

BYZANTINE AND MEDIEVAL UNIVERSITY: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO COVERING THE GAP IN BERNSTEINIAN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, an attempt is made to conduct a sociological analysis of the institution of the byzantine university, which operated from the 5th century A.D. in Constantinople, comparing it with the medieval university, which Basil Bernstein researched. The discourse of the medieval university, which was an ideological apparatus of the Catholic Church, was based on a religious approach to produce knowledge. The reason being that the teaching of the lessons of the Trivium (grammar, logic and rhetoric) was aimed at shaping the consciousness of medieval man through the understanding of the natural world based on the views of the Church of Rome. The research results revealed that the byzantine university was kept in check exclusively by state power and was founded on a Visible Pedagogy. The orientation of the discourse that concerns scientific knowledge and the objective of its educational role was based on a mundane principle related to the need of the civil authority to prepare staff for the state bureaucracy and the institution of justice. In addition, the intellectual armamentarium of the Classical and Hellenistic years (such as the Aristotelian reasoning and neo-Platonic philosophy) was utilised for the shaping of byzantine scientific knowledge.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην εργασία αυτή επιχειρείται η κοινωνιολογική ανάλυση του θεσμού του βυζαντινού πανεπιστημίου, που λειτούργησε από τον 5ο αιώνα μ.Χ. στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, σε σύγκριση με το μεσαιωνικό πανεπιστήμιο, το οποίο προσέγγισε ο Basil Bernstein. Ο «λόγος» του μεσαιωνικού πανεπιστημίου που αποτέλεσε ιδεολογικό μηχανισμό της Καθολικής Εκκλησίας βασίστηκε σε μια θρησκευτικού χαρακτήρα αρχή για την οικοδόμηση

της γνώσης. Και τούτο διότι μέσω της διδασκαλίας των μαθημάτων του Trivium επιδιώχθηκε η διαμόρφωση της συνείδησης του μεσαιωνικού ανθρώπου για την κατανόηση του φυσικού κόσμου με βάση τις αντιλήψεις της Εκκλησίας της Ρώμης. Τα ευρήματα της έρευνας έδειξαν ότι το βυζαντινό πανεπιστήμιο ελεγχόταν αποκλειστικά από την κρατική εξουσία και θεμελιώθηκε σε μια Ορατή Παιδαγωγική. Ο προσανατολισμός του «λόγου» που αφορά την επιστημονική γνώση και τη στοχοθεσία του εκπαιδευτικού του έργου βασίστηκε σε μια κοσμική αρχή επιδιώκοντας τη στελέχωση της κρατικής γραφειοκρατίας και του θεσμού της δικαιοσύνης. Επίσης για τη διαμόρφωση της βυζαντινής επιστημονικής γνώσης αξιοποιήθηκε η πνευματική δημιουργία των κλασικών και ελληνιστικών χρόνων (όπως είναι η αριστοτελική λογική και η νεοπλατωνική φιλοσοφία).

■ INTRODUCTION

Historical knowledge is often used in sociological analysis to highlight the development of human societies and the social institutions that constitute them (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 2009; De Montlibert, 2003; Giddens, 2009). Bernstein (1991, 1996, 2000) uses the historical aspect to explain the strong borders that separate 'scientific' knowledge in the case of the medieval university and the evolutionary shaping of the scientific fields in Europe. However his approach didn't refer to Byzantium. When Bernstein was made an honorary doctor of the University of Athens in 1997 he was asked about this particular gap in his work and his response was that he knew nothing about the byzantine educational field.

This paper is a sociological attempt to investigate the gap in the Bersteinian analysis of university education in Byzantium, highlighting that an institution providing higher stage education at that time can be conventionally called a university analogous to the medieval university of Bernsteinian analysis. This paper aims to answer the following questions: *On what dominant principle was the institution of the byzantine university founded and what form of power defined its founding and development? In addition, how was the educational 'code' formed in the case of the byzantine university, when comparing it with the medieval university?*

The paper begins with the theoretical notes. Then, supported by valid historical bibliographical sources we attempt to answer the above questions. The study closes with the section containing the discussion and conclusions.

THEORETICAL NOTES

Durkheim's approach (1971, 2014) to the medieval university of Paris contributed to the recognition of the role of the Catholic Church, which founded it, in the formation of 'scientific' knowledge in medieval Europe¹. The Durkheimian version of knowledge and the development of the sciences in the West influenced Bernstein's analysis (Cambridge, 2012; Moore, 2013; Muller, 2009; Muller & Young, 2014; Sadovnik, 2001).

Durkheim (1971, 2014) claimed that the medieval university separated knowledge based on two mutually exclusive principles: "sacred" and "profane" (Cambridge, 2012, p. 235). The sacred is linked to the amassment / accumulation of theoretical knowledge and the formation of the subject's thought and moral social behaviour. The profane is linked to the understanding of the world, something which regulates the subject's choices for solving practical everyday matters (Muller & Young, 2014, p. 129). In the medieval university, the cultivation of the sacred was promoted through study of the Trivium (grammar, logic, rhetoric) in which Catholicism's version of the world is cultivated and promoted as the only truth. Once scholars of the Trivium have accepted 'God's Word' it is permitted for them to proceed to the study of the Quatrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music), which corresponds to knowledge of the 'world'. This is because they can then understand the natural world through the narratives of the Church of Rome (Muller, 2009).

Bernstein (1991, p. 144) claims that the Visible Pedagogy has its roots in the medieval university, which he used to explain the concept of 'classification' that constitutes a fundamental element of his theory on 'code'. In particular, code constitutes a regulatory principle and is illustrated as (Bernstein, 1996, p. 102):

Orientation of the discourse

±C/±F

1. The prevailing version for the determination of the middle ages in Europe is that it starts in the 5th century with the fall of the West Roman Empire when Germanic tribes conquered Rome in 476. This had been preceded by the division of the Roman Empire by Theodosius 1 between his two sons in 395. He gave Honorius the Western section and Arcadius the Eastern which was maintained until the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. The European Medieval period ends when Columbus discovered America in 1492 (Wickham, 2018).

In the case of the medieval university the orientation of the discourse was sacred (O^{sacred}) and the discourse was embedded in a Visible Pedagogy, which was determined by the implementation of strong Classification and strong Framing.

Classification reveals the activation of power for the formation and maintenance of boundaries that can separate agents, spaces and discourses. Framing refers to the acceptable behaviour and social relationship between the teacher and the taught (regulative discourse) as well as the degree of control they have in their choice of the knowledge to be taught, the pace of knowledge transfer and the evaluation of learning outcomes (instructional discourse) (Bernstein, 1996, 2000).

In the case of the medieval university the implementation of a strong framing, which comprises an element of Visual Pedagogy, is linked to teacher-centred teaching for the transfer of knowledge (Durkheim, 2014). The implementation of strong classifications is evidenced in the existence of strong boundaries that separate:

- a. The discourses that compose the curriculum since '*the trivium always presupposes the quatrivium*' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 22). The Trivium constitutes a 'regulative discourse' that is used in the formation of the conscience of the scholars, who are socialised to accept the theoretical knowledge of Catholicism according to God.
- b. The Agents who are involved in the teaching process, in terms of status and power. In particular '*the Trivium teachers had the power*' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 83) while the teachers in the Quatrivium had a low status. And
- c. The space in which the two sectors of the medieval university functioned. Since the Trivium '*dominated the university*' in all the cases of the medieval universities '*for material or pedagogical reasons*' it existed either alone or together with the Quatrivium. The autonomous operation of the Quatrivium, which was associated with the mundane was forbidden (Moore, 2013, p. 37). And this was because first, the formation of the thought and the conscience of the scholars was sought, through study of the Trivium, before it was necessary to '*apply thought*' to comprehend the world through study of the Quatrivium (Bernstein, 1996, p. 83).

The analysis that follows focuses on the byzantine university that was founded and operated in Constantinople, in other words the cultural and economic centre of the Byzantine Empire. Our approach is historic-sociological highlighting the dominant features of the byzantine university bearing in mind the gaps, inconsistencies and the controversial information that exist for certain periods of the centuries old byzantine history regarding the operation of the university.

DISTRIBUTION OF POWER IN THE EAST ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE BYZANTINE UNIVERSITY

Educational reform is promoted by the powerful social and political forces at different times in history (Apple, 2002; Bernstein, 1990, 2000). This point makes necessary a brief approach to the main features of the Byzantine state² and the distribution of power within it, which is linked to the foundation and operation of the university.

The Byzantine Empire was a multinational 'popular' state with an extensive and complex bureaucracy and was a continuation of the Roman Empire. For that reason it relied on the institutions and laws of justice of the subsequent Roman State, used the Greek language, promoted Greek education as the only one acceptable and Christianity as the official religion for pacifying and homogenising the peoples that made it up (Beck, 2000; Karagiannopoulos, 2001; Vasiliev, 2006; Zakythinos, 2015). The 'byzantine man' believed he was a Roman citizen, an Orthodox Christian and lived in the Eastern Section of the Roman Empire. At the top of the social hierarchy was the emperor, who was believed to be 'God's chosen one' and his power appeared to come first from God and then from the Senate, the army and the people. The emperor made the laws, was the highest in command in the army and head of the church (Beck, 2000; Karagiannopoulos, 2001; Mango, 2013; Ostrogorsky, 2018; Zakythinos, 2015). The term 'Caesaropapism' renders the relationship between the emperor and the Church showing that as leader in chief of the state and head of the Church he could impose his will on it, such as by appointing a Patriarch, presiding over the Ecumenical Councils and influencing their decisions (Cristofilopoulou, 2004; Ostrogorsky, 2018; Runciman, 2017; Walter, 2007).

University in the sense of the concentration and operation in an organised and systematic way of Schools in a city for the provision of third stage education and with the simultaneous regulation through written rules of the role of professors and students is to be found to Constantinople in 5th century. Up until then, private schools had operated in various cities in the Roman Empire, offering

2. The birth of the Byzantine Empire is located by many researchers at the start of the reign of Constantinus who ended the persecution of Christians in 324, called the 1st Ecumenical Council in 325 and recognised Christianity as the official religion of the state and moved the state capital from Rome to Bosphorus in 330. The Byzantine Empire ceased to exist when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453 (Cristofilopoulou, 1996, 2004; Karagiannopoulos, 2001; Ostrogorsky, 2018; Runciman, 2017; Vasiliev, 2006).

higher education, such as studies in Philosophy in Athens, Law in Rome, Beirut and Kayseri, Astronomy in Trabzon and Medicine and Geometry in Alexandria (Buckler, 2005; Mango, 2013; Runciman, 2017).

The byzantine university was a state institution and the emperors had the monopoly on its founding and operation. It was founded in Constantinople by Theodosius II in 425 A.D. on the instigation of his wife, Evdokia of Athens. She contributed to the formation of the choices concerning the university since her *habitus* (Bourdieu, 2986), which was built with the contribution of her father Leontius, a professor of Philosophy in Athens, was linked to the value bestowed on ancient Greek education, in which she herself had a share. The university was founded on a secular principle, aiming throughout the duration of byzantine history, at the education of the officials who were to fill positions in state bureaucracy. The university curriculum was linked to 'Greek classical secular education' (*thirathen paideia*) (Lemerle, 2010; Mango, 2018). The Church had at its disposal the Patriarchal academy of Constantinople, whose curriculum, despite imperial interventions in the 11th century AD, regarding the addition of lessons in philosophy and rhetoric, was regulated by a religious type principle aimed at the provision of theological education for church staff (Harris, 2017; Lemerle, 2010; Savvidis & Deriziotis, 1996). In this, the implementation of a strong classification is apparent (Bernstein, 1991, 2000) for the separation of the 'sacred' character of knowledge in the case of the Patriarchal academy that was administered by the Orthodox Church, and the 'secular' orientation of knowledge in the Byzantine university that operated to cover the needs of state administration and the imperial court.

The high point of the byzantine university is observed in the following periods: a) the 9th century when university studies were reorganised through actions of caesar Barda; b) the 9th and 10th centuries when emperors Leo IV Sophos and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos strengthened the byzantine university and shaped the prerequisites for the development of letters, creating the 'first byzantine humanism' (Lemerle, 2010); c) the 11th century when the interventions of Constantine IX Monomachus in the university contributed so that this period became known as the golden era of university studies (Walter, 2007). And d) the 14th and 15th centuries during the reign of the Palaiologan Dynasty after the restoration of Constantinople in 1261 which is characterised as the most shining period of byzantine education where classic studies were developed (Constantinides, 1982; Runciman, 2017). At its best, the byzantine university played a secular cultural role, highlighting Constantinople as a centre for studies as it attracted students from the latin West and the surrounding peoples (Buckler, 2005). This was because famous

thinkers and philosophers such as Leo the Mathematician (9th c.), Michael Pselos and John Xiphillinos (11th c.), Ioannis Argyropoulos (15th c.) taught there, and its curriculum was linked to the utilisation of Greek classical thought.

The organization and operation of the byzantine university was embedded in a Visible Pedagogy since the emperors regulated the institutional role of the professors and determined the content of the studies. During the founding of the byzantine university by Theododius II we see the implementation of a strong framing of regulative discourse (Bernstein, 2000) since, by imperial decree, the rules were set in place for the appointment of professors, the regulation of their social and professional behaviour and their integration into the pyramid of social strata of byzantine society. The choice of professors was based on their wide learning, their reputation as intellectuals and appreciation of their virtuous life and morals. During their university career they had to develop good relations with their fellow men, to avoid attending horse racing, and participating in forms of entertainment of questionable moral quality. In addition, they had to be devoted exclusively to their work at the university and teach in a teacher centred manner while the students watched them, keeping notes (Walter, 2007), a fact that reveals the implementation of strong framing of instructional discourse (Bernstein, 1991). The professors belonged to the higher social strata, enjoyed respect and social value and retained for life the title 'magistor' or 'didaskalos', while they often functioned too as the emperor's counsellors (Diehl, 2007; Mango, 2013; Tsampis, 1999; Vasiliev, 2006; Walter, 2007). During the founding of the university, in order to cultivate respect for the institution of the professor, Theodosius II made provision for punishment in cases of disrespectful conduct of citizens towards the professors (Plakogiannakis, 2006). The professors, irrespective of the lesson they taught, possessed high social status and within the field of the university they were differentiated according to the importance of the duties associated with their position (Dean, magistor). This reality was contrary to the low status of the teachers in the Quatrivium in the medieval university (Bernstein, 1996).

As far as scientific knowledge is concerned, Geanakoplos (1966, p. 51) notes that byzantine scientific tradition wasn't 'original' as it relied on ancient Greek, Hellenistic and Roman achievements. In contrast with the medieval university (Bernstein, 1996, 2000), it appears that the byzantine university made use of the 'reason of Greek thought' together with Roman law tradition. This was influenced by the recognition of the value of its ancient culture by the Orthodox Church, which contributed to the saving of works of the Greek classics through 'transcription of ancient texts from papyrus to parchment' in the Monastic scriptoria (Herrin,

2006, p.17). As Lemerle (2010) notes, the Orthodox Church respected the classical secular education and didn't attempt to replace it with the imposition of a Christian ideology, as happened with Catholicism in medieval Europe. This was because the Byzantine theologians realised that the utilisation of classic philosophy could contribute to the better understanding and interpretation of the Holy Scripture since it could confirm the basic Christian principles (Nikoltchev, 2002). In particular, the work of the fathers of the Orthodox Church in the 4th century (John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzos) contributed to the respect and estimation of the value of ancient Greek philosophical thought and they also shaped the liturgical texts of the church. Before they became Christian, they learnt from famous pagan philosophers such as Livanius, and attempted to link the thought of the ancient Greeks to Christianity stressing how important it is for Christians to receive '*classical secular education*' (Cristofilopoulou, 1996, 2004; Nikoltchev, 2002, p. 616). In addition, the work of important intellectuals, such as the famous 7th century Neo-Platonist philosopher, alchemist and astrologist, Stefanos of Alexandria, who was appointed as a professor at the byzantine university by the emperor Heraclius, also contributed to the connection between ancient Greek thought and Christianity in Byzantium (Papathanasiou, 2006; Tatakis, 2003).

The foundation of the byzantine university on a mundane principle is related to the desire to develop administrative abilities, communication skills and utilisation of laws for the management of everyday practical problems, preparing the students who on graduation would staff state services. So, until about the 7th century when Byzantium was included in the boundaries of the latin provinces, teaching at the university took place in Greek and Latin. At the university of Theodosius II, the teaching of the sciences of philosophy and law was provided for at the same as the cultivation of Latin and Greek letters through specialised lessons in grammar and rhetoric. Moreover, the secular orientation of the byzantine university is also apparent in the fact that until the 6th century, Christian as much as pagan professors were appointed (Walter, 2007).

Observing the classification of scientific knowledge in the byzantine university it appears that with the implementation of a strong classification that concerns the determination of the scientific identity of the teachers and the spatial distribution of the teaching buildings, in essence, two general study directions were created, which in certain historical periods took on the character of Schools. These were the Law School and the Directorate of Philosophical Studies. The latter was wide and depending on the regulatory interventions of the emperor included lessons

in philosophy, philology, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, music, medicine and the natural sciences. The approach to all these sectors was made possible with the utilisation of the 'reason of Greek thought' (Bernstein, 1996) which sprang from the intellectual creation of ancient Greece and the Hellenistic period. For example the utilisation of Aristotelian logic and cosmology covered many of the particular cognitive subjects (Geanakoplos, 1996; Tatakis, 2003; Valente, 2017). An autonomous Law School in Byzantium was founded for the first time under emperor Justinian (6th c.), who implemented the principles of a Visual Pedagogy that was seated in a strong classification of scientific knowledge, spread the law lessons across five years and provided graduates with professional rights. The autonomy of law studies was ended by emperor Heraklius (7th c.) and they were integrated into the general curriculum of the university. An autonomous school for law studies reappeared under Constantine IX Monomachus (11th c.), who placed weight on its organisation and its accommodation in a different building, while the teaching staff were distinguished by the use of different titles of address in comparison with the professors in the School of Philosophy.

The Latin university didn't operate in Byzantium. However an attempt to found a medieval university was made by Baldwin who was appointed in 1204 as the first crusader emperor of Constantinople but his demand was rejected by the Pope of Rome (Buckler, 2005).

DISCUSSION – CONCLUSIONS

The term 'Papoceasarism' depicts the reality of medieval Europe where, in contrast to Byzantium, the Catholic Church possessed the power to impose its views through the use of mechanisms for exercising bodily and symbolic violence on the medieval man, such as the institution of the 'Inquisition' (Given, 2001; Murphy, 2012). The Church of Rome dominated medieval Europe ideologically by putting forward the ideological construct of 'papal primacy and infallibility' and aiming to extend its influence in the Eastern Roman Empire, subjugating the Orthodox Church to its power (Jagazoglu, 2014; Vraniskoski, 2011). The medieval university was the dominant ideological mechanism of the Catholic Church which founded its goal as the shaping of the intelligentsia of medieval Europe (Althusser, 2006). The building of 'knowledge' in it was based on a principle of religious character (Grace, 2004, p. 51), which is depicted in the superiority of the 'sacred' through study of the Trivium, and constituted its founding stone for the cultivation of 'faith'. This was because once the shaping of the 'inner', in other words the thought and

conscience of the scholars based on the theological discourse of Catholicism that came about through study of the Trivium had been achieved, then the approach to the 'outer' (natural world) through teaching of the Quatrivium was safe (Bernstein, 1996; 2000; Durkheim, 1971, 2014; Moore, 2013). Consequently, educational reality of the medieval university is depicted as follows:

Orientation of Discourse^{sacred}/Visual Pedagogy

The reality of the byzantine university is different to that of the medieval university and is illustrated:

Orientation of Discourse^{mundane}/Visual Pedagogy

More specifically, the byzantine university was founded on a secular principle and the orientation of its discourse was mundane for the following reasons:

- a. In contrast to the reality of medieval Europe, in Byzantium strong boundaries were implemented between state and church power and the issues concerning the university were regulated exclusively by the state. Hence, the university of Constantinople was founded and supported by the emperors, aimed at the education of staff for the state bureaucracy and the provision of state certificates for the exercise of the professions of lawyer, doctor and administrative official (Karagiannopoulos, 2001; Mango, 2013; Walter, 2007).
- b. It seems that there wasn't a school of theology in the byzantine university. The provision of theological knowledge that is linked with the 'sacred', was the exclusive duty of the Orthodox Church and took place in the Patriarchal academy of Constantinople (Harris, 2017; Savvidis & Deriziotis, 1996; Runciman, 2017).
- c. The professors of the byzantine university were at the top of the hierarchy of superior state operatives (Diehl, 2007; Tsampis, 1999) and were distinguished by their extroversion and their contribution to the intellectual and cultural production of their time and extensive use of 'Greek thought' (Bernstein, 1996) in their work. Indeed, during the byzantine period consensus of the superiority of classic Greek education was kept alive (Beck, 2000). Hence, the emperors, in their attempt to establish Constantinople as an intellectual centre, attracted distinguished intellectuals who cultivated Greek letters, and appointed them as university professors (Buckler, 2005; Lemerle, 2010; Walter, 2007). And
- d. The formation of knowledge in the byzantine university was linked to the utilisation as much of ancient Greek thought for the comprehension of the

'outer' (world) as of the latin tradition for law studies. This fact is interpreted by the composite character of the byzantine civilisation, which was made up of elements of the roman tradition in administration and law making, the Hellenistic tradition in language, literature and philosophy and the Christian tradition, reformulated according to the Greek model (Baynes, 2005; Cristofilopoulou, 2004; Zakynthinos, 2015).

Attempting to cover the gap in Bernsteinian analysis we note that it doesn't appear to be any of the tension or contradiction between 'faith' and 'reason' in the byzantine university, that was evident in the medieval university (Bernstein, 1996, 2000). The 'reason' of Greek thought was used for the formation of knowledge in the university of Constantinople. Indeed in the final years of Byzantium the flourishing of letters and arts is observed, which is founded on the ancient Greek intellectual tradition. The split of Byzantines with the west, as a result of the Latin conquest of Constantinople (1204), the attempt at the violent imposition of Catholicism on Orthodox citizens and the theft of byzantine cultural and religious relics that were transported to the west (Geanakoplos, 1966, p. 41) contributed to this. Hence, from the 11th century, it appears that neo-platonic philosophical thought, Aristotelian syllogistic for the comprehension of the natural world, the views of Cleomedes on astronomy and the ancient Greek medical literature for medicine were used for the construction of byzantine 'scientific' knowledge (Constantinides, 1982; Harris, 1996; Tatakis, 2003; Valente, 2017; Vyronis, 1991).

The byzantine university ended with the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire (1453). The byzantine intellectuals, such as the professors at the university of Constantinople Manuel Chrysoloras and Ioannis Argyropoulos moved to Italy and taught the 'reason' of Greek classical thought, thus contributing in their own way to the Renaissance and the creation of contemporary European culture (Alexandru, 2018; Tatakis, 2003; Vyronis, 1991). The questions concerning the contribution of Byzantine intellectuals to the development of scientific knowledge in Europe is a field of sociological interest. In addition, an in-depth historic-sociological analysis of the development of the scientific discourse of the byzantine university, as well as its influence in the society of the East Roman Empire on the formation of the thought of the byzantine man is also of interest.

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