

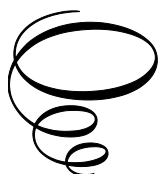
A Brief History of Education in Greece

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By

Apostolos Syropoulos and Eleni Tatsiou

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Dedicated
to my son
Demetrios-Georgios
and Linda
A.S.

Dedicated
to my son Michail and
my daughter Korina
E.T.

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PREFACE

History is the systematic study of the past, and in particular the human past. Apart from wars, conquests, and other similar events, human history is about the culture, sciences, and technology developed by man or a particular group of people, usually called a nation. For any developments to occur, one must teach the young people the current knowledge, current techniques, and current methods used in the sciences, arts, etc. Most people now agree that society benefits more from the systematic transmission of knowledge. Of course, things have not always been this way, and the history of education studies and examines the various forms of education in human history.

Greece as a geographical area has been inhabited for many years and is the birthplace of some of the greatest civilizations in the history of mankind. It is the birthplace of the Minoan, Mycenaean, ancient Athenian, Hellenistic, Byzantine, and, of course, modern Greek civilizations. The purpose of the present book is to present briefly the development of education in Greece in general. Some geographical areas may not belong to modern Greece today, but they were centers of Greek civilization (e.g., Constantinople, Asia Minor, Alexandria, etc.) and are therefore mentioned herein.

In 2020, the second author of this book presented her master's thesis, "Education and Educational Policy During the Greek Revolution (1821–1827)," which was later published as a book.¹ The publication of this book

1. Tatsiou, Eleni. 2021. *Educational Policies of the Greek Nation: The Years Before and During the Greek War of Independence (1821–1827)*. New Delhi: Partridge Publishing India.

made us realize that, at least at the time, there was no book covering the entire history of education in Greece. Thus the idea of creating this book was born. At first we thought that it would not be an extremely difficult endeavor. But it turned out that it was much more challenging. That is why, while we initially thought that we would complete the book in one year, it ultimately took us three years. Anyone who has worked on a similar project knows that it takes a long time to compile the literature. Fortunately, due to the expiration of their copyright, many digitized texts are now available for free. However, it took us many hours to find these texts. Moreover, although all Greek legislation has been digitized, it has not been OCR'd, and it is extremely difficult to locate laws and decrees. One of the most significant challenges encountered during the writing of this book was the utilization of Greek sources, including books and articles. Most books or articles contain incorrect references to other books, articles, or even laws. Searching the original sources for confirmation of "important" information resulted in the loss of numerous hours. In some cases the information was non-existent, and in many cases the sources that purported to contain it were completely wrong.

Despite the obstacles, we completed the book, which now consists of four chapters. The first chapter presents some general ideas concerning education and its function. In the second chapter, we present education from the Minoan and Mycenaean Period up to 1453, the year Constantinople was besieged. This event was a deeply traumatic experience for what we call the Greek nation since, for the first time, the Greeks did not have a homeland of their own. Chapter three describes the educational history of Hellenism during the Ottoman Empire. This period was particularly difficult as the Ottomans did not value education and learning, and furthermore, they did not hold in high esteem anyone who was not a Muslim. So in these terrible years, it was very difficult to develop education, culture, arts, etc. But all this stopped with the Greek revolution that started in 1821 and eventually resulted in the creation of the modern Greek state. The fourth chapter presents the history of the development of education in the modern Greek state from 1830 to the present day. Throughout the book, there are very short biographies of various important personalities. These biographies are based on the corresponding Wikipedia articles.

This book would not have become a reality if our publisher hadn't believed in the idea. So we owe a big thank you to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for agreeing to publish this book. In addition, we thank Adam Rummens, Commissioning Editor of Cambridge Scholars Publishing, for patiently waiting for the book to be completed.

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Xanthi, Greece, April 2025

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, most people agree that the quality of education depends on educational policies set by the government, the school administration, and the educational targets that each school sets. Thus, any historical account of education should present how these pillars shape the educational system of a given period. In this introductory chapter, we would like to briefly examine, from a purely philosophical point of view, how these pillars shape an educational system by presenting the ideas of some distinguished thinkers. Naturally, all thinkers and philosophers had something to say about education. Thus, this presentation is by no means exhaustive but rather indicative.

1.1 EDUCATION AND THE STATE

Education is the knowledge, skill, and understanding that one gets from attending a school, college, or university. This means that education is about organizations that provide education, their infrastructure, and, in general, about the structure of the system that provides education. However, education is also a process whose goal is to teach one or more people. Clearly, this more about methods that facilitate learning, about pedagogics, etc. Most people would agree that a good educational system is one that provides good facilities and has focused on how to better transfer important knowledge to pupils and students. However, people do not agree on what makes something

important, on what makes a good facility, or even on what is the best way to teach pupils and students.

Numerous renowned philosophers and thinkers have expressed the importance of education. Aristotle believed that an educated person can be a fulfilled person (Burnet 1967; Smith 2020). According to Aristotle, a science is both a manual and a mental activity. In addition, a science exists only if someone actively knows it. It is not enough to read a book about something; you must also act on it. Therefore, computation does not occur in nature unless someone understands the process and can interpret the output of the process.

Things cannot be active forever. Anything that is active eventually will stop being active. Obviously, sciences are no exception. Please note that we are not discussing the end of sciences but the completion of a specific task. For instance, in computer programming, we consider the task complete when we have implemented all specifications and requirements. On the other hand, a mathematical proof is complete when we know it. The two actions are similar in the sense that we need to solve a problem, which is a mental activity. The difference between a computer program and proof is that we have to deliver a working computer program, which is a manual activity (perhaps that is why programmers call themselves "software engineers"). Aristotle would call programming a *practical* science while mathematics is a *theoretical* science. Based on what has been said so far, one can conclude that education is a practical science.

There are a number of practical sciences, but they are not independent of one another. In most cases, the end of one becomes the beginning of another. For example, the Pythagorean Theorem is an end in geometry but a beginning in topography. Similarly, Plato believed that one science creates things another science uses. Now, there is an *art* that uses the outcome of all other practical sciences. This art is *politics*, and Burnet (1967) called it the *kingly art*. Politics is able to produce happiness in a state, which is the most important of all practical goods. Educators work in a political system, and their main task is to produce citizens that will have a certain character in their souls. Thus, if education creates good citizens of an oligarchy in a democratic regime, it is a total failure. In this sense, education is a supporting art for politics, and the government is the one that designs the educational policy. However, a good citizen is not necessarily a good person. Only in an ideal state does education produce good citizens that are also good persons.

Although Plato and Aristotle did not agree on what happiness is, one can

still say that it is something that leads to a good life. Of course, one needs to elaborate on what this good life is, but the point is that Aristotle realized that education serves the state and allows students to become good citizens and, in some cases, good persons. Also, education must prepare students for business because only business can guarantee the enjoyment of leisure. Just like being ready for war can guarantee peace.

1.2 EDUCATION AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Hegel was a German philosopher and one of the most famous thinkers of his time. Most people are familiar with his teleological account of history. What is really interesting is that pedagogical and educational matters had a deep impact on the development of his philosophy (Tubbs 1996). In particular, Hegel was principal of the Gymnasium of Nuremberg from 1808 till 1816, and his work at school played a role in his philosophical work. But let us first present some of his pedagogical and educational beliefs.

First of all, what is intriguing is that Hegel “introduced military drill and exercises into the school and felt so strongly on the subject of their value and importance that he devoted a portion of one of his school addresses to urging the claims of this kind of training to serious consideration and attention on the part of both parents and boys” (Mackenzie 1909). The following passage demonstrates Hegel’s opposition to any teaching method that prioritizes learning over actual teaching.

It has become the prejudice not only of philosophical study but also—and indeed even more extensively—of pedagogy that thinking for oneself is to be developed and practiced in the first place as if the subject matter were of no importance, and in the second place as if learning were opposed to thinking for oneself. (Hegel 1984, p. 340)

In addition, he was against “traditional” teaching methodology, as the following excerpt is making clear.

No one can talk of private study [hours] for our pupils, since if the subject is broached with the District School Councillor

he considers them completely superfluous. His only concept of educating the young is the misery of endless inculcating, reprimanding, memorizing—not even learning by heart but merely the misery of endless repetition, pressure and stupefaction, ceaseless spoon-feeding and stuffing. He cannot comprehend that in learning a young mind must in fact behave independently. (Hegel 1984, p. 199)

In philosophy, the term dialectics refers to a method of argument that relies on a contradictory process between opposing sides (Maybee 2000). For example, Plato used people as opposing sides, but in Hegel's dialectics, the opposite sides depend on the subject matter he discusses. Although he used this method extensively in his work, he was reluctant to introduce it to his pupils. He noted that pupils prefer the concrete to the abstract. This was a real obstacle that would hinder the realization of a class that would introduce the relevant ideas and concepts. Thus he concluded.

Dialectical (reason), on the one hand, could only be taught on an occasional basis and, on the other, could be taught more through the deficiency of this or that thought determination than according to its real nature, since what counts for youth is primarily positive contents.

The most difficult part in teaching how dialectical reason is contradictory is that the teaching itself is contradictory!

Hegel was very fond of Greek and Latin writers (Lilge 1974). The following excerpt from his first graduation speech in September 1809 amply illustrates this:

I do not think it an exaggeration to say that he who has not known the works of the ancients has lived without having known beauty.

It should be clear from this short presentation of some of Hegel's ideas on education that the vision and the aims of a principal can clearly affect the outcome of the educational process.

1.3 EDUCATIONAL TARGETS

Richard Phillips Feynman the famous American physicist and Nobel laureate, was a great teacher and had a strong interest in physics education, in particular, and education, in general. Feynman (1963) discussed in detail the problem of teaching physics in Latin America. He did not assume that universities should automatically offer a physics program. Instead, he explained why, in his opinion, it is worth studying physics. Here is his list of reasons:

- i) Since physics is the knowledge of nature, anyone who has it will be able to better handle technical problems that would arise in industry. If the goal of a country is economic advancement, then this country must invest in education because a man with higher technical ability will be able to produce more. In addition, locals with higher technical ability would cost less when compared to imported workers, and they would like to get a permanent position.
- ii) Learning physics means that one learns how to do things with his/her hands.¹ Learning about nature brings great pleasure to many men and women, and we should not deny this to anyone. These people will make contributions to both practical and theoretical matters. Thus, they will help in the development of science.
- iii) Studying physics means that one gets a feeling of stability and reality about the world. This helps to expel many fears and superstitions.
- iv) Physical education teaches the process of discovery. This shows how important it is to ask questions and freely develop ideas in science and life. Also, physical education helps people distinguish “truth from fraud and show.”
- v) Learning science teaches a person how to use the trial-and-error methodology and fosters a spirit of invention and free inquiry.

After recognizing the importance of learning, we should evaluate the present teaching methods and identify areas for improvement.

1. Indeed, during his high school years, the first named author gained extensive knowledge about optics when he attempted to construct his own telescope using basic tools. Not so surprisingly, before this little project, he had learned next to nothing about optics.

First of all, Feynman noticed that physics education suffers from what he called “pure abject memory.” In simple words, this means that when one teaches physics, it makes no sense to expect students to learn by heart. However, it makes sense to require students to know the basic principles of telescope construction rather than the types of telescopes. Of course, we have to learn some things by heart (e.g., the multiplication table), but the general rule should be that we learn by understanding.

The second problem was that students worked alone and not in teams. Usually, real scientists are part of teams that work to achieve a common goal. Students must learn to collaborate. The third issue closely mirrors the second one—students are unable to switch subjects mid-way through their studies. For example, someone who starts mathematics has to get a degree in it or drop out! And this is the reason why people think there is no reason to collaborate...However, there is another problem closely related to this one—there is no degree for those who do not want to become complete scientists. In fact, if there was provision for people who know enough physics to get a job in the developing industry, this would have a positive impact. Because of this somehow strange situation, the best students want to leave and go to other countries. Naturally, this is a disaster since the state spends money on educating them, and when they have completed their studies, they leave. In economic terms, this is a catastrophic investment. Now let’s see how Feynman proposed to solve these problems.

Feynman believed that education, especially secondary education, should be freed from the “drudge memorization” that existed at that time (other countries still struggle to oust memorization from their educational system, and Greece is a notable example). Teachers should, in his view, inspire their students by letting them investigate books outside the course, play with toys, etc.

Teaching engineers physics is one way to produce real scientists who can handle real-world problems. However, the focus should not solely be on teaching theoretical physics. Students should learn experimental physics instead. And in order to stop the brain drain, the government must give people books, experimental equipment, and travel grants. We need to encourage people that are active researchers to choose their own country as their base. Of course, Feynman had many other suggestions, but we will not present them.

This discussion revealed an approach to the solution of educational problems. After making it clear that students must learn, we must examine why we have failed and how to fix it. Unfortunately, as we will see in the next three chapters, this is not something that happened in Greece.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION IN GREECE BEFORE 1453

Unlike today, people in antiquity did not receive their education in a systematic manner. Instead, there were tutors, private schools open to selected people, etc. These very early forms of education laid down the foundations of modern education. Even today, teachers continue to instruct pupils in a similar manner. The first sections of the presentation that follows are about education in antiquity, whereas the last section is about education in *Romania* (the accent is on the i). This term refers to what is more commonly known as the Byzantine Empire, which is actually a misnomer (Wolff 1948). In addition, Miller (2003) notes that there was a popular song entitled *Ῥωμανία νικά* (Phonetic representation: *Romanía niká*, Engl. trans.: *Romania conquers*) that used the term *Romania* to refer to the East Roman Empire. This proves that the people of the so-called Byzantine Empire actually called it *Romania*.

The chapter starts with a presentation of education in the Minoan and Mycenaean periods and continues with education in the so-called Dark Ages of antiquity. In this period, written texts are minimal (a few tablets and clay fragments with short inscriptions) although the people that lived earlier were literate. This limitation makes it very difficult for modern scholars to reconstruct a proper history of this period. The presentation of education in later antiquity is based on the remarkable work of Henri-Irénée Marrou (1956)

and the little book by Robin Barrow (1996). In addition, the presentation on education in Romania is based mainly on the excellent book by Kimon Emmanouil Plakogiannakis (Plakoyiannakis 2002).¹ In addition, we have used two more reference books: (Krallis 2012; Miller 2003).

2.1 EDUCATION DURING THE MINOAN AND THE MYCENAEAN PERIODS

Today, a writing system intrinsically links education, facilitating the transmission of knowledge through books, papers, and other materials. Using this idea, Dwight Grafton Burrage, in his doctoral dissertation (Burrage 1920), speculated that there was an educational system in Crete during the Minoan periods. He based this speculation on the discovery of a *schoolroom* in the palace at Cnossus by Arthur John Evans. The truth is that Evans discovered several small rooms in the palace and concluded that perhaps one of them was used as a classroom (Burrage noted the possibility in his dissertation). Initially, the Minoan people used Cretan hieroglyphics as their writing system and later on Linear A. The script is undeciphered; however, many scholars are trying to understand it. (Palaima and Sikkenga 1999; Meissner and Steele 2017). These scholars recognize that there are many similarities between Linear A and Linear B, the script used by Mycenaean kingdoms.

Linear B has been (partially) deciphered, so we do know how to read the various tablets with Linear B texts. All these tablets were used to record yields and other administrative records. This data is the reason it is called an *administrative* script (Karagianni 2015). The name implies that the script was not used to record anything else (e.g., poems). Indeed, no one has found a tablet or anything else whose text is not administrative in nature. Of course, one can speculate that they used other material to record poems, but these

1. There is an unpublished review paper entitled *Η Ανώτατη Εκπαίδευση στο Βυζάντιο* (Higher Education in Byzantium) by Spyros Panagopoulos, which is available from <http://www.eriande.elemedu.upatras.gr/eriande/synedria/synedrio4/praktika1/panagopoulos.htm> It appears that this paper has copied almost verbatim paragraphs from (Plakoyiannakis 2002).

have not been preserved. However, other civilizations also used their writing system mainly for administrative purposes. Thus, this idea is highly unlikely.

Naturally, both the Minoans and the Mycenaeans needed a way to transmit the knowledge of their scripts from one generation to the next. It makes sense, then, to claim that they had an elementary school system of some kind. Most likely, only a small number of individuals possessed basic literacy skills and were responsible for teaching their apprentices. To put it another way, we cannot discuss an educational system without also discussing an apprenticeship system. More broadly, we can say that there was no proper education during the Minoan and Mycenaean periods.

2.2 THE DARK AGES (1100–800 BC)

The Dark Ages of Greek history follow the fall of the Mycenaean civilization (Snodgrass 1971; Osborne 2009). This period is sometimes referred to as the Homeric Age or the Geometric Period.

Although it is not correct to call this period a dark age, still most scholars use this term to refer to this period of Greek history. Four distinct characteristics typify the significant transformation Greece underwent during this period. First of all, it appears that there was a drastic fall in the population of Greeks. Secondly, there was a decline in or loss of certain purely material skills. Thirdly, individuals lost their ability to write, and there was a lack of true art during that period. Historically, there has been a decline in living standards. In addition, Greeks isolated themselves and stopped contacts and trade with peoples beyond the Aegean area. People felt quite insecure at that time.

The poet Homer (whoever he was) gives us our best look at this period in his poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The Dark Ages, according to these poems, was a time when kings had limited power. These poems depict kings as impoverished farmers, thieves, and pirates. There was an aristocracy that ruled during the Dark Ages, men whose families had attained power, but these men were not rich, nor did they have the total power of the Mycenaean kings before them. No person could elevate himself above the rest. Dark Age Greeks could not read or write during this time (illiteracy). A person's loyalty was first to himself and his family, not to his country. Greece was underpopulated because there was a limited food supply. The Greeks had

no contact with the outside world, like Egypt and Mesopotamia. All of this changed in the Archaic Period.

The fact that people “forgot” how to write means that, in general, there was no real education at that time. We can presume that ordinary people learned basic skills that were essential for their survival from their parents or, more generally, from the elder people of their villages. In particular, girls learned how to cook, how to bake bread, how to wash and make clothes, etc. On the other hand, boys learned how to cultivate the fields, how to raise cattle, and, quite naturally, how to hunt. As happened in all civilizations, the aristocracy was mainly occupied with the cultivation of specific skills. These included martial arts (e.g., how to fight with a sword), learning how to play the lyre and sing songs, and sports. Barrow (1996) used an excerpt from the *Odyssey* where Odysseus is challenged by Laodamas, the son of the king of Phaeacia (we do not know where this place was, but it is the earliest description of a utopia), to compete in various games. Even though Odysseus claimed to be homesick, Laodamas persisted, and Odysseus responded to his challenge by tossing an enormous discus far away. This act “proves” that kings were excellent athletes.

2.3 THE ARCHAIC PERIOD (800–480 BC)

Humanity invented one of its most significant tools during the Archaic period of Greek history. This tool is none other than the *alphabet*. One may ask, why is this tool so significant? Previously, people drew pictures that represented something that a reader could recognize, whereas at the same time, the reader could associate this picture with the sound of the word of the object the picture depicted. This process transformed the picture into a sound. However, the complexity of this sound rendered it unsuitable for writing other words. Thus, it was necessary to break down these sounds into simpler ones. The next step in the evolution of writing is syllabaries. In this writing system, the symbols represent syllables, that is, the combined sound of a consonant plus a vowel. Although this invention was a big step forward, still syllabaries were not useful enough, as one could not represent the correct pronunciation of words, sentences, and texts. The next step in the evo-

lution of writing is the invention of the alphabet, a writing system where the symbols represent all the sounds of the language, allowing people to write precisely what they utter! And this remark forms the basis of a fascinating theory.

Barry Bruce Powell (2002) used the previous remark to develop a theory about the origin of the Greek alphabet, since this was the first alphabet. According to Powell, when Homer, the ancient Greek epic poet who is supposed to be the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, wanted to write down the poems, he actually invented the alphabet. We know that these poems were recited in oral form by traveling singers for centuries, and obviously each of them changed the text since people forget easily. Thus, Homer's purpose was twofold: he wanted to fixate the text and allow others to learn it and sign it. At that time, people in the Levant used syllabaries. However, as previously mentioned, these writing systems are incapable of accurately representing the sounds in a text. Thus, Homer used the symbols used by these people, transformed them into symbols that represent consonants, and added symbols that represented vowels. This allowed Homer to write his poems so that people could read and recite them accurately. Powell's theory may seem a bit controversial; nevertheless, we are convinced that this is a reasonable theory. People create things out of necessity, and sometimes they invent or find something important but unrelated to their original goal. Still, we think this is highly unlikely in the case of the invention of the alphabet. One may wonder why Homer had to use the symbols of the Levant syllabaries. As we noted above, Greeks forgot how to write, and since at that time they started contacting people outside Greece, it was more than natural to adopt the shape of the symbols representing syllables for their purpose.

Homer was not the only poet at that time. For example, Hesiod is just one more outstanding poet of this period. We believe that Hesiod knew how to write and read; nevertheless, it is quite possible that someone very close to him knew how to read and write and so helped him to record his poems. We know that in the Middle Ages, craftsmen and merchants formed associations to promote the economic interests of their members as well as to provide protection and mutual aid. These associations are known as guilds. Typically, a guild master had one or more apprentices, who learned their master's trade by working for him. It is quite possible that this scheme has been used by poets to spread the use of the alphabet. Clearly, the claim is a hypothesis, but unfortunately there is no evidence that can prove or disprove it. In addition, it is quite possible that people who knew how to read and write were hired

by wealthy people to teach them and their male children. Education for girls was quite restricted, and in Section 2.6, we will discuss the education of girls in Ancient Greece in more detail.

2.4 EDUCATION IN SPARTA

The ancient city of Sparta is notoriously known for its agoge (ἀγωγή), that is, its system of education, which trained male youths to become warriors. Agoge in Ancient Greek means, among many other things, the leading or the guidance of a horse. Thus, one can say that just like young horses needed agoge to become adult horses, male children needed agoge to become men. Xenophon claimed that the almost legendary Spartan lawgiver Lykurgus introduced the agoge sometime between 750 BC and 650 BC (Forrest 1968). The purpose of his system was to create a skillful and courageous army and a stable and excellent constitution. Sparta had a small population when compared to the population of perioikoi (περίοικοι) and helots (ἐῷωτες). People viewed the perioikoi, who were Dorians and not Spartans, as second-class citizens. The Helots, who were the previous inhabitants of Laconia, were Ionian Greeks. The Spartans treated the helots essentially as slaves. As is quite natural, the helots were not happy, and so they wanted to gain their freedom. To prevent a helot revolution, the Spartans had to be ready at all times to confront them. And this is precisely the reason for the militaristic organization of their society. But let us present it in some detail, agoge.

The older men of the *phratry* (φρατρία), which was the aristocracy below the king and was made up of generals, priests, judges, and other important men from every social class, checked on all the male babies. The elders left the inadequate boys to die. Their mothers took care of the remaining boys until they turned six years old. At that time, the boy had to join a group of contemporaries. The group's leader was an older boy. Each boy stayed in this group for fourteen years. There he would learn music, dance, reading, and writing. In addition, he had to go through many training schedules whose sole purpose was to produce toughness, endurance, and discipline.

When males turned twenty, they became irenes (ἱρένες) (Makres 2009). In fact, they became erenes in the last year of their training in the Spartan system of the agoge (Chrimes 1971). They remained in this “state” during their twenties until they were 29 years old. During this time, they were not

full citizens, but they were liable for military service. However, their main occupation was to train younger individuals in the same experiences they had before turning twenty. The assembly admitted them when they turned thirty. It remains unclear if a specific procedure or ceremony was required to gain admission to the assembly. Although there were some more obstacles on their road to freedom (i.e., freedom to marry and have some sort of normal life), still this was the last major obstacle one had to pass to gain his freedom.

Upon turning 30, a Spartan gained admission to the assembly. We know that after this, a Spartan was admitted to the *sussition* (συσσίτιον), that is, military food ratio served at a mess hall, and this was an important thing.

Alcman (Greek: Ἀλκμάν) Alcman was an ancient Greek lyric poet who lived during the 7th century BC.² He is known for his choral poetry, written in a type of Doric similar to the colloquial language spoken in Sparta. His work is important because it contains information about the educational system of ancient Sparta. Alcman's work consisted of six papyrus rolls, but his poems survived in fragments. The longest surviving poem was in the *Partheneion* papyrus that was discovered in Egypt in 1855 (Ferrari 2008).

Spartan boys learned reading and writing using Alcman's compositions, which seem to be an integral part of the Spartan educational curriculum. Furthermore, the young Spartans received an enhanced cultural and moral education through the performance of Alcman's choral poetry during religious festivals and other public events. His poems celebrated the heroic achievements of Spartans, praised the virtues of courage and discipline, and strengthened loyalty to the state. In summary, we could say Alcman's work was instrumental in promoting the ideology of the new Spartan state of his time.

2. According to the Suda Encyclopedia (see <https://topostext.org/work/240>) Alcman was: *A Laconian from Messoa, but according to Crates—who is mistaken—a Lydian out of Sardis, a lyric poet, and son of Damas or Titaros. He was born in the 27th Olympiad [672 BE], when Ardys, the father of Alyattes, was king of Lydia; and being an especially passionate man, he was the inventor of love poetry. His parents were slaves; he wrote six books: lyric poetry and Diving Women. He was the first to introduce singing in meters apart from the hexameter. He used a Doric dialect, like the Spartans did. Another Alcman, a lyric poet, was born in Messene. And the plural [is] “Alcmanes.”*

2.5 EDUCATION IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

Education in Sparta and Athens was quite different. As we described in the previous section, Sparta was known for its military-style education, which focused on physical fitness, military training, and discipline. Athens, on the other hand, was known for its emphasis on intellectual and cultural pursuits. Boys in Athens learned how to read and write, but they also learned mathematics, music, poetry, and drama. The Athenian society valued citizens who were able to be active members of its democratic government.

At that time, education was not compulsory, but if families wanted to educate their male offsprings, they had to plan their education. Rich people were able to have teachers, who were known as *paidagogoi* [παιδαγωγοί, singular *παιδαγωγός* (*paidagogos*); tutor], to educate their offsprings. Typically, a *paidagogos* was a respected slave owned by the father of the family and was the attendant of a school-aged child. Basic reading and writing skills were taught by the writing master, known as a *γραμματιστής* (*grammatistis*). In addition, boys learned arithmetic (how to count, how to write numbers, and how to perform basic calculations) and music (they learned how to play musical instruments such as the lyre), as well as spending a lot of time in physical education and sports. In particular, they kept themselves busy with activities like wrestling, running, and discus throwing. It is worth noting that children used wax-coated wooden tablets as their writing pads and wrote on them with a stylus. Advanced literacy lessons, which included the study of poems, plays, and history, were given by *grammatikoi* [γραμματικοί, singular *γραμματικός* (*grammatikos*)].

Lower-class families had to rely on public schools known as *didaskaleia* [διδασκαλεῖα, that is, places for instruction, singular *διδασκαλεῖον* (*didaskaleion*)]. Each *didaskaleion* provided education on a specific subject, so a child had to attend lessons in different *didaskaleia*, which were usually located in different places. However, it was not uncommon for people coming from lower-class families to be completely illiterate.

When boys who had received primary education became 14 or 15 years old, they could attend higher education. Initially, the sophists (σοφιστές), who were lecturers, writers, and teachers in the 5th and 4th centuries BC, provided higher education. Before them, there was practically no higher ed-

education, and it was up to the families to teach their boys “advanced” subjects. Sophists taught two things: how to debate using logical arguments and how to speak persuasively. The latter was known as *rhetoric*. The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates was against the type of education provided by Sophists mainly because he regarded their teaching as totally utilitarian. Specifically, Socrates asserted that the Sophists primarily applied their teachings to resolve practical issues. Socrates favored education that focused on the disinterested search for knowledge and understanding. Beginning in the 4th century BC, two higher education institutions welcomed students. The first was Plato’s Academy and the second one was the school of the orator Isocrates. Later on, other schools were established: the Lyceum of Aristotle, the School of Epicurus, the Stoa of Zeno, the Cynic School of Antisthenes, the Cyrenaean School of Aristippus of Cyrene, and the Megarian School of Euclid of Megara.

Plato’s school emphasized the study of dialectic (the skill of accurate verbal reasoning). However, its ultimate goal was the search for God, whatever the term may mean. Plato’s Platonic dialogues primarily describe what we know about his school. In addition, Plato was teaching his own view of the world—that is, the view that the world is divided into the visible and the non-visible. The visible world is separated from the non-visible one, which is the world of ideas. Students had to study 15 years, and apart from dialectics, they also had to delve into mathematical reasoning. On the other hand, the school of Isocrates emphasized more practical matters. In particular, the school aimed to develop the quality of grace, cleverness, or finesse rather than the spirit of mathematics (especially geometry). The school taught gymnastics, music, the Homeric classics, and a thorough study of rhetoric. Isocrates’s school had a much more down-to-earth and practical approach to education. His main goal was to make his students wiser on practical matters that would allow them to face and eventually solve life’s problems. In addition, Isocrates sought to develop the quality of grace, cleverness, or finesse. Also, Aristotle had a specific method of teaching; he did so while walking, or *περιπατῶ* (peripato, walk), hence the Lyceum is also known as Aristotle’s Peripatetic School.

2.6 EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN ANTIQUITY

Education for women in ancient Greece was quite different from that of men. People expected women to become wives, mothers, and housekeepers, but not politicians, teachers, or warriors. Naturally, these circumstances affected their education. Thus, during the first years of their lives, women had to acquire practical skills needed for their future lives in their homes (e.g., weaving, spinning, cooking, and managing a household). Typically, their instructor was either their mother or a female slave owned by the family. Another aspect of their education was fitness and grooming. To become a healthy mother, girls had to maintain good health, and so they participated in activities like dance and gymnastics. Women learned to groom themselves early in life, as it is a diachronic practice (i.e., it is still done today).

In some city-states, girls had to learn how to write, read, and make basic arithmetic calculations. However, this was not the case for Spartan girls, whose education was more focused on physical fitness and athletic training instead of basic literacy and numeracy skills. In particular, Spartan girls participated in athletic competitions, including foot races and other physical contests. On the other hand, Athenian girls learned how to read and write, but their proficiency level was much lower compared to that of boys of the same age. Additionally, some girls had the opportunity to learn music and dance, which were considered essential skills for social occasions. In particular, girls of rich or noble families had to learn how to play musical instruments, sing, and dance, as these were considered significant for them.

Another aspect of girl education was their understanding of cultural and moral values. Consequently, teachers exposed girls to poetry and taught them storytelling and mythology. Such training was quite important for their participation in social and intellectual conversations at gatherings and festivals. Regrettably, public educational institutions such as gymnasia and philosophical schools, which were open to men, did not allow women to participate. In addition, women were not allowed to attend athletic events like the Olympic Games.

Spartan girls had to learn discipline as this was core aspect of Spartan education. Thus, they were taught to endure hardship, practice self-control, and remain stoic in the face of adversity. This rigorous discipline was in-

tended to prepare them for the challenges of life and warfare. Additionally, Spartan girls eschewed fancy clothing in favor of going barefoot to enhance their toughness. This rigorous discipline was intended to prepare girls for the challenges of life. In addition, women were considered the mothers of warriors. Thus, their primary duty was to produce healthy and strong children who would become future citizens, soldiers, and mothers.

2.7 EDUCATION IN HELLENISTIC TIMES

The term Hellenistic period refers to the period following the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC and lasting until the rise of the Roman Empire in the 1st century BC. Education in these times was actually a blend of Greek educational traditions and the traditions of the conquered lands. As expected, the education of that time was heavily influenced by Greek culture, language, and intellectual traditions. Greek became the lingua franca of the eastern Mediterranean region, and Greek educational practices spread throughout the territories conquered by Alexander.

Originally, the Gymnasium was a Greek building used for athletic activities. Later on, it was used also as a place where men and boys could meet and spend time together, and men could educate boys in the arts of warfare, sports, and philosophy (Troncoso 2009). In the Hellenistic Period, the buildings of the gymnasia became quite standard, whereas they retained their role as centers of physical and general education. Physical education included practice in wrestling, running, boxing, jumping, discus, and gymnastics. In addition, epheboi³ practiced sports useful for warfare that included archery, javelin throw, and armed combat. The gymnasium was run by the city and managed by the *gumnasiarkhos* (Greek: γυμνασίάρχος, *gymnasiarch*), who was a public servant. Women could not attend the gymnasium.

According to Papaevangelou (2014) and Sapounas (2012), there were three educational levels that depended on the age of the students. Students in the first level were referred to as *paides* (Greek: παῖδες, children) and ranged in age from 7 to 15. The *epheboi* were the students of the second

3. *Ephebos* (Greek ἑφηβος, pl. *epheboi*; Greek: ἑφηβοί) is a term for only a male adolescent in Ancient Greece.



Figure 2.1: Greek gymnasium in Sardes from the side. Photograph by Raicem under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

level, and they were aged 14/15–18 years. One had to be at least 18 years old to gain admission to the third level of education. After graduation and depending on the city they lived in, they either became soldiers or citizens. Note that there were no infant schools. Children had to learn in the school of the *grammatistis* (Greek: γραμματιστής, writing master) reading, writing, learning poems and text excerpts by heart, and enumeration. Their physical education teacher was called *paidotribis* (Greek: παιδοτρίβης, gymnastic master), and their music teacher was called *kitharistis* (Greek: κιθαριστής, player on the cithara). The school of the *grammatistis* became gradually more important as girls were allowed to attend and learn. In their literacy education, students first learned the names of the letters of the alphabet. Then, they learned how to write the alphabet in ascending and descending order. Next, teachers taught them how to write syllables, followed by words with one syllable and, later, words with multiple syllables. Typically teachers used words whose first letters formed the alphabet: αἶξ, βοῦς, γρόψ, etc., or Ἀχιλ-