# CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF EDUCATION DURING CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY USING EXAMPLES FROM THE SOUTH OF THE PROVINCE OF DALMATIA

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Abstract: Education is one of the most important factors in the development of humans. During classical antiquity, a relatively modest importance was attributed to education. It was present in the society of classical antiquity; it began in Ancient Greece and continued in the Roman period. Education in classical antiguity was part of philosophical and other studies about the state and social organization. Ancient philosophy set the foundation for different social concepts that have been developing until today. Education strongly influenced society, although it was mostly accessible to only the richest layer of society. The paper will present the education development course during classical antiquity, relying on the persons who addressed this issue. Through selected examples, we will show how this process was perceived by prominent Greek thinkers who followed society's attitude towards education. Thoughts about education were associated with thoughts about the state, governance, and the best polity. Moreover, we will cover examples from the south of the province of Dalmatia (the monument with an inscription from Prčanj, writing styluses made of different materials from Panik near Bileća, Mogorjelo, and Višić near Čapljina, Narona, etc.). The analysis of discovered monuments and archaeological materials from the above locations suggests that education was important in the south of Dalmatia. These facts will show us whether the citizens in the south of the province of Dalmatia, during classical antiquity, used writing in everyday life, which required education. Moreover, the aforementioned written and material testimonies will suggest how this process took place in the south of the province of Dalmatia. We will also analyze the sources and literature from classical antiguity and compare them with current knowledge and achievements regarding education to come to a valid conclusion.

**Keywords:** education, classical antiquity, Greece, Rome, province of Dalmatia. **Field:** Social sciences

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

The first reflections on the relationship between upbringing, education, and society can be found among ancient Greek philosophers, from the sophists, Plato and Aristotle, to the post-Aristotelian schools (Stoics, Epicureans). Discussing the best way of organizing the state, Plato and Aristotle believed that the state should be ruled by philosophers, people who have devoted a large part of their lives to upbringing, education, and self-improvement. At the same time, Aristotle paid special attention to the morality of rulers. "It happens elsewhere that the state is democratic according to the laws, but the administration is oligarchic due to its education and morals." We should not neglect that Plato and Aristotle, as well as other Greek philosophers of the time, believed that upbringing and education were not for slaves (Aristotel, 2003, pgs. 121–128).

As we can see, society's stance towards upbringing and education is as old as the thought about society and its organization. Thoughts and different views of upbringing and education in society, in ancient Greek philosophy, were presented in a fragmented, unsystematic, and contextual manner. This is the result of a lack of education in the system. Sophistic teachings introduced us to the perception of social relations created by people as their lack of freedom. Plato's Republic suggests that it is about imitating Egyptian society in the form of an idealization of the ancient social class. Plato's wish to stop the decline of Athenian society led him to find a model of harmonious functioning of various strata of society so that everyone would be happy. He shared a thought about the structure of social classes and tried to provide a solution for them. Additionally, his works emphasize the importance of demographic and geographical factors in society, religion, and education (Aristotel, 2003, pgs. 121–128). Aristotle, Plato's pupil, took some ideas from his teacher. Like Plato, he saw that happiness, moral perfection, and justice are achieved through the harmonization of the interests of individuals in the state. To achieve this, the state must be ideal, and Aristotle offered examples of ideal forms of government in his Politics. An example

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from his biography illustrates the relationship between politics and education. After teaching Alexander the Great, Aristotle returned to Athens and founded his school Lyceum teaching several scientific disciplines he founded, including politics as a practical science. After 13 years of work, it was declared an espionage institution, and Aristotle was accused. He left Athens with the explanation that he did not want Athens to make a second mistake regarding philosophy, alluding to the trial of Socrates. This best illustrates how education can have a strong influence on society, and that the repression of progressive thought is not something that happened recently (Fiamengo, 1973, pg. 17; Kolarić, 1998, pg. 77).

Two thousand years have passed since the world of classical antiquity. Despite the large period. sometimes we understand that distant world better than the modern one. Today, we certainly have more technical knowledge, but probably fewer ideas. We are often troubled by the same problems as the ancient Greeks and Romans as they are permanent. Today, they have different forms but the content is the same (Spektorski, 1997, pg. 31). Let us start by observing a portrait of a married couple from 79 BC. An example of Pompeian painting is the so-called house of Terentius Neo. The husband and wife were painted with the personal characteristics of the society to which they belong: these are neither a sword, spear, arrow, wealth, nor power, these are: a book, writing table, and stylus. These are personal tools that they used, so this cultural ideal is natural for us. Familiarity was rarely depicted in classical art. The husband is represented with his chin resting on the upper part of the book (in the form of a scroll) as if he is waiting for something. The wife thoughtfully raised the stylus to her lips, searching for the words for a verse. This is not a question of daydreaming. They are confident in themselves, (their ideas) which is proof of their closeness to the culture. There are no signs of privilege, they keep the book and the accessories because they love them. The harmony and genuineness of education make up the greatness of the Greco-Roman world that we are exploring (Tac. Ann. XIV 1–13, 57, 62, 64; Аријес-Диби, 2000, pgs. 13–15).

# 2. ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM OF SOURCE MATERIALS

In Greece, literacy was never a kind of special knowledge only mastered by experts. The ability of the Greeks in the 5th century BC to read and write was implied. We do not know exactly how widespread literacy was. Writing was used in poetry, public speaking, voting, writing tombstones, making shopping lists, and even swearing at opponents. An illiterate person in Greece was considered uncultured. Women in Greece were not encouraged to study and write, although many of them did. Likewise, it is believed that in Athens, more than half of the male population knew how to read and write. A high literacy rate indicates a widespread school system. Greek culture was characterized by oral forms and means of communication that preceded written ones (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583–635; Musić, 1942, pgs. 52–53). The Athenians had gymnasiums and palestras, but the state had no public schools, so education was private. Professional teachers personally organized private schools, and children of free citizens attended classes (Busuladžić, 2018, pgs. 11). Data about organized schools originate from the 6th century BC. Education and teachers were paid, but it was not expensive. Athenian laws prescribed the working hours of the schools as well as the number and age of the boys who attended them. State supervision of teachers was also organized for the moral protection of children. For families who could afford it, a slave accompanied children to school. Schooling started at the age of 7 and usually lasted 3 to 4 years, as long as it took to master the basic skills. After education, the boys focused on physical fitness and military discipline, followed by drawing and painting (Busuladžić, 2018, pg. 11). The next stage of life started at the age of 18, so it is assumed that many persons spent 10 years of schooling. Education was traditionally divided into three areas (literature, physical education, and music), under the supervision of three teachers (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583–635; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 90–92). Unlike boys, girls were homeschooled. Their mother and nanny taught them reading, writing, arithmetic, and household chores (Djurant, 1996, pgs. 311–313; Busuladžić, 2018, pg. 11). Following the Greco-Persian wars, in addition to mathematics, reading, writing, and music, there was an increase in the number of subjects taught to young Greeks, such as rhetoric, tactics, and other disciplines taught by sophists. Although some girls went to grammar schools, the study of rhetoric was, almost exclusively, the privilege of young men. The rhetor introduced the students at school to the theory of rhetoric. The students were asked to use their knowledge of this subject in practice by speaking in front of the whole class (meiete in the Hellenic school, and declamatio in the Latin school). (Quintus I 39–117, II 121–179, VIII 221–262, IX 281–336, X 369–420, XI 429–452, XII 489–543; Musić, 1942, pgs. 52–53; Busuladžić, 2018, pg. 11; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 37–70, 91–92; Brković / Bušljeta-Kardum, 2021, pgs. 113–124; Jovanović, 2022, pgs. 3–24).

Literature implied learning how to read and write, grammar and language, memorizing verses (Homer) as well as addressing questions of poets. Teachers expressed their social status by imposing

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strict discipline through corporal punishment. The educational practice of the Greeks predicted that poets were the most useful moral teachers, while prose writers and technical subjects were not studied. Physical education was carried out in wrestling schools (palaistra). The training was led by teachers who insisted on individual physical exercises or sports. Various physical exercises were performed, where under the supervision of the teacher, the students learned different types of fights, swimming, and more. The music included choir singing and playing instruments. In the music school, students learned to sing and play various instruments and dance to music. It is believed that upbringing and education in classical Athens were available, not only to citizens of aristocratic origin but also to wider layers of the population. At the end of the 4th century BC, the system of Athens stipulated that all young men 18 years old should spend 2 years in the gymnasion and military training under the supervision of special officials and teachers. This institution, ephēbeia, in the Hellenistic period became a symbol of the city and a way of distinguishing the citizens from the non-citizens (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583–635).

In his Politics, Aristotle explained what the system of upbringing and education of youth in Greece consisted of: "There are two periods of education: between the ages of seven to puberty and puberty to twenty-one". According to him, education has the task of completing the deficiencies of nature. Likewise, he stated that human life should be divided into a period of 7 years because this division keeps pace with nature. When it comes to education, he pointed out that: "There are perhaps four customary subjects of education: Reading and writing, gymnastics, music, and sometimes drawing. Reading and writing and drawing being taught as being useful for the purposes of life and very serviceable, and gymnastics as contributing to manly courage... Music is not as useful as gymnastics for health and strength, because neither health nor physical strength is gained through music." Aristotle did not only provide simple explanations of why gymnastics is necessary for the youth, but he also used examples to portray everything more vividly. Thus he wrote: "It is therefore agreed that we should employ gymnastic training, and how we should employ it. For until puberty we should apply lighter exercises, forbidding hard diet and severe exertions, in order that nothing may hinder the growth. For there is no small proof that it can produce this result: in the list of Olympic victors, one would only find two or three persons who have won both as men and as boys, because when people go into training in youth the severe exercises rob them of their strength. But when they have spent three years after puberty upon their other studies, then it is suitable to occupy the next period of life with laborious exercises and strict training diet. For it is wrong to work hard with the mind and the body at the same time; for it is the nature of the two different sorts of exertion to produce opposite effects, bodily toil impeding the development of the mind and mental toil that of the body." (Aristotel, 2003, pgs. 215–232; Иоанидис / Стефановић / Кариоту / Шиљак / Мијатовић, 2008, pgs. 66–74; Momčinović, 2021, pgs. 2–14).

At the beginning of the 5th century BC, in Athens, there was a form of higher education that prepared young men for participation in public life. The rise of Athens caused all the famous lecturers to come to this city. Traveling lecturers amazed with their knowledge of many subjects (anthropology, mathematics, linguistics), announcements, and intelligence. Their visits are reflected in the works of Plato. In these works, he set up an antithesis between the sophists and Socrates. They stated that they possessed all knowledge and that he knew nothing; they flaunted their speaking skills, he only asked a question; they offered to teach people how to be better, he just pointed out man's ignorance, etc. The influence of the sophists on the aristocratic youth of the 5th century BC was immense. A generation of politicians appeared who opposed the plebeian attitudes of demagogues. The sophistic educational system developed in two directions with the help of Plato and Isocrates (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583-635; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 37-70). Plato attempted to create leaders for a new philosophical age and to systematically study the various branches of philosophy, from mathematics to metaphysics. Isocrates channeled the sophistic movement in the direction of continuous professional training. Rhetoric was turned into a skill suitable for occasions when something had to be formulated verbally, but there was nothing in his theories to encourage serious thought. The turmoil between Plato and Isocrates created the theories of logic and rhetoric, which we find in Aristotle (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583-635; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 37-70). The contrast between philosophy and rhetoric as two forms of mental activity that prevailed until the end of classical antiquity developed from Aristotle. Along with the transition from traveling sophists to schools of philosophy and rhetoric, the medical profession was also progressing. This process can be traced through medical experiments attributed to Hippocrates of Kos. It is a great achievement that medicine survived in a world where belief was believed to be more effective. The Hippocratic Oath contains the principles of this new medicine as well as the way it was organized (Harvey, 1966, pgs. 583-635).

In the 5th century BC, the sophists introduced secondary education. As professors and pedagogues, they thought about the virtues that make a noble man successful. Sophists had no permanent school. They were travelers who traveled and trained young people. They taught rhetoric, made plans, taught how

to come up with ideas, how to impress judges, and discuss justice and injustice. Later, many philosophers opened schools in Athens teaching their philosophical concepts. Isocrates founded the school of rhetoric in the 4th century BC, teaching the art of speaking. He considered rhetoric to be an art and scorned sophists who approached oratory technically. The result was few illiterates in Athens at the end of the 5th century, because education became available to all social classes (Quintus I 39–117, II 121–179; Битен, 2010, pgs. 225–228; Knezović, 2019, pgs. 5–14).

An example of a professor pedagogue as a traveler who traveled and taught virtues can be found in the south of the province of Dalmatia (today a monument with an inscription from Prčani). Namely, this monument was discovered in Risan, but it was moved and built into a brick wall behind the apse of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Prčanj (Bogorodični hram) by its pastor, the famous historian and collector of antiquities, don Niko Luković. The inscription was engraved on an irregularly edged white marble slab measuring 28 x 29 cm. The size of the letters in the rows is not equal. The first three rows are larger and the last four are smaller. The inscription reads: ΔYONICYOC / EIPHNAIOY ΙΑ/CEYC PHTOP / EUDAIMONHCAC ΕΤΕΛΕΥ/ΤΑΕΤΩΝ ΟΔΜΘ / ΕΠΟΙΕΙ ΕΠΙΚΤΗCIC ΑΠΕLΕΥ/ΘΕΡΑ. Διονύσιος / Ειρηναίου ια- / σεις ιήτ<ω>ρ, / ειδαιμονήσας ιτελεύ- / 5 τα ιτιν οδ΄, μ(ηνιν) θ΄. / ιποίει ιπίκτησις Iπελευ- / θέρα. Inscriptions in the Greek language are less represented among the archaeological material from the south of the province of Dalmatia. The inscription of Dionysius, the son of Irenaeus from the city of lasos in Caria, is extremely significant because it is the only inscription in the south of the province of Dalmatia that mentions a rhetor. Based on the inscription, we can conclude that he died at the age of 74 and nine months on a journey, or that he lived and worked in the south of the province of Dalmatia as a teacher of rhetoric, and that the freedwoman Epiktesis erected this monument in his honor. It is believed that the reason for his journey far away from home in Caria was to teach young people the art of rhetoric (field research, 2023/2024, manuscript Martinović, pg. 56).

Roman upbringing and education were based both on its own experiences and on the experiences of other nations (Busuladžić, 2018, pg. 10). Before upbringing and education, a newborn baby that came into the world was accepted into society (tollere) or exposed (in front of the door or at the dump), according to the decision of the chief of the house. In 1 BC, a Hellenian wrote to his wife "If, knock on wood, you have a child, let him live if it's a boy; expose him if it's female" (Tac. Ann. XIV 1–13, 57, 62, 64; Apµjec-Диби, 2000, pgs. 13–15). Seneca informed us that the Romans strangled or exposed crippled children. "We need to separate what is good from what is useless." Some of the causes of child abandonment were poverty, infidelity, distribution of inheritance, and political-religious manifestation. The last connotation was particularly indicative. For example, after Agrippina was murdered by her son Nero, a stranger exposed the child with the announcement "I am not raising you for fear that you will slaughter your mother" (Tac. Ann. XIV 1–13, 57, 62, 64; Apµjec-Диби, 2000, pgs. 13–15). We can see that the first forms of upbringing and education in Rome were based on homeschooling. In this earliest period, the father had a decisive influence (pater familias). During family upbringing and education, children were taught religion, writing, reading, and the basics of the law, as well as the Greek language in some families (as its importance grew) (Giunio, 2016, pg. 27; Busuladžić, 2018, pg. 12).

Apart from the mother, who fed, brought up, and educated the child, a significant role until puberty was played by the nurser and the pedagogue (nutritor, tropheus), who, among other things, was responsible for good upbringing. From early childhood, children were brought up to participate in family (household) chores. Mother had an important role in the educational process of a child until the age of seven (for girls it was even longer), and later the role was assumed by the father (especially for boys). In addition to household chores and farming, children learned prayers and acquired and built the most important virtues (moderation, seriousness, courage, persistence, piety, the cult of ancestors, etc.) (Hosni / Ninčević, 2017, pgs. 43–61). One example shows us the importance of pedagogues. Namely, Marcus Aurelius was taught by a pedagogue to take care of himself. As soon as he passed the age at which children are left to the care of a nanny, he was entrusted to learned people. He spoke with great respect about his birth father, his adoptive father, and his "foster carer". Children lived and dined with their guardians, but they dined ceremoniously with their parents (Царска повест, 2009, I 10; II 7; III 9). For a long time, Emperor Claudius was under the supervision and guidance of educators and pedagogues, whom he hated because of the frequent abuse of the whip (Suetonius, 195, pgs. 193–220). Nero had an accomplice and helper, his "foster carer" for the murder of his mother Agrippina. When the rebels were chasing him to his death, only his nurser comforted him. After committing suicide, his nannies Egloge and Alexandria buried him with his lover Acte (Suetonius, 195, pgs. 221-254). The future emperor Vespasian was raised and educated under the supervision of his paternal grandmother, on the estate at Cosa, in the small village of Falacrine, above Reate, although his mother was still alive (Suetonius, 195, pg. 288). Caesar and Augustus were raised similarly (Suetonius, 195, pg. 288).

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In Rome, morality was thought to consist less of love and the habit of virtue, and more of the strength to resist vice. This would mean that the strength of resistance is a condition for the balance of personality. Upbringing in the Empire was aimed at toughening the character so that when a child grows up, they will become resistant to luxury and various vices. Parents influenced infants so that their personalities tolerated everything that was for their good because they continued to carry the family name and honor. The frequency of adoption of children in the Empire suggests how unnatural the Roman family was. Apart from having children in a valid marriage, adoption was also a means of preventing the discontinuation of the family line. Adopted children were usually not pampered and coddled. Their care was left to servants, that is, to a nurser who was usually Greek so that the child could learn the cultural language. The pedagogue had the duty to teach the child to read (Аријес-Диби, 2000, pgs. 21–23).

A certain number of young Romans went to school until the age of 12 (girls and boys). Schools in Rome were mixed. Boys from wealthier families continued their education after the age of 12. Whereas some girls would get a tutor or would get married after the age of 12 because in any case girls were considered adults at the age of 14. The belief that the Roman school had the function of shaping a personality and adapting them to society is considered wrong. In Rome, subjects that contributed to this were not studied, but those that brought prestige (rhetoric) (Аријес-Диби, 2000, pgs. 23–26; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 111–126). The Roman school is considered to have been imported, so it was separated from the street, politics, and religious activity. Unlike the Roman school, the Greek school was part of public life. Literature, rhetoric, philosophy, and music were taught on training and fighting grounds. Sports made up half of the learning time, which lasted until the age of 16. A Roman person from a distinguished house could be considered educated if they were taught the Greek language and literature by a private tutor. However, Greek intellectuals did not care about learning the Latin language. Only those Greeks who wanted to pursue a legal career in the administration would begin to learn Latin towards the end of Antiquity (Apujec-Диби, 2000, pgs. 23–26). The school was a means of appropriating and reshaping culture. She taught every respectable Roman citizen activities that were generally useful and that few were interested in. The school taught and called classical only what was most convenient for teaching. Rhetoric turned into a pre-prepared lecture. This is essentially not something that benefited society because school and school exercises became a means unto itself (Аријес-Диби, 2000, pgs. 23-26; Кенеди, 2019, pgs. 111-126).

In the south of the province of Dalmatia, a significant number of styluses were found indicating the existence of education within the homes of parents of children of a younger age, who acquired their first knowledge and skills of writing, reading, and arithmetic. From the south of the province of Dalmatia, significant objects that can be defined as writing utensils (styluses) were found in the sites of Narona, Višić, and Mogorjelo near Čapljina and Panik near Bileća. The material analysis indicates that the bronze and iron examples of styluses from the mentioned sites are the most common (field research, 2023/2024, Busuladžić, 2028, pg. 19).

### 3. CONCLUSION

Different social, economic, and technological conditions have influenced upbringing and education throughout history. During classical antiquity, upbringing and education were treated within philosophical and other teachings about the state and social organization. Classical philosophy provided the basis for different concepts of society that continue to develop until today. Even at this period, upbringing and education exerted a strong influence on society, although it was mostly available only to the richest class. The widespread use of letters and the services of scribes means that part of the rich literature and mythology of peoples of classical antiquity is constantly being discovered today. It is considered that the Greek period of upbringing and education was more significant than the Roman one because philosophers in this period were focused on description and morality, which they discussed within the framework of law. According to Fiamengo, "Apart from the elaboration of the legal phenomenon, the Romans did not make any significant contribution to the development of sociological thought".

By studying sources (narrative, epigraphic monuments) and literature from the period of classical antiquity and comparing them with today's knowledge in the field of upbringing and education, we came to the following conclusion: in classical antiquity, as well as today, upbringing and education included: nurser (nanny, guardian), pedagogue, teacher, specialist trainers, people from the field of sports medicine, scientists, and others. The working principle from the period of classical antiquity has remained quite similar until today. They knew the principles of work and training. In the past, preparation for work and training was sketched, but today we use computer technology for planning and programming. Music was especially used during training and competition as motivation for achieving success/results in the chosen sports activity. A similar thing happens today in the process of sports training and competition. Recovery

received great attention in both periods. In ancient Greece, coaching science existed at the corresponding level of knowledge, just as it exists today in terms of the new technology of sports training. The use of terminology, selection of athletes, categories of competitors, versatile preparation, the use of optimal load during training, knowledge of periodization (microcycle), nutrition, and others, combines former and present knowledge about sports training, i.e., two sports cultures from different periods.

In essence, education and upbringing in Greece was a combination of physical, mental, moral, and intellectual training, which aimed to mold young people by the traditions and the greatest models of Greek society. This influenced the development of scientific thought, the outlines of which are present to this day. For the person of classical antiquity, the knowledge of reading and writing was less important than conversation, discussion, and theater, which represented far more important sources of knowledge. The children did not go to school to get a certificate and acquire all educational gualifications. Children were sent to school for upbringing and education, to acquire good morals, behavior, and physical composition not only for personal or family interest but also for the interest of the wider community in which they lived.

Physical education was the first and basic level of upbringing and education among the Romans. Unlike the Greeks, who emphasized physical appearance (vigorous exercises, training, sports competitions), the Romans associated physical education with military readiness (learning various skills, strengthening character, getting around in different situations, gymnastic exercises, etc.). The higher level of upbringing and education among the Romans included the school of medicine, grammar, literature, rhetoric, and others. Further Roman upbringing and education included public readings and libraries. In such circumstances, private as well as public book readings were organized, and attended by those interested in readings by authors or learned people.

Research results led to the realization that the evidence found in the south of the province of Dalmatia (a monument with an inscription from Prčanj, writing styluses made of different materials from the area of Panik near Bileća, Mogorjelo, and Višić near Čapljina, Narona, etc.) indicate that upbringing and education were important in this area in classical antiquity. The significant number of discovered styluses indicates that the population in the south of the province of Dalmatia used writing in everyday life, meaning that they were educated. Archaeological field research indicates that this process was quite developed in the south of the province of Dalmatia during the period of the Empire, as evidenced by epigraphic monuments and finds from the mentioned sites.

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