ANTIRACISM AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN CLASSICS PEDAGOGY:

RACE, SLAVERY, AND THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE IN BEGINNING GREEK AND LATIN TEXTBOOKS

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TODAY’S GOALS

THE PROBLEM
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
DATA SET
METHODOLOGY
FINDINGS & IMPLICATIONS
White supremacists have historically relied on Classics to help socially construct racism.

Classics has continued to foster racism in different contexts across time and place.

Racism is now embedded in Classics teaching practices and materials.

The enslavement narratives in Greek and Latin textbooks are part of a legacy of racist ideas.
**DEFINITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racist</th>
<th>Antiracist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea.</td>
<td>• One who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kendi, 2019: p. 13)
HISTORY

Early Ideas (proto-racism)
Environmental determinism (Xenophon, Aristotle, etc.)

Continued Social Construction (racism)
Human traffickers like Henry the Navigator

Ongoing and every-changing manifestations today
Voting policies
THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

- White supremacists use Classics imagery
- Classics houses White supremacists
- The interwoven relationship between Classics and White supremacy continues today
THE SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

- Classroom materials, especially textbooks, are part of the problem
- The enslavement discourses in these textbooks are particularly egregious
- A comparison to 19th century American texts and images show how false portraits of slavery are a tool of White supremacists
- Many Classics textbooks promote these same false portraits of a “happy slave” and benevolent system of enslavement
- Although ancient enslavement was not race-based, the presentation of Greco-Roman enslavement today is racist
• How are interpersonal and ideational meaning systems being used to construe enslavement discourses within Greek and Latin textbooks?

• What is the function of multimodality in construing enslavement discourses in Greek and Latin textbooks? How are images and texts together being used to construct enslavement?
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- **Multicultural Education**
  - Social justice movement aimed at creating a more equitable society through education
  - Developed out of the Black Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and has antiracism principles at its core
  - Advocates for the examination and reconfiguration of the education system at micro and macro levels
  - Includes considerations of student learning, teacher training, and structural reform in education
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

• **Systemic Functional Linguistics**
  
  • Also emerged in the 1960s with movements of equity in education
  
  • Toolbox of resources for examining the social function and meaning of language as defined by J. R. Martin (1992)
    
    • Language is a network of relationships
    
    • Description shows how these relationships are inter-related
    
    • Explanation reveals the connection between these relationships and the use to which language is put
DATA SET

- *Athenaze: An Introduction to Ancient Greek* (Balme et al., 2016)
- *Reading Latin* (Jones & Sidwell, 2012)
- *Ecce Romani* (Lawall, 2009)
- *Latin for the New Millennium* (Minkova & Tunberg, 2008)
METHODOLOGY

• **Appraisal Analysis in SFL**
  • How are people and things being described and assessed for value and worth in a community or society?
  • What is the function of this construal?

• **Transitivity Analysis in SFL**
  • Who are the participants? Who is doing what to whom?
  • What is the function of this ideation?
APPRAISAL

ENGAGEMENT
- monogloss
- heterogloss

ATTITUDE
- AFFECT
- JUDGEMENT
- APPRECIATION

GRADUATION
- FORCE
  - raise
  - lower
- FOCUS
  - sharpen
  - soften
**CODING & INTERPRETING APPRAISAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affect - <strong>bold</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation - <code>underlined</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgement - <em>italics</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical Metaphor - [brackets]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He felt pretty <strong>uncomfortable</strong> standing there [like an exhibit at the cattle-market], but he put the <strong>best face</strong> on it, looking around <em>challengingly</em> at the bidders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 19** Coding of attitude sample 1 (Lawall, 2009, p. 37).
Slaves, who were in the early days mainly prisoners of war, were plentiful, and the poorest Roman household might own one or two. Davus had been captured by the slave-dealer, Davus was mystified, but he soon discovered that this had been done to all new arrivals from abroad. A placard was hung around the neck indicating that he was British and could read and write. He was then put on a revolving stand, and bidding for him began.

He felt pretty uncomfortable standing there like an exhibit at the cattle-market, but he put the best face on it, looking around challengingly at the bidders. Titus Corbulo, father of Gaius Cornelius, was in the Forum that day with the overseer (vilicus) of his farm to purchase some new slaves. He did not pay much attention to the placards, as slave-dealers were called, were notorious swindlers—but when he saw Davus's fine physique, fair hair, and blue eyes he made a bid of 5,000 sesterces, and soon found himself beside the overseer and his new master.

By this time Titus was offering 10,000 sesterces for a Greek from Rhodes. This frightened Davus because the fellow was a pale, half-starved individual who looked as if the daily work would kill him. The overseer, too, looked annoyed at this extravagant bid and said nothing. But when he heard Titus being forced up to 20,000, then 30,000, he contained himself no longer and muttered angrily, "He's not worth half that, master!"

Titus ignored him and finally paid 35,000 for the Greek Euclides. The odd questions on the placard, "skilled in geometry and rhetoric," must, the overseer thought, have had something to do with the record price!

As Davus, along with the strange Greek, was packed on a cart with some looking Thracians also bought that day, he was filled with fear and doubt as to what might happen to him. But he needn't have worried. Old Titus proved to be the kindest of masters, and now, thirty years later, Davus, himself a grizzled fifty-five, was over the farm. On some of the neighboring estates, he knew, things were not so good.
COUNTER-NARRATIVE

• Mary Prince (1831):

• The black morning at length came; it came too soon for my poor mother and us. Whilst she was putting on us the new osnaburgs in which we were to be sold, she said, in a sorrowful voice (I shall never forget it!), “See, I am shrouding my poor children; what a task for a mother!”...[the other slaves] could only weep and lament with us. When I left my dear little brothers and the house in which I had been brought up, I thought my heart would burst.
## CODING & INTERPRETING APPRAISAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgement</td>
<td><em>italics</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Coding

> ὁ οὖν Ἑανθίας βραδέως προσχωρεῖ ἀλλ' οὖ συλλαμβάνει
> [ho oun Zanthias bradeos proshorei all' ou sullambanei;]
And so Xanthias *slowly* comes but is *not helping*;

**Fig. 21** Coding of attitude sample 3 (Balme et al., 2016, p. 30).
### Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td><strong>CAPITALS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgement</td>
<td><em>italics</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Coding

In the country, the slaves of farmers *usually* lived and ate with their masters. Aristophanes’ comedies depict them as *lively* and *cheeky* characters, BY NO MEANS *downtrodden*.

**Fig. 26** Coding of attitude sample 5 (Balme et al., 2016, p. 20).
### Transitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Relational</th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
<th>Existential</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Carrier</td>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>Existent</td>
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<td>Goal</td>
<td>Phenomenon</td>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td>Receiver</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attributor</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td></td>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td>Target</td>
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<td>Scope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assigner</td>
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</table>

*Fig. 31* Semantic roles in transitivity (Bartley, 2018; Halliday & Matthieson, 2014).
CODING & INTERPRETING TRANSITIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor - square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect - bold</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Judgement - italics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Material process - gray highlight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verbal process - green highlight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>In the country, the slaves of farmers usually lived and ate with their masters. Aristophanes’ comedies depict them as lively and cheeky characters, by no means downtrodden.</td>
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Fig. 38 Coding of transitivity sample 7 (Balme et al., 2016, p. 20).
Bill O’Reilly (2016):

Slaves that worked there were well-fed and had decent lodgings provided by the government, which stopped hiring slave labor in 1802. However, the feds did not forbid subcontractors from using slave labor. So, Michelle Obama is essentially correct in citing slaves as builders of the White House, but there were others working as well.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor - <strong>square</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal - <strong>red font</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Judgement - <em>italics</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material process - <strong>gray highlight</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient - <strong>purple font</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Coding**

The Romans did not reduce a single race or culture to slavery; rather, slaves came from all over the ancient Mediterranean world and typically fell into servile status by capture in war.

*Fig. 32* Coding of transitivity sample 1 (Minkova & Tunberg, 2008, p. 51).
The Greek and Latin textbooks thus engage heavily in the legacy of downplaying enslavement AND now reinforce what have become racist narratives today.

These same themes are prevalent in racist American discourse of enslavement.

The majority of these themes sanitize and normalize enslavement.

5 prevalent themes in 40 pages of data from the textbooks:

- Enslaved people as immigrants
- Enslaved people as property and goods
- Enslaved people as happy and lucky
- Enslaved people as lazy and sluggish
- Enslaved people as oppressed and suffering
PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

• This research can be used to:
  • Educate textbook publishers, editors, authors, teachers, and learners
  • Conduct teacher training workshops on critical language awareness
  • Provide resources for student learning activities
    • Identification analysis
    • Coding
    • Composition
• How can my work embody what I advocate for?
• How can I use this opportunity to teach readers more about enslavement and the lives of enslaved people in a new way?

When he told me that I was made for his use, made to obey his command in everything; that I was nothing but a slave, whose will must and should surrender to his, never before had my puny arm felt half so strong.
- Harriet Ann Jacobs, 1861 (p. 29)

Fig. 13 Photograph of Harriet Ann Jacobs, 1894

Harriet Ann Jacobs (1813-1897) was an enslaved Black woman who self-emancipated and in her freedom became an anti-slavery activist. Her autobiography, *Incidents in the life of a slave girl* (1861), recalls the brutality she experienced in enslavement. In the excerpt above, she expresses ways in which her value was appraised by her enslaver including the worth of her body. He deemed her existence to be worth "nothing" beyond her status as a captive. And as she reflects on this dehumanization, she herself appraises her own body by describing how her "puny arm felt half so strong." Enslavement discourses such as this use the appraisal system to express the (perceived, projected, or real) feelings and dispositions of enslaved people and enslavers. An appraisal analysis reveals a great deal about the function and meaning of passages on enslavement as demonstrated in this chapter.
FUTURE RESEARCH

Turn dissertation into a handbook for critical language awareness in Classics available open access online via Taylor & Francis

Publish current papers in progress on patterns of classical rhetoric in 19th century Black literature

Conduct more IRB studies to assess the impact of the teaching approaches suggested and increase the data available regarding the efficacy of current teaching practices


