

**Peter Glatz – Andreas Thiel (Linz),
European Symbols. Ein didaktischer Vorschlag über Europas Grenzen hinweg
Una proposta didattica che oltrepassa le frontiere...**

Das bekannte Autoren-Duo Peter Glatz und Andreas Thiel hat 2015 ein neuartiges Lehrbuch als Ergänzung zu bisherigen Lehrwerken herausgebracht, das sich der Frage nach dem "Lateinischen" im europäischen Kontext widmet. Europäische Symbole mit lateinischem Untergrund, Boten der Latinitas auf Schritt und Tritt und ein gemeinsamer Nenner, der für ganz Europa Gültigkeit hat. Kulturkunde auf ganz Europa bezogen und doch auch länderspezifisch - und eine Anleitung, Symbole als wesentliche Identifikationspunkte unseres Gemeinsamen zu suchen und zu finden. Europas Länder haben bei der Erstellung des Werks wertvolle Bausteine geliefert. Dass ein österreichisches Autoren-Duo diese Pionier-Arbeit geleistet hat, mag auch als Zeugnis dafür stehen, dass sich das Land zwischen Alpen und Donauregion als direkte Erbin lateinischer Kultur empfindet und in gewissem Sinn auch ein Herz einer gesamteuropäischen Latinitas darstellt.

Ich hatte am 1. Dezember 2018 die Ehre diesen Band beim Didacticum in Bozen in Vertretung der leider verhinderten Autoren vorzustellen und möchte ihn den Kollegen in Südtirol und in vielen Städten in Italien ans Herz legen. Damit zu arbeiten wird sicher ein Gewinn sein und mit einem auch unterhaltsamen Element Jugendliche ansprechen.

I due autori austriaci, Peter Glatz e Andreas Thiel, latinisti di indiscussa fama in Austria, hanno prodotto un libro didattico finora inedito. Cercare e trovare le tracce culturali latine in molti Paesi d'Europa è un impegno importante in un'epoca che si interroga sulla sostanza comune europea. La Latinitas ci unisce e ha dato forti contributi di vario carattere alle civiltà europee. Dal Sud al Nord, e dall'Est all'Ovest siamo tutti eredi della Latinitas e questo patrimonio va illustrato oltre i consueti testi di scuola. "European Symbols" vuole essere un aiuto a comprendere meglio il nostro denominatore comune, un'eredità tra tracce archeologiche e passaggi di testo, tra frammenti in pietra ed iscrizioni varie, tra rielaborazioni artistiche e lasciti filosofici e i beni delle tradizioni perfino popolari. Siamo tutti anche "latini" e ciò potrebbe unirici più della moneta unica e i capricci della politica. Est Europa nunc unita et unita maneat.

Ho avuto il piacere di presentare questo libro ai colleghi altoatesini ed italiani nell'ambito del Didacticum che si è tenuto il 1 dicembre a Bolzano e lo consiglio ai colleghi in Italia proprio come un vademecum divertente che sicuramente potrà entusiasmare molti giovani.

Rainer Weissengruber

In rappresentanza degli autori

In Vertretung der Autoren von European Symbols

EUROPEAN SYMBOLS – A Schoolbook for European Students

An educational project with a European focus, supported by
EUROCLASSICA and AMICI LINGUAE LATINAE

The idea of the project European Symbols, designing a schoolbook that may be used by students and teachers of Classical languages in all countries of Europe, was created by Peter Glatz and Andreas Thiel, Austrian teachers of Latin and promoters of AMICI LINGUAE LATINAE, in 2008. The project was approved by the general assembly of Euroclassica in Ohrid in 2009. In the following years all European nations were invited to join in. Each contribution with the exception of France, which withdrew its contribution, has been written by a citizen of the country that is home of the presented national symbol. By reading this book the readers will be able to study a national setting and at the same time get introduced to a wider – European – context. Being taught Latin with this book, students should get an idea of what Europe is – based on key ideas coming from Roman and,

of course, Greek antiquity. Our students should thus be encouraged in developing their awareness of being European citizens.

The fascinating idea of the European Union is represented in this common schoolbook showing the common cultural roots of Europe. Each didactic article shows the reception of classical culture and thinking in politics, social norms, art, literature, philosophy, law, etc. corresponding to the chosen genuine national symbol, a truly relevant popular text or person of national interest and popularity. The population of the country should be ready to identify on a broad national consensus with the choice. All texts have an introduction, a commentary and are supplied with suitable illustrations or pictures. Special effort has been taken to find sufficient well-considered questions of interpretation to go with the texts.

The contributions of Macedonia (FYROM) and Greece, which offer ancient Greek texts, provide the opportunity to point out the Greek roots of Europe. Looking into the past enables an understanding and shaping of the present. Consequently, each contribution features one image typical of the life and culture of the respective country. This selection of images is not associated with the Latin or Greek texts of the contributions but pays homage to the motto „United in Diversity“ by offering a modern visual approach.

There is no reference to either national curricula or any national books. Translations, teacher handbooks and further online materials are offered on www.euroclassica.eu. As English is taught as the first foreign language in most countries of Europe, the language of the schoolbook is English, thus catering for optional bilingual teaching in each European country, but, of course, also allowing traditional treatment of the central European texts in the mother tongue.

In the first edition of European Symbols there are contributions from 20 countries of Europe:

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Croatia
4. Czechia
5. Denmark
6. France
7. Germany
8. Great Britain
9. Greece
10. Italy
11. Lithuania
12. Malta
13. Macedonia
(FYROM)
14. The Netherlands
15. Portugal
16. Romania
17. Russia
18. Spain
19. Sweden
20. Switzerland

First you can find the Austrian part of the European schoolbook presenting the Karlskirche of Vienna as a beautiful example of Habsburg architecture based on the concept of the “*translatio imperii*”, then the Belgian part on Erasmus’ Panegyric for a Prince as a joyous entry into political culture, the Croatian contribution on the father of Croatian literature, the Croatian Dante, Marcus Marulus, Czechia’s part on ancient heroes in Baroque Olomouc, Denmark’s contribution on Holberg’s Nicolai Klimii Iter Subterraneum, France’s part on famous water routes and bridges in Roman Gaul, Germany’s contribution on Melanchthon’s impact, Great Britain’s part on the Magna Carta, the Greek contribution on C. P. Cavafy’s mythological-didactic poem Ithaca, the Italian part on the Loggia dei Lanzi and Dante Alighieri, the Lithuanian contribution on the cathedral of Vilnius, the Lithuanian Parthenon, Malta’s part on Thrinx of the Maltese, the contributions of Macedonia (FYROM) on Grigor Prlichev and his Greek epic on the freedom fighter Skanderbei, which bears clear allusions to Homer’s Iliad, and on Tauresium, the birthplace of Justinian I, the Dutch part on Desiderius Erasmus’ Praise of Folly, which reflects his lasting impression on European thoughts and views, the Portuguese contribution on the University of Coimbra, the Romanian part on Dimitrie Cantemir’s Descriptio Moldaviae, the Russian contribution on Sigismund von Herberstein’s Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii, which report on his experiences in Russia in the 16th century, the Spanish part on the theatre of Merida, the Swedish contribution on the Vasa warship, whose hull and beak are full of figures from Greek and Roman myths and the Swiss contribution on the freedom fighter Wilhelm Tell.

In a European motto contest held in the year 2000, students from the then 15 EU member states submitted their ideas. These are the mottoes that made it onto the shortlist.

“Peace, freedom, solidarity”

“Old continent – new hope”

“Our diversity is our strength”

“All different, all Europeans”

“Unified for peace and democracy”

“Unity in diversity”

“United in freedom”

Eventually, the winning entry – the last suggestion above, slightly modified – was submitted for official approval: *United in diversity*. The motto was accepted by Nicole Fontaine, the then President of the European Parliament, and was subsequently included in the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, which has still not been ratified.

What is striking is the close similarity between the European motto and the motto of the USA: *E pluribus unum*.¹

Even from the small number of mottoes listed above, it becomes apparent that Europe is first and foremost a community of shared values and that, ultimately, it is humans and their harmonious life side by side that are at the centre of all political and societal activities.

It is the task of politics at a general European level, and also at the national levels of the individual member states, to enhance and firmly embed this European idea in the consciousness of all European citizens. Its declared aim is to advance a kind of political reasoning that is aware of its roots going back to ancient Rome, viewing democracy and the welfare state – which many young people of today erroneously tend to perceive as a given since time immemorial – as the fruits of a historic process, evolved out of conflicts and, if need be, worth being defended and fought for.

¹ cf. <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europamotto> [9.6.2015]

Since classical antiquity, there have been numerous examples of people overcoming a purely nation-centred outlook. According to Diogenes Laertios, the philosopher Diogenes of Sinope, when asked where he was from, replied that he was a citizen of the world. This statement is also quoted in Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Apophthegmes*, a collection of sayings that Erasmus referred to as "Egregia dicta". Their intended purpose was to advise people in a variety of situations:

Interrogatus a quopiam, cuias esset, Diogenes respondit κοσμοπολίτης, id est civis mundi, significans philosophum, ubicumque locorum agat, in sua patria vivere. (*Apophthegmata*, III Diogenes 171)

quispiam, quidpiam (n.): somebody; **cuias**, -atis m.: citizen of which state/country?

When Alexander the Great was engaged in his campaign of conquest (334-324 BC) it was something of a first globalisation of the Greek world. The *Pax Augusta* of the late 1st century BC was yet another instance globalisation – of the Roman sphere of influence.

Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD), the 'philosopher king', though a Roman citizen from birth, regarded himself at the same time as a citizen of the world – presumably in the sense of the open-minded Stoic school of philosophy in which he was brought up.

He resolved the apparent dichotomy between his Roman citizenship and his world citizenship, as derived from Greek philosophy, with these words:

Πόλις καὶ πατρίς ὡς μὲν Ἀντωνίνῳ μοι ἡ Ῥώμη, ὡς δὲ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ κόσμος. τὰ ταῖς πόλεσιν οὖν ταύταις ὠφέλιμα μόνα ἐστί μοι ἀγαθὰ. (M. Aurelius, ad se ipsum 6,44 a)

For me, as Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Rome is my pólis (my polity) and my patrís (my native country); for me, as a human being, however, it is the world – kósmos. And I consider everything that is simultaneously propitious to both these polities to be good." (M. Aurelius, ad se ipsum 6,44 a)²

Living today, we might find it hard fully to grasp the revolutionary potential of the term 'citizen of the world' at that time. This statement was bound to be perceived as momentous in a world lacking the modern media and means of transport which have turned our world into the proverbial global village. And yet, even today, we are more than ever in need of a spirit of global citizenship – the awareness of global interconnectedness and of the shared responsibility of humans for one another all over the globe.

In the context of this publication, the notion of transcending national borders and of global mutual responsibility means: We are European citizens; though grounded in different regional traditions, we are Europeans *united in diversity*.

This thought makes us confident you will enjoy these intriguing *European* texts.

If there are any questions about concept and use of "European Symbols", please don't hesitate to contact Peter Glatz peter.glatz@eduhi.at or Andreas Thiel a.thiel@eduhi.at.

² cf. Bartels, Klaus, *Jahrtausendworte – in die Gegenwart gesprochen*, Darmstadt/Mainz 2011, 79. Further mention of the topic *ibid.* Chapter 5 "Global Village"