



Digital Catalogue



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Introduction

The EUfolk Digital Catalogue of Folklore Legends has been developed as part of Work Package C3.2 of the Erasmus+ project *European Folklore and Cultural Heritage Preservation*. Its purpose is to collect, compare, and present selected folklore legends from European countries, highlighting the common values and moral foundations they reflect.

Legends and oral traditions form a living bridge between past and present, embodying the cultural identity, moral lessons, and social values of European peoples. At the same time, they reveal shared principles—such as dignity, freedom, solidarity, justice, and respect for diversity. By documenting and interpreting these narratives, this catalogue not only preserves intangible cultural heritage but also demonstrates that the European community has long been united by common ideals, even before they were codified in law.

The catalogue is intended for educators, cultural organisations, communities, and learners of all ages. It supports intergenerational dialogue by involving seniors as keepers of oral traditions and young people as digital facilitators, ensuring that these stories are not only preserved but also reimagined in accessible, contemporary formats. It also contributes to the broader outputs of EUfolk, feeding into the Common EU Values Textbook, digital videos, and dissemination activities. Ultimately, the catalogue demonstrates that folklore is not only cultural heritage—it is civic education, a reminder of shared values, and a tool for building European identity.

1. Legends Depicting Common European Values

1.1 Polish legends

1.1.1 The Wawel Dragon

Country: Poland

Legend Title (original language): Smok Wawelski

Synopsis: In medieval Kraków, a terrifying dragon lived beneath Wawel Hill, devouring livestock and threatening the townspeople. Many knights failed to slay it. At last, a poor shoemaker named Skuba devised a clever trick: he stuffed a sheep with sulfur. The dragon devoured it, grew unbearably thirsty, and drank so much water from the Vistula River that it exploded. Skuba was hailed as a hero, and the city of Kraków was freed from fear.



Historical/Cultural Context: The story originates from medieval chronicles tied to Kraków's founding myths. It embodies the spirit of ingenuity over brute force and became central to the city's identity. The dragon cave at Wawel remains a cultural landmark.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Human dignity** — A humble shoemaker defeats the beast, showing that dignity and agency belong to ordinary people.
- ☑ **Freedom** — Kraków regains safety and liberty after the dragon's defeat.
- ☑ **Justice** — The destructive force is punished, restoring order and fairness.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — The community's survival depends on collective resistance.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Illustrates intergenerational storytelling about civic courage.
- Highlights moral agency: wit and justice prevail over violence.
- Reinforces the role of community heroes from humble backgrounds.
- Symbolizes the victory of order, knowledge, and civic responsibility.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

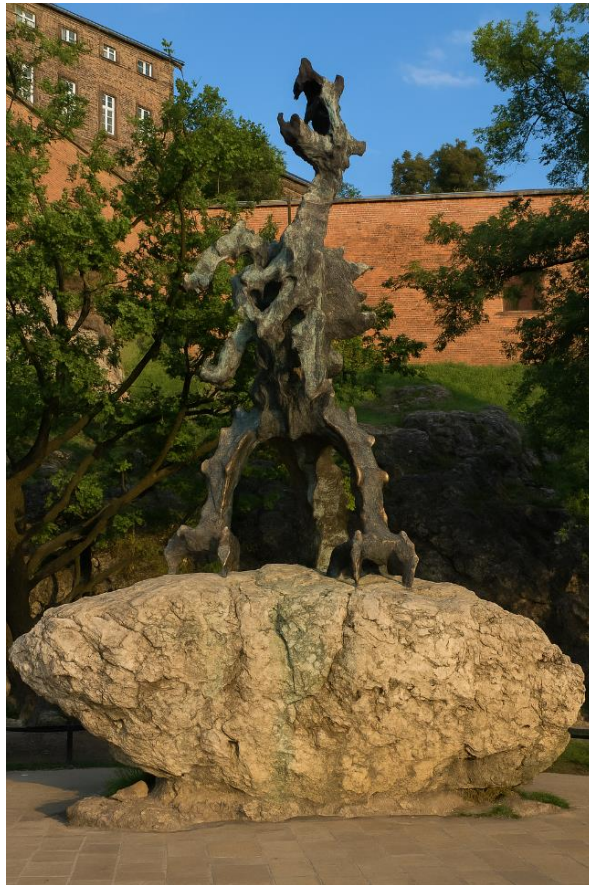
Similar to: Greece – Odysseus and the Cyclops, Oedipus and the Sphinx

Shared motifs/values: Cunning intellect over brute force; liberation from captivity/oppression.

Key difference(s): Odysseus acts for his crew, while Skuba's action liberates an entire city, Oedipus solves a riddle to defeat the Sphinx, while Skuba uses a trick.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older generations recall hearing the story of the dragon from parents or teachers during childhood festivals in Kraków. The dragon cave was often part of school trips, linking memory with place. Seniors highlight that the legend taught them that even an ordinary shoemaker could save a whole community.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people reinterpret the story through comics, short animations, and augmented reality games where the dragon becomes a symbol of environmental responsibility (e.g., overconsumption leading to self-destruction). They see the tale as a metaphor for clever problem-solving in modern crises.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Trainees in Greece compared the dragon to Odysseus' escape from the Cyclops, both showing intelligence as more powerful than brute strength. Spanish learners linked it with El Cid's honour, noting different cultural emphases (cunning vs. loyalty) but a shared idea of freedom and justice.

Conclusion

The story concludes with Kraków's liberation through the cleverness of an ordinary shoemaker, affirming that ingenuity and justice often arise from humble origins. The dragon's defeat represents the triumph of collective courage and human intellect over fear and tyranny.

1.1.2 The Mermaid of Warsaw

Country: Poland

Legend Title (original language): Syrenka Warszawska

Synopsis: According to legend, a mermaid swam up the Vistula River and rested near today's Warsaw. Fishermen captured her, but hearing her singing, they released her. In gratitude, she vowed to protect the city. Later, when a merchant tried to imprison her, the fishermen freed her again. She became the guardian of Warsaw, defending it against enemies and symbolizing its spirit of resilience.

Historical/Cultural Context: The tale, dating to the 14th–15th century, reflects Warsaw's emergence as a thriving city along trade routes. The mermaid remains Warsaw's emblem, appearing on its coat of arms.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Freedom** — The mermaid's liberation embodies respect for liberty and opposition to captivity.
- ☑ **Human rights / minorities** — Protecting a “different” being reflects inclusiveness and dignity.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — Fishermen act together to defend her freedom and later the city.
- ☑ **Gender equality** — A female figure is portrayed as a strong protector and civic leader.
- ☑ **Pluralism** — Mythical and human worlds coexist in harmony.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Reflects urban identity and shared civic symbols.
- Promotes intergenerational unity through storytelling and emblems.
- Represents tolerance toward “the other” integrated into community identity.

- Reinforces gendered agency in folklore.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Denmark – *The Little Mermaid*

Shared motifs/values: Mermaids as symbols of love, identity, and resilience.

Key difference(s): Danish tale emphasizes sacrifice and longing, Polish tale emphasizes civic protection and solidarity.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Many Warsaw elders recall the mermaid statue as a meeting place and national emblem, especially meaningful during times of foreign occupation. They grew up seeing Syrenka as a guardian of resilience and survival.

Youth Perspectives:

Digital artists and students use the mermaid in TikTok videos and memes, presenting her as a superheroine protecting the city against modern threats (pollution, inequality). Some reinterpret her as a feminist icon, showing women as defenders of civic life.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Greek learners compared Syrenka to sea deities from Homer's *Odyssey*, emphasizing harmony between human and mythical worlds. Spanish trainees linked her to *La Dama de Elche*, showing how female figures symbolize community identity across Europe.

Conclusion

The mermaid's pledge to protect Warsaw transforms her from a captive to a guardian, ending the story as a celebration of freedom, solidarity, and gendered strength. Her image continues to embody resilience and unity, symbolizing a city that stands proud and unbroken.

1.1.3 Legend of Mr Twardowski

Country: Poland

Legend Title (original language): "Pan Twardowski"

Synopsis: The legend tells of a nobleman named Pan Twardowski who, instead of putting his knowledge and skills to good use, sold his soul to the devil in exchange for "great knowledge and mastery of magic." In the contract, Twardowski included a clause stating that the devil could only take his soul when he went to Rome, which he had no intention of doing. Thanks to the power he gained from the devil, Twardowski gained wealth and fame, becoming a courtier of King Sigismund Augustus. A confrontation took place at the inn called "Rome," which was supposed to be the place where he would take Twardowski's soul. During the abduction, as the devil was carrying Twardowski to hell, he began to pray to the Virgin Mary which caused the devil to suffer and drop him onto the moon.

Historical/Cultural Context: The legend is set during the reign of King Sigismund Augustus. The king surrounded himself with courtiers interested in alchemy and magic.

Identified EU Values

☑ **Human dignity** — In the legend, Pan Twardowski is portrayed as a highly educated and ambitious man. His desire for knowledge and power leads him to strike a deal with the Devil, but it also shows his deep sense of personal dignity. He does not simply accept his fate or limitations—he pursues mastery over his own life and destiny, albeit through questionable means. This pursuit can be seen as a reflection

of human dignity in the sense that he seeks to transcend human frailty and achieve something greater.

☑ **Freedom** — Twardowski manages to escape the Devil's clutches through his wit and cunning, such as when he outsmarts the Devil by tricking him into thinking Twardowski has already gone to hell. This act of defiance against an oppressive force symbolizes a fight for personal freedom and autonomy.

☑ **Human rights** — The legend touches on the idea that human rights—specifically the right to live a moral and just life—are not to be compromised. Twardowski's choices ultimately question the ethical limits of his quest for power and immortality, raising awareness about the importance of respecting the rights of others and the consequences of self-serving actions.

☑ **Solidarity / community** — At times, Twardowski uses his magical powers to help those around him, especially the less fortunate. In doing so, he exemplifies a form of solidarity where he uses his abilities not only for his own benefit but also to bring about some good for others. This can be interpreted as a reminder that individuals should work together to improve society and protect the welfare of others.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Willingness to acquire knowledge at all costs.
- The story is a classic moral tale about the struggle between good and evil.
- Twardowski's pact with the Devil can be interpreted as a critique of greed and selfishness.
- The story provides a timeless tale about ambition, knowledge, and the cost of moral transgressions.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Germany - Faust

Shared motifs/values: Alliance with dark powers in pursuits for knowledge

Key difference(s): Twardowski is not a true scholar.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



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Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Elders recall hearing the tale of Pan Twardowski from parents and teachers as a moral warning about pride and the misuse of knowledge. They remember him as the Polish counterpart of Faust—an ambitious man who bargained with the devil. For older generations, the story carried a moral about humility and repentance, often linked to folk sayings warning against “Twardowski’s arrogance.”

Youth Perspectives:

Young Poles reinterpret Twardowski as a symbol of human curiosity and innovation. Digital creators have turned his story into short films, comic art, and video games where Twardowski becomes a misunderstood scientist rather than a sinner. Some even blend the legend with space themes (inspired by the poem “Pan Twardowski on the Moon”), turning him into an astronaut-hero exploring knowledge responsibly.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

All learners immediately compared Twardowski with Faust, discussing the shared motif of a pact with dark powers and the moral of redemption through knowledge. Greek participants linked him to Prometheus, noting both figures’ defiance and search for enlightenment. Spanish learners found a similarity with Don Juan and his defiance of the human rules that led him to hell. The discussions underlined Europe’s shared fascination with the tension between ambition, knowledge, and moral limits.

Conclusion

Though the story of Pan Twardowski is primarily one of personal ambition, moral failure, and supernatural intrigue, it contains numerous elements that can be connected to themes of human dignity, freedom, human rights, justice, and solidarity. The legend provides a framework for understanding these values, even as it critiques the consequences of ignoring them in the pursuit of personal gain.

1.1.4 The Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle

Country: Poland

Legend Title (original language): "legenda o Zamku w Pieskowej Skale"

Synopsis: The legend of the castle in Pieskowa Skala tells the story of the beautiful noble girl Dorotka, daughter of the nobleman Tęczyński family, who fell in love with a servant-lutenist. Her father though got her married to an old man whom Dorotka did not love. The lovers decided to be together against all odds. Unfortunately, after their attempt to escape ended in capture, Dorotka was locked in a tower to starve to death, and her beloved lute player was dragged by horses. Dorotka's faithful dog climbed the rock to bring her scraps of food, saving her from starvation. Still, in spite of the doggy's efforts, Dorotka died of hunger. The name of the rock and the entire castle commemorates this story and the faithful dog.

Historical/Cultural Context: The castle in Pieskowa Skala, located on the Eagles' Nests Trail, was built in the 14th century on the initiative of King Casimir the Great as an important defensive stronghold. Over the centuries, the castle was managed by many families, and its current name comes from its first private owner, Piotr Szafraniec. In the 19th century, the castle became an important symbol of Polish Romanticism, and after World War II, it was restored.

Identified EU Values

- ☒ **Human dignity** — the main characters value their dignity more than life
- ☒ **Gender equality** — a female figure is portrayed as a strong independent lady who would rather die than give up her true love
- ☒ **Freedom** — Dorotka chooses death – a sort of freedom - rather than unhappy life
- ☒ **Human rights** — we recognize that intimidating people and depriving them of their rights is morally wrong

☑ **Solidarity / community** — Dorotka's doggy was faithful to his lady and helped to save her life

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Symbol of attachment and ever-lasting love
- Promotes independence and freedom of choice
- Highlights moral agency and responsibility.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Bridge of Arta, Greece

Shared motifs/values: Sacrifice for feelings, unfulfilled love, male oppression over a young lady

Key difference(s): historical context

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older residents near Ojców National Park recall hearing of the faithful dog and his mistress, whose tragic loyalty gave the castle its name. For them, the story symbolized

devotion and endurance in the face of injustice—qualities admired in post-war Poland as virtues of steadfastness and love.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people visiting Pieskowa Skała often discover the story through tourism or digital guides. They reinterpret the dog's loyalty as a metaphor for emotional truth and empathy. Some students create art projects or videos portraying the animal as a guardian spirit watching over the landscape, blending environmental respect with compassion for animals.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Spanish learners compared the story to “The Lovers of Teruel,” noting how both legends transform personal tragedy into enduring love. Greek participants associated it with the loyal hound of Odysseus, Argos, reflecting on faithfulness that survives time. The exchanges emphasized solidarity, emotional endurance, and respect for loyalty as universal values across cultures.

Conclusion

The legend stresses that the values of faithfulness, loyalty, and love of an animal can overcome difficulties and even prove to be stronger than human help or betrayal. This is a story that emphasizes the power of animal friendship in the face of danger and adversity.

1.2 Greek legends

1.2.1 Prometheus and the Gift of Fire

Country: Greece

Legend Title (original language): “Ο Προμηθέας και η φωτιά”

Synopsis: Prometheus, a Titan, defied the Father of gods Zeus by stealing fire from Olympus and giving it to humankind. With fire, humans gained warmth, protection, and the ability to develop culture and technology. Zeus punished Prometheus by chaining him to a rock, where an eagle ate his liver daily, only for it to grow back each night. Eventually, Hercules freed him from his torture.



Historical/Cultural Context: This myth originates from ancient Hesiodic traditions (8th–7th century BCE) and reflects Greek attempts to explain the origins of civilization, technology, and human independence from divine control.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Human dignity** — Fire symbolizes empowerment, allowing humans to rise from helplessness.
- ☑ **Freedom** — Prometheus resists tyranny for the sake of humanity's progress.
- ☑ **Human rights** — Prometheus recognizes that not only gods but also human beings have rights, too, and they deserve to live better, no matter the cost to him.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — His sacrifice was for the collective good of mankind.
- ☑ **Justice** — The myth sparks debates on just punishment versus noble disobedience.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Symbol of civilizational progress and innovation.
- Reflects human struggle against oppression.
- Promotes civic courage in defying unjust power.
- Highlights moral agency and responsibility.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

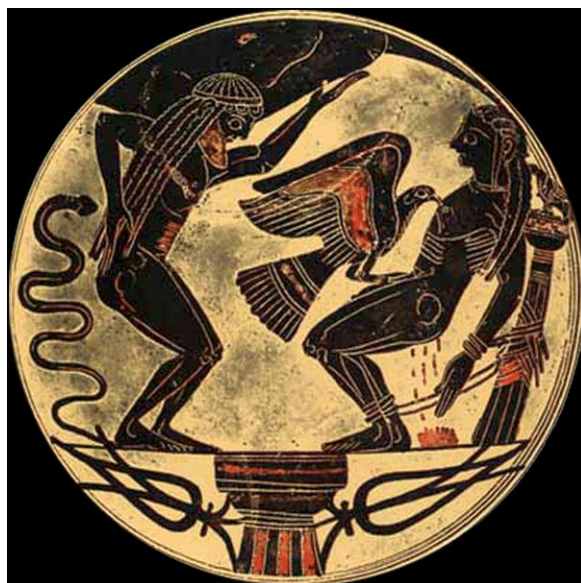
Similar to: Poland — *Pan Twardowski*

Shared motifs/values: Defiance of higher power, sacrifice for knowledge.

Key difference(s): Prometheus acts selflessly, Twardowski for personal gain.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Elders recall learning of Prometheus in school as a heroic rebel who brought fire—and with it, civilization—to humanity. For them, Prometheus embodied both suffering and enlightenment, symbolizing resistance against tyranny and compassion for humankind. Many associate his punishment with the idea that progress always demands sacrifice.

Youth Perspectives:

Young Greeks reinterpret Prometheus through modern media and science fiction, seeing him as a symbol of creativity, freedom of thought, and the ethical use of technology. Environmental activists and students often reference him in discussions about renewable energy, describing fire as the first step in humanity's partnership—and struggle—with nature.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Polish learners compared Prometheus to Twardowski, observing how both legends link human ambition to moral boundaries. Spanish participants related him to Don Juan, contrasting intellectual rebellion with moral rebellion. Across Europe, Prometheus inspired conversations about responsibility, progress, and the balance between innovation and humility.

Conclusion

This legend reminds us that progress often comes through sacrifice and courage. Prometheus' defiance underlines the European value of questioning unjust power and using knowledge for the collective good.

1.2.2 Theseus and the Minotaur

Country: Greece

Legend Title (original language): “Ο Θησέας και ο Μινώταυρος”

Synopsis: King Minos of Crete demanded that Athens send youths every seven years as tribute to be sacrificed to the Minotaur, a monstrous creature with the body of a man and the head of a bull living in the Labyrinth, a subterranean maze from where, once inside, no creature could find the exit. Theseus, prince of Athens, volunteered to end this cycle. With the help of Ariadne's thread – Ariadne being king Minos's daughter who fell in love with Theseus-, he entered the Labyrinth fastening the thread to the entrance in order to find the road back, killed the Minotaur, and freed Athens from the tyranny of the youth sacrifice.

Historical/Cultural Context: The myth is rooted in Bronze Age Crete (Minoan culture, ca. 2000–1400 BCE) and reflects tensions and the struggle for power between early Mediterranean city-states.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Freedom** — Liberation of Athens from oppressive tribute.
- ☑ **Justice** — Ending unjust sacrifice of innocents.
- ☑ **Gender equality** — The long-standing problem is solved not only with the hero's bravery but also with the ingenuity and vital contribution of a woman.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — Hero risks himself for the city's youth.
- ☑ **Respect for nature / harmony with environment** — Labyrinth as a metaphor for confronting human-made monstrosity and vanity.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Celebrates civic duty and leadership.
- Promotes the idea of resisting tyranny.
- Symbol of youth courage and innovation (Ariadne's thread).
- Teaches communal responsibility.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Poland — *Wawel Dragon*

Shared motifs/values: Hero defeating a monster to protect a community.

Key difference(s): Theseus represents civic duty, the dragon tale emphasizes trickery and intelligence.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older Greeks remember the legend as a proud national myth of courage and intelligence. They recount how Theseus' victory over the Minotaur symbolized not just physical triumph but liberation from fear and oppression—echoing memories of resistance and national resilience.

Youth Perspectives:

Younger audiences reinterpret Theseus through films, VR experiences, and social media storytelling. Many highlight Ariadne's role, rebalancing the gender perspective and portraying her as a co-hero who enabled Theseus' success. The labyrinth becomes a metaphor for navigating modern life—moral complexity, social pressure, and the search for identity.



Cross-Country Dialogue:

Polish learners linked Theseus' story to the Wawel Dragon, emphasizing ingenuity over brute strength. Spanish participants compared the labyrinth to moral "mazes" in their folklore. The discussions showed how Europe's myths of monsters and heroes teach common values—courage, cooperation, and justice.

Conclusion

The tale highlights the fight against oppression and the triumph of civic responsibility. Theseus' courage illustrates how freedom and justice are achieved when individuals act on behalf of their community.

1.2.3 The Bridge of Arta

Country: Greece

Legend Title (original language): "Το γεφύρι της Άρτας"

Synopsis: According to this folk ballad, every day the master builder and his workers tried in vain to construct a bridge over the Arachthos River in Arta, because during the night it supernaturally collapsed. Finally, a supernatural bird with human voice told the builder that the bridge would only stand if a human sacrifice was made. Although heartbroken, the builder sent the bird to his wife to bring her to the site of the construction, where she found him devastated, allegedly due to the loss of his ring into the foundations. The woman volunteered to descend to the river and search for the ring. With great sorrow, the builder walled his own wife into the foundations, finally with her own will in the face of the common good, and only then did the bridge hold firm.

Historical/Cultural Context: This legend comes from Epirus (northwestern Greece) and dates back to Byzantine and Ottoman times. It reflects the hardships of building monumental works and the human costs often associated with them. The ballad remains one of the most famous in Greek folk tradition.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — A sacrifice ensures the survival of a community's project.
- ☑ **Justice** — Raises moral questions about fairness and human cost.
- ☑ **Respect for nature / harmony with environment** — Highlights the struggle of humans against natural forces.



☑ **Human dignity** — The builder's wife becomes a tragic symbol of endurance and sacrifice for the common good.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Folk ballad blending myth and reality.
- Explores tension between progress and sacrifice.
- Preserves memory of women's endurance and hidden roles in history.
- Connects community identity to place (bridge as heritage).

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Romania — *Master Manole*

Shared motifs/values: Human sacrifice for construction stability.

Key difference(s): In Greek tradition, focus is on community survival; in Romanian, divine inspiration.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older villagers from Epirus remember songs and laments about the Bridge of Arta being sung at weddings and communal gatherings. For them, the tale evokes both sorrow and pride in the endurance of their ancestors.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people reinterpret the legend critically, pointing out the injustice of sacrificing the builder's wife. Digital animations highlight gender equality, transforming the wife into a builder herself or into a spirit who negotiates with fate rather than being forced into sacrifice.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Polish participants drew parallels with Warsaw's Mermaid, noting how both legends deal with captivity and liberation, though from different angles. Spanish trainees compared it to the Lovers of Teruel, showing how sacrifice and tragedy are recurring motifs but today demand reinterpretation through equality and justice.

Conclusion

This ballad embodies the tension between human ambition and natural forces. It reflects on the costs of progress and the sacrifices communities have historically faced to achieve collective survival.

1.2.4 The fairy's headdress

Country: Greece

Legend Title (original language): “Η μπόλια της νεράιδας”

Synopsis: In many Greek villages, rivers, brooks, and watermills were believed to be inhabited by *neraides* (fairies). One well-known tale tells of a young man who was out late into the night by a river and encountered a party of beautiful *neraides* dancing by the rushing waters. He was enchanted by one of them and stole her headdress. So, when the other *neraides* vanished when the morning came, his beloved was obliged to remain with him. He married her and they had children together, but she kept asking for her headdress. The husband finally gave in and gave her the headdress while she was dancing at a wedding, and the *neraida* vanished forever returning to her folk. However, she returned everyday while her husband was at work, and she took care of her children and the house, but her husband was never again able to lay eyes on her.

Historical/Cultural Context: This legend comes from rural Greece and belongs to a widespread folk tradition about spirits inhabiting rivers, forests, and deserted places, and



roaming the countryside during the night. It reflects the close connection between rural communities and natural forces, as well as moral lessons about respect, the punishment of deceit, and duty.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Respect for nature / harmony with environment** — Nature is alive and must be treated with reverence.
- ☑ **Justice** — Deceit leads to punishment.
- ☑ **Freedom** — No power nor law –not even love- can justify captivity against one's will.
- ☑ **Gender equality** — Women have rights, too, and they should never be considered men's property.
- ☑ **Human dignity** — The neraida retains her agency, reminding us that respect for personal freedom is vital.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — Even after returning to her folk, she continues to care for her children and household.
- ☑ **Tolerance** — The coexistence of humans and supernatural beings shows respect for diversity and the "other."

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Reflects traditional rural beliefs about unseen spirits inhabiting natural spaces.
- Highlights the fragility of promises and the consequences of broken trust.
- Preserves the motif of supernatural marriage, common in European folklore.
- Teaches intergenerational lessons about responsibility and respect within relationships.
- Symbolizes the intersection of human life with nature's mysteries.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Ireland — *The Selkie Bride*

Shared motifs/values: Marriage between human and supernatural, hidden garment, eventual return of the otherworldly spouse.

Key difference(s): In the Irish tale, the selkie leaves forever when her seal-skin is returned; in the Greek version, the neraida continues to support her children from afar, reflecting communal and maternal values.



Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Elders in rural communities remember tales of the “fairy’s headdress” as songs or bedtime stories, warning against greed and teaching respect for nature’s mysteries. The headdress, once stolen by a human, bound a fairy to the mortal world until it was returned—symbolizing the fragile balance between humanity and the supernatural.

Youth Perspectives:

Young artists reinterpret the tale through ecological and feminist lenses. The fairy becomes a voice for environmental justice, her lost headdress representing the exploitation of natural beauty. Digital storytellers use animation and photography to reimagine her as a guardian calling for harmony between people and nature.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Greek and Spanish participants compared the fairy’s captivity to the Mermaid of Warsaw’s imprisonment, noting how both female figures represent nature’s voice seeking freedom. Polish learners saw parallels with forest spirits in Slavic folklore. Across discussions, participants emphasized empathy, coexistence, and respect for difference.

Conclusion

This legend conveys themes of love, loss, and responsibility across the human–supernatural divide. It reminds us that harmony requires respect for autonomy and that even when bonds are broken, care, solidarity, and the nurturing of family remain enduring values.

1.2.5 The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great

Country: Greece

Legend Title (original language): “Η Γοργόνα, η αδελφή του Μεγαλέξανδρου”

Synopsis: The myth of the mermaid, sister of Alexander the Great, says that Thessaloniki, his half-sister, accidentally spilled the Immortal Water that her brother Alexander had found during one of his campaigns. Remorseful and fearing his wrath, she begged the gods to transform her into a mermaid so that she could always hope for his immortality. The gods heard her plea. Since then, she has been roaming the seas and asking sailors if King Alexander is alive. If the answer is negative, she causes a storm and sinks the ship, while if it is positive, she calms the sea and protects the ship.

Historical/Cultural Context: The legend of Thessaloniki, Alexander’s half-sister, belongs to the post-classical folk cycle of the “Alexander Romance” (3rd century CE onward), a body of popular stories that spread throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. In Byzantine and Ottoman times, these stories were reinterpreted in oral folklore, blending historical figures with mythical motifs. The mermaid-sister tradition in particular is tied to maritime culture in northern Greece, especially around Thessaloniki and the Aegean, where seafarers passed down the tale across generations. The story reflects not only admiration for Alexander as an immortal cultural hero but also the symbolic importance of the sea in Greek life: a space of danger and salvation, testing human respect, truthfulness, and courage.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Human dignity** — Thessaloniki’s transformation shows the deep emotional bond of loyalty and love, elevating her human grief into eternal remembrance.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — She protects sailors who honor her brother, safeguarding human life at sea.
- ☑ **Tolerance** — The legend blends historical memory, myth, and maritime folklore, showing openness to diverse traditions.
- ☑ **Respect for nature / harmony with environment** — The sea is personified, embodying both danger and protection, depending on human response.

Sociological / Literary Significance

- Preserves the memory of Alexander as a timeless cultural hero in Greek and European tradition.
- Connects history, myth, and seafaring life into a single narrative.
- Symbolizes the moral power of loyalty and remembrance.
- Reflects maritime culture, where respect for the sea ensures survival.
- Encourages intergenerational storytelling (still told by sailors in modern Greece).

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Ireland — *Merrow Legends* (mermaid-like beings testing sailors).

Shared motifs/values: Sea spirits, human–supernatural encounters, protective versus destructive forces depending on respect.

Key difference(s): In the Greek tale, the mermaid is tied to a historical figure (Alexander), while in Irish tradition the merrows belong fully to mythic folklore.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression



Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older generations recall this legend as one of the most enchanting Greek sea tales. They remember the Gorgona asking sailors, "Does Alexander the Great live?"—and saving or destroying ships depending on their answer. For elders, the mermaid sister symbolizes eternal guardianship and the enduring memory of national pride.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people reinterpret the Gorgona as a mythic protector of the Aegean, blending tradition with modern ecological consciousness. She is reimagined as a spirit safeguarding the sea against pollution and climate change. In digital art and animation, she appears as a symbol of identity—half-human, half-mythic, bridging past and present.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Polish participants compared her to the Mermaid of Warsaw, seeing both as civic protectors who unite land and sea. Spanish learners noted similarities with water nymphs in Iberian legends. The dialogue highlighted how mermaid figures across Europe embody care, continuity, and the blending of myth with collective identity.

Conclusion

The legend of Alexander's mermaid sister highlights enduring values of love, loyalty, and protection. It bridges history with folklore, reminding us that respect, remembrance, and truthful words can bring harmony, while disrespect or denial can unleash chaos.

1.3 Spanish legends

1.3.1 The Lovers of Teruel

Country: Spain

Legend Title (original language): Los Amantes de Teruel

Synopsis: In 13th-century Teruel, two young people—Isabel de Segura and Diego de Marcilla—fell deeply in love. Isabel's wealthy family forbade their union because Diego lacked fortune. Given five years to earn riches, Diego departed. Isabel, believing him lost,



eventually married another. On his return, Diego begged for a kiss, but Isabel, bound by honor, refused. Heartbroken, Diego died instantly. At his funeral, Isabel bent to kiss him and collapsed lifeless beside him. The townspeople buried the two together, honoring their eternal love.

Historical/Cultural Context: The story is rooted in Teruel, Aragón, with early references dating to the 13th century. In 1555, mummified remains said to be the Lovers were discovered in San Pedro Church, giving the tale material grounding. Since then, the legend has inspired plays, operas, and an annual medieval festival (“Las Bodas de Isabel de Segura”), making it central to Teruel’s identity.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Human dignity** — The tale emphasizes the worth of love across social barriers.
- ☑ **Equality** — Challenges rigid class structures that prevent unions of affection.
- ☑ **Justice** — Critiques unfair social norms that destroy individual happiness.
- ☑ **Solidarity / community** — The city mourns collectively, showing empathy and shared grief.

Sociological / Literary Significance

The Lovers of Teruel reflect enduring cultural values of fidelity, honor, and the tragedy of imposed inequality. Their story has been preserved in chronicles, dramatized in 16th–19th century literature, and remains an active festival tradition, keeping intergenerational storytelling alive.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Romeo and Juliet (Italy/England tradition)

Shared motifs/values: star-crossed lovers, death caused by social/familial barriers.

Key difference(s): Teruel's story emphasizes class and honor, while Shakespeare's play focuses on family feuds.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older generations in Aragón recall being told the tragic tale of Isabel and Diego during local festivities or school lessons, often while visiting the Mausoleum of the Lovers. For them, the story was a moral lesson about the weight of honor and the injustice of social divisions. Many seniors highlight how the annual festival *Las Bodas de Isabel de Segura* kept the memory alive, blending folklore with living tradition.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people reinterpret the legend through theatre, cosplay, and short videos on platforms like TikTok, often portraying Isabel and Diego as symbols of authentic love challenged by unfair structures. Some see the story as a critique of outdated social norms and imagine alternative endings where the lovers defy class barriers. The legend also inspires digital storytelling projects in schools, where students use VR and animation to “reunite” the lovers.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

All learners compared the tale to *Romeo and Juliet*, noting the universal tragedy of lovers torn apart by external pressures. Greek trainees pointed to parallels with Byzantine

romances where duty overrides love. In all cases, participants recognized shared European values of dignity, equality, and justice, while reflecting on how modern society aspires to overcome such rigid barriers.

Conclusion

The legend concludes with the timeless lesson that love and human dignity transcend social class and material wealth. Isabel and Diego's fate reminds us of the cost of rigid societal norms, urging modern audiences to value equality, compassion, and the freedom to choose love over convention.

1.3.2 The Seven Infantes of Lara

Country: Spain

Legend Title (original language): Los Siete Infantes de Lara

Synopsis: In medieval Castile, the seven sons (infantes) of Gonzalo Gustioz and Doña Sancha—the “Infantes de Lara”—are embroiled in a family feud. Their uncle, Ruy Velázquez, plots against them, and through betrayal and intrigue all seven are deceived into confronting Muslim forces and are slain. Their severed heads are sent to Córdoba, while their father receives them in grief. Later, one son, Mudarra (born of a secret union), avenges them by killing Ruy Velázquez, thus restoring family honor.

Historical/Cultural Context: The legend of the Seven Infantes de Lara is preserved in medieval Castilian chronicles, first appearing in the *Primera Crónica General* compiled before 1289 and later retold in the *Segunda Crónica General* and subsequent texts. Scholars such as Ramón Menéndez Pidal have argued that these accounts likely derive from an older *cantar de gesta*—a heroic epic poem that has since been lost but whose themes and narrative structures echo in the preserved versions. Over the centuries, the story moved beyond the chronicles into the *Romancero Viejo*, the corpus of traditional Spanish ballads, where it was sung and transmitted orally. Its enduring popularity ensured adaptations in Golden Age theater and later literature, securing its place as one of the foundational legends of medieval Castile and a lasting component of Spain's cultural memory.

Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Justice / rule of law** — The legend highlights the consequences of betrayal, rightful vengeance, and moral order.
- ☑ **Human dignity** — Even in death, the infantes' fates are mourned, honoring their memory.



☑ **Cultural heritage** — It is part of Spain's medieval epic tradition and collective memory across centuries.

Sociological / Literary Significance

The legend of the Seven Infantes of Lara captures central themes of medieval Castilian society: the bonds of kinship, the consequences of betrayal, and the pursuit of honor through vengeance. It reflects how oral tradition preserved family feuds and border conflicts with al-Andalus, turning them into narratives of moral and social order. Over time, the story was not only a record of blood feud but also a didactic tale: loyalty to one's lineage and the restoration of justice were presented as communal values. Its migration from lost epic poetry into chronicles, romances, and theater shows how the legend adapted across genres, ensuring intergenerational transmission. For audiences, the story continued to affirm notions of collective identity, the dignity of noble lineage, and the need for justice against treachery — values that still resonate when the tale is remembered today.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: The Song of Roland (France)

Shared motifs/values: betrayal leading to massacre, heroic sacrifice in battle, and the preservation of honor through memory and song. Both traditions turn historical frontier conflicts into epic narratives that affirm justice, loyalty, and communal identity.

Key difference(s): The Song of Roland emphasizes Christian unity against external foes, while *The Seven Infantes of Lara* focuses more on internal treachery within a family, highlighting the dangers of betrayal from within one's own kin.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Elders in Castile recall ballads of the Infantes sung by grandparents or recited in history classes, often emphasizing betrayal within the family as a cautionary tale. For many, the story represented loyalty to kin and the tragedy of dishonour. They often remember the figure of Mudarra, the avenging son, as a symbol of justice restored.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people engage with the legend by transforming it into podcasts, graphic novels, and even role-playing games that dramatize themes of betrayal and revenge. For them, the story resonates as a narrative about trust, resilience, and justice. Some reinterpret the Infantes not only as victims but as martyrs whose deaths underscore the destructive power of internal divisions.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Greek learners linked the legend to the ancient legend of king Agamemnon's slaying by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus –being Agamemnon's cousin- as soon as he returned from the Trojan War, and the subsequent revenge by Orestes, Agamemnon's son, focusing on the shared motif of massacre and betrayal. Polish trainees compared it to legends of resilience under foreign partitions, showing how memory of injustice can unify a community. Participants agreed that the story affirms solidarity and the pursuit of justice across generations.

Conclusion

The tragedy of the Infantes concludes with the restoration of justice through Mudarra's vengeance, symbolizing that betrayal and injustice ultimately demand redress. The tale preserves the medieval values of honor and loyalty while inviting reflection on unity and the dangers of internal division.

1.3.3 The Lizard / Dragon of Jaén

Country: Spain

Legend Title (original language): El Lagarto de la Malena (OR “Lagarto de Jaén”)

Synopsis: In Jaén, a monstrous “lagarto” (giant reptile / serpent / dragon) took up residence near a spring or cave by the Magdalena area, terrorizing locals by preying on animals and possibly people. The townspeople, desperate, sought a solution. In one version, a condemned prisoner offered to kill it in exchange for his freedom. He used a trail of bread leading the creature to the town square, where he substituted one piece of bread for a sack of gunpowder (or explosives). The beast devoured the sack and exploded. Another version has a shepherd trick it with a sheep skin stuffed with burning tinder. In a third version, a knight wearing mirrored armor dazzles the creature with reflections and strikes it. The beast is destroyed, and its legend persists in Jaén's collective identity.

Historical/Cultural Context: The Lagarto de la Malena is one of the best-known folk traditions of Jaén, in Andalusia, and has been passed down for centuries as part of the city's collective identity. References to the legend already appear in the 17th century, including an anonymous text that described Jaén as having its “vital functions distributed like the body of a dragon,” linking the very image of the city to the monstrous creature. Over time, the tale became symbolically tied to Jaén itself: the lagarto is not only remembered in oral storytelling but also represented in local architecture, depicted in murals and sculptures, and celebrated in sayings and festivals. In this way, what began as a frightening story of a destructive beast was transformed into a civic emblem, making the lagarto both a guardian of memory and a symbol of local pride.

Identified EU Values

- ☒ **Cultural heritage** — The legend is preserved in local identity, tourism, iconography, and collective memory.
- ☒ **Solidarity / community** — The community's collaborative effort to rid the threat shows collective courage and resourcefulness.





☑ **Human dignity** — The defeat of the monster symbolizes human triumph over fear and oppression.

Sociological / Literary Significance

The legend of the Lagarto de la Malena illustrates how communities transform a tale of fear into a marker of identity. In Jaén, the monster that once symbolized chaos became a civic emblem, present in sayings, school stories, urban sculptures, and local festivities. The survival of different narrative versions—sometimes featuring a knight, sometimes a shepherd, or even a condemned prisoner—shows the flexibility of oral tradition to adapt to social context while preserving the same moral lesson: courage and wit can overcome terror. By integrating the lagarto into cultural practices and civic symbols, Jaén turned a destructive beast into a unifying figure, reaffirming the role of folklore in shaping belonging and collective pride.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: The Wawel Dragon (Poland), Oedipus and the Sphinx (Greece)

Shared motifs/values: a monstrous creature terrorizes a community, ultimately defeated not by brute strength but through human cunning and ingenuity. Both legends emphasize collective survival, the triumph of human agency over chaos, and the transformation of fear into cultural identity.

Key difference(s): The Wawel Dragon and the Oedipus and the Sphinx legend are tied to a city's founding myth and highlight a humble shoemaker/or traveler as hero, while the Lagarto de la Malena is linked to local identity in Jaén and survives through multiple variants (knight, shepherd, prisoner), reflecting oral tradition's adaptability.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older residents of Jaén recall being told the story of the Lagarto de la Malena as children, often as a bedtime story or during school visits to the Magdalena spring. They remember it both as a frightening tale and as a source of civic pride, with the lagarto appearing in local festivals, murals, and sayings. Seniors emphasize that the story taught them that wit and courage are as powerful as strength.

Youth Perspectives:

Young people reinterpret the lagarto in playful ways, creating comics, street art, and video games where the creature becomes a guardian of Jaén rather than a threat. Some environmental projects use the lagarto as a symbol of protecting nature, reimagining the beast as an endangered animal rather than a monster. Digital animations and AR apps place the lagarto within city tours, turning folklore into interactive heritage.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

Polish learners compared the legend to Kraków's Wawel Dragon, noting the shared motif of defeating a beast through cleverness. Greek trainees linked it to the legend of the hero Perseus who saved princess Andromeda and the country from the sea monster

that tormented the region and threatened to devour the princess. The dialogue highlighted how legends of monsters often evolve into civic symbols, transforming fear into shared identity.

Conclusion

This legend ends in the triumph of courage and intelligence over chaos. The community's collective wit transforms fear into identity, showing that even monstrous challenges can become symbols of resilience, creativity, and civic pride.

1.3.4 The Legend of Don Juan Tenorio

Country: Spain

Legend Title (original language): Don Juan Tenorio / El Burlador de Sevilla

Synopsis: Don Juan Tenorio is one of Spain's most famous legendary figures, remembered as a reckless nobleman who lived in Seville during the 17th century. Handsome, charming, and fearless, Don Juan made his name by seducing women of every class—noble ladies, peasants, and even nuns—mocking the honor of families and leaving a trail of shame and scandal behind him. His behavior was summed up by his defiant phrase, “*¡Tan largo me lo fiáis!*” (“You give me plenty of time!”), meaning he believed he could postpone forever the moment of justice or repentance. The story reaches its climax when Don Juan kills Don Gonzalo, the father of one of the women he dishonored. Later, he comes across a statue of Don Gonzalo in a cemetery and, in arrogant mockery, invites it to dinner. To his shock, the statue accepts—and during the eerie banquet, the stone figure rises to drag Don Juan to hell. His dramatic punishment became a moral lesson: no matter how powerful or charming, no man can escape justice when he abuses others and scorns honor.

Historical/Cultural Context: The figure of Don Juan has roots in earlier European trickster and libertine traditions, but it was Tirso de Molina, a Spanish monk and playwright, who first gave the character a lasting literary form in *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (published c. 1630). Written during Spain's Golden Age of theater, the play reflected the moral anxieties of the Baroque era, contrasting seduction and excess with honor, repentance, and divine judgment. Don Juan's story quickly transcended Spain: it inspired Molière's *Dom Juan* in France (1665), Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* in Vienna (1787), and numerous adaptations in literature, theater, and film. Through these versions, Don Juan became one of Spain's most influential cultural exports, simultaneously admired as a symbol of irresistible charisma and condemned as a warning of the inevitable consequences of dishonor and arrogance.



Identified EU Values

- ☑ **Justice / rule of law** — The supernatural punishment of Don Juan demonstrates that even the powerful cannot escape accountability.
- ☑ **Human dignity** — The violation of women's honor and trust highlights the need to protect personal dignity against exploitation.
- ☑ **Cultural heritage** — Don Juan is a pan-European figure, rooted in Spanish origins but influential across the continent's artistic and moral traditions.

Sociological / Literary Significance

The legend of Don Juan addresses deep moral and social anxieties: the abuse of privilege, disregard for women's dignity, and the consequences of unchecked desire. As a literary figure, Don Juan became a mirror of European values, simultaneously admired for his charisma and condemned for his immorality. His supernatural punishment underscores the cultural lesson that justice—divine or human—must prevail. The tale's countless adaptations across Europe reveal its power as a shared cultural myth, one that continually provokes reflection on freedom, responsibility, and the limits of transgression.

Comparative Note ("Similar Legends" across EU)

Similar to: Faust (Germany)

Shared motifs/values: both Don Juan and Faust are legendary figures who pursue forbidden desires—lust in Don Juan's case, knowledge and power in Faust's—only to face supernatural punishment for their excesses.

Key difference(s): Don Juan represents social and moral corruption punished by divine justice, while Faust embodies intellectual ambition and the search for transcendence, punished by a pact with the devil.

Illustrations / Artistic Expression





Reflections & Intergenerational Narratives

Seniors' Testimonies:

Older generations in Seville and across Spain recall first learning of Don Juan not only as a local story but also as a classic of Spanish Golden Age theatre. For them, Don Juan embodied both fascination and warning: he was admired for his charisma yet feared as a model of immorality. Seniors often remember attending stagings of *Don Juan Tenorio* around All Saints' Day, when the play traditionally became part of cultural life.

Youth Perspectives:

Today's youth encounter Don Juan in modern adaptations: opera, cinema, memes, and even online debates about toxic masculinity. Many reinterpret him not as a hero but as a cautionary figure illustrating abuse of privilege and disrespect for dignity. Students use digital media to critique the legend, recasting Don Juan as a lesson in accountability and justice.

Cross-Country Dialogue:

All learners compared Don Juan with Faust, highlighting how both characters pursue forbidden desires and meet supernatural punishment. The adaptation of the legend in Molière's *Dom Juan* inspired a dialogue about how national legends become part of European shared culture. Across discussions, participants emphasized justice and dignity as central lessons: Don Juan's downfall illustrates that no one, however privileged, is beyond moral responsibility.

Conclusion

Don Juan's downfall delivers the ultimate moral reckoning: no power or charm can protect one from the consequences of moral corruption. His punishment serves as an enduring reminder that justice and respect for human dignity must prevail over arrogance and abuse.

2. Summary: Common EU values depicted in legends

The following table presents the common European Union values identified in the legends described in the Catalogue. It connects each value with the legend and the respective country where the story originates.

Common EU Value	Legend	Country
Human Dignity	The Wawel Dragon	Poland
Human Dignity	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Human Dignity	Legend of Mr. Twardowski	Poland
Human Dignity	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Poland
Human Dignity	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Greece
Human Dignity	The Bridge of Arta	Greece
Human Dignity	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Human Dignity	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great	Greece
Human Dignity	The Lovers of Teruel	Spain
Human Dignity	The Seven Infantes of Lara	Spain
Human Dignity	The Lizard/Dragon of Jaén	Spain
Human Dignity	The Legend of Don Juan Tenorio	Spain
Freedom	The Wawel Dragon	Poland
Freedom	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Freedom	Legend of Mr. Twardowski	Poland
Freedom	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Poland
Freedom	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Greece
Freedom	Theseus and the Minotaur	Greece
Freedom	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Justice	The Wawel Dragon	Poland
Justice	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Greece
Justice	Theseus and the Minotaur	Greece
Justice	The Bridge of Arta	Greece
Justice	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Justice	The Lovers of Teruel	Spain



Justice	The Seven Infantes of Lara	Spain
Justice	The Legend of Don Juan Tenorio	Spain
Solidarity / Community	The Wawel Dragon	Poland
Solidarity / Community	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Solidarity / Community	Legend of Mr. Twardowski	Poland
Solidarity / Community	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Poland
Solidarity / Community	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Greece
Solidarity / Community	Theseus and the Minotaur	Greece
Solidarity / Community	The Bridge of Arta	Greece
Solidarity / Community	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Solidarity / Community	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great	Greece
Solidarity / Community	The Lovers of Teruel	Spain
Solidarity / Community	The Lizard/Dragon of Jaén	Spain
Solidarity / Community	The Seven Infantes of Lara	Spain
Gender Equality	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Gender Equality	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Poland
Gender Equality	Theseus and the Minotaur	Greece
Gender Equality	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Human Rights	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Human Rights	Legend of Mr. Twardowski	Poland
Human Rights	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Poland
Human Rights	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Greece
Pluralism / Tolerance / Respect for Diversity	The Mermaid of Warsaw	Poland
Pluralism / Tolerance / Respect for Diversity	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Pluralism / Tolerance / Respect for Diversity	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great	Greece
Respect for Nature / Harmony with Environment	Theseus and the Minotaur	Greece
Respect for Nature / Harmony with Environment	The Bridge of Arta	Greece
Respect for Nature / Harmony with Environment	The Fairy's Headdress	Greece
Respect for Nature / Harmony with Environment	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great	Greece
Cultural Heritage	The Seven Infantes of Lara	Spain
Cultural Heritage	The Lizard/Dragon of Jaén	Spain
Cultural Heritage	The Legend of Don Juan Tenorio	Spain



The following table compiles all legends mentioned in the Catalogue, including the main legends from Poland, Greece, and Spain, as well as comparative references from other European Union countries. Each entry lists the country, the legend, its linked legend(s) mentioned, and the shared European values or moral themes they reflect.

Country	Legend Mentioned	Linked Legend(s)	Shared Themes / EU Values
Poland	The Wawel Dragon	Theseus and the Minotaur (Greece), Lizard/Dragon of Jaén (Spain), Oedipus and the Sphinx (Greece)	Cleverness over brute force, liberation from oppression, civic courage, solidarity.
Poland	The Mermaid of Warsaw	The Little Mermaid (Denmark), The Fairy's Headdress (Greece), The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great (Greece)	Freedom, inclusiveness, gender equality, pluralism, harmony between worlds.
Poland	Legend of Mr. Twardowski	Faust (Germany), Prometheus and the Gift of Fire (Greece), Don Juan Tenorio (Spain)	Moral limits of ambition, knowledge, justice, dignity, responsibility.
Poland	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle	Bridge of Arta (Greece), The Lovers of Teruel (Spain)	Sacrifice for love, freedom of choice, gender equality, endurance.
Greece	Prometheus and the Gift of Fire	Pan Twardowski (Poland), Don Juan Tenorio (Spain)	Defiance of power, moral responsibility, innovation, freedom, dignity.
Greece	Theseus and the Minotaur	The Wawel Dragon (Poland)	Justice, freedom, heroism, solidarity, civic responsibility.
Greece	The Bridge of Arta	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle (Poland), The Lovers of Teruel (Spain)	Sacrifice, community survival, justice, gender equality.
Greece	The Fairy's Headdress	The Mermaid of Warsaw (Poland), The Selkie Bride (Ireland)	Freedom, respect for nature, justice, tolerance, gender equality.



Greece	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great	The Mermaid of Warsaw (Poland), Merrow Legends (Ireland)	Loyalty, solidarity, harmony with nature, respect for diversity.
Spain	The Lovers of Teruel	Romeo and Juliet (Italy/England), The Bridge of Arta (Greece)	Human dignity, equality, justice, love transcending barriers.
Spain	The Seven Infantes of Lara	The Song of Roland (France), Greek legends of Agamemnon/Orestes	Justice, loyalty, honor, solidarity, collective identity.
Spain	The Lizard/Dragon of Jaén	The Wawel Dragon (Poland), Oedipus and the Sphinx (Greece)	Solidarity, human dignity, cultural identity, courage over fear.
Spain	The Legend of Don Juan Tenorio	Faust (Germany), Prometheus (Greece)	Justice, human dignity, moral responsibility, accountability.
Denmark	The Little Mermaid	The Mermaid of Warsaw (Poland)	Freedom, female empowerment, sacrifice, love, solidarity.
Germany	Faust	Legend of Mr. Twardowski (Poland), Don Juan Tenorio (Spain)	Knowledge, temptation, justice, moral accountability.
Romania	Master Manole	The Bridge of Arta (Greece)	Sacrifice for the common good, endurance, justice, community survival.
Ireland	The Selkie Bride	The Fairy's Headdress (Greece)	Freedom, respect for nature, coexistence, dignity.
Ireland	Merrow Legends	The Mermaid Sister of Alexander the Great (Greece)	Harmony with nature, truth, protection, respect for diversity.
France	The Song of Roland	The Seven Infantes of Lara (Spain)	Justice, loyalty, heroism, communal memory.
Italy / England	Romeo and Juliet	The Lovers of Teruel (Spain)	Human dignity, equality, love vs. societal constraint.





Greece (as comparative)	Bridge of Arta	Legend of Doggy's Rock Castle (Poland)	Sacrifice, love, oppression, endurance.
Poland (as comparative)	Wawel Dragon	Theseus and the Minotaur (Greece), Lizard/Dragon of Jaén (Spain)	Cleverness, civic protection, shared identity themes.

3. General conclusion

The examination of several legends from Poland, Greece, and Spain, as well as other European countries demonstrates that the legends of Europe, though born in different languages and landscapes, share a common moral and cultural foundation. Through dragons and mermaids, builders and lovers, heroes and tricksters, these stories reveal that European peoples have long embraced shared ideals—human dignity, freedom, justice, solidarity, equality, respect for diversity, etc—centuries before these values were written into law.

Across Poland, Greece, Spain, and beyond, the legends converge around the same truths: that courage may take the form of wisdom, that compassion binds communities together, and that even mythical beings remind us of our duty to respect nature and one another. When viewed collectively, these tales form a mosaic of European identity—one that celebrates both unity and diversity, tradition and renewal.

By connecting the oral traditions of the past with the digital creativity of the present, European peoples can preserve not only stories but also the living spirit of Europe. This perspective reminds us that cultural heritage is not static but continuously reinterpreted by each generation. Through these legends, Europe's common values become more than words—they become living narratives, teaching, inspiring, and uniting people across borders.

