

“THE ESSENCE OF CLASSICAL CULTURE”:
WERNER JAEGER’S FIRST PUBLIC ADDRESS IN THE
UNITED STATES*

— STANLEY M. BURSTEIN —

ABSTRACT

This paper publishes the text of “The Essence of Greek Culture,” the first public address delivered by Werner Jaeger after his immigration to the United States in 1936. It was part of the program of a symposium sponsored by the Trustees of the University of Chicago in May, 1937 and provides important evidence indicating that Jaeger had begun to adapt ideas he had long supported in Germany to conditions in the United States. The text of the paper is preserved in the Archives of the University of Chicago and is published with its permission.

KEYWORDS

Werner Jaeger, University of Chicago, Greek culture, education, cosmopolitanism

Werner Jaeger was easily the most prominent classicist to come to the United States in the 1930s. As Professor of Greek at the University of Berlin since 1921 and the author of fundamental works on Aristotle, he was probably the most famous Greek scholar in Europe and the Americas. After initially trying in 1933 with the encouragement of the Nazi minister of education, the classicist Bernhard Rust, to influence National Socialist educational policy,¹ Jaeger became dis-

* I would like to thank The Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library and the grandchildren of Werner Jaeger for permission to publish this paper. I also would like to thank Dr Christopher Stray for reading and commenting on an earlier version of this paper.

¹ With Rust’s encouragement he published in 1933 the article “Die Erziehung des politischen Menschen und die Antike” in the Nazi education-themed journal *Volk im Werden* edited by the educational philosopher Ernst Kriek. Numerous such articles intended to establish the relevance of their discipline in Nazi Germany were published by classicists during the 1930s. Best documented is the case of the University of Heidelberg (cf. Chaniotis and Thaler 2006, 412–415). For a detailed account of Jaeger’s attempts to influence Nazi education policy, see Rösler 2017, 51–82.

illusioned with developments in Germany, particularly in the universities,² and, more important, he feared for the safety of his “non-Aryan”³ wife and their infant daughter.⁴ After extended negotiations with the University of Chicago in late 1935 and early 1936, he accepted appointment as Professor of Greek, arriving in the United States in the summer of 1936, officially to serve as the representative of the University of Berlin at the tercentenary of Harvard University but, in fact, to assume his new position at the University of Chicago.⁵

Jaeger was not typical of the refugee classicists who immigrated to the United States from Germany in the 1930s. First, as an “Aryan” professor of exceptional prominence and of well-known conservative political and social views, albeit one married to a “non-Aryan” wife, he was not in immediate danger of losing his professorship when he decided to immigrate.⁶ Second, while most of the nineteen other identified German classicists who immigrated to the United States virtually had to begin their careers over again, often taking entry-level appointments at institutions with poor libraries,⁷ this was not the case with Jaeger. He, instead, immediately obtained positions comparable to the one he left in Germany, first as Professor of Greek at the University of Chicago and then, beginning in 1939, as University Professor at Harvard University, with freedom to choose the courses he taught, an institute specially created for him, and extensive research support,⁸ a position he held until his death in 1961.

Nevertheless, his life in the United States was significantly different from what it had been in Germany, or so Jaeger believed. In Germany he

² Burstein 2019a, 323–325.

³ I use the term “Aryan” in this paper in the sense of German as defined by Nazi race policy. Jaeger’s second wife, therefore, was classed as “non-Aryan” because, although she was herself Protestant, her father was Jewish. Under the terms of the 1935 citizenship law she ceased to be a German citizen, as did their infant daughter Therese.

⁴ Burstein 2019a, 323.

⁵ For the details of Jaeger’s immigration to the United States, see Burstein 2019a, 319–328. For his Harvard tercentenary talk, see Jaeger 1937, 240–250.

⁶ Jaeger’s situation was similar to that of the philosopher Karl Jaspers, whose prominence protected him at the University of Heidelberg until 1937, when he was fired under the section of the German Civil Servants Law barring “Aryan” professors and other civil servants from public service if their spouses were “non-Aryans” (Remy 2002, 80–81).

⁷ For the list see Calder 1984, 35; the ancient historian Richard Laqueur has to be added to it (Epstein 1991, 120). For the experiences of most immigrant classicists and historians in America see Epstein 1991, 116–135; and Obermayer 2014.

⁸ The Institute for Classical Studies. The details of the offer he received from Harvard are contained in a letter he wrote to Richard McKeon on February 18, 1939 which is preserved in the McKeon Papers at the University of Chicago.

had not only been a prominent professor but also a significant public intellectual throughout the 1920s. Besides directing numerous PhDs, founding the journals *Die Antike* and *Gnomon*, and being the leading proponent of the so-called Third Humanism, which aimed to create a politically relevant humanism for contemporary Germany, he also was one of the foremost conservative spokesmen against the educational reforms of the Weimar Republic, particularly the reduction of the dominant role traditionally played by the classical gymnasia in German education that was mandated in the 1924 education law. That Jaeger could not occupy the same prominent place in the public life of the United States as he had in Germany was obvious. So, in a letter written on April 20, 1942 to his friend, the distinguished Mexican intellectual Alfonso Reyes, he remarked that since coming to the United States his “relation to political reality has become increasingly and passionately Platonic,”⁹ that is, he had become an advisor from the sidelines.

The reality was different. Throughout his American career Jaeger was, in fact, a significant public intellectual, speaking and writing frequently as he had done in Germany on the important contribution classics could make to a society in which professional and vocational concerns were increasingly central to education at both the secondary and college levels.¹⁰ His career as an American public intellectual began in the spring of 1937, a few months after his return from Scotland, where he had delivered his Gifford Lectures on *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*.¹¹ The occasion was a symposium consisting of three public lectures sponsored by the Trustees of the University of Chicago and chaired by Harold H. Swift, the President of the Board of Trustees, that was held on the evening of May 18, 1937 at the Goodman Theater in downtown Chicago.¹² The lectures were delivered by three of the university’s most distinguished professors: Richard P. McKeon, Dean of Humanities and Professor of Greek, Hayward Keniston, Professor of the

⁹ Jaeger to Reyes, April 20, 1942 (Quintana 2009, 103). For Jaeger’s friendship with Alfonso Reyes, see Burstein 2019b.

¹⁰ Cf., for example, his Aquinas Lecture, *Humanism and Theology*, delivered at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on March 7, 1942 (Jaeger 1943), and his talks on “The Future of Tradition” (Jaeger 1947a) and *The Greeks and the Education of Man* (Jaeger 1953).

¹¹ Jaeger 1947b.

¹² The evidence for this event is contained in an announcement of the symposium in the minutes of the Board of Trustees for May 13, 1937 (*Minutes of the Board of Trustees* 27, p. 105, University of Chicago Archives) and two newspaper articles, one in the University of Chicago newspaper, *The Daily Maroon*, May 18, 1937; and the other in *The Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1937.

Spanish Language, and Jaeger. The theme was “What Our Civilization Owes to Greece and Rome.”¹³

It is clear from the titles of the papers that the intent of the symposium was to provide the audience with an overview of the classical tradition and its significance in western history. The program opened with McKeon’s talk on “The Contribution of Antiquity to Later Civilizations,” which traced the transmission of classical literature from antiquity to the present, and closed with Keniston’s talk on “The Survival of Classical Culture in Contemporary Life.” The highlight of the night, however, clearly was the talk on “The Nature of Classical Culture” by Jaeger,¹⁴ who was described in the announcement of the symposium in the *Daily Maroon*, the university newspaper, as “the world’s foremost living classicist.” As Jaeger’s first major public address after arriving in America — an audience of seven hundred was anticipated — the talk is important evidence for how he sought to adapt his ideas to his new home.

Since it was a brief public lecture delivered less than a year after Jaeger left Germany, it is not surprising that “The Essence of Classical Culture” is a pastiche of ideas drawn both from his previous work and his ongoing projects. So, for example, the discussion of “culture” is essentially a paraphrase of the similar discussion in the introduction to the first volume of *Paideia*,¹⁵ while the surprisingly extensive analysis of Greek medicine as a form of *paideia*, with its emphasis on the importance of dietetics, clearly reflects the book on Diokles of Karystos that he was writing at the same time as the lecture.¹⁶ It is the emphases and not the content, of the lecture, therefore, that are original and that reveal Jaeger’s attempt to adapt long held ideas to the new American environment in which he and his family were now living. Two such changes of emphasis are particularly noteworthy: the idea that the Classics belong to all western peoples, including Americans, and the redefinition of the nature and relevance of Greek education.

¹³ Interest in such themes was considerable at this time since Ancient History was a required subject in the college preparatory curriculum in both public and private schools. Illustrative of that interest was one of the largest projects in American Classics of the period, a series of 52 volumes edited by G. D. Hadzsits and D. M. Robinson and written by leading scholars that was published between 1922 and 1940, first by Marshall Jones Co. (1922–1928) and then by Longmans, Green & Co. (1928–1940) under the overall title *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*.

¹⁴ Changed to “The Essence of Classical Culture” in the text of the talk.

¹⁵ Jaeger 1936, 1: 6–8.

¹⁶ Jaeger 1938.

The first of these themes is particularly prominent, occurring repeatedly in the talk. So, in the introductory section, Jaeger describes the significance of the ancient legacy for Western Civilization as follows:

Even since the downfall of the Roman Empire the nations which had begun their historical careers as parts of that Empire have been bound together by the common heritage of Greco-Roman culture, in which their descendants in the New World now likewise participate.

A little later, after discussing the significance of “culture” in the context of civilization, he becomes more specific with regard to the contemporary significance of Greek culture for western people:

History knows only one system that is really dominated and illuminated by the conscious ideal of culture. This is the community of nations in which we are living. Thus, so far as culture is concerned, we are living in a hellenocentric system.

Finally, he returns to the subject in the concluding section on education, noting that western education including American education is a legacy from the Greeks:

We have inherited this form of education from the Greeks and since there is no civilized nation in the Western World which has not adopted their system, we all participate in their achievements even if we do not know their language.

By telling his Chicago audience that as a western people Americans could lay a claim towards Greek culture even if they did not understand ancient Greek, Jaeger significantly moderated the German nationalism that was an important part of his educational views in the 1920s and early 1930s.¹⁷ By so doing, he also repudiated one of the pillars of Nazi classicism, namely, that the ancient Greeks were “Nordics” like the Germans and that, therefore, Greek culture was literally German culture: a view that he had explicitly denounced a few months earlier in his first professional

¹⁷ As late as the second edition of *Paideia* Jaeger (1935, 1: 4) had maintained the existence of both cultural and racial kinship between Greeks and Germans: hence its appearance in the English translation of the first volume of *Paideia* (Jaeger 1939, 1: xv), which was based on the second German edition. For Jaeger’s nationalist views see Ringer 1969, 289–294; Chapoutot 2016, 106–110; and Kim 2018, 224–225.

paper in the United States, “Classical Philology and Humanism,”¹⁸ which began with a clear reference to “the disruption of Western Civilization which we are witnessing, with the rise of the doctrine that culture and knowledge are nationalistic possessions.” To Nazi educators like Bernhard Rust¹⁹ and Hans Drexler,²⁰ Jaeger’s belief in the unity of Western Civilization and its share in the legacy of Greek culture was “cosmopolitanism,” and it was one of the principal charges leveled at him in particular and at Third Humanism in general.

Jaeger’s appreciation of the need to adapt his ideas to his American audience is likewise evident in the discussion of Greek education that closes his talk. The ringing declaration that “the Greek idea of education is opposed to all professionalism” that opens the discussion echoes ideas that he had espoused for years in Germany,²¹ most recently in his 1933 *Volk im Werden* article, and that he continued to support in America, asserting, for example, at Bard College in 1953 that “the objective of education is not *business* but *man*.”²² His hostility to professional education also would have probably made Jaeger sympathetic to President Robert Hutchins in the contentious argument over the nature and purpose of undergraduate education at the University of Chicago that flared up following the publication in 1936 of Hutchins’ book, *The Higher Learning in America*.²³ Nevertheless, there is a significant change of emphasis in the talk. In his *Volk im Werden* article,²⁴ Jaeger had claimed that a Greek philosophy-based education was political because it would foster the development of a ruling elite just as he believed such an education did in

¹⁸ Jaeger 1936, 363–374. He delivered the paper at the 1936 meeting of the American Philological Association held in Chicago.

¹⁹ Cf. the conclusion added by Bernhard Rust to the 1933 statement of educational goals drafted by the *Deutschen Altphilologen-Verband* on which Jaeger had worked: “This German humanistic Education is in the proper sense a German concern and different from all foreign forms of the same name. It has nothing to do with cosmopolitanism and renewed paganism. It strives to awaken the best forces of German man and to augment them through its relationship with the closely related peoples of antiquity and through it to secure its own Volk-mindedness” (my translation. For the text of the goals, see Fritsch 1989, 155–159). Cf. Chapoutot 2016, 51–97; Kim 2018, 213–215; and Roche 2018, 241–243, for the supposedly “Nordic” character of the Greeks.

²⁰ Drexler 1942, 59–69.

²¹ Ringer 1969, 110–111.

²² Jaeger 1953, 8, a point he had already made in his 1937 talk (see below, p. 13).

²³ Hutchins 1936. Cf. Dzuback 1991, 125–135; and Boyer 2015, 242–252. As Jaeger was on leave during the 1936/1937 academic year, however, he was not directly involved in the controversy.

²⁴ Jaeger 1933, 47–48.

England. In the lecture, however, while he still maintained that Greek education was political but now it was so only in the broader sense that it encouraged “civic virtue,” that is, good citizenship.²⁵

It is also probably not a coincidence that in the lecture he characterized Greek education as “general education,” a term that recalls Isocrates’ *enkyklios paideia*, and reflected Jaeger’s long-standing belief that in the United States, where Greek was little taught, the best curriculum was one that had the classical tradition at its core, but could reach a broad segment of the general university student population.²⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that a little over a decade later, in 1948, he would recommend to his longtime friend, the educator Eduard Spranger,²⁷ as the best model for post-World War II German education, not the pre-1933 classical curriculum, but the Harvard model of General Education that had been adopted in 1945 and would dominate American university curricula for almost half a century.²⁸ Jaeger certainly never surrendered his pride in being a representative of the great German philological tradition, but as “The Essence of Classical Culture” indicates, within less than a year after his arrival in the United States he had also begun his transformation into an American educator.

Two copies of the talk survive and are preserved in the Archives of the University of Chicago, specifically in Box 37 of the Office of Vice President Records. One is the text of the talk as delivered by Jaeger on May 18 and the other, which is published in this paper, is the final polished version he submitted to the university administration. Both bear a title slightly different from that announced in the newspapers: “The Essence of Classical Culture.”

²⁵ Cf. Jaeger 1953, 9.

²⁶ Cf. Jaeger 1953, 17–19. Jaeger’s course on “Greek Political Thinkers,” which he taught as Sather Professor at Berkeley in 1934, was intended to be accessible to “philosophy students who did not know Greek (letter of Jaeger to I. Linforth, May 4, 1934 [Univ. of California, Berkeley Classics Department files]).” At Harvard Jaeger regularly taught a year-long course on Greek culture in the university’s General Education program until his retirement (Park 1983, 381).

²⁷ The letter is preserved in the Jaeger papers at Harvard University and was published by Manfred Overesch (1982, 116–121).

²⁸ The reference is to *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee*, commonly known as the Red Book. Although Jaeger was not on the committee that developed the document, its principal author was his colleague and close friend, the committee secretary John Finley.

Text of the Lecture

The Essence of Classical Culture²⁹

by Werner W. Jaeger, Ph.D., Litt. D.

Professor of Greek, the University of Chicago

The Classics were handed down to us from the end of the ancient period to the present time by a continuous historical movement which has preserved in varying forms the abiding content of this spiritual possession.³⁰ It was in the first place a process of conscious tradition which was almost uninterrupted through two thousand years. It has been interrupted by some special high points of inner contact with ancient culture which we call renaissances or revivals and which coincided with the high points of cultural life in the history of the medieval and modern nations. Standing at the end of this historical curve and viewing its uniform rhythm we may ask for the cause of this amazing phenomenon of continuity and vitality. It goes without saying that this cause is to be found only in the inner structure of ancient civilization itself. At the same time a second question arises: what is or ought to be the position of classics in contemporary culture?³¹

A thousand answers have been given to both questions, each of them stressing a particular feature of this many-sided problem. But since we cannot discuss them in this limited account, I shall try to reduce them to one single answer which covers both questions. For the position of the classics in our present time must be based necessarily on the same quality which was the cause of their triumph in history. To define this quality, it would not be enough to enumerate all the individual inventions of the Greek genius in art and literature, science and philosophy, moral thought and political ideology. However highly we may esteem each of these achievements, one thing stands out above them all and

²⁹ At this point Jaeger inserted the following footnote: "An address delivered at the Goodman Theater May 18th, 1937, as part of a symposium on "What Our Civilization Owes to Greece and Rome."

³⁰ While Jaeger's English in this talk is remarkably fluent overall, his punctuation, which is reproduced here, is uneven, particularly his use of commas. Underlining reproduces Jaeger's emphases in the text.

³¹ In the delivered text the above paragraph replaced the original introductory paragraph: "The first speaker [sc. Richard McKeon] has presented a sketch of the historical movement by which the Classics were handed down to us from the end of the ancient period to the present time. Standing at the end of this curve and viewing its uniform rhythm we may ask the cause for this amazing phenomenon of continuity and vitality. It goes without saying that this cause is to be found only in the inner structure of ancient civilization itself. At the same time a second question arises: what is or ought to be the position of the Classics in contemporary culture?"

makes us understand them as a spiritual unity: this is the ideal scope which they were aimed at more and more consciously as Greek culture progressed. The Greeks referred all their creative work to one highest task: the formation of man. So they became the creators of a new form of living and thinking which we call culture. This concept since has become the distinctive mark and common link of all those nations which share in the Greek heritage. We call this Greek idea by a Latin word, because the Romans brought both the thing and the word for it to the Occidental world when they imposed their domination on the other nations and unified them in a tradition based on Greek civilization. Even [sic] since the downfall of the Roman Empire the nations which had begun their historical careers as parts of that Empire have been bound together by the common heritage of Greco-Roman culture, in which their descendants in the New World now likewise participate. All higher norms of human thought and action which modern nations have in common derive either from Christian religion or from Classical culture. To abandon this basis would mean for them to relapse into external isolation and barbarous primitivism; it would mean inner disruption and the complete loss of mutual understanding.

But is this thesis of the uniqueness of Classical culture compatible at all with the historical conception of the Ancient world which modern research has opened during the last hundred years? The discovery of the monumental civilizations of Egypt and Asia has aroused our admiration for the august age and the achievements of those nations compared with which the Greeks themselves felt like children. But this discovery itself discloses even more clearly the fact that none of these other nations produced a conscious ideal of culture in our Hellenic sense of the term. Even the word and with it the concept as such is missing in their languages. The intellectual and moral structure of their own systems of life is essentially different. We are able to recognize this more easily when we ask ourselves how the principles of their own civilizations differed from our cultural ideals. Either their systems were fundamentally religious in character e.g. the Law and the Prophets of the Jews or the Dharma of the Indians,³² or they were exclusively moral like the Confucianism which shaped the lives of the Chinese for many centuries, or exclusively militaristic or juridical like the Persian or Roman systems. None of these nations developed a literature or art, a science or philosophy in our sense of the term with the exception of the Romans who were the authors of the first Renaissance of Greek literature and culture. If nonetheless the abstract language of our modern Social Science uses the word “culture” unhesitatingly in the plural as a

³² At this point Jaeger deleted the following sentence: “These were the forms in which these nations propagated their civilizations.”

merely descriptive concept and speaks of the Persian or Indian or Egyptian cultures and even of the culture of primitive tribes, we shall be able to avoid rendering one of our highest concepts of value relative and almost meaningless only if we are aware that such a juxtaposition has no foundation in history. It is much the same as when e.g. some ancient Greeks speak of the Mosaic Genesis and Decalogue as the “philosophy of the Hebrews.” History knows only one system that is really dominated and illuminated by the conscious ideal of culture. This is the community of nations in which we are living. Thus, as far as culture is concerned, we are living in a hellenocentric system.

But what does it mean to say that the Greeks were the creators of culture? Our definition of Greek culture as a conscious ideal involves the danger of taking it as something abstract, whereas what I mean is a tendency which pervades all the creations of the Greek mind and determines their form. But let us take as an example Greek literature and views which the Greeks themselves held of poetry and spiritual creation. To them the work of art was never a mere object of esthetic pleasure as it is to us. It was at the same time the bearer of an ethos, a feeling or intention of the artist which has sought expression and found it. It was true to life, not realistic in the narrow sense of mere verisimilitude, but true in the perfection or excellence of the object represented. The subject of their art is always man in all the essential relations of his existence to life, to nature, to the divine, and to destiny. Where poetry ceases and the contents of thought calls for prose — oratory, history, philosophy — the same rule holds. The literature of the Greeks offers thus a splendid spectacle: the striving of the human spirit for the abiding expression of its ideals, the molding of human excellence from the heroic stage of the epic to the later phase of the tragic, the political, the philosophical man. Homer is the herald of heroic virtue embodied in the chorus of national heroes fighting against Troy. His follower, Hesiod, set up in his epic *Works and Days* a parallel codification of the virtues of the working man. The poets Tyrtaeus and Solon become the great political teachers of their countrymen: the first of them by his praise of the Spartan ideal of valor with which he tries to inspire a whole community during a fatal war; the other, one of the Classical law-givers of history and a poetical representative of the spirit of democracy, deifies the ideal of an organic social order based on justice, lawfulness, and free self-responsibility. The lyric poets show for the first time the awakening of a free individuality conscious of the objective norms underlying its subjective feeling and expression. Tragedy deepens the inborn heroism of the Greek soul to the religious consciousness of the tragic character of life. It discovers the sources of tragic complications and models the immortal figures of suffering hu-

manity: Prometheus, Oedipus, Antigone. Comedy castigates the weaknesses of human nature. Historiography reveals the eternal struggle of right and might as the essence of political life. In the same ways Greek literature and poetry show all stages of human existence and its immanent laws and make the poet the very prophet and teacher of his nation, early Greek philosophy seeks the abiding laws of nature, and Greek art discovers for the first time the hidden plastic norms of the body, the general laws of anatomy, proportion, ponderation, motion, and perspective.

On this background we understand how the Greeks were able to formulate also the problem of education in an entirely new way. Education is common to all human races from the beginnings of civilization. It is based on the necessity of transferring to every new generation the standards of human life, which so far have been attained by the continuous struggle for existence and the maintenance of a long tradition. Men are brought up in the arts of peace and war and are taught to honor the gods and their parents. The Greeks set up a higher idea of education. The nation of artists and thinkers conceived the process of conscious formation of the living man. Nothing is equal to the philosophical earnestness and the creative power with which they approached this task. Simonides, the ancient poet, says:³³ “It is hard to become a man of perfect virtue constructed four-square with hands and feet and mind without blemish.” Indeed the Greek spirit faces this problem as a sort of architectonic task. Like the Greek artist or poet, the educator asks for the ideal laws and norms of human nature in order to express them in the individual. The earliest stage of Greek education, which we can trace back to Homer, was a combination of gymnastic and music. The harmony of body and soul is one of its basic features. Music means the arts of the Muses; it includes poetry and dance as well as vocal and instrumental music. We can understand from what has been said about the specific character of Greek poetry, why it is given so high a place in education. Poetry becomes in the Greek scheme the representative interpreter of life. In its higher forms it is far beyond the limits of any mere individual emotion or expression to which modern artists usually confine. The Greeks found in Homer and Sophocles not only entertainment and inspiration, but an expression of obligation. More and more the word culture or education (the Greeks say *paideia*) included the works of literature and thought in which the highest spiritual and moral ideas of the nation were embodied. The content of the word was enlarged again when, in connection with the educational problem, the Greeks became the investigators and discoverers of the

³³ Simonides Frag. 542 (Campbell).

typical forms of human thought, voice, speech, and action. They discovered the laws of musical harmony and the grammatical structure of human language. They taught how to distinguish force and shade of meaning of every word and how to adapt the various types of style which they brought into a rhetorical system, to the various parts of discourses and to the changing situations of life. They disclosed the laws of argumentation and logic as well as arithmetic, geometry, and stereometry, and referred the epoch-making knowledge of all these formal principles of the human mind to the task of the intellectual formation of men. We have inherited this form of education from the Greeks and since there is no civilized nation in the Western World which has not adopted their system, we all participate in their achievements even when we do not know their language.

The discovery of the disciplines just mentioned led to an immense extension of the intellectual part of education, to the new idea of a gymnastic training of the mind. It is interesting to see that at about the same time Greek medicine entered the circle of disciplines which contributed to the objective of human culture and accomplished a parallel enlargement of the somatic part of education. This also is an instructive example of what I called the educational attitude of the Greek genius. Although Greek medicine was already highly specialized and had its own special literature in the time of Hippocrates and his medical school, physicians of all schools endeavored to state their theories in a form intelligible to the public and to bridge the gap between specialists and laymen. The Greek physician turns from the sick to the healthy man and becomes his educator. He teaches him how to live, how to avoid the dangerous influence of the various seasons, the menace of epidemic diseases, the bad consequence of false diet, and how to find out by experience, conjecture, and tact the right mean of symmetry. The literature on diet increases rapidly and shows an incredible refinement. This new discipline is based on the assumption that nature itself is the greatest physician. The task of medicine is only to understand and to assist nature. Medicine must combine a tactful diplomacy, which is aware of the nature of the individual and his constitutional needs, with a tendency toward nature in the sense of the general norm and its measure. The whole life must be controlled by medical intelligence and is described in all its daily details. This literature gives an admirable picture of physical culture in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. and of the unifying influence which the cultural ideal exercised at that time on all branches of Greek life. This medical theory of diet is, as it were, the ethics of the body. Plato and Aristotle are full of praise of the medical art and imitate in their ethics the example of medical method. On the other hand medicine stands in close contact with philosophy. Comparing it with the beginnings of medical experience in Egypt, we may say

that Greek medicine developed its scientific character because of its close contact with the philosophical thought of the Greeks.

The Greek idea of education is opposed to all professionalism. The objective of education is not business but man, that is to say true education must develop man's nature and faculties as a whole and not merely make him fit for a technical job. Thus Greek education is general education, but this does not mean a mere formal training of man's mental and physical forces. The stress which is laid on the arts, i.e. on grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, and the mathematical disciplines, might give the opposite impressions, but this stage of the educational process is by no means final. According to Plato and Aristotle, it is only preparatory in character. Even among the Sophists who were the inventors of that formal training, there was a Protagoras who was aware of the fact that an education that was based chiefly on the formal arts would be too technical and would not make a man fit for a life within a community. To the Greeks a general education means a political education, if we take this word in its highest sense. Socrates' objection to the Sophists was that they did not attain this objective in making a young man a good public speaker by their formal training. But even Protagoras who initiated his pupils in the abstract theories of the recently invented Social Science did not satisfy the philosophical critics of the Socratic school. To the great philosophers of the fourth century, Plato and Aristotle, true civic virtue is based on the knowledge of the highest norms of human life moral and political. Such norms and ideals, as we have seen, had been heralded by the great poets who embodied them in their works and thus had become the spiritual law-givers of the Greek nation. But after the breakdown of all religious and moral traditions in public and private life during the Peloponnesian War, philosophy had to take over the educational mission from poetry. Turning from the lonely contemplation of the cosmos to the social problem of the present time, the philosophical mind tried to reestablish a system of life on a rational basis. In the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle Greek culture attains its most universal form and in this universal form it was able to conquer the world. On the other hand these architectonic systems are far from being empty constructions. Their so-called rational character is something very complicated. All sorts of empirical research, historical tradition and natural science have given to this philosophy its substantial foundation and received from it the most vigorous impulses for their own development. Plato's and Aristotle's philosophical solutions of the practical problems of human life presuppose a theoretical knowledge which comprises the totality of being. This was the hour of birth of the University in which the theoretical totality of knowledge is displayed under the practical scope of educating man and organizing human life. In the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle the development of

Greek education comes to its height. Education is no longer a training of youth. It claims the whole life of man and becomes the highest symbol of the metaphysical sense of human existence and striving. In schools and works of philosophy the Greek ideal of culture finds its last and highest manifestation. In this form which includes the earlier stages it has continued vital more than two thousand years beyond the political and national life of its authors.

Stanley M. Burstein

California State University, Los Angeles

sburste@calstatela.edu

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Boyer, John 2015. *The University of Chicago: A History*. Chicago and London.
- Burstein, Stanley M. 2019a. “Werner Jaeger Comes to Chicago,” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 26, 319–332.
- Burstein, Stanley M. 2019b. “‘A Friend in Foreign Lands’: The Friendship of Alfonso Reyes and Werner Jaeger.” In Roberto Cantú (ed.), *A Scholiast’s Quill: New Critical Essays on Alfonso Reyes*. Cambridge, 32–42.
- Calder, William M., III 1984. “Die Geschichte der klassischen Philologie in den Vereinigten Staaten.” In *Studies in the Modern History of Classical Scholarship*. Naples, 15–42.
- Chaniotis, Angelos and Thaler, Ulrich 2006. “Die Altertumswissenschaft an der Universität Heidelberg 1933–1945.” In Wolfgang U. Eckart, Volke Sellin, and Heike Wolgast (eds.), *Die Universität Heidelberg im Nationalsozialismus*. Heidelberg, 391–434.
- Chapoutot, Johann 2016. *Greeks, Romans, Germans: How the Nazi’s Usurped Europe’s Classical Past*, Richard R. Nybakken (trans.). Berkeley and Los Angeles (orig. ed. *Le National-socialisme et l’Antiquité*, Paris 2008).
- Drexler, Hans 1942. *Der dritte Humanismus: Ein kritischer Epilog*. Frankfurt.
- Dzuback, Mary Ann 1991. *Robert M. Hutchins: Portrait of an Educator*. Chicago.
- Epstein, Catherine 1991. “Schicksalgeschichte: Refugee Historians in the United States.” In Hartmut Lehmann and James J. Sheehan (eds.), *An Interrupted Past: German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*. Washington and Cambridge, 116–135.
- Fritsch, Andreas 1989. “Die altsprachlichen Fächer im nationalsozialistischen Schulsystem.” In Reinhard Dithmar (ed.), *Schule und Unterricht im Dritten Reich*. Neuwied, 135–162.
- General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee* 1945. Cambridge, MA.
- Hutchins, Robert M. 1936. *The Higher Learning in America*. New Haven.
- Jaeger, Werner 1933. “Die Erziehung des politischen Menschen und die Antike,” *Volk im Werden* 1, 43–49.
- Jaeger, Werner 1935. *Paideia: Die Formung des griechischen Menschen*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. Berlin.
- Jaeger, Werner 1936. “Classical Philology and Humanism,” *TAPA* 67, 363–374.
- Jaeger, Werner 1937. “The Problem of Authority and the Crisis of the Greek Spirit.” In *Authority and the Individual*. Cambridge, MA, 240–250.
- Jaeger, Werner 1938. *Diokles von Karystos: Die griechischen Medizin und die Schule des Aristoteles*. Berlin.
- Jaeger, Werner 1939. *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, vol. 1. Gilbert Highet (trans.). New York.
- Jaeger, Werner 1943. *Humanism and Theology*. Milwaukee.
- Jaeger, Werner 1947a. “The Future of Tradition.” In Ruth Nanda Anshen (ed.), *Our Emergent Civilization*. New York.

- Jaeger, Werner 1947b. *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*. Oxford.
- Jaeger, Werner 1953. *The Greeks and the Education of Man*, Bard College Papers. Annandale on Hudson, New York.
- Kim, Alan 2018. "An Antique Echo: Plato and the Nazis." In Helen Roche and Kyriakos Demetriou (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Classics, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany*. Leiden, 205–237.
- Obermeyer, Hans Peter 2014. *Deutsche Altertumswissenschaftler im amerikanischen Exil: Eine Rekonstruktion*. Berlin.
- Overesch, M. 1982. "Dokumentation zur deutschen Bildungspolitik nach dem 2. Weltkrieg," *Gymnasium* 89, 109–121.
- Park, Clara Claiborne 1983. "At Home in History: Werner Jaeger's Paideia," *The American Scholar* 52, 378–385.
- Quintana, Sergio Ugalde (ed.) 2009. *Un Amigo en Tierras Lejanas: Correspondencia Alfonso Reyes / Werner Jaeger (1942–1958)*. Mexico City.
- Remy, Steven P. 2002. *The Heidelberg Myth: The Nazification and Denazification of a German University*. Cambridge, MA.
- Ringer, Fritz K. 1969. *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933*. Cambridge, MA.
- Roche, Helen 2018. "Classics and Education in the Third Reich: *Die Alten Sprachen* and the Nazification of Latin- and Greek-Teaching in Secondary Schools." In Helen Roche and Kyriakos Demetriou (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Classics, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany*. Leiden, 238–263.
- Rösler, Wolfgang 2017. "Werner Jaeger und Nationalsozialismus." In Colin Guthrie King and Roberto Lo Presti (eds.), *Werner Jaeger, Wissenschaft, Bildung, Politik*. Berlin and Boston, 51–82.