

# КЛАСИЧЕСКОТО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В КОНТЕКСТ

СБОРНИК ОТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНА НАУЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ  
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## ПРЕДГОВОР

Настоящият сборник включва докладите от международната научна конференция „Класическото образование в контекст“, проведена на 4 и 5 май 2006 г. в Софийския университет „Св. Климент Охридски“. По стил и съдържание тя се отличаваше от традиционния облик на повечето тематични форуми, тъй като представляваше част от цикъла на тригодишен международен проект<sup>1</sup> на катедра „Класическа филология“, спонсориран от новосъздадената програма „Регионален семинар за отлично качество на преподаването“ на Институт „Отворено общество“. Както подсказва самото наименование на програмата, формата на участие, върху която беше поставен основният акцент, беше не научният доклад, респективно научното съобщение, а приносът на всеки лектор – с теоретична разработка или с демонстрация на образователен модел – към академичния дебат за реформите, през които преминава в началото на XXI в. обучението по класическа античност.

Проектът „Контекстуализация на класическите изследвания. Обновяване на образователните практики и идеи (2005–2008)“ имаше за цел реформа на университетското преподаване по класически езици и античност чрез създаването на международна академична общност от млади преподаватели от Източна и Югоизточна Европа и лектори от България, Гърция, Германия, Великобритания и САЩ, избрани не само заради научния им авторитет, но и заради прекия им ангажимент в разработването на концепция за обновяването на традиционните образователни модели. Ето защо основни акценти още в първите сесии на проекта бяха: критическият анализ на институционалната основа и на проблемите на Класическа филология като дисциплина; сравнителният преглед на учебните планове в Югоизточна Европа, Русия, Гърция, Германия и Великобритания; отварянето на специалността към информационните технологии и актуализирането на обучението по класическа античност.

Благодарение на интердисциплинарния облик на проекта, в който участваха преподаватели по класически езици, старогръцка и римска литература и култура, антична история и право, теология и философия, беше постигната

<sup>1</sup> Contextualizing Classics. Renewal of Teaching Practices and Concepts (2005–2008). Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching. Higher Education Support Program, Open Society Institute. Проектът, инициран от катедра Класическа филология, беше спонсориран от Институт „Отворено общество – Програма за подпомагане на висшето образование – Регионален семинар за отлично качество в преподаването“, с подкрепата и домакинството на Софийския университет.

прозрение каква именно смяна и какво ще бъде мястото ѝ в глобализирания свят. Това едва ли ще бъде възможно в непосредствено близко време. Но с каквато и нагласа да тръгнем към тази промяна, с програмния патос на Хумболтовия хуманизъм, с готовността за премахване на отстоявани граници и стандарти в името на интердисциплинарността или с прагматичното реформаторство на новия век, който вкара всички науки в едно скоростно платно, не бива покрай текста да забравяме контекста: промяната в отношението към античността е част и от промяната в интелектуалната история.

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## COULD CICERO'S CONCEPTION OF *HUMANITAS* BE APPLIED TO THE CURRENT REFORMS OF UNIVERSITY COURSES IN HUMANITIES?

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Nowadays too often Classics tend to be regarded as a remote and abstruse discipline that can only be studied by the brilliant few. It is unfortunate, for Classics and related disciplines are less difficult and more important than it is generally supposed.

This paper has two aims. The first is to assemble some evidences about Cicero's conception of *humanitas*. The second is to draw a rough outline of a possible application of Cicero's, and thus Roman concept of *humanitas* to the current reforms at European universities. It means to lay stress on a method for looking at studies in humanities not piecemeal, so that every discipline would stand alone, but as a system, similar to ancient Greek and Roman educational systems. Studies in humanities should not just improve students' basic knowledge and intellectual skills, but also endow students with the means to lead fuller lives, to enjoy the 'humanistic' aspect of education as an end in itself and to be better citizens<sup>1</sup>.

From Homer through the classical Greek authors the word ἄνθρωπος signified a creature that, although having some characteristics of the lower animals, nevertheless possessed powers and faculties above them. The Romans, likewise, in their most common usage of the word *homo*, identified thereby a creature superior to animals. According to Cicero, a *homo*, although an *animal*, is distinguished by being clear-sighted, keen, complex and many-sided<sup>2</sup>. Man was found to possess within himself the power to be of the greatest help or of the greatest harm to himself, either a god or a wolf, as Plautus said, *lupus est homo homini*<sup>3</sup>. The Greeks were familiar with this two-fold nature of man, and yet the word ἄνθρωπος seldom in classical times signified the 'noble' or 'humane' aspect of man. The Romans, however, early attached a positive meaning of 'humane' to the word *homo*, as it is shown by its use in the plays of Plautus and Terence<sup>4</sup>. The dramatist Terence, being close to the Scipionic Circle, expressed ideas that departed from the strictness of the old Roman *virtus*. In his dramas the words *humanus*, *humane*, and *humanitas* have reference to kindness and a forgiving spirit as op-

<sup>1</sup> See Coombs 1968: 17ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. Leg. 1, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Plaut. Asin. 495.

<sup>4</sup> Plaut. Asin. 495; Bacch. 1169; Trin. 447; Ter. Ad. 107-110; 734-736; 934; Heaut. 77.

posed to *severitas* and *vis*<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, the two elements constant in Cicero's presentation of character are, on the one hand, those qualities expressed by *constantia*, *gravitas*, *severitas* and, on the other, those expressed by *humanitas*, *suavitas*, *lepos* and *benevolentia*<sup>6</sup>. This ideal, combining as it did the qualities of human excellence developed both by the Greeks and the Romans, was comprehensive and many-sided. Thus, the word *humanitas* often signified that characteristic of a human being, which marks him as a possessor of *mores compositos*<sup>7</sup>.

It was in the second century BC, after Rome had become mistress of the Hellenized world, that Greek culture had a stronger impact on Roman civilization. After Scipio had increased his fame as a political and military leader, he continued his study of Greek culture by becoming a pupil of the Stoic philosopher, Panaetius. In his message to the Scipionic Circle Panaetius put the chief emphasis on the importance of *homo* as such<sup>8</sup>.

Cicero, who has been called the most brilliant mental descendant of the Scipionic Circle, expressed in the best way the ideals of that group and the concept of Roman *humanitas*, and gave his own contribution to it. He described Scipio and Laelius as 'reformed' types of Romans, who adhered to a middle course and who became not sterner men, but gentler, wiser, more cheerful and agreeable (*moderatissimus, lenissimus, sapientior, comior, iucundior, aequabilitas in omni vita, multa hilaritas*)<sup>9</sup>.

The character of Scipio Aemilianus was representative of the humanizing and refining influence of Greek culture on the stern and practical qualities of Roman character. In the second speech *In Verrem*, Cicero calls Scipio a *homo doctissimus atque humanissimus* in contrast to Verres who was *sine ulla bona arte, sine humanitate, sine ingenio, sine litteris*<sup>10</sup>. Culture and learning are among man's most important achievements and the word *humanitas* was often used by the Romans with special reference to this *animi cultura*<sup>11</sup>.

Cicero's *vir illa humanitate praeditus* was expected to display by his actions, speech, and bearing that he united in true harmony the highest intellectual and moral qualities of man and that he was motivated by an imperative moral duty (*honestum*) and an inner sense of propriety (*decorum*)<sup>12</sup>. Man possesses certain elementary human feelings which make him considerate of his fellow-man and willing to help him, no matter who or where he may be. Although Laelius had

<sup>5</sup> Ter. Ad. 141-145; And. 107-116; Heaut. 97-112; Hec. 549-556.

<sup>6</sup> Cic. Att. 4, 6, 1; 6, 1, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Cic. Div. 1, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Nybakken 1939: 400.

<sup>9</sup> Cic. Arch. 16; Mur. 65; Off. 1.90, 108.

<sup>10</sup> Cic. Verr. 2, 4, 98.

<sup>11</sup> Aul. Gel. 13, 17.

<sup>12</sup> Cic. Fin. 2, 45-47; Off. 1, 93-141.

attained the Stoic ἀπάθεια, that affection for a fellow-man (*humanitas*) would not allow him to be calm and unaffected by Scipio's death<sup>13</sup>. In defending Roscius against the charge of a brutal crime, the murder of his own father, Cicero states that the same universal human feeling is strong enough to have prevented the defendant from committing such a deed against any fellow-man, for, as Cicero says, *magna est enim vis humanitatis*<sup>14</sup>. The word *humanitas*, used by Cicero, in its broad sense includes, and often in a more restricted sense denotes qualities such as *clementia*, *mansuetudo*, *benignitas*<sup>15</sup>, and the associated human refinements of courtesy, good taste and humor (*comitas, facilitas, lepos*)<sup>16</sup>.

Cicero would deny the name of human being to one who does not share in the *societas humanitatis* and who does not make his main interest the welfare of individual and humanity<sup>17</sup>. All virtues are in harmony with this universal brotherhood of men, and even law has its foundations in the fact that a man should love a man<sup>18</sup>. Stoicism also promoted that meaning of *humanitas* which dealt with the universal brotherhood of men and the associated idea of kindness. In stoic writers the word *humanitas* often denoted the qualities of kindness, geniality and forgiveness. For example, Seneca, by quoting Terence's words, *homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*, pleads for a universal sympathy and fellow-feeling among all men<sup>19</sup>.

A few Romans, only those of the upper class, could understand and appreciate a picture of ideal humanity. All the sterner qualities of the old Roman *virtus* and the high sense of duty to the state had not faded, but there was placed beside and above them a universal and higher duty, the content of which was called *humanitas*. Men like Scipio, or Cicero, as well as others in later times, invited foreign teachers to their home and were tolerant and sympathetic toward others', i.e. Greek ideals. It is useful even today to repeat that an intelligent view of the whole humanity demands an experience wider than that of one individual or of one nation.

The meaning of Cicero's *humanitas* is, therefore, of a large scope. The conception comprised broad universal human duties, extensive feelings of love and sympathy, refinement of living including beauty of social outward form, a rational application of virtuous modes of bearing and conduct, and enjoyment in literature, art and scholarship. Mere 'learning and training in the liberal arts' give a man the balanced development and those traits of character and conduct which made him

<sup>13</sup> Cic. Lael. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Cic. Rosc. Amer. 63.

<sup>15</sup> Cic. Manil. 42; Sull. 92; Mur. 65; Rep. 2, 27; Att. 12, 44, 1; 15, 1, 1; Fam. 11, 22.

<sup>16</sup> Cic. Mur. 66; Brut. 83-85; Off. 1, 145; Att. 1, 13, 1; Fam. 16, 21, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. Rep. 2, 48; Fin. 5, 65-66.

<sup>18</sup> Cic. Leg. 1, 43.

<sup>19</sup> Sen. Ep. 5, 4; 95, 52-53.

truly *humanus*, as Vitruvius argues<sup>20</sup>. In the sum of its meanings Cicero's conception of *humanitas* signified a *modus vivendi*. As Sihler says<sup>21</sup>, "Cicero was a cyclopedic nature, his ingenium had a certain universality... In a way he was the first of the Humanists". After Cicero's death no vigorous advocate of his conception of *humanitas* appeared. Later writers, partly due to Christian influence, used the word in making a contrast between the human and the divine, and in pointing out the moral faultiness and helplessness of man. Cicero's conception of *humanitas* faded and did not begin to show its light again until the time of the Renaissance.

Quintilian approached the broader Roman humanism, when he set forth his doctrine about the potential goodness of man, when he designed the *vir bonus* as one who earnestly tries to attain excellencies of *iustitia*, *fortitudo*, *abstinentia* and *pietas*<sup>22</sup>, and when he attached supreme importance to *doctrina* and learning<sup>23</sup>. Yet he was not interested in humanity and individual inner harmony, and for him the word *humanitas* was not filled with such significance as it was for Cicero. This seems to have been true in general regarding the use of the word at his time<sup>24</sup>.

In Quintilian's day the word *humanitas* was also applied to the excessive freedom which pupils enjoyed in a classroom. Should we regard it as an opposite meaning of an earlier signification of good manners and self-control? Not necessarily, especially if we have in mind the further development of pedagogical theory and practice, from the Renaissance till nowadays.

In Erasmus' concept of *humanitas*, incorporating the ideals of *philanthropia*, *mores hominis natura digni*, and *litterae humaniores*, has already been seen its Roman ancestral pattern<sup>25</sup>. In his educational principles aimed at creating 'a complete citizen', Vittorino – who gave to Cicero the highest place as a philosopher useful in actual life – is in remarkable agreement with Cicero's and Quintilian's ideals of a man who is not only a self-sufficient scholar but also an active participant in the affairs of men<sup>26</sup>. Cicero's attempt to discover the *honestum* of morality had a particular relevance and appeal for philosophers of the eighteenth century who were seeking to establish what they called the foundation of morality. One of those philosophers was Hume. He did some attempts to reconcile the foundation of morality, as he understood it, the sentiment of humanity, with the principles of utility and agreement. Mather's definition of twentieth century Humanism as "an attitude of a cultured, curious person versed in humane letters and tolerantly studious of his fellow men" almost adequately expresses Cicero's *humanitas*<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Vit. Praef. 9, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Sihler 1914: 464.

<sup>22</sup> Quint. Inst. Prooem. 12; 12, 17.

<sup>23</sup> Quint. Inst. 12, 1–10.

<sup>24</sup> Nybakken 1939: 412.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Woodward 1912: 36 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Mather 1930: 742.

Although the Greeks created and developed most of the ideals associated with the concept of idealistic mankind, it was the Romans, Cicero in the first place, who formulated a broad idea of 'Humanity' and expressed it in one word, *humanitas*<sup>28</sup>. It was not revived until the Renaissance and now it contains many of the maxims of Erasmus, Hume etc., and also of some living twentieth and twenty first century humanists.

Thus Cicero's conception of *humanitas* could be taken as one of the starting points in currently popular discussions about improving student rights, their role in a classroom and relations with teachers. To implement this concept in university programs should not require far-reaching changes in the system's academic structure, in the curriculum and teaching methods. It could be implemented as a first part of a course in the first year of studies or even as a one-semester course<sup>29</sup>.

Creative excitement about what could be achieved by the current reforms at European universities arose to challenge old methods<sup>30</sup>. However, in making new instructional models, we should not forget what we have learnt by using old methods and tools<sup>31</sup>. The majority of universities in Europe want to be competitive and to take part in the Bologna process. Yet one should be aware of a risk of pressure to make students complete worksheets rather than develop higher-order thinking skills<sup>32</sup>. As Bollinger argues: "While the last century witnessed a new demand for specialized research, prizing the experts' vertical mastery of a single field, the emerging global reality calls for new specialists who can synthesize a diversity of fields and draw quick connections among them"<sup>33</sup>.

To conclude, concerning its interdisciplinary nature, the importance and role of classical education today seems to be as relevant as it was centuries ago. The ideas of Cicero and many later humanists could be successfully applied to modern tendencies of teaching and learning Classics and other disciplines in humanities<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Nybakken 1939: 397.

<sup>29</sup> A course could be titled 'Roman Concepts of *Humanitas* and the Ideas of Humanism', or something similar.

<sup>30</sup> As Coombs argues: "No more than a grown man can suitably wear the clothes that fitted him as a child, can an educational system successfully resist the need to change itself when everything around it is changing". See Coombs 1968: 5ff.

<sup>31</sup> In my opinion, it is even more important to bear it in mind in the post-communistic countries. See Butora 2007: 48.

<sup>32</sup> Rapp discusses the problem in the realms of the USA educational system. See Rapp 2007: 24.

<sup>33</sup> Bollinger 2007: 27.

<sup>34</sup> The final version of this article is partly written within the scope of the project "The Modernization of the Western Balkan", no. 177009, financed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia.

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## CLASSICAL LANGUAGES AS A PART OF THE HUMANISTIC EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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The process of reforms in education, which is currently taking place in Macedonia, should also be an incentive for the re-examination of the current situation and strategy-building process for further development of specific disciplines. These disciplines match the terminology ‘humanistic education’ within the framework of the new model required by the University of St. Cyril and Methodius.

The arguments for the necessity of one well thought-out humanistic component of the study programs of all institutions for higher education are numerous, valid and indisputable<sup>1</sup>. It is for this reason that I believe it is unnecessary to repeat these arguments, and explain ‘why’ and ‘how many’ classical languages (e.g. Ancient Greek and Latin) are essential parts of the study program or better said: an indispensable element of that humanistic component.

It is more than clear that the languages of the Greek and Roman civilizations are of exceptional and fundamental meaning to the development of many social and natural sciences, on which today’s modern world is based. Latin and Ancient Greek languages form the foundation of professional terminologies in almost all scientific disciplines – social, natural and possibly even technical. In short, these are the languages of science, politics and education, the languages on which European scientific and professional literature was written until the middle of the nineteenth century, languages which form a basis for universal values and messages. These are the languages which ensure a higher level of general education and readiness of the student in accepting narrower professional knowledge and skills. For this reason, the essential question is not, “Should classical languages (and humanistic education in general) be included?” but “How intense and in what way exactly should classical languages be integrated into the new study programs of Macedonian universities?”

To be able to answer this question, attention should be focused on two aspects of the current situation of the frequency and intensity in which classical languages are studied. The **first aspect** is one that comes naturally – insuring unity or continuity with the reform of the secondary education. The **second aspect** is the comparison and possible compatibility with occurrence of classical languages at universities of other countries.

<sup>1</sup> Just as a reminder: the term *humanitas* in Classical Latin means ‘humanity’, ‘human rights’, ‘refinement’, ‘nobility’, but it also means ‘human dignity’, ‘education’, ‘ability, readiness to be involved in the sciences’, ‘readiness for higher knowledge and education’.