

THE ARISTARCHUS PROJECT ON LINE
(www.aristarchus.unige.it) : ELECTRONIC TOOLS FOR
CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY

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RESUMEN

El artículo está destinado a subrayar el proyecto ARISTARCHUS, un conjunto de herramientas de trabajo para la investigación y la enseñanza en temas del área de mundo antiguo Griego y Latino y está disponible en el sitio web www.aristarchus.unige.it. Ha sido llevado a cabo por el grupo de investigación del Dipartimento di Archeologia e Filologia Classica (DARFICLET) de la Universidad de Génova, dirigido por el Profesor Franco Montanari. El sitio web incluye cinco ítems: 1) LGGA – Léxico de los Gramáticos Griegos Antiguos; 2) PAWAG – Palabras escasamente atestadas en Griego Antiguo; 3) CPhCI - *Catalogus Philologorum Classicorum*; 4) CIAPh - Centro Italiano de *l'Année Philologique*; 5) *Mediaclassica*, un conjunto de herramientas para la enseñanza de Griego y Latín.

ABSTRACT

The paper is devoted to outline the project ARISTARCHUS, a set of working tools for research and teaching in the subject area of Greek and Latin ancient world and available in the web site www.aristarchus.unige.it. It is carried on by a research group of the Dipartimento di Archeologia e Filologia Classica (DARFICLET) of the University of Genova, directed by Prof. Franco Montanari. The web site includes five items: 1) LGGA - Lessico dei Grammatici Greci Antichi; 2) PAWAG - Poorly Attested Words in Ancient Greek; 3) CPhCI - Catalogus Philologorum Classicorum; 4) CIAPh - Centro Italiano dell'Année Philologique; 5) *Mediaclassica*, a kit for teaching Greek and Latin.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Clásicas, herramientas electrónicas, Internet

KEYWORDS: Classics, Electronic tools, Internet

Classical Philology surely is not the field where you expect the highest development concerning electronic tools and the widest use of such resources for the aims of research, didactic purposes, information recording and diffusion. Nevertheless, we can say that Classical Philology today is not so bad equipped and fitted out as for: electronic databases (on line as well

as on CD ROM) which can be used with personal computer or lap tops, advanced software for the processing of linguistic and textual data and images, exploitation of web resources from many points of view and for several aims. Classical Studies are traditionally disciplines with a well established set of work instruments, methodological consciousness, research organization: what is called a well structured science with solid groundings. This is supposed to be a good chance and an advantage to fit in new situations and to suit historical changes. Perhaps I can be charged with optimism. Actually, the same things and characters seem to be at once a serious obstacle to changes and a convenient brake faced with a dangerous rush and a blind will to remove everything.

Of course, it must be considered that in the last decades, as for them, the operators in the field of Classics (researchers, scholars, school and university teachers) have started and carried on the acquisition of the competences necessary to use digital technology for philological and historical disciplines. Clearly that doesn't concern exclusively the Classical Philology, but generally the whole humanistic sector, even though my paper, which is just held by a scholar of Classical Philology, is particularly focused on this field.

As a matter of fact, such a change in the *forma mentis*, the skills and the way of working of classicists become progressively established as markink roughly a generation shift and a conversion of a traditional figure to a new one. This new figure must be a scholar able to combine respect and preservation of a deep-rooted tradition with an unavoidable degree of innovation and adaptation to contemporary tools and way of working. In the next years, for scholars and teachers this point is likely to become a *condicio sine qua non* for the future life in the education system and for keeping a cultural and social role which is irreplaceable. To put it simply, being able to follow technological progress and to utilize new and updated tools is without doubt useful and advantageous for the Classical Philology, and it corresponds to the expectations of users and young interested people. The contrary means a harmful segregation: harmful from a social, cultural and also economical point of view.

It seems to me that the whole production of a wide set of digital tools for philological disciplines and for the whole humanistic field takes as a rule two leading lines. On one side, general electronic tools are transformed and fitted in order to become suitable to more specific needs; on the other side, new tools are created exactly to meet a peculiar demand. Examples of the latter case are: specific databases (not only textual), software for searching these databases, particular web sites for the use of scholars and teachers in classics, also special fonts for ancient Greek or other ancient languages.

It is well known that the websites relevant for the various aspects of teaching and research in the field of Classical Philology are remarkably numerous today and I think that what is more and more needed are index-sites providing list of addresses, if possible also grouped by subjects.

I would cite just one Italian example, that is the "Rassegna degli Strumenti Informatici per lo Studio dell'Antichità Classica" of Bologna University (<http://www.rassegna.unibo.it/index.html>), but of course there are many all over the web.

The "new" classical scholar and teacher is supposed to be at home with this kind of tools. Textual, bibliographical and lexicographical databanks represent three of the most relevant electronic tools available thanks to the progress of digital technology. For all of them a great improvement has taken place in the production of CD ROM, and more recently also DVD, to make available such resources for personal and local use. I think that the development shows us that nowadays these storage media are disclosing some weaknesses and limits, chiefly because of a certain uneasiness of access and data retrieval, as well as a difficulty in updating the databank (this last is perhaps the most relevant limit).

Let me take into consideration two points, which characterize and identify the present situation:

1) the easier and faster connection to Internet by private persons at home, and also by individuals from their particular working places;

2) the self-evident advantages provided by web resources as for the above mentioned problems of easy access, data retrieval and, chiefly, updating of the databank (still the most relevant aspect).

I think these are the main reasons why we can see the progressive shifting of such electronic tools from the CD and DVD technology to the databanks on line, from the local media to the world wide web. Of course, this is now in progress and we are still far from the disappearing of CD and DVD. But this process is very fast, as everybody knows well: the floppy disk is disappearing or almost disappeared and the powerful, ready and easy-to-use micro hard disk (called pen drive and connected through the USB) are the new deal for personal and portable data warehouse.

In the field of Classical Studies I can mention two very important and traditional tools for research:

1) the *Année Philologique*, the main bibliography for Classics, started some years ago a programm of digitalization of his databank to produce a CD. After the second release, this way has been dismissed and now the *Année Philologique* is available on line and the foreseen digitalization of all the historical data will be carried out for the web site.

2) the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, after some releases of the very widespread CD, now is also available and updated on the web. The CD (now in the fifth release, very widely used) has been updated producing a new release after some years, a long time for modern standards. Of course, everybody thinks that the database on line could be updated quickly and is even easier to access.

The case of lexicographical tools and of every kind of dictionaries is also interesting. Almost all the dictionaries are now sold with a CD ROM, which is updated when a new edition is prepared and published. I have no precise idea of the number of dictionaries available on line, but I am sure that also in this case the future development will go in this direction. Since some years the most widespread Latin Dictionary in Italy, the "Castiglioni-Mariotti", is sold with a CD. A second edition of my *GI - Vocabolario della lingua greca* is just appeared with a CD¹, searchable with a user friendly application, which can easily display the Greek alphabet (the only Ancient Greek dictionary available also in CD, to my knowledge). We will talk in a moment about an on line electronic tool aiming to produce a supplement in progress of the main printed dictionaries of Ancient Greek.

Now I would like to present you a new web site, which seems to me representative of the topics discussed so far. The project is called "Aristarchus" and is carried on by my research group in the Dipartimento di Archeologia e Filologia Classica (DARFICLET) of the University of Genova. The name comes from the name of the learned scholar Aristarchus of Samothracia, who lived in Alexandria from about the start till the middle of the second century B.C., the most important erudite scholar of the ancient world (not to get confused with the astronomer Aristarchus of Samos). The website is available on the server of the University of Genova at the address www.aristarchus.unige.it. It includes a set of working tools for research and teaching in the subject area of Greek and Latin ancient world. To access the free services of the site, users need only sign in with their e-mail address when the relevant window appears.

1) LGGA - *LESSICO DEI GRAMMATICI GRECI ANTICHI*, i.e. Lexicon of Ancient Greek Grammarians. This is a lexicon of ancient Greek scholars and philologists, which aims to provide an online reference database designed particularly for studies on the history of ancient philology, grammar and scholarship. The contents consist of files on the personalities who variously contributed to erudite and philological-grammatical research in ancient world, alphabetically ordered by Latin name. The number of indexed figures has now been increased up to a total of 540 (and some more are foreseen). The files are made available progressively (as soon as work on a file is completed) for download in pdf format. Meanwhile many files (except for some still marked as only planned) can be requested via e-mail: the file (in the temporary state of the moment) will be sent as a Word-file in rtf format.

2) PAWAG - *POORLY ATTESTED WORDS IN ANCIENT GREEK*. For some time I have taken into my head that the possibilities of the electronic technology on line was extremely interesting for the future of scientific lexicography, in this case for Ancient Greek lexicography. This particular project (in partnership with Loescher Editore in Torino) has the aim of setting up a database in the

¹ Torino, Loescher Editore, 2004.

form of a dictionary, to gather together words of Ancient Greek that are either only scantily attested (i.e. in a small number of occurrences), inadequately (i.e. characterized by some sort of uncertainty) or in any case problematically, both from a formal and semantic point of view. Moreover, we are well aware of the fact that new words are continually being discovered: for such words there is no repertory that can be kept constantly updated, nor can one exist unless the flexibility of electronic tools is exploited for this purpose. Finally, the practically unlimited possibilities of data warehousing in electronic format allow this container to receive also corrections and improvements of every kind concerning the entries of the greatest dictionaries.

The objective is to establish an archive of this type of material and of the related available information. Actually, the project is to build up a real supplement in progress, available free on line, of the main printed dictionaries of Ancient Greek. Its lexicographical structure and the set of reference authors and works are based on the second edition of my *GI - Vocabolario della Lingua Greca*.

The items listed in this special lexicon should contain much more than what is to be found in a normal dictionary, if not at the beginning of the work, certainly as time goes by and the contents are increased by the results of on-going research. That is to say, it should contain (as far as possible) all the available information concerning the meaning, the etymology, the forms, the passages, with the aspects on which doubts and discussion focus, and also the bibliographical references, so that users can find all the elements necessary in order to gain a good idea of the issues involved, or can at least trace all the necessary information to study the word in question. In other words, a half-way house between a dictionary in the strict sense and an encyclopaedic lexicon (albeit in a somewhat limited sense).

Being able to rely on a tool of this kind is therefore a valuable resource that can also be of great help for authors of dictionaries, new dictionaries or new editions and revised versions of existing dictionaries. Quite simply, it means being able to rely on a database that will save considerable time and improve the results. This can create a fruitful interconnection between genuine research work and the production of an essentially scientific tool, and can also bring positive spin-offs for the production of a work of general value in education and research such as a dictionary of Ancient Greek.

3) CPhCl - *CATALOGUS PHILOLOGORUM CLASSICORUM*. This provides another reference tool for scholars of Greek-Latin Antiquity, above all for studies on the history of classical philology in the modern age. The *Catalogus* started off by the University of Pisa²: now the project goes on and becomes available on-line thanks to a cooperation between the Dipartimento di Filologia Classica

² On the initiative of Scevola Mariotti, following the International CNR Congress "La filologia classica nel secolo XX", held in Rome in 1984 (proceedings published in the volume *La filologia greca e latina nel secolo XX. Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Roma, 17-21 settembre 1984*, a cura di G. Arrighetti, D. Fogazza, L. Gamberale, F. Montanari, voll. I-III, Pisa, Giardini, 1989).

of the University of Pisa and the Dipartimento di Archeologia e Filologia Classica of the University of Genova. The *Catalogus* is composed of files on the personalities who were active in the period from 1880 to 1980³. The objective of CPhCI is to collect the bio-bibliographical data concerning classical philologists born after 1850. A standard file records the main stages of the academic and scientific curriculum, the most significant papers, biographies, bibliography, *Nachlass* (if known), papers *in honorem* or *in memoriam* and other useful data. The work is in progress: a census of more than 5000 scholars was taken, whose list constitutes the basis of the CPhCI: some 800 items are ready to be made available on line.

4) CIAPh - *CENTRO ITALIANO DELL'ANNÉE PHILOLOGIQUE*. CIAPh is the Italian editorial office of the *Année Philologique*, the well known reference bibliography for scholars of Greek and Latin antiquity. Active since 1996 in the Dipartimento di Archeologia e Filologia Classica of Genova, CIAPh is in charge of the indexing of the entire classical bibliography produced in Italy and cooperates with the international staff of the *Année Philologique* by means of a computer network. This web page is a showcase for the Italian office: it will include all the relevant information concerning the Italian production in the field (list of journals as well as of other bibliographical items taken into consideration, status of indexing, etc.) and is linked to the overall site, allowing search operations to be performed on the international bibliographical database.

5) *MEDIACLASSICA*. This is a web site for didactics of the ancient Greek and Latin languages, carried out by a group of scholars and teachers working in my Department of the University of Genova in partnership with Loescher Editore in Torino.

6) *SCHOLIA MINORA IN HOMERUM*. This page (a new entry of the site) will contain a collection of editions and images of papyrus texts with *Scholia minora* on Homer.

Of course, additional items can be foreseen to enlarge the content of Aristarchus website. The basic idea will remain, of course, to improve an increasing container of working tools for research and teaching in the subject area of ancient Greek and Latin world, providing a set of free services on line.

³ With a chronological connection to W. Pökel, *Philologisches Schriftstellerlexicon*, Leipzig 1892.