

Upbringing by the Theater and Upbringing in the Theater: the Ancient Pedagogy of Scene



(Preface)

This issue of the journal continues a series of annual thematically selected materials on the history of ancient pedagogical culture. Like the previous one, this issue combines scientific articles and translations of foreign scientific works on the topic. This will provide the reader with a wide range of opinions belonging to representatives of various research schools and areas, as well as initiate an interdisciplinary field for scientific discussions. The theme of the issue is *upbringing by the theater and upbringing in the theater: the ancient pedagogy of scene*. The title chosen for this issue might be a little controversial. Its purpose is not only to specify the range of problems but to state the unity of the authors in their choice of the academic tradition of studying the ancient pedagogy of the stage. The reader will get acquainted with more than a dozen modern studies, where each author strove to present in detail every aspect of the matter at hand. The outcome of such aspirations could have become a book characterized by highly contradictory content, but surprisingly it turned out differently. Each article has become a part of a joint research.

If some topics on the history of ancient pedagogical culture can be said not to have lost their heuristicity for the researcher, the selected one has not yet fully acquired it. This is largely due to the fact that the sources that give us an idea of the ancient theater are diverse: from the general idea of the character of the theatrical performance to the detailed description of the stage design, actors' masks, theatrical acoustics, etc. Their peculiarity is that, with a limited number of facts, there is a lot of reasoning advanced in favour of antagonistic hypotheses, among which there are hardly any put forward by educationalists. Works of ancient playwrights, treatises on the theory and history of drama, philosophical writings with the focus on the theatre pedagogy, encyclopedic, biographical and historiographical writings, didaskalia – inscriptions recording the results of drama competitions, personal correspondence and others – all of them are traditionally considered sources of musical, stage and other features of theatrical productions, which understates their role as texts on the history of ancient pedagogical culture. We can observe a constantly increasing number of papers in which theatrical spectacles are regarded as one of the main events of the intellectual life of the ancient city, without reference to the existing pedagogical tradition and educational practices. In most cases,

the ancient theater is considered a space for an open dialogue between citizens on urgent matters. The fact that involvement in this dialogue and its full implementation became possible only when the theater served as a special educational space with its own laws and rules remains beyond the researchers' attention.

The ancient culture is characterized by a love for theatrical spectacles, which always found their audience and exerted educational influence on them through their scale, rituality, the very opportunity to express oneself in public. In the works of ancient thinkers who lived in different periods of ancient history, for the first time in the history of pedagogy, it is emphasized that the theatre is a school for the mature and maturing, where the audience was instructed in the correct understanding of the events through the demonstration of the approved patterns of thinking and behavior. The works of ancient playwrights of different periods were not only a reflection of their critical views on the contemporary educational system, but they also represented the attempts to visualize the ideal teaching and educational practices. The pedagogical discourse of the ancient theater is a phenomenon that significantly influenced the emergence of the fundamental educational ideals and their interpretation in different historical periods. A detailed examination of the corpus of texts, in which playwrights act as mentors, the audience – as pupils, and the theater itself – as an educational space, gives the chance to regard the ancient theater as an educational space and powerhouse of the pedagogical discourse of the epoch.

To submit materials and check the theme of the next issues, as well as to make remarks, suggestions and comments, please contact the Editor-in-Chief at the following e-mail address: Pichugina_V@mail.ru – Victoria Pichugina. I express gratitude to the Deputy Editor-in-Chief Andrej Yu. Mozhajsky and the Issue Editor Yana A. Volkova, without whom none of this would have been possible.