



The Philosophical Text from Antiquity to Modernity

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Abstract

This article is a reflection on the philosophical text in its context of development and importance, from antiquity to modernity. The philosophical text is essential for a meaningful learning of students in the classroom, its reading, interpretation and hermeneutics.

Keywords: Philosophical Text; Teaching; Antique; Medieval; Modernity

Introduction

This article aims to understand how the philosophical text emerged and how the teaching of philosophy was historically elaborated in the tradition and practice of philosophers in classical antiquity. As it appears in philosophical schools and as a structuring element of a possible “curriculum”.

According to Cambi the historical methodology undergoes a profound transformation, implying a broader view of the concept of education and the inclusion of philosophy in the institutionalized educational process, thanks to the fact that pedagogy loses its strictly philosophical nature and becomes intertwined within the scope of other sciences [1]. Understanding how philosophy arises in the context of the education of humanity of the human being, in the access to the text, especially in Antiquity, is to realize that it is not engendered in a context of institutionalized education, but as an explanation and discourse. In that regard: Since Antiquity, the articulation between the production of philosophical knowledge and its teaching seems to have been a characteristic feature of instances of higher culture. Socrates, an emblematic figure in many ways, can also be evoked in this case: in the Socratic dialogue it is impossible to separate the production of knowledge from its teaching. The same can be said of Plato and Aristotle, founders of philosophical schools – the Academy and the Lyceum – which

simultaneously constituted places for the production and teaching of philosophy, a teaching that never resided in the transmission of foreign doctrines. But the Academy and the Lyceum were in Athens, schools of high philosophical culture in perception of the Trenti and Goto [2].

The question is how in this emergence of non-institutionalized philosophy, does the philosophical text appear as a reference for philosophical dialogue, its learning and its practice? At this point, Cavallo and Chartier when discussing reading in the western world call attention to the fact that between the 6th and 5th centuries BC, reading and writing are two fundamental factors for the survival of Athenian democracy, especially for a public reading, even considering that the book is a scarce presence and that literacy was not a broad process [3,4]. However, the authors state that reading, and particularly the book, had the primary function of conserving the text. According to the thought of Cavallo and Chartier “Ancient Greece was clearly aware that writing was ‘invented’ to fix texts and thus bring them back to memory, in practice, to preserve them” [3,4].

Text in Classical Antiquity

Greek antiquity (also called classical antiquity), both in terms of human formation (Paideia) and, in addition to the philosophical movement itself, states, in the last decades of

the 5th century BC. Books being used as school texts in scenes illustrated in Attic vases of the time, according to Cavallo and Chartier, in entertainment and conversation contexts, showing that reading the text was seen as a practice of life in society [3,4]. This reality is witnessed by Euripides and Aristophanes and, in a special way, by Plato, whose dialogues, “the written logo discussed is generally philosophical texts, which circulated within the Academy”.

It is obvious that philosophy and its educational perspective through the use of texts is made explicit in its successive movements in the course through which it is produced, with a progression of these movements that occurs from the moment of oral reflection, passes through writing, and is structured in time. logical, that is, according to Goldschmidt [5], as philosophy is explication and discourse, it becomes explicit in successive movements, in the course of which it produces, abandons and surpasses theses linked to each other in an order by reasons, which means that the progression (method) of these movements gives the written work its structure and takes place in understanding its independence, perhaps relative, but essential, in relation to the other times in which genetic research links them together. The interpretation will consist in re-apprehending, according to the author’s intention, this order by reasons, and in never separating the theses from the movements that produced them, according to Goldschmidt [5].

Assuming that the fixation of ideas is done through the text and the text is the starting point for the learning process, since the reader can navigate through the words, come and go without changing their essence, even adding their interpretation, for Goldschmidt [5], the dynamics of philosophical learning is a process by which the rational path established by the philosopher is made, from the apprehension of each step of the philosophical method used, as a kind of exegesis of the method. It can be considered as an important process of structural reading of the philosophical text, in a link with tradition in its historical locus, but, at the same time, as an understanding of the study of philosophy as a chronological and evolutionary indication, in a dynamic that consists of in establishing an authorial relationship with philosophical problems explained in the text, in relation to the context, particularly the present time. The close precursor of this reading movement was Aristotle, who:

*He used to summarize, when he set out to examine a given question of a philosophical or scientific nature, the theories of his predecessors and thus prepare, through their critical analysis, the emergence of his own conceptions. [...] It can be said that Aristotle was the first to write a monograph on the history of philosophy (cf. *Metaphysics, Book I*) and many of his scientific books contain important information for the history of Greek science [6].*

Considering that the text becomes the point of convergence of philosophical discourse, issues related to understanding the universe and the human being have always been part of human thinking and have always been recorded in texts. Seeking to understand reality and trying to answer about the fundamental paradigms such as where we came from, what we are, where we are going, which were present in all civilizations, in some cases elaborated in a mythological or even religious way, was the differential in the philosophical discourse that was born with the Greeks, which means that, although other civilizations have tried to respond from their religious-mythical reference, it was up to the Greeks to undertake a systematic elaboration, considered by Western criteria as original, to deal with these questions.

In “Culture, thought and writing”, Bottero and Morrison [7] emphasize that the Greeks appropriated the Phoenician alphabet and modified it with a transcription considered to be of greater precision, including in terms of sound, now with a public function capable of becoming a common good of all citizens, which supposes that since the 8th century BC. Writing (the text) ceases to be a specialized knowledge of scribes and becomes a technique of wide and free use, disseminated to the public that wants to start in its domain, in this case, constituting a primordial element of the Greek ***Paideia***.

In this way, the birth of the city (polis) occurs concomitantly with the birth of writing, consequently with the birth of Laws and a new way of thinking about education, as well as the advent of philosophy. In the perception of Vernant [8], the school of the alphabet, which began in the 5th century BC, attracts resistance from conservatives who believe that the school could neglect the memory of young people, an idea expressed by Plato in his dialogue, *Phedron*. It is known that, in the public school, the teacher taught the child to trace the letters, learn the syllables until reaching the texts, e.g. Marrou [9] adds that in the ***Paideia*** concept, “the primary school did not believe it was obliged to teach dogmatically the Greek language, a living language acquired through the daily practice of life”.

However, it must be considered that on the threshold of philosophy or philosophical thought, education does not have records that are a curricular process where the teaching of the discipline philosophy exists as a founding or key element. It must be considered, as Cenci [10] states, that it is “only at the age of 30 that dialectics, the properly philosophical method, can be dealt with, which will still require five years of dedication” for essentially philosophical learning in schools. schools or academies.

The philosophical schools that were born from the pre-Socratics and expanded with Socrates, Plato and Aristotle

develop a work with reading and with the text, very different from the pedagogical process of educating children, which gave rise to what became known as *Paideia*.

From a practical point of view, it is only with Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Peripatetic School that we have news of the promotion of a teaching offered to young people avid for knowledge, which already appears in Socrates, but for not leaving anything in writing, only through the writings of his disciple Plato, one has a vision of the Socratic teaching project, based on the dialectic of maieutics and irony [11]. Plato, in his works *Laws*, *Protagoras* and even in the *Banquet*, talks about the educational ideology that takes place in a school, under the tutelage of a *grammatistés*, the master of literacy (initially oral, later written). But, it is Plato who makes known the ideas of education in the perspective of an education for citizenship that, according to Paviani (2008) [12], it is not possible to understand education in Plato without referring to the maieutic process, *doxa* (opinion), science or true opinion (*episteme*), dialogue and rhetoric, sensible knowledge and the immortality of the soul, virtue, dialectics and mimesis, the question of the tripartition of the soul, the context of the education offered by the sophists and the clash with the master Socrates.

It is not by chance that in the 5th century BC, Gorgias was the author of an Onomastikon and that, indicating the continuity of interest in names or words, we find in the 2nd century AD, another Onomastikon in ten books by Pollux. This is a vocabulary, or rather, a very rich list of words, like a series of synonyms and families of words organized according to their meaning, in which we can find a lot of information, if not about the school and teaching, at least about their names. In Book IV he deals with the virtues, vices and ways of knowing, and then with grammar, oratory, philosophy, sophistry, poetry, music and its instruments, dances, actors, theatre, masks, astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, surveying, medicine [5].

The Onomastikons (cited above) refer to philosophy as one of the disciplines developed in the school education system and, it is important to note that it has its expressiveness in the written text, although it does not go into depth in what way. It is known that, in the 4th and 5th centuries, the need for the formation of civic or citizen character of the elites was a crucial issue, and rhetorical education becomes a practice for those preparing for the government of the polis. With Plato there is an educational dualism, according to Cambi directed towards two classes, that of the rulers or elite and the other towards the demos [1].

In the Hellenistic period, even with the process of oral transmission of culture and ideas, "the book starts to play a fundamental role from then on" [3], which makes all

literature of the time becomes dependent on writing and the book (the text). Through contact with Greek culture, the Romans adopted Hellenistic culture and, from the second century onwards, Roman schools were organized according to the Greek model, although Trenti [2] states that, in this context in relation to Greek culture, "grammar, music, and also science and philosophy were scarce".

Text in the Middle Ages

The medieval period, preceded by paradigm shifts in the Roman West, arises from the moment in which Christianity progressively consolidates in the 4th century AD, since when it became the official religion of the Empire. For nascent Christianity, the text takes on a relevant role given the distance between communities and the need to strengthen the faith through the testimonies of the apostles, martyrs and those considered saints, as well as the understanding of the figure of Jesus and his proclamation - Gospel (Good news). Christianity, due to the propagation of the faith itself, is strengthened by the primitive Christian communities, used as education strategies in the foundations of the faith, that is, an elementary education of catechesis. However, the complexity of the clash between Christians and non-Christians will require a new model of text conception that will emerge with the Church Fathers, in the period known as Patristic.

Medieval philosophy emerges slowly, from the proto-scholasticism of the 9th century with the adjustment between Christian faith and classical thought. "In the 11th and 12th centuries, philosophy re-emerged in Europe, in an altered form, and facing some resistance", especially in schools linked to monasteries, then cathedrals, thanks to the influence of the re-encounter of Platonic philosophy, but above all Aristotelian, promoted by Islamic thinkers [9]. Even in the face of such a dilemma, the rebirth of cities from the thirteenth century onwards, the text, reserved for the libraries of monasteries, becomes an urban element of wide diffusion.

Faced with an illiterate population, medieval schools had the function of instructing people, that is, it made them know the Latin language and some aspects of logic and astronomy, although in a world reduced to clerics or children of the aristocracy who could finance an elementary school, and then a university. The Church and the princes thought it necessary to have people who had the minimum of knowledge and were well articulated to maintain their services and also for a good functioning of society, especially from the 10th century onwards, when the great transformations of that society began [13]. This preparation depended on access to the written text.

In the perception of Cambi the elementary schools became known as monastic, abbey, cathedral and palace, being organized since the 5th century, but especially the episcopal schools (cathedrals) that had a great importance for inheriting the traditional classical model [1]. Created to form the members of the future clergy, inspired by the renewal of the Carolingian empire, they were structured around the teaching of the trivium (rhetoric, grammar and dialectics) and the quadrivium (astronomy, arithmetic, geometry and music). In cathedral schools, until the end of the 10th century “a didactic and conservative, formalist and non-creative model of culture prevailed. Only in the following century will they become protagonists of a great cultural flowering, under the impulse of the city’s rebirth” [1].

Basic education was grammar, “after grammar came, therefore, logic followed by initiation into the classics” [14]. The very difficult of philosophical texts, restricted and rare, contributed to their use being restricted in secondary schools and starting to be used in a more peculiar way in universities. However, the emphasis on logic, particularly the revision of Aristotle’s texts, was a privilege of few scholars, especially those who mastered the Greek language.

What matters is access to the text, knowledge, not without reason that the Scholastics and, in the case of philosophy, especially Thomas Aquinas, will use the philosophical texts of Aristotle found and translated by Arab authors such as Avicenna and Averroes. In this sense, philosophical speculation gains emphasis in text studies.

Abbagnano considers that medieval scholasticism had an essential concern with the method of studying the text, which made that a large part of the development of philosophical studies is directed towards logic, considering the rigor of the argumentation and the construction and exposition of ideas [6]. The consequence was the centrality in language and especially in the text that for theology becomes the Bible, but texts by Donato, Prisciano, Quintilian’s rhetoric, Boethius’ dialectic and Aristotle’s texts are incorporated, having as a fundamental method the reading and the direct analysis of texts and their rational construction. The novelty in the field of research on the role of language developed by Tomás de Aquino, which will add the need to work with language from a conceptual treatment.

Text in the Modern Age

The crisis of the scholastic teaching model added to the education process that emerged with the Lutheran Protestant reform, constitutes an important element along with the new perspectives of humanism, in the intersection of diversified cultural orders, they contributed to new

paradigms in education.

The reform movement puts as a foundation the believer’s need to have contact with the Holy Scriptures and, thus, the need to learn at least the grammar that allows contact with the sacred text in the vernacular. “The cultural model that the reform movement has in mind to organize the schools themselves is the humanistic one, based on the priority of languages and the centrality of grammatical education” [1].

Generally,

With the end of the 14th century (taking 1453 as a key year and a symbol year, with the fall of the Eastern Empire, or 1492, with the discovery of America, the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, or 1494, with the beginning of foreign domination in Italy), a long historical cycle is closed and another, equally long and perhaps still unfinished, is prepared, which is generally designated as Modernity. It is a historical cycle that has profoundly different characteristics from the previous one, in relation to which it operates a conscious rupture, manifesting substantially homogeneous and organic structures [1].

For Cassirer [2], the well-known “Century of Enlightenment” comes to be understood as the effort to clarify, in a rational and scientific way, man against the domain of obscurantism and deceit exercised by the clergy and the nobility it during the middle Ages. In this way, men, freed from superstition, can be led to rational and scientific enlightenment.

Until 1789, a period known as the Ancien Régime, the modern world was organized around the processes of civilization, rationalization, and institutionalization of social life based on a lifestyle totally different from medieval patterns.

The cultural and educational revolution of humanism, the tensions produced by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation and by the crisis of the scholastic tradition itself, the advent of bourgeois revolutions and the rise of an increasingly centralized and bureaucratic State that claims the need for specific knowledge and moral requirements finds in the school and in its curricular structure the path of emerging transformations. The rationalized school starts to guarantee the objective of taking culture to the young generations. However, Cavallo and Chartier [3] recall that the first transformation that affects the reader versus text relationship in this period is the so-called technique, that is, there is a revolution promoted by the modes of reproduction of texts and even by the production of the book. “Each reader can have access to a greater number of books; each book can reach a larger number of readers.

In the perception of Marrou [9], the Enlightenment inaugurates the era of literacy in the concept of education and learning. The text is the privileged space for reading, for reflection, whether philosophical or not. In this dynamic of building a society less dependent on the dictates of the Catholic Church and scholastic philosophy, the Protestant Reformation emerged [15]. "The Protestant reform advocates schooling as a tool for the direct reading of the Bible" (p.71) and "books, which were made public and were seen in the service of an erudite and a religious culture" (p. 75). It should be noted that the role of the text (book) in this period gains considerable importance with attempts to moralize the contents of books as a strategy for training the population.

Conclusions

Modernity not only brought the contact with the printed book (which was already projected at the end of the Middle Ages), however, the great transformation of the 18th century was the Industrial Revolution, with a profound change in the modes of production and radical changes in relations social and working conditions, when human power is gradually replaced by machinery and the production process becomes mass.

The process of transforming work shifted entire populations from craft activities to factories and from the countryside to the cities. This new context manifested social and cultural conflicts never before experienced by society. At the same time that the new property relations altered the mode of production, the new context also implied profound changes for schools and education, especially popular ones.

The operations of activities in the factory did not require more than ignorance, however, the process of incorporating scientific discoveries by causing rapid changes in machines began to require a worker willing to these transformations. In this sense, philanthropists and industrialists were faced with the challenge of educating the working masses demanded by the emergence of new instruments and production processes, that is, the very need for instruction arises as a demand of the very dynamism of factory production. And, obviously, in this process of instruction, the philosophical and non-philosophical text gains space. The first for offering the conditions that lead workers to understand an ethics to be incorporated into the world of work (even if of submission), the second for offering the conditions for understanding and learning of natural sciences and mathematics.

Finally, the 19th century is marked by questions raised by socialist ideas, facing an industrial state, increasingly defending capitalism and a new economic order. In it, workers' organizations emerged with the purpose of defending the interests of the class against the exploitation of

the owners of capital, initially with the production of utopian socialism; one arrives at scientific socialism with Marx and Engels [11].

Thus, access to the text must enable the conditions of emancipation from the formation of an autonomous thought, identifying the possibilities of understanding the whole and the contradictions that sustain the social and political reality. To form new subjectivities capable of recognizing their social and cultural roots in order to understand their insertion in the world, this could be the primary objective of reading the text and for that the literacy process, human formation becoming essential. Contact with the text and its understanding is fundamental.

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