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QUOTATION AS BASIS FOR EDUCATION: EXPERIENCE OF "ANTHOLOGY" BY IOANNES STOBAEUS

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Abstract

The article discusses the educational choice of quotations by authoritative authors, proposed by an early Byzantine school teacher Ioannes Stobaeus, who lived in the 5th century AD, when the Western Roman Empire ceased to exist and the Eastern Empire was undergoing serious changes. It is shown how educational reading was formed in Late Antiquity, when the creation of a compendium of quotations became the basis for education and identity. Stobaeus grouped into a little more than two hundred chapters quotations and paraphrases from over five hundred ancient authors — poets and prose writers, authors of artistic, philosophical, historical, natural-philosophical, and other writings. By this, he created his own educational horizon for the culture that was still studied in the then schools and in the subsequent self-education. The authors reveal how the thematic distribution of authoritative, but not sacred, texts was teaching the Anthology reader the order of thought consistent with the logic on which, in Stobaeus' opinion, the whole world, human thoughts and behaviors were built. The Anthology sought to fulfill the mission of the educational guide on all possible issues that its student might ask. The encyclopedic educational circle embraced issues related to the understanding of the physical world and issues related to the inner, spiritual one. The reader's mind, which united these two principles, substantiated a peculiar "psychosomatics" of the pedagogical doctrine of the early Byzantine teacher and the author of one of the first anthologies in the history of European education.

Keywords: Ioannes Stobaeus, anthology, educational space of Late Antiquity, history of pedagogy and education.

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1. Introduction

Anthologies might serve, no doubt,
as a shortcut to universal knowledge,
even if they were originally composed
with a different purpose in mind.
(Konstan, 2011, p.20)

The Anthology of Ioannes Stobaeus - a Byzantine compiler and, apparently, a teacher who lived and worked in the 5th century - is a monument that appeared in the space of Late Antiquity and for many centuries ahead defined the "shortcut to universal knowledge" that Konstan (2011) mentions in the epigraph. Quotes from poets and playwrights, philosophers, orators, grammatists, historians and other authors, combined according to a little more than two hundred subjects, comprise four volumes. A list of 208 chapters from the Stobaeus' Anthology is preserved, of which only a little less than one hundred and fifty have reached us or have been restored with various degrees of success and reliability. The introduction to the Anthology is lost, but in it, according to the information of the Byzantine theologian and Patriarch Photius of Constantinople, who lived in the 9th century, Stobaeus explained that he had written it for his son Septimius, who experienced problems memorizing texts or, probably, did not really want to read them in full. Excerpts, epithomes, florilegia, eclogues, anthologies, gnomologies, memorable "booklets", stromateis, isagoges, and other writings which contained remarks or quotations, a set of rendered extracts or an abridged version of a discipline became popular at the end of Antiquity as repositories of the accumulated knowledge (Rodríges-Noriega & Guillén, 2017; Tsouni, 2016; Brown, 1992; Corpus dei papiri filosofici greci e latini. Testi e lessico nei papiri di cultura greca e latina, 2017; Runia, 2018).

Almost the same targets are indicated in the epigram to the Pseudo-Apollodorus Mythological Library, where the reader was assured that the proposed book contains everything that "the world contains." When you open it, the unknown author of the epigram-introduction said that you could learn the plots without addressing either Homer, or the elegy, or the tragedians, or the lyric poets and authors of cyclic poems. Such a program of "educational abridgements", attached to Pseudo-Apollodorus by himself or his readers and/or admirers, was partially relevant to Stobaeus' idea, who added philosophers, historians, orators, grammars, legislators. Training with the help of instructive and "referential" excerpts was the first, and often the only stage of education in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

The idea of holistic encyclopedic completeness prevailed in educational ideas and practices, for example, in the Origines by Isidore of Seville or in the historical extracts of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, united in a symbolic numeral 53 (Németh, 2010). Even professional legal education saw its fullness in collecting quotes, which is illustrated by Justinian's huge collection of digests. For a free-born person, to become educated meant finding himself among a multitude of quotations, understanding what he should remember and be able to reproduce at the right time in the proper context (Brown, 1992; Cavallo, 2006). If you could confirm your knowledge of the general corpus of fragments, it was a testimony and criterion of your education as you belonged to a circle of those who knew texts through quotes, collections and anthologies (Brown, 1992; Clifford, 2017; Rimoldi, 2017).

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2. Problem Statement

Stobaeus' Anthology originally consisted of four books, of which two volumes were formed, and included variably sized quotes of about five hundred ancient authors. The first book begins with a selection of quotes about the Divine as the creator of the entire world, and the last one ends with quotes about the death of a person and how to preserve his memory among the living. The general logic of the Anthology is such that this work can be called, in the most general sense, "psychosomatic", using the metaphor of a holistic union of σῶμα (body) and ψυχή (soul). Thus, in Stobaeus' fourth book, one can find a description of a psychosomatic disorder, which in antiquity, for example, was considered to be phrenitis (literally "diaphragm inflammation", by which the soul was meant) (Stob. Florilegium. IV.44.81).

Stobaeus selects quotess in such a way that the soul and the body of a person are viewed as interrelated, interdependent and mutually conditioned components of a whole, with some priority of the soul over the body. The organic combination of poetic and prosaic quotes is also associated with this approach to the material. It is significant that such logic of body/soul presentation was free not only from Christian doctrines, but also from pagan mythology. The latter is, nevertheless, very organically manifested in the other parts of the text, which cannot be said about Christian authors, who are not represented in the text at all.

The search for "a shortcut to universal knowledge" was carried out by Stobaeus in a number of areas, with "universality" being not equivalent to "encyclopaedism". The structural and content features of Stobaeus' Anthology point to his peculiar approach to sources. This approach can be called "problematic", and we will try to make it more specific by formulating the problem for this study as follows: How did Stobaeus collect and structure his work, making from it an educational compendium of principal (in his understanding) quotes from the texts which were important to paideia as a common culture?

3. Research Questions

To present the selected fragments in an original way is one of the key issues for the compiler of any anthology, and Stobaeus is no exception here. Those intellectuals who later worked with Stobaeus' book "also had ambitions similar to those of the first compiler, so his design takes on other forms, presents other goals and, as a result, has a different meaning" (Curnis, 2013, p. 105). The history of this study compendium, which keeps being used from century to century, is connected with its numerous editorial revisions. To expand the text or, on the contrary, to reduce it is the easiest way to change the original structure and get a new version with the desired content. In some cases, we can appreciate not only the general educational orientation of the Anthology, but trace how Stabaeus' texts were altered with pedagogical purposes. In particular, one of the key figures for disclosing dialectical questions in Stobaeus is Plato. A later compiler tried both to preserve the author's idea of presenting quotes from Plato as a very important 'training module' (Curnis, 2013, p.108-109). The further story of Stobaeus' Anthology in the history of educational compendia was based on the nature, structure and subject matter of this work, which determined the issues addressed in this article.

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4. Purpose of the Study

Can be formulated as follows: to consider the early stages in the formation of educational anthologies, the development of approaches to the selection and systematization of material with pedagogical goals in ancient culture, which determined the further development of such a scientific and educational genre as anthology, since it is from works like Stobaeus' compendium that traditions both of academic and educational anthologies have been formed, general and thematic.

5. Research Methods

Combine textological, content-analysis, historical-genetic, historical-structural, comparative, semantic-terminological, hermeneutical analysis, etc.

6. Findings

We see in Stobaeus' Anthology a reliance on the "thoughtfulness of reading" that accompanies any kind of training. In the ancient world, thoughtful reading was accompanied by a partial appropriation of texts (which is not uncharacteristic of the modern reader, who works with electronic texts and knows how to cut out and save a selection of significant quotes for himself). The centuries-old statement of the importance of referring to quotations with different purposes (to expand memory, strengthen argumentation, etc.) could not but find reflection in Stobaeus' Anthology. Stobaeus could well wish to compile a book that could help the reader quickly navigate in the large number of texts and not waste time on making their own collection of quotes on one or another subject.

Precisely this tradition is described by Plato and Xenophon, Socrates' disciples. In Plato's dialogue Phaedrus, Socrates asks how well Phaedrus remembered Lysias' speech. After making sure that Phaedrus can repeat it almost literally, Socrates asks to reproduce it. When Socrates discovers a scroll under the Phaedrus' cloak, he definitely does not want him to read the speech. Socrates wants to hear a high-quality retelling, which Phaedrus probably could not have produced had he not made some notes for himself while listening to Lysias' speech. Only after Phaedrus hides the scroll, does his long dialogue with Socrates begin, during which Socrates asks Phaedrus a question, "On the other hand, he who has nothing more valuable than the things he has composed or written, turning his words up and down at his leisure, adding this phrase and taking that away, will you not properly address him as poet or writer of speeches or of laws?" (Plat. Phaedr.278e; further on in this article, all citations are reproduced according to the electronic database of classical texts "The Perseus Digital Library" http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collections). Socrates speaks about the possibility of such a type of authorship behind which there is a compilation of a work from parts, either your own or of other authors.

The same idea is also reflected in the Menexenus dialogue, where Socrates talks about his teachers: Aspasia, who taught him rhetoric and Connus, who taught him music. Then he says that yesterday he heard Aspasia, who partly improvised, and partly revised the earlier funeral oration delivered by Pericles. Eventually, she composed "her present speech from the fragments of the previous one" (Plat. Menex, 278e). In this dialogue, it is Socrates that is offered to reproduce the speech he heard from memory, and he accedes to the request. This speech is about a quarter longer than Lysias' one,

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which is reproduced by Phaedrus. We are not clear about the number of insertions when the words both of Lysias and Aspasia are rendered. Impressed by Aspasia's speech, Menexenus asks Socrates to reproduce the speeches of this great woman for him in the future. Probably, Menexenus, like Phaedrus, will continue to make notes to speeches, compiling for himself something like a collection of meaningful quotes and his own judgments about them. In Memorabilia, Xenophon gives his mentor the opportunity to formulate his pedagogical mission, and Socrates says that he teaches his friends "all good things" and introduces those from whom they can learn, "And the treasures that the wise men of old have left us in their writings I open and explore with my friends. If we come on any good thing, we extract it, and we set much store on being useful to one another" (Xen. Mem.I.6.14). Borrowing, memorizing, reproducing at a proper moment are the criteria for nominating an individual who possesses the paideia, i.e. has a good education, appropriate to a Hellene and Roman. Plato and Xenophon point to two practices common for that time: through Socrates, to the practice of composing essays from separate fragments, and through Phaedrus and Menexenus, to the practice of reading / listening as choosing fragments for recording and further memorizing (Konstan, 2011; Bezrogov & Pichgina, 2017; Pichugina, 2019). Plato and Xenophon's dialogues contain many indications that for Socrates, to find and preserve something useful from the books involved, probably, working both with poetry and prose. In addition to the literary tradition, which sheds light on the practice of working with texts from both the author-compiler and the reader, there is a significant number of evidence from papyri, many of which contain fragments of works and sometimes traces of intellectual work with them. An indicator of transition to the next stage after the initial period of education was the creation by a scholar or philosophy student of a personal compendium from extracts, which were considered relevant to the status of an educated person in his environment (starting with the teacher). The chronological distance between Socrates in the 5th c. BC and Stobaeus in the 5th c. AD indicates not only the centuries-old tradition of demand for collections of quotes with comments about them, but also the timeless relevance of the question of the accuracy of citation, which remains on the conscience of those who reproduce someone else's work with their own purposes. The Anthology contains a significant number of episodes that make modern researchers doubt the accuracy of Stobaeus' citations. In a number of cases, Stobaeus omits addresses and depersonalizes quotations, resorts to selective quoting, or intentionally attributes quotes to a completely different author (for example, ascribing Plutarch's quotes to Solon). Regarding many, but not all examples, we can say that the distortion of the quotes was the result of numerous alterations to the text of the Anthology made by later scribes with religious or moral purposes. In some cases, Stobaeus deliberately wants to shorten or "condense" quotes, omitting words or sentences, and thus changing (we would say: distorting) the source, which is especially noticeable in poetic quotes where the metric is confused. From the point of view of modern realities, Funke (2013) estimates this methodological approach to citing as follows,

> *in these cases, it is not that Stobaeus is providing us with dramatically incorrect information (such as inserting an entirely different name, or turning a god into a human), but rather that he reduces our ability to use his quotations as a source for understanding the plays from which they are taken.* (p.34)

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However, if we turn away from his texts in favor of the wider context of his collections, we will be able to see not a methodological weakness, but a methodological strength of Stobaeus, who is eager to present his own (and, possibly, partly pedagogical) position. In each section of the Anthology, quotations from poetry mainly precede quotations from prose (independent poetic fragments among prose are seldom found, and, mainly, in the form of quotations inside a larger prose fragment). Both are grouped not by author or chronologically, but by content. Since poetic and prosaic anthologies suggested different forms of selecting sources and working with them, Stobaeus' Anthology, which combined quotations from poetry and prose, presented the reader with a special practice for an intellectual who ponders over texts from different genres outside a single storyline, built by the compiler in other writings.

This student-teaching practice of thematic anthologization, according to Cavallo (2006), exists between reading and writing and encourages the reader again and again to reflect on what has been read, distinguishing him favorably from a simple reader (p.70). If you knew quotes, you had a lot of advantages in communication with government and bureaucratic officials, who could boast good education and erudition at that time. Knowledge of quotes gave a person an extra chance in various difficult situations. General education (reading in quotations) was a pass to the general communication within the middle and upper class people in Late Antiquity.

If we adopt this compilative-projective approach to the organization of the material, Stobaeus' Anthology was much more than just a textbook for his son, since it offered everyone an educational practice of active lifelong reading. However, there is no need to constantly wait for "didactic strictness" from Stobaeus: he was guided, first of all, by the anthological, not the pedagogical tradition. However, Stobaeus' tradition of collecting and arranging inevitably turned the "pure anthology" into a pedagogical one. A similar situation can be observed in many ancient authors: they are moving from collecting to (self)education with varying degrees of involvement.

In this regard, it is worth paying attention to how Stobaeus places independent poetic quotes from poets and playwrights before prosaic: they introduce the topic, add images, create involvement, through metaphors lead to reflections based on feelings. Stobaeus, apparently, considered this moment a proper "bridge" for the transition to the prosaic presentation of a particular topic in the compilations of "scholastic" quotes from philosophers, orators and other "specialists". The poetic texts do not relate to the prosaic ones directly. Prose is not a summary of poetry, and poetry is not a repetition of ideas expressed in prose, as is often found in early literary texts. However, poetry turns into a source of images and words, the reflection of which and understanding of which follow on the basis of prosaic texts containing another kind of poetry. It is difficult to judge whether Stobaeus associated poetry with the soul of education, and prose with its body, but its foundation, associated with tracing the complex dialogue between the psyche and the soma inside a single cosmos, is visible in all Stobaeus' preserved or reconstructed chapters. Perhaps this idea of his was one of those principles that determined the author's choice of fragments given in the quotations or the renderings close to his sources and contexts. Perhaps it was this position that determined Stobei's interest in the heritage of Hermes Trismegistus, quotes from whom directly adress this issue, see: "For that the Bodiless can never be expressed in body, the Perfect never can be comprehended by that which is imperfect, and that 'tis difficult for the Eternal to company with the ephemeral. The one is for ever, the other doth pass; the one is in [the clarity of] Truth, the other in the

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shadow of appearance. So far off from the stronger [is] the weaker, the lesser from the greater [is so far], as [is] the mortal [far] from the Divine. It is the distance, then, between the two that dims the Vision of the Beautiful. For 'tis with eyes that bodies can be seen, with tongue that things seen can be spoken of; but That which hath no body, that is unmanifest, and figureless, and is not made objective [to us] out of matter, – cannot be comprehended by our sense" (Stob. II,1, 26 Wachsmuth; III, 80, 9 Gaisford; Cod.Herm.Stob.fr.1, tr. G.R.S.Mead).

Among the poetic texts, Stobaeus prefers Euripides (Funke, 2013, p.54). The number of quotations from his tragedies, which have not been preserved, is very large. For example, Stobaeus cites fragments from the lost tragedy Antiope, the plot of which we partially know thanks to Hyginus' Fabulae which was probably written at the end of the 2nd century. Hyginus writes that Euripides' Antiope suffers a lot of hardships, both before and after the birth of her twin sons Zethus and Amphion, but in general, the story ends well for Antiope, "the young men, having learned from the shepherd who had raised them, that it was their mother, quickly appeared and saved her". In the Anthology, Stobaeus cites several fragments from the tragedy Antiope which allow the reader to see the unity and struggle of opposites connected with the mental or bodily aspects of human life. In one of the fragments from Stobaeus, Zethus argues with Amphion. Zethus embodies vigorous life and physical activity, and Amphion appears as an intellectual, choosing inaction, music and singing (this is the description we find in Pausanias IX.5.4.). It was Plato that opposed the brothers in the dialogue Gorgias, where he quoted from this tragedy by Euripides, "Each shines in that, to that end presses on, Allotting there the chiefest part of the day, Wherein he haply can surpass himself" (Plat. Gorg. 484e). Zethus kept faulting Amphion for passivity and effeminate behavior, as Plato points out when paraphrasing a fragment from Antiope in the address of Gorgias' student Callicles to Socrates, "And yet, my dear Socrates – now do not be annoyed with me, for I am going to say this from goodwill to you – does it not seem to you disgraceful to be in the state I consider you are in, along with the rest of those who are ever pushing further into philosophy? For as it is, if somebody should seize hold of you or anyone else at all of your sort, and drag you off to prison, asserting that you were guilty of a wrong you had never done, you know you would be at a loss what to do with yourself, and would be all dizzy" (Plat. Gorg. 486a). Although Amphion preferred a contemplative life, he still managed to erect the city of Thebes when the walls began to build themselves under his music. It seemed to Zethus that Amphion was not sufficiently involved in the city affairs. This is precisely what Stobaeus points at, citing Euripides' words from Antiope in the Anthology, "A man who possesses a good livelihood / but neglects matters in his own house and lets them slip, / and from his pleasure in singing pursues this all the time, / will become idle at home and in his city, / and a nobody to those close to him: a man's nature is gone / when he is overcome by pleasure's sweetness" (Eur.fr. 187 = Stob. 3.30.1).

Funke (2013) believes that Stobaeus selects this quote to emphasize to the reader (and first of all, his son) that "two factors can be used to assess masculinity: the strength of the body and the strength of the mind" (p. 40). Amphion, in his opinion, is no less masculine, and perhaps even more masculine, than Zethus, since he privileges the mental over the physical.

Perhaps it's just one of the threads that linked Stobaeus' educational position and purpose with his interest in Stoic philosophy, since it was a doctrine which suited his work with his spirit not only through education, but also self-education and ethical-psychological tuning to the journey of the soul, in a body

whose life is measured out by the Erinyes. The Stoics is the most popular philosophical school for him in the Anthology and, therefore, the main guideline in the "medicine for the soul". It may be compared with drama which is creating the unity of the soul with the suffering body.

7. Conclusion

For Stobaeus, the rediscovery and rearrangement of old time-honored texts was the essence of his educational activities and objectives: to create a magic well for gaining paideia, transforming a student, a disciple, into an educated person through the acquisition of cultural literacy. In the space of knowledge transfer, he shows students-learners a shortcut to paideia through selective anthological reference to great texts and people. This link with the classic authors gives students and teachers who study and teach with the help of the Anthology the right to create their own biographies, the right to identify themselves as free citizens and to reproduce the ancient culture in the future.

It is no coincidence that four centuries later Stobaeus attracted the attention of Patriarch Photius, who embodied the hellenization of Byzantine Christian education (Senina, 2018). At the sunset of Antiquity, Stobeaeus' Anthology created educated people who thought of themselves as a part of that epoch, felt that there was still light and noon even at dusk. When memorizing quotations, they clearly saw and felt that their education and training were rooted in the thickness of the five-to-ten-century heritage, although the choice and selection of this mosaic picture, the arrangement of smalt, the renovation and/or change of its colors were accomplished not by classic philosophers, but a collector of a flower garden of quotes (ἀνθολογία – literally, "collection, story, flower wreath, flower garden"), who lived in the 5th century AD, at the fall of the Western Roman Empire and during the complete Christianization of the Eastern one. A modest Byzantine teacher, with all his limited understanding of philosophy and a taste for correcting the collected quotations, did a sentinel and remarkable job: he designed an educational canon for his contemporaries and descendants.

Even if his corpus of quotes had not been planned for use in the standard school programme of those years (Piccione, 2002, p.169-198), Stobaeus arranged it so that it could always be addressed as an inventory of quotes about the cosmos, its divine structure, about soul, matter, behavior, that is, a didactic propaedeutics regarding all those "objects" that should be comprehended when following the education outlined by Antiquity and Stobaeus.

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