

(see below), it will probably be a long time before another book of this kind appears, in English at any rate. Apparently, few Anglophone scholars have the aptitude or inclination to produce one.

‘Our editions of Greek and Latin authors are good enough to live with’ (E.R. Dodds). ‘Maybe, maybe not; it all depends on one’s standard of living’. (D.R. Shackleton Bailey)

I recommend readers whose interest may have been whetted by this review to read the much fuller and more

informed review by Franz Dolveck at *BMCR* 2016.11.46. There is a useful thumbnail account of textual criticism in *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature* (see also the entries ‘texts, transmission of ancient’ and ‘books and writing’). There is also a more scholarly and condensed account by Bruce Gibson in Chapter 4 of the Wiley-Blackwell *A Companion to the Latin language*. We still await what will almost certainly be the even more scholarly account in the Oxford Handbook series, though for most of us this may prove to be too much of a good thing.

Textual criticism (TC) is the scholarly activity that seeks (ideally/idealistically) to restore the autograph of a text, in this case a Latin text from Antiquity. (The subtitle indicates that the book is concerned with the TC of Latin texts only, not both Latin and Greek texts.) As a recognised discipline within Classics, it has been practised for 500 years or more. Actually, it has been practised, both for Greek and Latin, since Antiquity, e.g. the Greek scholars in Alexandria and Pergamum, and Latin scholars such as Servius and his commentary on Virgil. From being almost synonymous with Classics itself (according to one school of thought), conferring ‘heroic’ status on its best-known practitioners in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it has become, in Anglophone circles at least, an endangered species whose extinction would hardly be realised – until it was too late. This book describes its rise and decline. Its fall is not able to be recorded yet, and one can only hope that it never will be since Classics will always be in need of its now unsung services.

The author is best known as an editor of Ovid. In general, editors of classical texts are also textual critics; the converse is not always the case. Only a tiny number of either has written about their craft. Until this book came out it looked like we would not see another one, in English anyway. About the only guides available in English until now have been those of Paul Maas (1953), Martin West (1973) and the estimable *Scribes and Scholars* by Wilson and Reynolds, now in its fourth edition. This book is as timely therefore as it is genuinely instructive. Apparently, there has been a steady decline in interest in TC, on the part of Anglophone classicists at any rate. Perhaps interest will be rekindled by this book and more will be forthcoming. But it is doubtful that we shall ever see again such pioneering figures as Scaliger, Heinsius, Gronovius, Bentley, Lachmann, Housman, to drop just a few names. Much of the work they did does not need to be

done again. This is one of the causes of the decline of TC – a victim of its own (qualified) success, you might say.

The book is concerned mainly with the present-day state of textual criticism and editorial practices, so a very up-to-date, indeed proleptic, guide: the concluding chapter is about the present and possibly future role of digital technology in TC.

The central chapters of the book are concerned with the traditional accredited procedures employed in establishing the best possible text. So they are concerned with creating a stemma, collation, recension etc. Tarrant devotes a chapter or a section of a chapter to each of these. The rest of the book is given over to less technical and more digestible stuff.

The book is concerned with more than textual criticism as such and the mechanics of TC. This is what makes it so readable. A colleague – neither a textual critic nor an editor – told me he found it such a page-turner that he read the whole book at one sitting. It is not a ‘how to’ user guide-type manual, in spite of ‘Methods and Problems’ in the subtitle – not that a manual in itself would get you very far as a critic, or an editor.

We learn a lot about the characteristic virtues (and vices, though not always fairly attributed) of well-known critics and editors. The footnotes are full of their egregious triumphs and disasters (as Tarrant and others have seen them), the latter often deliciously exposed by Tarrant, but without any of the mordant malignity of Housman or Bentley, delicious though that may be too in its way, if we are to be honest.

TC is a frustrating and thankless activity ultimately. The goal – to restore the autograph of a text – is unattainable, and even if it were attainable, one could never know that one had achieved one’s goal. This book explains why, but makes you feel that the effort is still worthwhile. It doesn’t quite make TC ‘sexy’, but nor does it make it ‘nerdy’ either, an image it has acquired since losing its hero status, and one that this book may help to dispel.

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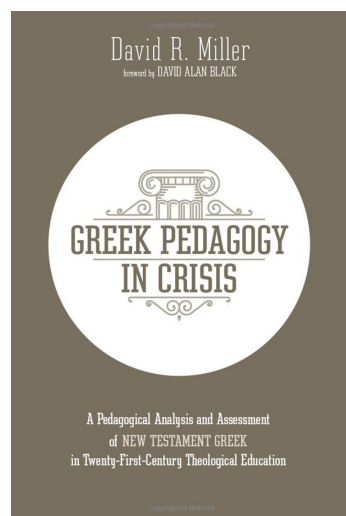
## Greek Pedagogy in Crisis

Miller (D.R.) Pp. xiv + 247. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019. Paper, £23, US\$31. ISBN: 978-1-5326-9093-8.

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This book began as a thesis assessing the state of Greek pedagogy in theological educational establishments, primarily in the USA. The structure is introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. About 40% of the volume comprises appendices, including copies of the survey responses informing the research. Miller is concerned that there has not been much research on what constitutes good pedagogy in ancient Greek. He has a point; it has been an under-researched area. Unfortunately, however, he misses much of the work which has gone on, and the changing landscape.



He compares the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) methodology, focusing on Krashen's theories. This yields a useful summary of key ideas, although they are set against each other in rather a false opposition. There is more to language pedagogy than GTM or Communicative Language Teaching, and it is important to blend, refine, and tailor approaches. He is particularly concerned about the role of translation, which resonates with this methodological split.

He never clearly differentiates between reading and translating, however, but does make constant reference to the challenges in translating the New Testament facing those who have only studied a little Greek. This poses the question of what the goal of intense, compressed language study might be, which is not something Miller discusses, so much as assumes.

Research participant choice seems awkward. Miller explains how he chose participants, with criteria including publishing textbooks, having more than ten years in the field, or personal recommendation; several of the most important potential contributors did not engage, however, and the group demographics are not representative of international Greek teaching. The group is 90% male, for example, so when he uses feminine pronouns for professors throughout the book, it feels awkward. 11 of the participants remain anonymous in their answers, but by publishing a full list of participants at the end, and naming all the others, those 11 do become exposed.

The literature review is the most extensive part of the book. It offers an excellent survey of available resources and their approaches, within the niche of New Testament Greek. It is a shame this volume reaches the *Journal of Classics Teaching* so late, as it was published in 2019, and resources do not refer to anything post-2017. This is particularly important with reference to the role of technology in language pedagogy, as the Covid-19 pandemic changed digital engagement so much.

He argues the GTM is not fit for purpose, the purpose being teaching those going through seminary (or equivalent) to translate and exegete. He surveys 32 Greek teachers, seeking positive and negative comments about the GTM. He lists 118 positive and 114 negative comments, and classifies them into categories. These include structure, the role of translation, student motivation and engagement, and the availability of support resources. Memorisation is assumed to be a good thing, which I would challenge in the context of teaching students to use Greek rather than learn about Greek. There's a tail-chasing sense to justifying GTM – one participant notes adult learners think more systematically and so like it, whilst another claims the method

itself teaches such systematic thinking. The way the GTM is used to reinforce the status quo is clear throughout, in reasons such as supporting students to access existing materials, the large range of support materials, GTM having 'stood the test of time', and it conforming with student expectations.

The final section sets out his application of course design principles to creating, in ten steps, what he calls 'Exegetical Greek', with tasks in place of topics or approaches. As this is a hypothetical course design, his reflection and evaluation steps are theoretical. His inclusion of 'verbal aspect' as a key topic demonstrates the ways NT Greek research is developing, but he does not engage directly with NT linguistics and the relationship between research and teaching; I doubt many UK Greek teachers would be so concerned about aspect as to prioritise it like this. He insists that this is a departure from the GTM, but easily converted from it so that professors do not have to struggle to adapt. The pragmatic 'academics do not like change' (p. 148) alongside the idealistic thrust of wanting the best possible Greek teaching to serve his theological mission makes this a slightly disorientating read.

Miller also discusses Melancthon and Erasmus. On first reading, this ties together threads in the history of language learning and teaching. In fact, it is part of a theological mission underpinning this book, whose stridency is problematic, in bemoaning both the state of Greek pedagogy, and people's ability to understand and explain the mind of God. One of Miller's survey respondents is Rob Plummer, who also cites Melancthon in *Greek for Life* (Merkle and Plummer, 2017). Similarly, Dan Wallace (author of *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Wallace, 1996), highly recommended in this book) gives a passionate appeal to Melancthon and principles of *ad fontes* and *sola scriptura* (p.114). Erasmus, furthermore, is made responsible for an artificial schism between 'ancient' and 'modern Greek'. This book is a prime example of attempts to use philology to drive theology. The purpose of learning Greek is solely to inform a particular kind of exegetical approach to the New Testament, which the majority of British Greek teachers would not recognise.

Miller asks important questions, although they are so tied to a specific mission, and the educational approaches are left until after this mission is well-established, that the book is hard for someone who does not share that mission to benefit from. This book is worth reading, however, for anyone wanting to understand American NT Greek pedagogy, especially with a view to understanding the real-world impact of ancient language teaching.

## References

- Merkle B and Plummer R (2017) *Greek for Life: Strategies for Learning, Retaining, and Reviving New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Wallace D (1996) *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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