

EDUCATION IN ANCIENT GREECE

OBRAZOVANJE U ANTIČKOJ GRČKOJ

EDITOR'S NOTE

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This thematic issue represents the efforts of the Laboratory of Educational Theories of the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade to come to a broader understanding of ancient educational conceptions. The initial assumption is that the educational perspectives of ancient thinkers, as well as their argumentation, are extremely valuable and meaningful in our contemporary society.

The questions looming on the horizon include: Why is education important? How should it be managed and who should be in control of it? Who should organize education and what subjects should be taught? When should we begin with education and how long should it last? Various answers have been offered to these and similar questions in ancient times which could be useful for a contemporary and completely different world from the ancient one. Besides, as we know, women, elderly people, the poor, slaves and foreigners were excluded from ancient educational practices. However, it should be acknowledged and underlined that there were a few philosophical schools which included these marginalized groups.

Indubitably, the approach of ancient Greek philosophers to education was comprehensive, thorough and diverse; we cannot thus expect to cover all topics in a limited space. Nevertheless, in this thematic issue, we focus our attention on several important and relevant perspectives on ancient education.

This thematic issue begins with Aikaterini Lefka's paper – "The Citizens' Lifelong Learning in Plato's *Laws*" – that deals with the educational program in Plato's *Laws*. Lefka employs a synthetical approach: namely, she connects the educational aspect with the moral one. In other words, she tries to explain how education is beneficial for the moral development of each individual and of the polis (πόλις).

The second paper, "The Role of Education in Aristotle's *Politics*", by Zoran Dimić points out the significance of the reasons for creating the polis as a

stepping stone for Aristotle's educational practice. This ties in with the relationship between the polis (πόλις) and the constitution (πολιτεία) which is of paramount importance for the education of the politically capable citizen.

In her paper, "Women's Education, Knowledge and Competence in Ancient Greece", Lada Stevanović offers a comprehensive approach to the marginalized and often forgotten women's education in ancient Greece. Stevanović's approach is quite unusual as she sheds light on the disregarded and less analyzed aspects of women's education and their voices which have never been valued in the public sphere of that time.

Finally, Tamara Plećaš portrays the concept of Stoic philosophical education in her paper entitled "The Roman Stoics on the Emancipatory Potential of the Philosophical Paideia". Namely, Plećaš identifies specific Stoic ideas and educational practices and claims that they have emancipatory potential. According to her, for example, it is essential that the Roman Stoics believed that women and men were equally subjected to virtue and rationality and that they encouraged their students and protégés to speak and act freely as well as to not be afraid of authority figures. In addition, Plećaš maintains, the Stoics perceived philosophy as a discipline "that educates the mind" which is why philosophical education was also a path to happiness.

As mentioned before, the goal of this thematic issue is not to give a complete overview of ancient education. Instead, the papers in this thematic issue offer four different approaches to intriguing educational problems. Moreover, the papers in this thematic issue share a dual objective: to explore the concept of education and to make suggestions for its potential applications in contemporary educational methods.