

Classical Greek Literature: The pedagogical dimension of its offer

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The study of the Classical Greek Language and Literature should emphasize its anthropocentric and sociological orientation. The reader student, as well as the educator or any other scholar of any age, while approaching the Classical Greek texts, comes in contact with the culture, the society, the history, and the human action and reaction of antiquity, and meanwhile receives and studies perpetual messages. For this reason, contact with the Classical Greek Language and Literature is approached as a dynamic process, during which today's modern reader is called to examine, study and explore them, contributing to the cultivation of her/his critical thought and by extension to the best interpretation of the world, giving also emphasis on the critical reading of the texts through the consideration of nontextual elements, which will focus on the ideas and positions of the author.

In this frame, this work will focus on the importance of upraising the role of the scholar of Classical Greek texts to a critical reader on another dimension of their offer, that is pedagogy. It will be attempted to illuminate pedagogical principles through the Classical Greek texts and will be analysed how they converse with pedagogical principles proposed over the centuries up to the modern age. Finally, an effort will be made to present teaching methods in the course of Ancient Greek beginning from the elementary and stepping to the end of secondary education, relying on the propositions of ancient and modern writers - educators.

1.

The study and teaching of ancient Greek texts is an important educational process for students and educators, actively engaging scholars in the knowledge of the world they offer, enabling them to formulate conclusions on the interpretation of reality through the activation of their higher cognitive functions (Matsangouras, 2011). This strengthens the critical thinking of the scholars with the ancient Greek texts and ensures the conditions for the activation of their spiritual skills. In this regard, the teachers – educators can be strengthened in an additional strong point of their role, by exploiting all those elements that will cause a fruitful reflection and enhance their pedagogical proficiency.

Plato is particularly concerned with the subject of education, which cannot be intended merely to ensure life, but to rise to perfection, the uplift of the soul to the Highest Good (*Politeia*, 518 b-d), through the "roaming" of the soul, which cannot be accomplished without the proper pedagogue, who will "gestate the soul.. anew," and who having been mentally fertilized (*Symposium*, 209 b-c), ought to approach the young man "while partaking the Good and speaking about it", and who will behave as a model of morals. Furthermore, Plato proposes that education begins even before birth, and suggests pregnant women do

specific exercises and asks to test children in terms of the strength of their character (*Laws*, 413 C-D) and not of their ability to digest information; in addition, he promotes the game's educational program: "not violence, thou excellent, but raise the children with games." (*Laws*, 7th book).

The above are only a few, but important hints in relation to the pedagogy that the reader could derive from the classical Greek texts.

The purpose of this work is to adopt an interpretative practice in the study of the c Greek text, which will illuminate the views of the ancient writers in matters of pedagogy, will study the convergence with pedagogical principles proposed by educators over the time until the modern age, and will propose to teachers to learn and adopt teaching pedagogical ways to enable them to use the Classical Greek texts.

As Vasilarakis (1997:32) notes for teachers: "[...] *You are not alone with the children and the text that you will teach [...]. Both you and the children pre-exist in the space of communication, which is the classroom, the space of the page that is the text. You pre-exist as subjects of a dialogue with the environment of the family, friends, village, city, linguistic community, history, cultural spacetime...*"

2.

In the interpretative approach of the ancient world, the exploitation of literary theory can help by opening new interpretive streets and giving the opportunity to readers/scholars to familiarize themselves with criteria of comparative reading of classical Greek and modern texts. The Theory of Literature opens up new perspectives with new ways of reading classical texts, providing a refresher in traditional criticism (Culler, 2000:65). Meanwhile, the values and experiences of the critical reader do not need to be identified with those shown in readings. On the contrary, the dialogue between two and/or more different voices will be more beneficial and will allow the cultivation of personal reading and experience.

The main orientations of this reading theory are two, the first is the aesthetics of recruitment of H. R. Jauss and the second is the theory of the reader response of W. Iser.

Jauss' basic working hypothesis was the reconstruction of the expectations horizon of a given reading community and the description of changes in the horizon of understanding and interpretation at the work of the historical reader (Jauss, 1995:12). He argued that understanding a literary work by his first reader is preserved, enriched and altered by the different perceptions that prevail from generation to generation (Jauss, 1970: 20). According to the aesthetics of the recruitment, the interpretation must serve three objectives: Comprehending, interpretation and application. In particular, comprehending is based on the investigation of their readership and differences, as well as on the identification of the area created by the merging of the horizons of text and readers. The concept of *explanation* rests on the intertextual relationships, which can bring about a change in the horizon. Finally, *application* is linked to the enhancement of the link of the reading experience with the real social and historical experience of readers (Frydaki, 2003:164-165).

Iser, in turn, emphasized the reader-interpreter's response to the literary text (Holub, 2004:146), claiming that the individual consciousness is energetic and that is why the reader does not discover the meaning but produces it through its projection (Frydaki, 2003:166). The literary text is recognized no longer as such, but as an empty uncertainty which the reader (Iser, 1976:312) is required to complete. According to Iser's theory, the process of reading a text passes through four levels. The first is called recruitment and is based on the first perception acquired by the reader about the text at the level of the unconscious. The second level refers to the *interpretation* and is linked to the filling of the undefined gaps of the text through the imaginary views of the reader. The third level is based on the *repertoire*, that is to say, these are the "strategies that include the inherent structure of the text and the acts of understanding that triggers this structure in the reader (Holub, 2004:151-153). Finally, the fourth level refers to the *understanding* and awakened conscience of the reader, who can now act socially and politically (Frydaki, 2003).

The methodology of teaching is directly linked to the theory of edification and education, in which the broader social orientations and the achievements of culture are reflected. Thus, today, it is not possible to approach and highlight the teaching methods, without considering the needs that it has brought to the fore and the directions it has shaped in the educational field.

The ancient Greek Literature is a source of spiritual wealth, a treasure trove of wisdom and inexhaustible moral lessons over the time. Given this assumption, we wanted to explore another aspect of the multidimensional offer of ancient texts, which is the pedagogical dimension.

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