = \ln x$ *μυθολογία* *Mythologie*

$\int \frac{dx}{x} = \ln|x| + C$

mitologia $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$

$C = \frac{n!}{\dots}$

OUR MYTHICAL EDUCATION

“OUR MYTHICAL CHILDHOOD” Series

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OUR MYTHICAL
EDUCATION
The Reception
of Classical Myth
Worldwide in Formal
Education, 1900–2020

Edited by Lisa Maurice



Our Mythical Education: The Reception of Classical Myth Worldwide in Formal Education, 1900–2020,
edited by Lisa Maurice (Bar-Ilan University, Israel)
in the series "Our Mythical Childhood", edited by Katarzyna Marciniak (University of Warsaw, Poland)

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To Aryeh, my constant fan and supporter
and
to my children and grandchildren who are more wondrous
to me than any mythological beings:
Shosh, Nadav, Kfir, Ayal and Manor
Yonatan and Elital
Eli, Ayelet and Ori
Talia and Yair

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Lisa Maurice

INTRODUCTION

This introduction has been given its final touches as Covid-19 rages throughout the globe, forcing lockdown on much of the planet in a manner that is unprecedented, at least in living memory. Many universities and schools have resorted to remote teaching, and as physical national borders have closed, virtual international ones have expanded. The classical community has responded to this admirably, sharing resources, information, and aid through social media and other forms of online collaboration. Such cooperation is very much in the spirit of the *Our Mythical Childhood* project, of which the present volume is a component, and whose brief is specifically *The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*. It is possible that the present challenge is the greatest ever faced; yet it is also connecting educators and scholars the world over, who have united in the dual intentions of disseminating the works of classical Greece and Rome and continuing in their educational missions. In this way, they have been providing, what seems to many, a beacon of hope in the current darkness.

I. Our Mythical Education: Rationale and Overview of the Project

Through such ideas and practices, the teaching of classical myth continues on paths that are very well established, in the sense that myth has constantly been consciously utilized for specific aims, in order to put across ideological messages. It is accepted that children's literature, often the first meeting point with the worlds of Ancient Greece and Rome, is an important element in the formation of perceptions of that culture, but, since any book that is written for or given to children involves by definition an element of ideology, these perceptions are far from free of ideological implications. As Peter Hunt puts it:

It is arguably impossible for a children's book [...] not to be educational or influential in some way; it cannot help but reflect an ideology and, by extension, didacticism [...]. Children's writers are in a position of singular responsibility in transmitting cultural values.¹

If this can be stated regarding children's literature, how much more must it be stressed with regard to actual educational curricula and materials, which are explicitly selected and developed for particular ideological and/or didactic aims? It is true that methods of educating and pedagogical practices may vary.² Nevertheless, all elements of a planned educational curriculum must by their very nature have a didactic component, in the sense that they are included for their supposed value in teaching something. What is taught is not necessarily information or skills, and may include less concrete elements, such as values or codes of behaviour; but that educational constituent is still thought to be present. No text, subject, syllabus, or other educational material is ever selected randomly (although the amount of thought and intention devoted to the choice does, of course, vary).³ Naturally it is the case that curricula do not always achieve their aims, and may on occasion in fact promote, consciously or subconsciously, values their proponents ostensibly oppose.⁴ In general, however, educational systems reflect and are shaped by ideological and organizational processes at a number of levels (individual, local, national, societal, global, etc.), all of which are influenced by wider concerns and challenges.⁵ Recent research has attempted to assess the character and change in these ideological processes by examining the formally stated aims of education in countries throughout the world in the second half of the twentieth century.⁶

¹ Peter Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, 3.

² See, e.g., Geraint Johnes, "Didacticism and Educational Outcomes", *Educational Research and Reviews* 1.2 (2006), 23–28.

³ For an overview of the two major transnational curriculum theories and practices, the Anglo-American curriculum and the European-Scandinavian *Bildung-Didaktik*, and the changes in recent years, see Tero Autio, "The Internationalization of Curriculum Research", in William F. Pinar, ed., *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*, 2nd ed., New York, NY and London: Routledge, 2014 (ed. pr. 2003), 17–31.

⁴ See, e.g., Kenneth T. Henson, *Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform*, 5th ed., Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2015 (ed. pr. 2000), 1–40.

⁵ See *ibidem*, 41–141.

⁶ Robert Fiala, "Educational Ideology and the School Curriculum", in Aaron Benavot, Cecilia Braslavsky, and Nhung Truong, eds., *School Knowledge in Comparative and Historical Perspective*, CERC Studies in Comparative Education 18, Dordrecht: Springer, 2007, 15–34.

When talking about classical studies, the question of curriculum becomes even more loaded than it does with many other subjects. Debates about the role of Classics – whether arguing the necessity or the irrelevance of such subjects – are so charged with history and ideology, particularly in the post-modern environment of debates around issues such as colonialism, class, and gender, that they take on a fervour that is rarely seen in many other areas.⁷ The historically central place of Classics within the education systems of many countries (not least as a result of colonialism and imperialism), and its gradual marginalization, has been the subject of academic scholarship and wider public debate over recent decades, and many countries provide their own individual perspectives on the issue.⁸ To provide only a single example from Europe, one of the most influential works on the subject in Britain was Christopher Stray's *Classics Transformed*, a work published twenty years ago, that was groundbreaking for its study of "school and university curricula, teaching, and textbooks; with the content, institutional forms, and

⁷ Some of the most important works focusing on the United States and Britain are: Phyllis Culham and Lowell Edmunds, eds., *Classics: A Discipline and Profession in Crisis?*, Lanham, MD and London: University Press of America, 1989; Christopher Stray, *Classics Transformed*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; Barbara Goff, ed., *Classics and Colonialism*, London: Duckworth, 2005; Lorna Hardwick and Carol Gillespie, eds., *Classics in Post-Colonial Worlds*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199296101.001.0001>; Mark Bradley, ed., *Classics and Imperialism in the British Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010; Lorna Hardwick and Stephen Harrison, eds., *Classics in the Modern World: A Democratic Turn?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; Henry Stead and Edith Hall, *Greek and Roman Classics in the British Struggle for Social Reform*, London: Bloomsbury, 2015; Eric Adler, *Classics, the Culture Wars, and Beyond*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2016; Christopher Stray, *Classics in Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018; Edith Hall and Henry Stead, *A People's History of Classics: Class and Greco-Roman Antiquity in Britain and Ireland 1689 to 1939*, London: Routledge, 2020.

⁸ For the cases of Britain and the United States, see, e.g., Martin Lowther Clarke, *Classical Education in Britain 1500–1900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959; Stray, *Classics Transformed*; John Roach, *Secondary Education in England 1870–1902: Public Activity and Private Enterprise*, London and New York, NY: Routledge, 1991. For France, see, e.g., Eric Verdier, "La France a-t-elle changé de régime d'éducation et de formation?", *Formation emploi* 76.1 (2001), 11–34, and Pierre Duroisin, "Rosa, rosa, rosam... Les Enjeux de la querelle du latin", *Cahiers du Centre Jean Gol* 3 (2007), 527–553. For Germany, see, e.g., Hans-Joachim Glücklich, *Lateinunterricht. Didaktik und Methodik*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993. For a broader European perspective, see Freddy Decreus, *New Classics for a New Century?*, *Didactica Classica Gandensia* 42, Gent: RUG Seminarie voor bijzondere methodiek van de oude talen, 2002; Bob Lister, ed., *Meeting the Challenge: International Perspectives on the Teaching of Latin*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; Evelien Bracke, "Bringing Ancient Languages into a Modern Classroom: Some Reflections", *Journal of Classics Teaching* 16.32 (2015), 35–39, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2058631015000185>. Space does not permit further examples, but similar arguments and works can be found globally, and especially throughout Europe, in a number of languages.

definition of scholarship; and with the social bases, location, and organization of classical knowledge".⁹ This work opened up the debate on the role and evolution of Classics within British formal education from the Victorian era to the early 1960s. Since Stray's authoritative work, the research in recent years by other scholars has continued to shine the spotlight on the role of Classics within British education and society.

Similarly, in the United States, books such as Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* and Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath's *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* stimulated debate and concern about the changing role and use of the traditional great works of Western heritage, including those in the classical languages.¹⁰ Such works led to talk about a "crisis" within Classics in America, resulting in a number of articles and books on the role of the Greek and Roman Classics in American education overall.¹¹ More recently, Caroline Winterer, concentrating on examining university rather than school curricula, demonstrated how Classics was transformed from a narrow, language-based subject to a broader study of civilization that influenced both the rise of the American university and modern notions of selfhood and knowledge.¹²

2. Aims and Scope

Almost all of the emphasis in these studies of Classics in education is on the study of the ancient languages. Yet, as we are all aware, not only is Classics far broader than just the languages of the ancient world, but it is found much more commonly within other areas of the school curriculum. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Greeks and Romans are commonly encountered within history lessons, while in the United States they appear as part of social studies curricula. Nevertheless, it is the case that not only are children

⁹ Stray, *Classics Transformed*, 3.

¹⁰ Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath, *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom*, New York, NY: Encounter Books, 2001 (ed. pr. 1998).

¹¹ Edward Phinney, "The Classics in American Education", in Phyllis Culham and Lowell Edmunds, eds., *Classics: A Discipline and Profession in Crisis?*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989, 77–87; Lee T. Percy, *The Grammar of Our Civility: Classical Education in America*, Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005; Daniel Walker Howe, "Classical Education in America", *The Wilson Quarterly* 35.2 (2011), 31–36.

¹² Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780–1910*, Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

more likely to be introduced to myth than history via other media, such as books and films, but that one of the most common ways in which Classics is encountered within school curricula is through classical myth.

Clearly, wherever myth forms part of an educational syllabus, value judgements have been made by those who chose the texts, with regard to content, approach, usage, emphases, purpose, and many other elements. The present volume looks at these myriad factors, in an attempt to untangle which elements of classical myth have been selected and adapted, and how and why these choices have been made. Through this analysis, light is shed on some underlying ideas and beliefs, regarding both conceptions and manipulations (whether conscious or subconscious) of the ancient world, and of the adapting society.

This volume is a product of the five-year European Research Council-funded project, *Our Mythical Childhood*, headed by Katarzyna Marciniak, which is examining the reception of classical mythology in children's culture worldwide (<http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/>). As part of this investigation, the present volume examines the reception of such myth within formal education in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, over a wide geographical area. It focuses for the most part on school education, but with forays into post-high school where relevant, and includes a wide geographical and chronological range. With regard to the latter limitations, the general emphasis is on modern day and the current situation, but as a result of individual historical circumstances in each example. The complexity of such traditions has led to summaries that reach rather further back in history in some cases;¹³ this was unavoidable since comprehensiveness in both chronological and geographical terms for the volume would have resulted in hundreds of contributions, an obviously impossible undertaking.

In place of a narrow delineation of a time period, the decision was made to focus on geographical breadth, even at the expense of temporal cohesion as a result of individual circumstances in each case. Unlike many works on reception, which focus on Europe or North America, the volume covers Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas (including Canada, the USA, and South America), and both Australia and New Zealand. While the book cannot hope to be exhaustive, it is truly global in its approach, and

¹³ See, e.g., Markus Janka and Michael Stierstorfer's chapter which traces developments as far back as the twelfth century.

breaks new ground in its scope and attention to geographic regions without a strong classical tradition, such as Brazil, Israel, and Japan.

Because of this broad geographical scope, the book is arranged by region rather than by theme, with commonalities and differences being highlighted in the concluding chapter. This was not an easy decision; the volume could have been designed around topics such as pedagogy and ideological approaches, for example. Yet so doing would have blurred the comprehensive international nature of the work, which is such a distinctive feature of the *Our Mythical Childhood* project. Making this a fundamental element of our approach, therefore, the regional grouping was preferable. With respect to globalism, it should be noted that while the papers themselves are all in English, the book does cover a range of languages and addresses issues not generally discussed, at least in English-language publications, such as the focus on French Canada, rather than the English-speaking areas.

The differing circumstances in the various countries have also led to a variety with regard to the disciplinary backgrounds of the contributors. While most are classical philologists, this is not the case for all; some are experts in pedagogy or literature, and one case even includes the perspective of a school student. Although the natural result of this is a somewhat uneven attitude towards ideological and theoretical issues, the benefit of the resultant breadth of experience was felt to outweigh the inevitable disadvantages of such an approach.

Similarly, a decision was taken early on not to impose restrictions on contributors as to how to present evidence for their particular regions. As a consequence of this decision the nature of the articles differs considerably. While some (for example, the papers by Konstantinou, McAuley, Gancz and Santos) give a complete survey of the historical development of classical education in the country they cover, others (for example, Unceta Gómez, Paulouskaya, Peer and Roesgaard) limit their research to the last hundred years or to smaller, interesting periods (for instance, Garulli, Ryba, Gunter and Curley, Maurice). Still others present case studies of a particularly innovative programme or usage of myth (Hale and Foka, Puetz, Holmes-Henderson, Fratini), a single school (Ermolaeva and Pushel, Marciniak and Strycharczyk) or myth (for example, Neba and Nkemleke), or even a single text (Janka and Stierstorfer). Two of the cases (Neba and Nkemleke, Peer and Roesgaard) even devote considerable space to non-classical mythology, in places where local legends take precedence and Graeco-Roman myth acts in a comparative manner. Although this range of approaches may not make

for the academic uniformity typically found in collections with a narrower focus, it is hoped that the benefits of the wider outlook, with its concomitant vagaries, outweigh the disadvantages that are an inevitable consequence of the scope and nature of the subject in this case.

3. Outline of the Book

The book is divided into five parts, arranged by area. Opening with Western Europe, an area in which the classical tradition has long been deep-rooted, Part I considers five different countries: Greece and Italy, the birthplace of the classical cultures, as well as three in which the Roman civilization was well established: Spain, Germany, and Britain. In the first chapter, Ariadne Konstantinou shines the spotlight on Greece, examining how Ancient Greek myth and Mycenaean civilization fit into the mosaic of national identity and self-definition. Focusing on the history curriculum for Grade 3, Konstantinou demonstrates the ideological issues underlying the inclusion of mythology in a history textbook and syllabus. She shows that there is a blurring not only between myth and history, but also between history and prehistory, which reflects both uncertainty regarding the ancient roots of the Modern Greek people, and an unease with how to understand, and to present to children, a tradition that so strongly impacts on the question of national self-identity.

Valentina Garulli's paper focuses on the other centre of classical civilization, namely Italy. She concentrates on a specific era, the Fascist period, examining schoolbooks on classical myths for secondary school published in Italy during the 1920s and 1930s. Providing an overview of Italian schoolbooks on mythology, she demonstrates that although some show explicit signs of Fascist ideology, with emphasis given to the Roman side of classical myth, this is not always the case. Many of the books are actually of a high quality and fluctuate ambiguously between a continuation of the positivist and liberal culture of the first two decades of the twentieth century, and the political use of classical myth, with the exploitation of the tales for ideological purposes less blatant than might have been expected.

Ideology is also the central theme of Luis Unceta Gómez's paper, as he gives an overview of the role of classical mythology in successive educational systems in Spain's recent history and suggests that the difficulty in incorporating mythology in Spanish education is fundamentally due to ideological and religious issues. The author shows how many of the textbooks used

in schools in the late 1800s and early 1900s were dominated by explicit moral and religious precautions about the content of classical mythology. Educational reforms in the first decades of the twentieth century adopted the French model, which, since it imposed secularization on the educational system, led to tension between conservatives in Spain, who were identified with the Church, and modernists. The weight of Catholicism had the effect of limiting mythology content in the curricula; it was considered unimportant and even morally corrupting. With time, mythological content has been gradually normalized, and a significant nucleus of humanities subjects has been formed within compulsory secondary education, with classical civilization becoming a popular subject, particularly under the impetus of popular culture. The religious influence remains, however, in a negative manner; in tandem with the recent popularity and in-depth knowledge of classical myth, there has been a growing ignorance of the Bible, with biblical references no longer understood by youth.

The final two papers in this section present case studies in countries where the classical tradition has deep roots. In Germany, education was steeped in Classics in the early modern period, as modern educational systems evolved, and this is reflected in Markus Janka and Michael Stierstorfer's paper. Rather than raising questions about the place of mythology within education it takes its position for granted, honing in on the use of one particular author, Ovid, within the German gymnasium curriculum. Janka and Stierstorfer demonstrate that whereas in the first half of the twentieth century Ovid was overshadowed by Virgil and Horace, with the mythical narratives of the *Metamorphoses* relegated to the middle level of higher education, in recent decades, and especially in the new millennium, Ovid has had something of a rebirth. Despite the difference between Germany and Spain with regard to the classical tradition, there is also similarity regarding the impact of popular culture on education. In Germany, for this reason, and also because of the multimedia appeal and Ovid's playful yet sophisticated poetry that is almost postmodern in style, the *Metamorphoses* have been adopted as refreshing stimuli of a complex and intellectually demanding mythological education.

Similarly in Britain, where classical studies has long been well established within education, a case study of some current uses of classical myth is presented. Arlene Holmes-Henderson considers the use of mythology as a different type of stimulus, namely to literacy, or, more accurately, multiliteracies, for primary school children in the United Kingdom. Although

classical myth exists only on the fringes of the school curriculum, British children frequently discover the stories outside of the school framework, through reading, popular media, and informal education, and their attraction to the tales allows for exploitation for educational reasons, within a classroom setting. Presenting two case studies in which classical mythology was deliberately and creatively introduced to British classrooms, Holmes-Henderson demonstrates how the projects enhanced the development of multiliteracies in children aged seven to twelve.

Part II of the book takes us to Central and Eastern Europe. Here, two overview studies and two case studies are presented, one for Russia and one for Poland. For the former, Hanna Paulouskaya examines the use of mythology in Soviet schools, where it was presented only to children through a number of textbooks that were widely used across the Soviet Union. These books taught that Soviet children belonged to a common Greek heritage, ridiculed religion, and depicted figures such as Heracles or Prometheus as Soviet heroes and revolutionaries fighting for the people. The strong ideological tone – and indeed the books themselves – changed little throughout the period of Soviet rule despite the freedoms and more progressive attitudes in later years. Nevertheless, the very stability of the teaching material, which quickly became deeply familiar to the teacher, actually allowed for creativity within teaching, since there was rarely new material to be internalized, and efforts could then be expended on teaching methods.

Focusing in on specifics, a case study follows, this time of a particular Russian school, the Classical Gymnasium of Saint Petersburg, School No. 610. Here the description and analysis is provided from the point of view of both a teacher, Elena Ermolaeva, and a recently graduated student, Lev Pushel. Each provide a personal perspective on how Classics in general, and classical myth in particular, form a central part of both the ideology and daily practice within the curriculum of the school.

Janusz Ryba's examination of the teaching of classical languages and culture in Poland from 1945 to present day highlights a central trend of marginalization of classical languages, particularly of Greek, which has been almost entirely removed from the curriculum; similarly in the teaching of Latin, the skills of reception have increased at the expense of traditional parsing. Latin is now regarded as a bearer of cultural content and a means of enabling pupils to decode this content, which means that language education is subordinated to intercultural skills. Along with this reduction in importance of language analysis has emerged a parallel trend of emphasis upon

classical civilization and culture, which, according to the current programme guidelines, is oriented towards intercultural communication skills, although it should be stressed that the programme is still highly text-based.

Katarzyna Marciniak picks up on the idea of the cultural legacy of the ancient world that is experienced in Poland in her study of the Classics programme at the Mikołaj Rej High School No. XI. Emphasizing the importance of the Classics as means of establishing a common spiritual heritage upon which the Polish intelligentsia could draw in order to maintain ties with the West, she demonstrates how ancient culture was perceived in Poland as a vital connection with the Mediterranean community transcending geographical and political borders. In contrast to Spain, Latin's association with the language of the Catholic Church placed it in the centre of opposition, while the academic elite also cherished the ancient tradition in the belief that it "helped defend their identity from the attempts to create captive minds". Using the Mikołaj Rej school, with its enlightened attitude and fitting motto of *Macte animo!*, as a case study, Marciniak outlines the "Classics profile" class opened in 1982, a seeming impossibility in that time of communist censorship. Inspired, however, by the aim of educating youth who would bring about social change, Marciniak, herself a graduate of the programme, provides a testimony to the joint mission of teachers and researchers of antiquity to secure for young people an education that was intended to help them become adults with critical minds, aware of their choices. The paper is preceded by a piece by Barbara Strycharczyk, who was the teacher of the Classics class at the school for thirty years, ever since the implementation of the programme in 1982, and who provides an overview of the programme as it evolved and some highlights from her experiences. The two perspectives of teacher and student are complemented by a few remarks from the author of the concept of the Classics profile at Rej, the director of this school in the difficult 1970s and 1980s – Prof. Witold Kaliński.

With Part III, we move to the continent of Australasia. Elizabeth Hale and Anna Foka's focus is on Australia, where they demonstrated how Australian Classics teachers in New South Wales, the state with the largest concentration of classical classrooms, use creative approaches to classical education. They stress in particular the innovative use of fabrication, visualization, and reception to engage students, integrating an appreciation of classical mythology into a curriculum that covers many aspects of ancient cultures. To illustrate their point, Hale and Foka turn the spotlight on a number of case studies, including projects that utilize LEGO and digital

fabrication technologies, innovative storytelling practices and thoughtful activities, and incorporation of indigenous myth into classical textbooks.

Moving across to New Zealand, Babette Puetz gives an overview of classical studies in the region, demonstrating its popularity at New Zealand secondary schools, particularly as a result of exposure to recent popular culture, such as the *Percy Jackson* and *Harry Potter* novels and movies. With regard to the school curriculum, Puetz stresses the freedom of choice of content that is available for teachers in this region, although they are encouraged to choose material that connects with the students' local contexts, and in particular Māori culture. Despite this great flexibility and variety, general trends can be determined, and Puetz shows that myth, rather than taught as a specific unit, usually tends to be embedded into other topics of enquiry, and is taught in order to exemplify ancient attitudes and to help students analyse and interpret ancient literature and art.

Part IV takes us from one New World to another, in the shape of America. Since the United States, with all of its independent states and educational systems is too vast for comprehensive analysis, a decision was taken to look not at schools in this case, but rather at college and university programmes, where some cohesiveness can be delineated. Emily Gunter and Dan Curley therefore carried out a survey of the 3,000 or so myth courses run by colleges in the United States, contacting them and subsequently receiving 589 syllabi in response. From this information, they created a database, examining which departments offer myth courses; the structures of the courses themselves; which Graeco-Roman gods, heroes, and myths are taught; and what themes and motifs are addressed. Analysing this information, they were then able to discuss some current and emerging trends, such as the use of screen media and gaming, as well as the increasing utilization of trigger warnings with regard to gender, sexuality, and violence. Such elements appear to define, or have the potential to define, the twenty-first-century mythology classroom in the United States.

Remaining on the same continent but moving north, Alex McAuley's chapter considers an element of classical-myth teaching rarely examined in the Anglophone world, that found in French Canada, where the link between Latin and the Catholic Church once again features as the central issue. McAuley highlights how, until the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, the Catholic Church had an almost unchallenged monopoly on public education in French Canada. This meant that the curriculum, which infused almost every element of education with the fundamentals of the Catholic faith, both required

the teaching of the Latin language, but as a consequence, also, paradoxically, gave prominence to “pagan” mythology and religious traditions. This chapter therefore addresses the question of why a Catholic system spent so much time teaching non-Catholic literature and religious material. It does this through a detailed examination of the place of mythology in a variety of primary pedagogical materials used in French Canadian schools from the foundation of the colony until the publication of *commission Parent's* report in 1964. The evolving place of classical mythology in French Canadian education is tracked from the establishment of the colony in the seventeenth century through to the vociferous debates among the clergy over the place of pre-Christian authors in Catholic education, which erupted in France in the mid-nineteenth century and then spilled into French Canada in the 1860s. The perceived benefits and threats posed by such a mythological education are analysed through the assertions of a variety of contemporary commentators. By means of conclusion, the prominence of classical mythology and ancient authors in the curriculum is viewed in relation to the evolving national mythology of French Canada itself, according to which the French Canadian Catholic establishment becomes the direct successor to the classical past.

Ideology again features as the central theme of the final paper in this section, which moves southwards to Latin America, with Pablo Silva Machado Bispo dos Santos and Ricardo Gancz's chapter on Brazil, where they examine the different periods in the Brazilian education system, demonstrating how the myths are used to justify and reinforce the political paradigm/views of each period. Tracing the history of Brazil, from the period in which the country was a vassal to Portugal until independence, the beginning of the republic, two different dictatorships, the rise of the left and the current rise of the right, the authors show that with each political change came a shift in the paradigm of education, expressed in the form of laws and the alteration of the obligatory curricula. In every period, as this chapter establishes, mythology was part of the official curricula that schools were required to follow, and these myths were used to further the political messages of the different governments.

While America is the New World, the links to the old in the form of European culture remained strong, through the people who settled the area. With Part V, we move to realms rather less traditionally associated with classical culture: Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Despite the weaker connection between the classical past and Africa, myth is far from non-existent, and Daniel A. Nkemleke and Divine Che Neba make a plea for the use

of classical mythology as a tool within the African classroom. Arguing that the tussle between world mythologies has pushed writers, particularly within the African continent, to come to terms with what pertains to them, what they have borrowed, what they offer to the world, and what they share with others, they explain that African scholars may use classical mythology as templates for their own writings, or as a means of celebrating their individual cultures. Demonstrating this, they provide an analysis of a modern African adaptation of the Oedipus myth, Ola Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not to Blame*, emphasizing how his writing is rooted in rituals and other accompanying elements, like dance, songs, and chants. The introduction of these cultural elements in writing (and eventually in performance) by Rotimi and Sophocles, therefore, they argue, has the potential to contribute to identity formation of young adults, linking their cultural past and projecting to the future. In particular, they claim that the adaptation of such cross-cultural literary models in an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom in Africa can serve as a catalyst for improving cross-cultural competence and igniting the imagination of learners.

In the case of South Africa, where the classical culture itself was inextricably linked with its colonial past, there is now a requirement to decolonize and Africanize the curriculum. Claudia C.J. Fratini, after giving an overview of the evolution of the South African education reforms, argues, like Nkemeleke and Neba, that mythology could be used as an invaluable tool within the classroom to create a multicultural and interdisciplinary conversation within the South African school environment. Illustrating this, she provides a detailed example and lesson plans of how mythology can be employed in the classroom to journey through what she calls "the wormhole that links contextualized learning to the parallel universes inhabited by the debates on decolonization and Africanization of the curriculum".

Like Africa and Australia, which both possess their own native mythologies, Japan also has a cultural history far-removed from that of Greece and Rome. Western education and methods greatly influenced the development of Japanese education after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, but the mythology that was taught was not classical, but Japanese, mythology. This was, in fact, a point of great dissension in the past, with the mythological origin of the Imperial Family taught within the framework of history classes, from the establishment of the educational system in the 1870s onwards. This emphasis on nationalism, reinforced by the teaching of Japanese mythology, was an important element of education right up to World War Two. In this

chapter, Ayelet Peer and Marie Højlund Roesgaard examine the role of Japanese mythology and Japanese Classics within the national curriculum, before going on to explore the exposure of Japanese children and youth to classical Graeco-Roman myth, looking at the role of mythology in modern Japanese society. They demonstrate that, whereas previously it had been a strong source of legitimacy and national identity, it has become trivialised into merely a rich store of stories and fantasies about ancient times, which form a common basic repository of narratives and images.

Lisa Maurice rounds off the contributions with a discussion of the modern State of Israel. Here, distrust of Greek culture, when coupled with the fact that the Jewish people had their own legends and stories in the form of the Bible and of other traditional tales, meant that the classical world was regarded with suspicion and always marginal within education. After outlining the development and role of Classics in general within the Israeli education system as it evolved, the somewhat tantalizing glimpses of Greek myth, within the various history, literature, and drama syllabi are analysed, as well as the various programmes for gifted children, and, finally, a new initiative currently being pioneered, for children on the autism spectrum. The chapter concludes with some ideas as to how to capitalize on the great enthusiasm for classical mythology demonstrated by Israeli children, in ways that will enhance various aspects of their education.

In order to provide some kind of cohesion to this diverse smorgasbord of offerings, the volume concludes with some thoughts and observations as to trends, similarities, and differences observed from place to place. It is to be hoped that these may go some way towards identifying some of the points of contact and of divergence in the treatment of classical mythology in educational contexts. While a book of this kind can never be exhaustive – and indeed this one makes no claims to be so – what it does hope to do is to provide a wide-ranging and multifaceted picture, which opens up different perspectives on the topic and offers its readers stimulating suggestions for their own teaching and research. It is, in many ways, a starting point rather than a final destination, intended to provide a basis for the further enquiry that is necessary, as the teaching of classical culture and mythology continues to have relevance and be promoted, as it has throughout history, even in the technological age of the third millennium.