

The Irene Project:

Classical Literature for the Promotion of Peace and Reconciliation in the Classroom

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What is the practical value of humanities? Our contribution aims at highlighting the potential of the Humanities in promoting peace and reconciliation after political conflict for the younger generations. For that purpose, we present our ongoing educational project Irene which develops a methodology for conflict resolution based on classical literature for high school students in Colombia. As material for the pedagogical concept, Irene resorts to samples from Classical literature to reflect on violence, peace, and inequality. In our proposed contribution, we developed a learning unit based on a Stesichorus' poem (fr. 97 Finglass; PMGF 222b) to reflect on dialogue, mediation, and negotiation. In a second step, we suggest an outline of how Aristophanes's *Lysistrata* and *Peace*, and Plutarch's *Bravery of Women* can be adapted to teach peace education.

The scope of our project and its transdisciplinary approach (Classic Philology, Pedagogics, Didactics, and Peace Studies) suggests a way to adapt the Classic's heritage to address topics of violence, peace, and reconciliation to young audiences. Additionally, Irene fills the void in lacking materials and tools for peace education in the national curriculum, relevant as the 2016 peace agreement with the former FARC-guerrilla opened a window of opportunity for conflict transformation and the tackling of structural causes of violence. As an educational project, Irene is best situated to fulfill this demand. Finally, since our project underscores the intrinsic value of Humanities for peace and reconciliation, we believe that the adaptation of Classical literature for education purposes in the Colombian context can be an inspiration for peace education and reconciliation efforts not only in the Global South, but for conflict in Europe as well.