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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE GREEK MYTHOLOGY
OVER THE MODERN WESTERN SOCIETY**

This Extended Essay is Submitted to the English Department as a Partial Fulfillment For the Requirement of “the Master Degree” in Civilization and Literature.

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Dedications

I dedicate my work to my family who has supported me throughout the process of studying. I will always appreciate all they have done. Thank you for your unconditional support with my studies. I am honoured to have you as a family. Thank you for giving me a chance to prove and improve myself through all my steps in life.

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Abstract

Since the dawn of history mythology has fulfilled a significant role within many aspects of people's cultures. It has been handed down from one generation to the next one through different means and has been depicted in numerous ways. The antique Greek mythology is a well-known mythology which emerged from the ancient religions of the island of Crete and gathers a wide range of legends, myths and stories. This classical mythology has numerous themes and incorporates many deities and other mythical creatures as well. The modern western society with all its contemporary characteristics has been shaped thanks to several eras; according to specialists it began from the early Middle Ages and continue throughout distinct periods until it became what it is today. All along those periods the Greek mythology has survived, and still influence many fields in the contemporary Western culture. Thus, in this work the Greek mythological beliefs and their impacts on the language, literature, sport, modern marketing and sciences of the modern West are highlighted.

Key words:

Mythology - the Greek mythology - myths - culture - influence – modern western society.

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List of abbreviations

1. **CAR:** the central Africa Republic.
2. **DRC:** the democratic Republic of Congo.

General Introduction

General Introduction

Throughout thousands of years many civilizations emerged in different parts of the globe, and each civilization thanks to several factors and circumstances gave birth to its own culture. The term “culture” has been by time, attributed many characteristics and definitions but nowadays this word is related to every aspect of people’s life from media, law, everyday ideologies to every single thing that is found within a given society.

Further, one of the most important features of culture is mythology; mythology emerged thousands and thousands years ago in different parts of the globe, it was considered as an answer to various enigmas and questions that the antique individuals needed to answer. The word mythology according to specialists refers to the collections of myths, tales and legends; it is passed down from one generation to the other one by different means and it is portrayed in various ways.

The western world origins is rooted to the Middle Ages according to interpreters and has witnessed many changes and developments throughout centuries until it became what it is today. This mixed ancestry gave Western civilization a rich heritage to draw on and the modern western society incorporates significant characteristics and has been influenced by a strong tide which is the Greek mythology.

Furthermore, this antique mythology is considered as the body of myths concerning the gods, goddesses, heroes and other mythical heroes related to the Greek people, their cult and ritual beliefs. The Greek mythology emerged from the antique religions of Crete; an island located in the Aegean Sea and incorporates many themes and mythical figures. Nowadays, within the modern western society traces of the Greek mythical beliefs are still found in many areas in the West. Thus this research paper shows the influence of the Greek mythology over the modern western society by investigating the following sub questions:

1. What is the concept of the Greek mythology?
2. What are the characteristics of the modern western society?
3. How is the relationship between the Greek mythology and the Western world?

It this extended essay I would like to shed light on the truth of mythology nowadays by providing an answer for the following problematic: how does the Greek mythology influence the modern western society?

Thus, this work is divided into three chapters; the first chapter sheds light on the etymology, meaning, content and aim of mythology, then it gives some facts about this antique mythology, and highlights its origins and development. This chapter also depicts the most important themes and major mythical creatures belonging to the Greek mythology. Next, the second chapter deals with the cultural origins of the modern western society and provides facts about the most important characteristics of the modern western society; then, it investigates on the relationship between culture and mythology. Finally, the third chapter shows how the Greek mythology influences the modern language, literature, sport, modern marketing and sciences fields of the modern western society.

Chapter one: An Overview of the Greek Mythology.

1. Introduction.

2. The Concept of Mythology.

3. The Greek Mythology.

3.1 Origins and Development.

3.2 Themes.

3.2.1 Pantheons.

3.2.2 Human Flaws.

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3.3 Major Gods, Goddesses, Demigods and Mythical Beings.

4. Conclusion

1. Introduction

Since the dawn of history various mythologies in different areas of the globe emerged within distinct cultures thanks to several factors and fulfilled an important role in many aspects of people's life.

This chapter deals with the etymology, content, meaning and aim of mythology, then, it sheds light on the origins and development that occurred within this antique mythology. It also highlights the most important themes and mythical figures with different illustrations from the Greek mythology.

2. The concept of mythology

The term mythology appeared in the beginning of the 15th Century and refers to the exposition of myths. It is rooted to the middle French 'mythologie' which comes from Late Latin 'mythologia' originating from Greek 'mythologia' meaning legendary lore, a telling of mythical legends, a legend, story and tale.¹ The term myth is rooted to the Greek 'mythos' and signifies a word, speech, tale or story² and logy refers to the investigation area.³

Moreover, the easiest way to understand mythology is by knowing its interests. Generally myths are traditionally shaped stories that concern gods, kings and heroes; the stories usually link the globe foundation and occasionally its forthcoming devastation. Myths reveal how humankind was shaped by gods; depict the links amid distinct gods and amid gods and human beings as well. They show how to live by giving ethical regulations, also deal with the heroes lives considered as model for a community. So their wide concern is the important being's characteristics of human kind and mythical being.

¹ Douglas Harper, "mythology", *Online Etymology*, accessed February, 16, 2015, Dictionary, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=mythology> .

² Mark P.O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, introduction to *Classical mythology*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1.

³ "mythology", *Dictionary.com Unabridged*, accessed February, 16, 2015, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Mythology> .

The simplest and most direct way to approach mythology is to look at its subject matter. In the broadest terms myths are traditional stories about gods, kings and heroes. Myths relate the creation of the world and sometimes its future destruction as well. They tell how gods created men. They depict the relationships between various gods and men. They provide a moral code by which to live. And myths treat the lives of heroes who represent the ideals of a society. In short, myths largely deal with the significant aspects of human and superhuman existence⁴.

Stories and widespread tales which have been passed down from one generation to another one and which carry information of a group of people are called myths. Even though several myths are rooted to shamans, priest and poets, they are a cultural legacy associated to ancient or before the scientific emergence era.⁵

Furthermore, in a given culture myths are considered as important stories and their importance is now and then handed down for a long time, far from their original source. They are found within every culture and are imported, repeated and experienced again under new ways. Myths are ancient stories showing in which manner individuals lived and how ideas were formed.⁶

The majority of myths author's are unknown since numerous tales are rooted to the pre-writing era but some are of known source.⁷ Homer is a well-known example which shows a known individual who reported myths. The Greek mythology was reported first by him in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; in these literary works he depicted numerous mythical information and stories from the classical mythology:

Our first witness to Greek mythology is Homer. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* we encounter, for the first time in the history of Greek literature, the gods and heroes that constituted myth as the Greeks themselves knew it, and as we know it now. Since Homer's day, Achilles and Hector, Paris and Helen, Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and Athena, the Cyclopes and the Giants, the Centaurs and the Sirens ...⁸

⁴ James Weigel, introduction to *Cliffs Notes: Mythology*, Gary Carey ed., (New York: Wiley Publishing, 1973), 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶ Janet Parker and Julie Stanton, eds., *Mythology: Myths, Legends and Fantasies* (Cape Town: Struik Publishers, 2006), 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸ Fritz Graf, *Greek Mythology: An Introduction*, trans. Thomas Marier (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 57.

Prior the literacy occupied a wider place and prior the invention of printing machines, this kind of tales were repeated infinitely. Several cultures considered every single word of their myths as divine compositions transmitted to them by gods. They were trying to pass their stories in their original form thanks to myth tellers intensely formed to learn by heart the exact text.

Besides, changing the elements of a myth was appreciated in other cultures since it would be a little bit distinct. It was an enjoyment for the listeners to hear new elements of the local tale. Also, there is no existence of one and only version of myths, for example of Greek, Roman or Arthurian. When the printing machines appeared, stories were gathered and printed in one form. It was helpful because instead of having various spoken forms of a myth, it made a single myth's version permanent. In addition, myths are not only transmitted by words but also through sacred achievements in art, rock's sculptures, exceptional dances or music and by performing rites as well.⁹

Mythology implies both investigation on myth (myth as a subject) and the gathering of a culture's myths. So when we talk about Greek mythology or Norse mythology or vaguely about African mythology or Asian mythology both of them embody numerous mythologies for example: Vedic, Shinto, Yoruba and Bantu.¹⁰

The tribes who speak Bantu languages live in Africa, they are located south from Nigeria across the central Africa Republic (CAR), the democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, before it was called Zaire) Uganda, Kenya to southern Somalia in the east. Among communities the Bantu is the most spoken in this channel to the cap.¹¹ For thousands of years, a complicated mythology had allowed the tribes of Bantu to understand the globe.¹² Among the Bantu tribes, there is a Bantu tribe called the Fans,

⁹ Janet Parker and Julie Stanton, eds., *Mythology: Myths, Legends and Fantasies* p.11.

¹⁰ David Leeming, introduction to *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*, Oxford Companion Series (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), xiii.

¹¹ Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson eds., introduction to *The Bantu Languages*, the Routledge Language Family Series (Oxon: The Routledge, 2014), 1.

¹² Stephen C. Ausband , *Myth Meaning, Myth and Order* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), 108.

their mythological creation story depicts the story of the god Nzame who was in reality incorporating Nzame, Mebere and Nkwa, the Nzame part made different creations until he became angry and destroy everything except the arrogant Fam:

In the beginning there was nothing but Nzame. This god is really three: Nzame, Mebere, and Nkwa. It was the Nzame part of the god that created the universe and the earth, and brought life to it. While the three parts of Nzame were admiring this creation, it was decided to create a ruler for the earth. So was created the elephant, the leopard, and the monkey, but it was decided that something better had to be created. Between the three of them they made a new creature in their image, and called him Fam (power), and told him to rule the earth. Before long, Fam grew arrogant, he mistreated the animals and stopped worshipping Nzame. Nzame, angered, brought forth thunder and lightning and destroyed everything that was, except Fam, who had been promised immortality.

This creation myth developed with other mythical convictions which indicate that Nzame with his three aspects applied new decisions. Nzame also created a man called Sekume who shaped a woman called Mbongwe out from a tree; these individuals were composed of body and soul. Later, other mythical beliefs were held:

Nzame, in his three aspects, decided to renew the earth and try again. He applied a new layer of earth to the planet, and a tree grew upon it. The tree dropped seeds which grew into more trees. Leaves that dropped from them into the water became fish, those that dropped on land became animals. The old parched earth still lies below this new one, and if one digs deep enough it can be found in the form of coal. Nzame made a new man, one who would know death, and called him Sekume. Sekume fashioned a woman, Mbongwe, from a tree. These people were made with both Gnoul (body) and Nissim (soul). Nissim gives life to Gnoul. When Gnoul dies, Nissim lives on. They produced many children and prospered.¹³

Furthermore, Mythical stories can take distinct forms, so they can be put down in written form or in observable shape, but each of these forms fulfill an important aim by creating questions which has no solutions and by bringing clear answers. A large part of people cannot live in mystery and ignorance so individuals try to find answers and understand things which are unclear in order to escape from both mystery and ignorance. The religious mythical stories used to create questions which has no solutions and used to bring clear answers, but nowadays the traditional mythical stories have vanished since people live in a world of science. Thus, science fiction has

¹³ 'Creation Myths in Africa,' *www.bibliotecapleyades.net*, accessed May 5, 2015, http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/mitos_creacion/esp_mitoscreacion_0.htm .

taken the place of the old mythology and became the mythology of our modern world.

Shermer in his saying summarizes these ideas:

Myths, whether in written or visual form, serve a vital role of asking unanswerable questions and providing unquestionable answers. Most of us, most of the time, have a low tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. We want to reduce the cognitive dissonance of not knowing by filling the gaps with answers. Traditionally, religious myths have served that role, but today - the age of science - science fiction is our mythology.¹⁴

Finally, mythology is no more concerned with only the investigation on the old or on other types of literature. Mythologists are at the present time anthropologists, philologists, etiologists, ethnologists and maybe the majority of them psychologists. Then, there are through the mentioned fields of study ritualists, diffusionists, structuralists, Jungians, Freudians and culturalists but without everlasting exclusive mutuality. Acquiring knowledge about the most important theorists and theories may help the temporary mythology's learner to find the suitable approach¹⁵.

3. The Greek mythology

First of all, the collection of legends, stories and mythical stories made by antique Greek people is referred to it as Greek mythology. The convictions related to spirituality, religion and cult actions were taken from the Greek mythology. Investigation on this mythology sheds light on institutions, the acquired behaviors pattern regularly followed until they became almost involuntary, customs and rituals of the Antique Greek¹⁶.

Further, since the earlier times, the mythical stories spread easily, from time to time even between distant places. Some myths held their origins from Greece lands and others appeared thanks to intruders coming from the north. Meanwhile, Greece principal areas were characterized by hard topographical features and lacked fertile

¹⁴ Michael Shermer, *Citatum*, accessed May 23, 2015, http://www.citatum.org/author/Michael_Shermer .

¹⁵ David Adams Leeming, introduction to *Mythology: the Voyage of the Hero*, 3rd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1.

¹⁶ "Greek Mythology," Greek Myths & Greek Mythology, accessed February, 16, 2015, <http://www.greekmyths-greekmythology.com/greek-mythology/> .

soils which led the inhabitants to flee Greece to different places beyond the sea. Also, the colonies of Greece were not located in one area instead they were located faraway from each other such as southern Italy, Egypt, and Crimea and wherever the Greek immigrants traveled, their tales accompanied them all time.¹⁷

The first individuals who shaped deities resembling to humankind were the Greeks. Those gods and goddesses were attractive, aged persons characterized by the quality of being funny and worthy of esteem or respect; there were also marvelous animals and some monsters as well.

Humankind and his feelings were the center of interest in the whole art and ideas in Greece; nowadays we still find known places where the Greek deities used to communicate with human beings, like the place where Zeus was brought up called Mount Ida, on the island of Crete and the habitation of Heracles “the hero” in Thebes.¹⁸

3.1 Origins and development

The Greek mythology is most likely rooted to the old religions of Creti (Kṛíti), an area (island) in the Aegean Sea, where about 3000 B.C the earliest civilization in this area emerged. Those individuals were convinced that the totality of natural things acquired spirits, and some things or fetishes acquired exceptional supernatural capacities. Throughout times, changes occurred within those convictions and became a group of legends including natural things, animals and gods acquiring humankind shape. Then, among those legends, there were certain legends remaining within the classical Greek mythology.¹⁹

Further, mythology and religion of the Greeks had not only one fixed form rather it changed according to places and circumstances. When mentioning Greece we are

¹⁷ Tony Allan and Sara Maitland, *Ancient Greece and Rome: Myths and Beliefs*, World Mythologies (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2012), 7.

¹⁸ Kathleen N. Daly, introduction to *Greek and Roman Mythology A to Z*, Mythology A to Z, 3rd ed., revised by Marian Rengel (New York: Chelsea House, 2009). VIII.

¹⁹ ‘A History of Ancient Greece, Mythology,’ *International World History project*, accessed February 15, 2015, http://history-world.org/greek_mythology.htm .

referring to people who lived in Greece (in all the places where Greeks are found there is Greece) and not to a society with a government. Myths witnessed development and modification since they moved from Asia Minor to Greece or from Greece to the Islands of the Aegean Sea, to Italy and Sicily. In addition, persons were free in Greek states and had their self-thought because of the absence of government's control and the absence of tough unfair controlling priests, which promoted diversity. So there was liberty in making transformations on tradition by artists and poets as to represent their ideas in their own way, this enriched mythology²⁰ and art. Also, the Greek conditions and pride were geographically and politically in disorder, so they formed little groups and supplied customs of religion with diversity.

Furthermore, on mountainous areas, there was the greatest fear from the sky and the storm god; on the plane lands with fertility the earth and harvest gods were feared; and on seashore men claimed the favor of the strong gods who controlled the sea and guarded trade. Also stories of heroes were gathered by themselves. And as a result of local pride, significant occurrences were established by individuals, like the god's birth or god's significant power display appeared where they were located.²¹

Moreover, the Greeks came into contact with other individuals and became acquainted with the stories of their religion and ceremonies, so the Greeks added other's ideas in their religion. The stories and the excessive rite celebrations linked to Dionysus or Bacchus were the product of the East. Also, Asia Minor's Aphrodite had Asiatic and sensuality within his characteristics than the one of Greece.

Moreover, mythology appeared from persons soul and did not emerge from authoritative source, mythology followed this flow; as Greeks life and way of thinking changed, social circumstances were not the same, art²² became better, poetry and philosophy became complex, so utterance of the mythical stories and their meanings were no more the same and were transformed. Mythology was not a fixed and unchanging system; rather it witnessed development and change. Greek mythology has

²⁰ Jessie M. Tatlock, introduction to *Greek and Roman Mythology* (U.S.A: The Century, 1917), xxii.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., xxiii.

to be considered as a collection of legends passed down through individuals and persons who used poetry during generations; constantly depicting the growing life and soul of a significant race of the “Greeks”²³.

At last, explanations of the development of Greek mythology were given even by the earliest Greeks. For instance, a mythographer from 300s B. C. called Euhemerus registered in *Sacred History* a wide accepted conviction which reflected that myths were just a history deformity, in addition, gods were in fact heroes who gained more and more glory as time was passing. Another instance is the idea that natural phenomena like sun, moon, winds and water were personified by gods, taught in the 400s B. C. by a philosopher called Prodicus of Ceos. Also, in the 400s B. C. a Greek historian named Herodotus was persuaded that numerous rituals of Greeks held their origins from Egypt’s people.²⁴

3.2 Themes

The antique Greek mythology is world-known mythology which incorporates a lot of mythical stories; those myths that Greek people considered as facts are depicted through various themes.

3.2.1 Pantheons

In Greek mythology, the golden age (a legendary era) witnessed early and strong gods and goddesses called the Titans who had control during that period of time. They came into existence thanks the Earth’s goddess called Gaea and Uranus.²⁵ The Titans names are: Asteria, Astraeus, Atlas, Clymene, Coeus, Crius, Cronus, Dione, Eos, Epimetheus, Eurybia, Eurynome, Hyperion, Iapetus, Lelantos, Menoetius, Metis, Mnemosyne, Oceanus, Ophion, Pallas, Perses, Phoebe, Prometheus, Rhea, Selene,

²³ Ibid., xxiv.

²⁴ “A History of Ancient Greece, Mythology,” http://history-world.org/greek_mythology.htm

²⁵ Greek-Gods.info, ‘First Greek Gods: The Titans of Ancient Greece,’ Greek-Gods.info, accessed May 28, 2015, <http://www.greek-gods.info/titans/>.

Styx, Tethys, Thea and Themis.²⁶ There were also giants with a great force named the one hundred hands which had one hundred arms and fifty heads which hold the appellation of Hecatonchires:

Hecatonchires come from the Greek Hecatoncheires which means "hundred handed". They were gigantic and had fifty heads and one hundred arms each of great strength. There were three of them: Briareus also called Aegaeon, Cottus, and Gyges also called Gyes. They were of the same parents as the Titans and the Cyclopes, Uranus and Gaea (the Earth).²⁷

Further, according to the Greek mythology, the habitation of the twelve main Olympian Greek Pantheons (gods and goddesses) is called Mount Olympus; they had legendary accomplishment and were at the center of interest in the antique mythology. Throughout distinct eras, seventeen gods were admitted to be Olympians even though only twelve were found on Mount Olympus in any era. According to *Theogony* in 17th century by Hesiod they were 3rd and 4th generation gods.

The twelve Olympians, known in Greek as the *Dodekatheton*, were the most important gods and goddesses in the ancient Greek pantheon. Believed to dwell on Mount Olympus in Greece, they were central to the Greek mythology that developed from around 1000 BCE. According to Hesiod's seventh-century BCE *Theogony*, the first written work on Greek Mythology, they were third- and fourth-generation gods, all descending via the union of Kronos and Rhea, and, before that the union of Ouranos and Gaia. Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and Demeter are the third-generation gods of the twelve, and Dionysus, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Athena, Ares, Aphrodite, and Hephaestus are the fourth-generation. All of the fourth-generation Olympians are children of Zeus, who is the king of the twelve.²⁸

3.2.2 Human flaws

The appearance of vices or flaws within the Greek deities (gods and goddesses) is a very interesting theme within the Greek mythology. It is so particular because of the fact that the majority of individuals perceive the word god as reflecting a model and excellence. But the ancient gods had pity, jealousy and adultery, as human beings.

²⁶ "Greek Gods," *Greekmythology.com*, accessed February 15 <http://www.greekmythology.com/>

²⁷ Monstrous.com, 'The Hecatonchires,' *Monstrous.com*, accessed, May 8, 2015, http://monsters.monstrous.com/hecatonchires_.htm .

²⁸ Robert Arp ed., *1001 Ideas That Changed the Way We Think*, pre. Arthur Caplan (New York: Atria Books, 2013), 125.

3.2.3 Temptation

A distinct deep-seated theme among the Greek myths is “temptation”. It appears that every story based on this theme, a deity (god or goddess) has to surmount temptation. The Pandora mythical story is considered as the perfect illustration; this myth says that a unique box is for Pandora, accompanied with directions to leave that box closed. But she is overwhelmed by temptation and released evil into the globe.

3.2.4 Payback and reward

The conviction that each action has a result was held by mythical gods. Thus, fine deeds were all time recompensed and malicious deeds needed correction. Any human being who refused to obey, gods adored to banish or perpetually damn that individual.

3.2.5 Brains over brawns

Despite the fact that numerous gods were strong, forceful, and acquiring capabilities beyond the capability of human being; they most liked a balanced mind than their force. This theme is found within any Greek myth. Illustrations comprise using outsmart against their adversaries, or utilizing smart diversion to reach their aim.²⁹

3.2.6 Heroes

Within this mythology, Heroes who vanquished their rivals thanks to their greater wit are also mentioned. For instance, Odysseus, who is believed to create the Trojan horse made with wood, which carried secretly Greek warriors³⁰.

²⁹ Rebecca Ray “Key Symbols Themes Motifs in Greek Mythology,” *Clever Prototypes*, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.storyboardthat.com/teacher-guide/greek-mythology> .

³⁰ Kathleen N. Daly, *Greek and Roman Mythology A to Z*, VIII.

3.2.7 The creation

The globe creation myths have resemblance since they investigate on how ancient people attempted to clarify the sources of the Earth, the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, the Earth's creatures implying both genders³¹. The myth of Uranus and Gaia is a famous Greek myth of creation which portrays different mythical information about the antique mythical Greek belief about the world creation:

In the Greek creation myth, Uranus (the sky) wed Gaia. Their lovemaking produced the oceans and the lands, trees, flowers and animals. The marriage of heaven and earth finally produced men and women who saw, in the connection between the cycle of the sky and the cycles of the earth, proof that they and their world were together children of the gods.³²

3.2.8 Constellations

The first mentioning of the Greek constellations mythological meaning is likely to be cited during the 7th Century B.C in Homer achievements, as an example, in the *Iliad*, Homer gives a description of how the craftsman god Hephaistos created the shield of Achilleus.³³

4.2 Major gods, goddesses, demigods and mythical beings

The first god is Ares, the Romans called him Mars, he is considered as the war god, he is Zeus and Hera's son and he is characterized by his ferocity and his tendency to cause chaos. Artemis, the Romans called her Diana, she is the hunt goddess symbolized by the moon; she is considered as Apollo's twin sister. Then, Athena, the Romans give her the appellation of Minerva, a supposition depicts that she was born from head of Zeus. She was believed to be the goddess of skill, peace, warfare and wisdom. As a counterpart to Ares, Athena brings aid to those involved in a battle and was the heroes' patron.

³¹ *Ibid*, VIII.

³² Patrick Lavin, *The Shaping of the Celtic World: And the Resurgence of the Celtic Consciousness in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2011), 139 -140.

³³ Cathy Bell, 'The Mythology of the Constellations,' www.comfychair.org, accessed May 28, 2015, <http://www.comfychair.org/~cmbell/myth/myth.html> .

Further, Apollo is also attributed to him by the Romans, this mythical creation has twin sister called Artemis and he is Zeus and Leto's son. Apollo is the god of music, arts, knowledge, healing, plague, prophecy, man's beauty and archery. Aphrodite is called by the Romans Venus, it is believed that she is the most beautiful among the totality of goddess. Engaged with Hephaestus but had links with Ares, Adonis, and Anchises. She is associated with love, beauty and desire. Another one is Demeter, the Roman's name is Ceres; this goddess is sister of Zeus symbolized by the cornucopia. She is the harvest and agriculture goddess and charged of the growth as well. Hades is called by the Romans Pluto, brother of Zeus, famous by his three headed dog Cerberus; he is classified as a mythical figure higher than a god since he is the underworld king.

Furthermore, for Hermes, the appellation given by the Romans is Mercury. He is Zeus and Maia son, symbolized by wand of herald. This god is associated with travel, trade, communication but much more mentioned as the messenger god. Hephaestus, the Romans attributed to him the name of Vulcan, he is symbolized by the hammer; this god is Hera's son and Aphrodite's husband. Also, he is famous through his creations of tools and crafts and considered as the god of fire and smith activity. Hera is named by the Romans Juno; she is the goddess of marriage, women, and birth of child, heirs, kings and empires as well. She happens to be the queen engaged with Zeus but Zeus's various affaires pushed her to be jealous and commit vengeance. Poseidon is called by the Romans Neptune, this waving mythical figure with trident is Zeus's brother, numerous animals both on land and in the sea were made by him and he is considered as the king of the whole water and its creatures as well. And for Zeus, the Romans named him Jupiter, he is the Greek gods' king, he caused the downfall of Chronos (his father), his siblings were saved by him, and he had a violent conflict with the Titans.³⁴

³⁴ "Greek Gods Character Map," <http://www.storyboardthat.com/teacher-guide/greek-mythology> .

4. Conclusion

Mythology embodies distinct mythological beliefs and stories and depicts numerous themes. The mythical stories were handed down from one generation to the next one, and were imported, repeated and experienced differently. Further, the majority of myths-makers are unknown; also, there were several versions of myths but the printing machine permitted to make one version. Those stories are portrayed through many ways and a mythology can embody several mythologies. Nowadays, it is no more concerned with the antique texts study and the modern mythology is 'science fiction'.

The Greek mythology emerged thousands years ago probably from the ancient religions of Crete and had not a fixed form but developed according to places and circumstances. Next, this antique mythology is portrayed through a set of tales, legends and mythical stories. Moreover, the Greek people were the first who created deities resembling to humans and also other mythical figures. This antique mythology carries various themes and many mythical creatures.

Chapter two: The Contemporary West.

1. Introduction
2. The Cultural Origins of the Modern Western Society
3. The Modern Western Society
4. Culture Versus Mythology
5. Conclusion

1. Introduction

Throughout millennia the world has been the cradle of numerous civilizations that left great impacts on human history. The modern western civilization is a product of thousands of years through which numerous notions, principles and convictions have been shaped thanks to different factors, until they arrived to the contemporary western world.

This chapter deals with the origins of the modern western society, from the earliest roots to the afford factors that contributed in shaping the modern West. Then, it sheds light on the most important characteristics of the contemporary western society, and finally it highlights the relationship between culture which incorporates many notions and mythology.

2. The Cultural Origins of the Modern Western Society

Europe passed through a very important era in human records called the Middle Ages. During ten centuries, this era embodied a wide range of various individuals, institutions, and kinds of culture. Further, numerous phases of the contemporary society are rooted to this era. Differences of locations, of conceptions and of thoughts and beliefs provide the Middle Ages with vivacity. In addition, this period has two features which are: the state of being continual and the developments that occurred within it. In his '*The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*', Charles Homers Haskins states:

The European Middle Ages form a complex and varied as well as a very considerable period of human history. Within their thousand years of time they include a large variety of peoples, institutions, and types of culture, illustrating many processes of historical development and containing the origins of many phases of modern civilization. Contrasts of East and West, of the North and the Mediterranean, of old and new, sacred and profane, ideal and actual, give life and color and movement to this period, while its close relations alike to antiquity and to modern world assure it a place in the continuous history of human development. Both continuity and change are characteristic of Middle Ages, as indeed of all great epochs of history.³⁵

³⁵ Charles Homers Haskins, "The Historical Background," in *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955), 3.

Besides, during the last stages of Antiquity and the periods of Middle Ages, the Western civilization witnessed certain obstacles during the process of collecting information. Since no great importance was given to education and literacy and certain ancient literary achievements were no more available. Ultimately, all those periods with illiteracy led to findings of fresh knowledge. The consequences of what occurred during those periods led to several developments and growths known as renaissance.

In late antiquity and the Middle Ages, the otherwise fairly steady progress of Western civilization in accumulating knowledge was interrupted several times. As school curricula became more restricted and fewer people received any education at all, people wrote and read less, and some the literary works of earlier times were permanently lost. Eventually, each of these periods of relative ignorance ended with a new expansion of knowledge. The cultural setbacks, of varying severity, maybe called “dark ages”; the cultural revivals, of varying vigor, may be called “renaissance”.³⁶

The term Renaissance in French signifies “new birth”³⁷, the term signifying ‘rebirth’ its first usage was by Georgio Vasari (1511-1574) a painter and historian, this person created the term ‘rinascità’³⁸ which was later changed to French language. The word Renaissance usually refers to the known Italian Renaissance (14th -17th centuries). Nevertheless, prior the Italian Renaissance, the term “Renaissance” was already used to certain eras such as in Carolingian Renaissance, Ottavian Renaissance, the Paleologian Renaissance and the 12th Century Renaissance. The latter merit certain consideration, the phrase “12th Century Renaissance” became famous thanks to Charles Homer Haskins, an American scholar who published in 1927 a literary work entitled *The Twelfth Century Renaissance*. In his book preface, he mentioned “... the continuity of history rejects sharp and violent contrasts between successive periods, and that modern research shows us the Middle Ages less dark and less static, the Renaissance less bright and less sudden, than once supposed”³⁹

³⁶ Warren T. Treadgold ed., introduction to *Renaissances Before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (StanfordCalifornia: Stanford University Press, 1984), 1.

³⁷ Sarper Yilmaz, “Twelfth Century Renaissance,” *Academia*, accessed, April 4, 2015, http://www.academia.edu/4817868/Twelfth_Century_Renaissance .

³⁸ Alex Novikoff, “The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century Before Haskins,” *Haskins Society Journal*, vol. 16 (2005) : 104.

³⁹ “Twelfth Century Renaissance,” http://www.academia.edu/4817868/Twelfth_Century_Renaissance .

The origins of the 12th century renaissance have long roots; numerous writing of the Greek people existed within the Byzantine Empire, then they were translated to Arabic in the time of the Umayyads beginning by works of Alchemy, Astrology and Medicine. Then during the period of Abbasids it was accelerated and those latter translations included scientific and philosophical achievements. Next, there was also a tradition of Islamic philosophy based in some bases on Greek famous figures like Plato and Aristotle. During the 12th century many works in Greek Hebrew and Arabic languages were translated to Latin, different places contributed in the translation like Sicily and Spain.

The background for this renaissance is extensive. Many of the ancient Greek writings had survived in the Byzantine empire. Their translation into Arabic began with alchemical, astrological, and medical texts in the time of the Umayyads. It was accelerated under the Abbasids and included both scientific and philosophical works. Partly on the basis of Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus there developed a tradition of Islamic philosophy that included Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, and others.

In the twelfth century, many of these works in Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic were translated into Latin - the literary and philosophical language of Catholic Europe. There were a number of places that functioned as conduits for this literature. Sicily was one. Spain was another. Within Spain, translation was done at many cities, but one of the great centers was Toledo.⁴⁰

The twelfth century in Europe is considered by the specialists as an important era since it was characterized by both changes and developments in political, economical and social fields. Such changes included the crusades, Romanesque art, poetry, the emergence of the Gothic architecture, vernacular literature written by local languages like Spanish and French, the return back to the classical ages and Arabic knowledge. Also, this era saw the roots of the first European universities.

⁴⁰ "Renaissance of the Twelfth Century," *www.ariadne.x10.mx*, accessed April 4, 2015, http://www.ariadne.x10.mx/islam/more_028.htm .

The twelfth century in Europe was in many respects an age of fresh and vigorous life. The epoch of the Crusades, of the rise of towns, and of the earliest bureaucratic states of the West, it saw the culmination of Romanesque art and the beginnings of Gothic; the emergence of the vernacular literatures, the revival of the Latin Classics and of Latin poetry and Roman Law; the recovery of Greek science, with its Arabic additions, and of much of Greek philosophy; and the origin of the first European universities. The twelfth century left its signature on higher education, on the scholastic philosophy, on European systems of law, on architecture and sculpture, on the liturgical drama, on Latin and vernacular poetry. (Haskin viii).⁴¹

The starting of the shift from the dark ages to the contemporary worlds occurred during the middle of the fourteenth century and this shift is called The Renaissance.⁴² In Italy there were three main city-states, Milan was recognized by textiles and controlled by Sforza, and the family of Medici controlled Florence which was famous by its banking, finally, Venice (an oligarchy) famous for shipbuilding.⁴³

Next, the city states of Italy, took some steps to remove the church's power.⁴⁴ Machiavelli indicated that the individual holding control should control upon human nature basis and not upon morality basis.⁴⁵ The Society was devised into three classes which included the totality of the individuals related to the church named the clergy, the monarch's rich advisors called the nobility and the larger part holding the appellation of peasants. Also, the vernacular literature appearance made the bible readable for any single person because prior this period there was no other bible than the one of Latin writing⁴⁶. Then, Books became accessible to normal individuals thanks to the printing press creation.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Charles Homers Haskins, "The Historical Background," in *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955) quoted in Y.C Chiu , *An Introduction to the History of Project Management: From the Earliest Times to A.D. 1900* (The Netherlands: Eburon, 2010), 77.

⁴²Houghton Mifflin Harcourt , "What was the difference in history between the Middle Ages (Medieval Times) and the Renaissance?," *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*, accessed April, 4, 2015, <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/cliffsnotes/american-government/what-was-the-difference-in-history-between-the-middle-ages-medieval-times-and-the-renaissance> .

⁴³ Lottglaz, "Sec 1& 2 questions," *Quizlet*, accessed April 12, 2015, <https://quizlet.com/7816186/sec-12-questions-flash-cards/>.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Humanism was also another important feature of this renaissance; the humanists based their knowledge and developments on the revival of the classical knowledge. There were distinct achievements in education, statecraft, art and theology.

The term “Humanism” indicates the fifteenth century movement of thought that places man and human experience at the core of its investigation. In reaction to medieval speculative thought, the philosophical and scientific goals of Humanism were essentially practical, aiming at moral and civic education as a premise to construct a Christian ideal society. Covering a core period from the mid-fourteenth century to the early decades of the sixteenth century, Humanism greatly influenced the formation of modern thought. An essential trait of this movement was the recovery of pagan and Christian antiquity, on which the Humanists based their program of educational reform.⁴⁸

Besides, the 14th Century early Italian Renaissance appearance was characterized especially by the classical antiquity effect awakening. In Italian northern cities, certain lines met there to fasten the effect. In fact, Romans traces still existed which made admiration and investigation on them possible; since the 12th century main places like the University of Seville had saved documents of Islamic scholars which were more and more known across Western Europe. Also, the empire which was established on Constantinople witnessed a division which led the savants of Byzantium to run away from that area with various classical Greek documents and information and found in Italy a safe place. Further, in Italy, appreciation for and comprehension of the Roman antiquity had not in any way ceased to exist but the original information of classical Greece disappeared. Consequently, the Greek tradition’s influence during the Renaissance era was strong and abrupt.⁴⁹

In the course of the 15th century, literate Italians were convinced that Italy structure based on plurality and its numerous autonomous city states resembles to that of ancient Greece, also that they have to search not in the Roman people but further which means to the Greek people in order to find their culture’s origins.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Susanna Barsella, “Humanism,” in *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies: A-J, index*, vol. 1 ed. Gaetana Marrone (New York: Routledge, 2007), 950-51.

⁴⁹ Carol G. Thomas ed., *Paths from Ancient Greece* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1988), 92.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

Furthermore, there were various significant changes during the renaissance in the Northern and the Italian renaissance as well. Those changes which concerned cultural and social fields brought positive impacts which led the Gothic notions to vanish by the end of the 14th century:

Both the Northern and the Italian renaissance gradually brought important and lasting cultural as well as social changes that moved their societies from barbarism to rebirth, from obscurity to brightness. By the end of the fourteenth century, the Gothic world had run its course.

Art informs life and produces changes. It has recorded history and enriched the lives of millions. The Renaissance was special in this way.⁵¹

During the Renaissance era the art field had the coming features: the ancient Greece and Rome achievements were reproduced closely and the art shapes of the Medieval era were excluded. The artist during the Renaissance were deeply realistic and investigated meticulously on human being anatomy⁵² and produced directly from real beings, in addition, they made the three-dimensional angle of view technique. In addition, the artists depicted secular subjects and admired a person's work.

Besides, certain artists concerned with the Renaissance were the coming ones: Giotto born in Florence and lived between 1267 and 1337, he contributed in making Florence the center of the Rebirth era. Giotto is well-known by his paintings on walls named known as Frescoes like *St. Francis Preaching in the Birds*. Giotto's paint woks were realistic and took the place of the Middle ages' two-dimensional art. Then, for Florence's Cathedral he designed a bell tower, generally known as Giotto's Tower.⁵³ In addition, an Italian named Leonardo da Vinci was a painter, a draftsman, a sculptor, an architect, also an engineer. Da Vinci's high smartness illustrated the Rebirth humanist excellence maybe more than other well-known individuals.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Irene Earls, introduction to *Renaissance Art: A Topical Dictionary* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1987), xii.

⁵² The science of the shape and structure of organisms and their parts.

⁵³ Michael J. Romano, *CliffsNotes AP European History with CD-ROM*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), 35.

⁵⁴ Kara Rogers ed., *The 100 Most Influential Scientists of All Time*, The Britannica Guide to the World's Most Influential People (New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2010), 40.

3. The Modern Western Society

The western academic specialists in interpreting the historical records have deduced that the civilization of the West emerged from three different origins that occurred in separate periods of time. The first one is Greece and Rome's antique rich culture from which the westerners took numerous principles. The second one is the religion of Christianity especially the Christianity of the West and the third one the contemporary period of Enlightenment which is characterized by new ideas and ideologies. Further, despite the fact that numerous specialists have perceived the civilization of the West as a fusion of all these origins certain interpreters highlighted problems between these ones. Kurth summarizes these ideas in the following quotation:

Among scholarly interpreters of the West, it has been widely understood that Western civilization was formed from three distinct traditions: (1) the classical culture of Greece and Rome; (2) the Christian religion, particularly Western Christianity; and (3) the Enlightenment of the modern era. Although many interpreters have seen Western civilization as a synthesis of all three traditions, others have emphasized the conflict among these threads.⁵⁵

Moreover, the expression Western man as mentioned in Oxford English Dictionary was first utilized by Chesterton⁵⁶ during 1907.⁵⁷ The phrase Western culture gives significance to a distinct expressed world and life's conception, it begins by some social teams' efforts on territories level, those teams have the tendency to highlight the neighbor distinctions and delimit its evolution scope.⁵⁸ The coming characteristics are related to the contemporary Western world. First of all, "Monotheism" is the first component of the Western society and it refers to believing in one single god which is the foundation of the Judeo-Christian faith, despite the fact that distinct important religions which are non –Western like Islam follow the same principle. The second

⁵⁵ Kurth, J. "Western Civilization: Our Tradition," *Intercollegiate Review* (Fall 2003/Spring2004): 10, accessed April 20, 2015, http://www.mmisi.org/ir/39_01_2/kurth.pdf .

⁵⁶ Robert Royal Who Put the West in Western Civilization? *Intercollegiate Review* (Spring 1998): 3, Accessed April 20, 2015 http://www.mmisi.org/ir/33_02/royal.pdf .

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "Characteristics Of Western Civilization," *Researchomatic*, Accessed April 21, 2015, <http://www.researchomatic.com/Characteristics-Of-Western-Civilization-72442.html> .

one is the Detachment of both the authorities of politics and spirituality (usually named “the separation of Church and State).

Besides, the nowadays called science (used to be called natural philosophy) is another component of the West which refers to the experimental studies and explanation using mathematic. They also believe in science and technology’s capability to change the environment of human being. Also there is a trust in the development established upon a thinking which is reasonable, despite the fact that trust in recent times is considered as the growing proof of the harm to the environment made by human being.

Furthermore, Human rights within the western world are respected like worship liberty, expression liberty and the belief that law is over every single individual, despite the fact that the mentioned rights were at a slow rate allowed among distinct portions of the inhabitants.

In addition, the political rights formed as codes like the right to have government’s representative, assembly’s freedom, the belief that before the law there is equality and the vote’s right. Despite the mentioned rights, these rights were extended slowly to minor portions, females (women), non-white people and the people without land. Finally, there is a deep estimation of the privacy of life, family and the economic free practice.⁵⁹

Within the western world, the majorities of individuals believe in some notions which are found within democracy, they give them a high importance and follow them. Some of those followed convictions include various values and institutions.

Most people in modern Western and other democratic societies take the latter’s constitutive values and institutions as parametric, namely given or granted. This applies to such values and institutions as liberty, equality, justice, democracy, inclusion, human rights, dignity, well-being and happiness, human life, civil liberties, scientific rationalism, technological and social progress and optimism, economic prosperity , free markets, secularism, pluralism and diversity, individualism, universalism, humanism, and the like...⁶⁰

⁵⁹ University of Nevada, Las Vegas, “What is “The West”?,” *faculty.unlv.edu*, accessed April 21, 2015, <https://faculty.unlv.edu/gbrown/westernciv/wc201/wciv2c1/wciv2c11sec2.html> .

⁶⁰ Milan Zafirovski, “Liberty, Life and Happiness for All: The Ideals and Legacies of the Enlightenment in Modern Societies Revisited,” in *The Enlightenment and Its Effects on Modern Society* (New York: Springer, 2011), 1.

4. Culture Versus Mythology

At first, ‘What is culture? Culture is a notorious difficult concept to define; we all seem to know what it is, and yet it is extremely difficult to put a definition down on a paper’,⁶¹ around 1430 when culture for the first time was mentioned it signified ‘cultivation’ or ‘tending the soil’ rooted to culture of Latin. During the 19th century this term was linked to the expression ‘high culture’ signifying the cultivation or ‘refinement of mind, taste, or manners’.⁶²

Further, the word culture indicated arts and sciences. After that it was utilized to give description to the arts and sciences’ famous correspondents (folk music, folk medicine ...). This term has emerged, in the last generation to indicate to numerous artefacts such as habitations, images, tools and the like, then activities such as games’ playing, the practice of reading, and the activity of conversation and the like.⁶³

Besides, in nowadays research of sociology the word culture is employed to provide a description to every single thing from high activities in art, to values, to style, the way we behave each day (day to day ideology). Not only art and each day way of behaving are embodied within the research interests that are found within the area of research of the culture’s sociology but also empirical research, religion, law, media, a culture which is popular and organization’s work.⁶⁴

Culture for an anthropologist means ‘shared system of beliefs, values, and traditions that shape a person's behavior and perception of the world.’ Everyone has culture; each one belongs to group of friends, relatives, ancestors or those an individual knows, then one learns the way he acts, the way he or she think in numerous manners from the inhabitants. The group is unified by a communication mean,

⁶¹ Wilbert M. Gesler and Robin A. Kearns, *Culture/place/health* (London: Routledge, 2002), 12.

⁶² Bruce M. Tharp, “Defining “Culture and “OrganizationalCulture”: From Anthropology to the Office,” *Haworth*, accessed April 23, 2015, http://www.haworth.com/docs/default-source/white-papers/defining-culture-and-organizational-culture_51-pdf-28527.pdf .

⁶³ Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2008), 29.

⁶⁴ Edgar F. Borgatta and Rhonda J.V. Montgomery eds., “Culture,” in *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002), 562 -63.

religion, economics, and organization of a society, kinship, laws, politics and education.⁶⁵ Culture is considered as a primordial component of an individual without he or she cannot be a complete individual. So, a person is able to share numerous cultures and subcultures, for instance: somebody living in the United States is able to share both the culture of his nation and other culture like the South's culture, a community of religion, or a group's heritage and others.⁶⁶

Moreover, each culture made and says stories; also the creation of a myth is a significant practice depicting human kind creativity. Mythical stories, stories, legends, folklore, long tales reflect important comprehensions (insights) within the way individuals look at and consider their globe⁶⁷

Languages, cultures and lives contribute in the diffusion of mythology and the ideas of mythology, which leads to an important fact that is mythical stories, influence us in numerous manners. In each culture, the language, customs, rituals, values and morals reflect the impact of mythology which indicates that each culture has its mythology and each culture allowed a place to mythology; but until now individuals do not have a deep knowledge of mythology. Generally, nowadays we acquire just few information about the myths importance on our life experiences.

Among the most important paths to investigate on culture is to investigate on the mythological basis, the mythical stories' roots, the mythology significance within a given culture, the symbols that are utilized in order to depict mythical stories and finally the shared features and dissimilarities concerning this science.

⁶⁵ "Education Area: "What is Culture?," *www.statemuseum.arizona.edu*, accessed April, 24, 2015, <http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/exhibits/pol/education.shtml> .

⁶⁶ Erin Long Crowell, "What is Culture, -Material and nonmaterial culture," *Study.com*, accessed, April 24, 2015, <http://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-culture-material-and-nonmaterial-culture.html> .

⁶⁷ Cora Agatucci, "Culture, Religion & Myth: Interdisciplinary Approaches," accessed 21, 2015 <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/CoursePack/culture.htm> .

Mythology and mythological ideas permeate all languages, cultures and lives. Myths affect us in many ways, from the language we use to how we tell time; mythology is an integral presence. The influence mythology has in our most basic traditions can be observed in the language, customs, rituals, values and morals of every culture, yet the limited extent of our knowledge of mythology is apparent. In general we have today a poor understanding of the significance of myths in our lives. One way of studying a culture is to study the underlying mythological beliefs of that culture, the time period of the origins of the culture's myths, the role of myth in society, the symbols used to represent myths, the commonalities and differences regarding mythology, and the understanding a culture has of its myths. Such an exploration leads to a greater understanding of the essence of a culture.⁶⁸

5. Conclusion

The western world has been shaped throughout centuries and passed through different stages. It passed through slow developments during the Middle Ages then saw significant various achievements in the social, political and economical fields during the 12th and the 14th century Renaissances. Further, the modern western society emerged thanks to three traditions which are: the Greek and the Roman traditions, Christianity and the modern Enlightenment even though some interpreters claim that there are problems among those traditions.

Furthermore, the modern West is characterized by Monotheism and the detachment of both the political and spiritual authorities; it also gave importance to science, technology, human rights and the political rights. The West believes in and gives a high estimation to some notions which are either given or granted by democracy. Finally, culture is related to almost every aspect of our daily life, then, mythology is found within different cultures and fulfills a significant role despite the fact that mythology within cultures is not deeply understood.

⁶⁸ Pedro Mendia-Landa, "Universal Myths and Symbols: Animal Creatures and Creation," *the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute*, accessed April 27, 2015, <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1998/2/98.02.05.x.html>.

Chapter three: The Contemporary West and the Greek Mythology Impacts.

1. Introduction

2. The Influence of the Greek Mythology Over the Modern Western Society

2.1 Languages

2.3 Literature

2.3.1 Youth Literature

2.2 Sport

2.4 Modern Marketing

2.5 Sciences

3. Conclusion

1. Introduction

Culture has been given different attributions and characteristics throughout centuries by specialists; today's culture is associated with almost everything found within the contemporary society from traditions to art and from the way an individual behave to media, it embraces all modern fields. Then, one of most important components of culture is 'MYTHOLOGY'.

Various cultures allowed the emergence of numerous mythologies that gave rise to convictions, ideologies and beliefs within distinct communities of the Earth. One of the most important mythologies that emerged in the antique world is the classical Greek mythology. It emerged and gave birth to various beliefs within the Greek society as well as with other communities thanks to their wide spread across different parts of the globe through different ways (words of mouth, literature, art forms ...). The Greek mythology passed through generations and still exists in our contemporary world. Thus it is found under various forms and in numerous fields of the modern societies.

This chapter deals with distinct influences of the Greek mythological beliefs on the modern western society. It sheds light on numerous references related to the Greek mythology, found in different fields. There are different examples highlighted here, from language, literature, sport, modern marketing and science.

2. The Influence of the Greek Mythology over the Modern Western Society

The antique Greek mythology has been passed down through different ways and has played an important role throughout centuries. The mythological stories within this old mythology have influenced individuals from all ages and backgrounds. The Greek myths depict various Greek ideas and notions which allow them to gain importance in the modern society. Thus, those Greek beliefs and stories are found in numerous fields in the contemporary world, from art to literature and from media to cinema and marketing, their presence is almost everywhere.

Greek mythology has inspired almost every person who has come into contact with its countless delights and bewitching magic. Because these ancient stories are so exciting and present interpretations of some natural phenomena, they are constantly cropping up in various forms today. We see them in modern plays, novels, television programs, movies and even in advertisements.⁶⁹

The repeated occurrence of mythological creatures and motifs in the whole fields of popular culture depicts the concept that mythologies have not vanished but still have an important place in the modern globe. ‘Movies, television, computer games, comics, graphic novels, traditional literature, visual arts, performing arts, politics, blogs’ and in other fields as well.⁷⁰ There are a lot of contemporary illustrations in which a mythological story influences our life experience⁷¹.

2.1 Language

Prior to the era of the renaissance the Greek terms were not borrowed by specialists and scholars, they were rather used by common individuals; those persons used Greek terms without knowing that they were of Greek origins. Next, this kind of terms became part of English in indirect manner. In three ways: Latin, ancient French and even the Arabic language. Those Greek words were sometimes used in different forms from the original terms and often a Greek word appeared after a certain period of time with distinct meaning and with resemblance to the Greek language. Ayers sums up, the history of the appearance of the Greek language in English:

⁶⁹ Bernard Evslin, Dorothy Evslin and Ned Hoopes, *The Greek Gods*, Point (U.S.A: Scholastic, 1995), 112.

⁷⁰ “Mythology in contemporary culture,” *Popular Culture Association (PCA) /American Culture Association (ACA)*, accessed April 23, 2015, <http://pcaaca.org/mythology-in-contemporary-culture/>.

⁷¹ Paul Binford, “Common Mythological Motifs in Literature,” *Studies in Humanities and Culture*, no. 15 (2011): 93.

The words which came from Greek before the Renaissance were generally popular borrowings, that is, they were adopted by the common people, who knew no Greek, rather than by scholars. Furthermore, such words often entered English indirectly, not only by way of Latin, but sometimes by way of Old French, or even, in some cases, through Arabic. They therefore usually show considerable divergence in form from the Greek original. Sometimes the same Greek word was later reborrowed [*Sic*] with a different meaning and in a form more closely resembling the Greek.⁷²

There are numerous illustrations in English which shows the important number of expressions and words that hold their roots from the antique Greek mythology and that are still found in the modern western society:

Phobia means a fear of. The word phobia comes from the name Phobos, the son of the Greek god Ares. Phobos literally meant fear or terror. Example of use: Mary Ellen had a phobia about speaking English to her boss until she gained some confidence by taking an English class. Atlas is a book of maps from Atlas, a Titan who held the world on his shoulders. Example of use: I looked in the atlas to learn more about the European countries. Cereal is wheat, oat and corn from Ceres, goddess of agriculture. Example of use: The restaurant served a range of healthy cereals for breakfast. Cloth is fabric formed by weaving from Clotho, the Fate that spun the thread of life. Example of use: The cloth was purchased...⁷³

Besides, The Greek mythology influence on the western civilization culture and language does not concern only single terms, there are numerous expressions, proverbs and clichés which are related to old Greek mythical stories. For instance, the tales of the sailors who were believed to be caught between the Greek mythological monsters called Scylla and Charybdis gave the expressions: ‘caught between a rock and a hard place’ and ‘between the Devil and the deep blue sea’⁷⁴ Stout summarizes the story of Odysseus, his companions and the two monsters Charybdis and Scylla:

⁷² Donald M. Ayers, *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements*, 2nd ed., Thomas D. Rothen rev.ed (U.S.A: University of Arizona Press, 1986), 159.

⁷³ Marc Anderson, “25 words and phrases with Greek Origin You Might Want to Use,” *TalktoCanada.com*, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://www.talktocanada.com/blog/25-english-words-and-phrases-with-greek-origin-you-might-want-to-use/>.

⁷⁴ Nika Chxartishvili, “Impact Of Greek Mythology On Western Culture,” *academia.edu*, accessed May 4, 2015, https://www.academia.edu/6738534/Impact_Of_Greek_Mythology_On_Western_Culture .

Odysseus and his companions sail past Charybdis at a safe distance. Able to detect the danger from afar, they can outmaneuver it without difficulty. Charybdis thus represents no real danger to them. Scylla, on the other hand, carries off six men from the ship - a surprise to the shipmates, and, to an extent, a surprise to Odysseus as well. Yet following this loss, Scylla no longer represents and threat. Odysseus is therefore able to continue his voyage with his remaining companions. Moreover, Odysseus himself was also warned of Scylla by Circe. He thus knew in advance that Scylla would be satisfied with carrying off six of his men and that she would thus not pose and threat for him personally, for his ship, or for the remainder of his companions.⁷⁵

2.2 Literature

Antique mythical story within English literature in the 20th century is not only concerned with England's literature. It also concerns the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the areas in Africa where English is spoken, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Antique mythical story has in arguable manner begun its existence within the American literature by the translation of *Metamorphoses* as colonial official by George Sandy in the 17th century Virginia. Nevertheless, until the 19th century this area was used by inferior and ordinary versifiers.⁷⁶ And in the 20th century the ancient accounts appeared again⁷⁷ Some American poets and dramatists such as Ashbery, Duncan, Jarrell, Jeffers, Levertov, Lowell, MacLeish, O'Neill, Rexroth, Rich, Rukeyser, Tennessee Williams, considered the antique world's mythology as a strong tide to use in themes, for the contemporary times.⁷⁸ When the 20th century started, antique mythology was still present.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ André Hurst and Françoise Létoublon eds., *La mythologie et l'Odyssee: hommage à Gabriel Germain : actes du colloque international de Grenoble, 20-22 mai 1999*, Recherches et Rencontres : publications de la Faculté des lettres de Genève, vol. 17 (Genève : Librairie Droz, 2002), 15.

⁷⁶ Geoffrey Miles, ed., *Classical Mythology in English Literature: A Critical Anthology*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 17.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

2.2.1 Youth literature

One of the most important forms of literature that influences the modern Western society is the literary works made for young readers. Those works have a significant impact over young individuals and vary in format. Each format differs from the others and deals with the topic of the Greek mythological world.

The formats of children's books on ancient Greek and Roman mythology vary as much as the methods of composition. They include autobiographies, biographies, comic books, coffee-table books (picture books), coloring books, dictionaries (encyclopedias) of mythology, dramas, novelettes, and elementary-school readers.⁸⁰

The same points amid the superheroes of the comic books which are published in form of series and the Greek mythical heroes gives an important literary genre that can permit classical savants to notice the way in which contemporary authors interpret again the ancient Greek mythological texts.⁸¹ From 2008-2010, for example, Marvel Comics published series named *the Incredible Hercules* focusing on a fresh way of depicting the mythical Hercules. Comic books are affected by different sources but the most seen is the Greek mythology, especially in countries of the West like the United States which acquires a link made by history with the Greek civilization.⁸²

2.3 Sport

The old Olympic Games acquire a long history according to our knowledge. They emerged in Greece some 3000 years ago in the Peloponnese. The historical records show that the old Olympic Games were held in Olympia in 776 B.C.⁸³ they were held in Olympia each four years, and this period was named Olympiad.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Antoinette Brazouski and Mary J. Klatt comps., *Children's, Books on Ancient Greek and Roman Mythology: An Annotated Bibliography* (West Port, CT: Green Wood Press, 1994), 18.

⁸¹ Andrew S. Latham, "Comic Books vs. Greek Mythology: The Ultimate Crossover For The Classical Scholar" (Master's diss., The University of Texas at Tyler, 2012), iii.

⁸² Ibid., 1.

⁸³ international Olympic Committee, "Factsheet: The Olympic Games of Antiquity," Accessed May 19, 2015, http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents_Factsheets/The_Olympic_Games_of_the_Antiquity.pdf

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1.

Further, the emergence of the Olympic Games is not easy to determine since it has not a single source but distinct mythical stories, the first story is that of Idaios Daktylos Herakles, believed to be one of the Daktyloi. Other myths highlight the myth of Zeus defeating Cronus for the sake of gaining control of gods' throne. The myth of Herakles, who established these games in honor of Zeus, since the king of the gods aided him when he went as a conqueror in Elis a land held by king Augeas is another mythical story believed to be the cause of the Olympic Games emergence.

The oldest myth which concerns the beginning of the Olympic Games is that of Idaios Daktylos Herakles. According to other myths, Zeus, the father of humanity, fought and defeated Cronus in a struggle for the throne of the gods. Finally, the well-known demigod Herakles is mentioned. He staged games in Olympia in honour of Zeus, because the latter had helped him conquer Elis when he went to war against Augeas.⁸⁵

Furthermore, Christianity was the most important factor for the decline of these games, the Christian emperor Theodosius I in A.D 393 abolished this pagan games in his decree. After more than 1500 years Pierre de Coubertin of France who in 1894 founded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Paris and by 1896 the first modern Olympic Games took place in the Panathnaic Stadium⁸⁶ and today the Olympic Games are still held in our contemporary society each four years.

In 1896, more than 1,500 years after the ancient Games were banned, the first modern Olympic Games featured many references to this legacy of Greek Antiquity. The IOC's decision to hold them in Athens (Greece) was a reminder that the Olympic Games originated in Greece. The majority of the competitions took place in the ancient stadium (the Panathenaic Stadium), which was restored for the occasion. Most of the sports on the programme of the ancient Olympic Games were echoed in the modern Games.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ "Ancient Olympic Games," *Olympic.Org*, accessed May 18, 2015, <http://www.olympic.org/ancient-olympic-games?tab=mythology>.

⁸⁶ The Panathinaiko Stadium is situated in Athens and hosted the old sports competitions known as the Panathenaea.

⁸⁷ The Olympic Musuem "The Modern Olympic Games 2nd ed. 2007 Accessed, May 18, 2015. <https://olympiada.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/modern-olympics.pdf> .

2.4 Modern Marketing

In modern societies, marketing plays an important role since it has great impacts over individuals. The appellation and identity given to any brand specialized in any given field is considered as crucial. If the owner of a brand chooses a suitable appellation, it may save him important amounts of money and may have deep impacts even among other eminent brands. Oosthuizen explains this concept in the following quotation:

What is in a name? Quite a lot more than what we tend to think, I believe. The name and identity of a brand must be one of the most important decisions to be made about a brand. A good name and identity can buy the brand owner high impact at relatively low cost in a highly cluttered brand environment.⁸⁸

Next, different thriving and eminent companies exist in distinct eras of the globe, with Greek appellations; the majority of them are European and American. An individual might identify some companies' appellations as connected to Greek mythological heroes and individuals.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, an individual might miss numerous names related to Greek mythology.⁹⁰

Further, in antique mythology, 'Ambrosia' is the Greek God's food sometimes and other times it indicates their drink. This appellation exists in Ambrosia Software, the well-known Ambrosia Salad and Ambrosia Natural Foods.⁹¹ Also, A mythological beings named 'Centaur' part horse and part human, in contemporary society, there is, Centaur Floor Machines, , veterinarian medicine made by Centaur Pharmaceuticals, Centaur Riding School and Centaur Theatre Company.⁹²

Furthermore, the goddess of Agriculture in the Greek mythology is called 'Demeter', professional audio products are designed and made by Demeter

⁸⁸ Thomas Oosthuizen , *The Brand Book: How to Build a Profitable Brand – Fast, Effectively and efficiently* (Johannesburg: Stonebridge, 2013), 57.

⁸⁹ "Companies With Greek Names," *Greek Names*, accessed May 19, 2015, <http://www.greek-names.info/companies-with-greek-names/>.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

Amplification, there is a center for software services called Demeter,⁹³ also an agency for consultation is called Demeter Matrix Alliance Inc.⁹⁴ Odysseys is found in a famous travel agency called Odysseys Travel, in a company of cruising called Odysseys Cruise Lines, in a company of record called Odysseys Record, and in a club line called Odysseys Golf.⁹⁵ Next, The famous Greek hero ‘Hercules’⁹⁶ is found in a company that manufacture graphic cards for video which are the best-selling, called Hercules and its slogan is “Legendary Strength, Quality and Performance”. The United States Air Force utilize a transport plane to transport huge war stuff and provisions called Hercules, and a company manufactures chemical and allied products is named Hercules Incorporated.

In addition, ‘Hyperion’ is an appellation for a titan, his name carries the meaning “he who goes before the sun”, so there is in the field of “business analysis software” a company with the following website : www.hyperion.com and also this appellation “Hyperion” is used for a publishing company for books.⁹⁷ ‘Trident’ which is the trident of Poseidon is used for a well known gum⁹⁸ and the Greek sea god named Poseidon is found in: Poseidon Travel which is a travel agency.⁹⁹ In the Greek mythology ‘Argus’ is a giant watchman with 100 eyes, nowadays there is Argus Security which is concerned with the protection of the commercial business.¹⁰⁰

⁹³ Sian-Addy Werick, “100 Greek Names & Roman Allusions,” *Weebly*, accessed May <http://sianaddy.weebly.com/> .

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

2.5 Sciences

In computer science, ‘The Trojan horse’ is a computer virus which pretends to be without harm but in reality it causes damages to the computer; the virus appellation is derived from the Greek mythology. Homer in the *Iliad* gives a description about the story of the Trojan horse from which this appellation emerged.

The name Trojan Horse is derived from Greek mythology, from the *Iliad* by Homer. In the *Iliad*, Homer describes how the Greek army, after unsuccessfully trying to capture the city of Troy, lift the siege and leave a wooden horse, ostensibly as a gift to the gods of the city. The citizens of Troy accept the gift by pulling it inside the city walls, whereupon Greek soldiers emerge from the horse to capture the city.

What does Greek mythology have to do with Computer diseases? Well, like the Mythical Trojan horse, a Trojan horse program pretends to be a perfectly legitimate program, for example a compiler or file handler, which has access to other users' files. This legitimate-purpose program is however subverted with the objective of violating security constraints.¹⁰¹

Besides, in the contemporary terminology of science, it is said that our solar system is ‘heliocentric’ which signifies that the planets turn around Helios.¹⁰² Then, a theory called ‘the Gaia theory’;¹⁰³ Gaia is an appellation which held its roots in Greek mythology and means Mother Earth¹⁰⁴. Also, In 1795, the famous Martin Klaproth a German chemist, had a pleasurable excitement of finding a fresh metallic element, this German chemist called his discovery ‘Titanium’, which is linked directly to the Greek mythological Titans, sons of the Earth goddess.¹⁰⁵ Next, the appellation ‘Promethium’ is derived from the Greek mythological Prometheus who is believed to be the mythical figure who gave the stolen fire of gods to humans.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Nishant Deshpande, “Computer Diseases: Trojan Horses, Viruses & Worms,” *Imperial College London*, accessed May 20, 2015, http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/~nd/surprise_96/journal/vol2/nd4/article2.html.

¹⁰² Laurie J. White, “Greek Mythology,” *The Shorter Word.com*, accessed, May 20, 2015, <http://www.theshorterword.com/greek-myths/>.

¹⁰³ Luigi Piccardi and W. Bruce Masse eds., *Myth and Geology*, Special Publication 273 (London: The Geological Society, 2007), 65.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁰⁵ Doug Stewart, “Discovery of Titanium,” <http://www.chemcool.com>, accessed May 20, 2015, <http://www.chemcool.com/elements/titanium.html>.

¹⁰⁶ “Promethium,” *Royal Society of Chemistry*, accessed May 20, 2015, <http://www.rsc.org/periodic-table/element/61/promethium> 12/16 /20/5

Scorpius is a summer constellation located south Ophiuchus,¹⁰⁷ ‘In mythology, this is the scorpion that stung Orion the hunter to death, although accounts differ as to the exact circumstances’,¹⁰⁸ and Ophiuchus in Greek mythology is related to the medicine Greek god, called Aesculapius.¹⁰⁹ The 10th zodiac sign is Capricorn and it is rooted to the constellation of Capricornus.¹¹⁰ ‘To the Greeks, Capricorn depicted he mountain god Pan who worked as a shepherd by day and a musician by night’,¹¹¹ the 5th zodiac sign of astrology is Leo and it came into existence from the Leo constellation.¹¹² This constellation is also related to a Greek myth, which is linked with the first Task of the twelve tasks that were given to Hercules. In this mythical story Hercules went to kill the Nemean lion and succeeded with his bare hands to kill the beast, after that Eurystheus put Leo in the sky, Forbes explains how the constellation of Leo came into existence:

The first task set for Hercules reveals a classic and indisputable Greek star myth at the outset of his labours. Hercules was asked to kill the Nemean lion and bring back its skin. He duly sets out to kill the lion, but he is unable to achieve this with any of his weapons; he eventually succeeds by strangling the lion with his bare hands. Depictions of Hercules Usually show him with the skin of the Nemean lion over his shoulder. After presenting the body of the Nemean lion to Eurystheus, he then nails it to the sky. This thereby explains the presence of the constellation Leo in the night sky.¹¹³

Moreover, ‘A natural satellite’ refers to an object that turns around a planet or other larger body which is not artificial.¹¹⁴ Within modern science, scientists use various

¹⁰⁷ Bojan Kambic, *Viewing the Constellations with Binoculars: 250+ Wonderful Sky Objects to See and Explore*, The Patrick Moore Practical Astronomy Series (New York: Springer, 2010) , 428.

¹⁰⁸ Ian Ridpath, *Star Tales* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1988), 114.

¹⁰⁹ Milton D. Heifetz and Wil Tirion., *A Walk Through the Heavens: A Guide to Stars and Constellations and Their Legends*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 61.

¹¹⁰“Capricorn,” www.crystalinks.com, www.crystalinks.com, accessed May 19, 2015, <http://www.crystalinks.com/capricorn.html> .

¹¹¹Matthew Abergel, *Work Your Stars!: Using Astrology to Navigate Your Career Path, Shine on the Job, and Guide Your Business Decision* (New York: Fire Side, 1999) . 127.

¹¹² “Leo,” <http://www.crystalinks.com/leo.html> .

¹¹³ Iain W. G. Forbes, *The Last of the Druids: The Mystery of the Pictish Symbol Stones* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2012).

¹¹⁴ “Natural Satellite,” www.newworldencyclopedia.org, accessed May 19, 2015, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Natural_satellite .

appellations for natural satellites. Those attributed names are rooted to Greek mythological stories; the following quotation depicts some of the natural satellites named after Greek mythical creations and their related stories. It highlights the still existing influences of Greek mythology over science.

Metis is the innermost of Jupiter's known satellites. In Greek mythology, the Greek personification of wisdom; the first wife of Zeus.Adrastea is the second of Jupiter's known satellites. In Greek mythology the goddess Adrastea punished human injustice. Amalthea is the third of Jupiter's known satellites. In Greek mythology, Amaltheia was the divine goat (or nymph) who suckled the infant Zeus on Crete. Thebe is the fourth of Jupiter's known satellites. In Greek mythology Thebe was a nymph, the daughter of the river god Asopus. Io is the fifth of Jupiter's known satellites and the third largest; it is the innermost of the Galilean moons. Io is slightly larger than Earth's Moon. In Greek mythology, Io was a princess whom Zeus transformed into a white heifer to hide her from his ever jealous wife.¹¹⁵

3. Conclusion

Within the culture of the modern western society the Greek mythology is found widely whether individuals know it or ignore it. There are many illustrations that depict how the classical mythology lives within the modern West. The first and most important field in which the classical mythology influences the contemporary society is the language used. The Greek terms became indirectly part of English and saw different changes. Next, in literature the Greek mythology is widely found like in youth literature.

Further, 'the Olympic Games' which are held today come from the old Olympic Games. Today we still celebrate the Olympic Games which in the antique world emerged according to different versions of myths. The modern world marketing is full of Greek mythological references used by several companies, agencies, and so on. The science field also incorporates a mass of examples derived from the Greek mythical convictions. Finally, the Greek mythology plays an important role and influences the modern West in numerous ways.

¹¹⁵ "The Celestial Bodies," www.pantheon.org, accessed May 19, 2015, http://www.pantheon.org/miscellaneous/celestial_bodies.html .

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The term mythology is derived from the Greek “mythologia” which means legendary lore, a telling of mythical legends, a legend, tale or story and the term myth comes from the Greek “mythos” which means a word, speech, tale or story. Mythology refers to the body of mythical beliefs, legends and tales which depict the antique beliefs and convictions of the ancient culture. The majority of myths makers are of unknown origins, nevertheless few are known like Homer in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Myths are handed down through different means and they are depicted through sacred arts, rituals and in other ways. Myths passed through different stages and changes by time, they incorporate various themes which try to provide answers for the unquestionable or for the questions that emerged before the scientific era and which needed clarifications concerning the gods, kings, heroes, world foundation, its future destruction or other themes. The nowadays mythology is not only related to ancient texts but deals with distinct kinds of literature and science fiction is the modern mythology.

Further, the Greek mythology is rooted to the antique religions of Crete, an island located in the Aegean Sea; this classical mythology passed through various transformations and changes according to places and circumstances since the Greek myths were not found only in Greece but in different areas of the globe. It incorporates mythical beliefs and thoughts of the Greek people that deal with themes like “Pantheons” which talks about the Titans who came through Gaia the Mother Earth and Uranus and talks about other mythical creations as well. Also mythical gods, goddesses, demi-gods and other mythical creatures had different characteristics and fulfilled distinct roles, like “Hades” king of the underworld who was famous by his three headed dog called Cerberus or “Hephaestus” the fire and smith god symbolized by the hammer and famous by his tools and crafts creations.

Furthermore, the western civilization holds its roots from the Middle Ages, during these times there was no real development since the field of education was not valued and certain ancient texts were lost. But the western world started to develop by the coming of the twelfth century Renaissance which was characterized by the returning

back to ancient texts and which saw different achievements in the economical, political and social fields. By the times of the fourteenth century Renaissance there were real developments and changes in different areas like in artworks. Next, those cited periods led to deep impacts in the culture of the modern West. According to interpreters, the western society origins are rooted to three traditions which are the Greek and Romans knowledge, the western Christian religion and the modern enlightenment. The western society is characterized by monotheism, human-rights as well as with other characteristics, also the westerners give importance to notions and values that are either given or granted found within their democracy. Besides, the term “culture” throughout centuries has been given different definitions and the nowadays culture is related to every single thing found within a society. And one of the most important features of culture which fulfils a significant role within culture is mythology.

The western society is full of Greek myths allusions, since this classical mythology is found in almost every field of the West, examples of how mythology influences the western society are abundant. The first area that is the most noticeable is the language used by individuals; the Greek terms became indirectly part of English through Latin, French and even Arabic. Some examples of terms rooted to the Greek mythology include cereal from Ceres goddess of agriculture and phobia from Phobos, Ares’ son. And there are also expressions used which are rooted to this antique mythology, like ‘caught between a rock and a hard place’ and ‘between the Devil and the deep blue sea’ which came both from Odysseys. Besides, in literature classic myths are also used, for example, the serialized comic books like *‘the Incredible Hercules’* is related to Hercules, a mythical hero. In sport there are also traces of the Greek mythology; the Olympic Games are rooted the antique Greece’s Olympic Games which were created from mythical beliefs. Next, the modern marketing is one of the most important field which is influenced by the classical mythology, examples are abundant in this field, for example, ‘Ambrosia’ is the Greek God’s food sometimes and sometimes it is their drink; This appellation exists in the famous Ambrosia Salad and Ambrosia Software. The last field that this work highlights is science which is also full of Greek

mythological references, like in Geology, the appellation 'the Gaia theory' came from Gaia which means Mother Earth or in computer science the 'Trojan horse' virus came from the Greek mythical story of the Trojan War.

As a conclusion, the influence of the Greek mythology over the modern western society is found in almost every field that the western world incorporates. It is present under many aspects and continues to reflect the antique Greek mythical beliefs and convictions that survived centuries after their appearance and that landed on the West through various ways.

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Glossary

Glossary

1. **Lore:** a body of knowledge or traditions.
2. **Shaman:** is related to shamanism which is a form of religion, in which those who practice it believe that the world and all events are governed by good and evil spirits who can be propitiated or bought off only through the intervention of a witch-doctor or Shaman.
3. **Iliad:** the tale of the siege of troy attributed to Homer.
4. **Odyssey:** the epic poem of Homer which records the adventures of Odysseus.
5. **Vedic:** Vedic mythology refers to the mythological aspects of the historical Vedic religion and Vedic literature, alluded to in the hymns of the Rigveda.
6. **Shinto:** is an indigenous religion of Japan and the people of Japan. Shinto today is a term that applies to the religion of public shrines devoted to the worship of a multitude of gods.
7. **Yoruba:** the mythology of the Yoruba is claimed by its supporters to be the world's oldest religion and it is practiced in Africa, chiefly in Nigeria.
8. **Philologist:** related to philology which focuses on the study of language.
9. **Etiologist:** related to etiology which focuses on the study of causation, or origination.
10. **Ethnologist:** relates to the study of cultures, especially considering social relationships and preliterate cultures.
11. **Ritualist:** related to “the myth and ritual or myth-ritualist, theory” held notably by the so-called Cambridge Ritualists, which holds that a myth does not stand by itself but is tied to ritual.
12. **Diffusionist:** an anthropologist who emphasizes the role of diffusion in the history of culture rather than independent invention or discovery.
13. **Culturalist:** one who subscribes to culturalism.
14. **Topographical:** related to topography which means a description of the features of the land surface of an area such as hills, rivers and roads.
15. **Dionysus:** is a god in Greek mythology.
16. **Bacchus:** a Roman god similar to Dionysus a god in the Greek mythology.
17. **Titans:** primordial Greek mythical creatures with enormous size and strength.
18. **Carolingian Renaissance:** the first of the three medieval renaissances. Was a period of cultural activity in the Carolingian Empire occurring from the late eighth century to the ninth century.
19. **Ottanian Renaissance:** was a limited renaissance of Byzantine and Late Antique art in Central and Southern Europe.

20. **The Paleologian Renaissance:** scholars of Byzantium have called the late 13th century and 14th century as Paleologian Renaissance.
21. **Deity:** god or goddess, essential nature of being divine.
22. **Pantheon:** set of gods belonging to a particular religion, mythology or tradition, or it is defined as a temple that is built to honour all the gods of a particular country or group of people.
23. **Romanesque art:** is the art of Europe from approximately 1000 AD to the rise of the Gothic style in the 13th century, or later, depending on region.
24. **Folklore:** the traditional beliefs, customs, etc., of a people.
25. **Versifier:** one that versifies, especially a writer of light or inferior verse.
26. **Theodosius I:** was the last Roman emperor who ruled over both eastern and western halves of Roman Empire (379 - 395AD).
27. **Titanium:** a strong, low-density, highly corrosion-resistant, lustrous white metallic element.
28. **Promethium:** a soft silvery metallic element.
29. **Eurystheus:** a king of Mycenae and cousin of Hercules.
30. **Heifer:** a young cow, especially one that has not given birth to a calf.