

SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

YEARBOOK OF THE ISRAEL SOCIETY
FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

VOLUME XLII

2023

ISSN 0334-4509 (PRINT)
2731-2933 (ONLINE)

The appearance of this volume has been made possible by the support of

Bar-Ilan University
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Open University
Tel Aviv University
University of Haifa

PUBLISHED BY
THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
<http://www.israel-classics.org>

Manuscripts in the form of e-mail attachments should be sent to the e-mail address rachelze@tauex.tau.ac.il. For reviews, contact yulia@bgu.ac.il. Please visit our website for submission guidelines. All submissions are refereed by outside readers.

Books for review should be sent to the Book Review Editor at the following address: Book Review Editor, Prof. Yulia Ustinova, Department of General History, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, P.O.B. 653 Beer Sheva 8410501, Israel.

Price \$50

© 2023 The Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies
All Rights Reserved

Camera-ready copy produced by the editorial staff of *Scripta Classica Israelica*
Printed in Israel by Magnes Press, Jerusalem

SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

YEARBOOK OF THE ISRAEL SOCIETY
FOR THE
PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

Editor-in-Chief: RACHEL ZELNICK-ABRAMOVITZ

Editorial Board:
AVI AVIDOV
ALEXANDER YAKOBSON
YULIA USTINOVA

Editorial Assistant: Hila Brokman

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD
OF *SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA*

François de Callatay, Brussels and Paris
Hubert Cancik, Tübingen
Averil Cameron, Oxford
Hannah M. Cotton, Jerusalem
Ephraim David, Haifa
Werner Eck, Köln
Denis Feeney, Princeton
Margalit Finkelberg, Tel Aviv
John Glucker, Tel Aviv
Erich Gruen, Berkeley
Benjamin Isaac, Tel Aviv

Ranon Katzoff, Ramat Gan
David Konstan, New York
Jaap Mansfeld, Utrecht
Doron Mendels, Jerusalem
Ra'anana Meridor, Jerusalem
Maren Niehoff, Jerusalem
John North, London
Hannah Rosén, Jerusalem
Brent Shaw, Princeton
Greg Woolf, Berkeley

THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION
OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

OFFICERS 2022–2023

President:	Jonathan Price
Secretary:	Sylvie Honigman
Treasurer:	Shimon Epstein

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Moshe Blidstein
Daniella Dueck
Andrea Rotstein
Iris Sulimani
Yulia Ustinova

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Hannah Cotton
Joseph Geiger
Ranon Katzoff
Ra'anana Meridor

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE TO VOLUME XLII	1
ORY AMITAY, Classics in Israel: Where Do We Go From Here?	3
AMIT BARATZ, Greece and Rome in Israeli Schools	9
ANDREA BALBO, ELISA DELLA CALCE, AND SIMONE MOLLEA, Towards an Unusual <i>speculum principis?</i> Virtues in the <i>Confucius Sinarum Philosophus' Proemialis Declaratio</i>	19
WERNER ECK, Hadrian in Iudaea. Zu gefälschten Inschriften υπέρ σωτηρίας αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Τραιανοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ	41
ESTHER ESHEL, HAGGAI MISGAV, AND ROI PORAT, Legal Ostraca From Herodium	53
ALEXANDROS KAMPAKOGLU, Daphnis in the Middle: Theocritus' Inter-generic Poetics and the Origins of the Bucolic Genre	67
YOSEF Z. (YOSSIE) LIEBERSOHN, Δίκαιος and Cognates in Plato's Crito	91
DMITRY EZROHI, When Teleology Fails: Aristotle on Bile as a Useless Residue in <i>Parts of Animals</i>	111
ERRATA	131
 BOOK REVIEWS	
Franco Montanari, <i>History of Ancient Greek Literature. Volume 1: The Archaic and Classical Ages</i> , with the collaboration of Fausto Montana, translated from the Italian original by Rachel Barritt Costa with revision by Orla Mulholland; <i>Volume 2: The Hellenistic Age and the Roman Imperial Period</i> , with the collaboration of Fausto Montana, translated from the Italian original by Orla Mulholland (by Heinz- Günther Nesselrath)	133
Sitta von Reden (ed.), <i>The Cambridge Companion to the Ancient Greek Economy</i> (by Jeremy Trevett)	137
Jennifer Baird and April Pudsey (eds.), <i>Housing in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Material and Textual Approaches</i> (by Michael Eisenberg)	139
Julia L. Shear, <i>Serving Athena: The Festival of the Panathenaia and the Construction of Athenian Identities</i> (by Ilaria Bultrighini)	142
David Saunders (ed.), <i>Underworld: Imagining the Afterlife in Ancient South Italian Vase Painting</i> (by Rivka Gersht)	144
Michaël Girardin, <i>L'offrande et le tribut. Histoire politique de la fiscalité en Judée hellénistique et romaine (200 a.C.–135 p.C.)</i> (by Benedikt Eckhardt)	147
Noah Hacham and Tal Ilan (eds.), <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum V: The Early- Roman Period (30 BCE–117 CE)</i> (by Haggai Olshanetsky)	149
Michael Philip Penn, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, Christine Shepardson, and Charles M. Stang (eds.), <i>Invitation to Syriac Christianity: An Anthology</i> (by Catalin-Stefan Popa)	152
OBITUARIES: DAVID WEISSERT (by RACHEL ZELNICK-ABRAMOVITZ)	157
MOSHE FISCHER (by OREN TAL AND ITAMAR TAXEL)	161
AMINADAV A. DYKMAN (by ABRAHAM AROUETTY)	164
DISSERTATIONS IN PROGRESS	167
PROCEEDINGS: THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES	175

Greece and Rome in Israeli Schools

Amit Baratz

Abstract: This article surveys the ancient Greek and Roman sources that are taught in Israel from middle school (ages 12–15) to high school (ages 15–18). The mandatory subjects in which these texts are studied are literature and history, to which I add one optional course in philosophy. 2022 was a year of reform in high school humanities. The article presents the classical material studied in Israeli schools both before and after the reform.

Keywords: Israeli schools, Classical culture, literature, history, education.

This article surveys the ancient Greek and Roman sources that are taught in Israel from middle school (ages 12–15) to high school (ages 15–18). It focuses on the mandatory programs studied by most Israeli pupils.¹ The relevant subjects in which these sources are studied are literature and history, to which I add the optional course in philosophy.

2022 is a year of reform in high school humanities, implemented by Education Minister Dr. Yifat Shasha Biton. The national matriculation exams in History, Literature, Bible, and Civics were canceled, and the students are instead required to write an individual interdisciplinary research project. Hours of teaching humanities were converted into hours of preparation for the project, leading to a reduction of obligatory study materials in all fields. Below, I will present a review of the situation before and after the reform.²

THE PAST

A brief look at the past might serve as proper introduction to a detailed discussion of the current situation in Israel. Until the 20th century, Classics constituted the basis of elite education in the western world. The core curriculum of school life consisted mainly of Latin and ancient Greek, and knowledge of Graeco-Roman culture. The 1869 Harvard

¹ There are many dozens of optional programs studied by relatively few pupils, some of which contain elements of Classics. I cannot delve into the countless details of all these programs, but one representative example might be in order: in the visual arts five-units' matriculation exam, a student is required to choose one of the following chapters: classical art, renaissance art, baroque art, Jewish art, and Muslim art, and to answer one of three given questions. It is surprising that the classical heritage in arts, to which all ages owe a debt, is such a marginal subject, often not being taught at all.

² A new government was elected in 2022 and it is not yet clear if the reform in the humanities will be retained. However, even if the new government will return to the pre-reform policy, this will not have much effect on the number of classical works taught in schools.

University admission exam may help us understand the historical prominence of Classics in education.³

The first section of the test is entitled ‘Translate into Latin.’ It has three increasingly difficult translation assignments, with a given vocabulary. The following two sections are ‘Latin Grammar’ and ‘Greek Grammar’ and contain multiple questions at all levels. These are followed by a fourth section entitled ‘Greek Composition,’ with three assignments and a given vocabulary. Ancient Greek and Latin enjoyed equal status with the student being required to answer all questions on both.

No less indicative is the next section of the test entitled ‘History and Geography.’ Here are some questions taken from this section:

II. Name the chief rivers of Ancient Gaul and Modern France. Is France larger or smaller than Transalpine Gaul? Where is Mount Blanc?

IV: Describe the route of the Ten Thousand, or lay it down on a map.

V. Leonidas, Pausanias, Lysander.

VI: Pharsalia, Philippi, Actium—geographically and historically.

VII. Supply the two names left blank in the following passage from the Oration for the Manilian Law: ‘Non dicam duas urbes potentissimas, *Carthaginem* et *Numantiam* ab eodem _____ esse deletas; non commemorabo nuper ita vobis patribusque esse visum, ut in uno _____ spes imperii poneretur, ut idem cum *Jugurtha*, idem cum *Cimbris*, idem cum *Teutonis* bellum administraret.’ Who was Jugurtha? Where was Numantia?

VIII: Compare Athens with Sparta.

IX: Pericles – the Man and his Policy.

The exam concludes with thirty questions on mathematical subjects: Arithmetic – Logarithms and Trigonometry, Algebra, and Plane Geometry. The test thus reflects a clear educational ideal based on Classical Studies—composition and grammar of Latin and ancient Greek, History and Geography, primarily of the ancient world, and mathematics. This educational rationale belongs to the past, but the long-established tradition of classical education as part of the core curriculum endures today in many schools, often considered the best in their countries.⁴

³ See the test here: <https://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/education/harvardexam.pdf>

⁴ Last year the Department for Education in the UK announced the introduction of a four-year Latin program to 40 state secondary schools. The goal of this reform was to counter the discrepancy between the ratio of independent schools (49%) and state schools (less than 3%) that teach Latin. See: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/jul/31/latin-introduced-40-state-secondaries-england> For a global survey of Classics, which presents the historical

In our own State of Israel, classical antiquity (mainly Greece but also Rome) had one visionary admirer right from the outset—the country’s first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. To quote:

With the conquest of the East (and within it the kingdom of Persia) by Alexander the Great, the Greek period begins, in which we witness a desperate struggle between Judaism and the rich and superior culture, which more than any other culture has influenced human society from that time to this day, and instilled in the world—in poetry, literature, philosophy, science, sculpture, painting and other branches of art—spiritual treasures that are the pinnacles of human creation in all generations.⁵

Like Horace, Ben-Gurion viewed the Greek masterpieces as *exemplaria Graeca*,⁶ that is, ideal models to be built upon in creating a new democratic Hebrew state. These models are needed, not only for the revival of intellectual and spiritual Hebrew culture, but also for much more prosaic reasons:

Many things might have been different in our history and in the history of the civilized world if at the same time that our holy books were translated into Greek, our sages who knew Greek had translated into Hebrew the books of Sophocles, Thucydides, Plato and the other great Greek masters, and had learned from the Greeks and Romans military affairs and statecraft.⁷

These words of Ben-Gurion about the Jewish past reflect his thoughts about the present: the building of our nation cannot be founded on Judaic tradition alone. For all its greatness, which Ben-Gurion admired, it lacks critical elements necessary for a modern democratic state. Political theory and praxis, military tactics and strategy, historiography and philosophy, and in general, arts and sciences—all of which are sorely lacking in the Bible, Mishna and Talmud, and in Judaic tradition at large. They were, however, mastered by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Jewish tradition should therefore be supplemented with these spiritual treasures. The State of Israel should aim to study and internalize the Greek and Roman masterpieces.⁸

On the tenth anniversary of the state, Ben-Gurion founded a national translation project of great books from all nations and generations. From the Greek corpora, which was top priority, he offered to translate Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides,⁹ Aristophanes,

debates, shifts and trends of classical teaching from the 19th to the 21st century, see Morwood ed. (2003). Bulwer ed. (2006) compiles detailed reports from fifteen European countries on the status of Classics in schools and universities. Holmes-Henderson, Hunt, Musie (2018) presents a worldwide account of classics in schools and higher education, covering the United Kingdom, mainland Europe, the United States, Australia and Brazil.

⁵ Ben-Gurion (1963), 13, *Yichud ve-Yeud*, ‘We Will Stand if We Will Be an Exemplary State’ (my translation from the Hebrew). Full text available at: <https://benyehuda.org/read/10917>.

⁶ Hor. *Ars. P.* 268–9: ‘... Vos exemplaria Graeca / nocturna versate manu, versate diurna’ (‘You, the Greek models, roll in your hand in the night, role in the day’).

⁷ Ben-Gurion (1963), 13 (see n. 5 above).

⁸ It should be noted that Ben-Gurion viewed the bible as standing high and above everything else in our humanistic education. What is important in our context is that the Greek tradition came second and had its own independent importance.

⁹ Ben-Gurion’s offer: ‘If I am to decide, I say publish Sophocles first, although I like Euripides and Aeschylus more. But in terms of perfection, there is no one like Sophocles.’

Plato, Thucydides, Polybius, and more. The Roman works he proposed were Lucretius, Julius Caesar, and Tacitus.

The first translation to be completed was Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Sales were weak, but Ben-Gurion proposed a solution: 'I will oblige all officers in the IDF, from the rank of lieutenant colonel and above, to buy Thucydides' book.' This amusing comment reveals once again the practical value he found in this work for the shaping of our own military and political acumen and prowess. In the following decades, translations of Greek and Roman works flourished in Israel, and Ben-Gurion's vision was fulfilled. Many great scholars contributed to the project of giving the people in Israel access to the classical tradition masterworks. Some of these found their way into the schools, to which we now turn.

The status of Classics in the history of Israeli education is a complex and dynamic matter which lies beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice to say that the past was more glorious than the present. A brief look at some old pedagogical textbooks confirms this assessment. For example, as early as 1930, 'The Education Department of the Zionist Administration in the Land of Israel' published four pocketbooks for high school students entitled 'Herodotus' Tales'. These consisted of selections from Herodotus' *History* entitled: *Babylonians and Persians, Egyptians, Croesus and Solon, Cyrus*. A similar series from the 1940s, published by the Hebrew Reali School in Haifa, was entitled *Masterpiece Books for Schools*. One book had selections from Plato, another from Homer's *Odyssey*, a third from the *Iliad*, and a fourth from Roman poetry. One final example: two books for schoolteachers published by Prof. Zvi Yavetz, a sourcebook and teacher's tutorial called *Spartacus' Revolt* published in 1957, and *Didactic Notes for Teaching Ancient History in the 9th Grade* which was published in 1967. These books indicate that Israeli pupils used to learn Greek and Roman history and read sources in different fields. The present situation looks somewhat different.

THE PRESENT

I begin with the literature program. Not a single work of literature from Greece or Rome is taught in middle school. To qualify this statement, there is an obligation to teach a subject called 'Mythology' in the ninth grade, but this is confined to choosing one myth out of four (Daedalus, Pygmalion, Eco and Narcissus, Orpheus and Euridice) and reading a loose two-page paraphrase of it, taken from Bulfinch, *The Age of Fable* (1856).

The high school literature program prior to the reform was directed towards a two-point matriculation exam and featured the Greeks in the 'Drama' section. The Ministry of Education instructions following the 2022 reform stipulate that: '*As part of the full curriculum, one play will be studied: one tragedy by Sophocles or by Shakespeare, or one modern play*'. The situation was more favorable before the reform when two plays were taught and the instruction was: '*one tragedy by Sophocles or by Shakespeare, and*

All three should be published.' For the protocols, see Naor (2011): <https://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/2011-04-24/ty-article/0000017f-db08-ddf3-af7f-ff2909160000>

one modern play'. Regardless, in the final exam a student may simply skip the drama section altogether and choose a different chapter and a different set of questions.¹⁰ The inevitable consequence is that a student nowadays usually finishes middle and high school literature without learning a single work from Greece and Rome—nothing out of 1,300 years of ceaseless creation (from Homer to the fall of the Empire), that provided endless inspiration for all generations.¹¹

The number of students who chose the extended five-units program in literature declined by 27% in the last decade. In 2020, 1,950 pupils took the exam, 1,493 girls and 457 boys.¹² This program, which has a 150% broader scope than the regular program, does not add any Greek or Roman play to the drama chapter, but rather, one Shakespearean comedy or a modern play. In the fourth unit, called 'Selection from World Literature,' Book 23 of the *Odyssey* is taught. In the fifth unit, the teacher chooses three out of six subjects, three of which include classical works: the first features two myths from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the second includes pages from Plato's *Politeia* and from Aristotle's *Poetics*, and the third has Euripides' *Medea*. It should be noted that all these are optional: not only do the other three units include no Classics, but even when choosing those that do, the teacher may still select different works.

¹⁰ The Ministry of Education's method to reduce even more material from the program may be called 'the multiple-choice system.' The pupils know in advance that they can skip whole subjects and still get the maximum grade. For example, the literature matriculation exam of winter 2022 had the following instruction: 'choose three of four chapters: short story, drama, novel and novella, poetry'. Thus, a student may simply give up studying one of the subjects at the cost of reducing his choice. He also has more room for choice within those chapters he selects, allowing him to reduce even more material. For instance, in the drama section he has to choose one of five questions: two on Greek tragedy, two on modern play, and one general question common to both, enabling him to skip Greek tragedy and still have a choice. Even more impressive is the multiple-choice system in the poetry chapter: 'answer one of seven questions, either on Middle Ages Poetry or on Nathan Alterman'. As explained, the students are aware of this structure in advance and make the right calculations for maximum success at minimum effort. The same holds true for the teachers who often skip this or the other subject.

¹¹ The study of reception of classical literature has grown enormously in the last decades, revealing more than ever the numerous and diverse ways in which western culture was influenced by the classical canon. Cf. Highet (1949), 544: 'Still, the current flowing out of Greece and Rome has always been a strong one, always productive, and often central. How strong and how productive it has been...can also be proved negatively: imagine that all the books, plays, and poems, in all the European languages, which were written under direct inspiration from the Classics, should be destroyed. Not only would nearly all the best work disappear—Dante's Comedy, Shakespeare's tragedies, much of the finest nineteenth-century poetry—but several complete areas of European literature would drop out of sight entirely...'. See also Hardwick and Stray (2008); Hardie and Moore (2010); OHCREL: Oxford's Series on Classics in English literature (5 Vols.).

¹² To compare, 50,219 took five-points English (23,552 girls 26,667 boys); 18,492 took five-points mathematics (9133 girls, 9359 boys); 9471 took five-points computer science (3,289 girls, 6182 boys). See: <https://www.haaretz-co-il.rproxy.tau.ac.il/news/education/2022-01-02/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/0000017f-f873-d887-a7ff-f8f724cc0000>

In summary: middle school literature studies contain no Classics—two pages translated from a textbook can hardly be defined as ‘studying Classics’. In high school, Greek tragedy is only one of three options, and can be skipped altogether in the final exam. In the extended program, the teacher may choose a ‘classical route’ and teach *Antigone* or *Oedipus Rex* and *Medea*, *Odyssey* 23, some Ovid, Plato and Aristotle. This is, however, a rare choice in the face of the other numerous options, many of which are more easily taught and studied.

HISTORY

In history studies, the Ministry of Education adopts the following syllogism: what is antique is undeveloped, a child is undeveloped, therefore antiquity suits childhood. The diagram of history is an ascending line rising continuously from the cavemen, via Greece and Rome (sixth grade), the Middle Ages and Early Modern period (seventh grade), and eighteenth century (eighth grade), ever upwards to the ultimate splendor of modernity in the nineteenth–twentieth centuries (ninth–twelfth grades).¹³ Classical antiquity belongs to the sixth grade and, from this point on, pupils bid farewell to Greece and Rome. The 2022 reform omitted the already sparse content taught in high school about Greece and Rome during the Hellenistic and Roman periods of Israel, a time which is also central to Jewish history—the Second Temple era. Consequently, these periods will no longer be taught in high school.

The situation prior to the reform was already quite inadequate: the teacher had to choose between two units: ‘From Temple State to the People of the Book’ or ‘Cities and Communities—Society and Culture in the Middle Ages’. The latter unit contained a few vague Roman issues while the first unit had more. As noted above, it addressed the Greek and Roman periods of ancient Israel. A teacher opting for this unit had to choose six out of a list of many topics. He could, if he wished, build himself a program focusing exclusively on the Jews. He could also choose some of the following ‘Graeco-Roman’ subjects: the characteristics of Hellenism; Israel in the struggle between the Seleucid and Ptolemy kingdoms; Hellenism in Judea; Antiochus’ decree; the Maccabean Revolt; Judas Maccabaeus; the Great Jewish Revolt, The Uprising of the Jewish Diaspora (116–117C CE), Bar Kokhba, and more.

As we can see, before the reform, Greece and Rome were taught mainly in a Jewish context; the theme running through most subjects was the register of Graeco-Roman crimes and follies against the Jewish nation. No effort was made to mitigate the pupils’ hostile attitude towards the two great nations that shaped western history—not a word about two hundred years of Athenian Democracy, Herodotus, the Persian wars, Pericles, Sparta, the Republic of Rome, the Gracchi struggle, Hannibal and Scipio, Julius Caesar, etc. In any case, this is now history—the unfortunate reality since the reform is that all students will finish middle and high school history without learning a thing about Greece and Rome or about Jewish history in the Second Temple period. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

¹³ Cf. Highet (1949), 264–69.

PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is not among the mandatory high school subjects. It is mentioned here only because Greek philosophy is relatively prominent in this field. The subject is studied in relatively few schools whose managers choose to add it to the general program. Without delving into the multiple topics of this optional two-year program and the choices at the teacher's disposal, I will mention the obligatory texts of the two-years program, and those that a student may also encounter if his teacher happens to choose them. Mandatory texts include Plato's *Apology* or a section from *Gorgias*, the allegory of the cave from the *Politeia*, and excerpts from the Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1–2. The optional texts include some pages from *Meno* or *Theaetetus*, a bit of *Phaedo*, and part of the *Symposium*. From Aristotle, excerpts from the *Politics*, *Poetics*, *On Interpretation*, more *Nicomachean Ethics*. Also, some pages from Longinus *On the Sublime*, and some from Epictetus' *Enchiridion*. This program is thus the only one which still maintains some degree of reverence for the wisdom of ancient Greece.

The overall conclusion of our survey is clear. The study of classical sources in middle and high school curriculum occupies a place that can be defined at best as very limited and, much more commonly, as simply non-existent. A pupil often graduates without encountering a single work of literature from Greece or Rome. All pupils will graduate middle and high school history class without learning anything about Greek and Roman history. Some optional extended programs have a bit more substance. These are the stark and basic facts. The reader is invited to judge them as he pleases.

ENCOURAGING NEWS

Within this national exiguity there is nevertheless one encouraging place—the Israel Arts and Sciences High School in Jerusalem (IASA), intended for gifted students. This school has a unique Humanities Department to which about fifteen pupils are accepted each year. The department offers a three-year program designed to expose students to the central texts and ideas of Western culture. In the first year, three hours a week are dedicated to the cultures and history of Greece and Rome. Moreover, the students in the Humanities Department are obliged to choose a second language, either Latin or Arabic. Latin is taught at university level for three consecutive years at the end of which a traditional ceremony is held, with faculty members from the Classical Studies Department at the Hebrew University granting the graduates a certificate of exemption (פטור) from Latin studies at the university. The Latin course, which has been taught in this school for the last nine years, has produced dozens of graduate students.

For the Latin pupils to reap the rewards of their efforts, i.e., to be officially credited for learning Latin in their high school diploma, Ella Kaplan and I prepared a five-points program for matriculation in Latin (based on Dr. Amiel Vardi's book). The Ministry of Education recently approved our program and, as a result, Israel now has an official Latin program which can be used by any school. Thus far, no other school has chosen to do so.

After the official approval of our Latin program, I reached out to Jerusalem's Department of Education (מנה"י) and asked if they would consider opening a regional

class in Latin. A regional class is a relatively new enterprise, which offers afternoon high school diploma studies in interesting subjects not usually taught in schools. Five languages are currently taught in regional classes: Arabic, French, Russian, Chinese, and Amharic. Unfortunately, my question met with a negative response.

A word of praise is well deserved to ‘Ruach Tzeira,’ (‘Young Spirit’), another afternoon three-year humanities program based on the *Arts and Sciences* model. This program, which also dedicates a year to the cultures of Greece and Rome, opened its doors in 2015 and is constantly expanding, with seven classes being opened this year across the country.

In his essay ‘The Place of Classics in Education’, Whitehead wrote:

We must remember that the whole problem of intellectual education is controlled by lack of time ... Classics can only be defended on the ground that within that [school] period, and sharing that period with other subjects, it can produce a necessary enrichment of intellectual character more quickly than any alternative discipline directed to the same object.¹⁴

In our own day, the hours that can be devoted to each field are even more limited. It follows that only top-priority subjects can be included in the curriculum. The question is whether Greece and Rome deserve such a place.

If one subscribes to the view that a proper education consists, in part, of learning the masterpieces of wisdom and art from the past, he/she is then obliged to include the Graeco-Roman sources in the curriculum. For these two nations, along with ancient Israel, created the most influential cultures in western history. Moreover, it was their heritage in all fields mentioned in this paper—literature, history, philosophy, arts, politics, warfare, mathematics, science, education, and more, which beyond any other culture inspired further creation and thought.¹⁵ If education digresses from the culture that shaped western history, from the trunk whence the cultures of all ages grew and to which they adhered, if the next generation does not draw anything from this historical treasure, so too our own cultural existence will be severely diminished. It is unfortunate to see how far we have drifted from the vision of the founder of modern Israel.

What of the future? In fact, Classics were banished from our ‘ideal state’ long ago. As we saw, the reduction of Graeco-Roman material brought about by the reform is just another step in a lingering process of reducing mandatory study content. If the classical

¹⁴ Whitehead (1931), 63. His essay demonstrates why Classics meet this difficult criterion.

¹⁵ As is well known, the Middle Ages were the only period in western history in which the classical culture as such lost its centrality, but did not disappear. It was given a prominent place as the servant of faith and much more. From the Renaissance onwards, classical tradition per se rose again, until modern times. Cf. Bolgar (1954), 2: ‘In every age, from the first to the last, the categories of European thought and the common institutions of European life have all borne to some degree the imprint of antiquity’.

tradition is almost inexistent during school years, if hardly any part of the curriculum has the potential to arouse interest in the Graeco-Roman world, there is no reason to sustain hope for increasing the enrollment rates in departments of Classical Studies at Israeli universities. Nevertheless, against all odds, there are still a few who choose to study Classics at universities. Their number depends, now more than ever, on the ability of university teachers to provide the best classical education, for their classes remain the last place in Israel where this heritage is still being taught.

Oranim College

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bolgar, R.R. (1954). *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bulfinch, T. (1856). *The Age of Fable*, Boston: Sanborn, Carter, and Bazin.
- Bulwer, J. ed. (2006). *Classics Teaching in Europe*, London: Bristol Classical Press.
- Hardie, P., and Moore H. eds. (2010). *Classical Literary Careers and their Reception*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hardwick, L. Stray C. (2008). *A Companion to Classical Receptions*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hight, G. (1949). *The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Holmes–Henderson, A., Hunt, S., Musie, M., eds. (2018). *Forward with Classics: Classical Languages in Schools and Communities*, London – New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- OHCREL = The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature, 5 vol. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morwood, J. ed. (2003). *The teaching of Classics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitehead, A.N. (1931). 'The Place of Classics in Education', In *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, London: Williams and Norgate, 93–115.

HEBREW PUBLICATIONS:

- בן גוריון, דוד. (1963). 'נעמוד אם נהיה מדינה למופת', בתוך *יחוד ויעוד: לקוטי דברים על דמותה של החברה והמדינה*, משרד הביטחון.
- ברוך, יצחק ליב. (1929). מגילות לבתי הספר, ספרי הרודוט: קרוזוס וסולון, כורש, המצרים ההבלים והפרסים, מחלקת החינוך של ההנהלה הציונית בארץ ישראל.
- יעבץ, צבי. (1957). *מרד ספארטקוס: מקורות, הקיבוץ המאוחד*.
- (1967). הערות דידיאקטיות להוראת ההיסטוריה העתיקה בכיתה ט', הוצאת עמיחי.
- נאור, מרדכי. (24.4.2011). 'עלינו להקים מדינת הרוח', הארץ.
- סוקרטס ומשנתו; איליאדה; אודיסיה. *מבחר השירה הרומית*, סדרת ספרי מופת לבתי הספר (50–1940). הוצאת בית הספר הריאלי העברי בחיפה.