

The Pedagogical Role of Homeric Epics: The Case of the Odyssey

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Abstract: The subject of the present study is the pedagogical role of Odyssey through the centuries. The aim of the study is to present the diachronic contribution of Odyssey to the students' "humanitarian education", and to the pedagogical perceptions and values. The theoretical framework of the study is the role of Odyssey in students' education over time. The study material is (a) the relevant literature, and (b) the "evaluation" of the course by 92 students (school years: 2013–2014, and 2020–2021). The methods used are: (a) the "historical research" by studying primary and secondary data sources, and (b) the "ex-post survey", a method of secondary data analysis. The main conclusion of the study is that the literary and pedagogical value of Odyssey remains unchanged over time. The adventures of Odysseus, the values, the ideals, the standards and the perceptions in the Odyssey affect the students' psyche, their imagination and their standards. The students have difficulty understanding the literary value of the epic and the narrative techniques, but they enjoy reading Odyssey.

Key words: Odyssey, narrative techniques, pedagogical role, standards, values

1. Introduction

The subject of this study is the role that Homeric epics, and especially the Odyssey, played and are still playing in the education of young people, and generally in the education of the individual and of the society as a whole.

The motivation to deal with this issue is: i) the importance and the contribution of Homeric epics, and especially of the Odyssey, in the education of young people, ii) its contribution to the delight and humanistic education of students, over the centuries, and iii) the fact that the Odyssey introduces the student to the world of the ancient Greek literature, as it is the first literary text with which the students come in contact with ancient Greek literature, when they enter Middle School.

Because of our involvement with the Homeric epics, as teachers in class, we will try to support in detail the dual value of the Odyssey, the literary and the pedagogical. Its literary value, of course, is indisputable especially because of the incomparable narrative technique. Its pedagogical value, on the other hand, is evident through its long-standing use as a textbook; it is a text that contributes greatly to school learning, as it corresponds to the mental level of the students, according to the principles of Pedagogy (Chatzidimou, 2015, pp. 205–206), and enhances the learning mechanisms that each student can develop activating imitation and imagination.

Considering the above the main purpose of our study is a) the presentation of the timeless contribution of the

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Homeric epics to the education and upbringing of young people and b) the demonstration of the contribution of Homeric epics in the formation of pedagogical perceptions and values in each society.

Our specific goals are: a) to investigate whether the “humanistic education” of students is achieved, b) to find the elements of the Odyssey that contribute to the humanistic education and the development of the student, and c) to explore the impact of the Odyssey on the student and the values it promotes to the modern student.

To achieve the above goals and objectives, we dealt with our subject at a theoretical and an empirical level.

2. Theoretical Approach to the Subject

The timeless contribution of the Odyssey to the education of young people and its special importance as an educational reading, in which ideals, patterns and attitudes are projected, are perceived through the study of the relevant bibliography.

The method we followed to approach the subject is “historical research”. Our study material is primary and secondary data sources. Our primary sources are the textbook, “Homer’s Odyssey”, the teacher’s book, older and newer teaching instructions given by the Greek Ministry of Education. Our secondary sources have been some relevant studies.

We collected, evaluated, recorded, analyzed and presented the data. Our goal was to find the elements that highlight the pedagogical role of Odyssey and to record its educational role over time.

The literary and pedagogical value of the Homeric epics had already known since antiquity (Ignatiadis, et al. 2006, p. 20). In Aristotle’s Poetics (24. 1459 b 15) it is emphasized the incomparable plot of the Odyssey: “ὅς ἅπασιν Ὅμηρος κέρηται καὶ πρῶτος καὶ ἰκανῶς. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν ποιημάτων ἐκάτερον συνέστηκεν ἡ μὲν Ἰλιάς ἀπλοῦν καὶ παθητικόν, ἡ δὲ Ὀδύσσεια πεπλεγμένον (ἀναγνώρισις γὰρ διόλου) καὶ ἠθικὴ πρὸς δὲ τούτοις λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ πάντα ὑπερβέβληκεν”. (Translation: Homer used all these first of all and satisfactorily. In fact, he composed both of his poems, the Iliad as a simple and passive poem, the other, the Odyssey as a complex poem (from the beginning to the end it is a poem of recognitions) and as a poem of characters. In addition, his poems are superior to all the others in terms of style and ideas.

“The plan is based on an extraordinary contraction of time”, the whole ten-year adventure of Odysseus is enclosed and announced in forty days. “A linear evolution is cut into pieces and reconciled, but without losing that linearity” (Lesky, 1983, pp. 89–90). The existence of formal elements and expressions, the permanent adjectives that accompany people and things, the use of simple similes are just some of the techniques that Homer used to compose his masterpieces (Lesky, 1983, pp. 110–111). Characteristically, Lesky states that “through the Odyssey, a synthetic power and a narrative craft speaks to us, which fit only to the great artwork...” (Lesky, 1983, p. 97).

Literature expresses the social consciousness, reflects the views of an era, so the social conditions of the poet’s era are reflected in the Odyssey. In Odyssey the “fighting ideas”, the behavior and the code of honor of the aristocracy appear (Lesky, 1983, pp. 99–100). The ideals of the time, values and patterns of behavior are projected, many of which are still valid today. For example, hospitality is projected, when Telemachus offers hospitality to Menelaos or Menelaos to Odysseus.

The modesty and good morals, that a woman should have, are exceptional, when Homer is referring to Penelope and Nausicaa.

Religiosity is overemphasized through the description of sacrifices and prayers to the gods, and the respect for the gods and men is contrasted with insult and injustice.

The heroic ideals, such as courage and honor, are declared, while at the same time we understand the changes in values and political changes that take place in Homeric society.

The subject of the Odyssey itself was dear to ancient Greeks. Odysseus is the expatriate who returns home and at the same time the hero of sea adventures and the Trojan War. The hero, Odysseus, was characterized by “smart prudence”, “agile compromise” and “predictive calculation of the best road” (Lesky, 1983, p. 83). His behaviors, such as “paying homage to the gods, loving his parents, helping beggars” made Odysseus a role model (Karakatsanis, 1998, pp. 273–274), because such characteristics and behaviors did not leave the ancient Greek indifferent. The ancient Greeks knew their history and religion through Homer. They saw “their models” in the heroes of the Homeric epics, “they found teachings in their words”. Therefore, this preference for Homeric epics, on which the ancient Greeks based the education of the youth, is not unjustified.

Thus, “from antiquity, Homeric epics became textbooks for Greek children, so that they could learn to read” (Ignatiadis, 2006, p. 9). Xenophon, for example, in “Symposium” III, 5, mentioned that Nikiratos, the son of Nicaeas, said that his father taught him the Homeric epics, so that he become a righteous man (Ignatiadis, 2006, p. 430).

During the Alexandrian times, an allegorical interpretation of Homer was attempted. Odysseus was the symbolic type of the sage, who taught how to avoid temptations, carnal and spiritual, by avoiding the Sirens. Similar views were expressed by Plutarch on the allegorical interpretation of Homeric epics (Tsambis, 1998, p. 238).

In the Middle Historical Periods, i.e., in the years of the Byzantine Empire, the appreciation of the ancient Greek literature and especially of the Homeric epics was evident in the field of Education. In Byzantium, Homeric epics held a special place in the cycle of philological studies. Even ecclesiastical circles showed interest in classical education, including the classical in the curriculum, which covered several hours, even “in the Higher School of Theological Studies of the Patriarchate of Constantinople” (Tsambis, 1998, pp. 60–61). From the first centuries of Byzantium, Homer’s poetry was taught in the schools of “grammar” and at the higher levels (Lemerle, 1985, p. 47). During the 3rd c. A.D. the Homeric epics are included in the school texts (Lemerle, 1985, p. 58) and, as Krumbacher points out, “The dealing with the classics in schools and the occupation of the scholars included Homer, who never ceased to be the school reading of the Greek Nation” (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 192). The Homeric epics were a basic textbook and “the student had to memorize 50 verses from Homer each day and read the relevant comments” (Talbot Rice, 1988, p. 258).

From the works of the ancient Greeks, Christians would obtain elements that are compatible with Christian ethics (Lemerle, 1985, p. 47). In a text of the Basil the Great, which aimed to teach his nephews the correct use of Greek letters, examples are given from the texts of Homer and Hesiod, which confirms the important position they held in education. Other Fathers of the Church of the 4th century, such as Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom also inform us that the disciples are taught Homer (Tsambis, 1998, p. 231).

Later scholars systematically engaged in the teaching, study, analysis and dissemination of Homeric epics. For example, Cometas, the headmaster of the grammar department at the School of Magnavra, was an expert on Homer and probably played an important role in transcribing and publishing them in micrograph (Lemerle, 1985, pp. 145–146). Other important scholars who, in order to serve the didactic purposes, studied and commented on the epics of Homer, are Michael Psellos (11th c.), who wrote “Allegories to Homer” (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 62), Efstathios Katafloros (12th c.), who taught Homer by writing commentaries on Homeric epics, which even today are an invaluable aid for Homer scholars (Tsampis, 1998, pp. 60–61), and Ioannis Tzetzis (12th c.), the famous

“teacher of grammar” of the 12th century, who studied Homer and wrote allegories on the Iliad and the Odyssey (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 244). We would consider it a serious omission not to mention Eustathios, the Archbishop of Thessaloniki, who wrote very remarkable commentaries on the Iliad and the Odyssey, in the preface of which “he discusses the importance of Homer for the history of the Greek spirit” (Krumbacher, 1974, pp. 260–261). In the 14th c. George Lakapinos, the foremost author of “school books”, wrote a “Treatise on the Homeric Forms and Regulations in Homer” (Paris Code 2938) (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 305), while the historian Nikiforos Grigoras wrote “a brief explanation of the delusions of Odysseus according to Homer” (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 597). These and many other Byzantine teachers and scholars took care to make Homeric texts accessible to their students through memorization.

In the years of Byzantium the teaching of Homeric epics was an attempt to achieve the pedagogical goals that are promoted by the ancient Greeks. Like the ancient Greeks, the Byzantines considered that “the basic pursuit of education is virtue, as a component of more virtues”, such as wisdom, bravery, justice, holiness and others. By defining “virtue” as “the basic pursuit of education” and “composed of more virtues”, the Homeric epics project elements that are compatible with Christian ethics (Lemerle, 1985, p. 47). The crown of virtues is godliness, which is praised in Homeric epics and is projected through the teaching of Homeric epics in Byzantium (Tsambis, 1998, p. 83). The pedagogical and moral role of Homeric epics is understood, for example, i) from the words of the Basil the Great that “all Homer’s poetry is a praise of virtue and all his words — except the insignificant ones — lead to virtue” (Tsambis, 1998, p. 233), ii) from the work of Nikiforos Gregoras “A praising prologue to Homer’s *Odyssey*, that briefly characterizes the poet’s intellect”, when he writes “common school is really poetry itself according to *Odysseas*...” (Tsambis, 1998, p. 235), iii) from the collections of quotations and proverbs, in which the Homeric verses with moral and philosophical interpretations occupy a dominant position (Tsambis, 1998, p. 235). As we understand, there are many references to Homer in the works of Byzantine scholars and, as Hunger says, without this genuine Byzantine attitude, “which largely shaped the secular literature”, we could not even read Homer today...” (Krumbacher, 1974, p. 36).

The systematic teaching of Homeric epics continues until the Fall of the Constantinople, while at the same time important writers, mainly historians (e.g., Anna Komnini, Ioannis Anagnostis, etc.), often refer to passages of Homeric epics in their work, taking care through their reports to show either that Homeric epics were taught or their appreciation of Homer’s work (Lemerle, 1985; Krumbacher, 1974; Tsambis, 1998).

In the years after the Fall, the Byzantine scholars, who moved to Western Europe, transferred their knowledge and love for the ancient Greek literary heritage, to which the Homeric epics belong. Thus, after the Fall, Homeric epics were taught in the West. During the 18th c. the scholars drilled their students in the paraphrase of the Homeric epics and rejected the translation, which they considered an insult to the text. Homer was no longer translated into other Greek dialects “out of respect for the poet”, but was commented, paraphrased and interpreted as “obsolete words” (Varmazis, 1999, pp. 27–28).

In the newly formed Greek state in the 19th century, by decree of the Regency, emphasis is given to the multidimensional cultivation of students through the lesson, because it enhances the sense of truth, good and beauty (Varmazis, 1999, p. 46). In the Royal Decree of 1897 it is stated as goal of the course of ancient Greek that the Homeric epics must be paraphrased by the students in the archaizing form of Greek language that is called “*katharevousa*” (purist). Other aims of the course are “the literary education of students and their spiritual and cultural education” (Varmazis, 1999, pp. 47–48). Following the above goals, the choice of teaching Homeric epics was made according to pedagogical criteria (Varmazis, 1999, p. 51).

The Ancient Greek Language and Literature is considered a valuable asset for modern Hellenism, which can gain a lot from it, if utilizes it effectively. The effectiveness of a course is judged and evaluated by the achievement of its objectives (Varmazis, 1999, pp. 41, 45). And a textbook must have the characteristics of a timeless educational good. Its content should excite students, interest them, and correspond to their intellectual level and psychic development (Chatzidimou, 2015, pp. 205–206).

The Homeric epics are to date still textbooks, as they fulfill the above requirements, although since the educational reform of 1976 they are not taught from the original text but from a translation in the first grade of Middle School. The text in its translated form is considered more accessible for the Middle School students and serves the modern goals of the course, which are the understanding and the experience of values, the mental, volitional, emotional, moral and aesthetic cultivation of the student (Kakridi, 1988, p. 11). At the same time, the students learn know the material and the spiritual culture of the Homeric era (Kakridi, 1988, pp. 97–98).

Homeric epics contain basic timeless humanistic values. A basic value, that they promote, is the individual responsibility of man for his actions, words and choices (Kakridi, 1988, pp. 36–37). The justice is emphasized as a motive for actions, the piety of the hero, the fair divine punishment, the need for a constant struggle to achieve the goals, the composure, the humanity and the kindness of the heroes. Punishment is a consequence of a “sin” (mistake) committed by man (Kakridi, 1988, pp. 42, 56, 59–62).

Homer prepares his listener (now reader) for what is to follow, so the students, reading the *Odyssey*, bring the events to life with their imagination and await their development. “The joints of the *Odyssey* are embossed” through the text itself and the thread, which is interrupted, is found again, as the technique followed by Homer in the *Odyssey* is reminiscent of the technique of fairy tales, which is familiar to our students (Kakridi, 1988, pp. 17–18). Thus, the epic “*Odyssey*” is the first ancient Greek literary text, a poem, with which students come in contact with ancient Greek literature, since it is closer to the fairy tale, although the characters are very true (Kakridi, 1988, p. 99). Pedagogical, then, are the reasons that require the child to be taught the *Odyssey* first, since it is a familiar text.

2.1 Conclusions From the Theoretical Approach

The literary and educational value of Homeric epics has been recognized since the earliest times of their creation and dissemination. The contribution of the *Odyssey*, and Homeric epics in general, to the education of young people is timeless. Its importance as an educational reading is great, because it promotes ideals, standards and behaviors of people.

Homeric epics were and are a source of inspiration for poets, angiographers, sculptors and other creators of works of art (Ignatiadis, 2006, p. 20). Homer’s parables, for example, inspire tragic poets, who recognize the greatness of his art (Kakridi, 1988, p. 102). Ancient Greek writers, Byzantines, Modern Greeks and foreigners are inspired by Homer or refer to Homeric epics (Xenophon, Plutarch, Anna Komnini, Dionysios Solomos, George Seferis, Kostis Palamas, Ezra Pound, Bertold Brecht, etc.).

3. Empirical Approach to the Subject

The present research effort aims to highlight the timeless literary and educational value of the *Odyssey*, and the positive effect it has on students even in modern times.

The main goal of the research is to explore and demonstrate the importance and the value of the course in the modern school.

Sub-objectives of the research are to detect students' views on the course, to record and analyze them, and to determine the type of impact that the "Odyssey" has on young people today.

Another goal is to detect systematically various parameters of the subject under study, in order to determine: a) which students are interested in the course (for example: students who are high-performing), b) for what reasons they like/are interested in the course, c) which topics raised in Odyssey are of interest to them.

3.1 Research Hypotheses

Taking into account the relevant bibliography, discussions with colleagues and students, as well as our personal experience as teachers in the classroom, the following assumptions were made:

Hypothesis one: The Odyssey is a beloved subject.

Hypothesis two: Students are unfamiliar with ancient Greek literature.

Hypothesis three: The textbook is not accessible to the middle school student.

Hypothesis four: From the content of the course only the story of Odysseus attracts the student.

Hypothesis five: The volume of the curriculum tires the student.

Hypothesis six: The role of the teacher is important to instill in the student a love for the Odyssey.

Hypothesis seven: The teaching methodology plays an important role in making the Odyssey understood by the student.

Hypothesis eight: The evaluation of the course makes it difficult for the student to enjoy the course.

3.2 Methodology: Study Material, Sample

For the investigation of the hypotheses and the achievement of the objectives of the research, the method of "ex-post research" is used and the questionnaire is used as a research tool. The questionnaire was placed in the context of the final evaluation of the course "Ancient Greek from translation — Odyssey", in the evaluation sheet of the course.

An effort was made to make the evaluation sheet as understandable and concise as possible and to examine the seven key parameters, which were mentioned in the individual objectives and in the hypotheses of the research.

The parameters that affect the student's view of the lesson are: a) the fact that the student comes in contact with the ancient Greek literature for the first time, b) the textbook, c) the content of the course, d) the curriculum, e) the role of the teacher, f) the didactic methodology (the way of teaching), g) the way of evaluating the course. These factors are also the independent variable, while students' behavior is the dependent variable.

In each question sheet eight (8) questions were asked, one closed type and seven open type. The students had the opportunity to develop their point of view freely.

The samples of the research are students of the first grade of a Gymnasium of the Prefecture of Serres, the "experimental groups".

The first sample of the research was the seventy-one (71) students of the first grade of a Gymnasium during the school year 2013–2014. Four of the students gave a negative answer to the first question and they did not want to participate in the evaluation of the course. Sixty-seven students answered all the questions. The same students three years later formed the "control group".

The second sample of the research was the twenty-five (25) students of the first grade of the same Gymnasium during the school year 2020–2021. They answered all the questions.

The same method was used to process both research samples. We collected and did retrospective examination

of primary data, which are the students' evaluations for the course (Cohen & Manion, 1994, pp. 204–228), that is, we applied a method of secondary data analysis (Kelpanidis, 1999, pp. 87–89). The evaluation sheets were checked and numbered. Their answers were coded.

We proceeded to analyze the data, but did not proceed to the “analysis of variance”. For the analysis of our data, we mainly used techniques of phenomenological data analysis, because the questions were open-ended (Cohen & Manion, 1994, pp. 400–409).

3.3 Analysis of Responses

The peculiarity of the school year 2013–2014 was that the students were forced to change teachers in the middle of the year, due to the mobility of teaching staff. Changing teacher is a negative element for the educational process but enabled students to form an opinion about the role of the teacher and the teaching methods that he/she applies.

The peculiarity of the school year 2020–2021 was that during the half months of the school year the lesson was taught online.

The first question was a closed type question. We asked students whether they liked the lesson or not. At the first sample four of the seventy-one students (about 5% of the students) simply stated that they did not like it at all and they did not answer the remaining questions.

Sixty seven (67) students from the first sample and twenty five (25) students from the second sample answered the seven open-ended questions.

The first open-ended question asked students to state the reasons they liked the Odyssey. At the first sample the 58% of students stated that they like the course very much and 37% of the students said that they like the lesson under certain conditions, which we tried to investigate. At the second sample the 80% of the students answered that they like Odyssey very much and 20% of the students said that they like Odyssey a lot.

The main reasons why they like it are three:

- a) the fact that the adventures of Odysseus are already known and interesting,
- b) the fact that a complete story is taught, and
- c) that in this lesson they can express their opinion freely.

The second open-ended question that was asked was to determine the degree of difficulty of the course. The majority of students of the first sample stated that initially they had difficulty in approaching the text and studying the course, but in the process they became familiar with the course thanks to the teacher's help. Here are two representative views of students:

- a) “I did not like the lesson in the beginning, because the teacher did not explain it well ... I was also very anxious about what would happen in the end. But later, when we changed teacher, I began to understand.”
- b) “I started with stress. Of course we had another teacher. Now it has become to be the second best course of the philological courses.”

The majority of students of the second sample stated that they had difficulty in approaching and studying the text in the online course. In the school class they could more easily solve their questions.

In the third open-ended question they were asked to express their opinion on the content of the course. The content of the course was considered known and loved by most students in both samples. What tired the students was the extensive dialogues and detailed descriptions, the delays and the narrative descriptions. So, they like the story but cannot appreciate the poetic art. One student from the first sample said characteristically: “I like Homer,

but he is very detailed.” And one student from the second sample wrote: “I have always loved Odyssey from movies and fairy tales.”

The fourth open-ended question was about the students’ opinion on the textbook. Most students of both samples are dissatisfied with the dense introduction, the difficult text and the unknown words, and the difficult comments of the book. Mainly the female students commented the external appearance of the book, which was considered attractive due to its color (pink). The same opinion was expressed by a male student commenting that the external appearance of the book does not excite boys: “girls like the color of the book ... boys do not like it.”

The fifth open-ended question was to express their opinion on the role of the teacher. The students of the first sample considered the intervention of the teacher important for the comprehension of the text. They expressed the view that the teacher is responsible for inciting the student’s interest and making the lesson more enjoyable. “The teacher was finding a way to make our lesson better”, said one student. Many students argued that “the teacher should devise ways to contribute to the learning of new knowledge”.

The students in the second sample claimed that the role of the teacher was crucial in understanding the text. As they said “during the online lessons due to the lack of direct contact with the teacher and the technical problems it was not easy to understand the text”. Therefore, the role of the teacher is very important in the selection and application of the teaching method, that suits the unit, the level and preferences of his/her students.

In the sixth open-ended question, the students were asked for their opinion on the role that the teaching method played in shaping their view of the subject/lesson. The students of the first sample made a lot of comments on the teaching, but the students of the second sample gave very short answers and made few comments, probably due to the online course period.

The teaching method, that had been followed in both samples, was text-centered and student-centered. Frontal teaching was applied seldom, in some sections of the introduction, in the narration of the summaries of the rhapsodies and when it was necessary to define Homer’s narrative techniques. Even in these cases the teaching can not be considered teacher-centered, because the narration was mainly used to render the concepts and the text of Homer in a simpler way, and the students often commented or continued the narration of the adventures of Odysseus. In both samples the students themselves said that they enjoyed the teacher’s narrations. In the first sample one student wrote: “I liked to hear it from you, because you said it in a very good and easy way, so that we could enjoy and understand the lesson.”

In some units group teaching was applied, and in classroom assignments binary (in pairs) teaching was applied. Dialogue and exchange of views prevailed, so the students felt involved in the teaching, they activated their imagination and assimilated the new knowledge in the classroom. In fact, they were impressed by the way that the ancient Greek literature is being taught from translation: “I was impressed by how we did the course with the summaries and comments. These helped me to understand and learn the lesson”, said one student in the second sample.

According to the students of the first sample, the way of teaching made the lesson more interesting, enjoyable and easy: “about the way you taught it to us, it made it much easier and it pleased me at the same time”, “I liked the course because the way of teaching was pleasant”, “I believe that the teacher makes the course easier than it is”, “from the middle of the year the course started to catch my attention, because as the teacher narrated us the story, I was imagining them and creating a film of my own. So, with the teacher’s help I overcame my difficulties and now I really like it”

The seventh open-ended question we asked them was about the students' opinion on how to evaluate the course.

The evaluation of the course was done according to the instructions of the Ministry of Education. Emphasis was placed on teaching the student to perceive, decode and answer questions. The teacher, taking into account the age of the students and their minimal contact with ancient Greek literature, treated the students with leniency. Despite the teacher's efforts to help reduce the stress of the students, the students had difficulty with the written exams and felt anxious: "in the exams it was unbearable. Now that the year is over, I feel relieved, but the exams are starting", said one student. And another comment was: "the only negative element is the stress that I have cause during the exam". In general, all students of the first sample were stressed by the written exams and would prefer another way of examination.

The students of the second sample do not have to take written exams at the end of the school year due to the peculiarities of this school year (coronavirus, online courses, etc.). But the students attitude was negative even towards homework, although they recognized that the homework did not require memorization and copying, corresponded to their level and they were not an occasion for reprimanding the student, but an occasion for mature engagement in the study of the Odyssey of Homer.

From the students' point of view, it is concluded that the way of evaluating the lesson should be changed, otherwise the students lose the enjoyment and the essence of learning.

3.4 Conclusions From the Empirical Part

All of our eight hypotheses were verified.

Most of the students loved the lesson because of the way of teaching and the good friendly climate that prevailed in the classroom during the teaching hour.

The students attributed the good climate to the personality, the behavior and the overall presence of the teacher, who took care to apply in practice the principles of Pedagogy (Chatzidimou, 2015, pp. 187, 189).

Nevertheless, according to the students, the course required a lot of study.

The students of the first sample, three years later, when they were been asked about the literary and pedagogical value of the "Odyssey", stated that the knowledge and the values that they gained from the course followed them until that time.

4. General Conclusions

In general the contribution of the Odyssey and the Homeric epics is important in the education and shaping of the personality of each student. The adventures of Odysseus, the values and ideals, the patterns and perceptions, that are projected in the Odyssey, have pedagogical value for the students, affect the psyche of the adolescent by stimulating their imagination, providing models of characters and behaviors to imitate, for example by projecting the relationship between counselor and mentor.

Although the students do not fully understand the literary value of the Odyssey, the narrative techniques and its pedagogical dimension, they recognize the value of the epic as a pleasant reading, the ideals and the models that it projects.

Therefore, the value of the epic remains unchanged over time, as it attracts almost every student, and on the other every educator, who treats it as an incomparable literary text with literary and pedagogical value.

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