

MSC 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.
COMMUNICATION»****ANTIQUE RHETORIC AS A PEDAGOGICAL ENTERPRISE FOR
INTERACTION (NEO-RHETORICAL MODERNIZATION)**

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Abstract

This article is devoted to neo-rhetorical interpretation of ancient rhetoric as a mechanism of interaction and its correlation with education and upbringing of a citizen. It is an attempt to make the analysis of ancient rhetoric carried out not only from the perspective of neo-rhetoric, but also from the concept of paideia (παιδεία), which is considered as a triune principle of education, upbringing and humanity in the modern philosophy of 21st century education. The object of the research is not the public speech of a certain era, but speech in its special performance by a certain person – Greek and Roman man as he appears or should appear in the view of the Antiquity classics. We also analyze the neo-rhetorical modernization of the established historical concepts of ancient rhetoric in order to reveal their cognitive and heuristic potential. The sophistic rhetoric of socio-political self-affirmation is opposed to the rhetoric of privileged knowledge as two competing models of education and upbringing of a good citizen; the Roman rhetoric, which states, that an orator is a perfect citizen, is considered as historically the first model for overcoming these collisions. The reconciliation of sophistry and Platonism with neo-rhetorical methods does not fit the aim of the research, but as far as it brings a new impulse to the old historical, philosophical and pedagogical problem, the consideration of the neo-rhetorical methodology is quite possible.

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1. Introduction

The modern philosophy of education, as well as the ancient one, which formed in the Hellenistic-Roman period as the “initial methodological basis” (Turbovskoy, 2018, p.7), is aimed at the necessity to socialize the younger generation, to include them in social and political mechanisms of interaction. Even the first schools of sophistry and the later Socratic and Platonic dialectics criticize and refuse the traditional receptive education, which aim is to develop the personality of a free man through “explaining the basic principles of the things studied” (Volf, 2018, p. 296). Later there comes a new philosophy of education, which develops a new system of the upbringing: “the word is determined by the way of life of a speaker and it does not just express it, but realize and continue directly, it is a kind of life performative act” (Dorofeev, 2018, p. 200). Moreover, it is wrong to understand the education of a citizen as the complex of both knowledge and its applications. According to the ancient traditions, this process is really an exact and experienced exercise, a speech act, which improves the interaction in a polis.

Rhetoric as a kind of “spiritual exercises” for upbringing a noble man is historically expressed in sophistry and dialectics – two competing educational and philosophical paradigms. The result of this competition is known: sophistry was completely discredited not only by the socio-political practice of the polis, but mostly by Plato and subsequent Western tradition of metaphysics, which invariably opposed the technique of rhetors and sophists with search for the declared subject of philosophy – truth. However, when in the second half of the twentieth century the neo-rhetoric appeared, this seemingly established axiom about the victory of dialectics over sophistry became the subject to a thorough revision. Here we can refer to the “doxic rhetoric” or the “rhetorical system of the political world” that Ptassek (1993) explicates from the point of neo-rhetoric, and which serve as a kind of justification of sophistry to be an effective rhetorical and educational paradigm on socio-political interaction.

The article states mostly not about the justification of sophistry as a historically established concept within the new doctrine, but about the illustration, based on the ancient rhetoric materials, of new principles and possible perspectives that open up to the philosophy of education. In order to solve the stated problem, sophistry, Platonism and partly Roman school rhetoric are paid a lot of attention in the article. The Roman rhetoric as a pedagogical enterprise of upbringing an ancient state man is considered in our earlier research (Kashchey & Kitaeva, 2015).

2. Problem Statement

The nature of the stated problem defines the task of this research: to investigate ancient rhetoric as a pedagogical enterprise for education and upbringing of a citizen, and its functioning as an instrument and a mechanism of socio-political interaction in the life of an ancient polis. In this regard, the work is aimed at the selective reconstruction of the historical and philosophical concepts of sophists, Plato and Roman theorists of rhetoric because of a specific interest: to reveal the role and the meaning of language in antique models of socialization and political education. This specific interest can be called neo-rhetorical as far as in order to realize the intended task, we are forced to link the philosophy of education and the modern theory of rhetoric together. As the result, the research can be denoted as a neo-rhetorical view on the

philosophical concepts of antiquity education, on the one hand, and as a philosophical-pedagogical view on the rhetoric theory and practice of this era, on the other hand.

3. Research Questions

In the context of our study, the following questions arise:

3.1. Is sophistry in the conditions of an ancient polis or others able to solve the problem posed by Plato about political virtue as a subject of teaching technique? How?

3.2. What is the reason of using the neo-rhetorical concept of “argumentative rhetoric” to justify the sophistic principles of socio-political self-affirmation as the basis of socio-political interaction?

4. Purpose of the Study

The problem and the stated questions define the purpose of the research: to expand the ideas about the possibilities of modern rhetoric as a methodology and theory for modernization of historically established concepts about the education of a citizen. Moreover, it is necessary to identify the role of language in social interaction, which allows deepening the knowledge about mechanisms and structure of speech functioning in various political systems and about the place of rhetoric in modern knowledge and education.

5. Research Methods

The methodological basis of this research is the neo-rhetoric of Kopperschmidt (2018) as a theory of persuasion and argumentation. Within the specified methodology, the neo-rhetorical study of this topic consists in the consideration of speech as the basis of reasonable agreement, which provides the social counterparties with the opportunities for creation. This distinguishes rhetoric as a specific, linguistic, purposeful reflection, in which the efficiency of speech reveals intersubjective and consensual knowledge, content. As a result, this leads to a certain methodical requirement, which needs to be complied: if rhetoric is an exemplary and representative type of the persuasive language usage, it is possible to specify the function of rhetoric on the education and upbringing of citizens, as well as on providing the interaction and collective agreement.

The effectiveness of this methodical requirement in relation to sophistic management of education is as follows: if the opinion at the joint meeting or during education formulates the idea of the fairness of public bases, then there is no more distinction between amateurism and professionalism. This means, that in fact sophists cannot know or convey the idea of justice. It is important to cultivate the appropriate conceptual space skilfully and knowingly, and therefore to cope with the stated moral and educational tasks.

Following this requirement, from the sophistry point of view the purely academic nature defines the philosophical problems of all Plato’s dialogues: how to live, what to know, what justice is. The sophists, wandering many poleis, understand the category of justice from cosmopolitan point of view, and this category has the certain solution in each polis: “Before making judgment on whether courage can be taught, one must answer: what a teacher should teach” (Alymova, 2016, p. 4). As far as a person improves the

speech through the lessons of rhetoric, the same is for virtues through exercises. Thus, it is possible to speak of qualitative superiority in communication, about anticipating the future state of affairs.

In the context of the school rhetoric of the Roman period, few moments can be pointed at. Some of them take place in the Cicero's dialogue "On the Orator" and fit into the methodical requirement, while being expressed as the unity of form and speech content. As, on the one hand, it is impossible to speak successfully without speaking clearly, understandably and beautifully, because speech devices and thoughts form the unity, so, on the other hand, it is impossible to speak well without being moral, "since eloquence is one of the most eminent virtues" (Cicero, 1972, p. 19).

6. Findings

In order to justify the stated ideas, there are some facts and representations of ancient rhetoric in the context of the specified methodical requirement. The speech is the necessary instrument for communication in the process of rhetorization of the socio-political life in a polis. It is connected with the triune principle of sophistic rhetoric: speak beautifully, discuss correctly and act effectively. Teaching effective speech for social and private affairs is the obvious purpose of sophistic education, which aims to provide a public meeting. According to Socrates, it is necessary to consult with specialists in different areas of life, at the same time only in the political sphere all participants are equally competent or incompetent, so as the result, there is no political technology and no specialists. All people who are interested in this virtue share the "Shame and Right" (Plato, 1971). Thus, as we know from the dialogue, Socrates doubts about the technical nature of political skill. At the same time, in spite of the rules of art, the possibility to master that skill causes even more questions. Protagoras answers these claims, when he tells the myth about the birth of culture; instead of the concept of competence, he provides an idea, that it is necessary to constitute the language as a source of politics.

If not going into details of the polemic between sophistry and Platonism, we can note that Platonism's reappearance in the modern political practice and Plato's return to his own asylum, academy, are possible mostly for his being a philosophy teacher. Through his written dialogues, Plato influences the rational part of the reader's soul and encourages one to master dialectical methods of argumentation and operation on concepts. Many ancient sources state, that in oral dialogues and academic conversations Plato shows another point of view: to consider the complementary nature of oral and written forms of sharing an intuitive knowledge during the process of philosophical education. Plato's concept of education is a result of a theoretical generalization of the naive intuitionism, which characterizes pre-Socratic philosophers, sophistry, the Socratic dialogues and their ideal of education, Pythagoreanism, which forms the abstract world of mathematical notions. "Thought-provoking is not just listening and being convinced, but defying as well, representing the opposite point of view, this is the essence of the dialectical method" (Klykanov, 2017, p. 45). Plato considers wisdom and knowledge not only from the point of clear abstract theory without its socio-political context, but also as the virtues related with a polis modernization through the education of a citizen, which is capable to fulfil a noble goal of building an ideal state. At the same time, according to Plato, dialogue, dispute and communication clarify and verify knowledge. Cognition is possible when acting jointly and intellectual intuition is raised at the maximum of human abilities.

Otherwise, the space of modern global communication can turn into some sort of analogy to the Plato's cave in its modern picture of big data (Garadja, 2019; Mironov, 2019).

Moreover, as it was in the Roman period, using rhetorical educational system as a method for reparation the political sphere of rhetoric cannot compensate for the loss of its influence in political activity. From the first look it seems convincingly and legally to blame the changed historical circumstances for this loss. Nevertheless, the end of the Roman republic and the beginning of the Principate complement the history of rhetoric with circumstances, though its connection with practice was problematic from the outset. As the rhetoric of Cicero loses the practice, probably along with the claim to influence practical actions, there is an increase in that cultural cosmopolitanism that was originally aimed at delimitating theory and practice, preparing the ground for the "culture of humanism" (Bazaluk, 2018, p. 245).

At the same time, rhetoric unlocks the potential of eloquence in literature, which becomes then an indifferent basis of the rhetorical educational program, created by Cicero. Therefore, rhetoric not only loses political meaning, but also significantly emancipates. However, the related loss of socio-political competence becomes a problem for rhetoric later, when an attempt to develop its original practical potential is made. Then rhetoric as an educational program not only opposes the New European scientific methodology, it even serves as a reason for its emergence.

Of course, the canonical formulation of the doctrine of rhetorical education and upbringing belongs to Quintilian, whose imperial rhetoric continues the distinctive republican Ciceronism. The Quintilian's project, in which political speech as a form is still given the traditional advantage, however, pursues clearly pedagogical interests: Cicero's directive idea of "a perfect orator", who must be a "perfect citizen", is presented here as a pedagogical enterprise within the framework of an extensive educational program. This enterprise includes not only the shaping of a future orator from childhood, but also the education and upbringing of one's parents; this clearly illustrates the tendentious shift away from the particular context of political activities. Although practical management of this activity context by an orator is further required, the excessive measures of educational nature show a huge difference between practice and Quintilian school rhetoric.

7. Conclusion

The suggested statements about the prospects for neo-rhetorical modernization of ancient rhetoric agree with the idea of "Rhetorical rationality": reasonable practice is possible if one manages to use the original plurality of opinions as a basis for rationalizing this practice. In other words, if a discussion is not a means of discrediting practical solutions, but is understood as an opportunity to clarify an activity, then practice is considered reasonable. In this respect, its doxic prospectization increases the level of requirements for the solutions, proposed to the problem; this helps a reasonable understanding of collective will. This exact discursive possibility of clarifying the case corresponds to reflection, discussion, meeting, which represent the specific human abilities, the same as speech, because they are connected with language, that is a condition of their existence. Therefore, the task of modern rhetoric is to optimize educational activities and provide social and political interaction; without this premise, there is no discussion, persuasion, rhetoric or education.

Such rhetoric is defined only with this problem solution, that can be considered reasonable, and its reasonableness is motivated by persuasive speech. This statement forms the basis of “rhetorical rationalization” in the situation when the condition of speech persuasiveness is an anticipation of agreement. This anticipation is impossible if taking a position of communicatively uninvolved, external observer. It demands a one’s presence in the process of trans-subjective design of own viewpoint, a joining the general potentials of agreement, which are considered the storage of universally important opinions (endoxa), since “they seem persuasive to everyone” (Aristotle, 2007, para. 1173a). Therefore, justifying sophistry and getting rid of the “oppression of Platonism” (Donskikh, 2018, p.213) eventually result in Aristotelism, which corresponds to historical truth, but as for the payment for having it, we again lose sophistry with its appealing ideas.

There is one more thing to note: Cicero’s borrowed figure of “a perfect orator” takes therefore both messianic and utopian features. The very extensive educational program inevitably delays the education of an orator; the activities become a formal aspect of rhetorical education, in which the forefront is taken by literary and contemplative moments. Though the advantage of “vita activa” is nominally assigned for an orator, there is a thesis that rhetoric is also peculiar to the so-called “silent orator”, which represents a very different ideal to the one of effective life. It is, of course, about a prototype of scientist-humanist who has left the affairs to devote oneself to the pure joy of scientific activity. Thus, literature comes to the place of rhetorical activity. Literary rhetoric expresses its connection to reality only in the form of a postulate. It is also necessary for an orator, who manages literary education, to convey the basics of moral lifestyle, so the introduction of classics in reading makes it at the same time the course of morality.

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