

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO'S ECOPHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: EDUCATION IN THE CITY AND FOR THE CITY¹

In the writings of the Ancient Roman philosopher, politician and orator Mark Tullius Cicero, the necessity to relate the nature of statehood, the nature of man, the nature of law, and the nature of society becomes a pedagogical principle, on the basis of which the philosophy of education should be built. Cicero advances an original concept of education as an institution which protects both the state and the person. Thus, he actually forms the area that we now call the ecophilosophy of education. Cicero is close to Socrates' pedagogy with its need to take care of the self through education in the city, which lives an active political life and represents a small-scale copy of the world. Reasoning upon this in *On the Nature of the Gods* and the *Tusculan disputations*, Cicero outlines two strategies of educational care of the self: for those who are directly involved in the political life of Rome, and for those who have deliberately retreated from the city and preferred scholarly leisure to politics. Praising Socrates for making philosophy useful for the city, Cicero is eager to do the same with the philosophy of education. His initial message is that a person is not born with full knowledge of his surrounding and inner nature; he is only able to acquire this knowledge through education. Cicero's legacy is an experience of an ecophilosophical interpretation of modern education, which he views simultaneously as a necessity, a need and a duty to carefully create himself through others.

Key words: *education; Antiquity; Cicero; ecophilosophy; care of the self*

The problem of comparing, correlating and combining man and nature (in all the diversity of aspects of the former and the latter) is a problem with a centuries-old history that originated in Antiquity. Actualization of this problem, both then and now, resulted from a series of fundamental ideological changes generated by globalization. These changes have been affecting all spheres of human life, and education is no exception. Re-thinking the goals, objectives and mission of education in the modern world is increasingly associated with the strategy of "education for survival"², which requires significant modification of modern understanding of the history of education. An attempt to identify the features of this strategy was undertaken by the Roman philosopher, politician and orator Mark Tullius Cicero, who advocated the necessity of relating the nature of statehood, the nature of man, the nature of law, and the nature of society. Later, this idea of Cicero in an expanded or truncated form was exploited by the authors of different historical periods, and gradually lost association to its original chronological and terminological coordinates. Numerous Cicero's reflections of the past and present of ancient Roman education allow scholars to put forward an almost infinite number of research hypotheses. One of these is that in Cicero's works, education is regarded as a special institution which protects the state and the individuum. In proposing and promoting this original idea, Cicero pieces together the practices that existed among the Classical Greek thinkers and his

¹ The study was supported by the Russian Science Foundation (project № 18-78-10001).

² Aldrich 2010: 1-14.

own contemporaries. In fact, it was Cicero who shaped the field that we can now call the ecophilosophy of education.³

One may reason upon an issue that if “Plato and Aristotle, for example, had differing views on human nature”, they had “different approaches to educational philosophy”⁴, but its essence remains unchanged. Surprisingly, thinkers who lived and worked at a time when the relationship between man and nature was not defined in terms of “ecological disaster” or “ecological thought” suggested thinking about “environmental education”, that is about educational programmes “with a focus on building capacity at the level of the individual”.⁵ Within the framework of the ancient pedagogical tradition, an educated person was considered to be the one who was virtuous not only through action, but also through the potency to action; who was capable of seeing the whole range of virtuous dispositions, which were systematically and continuously exposed in different life situations, due to his immersion to the educational space of the city. The corpus of Cicero’s texts clearly illustrates that he was an original thinker and researcher who successfully and chronologically correctly “went along” the texts of different authors, trying to trace the evolution of education-related formulas significant for solving the problem he had posed. He was acutely aware of the fact that the differences between Greek and Roman terms did not indicate the absence of common ground, especially when it came to the nature of man and his education in the city space. The following statement about philosophy from *On the Laws* not only confirms this, but best reveals the pedagogical credo of Cicero:

...since law ought to correct vices and encourage virtues, then the knowledge of how to live should be drawn from it. Thus it is the case that wisdom is the mother of all good things, from the love of which philosophy took its name in Greek. The gods have given to human existence nothing richer, nothing more outstanding, nothing more noble. Philosophy alone has taught us, in addition to everything else, the most difficult of all things, that we should know ourselves; and the force and significance of this maxim are such that it was attributed not to some human but to the god of Delphi (Cic. Leg. I.22.58).

Cicero explains where the understanding of philosophy as the ecophilosophy of education comes from and what he thinks about further specifying this understanding. A step-by-step return to the original assumptions of the ancient Greek authors (and especially the Socratic message of caring of the self through education and to the city’s benefit) is important for Cicero in terms of deriving the correct “rules of life”. It seems to him that Romans are perfectly capable of building life as a process of caring of themselves, since they possess the ability, in some instances, to make “wiser discoveries than the Greeks, with reference to those subjects which they have considered

³ Using this phrase – ecophilosophy of education – we proceed from a broad analogy with ecophilosophy as such, supporters of which argue that it is impossible to create anything globally sustainable in the human world if it is created in contradiction to the world of nature (and education here is no exception). See, Witoszek, Brennan 1999, Griffin 2011., et al.

⁴ Schwartz 2009: 1.

⁵ Krasnya and Rothb 2011: 78.

worthy of devoting their attention to” (Cic. Tusc. I.1). The need to take care of the self through education, on which Socrates insisted so much, was seen by Cicero as a way to find, not lose, oneself in a city that lives an active political life.⁶ Cicero was trying to prove to his contemporaries that though Athens in his time was not the same as in Socrates’ days, the pedagogical teachings of the “great and glorious” Greeks have a right to the second birth in Rome. For Cicero, the greatest achievement of the Greek philosophers was that they had brought philosophy from on high to the cities, and Socrates was first among them (Cic. Tusc.V.10). Socrates did this by raising the question of the best way of life in the city, and Cicero wants to answer it by defining this way of life as the path of a mentor-statesman, but not a philosopher:

Yet, as we have seen, that answer is too tentative, for the statesman’s concern for the city emerges as part of his concern for what is truly or eternally noble and beautiful. Philosophic statesmanship combines the care of the soul taught by philosophy with that taught by the laws.⁷

Cicero never concealed his own way of immersion in the Greek philosophy of education for the benefit of Rome. His strategy for educational care of the others and the self through the others is a peculiar Roman insight in the nature of the world and philosophical knowledge.⁸ For Cicero, the city was a whole of educational spaces, which originates on the boundary between the cityscape and the landscape and develops due to the efforts of philosophers / statesmen who occasionally urge people, society or the state to return “back to nature”. These ideas in the writings of Cicero (and especially in his later works) increasingly take the form of precepts – universal dispositions, which, in his opinion, will allow the Roman people to fulfill their great civilizational mission. In Cicero’s works, the boundaries of Rome are expanded to the boundaries of the world, and Roman philosophy should be able to solve those problems that interfere with man’s harmony with the world and the self. This gives the works of Cicero a cosmopolitan flavour, making the ideas of Cicero as open as Rome used to be and, at the same time, as confined to their borders as Rome. He treats the Roman state – the *res publica* (“common cause”) – as a world community of educated people, beyond which there are certainly some men of wisdom and philosophers, but they are not part of a single intellectual community⁹ This position prompts us to think

⁶ Cicero shows ways and means to optimally instruct his compatriots in many of his writings, but all of them can be described as a kind of immersion in a different discourse, the fusion of Greek and Roman strategies of caring of the self and others. See, Guite 1962: 142-159; Becker 1996; Zarecki 2005; Bishop 2011; Pichugina 2018: 198-205, et al.

⁷ Barlow 1987: 374.

⁸ Seemingly, it is this particular view that Cicero demonstrates, for example, in *On the Ends of Good and Evil*, which begins with a discussion of what philosophy is, continues with a philosophical and pedagogical discussion between Socrates and Gorgias, and ends with stating that a man is able to “advance on the path of virtue” only because of “nature” and “education” (Cic. De F. IV.IX.1). One of the key issues in *On the Ends of Good and Evil* is the idea that the most important concern for a person is to preserve his inner world and harmonize relations with the outside world.

⁹Oniga 2009: 7.

that Cicero was not a representative, but rather a consumer of philosophy, who was concerned about the fate of his contemporary Roman education and its role in keeping a human being linked with nature, cosmos and culture.

From the whole corpus of Cicero's writings, two works are subject to the detailed analysis in this article: *On the Nature of the Gods* and the *Tusculan disputations*. The first treatise was dedicated to Marcus Junius Brutus and was titled by way of analogy with several writings of Greek authors. The second one is associated with the memories of Cicero's daughter and was written when, after her death, Cicero chose his estate as a place of scholarly leisure, which was reflected in the "Roman format" of the title to this work. In *On the Nature of the Gods* and the *Tusculan disputations*, the ecophilosophical ideas of Cicero are presented from a diametrically opposed perspectives, because in the first work, they are expressed by a person who was directly involved in the life of Rome, and in the second – the one who had deliberately retired from the city. In the philosophical treatise *On the Nature of the Gods*, Cicero offers an educational program, pro-ecological in its essence, integrated into his precepts. He talks about the harmony that reigns on earth and in heaven, and also states that man should learn such a rational arrangement of life from nature, "For without troubling ourselves with too refined a subtlety of discussion, we may use our eyes to contemplate the beauty of those things, which we assert have been arranged by divine providence. First, let us examine the earth..." (Cic. N D. II.XXXVIII). Describing in detail the life order of some animals and birds, the beauty of the seas, the movement of the heavenly bodies and the arrangement of the constellations, Cicero teaches his readers lessons in geography, astronomy, ecology and even geometry. While inviting them to observe the motion of the moon and the sun, Cicero points out that this contemplation would certainly remind him of exactly the same correct non-randomness in the gymnasium or on the forum. It is rationality that reigns there, and rationality has a cause (Cic. ND. II.V). However, order and peace comprise only one side. The second side consists of chaos and motion, without which the world would not be the world. Cicero sees rationality in that amazing speed with which the celestial bodies move, the seasons change, etc. (Cic. ND. II. XX).

It all seems "wonderful" to Cicero because the natural world is "durable" and "made for lasting" (Cic. ND. II.XLV), which might not always be referred to the world of man. Arguing that his intelligence is not so unquestionable, though achievable, Cicero turns several times to the same thought: a person who has not received proper education is not able to see all the beauty of nature and the cosmos. To support this idea, he cites a fragment from the tragedy "Medea" of Lucius Accius (a follower of Quintus Ennius), where the shepherd sees the Argonauts' ship for the first time. He is surprised that "this horrid bulk" is moving and at the same time resembles a bursting storm-cloud, a rocky fragment and a dolphin (Cic. ND. II.XXXV.89). The shepherd wonders who is the creator of this "mighty fabric", and Cicero provides a detailed analysis of his intellectual search in the context of deficient knowledge.

In each part *On the Nature of the Gods*, Cicero returns again and again to the same question: can we consider reason a gift from the gods or should we perceive it as a result of human effort, human aspiration to obtain new knowledge. He argues that it would be folly to believe that “this elaborate universe, with all the variety and beauty of the heavenly bodies and the vast quantity and extent of the sea and land” are intended as “the mansion” of the gods who give reason to the man, but not of the man who strives to be reasonable (Cic. ND. II.VI.17). Further, Cicero, in a rather paradoxical form, asserts that it is people who create the educational image of cities, and then comes to the conclusion that the world is like a big house or city, where everyone lives by the law and justice, using the mind (Cic. ND. II.62.156). Here Cicero appears as the man of his time:

When a Roman imagines the physical city of Rome, he may speak of *templa* and *tecta*, the dwellings of gods and humans. When he thinks of human society, he moves from the household to the community of citizens.¹⁰

Roman patriotism reaches its climax when Cicero exclaims, “Nothing is better than the world, you say. Nor is there, indeed, anything on earth better than the city of Rome” (Cic. ND. III.9.21). Cicero’s Rome looks like a smaller-scaled model of the world, which can and should be explored. One cannot say that the world – a big city – possesses a mind, i.e. it is literate, eloquent, good at sciences and looks like a philosopher. But the world is beautiful, which cannot be said about a man, whom you can call reasonable, literate, etc. We agree with Walter J. Nicgorski who believes that Cicero’s city is anything but a simple one, “Cicero’s is a city in time rather than one in speech, and that city in time is necessarily dynamic in the balances of elements it strikes and in its potential for change for worse or better”¹¹.

In *On the Nature of the Gods*, Cicero draws a very harmonious picture of the world and consistently proves that in nature everything happens not by chance, but by a law that is akin to human intelligence. A person who seeks reason is one who praises virtue, strives toward it, and is justly proud when it reaches it; a virtue itself, according to Cicero, is not a gift of the gods, but the result of a person’s educational care of the self in the space of a city-world. In this treatise, the philosopher-mentor Cicero designates those staples of the universe which modern ecophilosophy points out, advocating the restoration of the fundamental links between Man, Culture, Nature and the Universe.

Cicero continues to reason upon this issue in the *Tusculan disputations*, which is considered an essay on the history of Roman education. Stressing that Rome was strong in the field of law, morality and military affairs, Cicero speaks of the unquestionable superiority of Greece in the matters of education and literature:

As to those things which are attained not by study, but nature, neither Greece, nor any nation, is comparable to us; for what people has displayed such gravity,

¹⁰ Treggiari 1974: 8.

¹¹ Nicgorski 2013: 12.

such steadiness, such greatness of soul, probity, faith – such distinguished virtue of every kind, as to be equal to our ancestors (Cic. Tusc. I.1).

After these retrospectives, Cicero turns to the prospects and again begins to talk about education as a bridge between man, nature, cosmos and culture. Again, Cicero assigns educational tasks to philosophy and begins to draw the future of the Roman education by matching / integrating Greek and Roman. By definition, the philosophical and pedagogical synthesis of this kind could not have been simple. Cicero and his contemporaries, many of whom, like Cicero, had received Greek education, witnessed an example of exceptional pragmatism towards Greek education which undermined all its ecophilosophical foundations. During the siege of Athens in 86, Ancient Roman dictator Sulla ordered to chop down the grove of the Academy, where the school of Plato was located, to get wood for the construction of siege machines.¹² According to Plutarch, five years after this event, Cicero entered into a confrontation with Sulla's associates and was forced to leave Rome. Traveling around Asia and Rhodes, Cicero was able to listen to many ancient Greek orators and philosophers.¹³ He was so much impressed with the Greek schools and mentors that even started dreaming of leaving politics, moving to Athens and fully devoting himself to the scholarship.

In the *Tusculan disputations*, Cicero, paying tribute to his “educational trips” to Greece, speaks about the possibility of creating a new grove of Academe in Rome, should many Romans really want this:

Therefore I recommend all men who have abilities to follow my advice to snatch this art also from declining Greece, and to transport it to this city; as our ancestors by their study and industry have imported all their other arts which were worth having (Cic. Tusc. II.1).

This statement confirms that Cicero, like most of Republican Romans, “in their veneration of Classical Athens, saw the modern city as a ghost town”¹⁴ – a city in which Socrates had once managed to make philosophy useful for his fellow citizens. Forced to admit that Romans were the disciples of the Greeks in the field of education and culture, Cicero, like all his fellow countrymen, was burdened by that discipleship and tried to find the way to get over it. By gently fusing together the Greek and the Roman, Cicero was inviting all those wishing to come to what might now be called the faculty of Philosophy – the first one in the Roman history. In fact, his appeal to *plures et orones eruditi* shows that Cicero expected a large number of “students”. In other words, Cicero did not want his countrymen to study sciences secretly and encouraged them to share their knowledge of philosophy in Latin. It seemed to Cicero that the gardens of the Academy could well blossom in Rome, and philosophy can finally fulfill its enlightening function in full. Defending the “unpopular” idea of the need to learn “from those Greeks”¹⁵ Cicero was looking for common grounds between Greek and Roman in order to

¹² Appian.

¹³ Plutarch.

¹⁴Howley 2014: 182.

¹⁵ Nicgorski 2013: 2.

approach to the understanding of the nature of society and the nature of education. Those Greek philosophers-teachers, who studied the “heavenly limits” set by nature, were seen by him as assistants to the Romans who set their own cultural limits to the world. Cicero justified the selective function of education and represented it as the ordering and system-forming principle in the cultural space – the principle, which is tailored according to the patterns of nature, common for both the Greeks and Romans.

Cicero’s original ideas on the ecophilosophy of education were scattered and “hidden” in many works of the great orator and political mentor. Nevertheless, they were perceived rather adequately by his contemporaries, but for us today it might sometimes look like a complete terminological mess, which we will try to discuss in the following paragraphs. Our search for answers to the question of who can be considered a “moderately” educated person (“*mediocriter doctus*”) (Cic. De F. III.I.3) resulted in the three definitions of the role and mission of education proposed by Cicero.

Despite the fact that Cicero indeed outlined the key issues of modern education, he did not consider the history of education as a history of the problems that his predecessors had posed and solved more or less successfully. It is surprising but modern researchers hardly recognize Cicero’s interest in solving problems that *were meaningful personally for him*. Cicero focussed, first of all, on the needs of his own philosophical and pedagogical conception, and it was for its sake that he interpreted the terminological constructs which we now zealously interpret. It must be admitted that he did not give an impartial account of his predecessors’ ideas, and by no means indisputably revealed such ideas to his followers. A problem vision of Cicero’s heritage is intended to warn against the interpretation of his texts solely as a convenient material for substantiating various contemporary problems (including those the modern ecophilosophy of education faces). It is of fundamental importance to consider his teachings and texts as created and functioning within a specific historical problem field. It could also allow us to formulate and specify the content of the problem that Cicero posed when he presented his experience of ecophilosophical interpretation of contemporary education, which somewhat resembled a boomerang, launched into the city’s space and always returning to the thrower in the form of various educational practices. The idea that a person’s life flows according to certain laws and the inevitability of many things in it is quite a natural process is repeated in Cicero’s works, speeches and letters over and over again:

to each is given what is fit for him. The boy is weak:
youth is more full of fire: Increasing years have more of soberness:
And so in the age there is a ripeness too. Each should be gardened in its proper
time, And made the most of (Cic. Sen. IX.33)

Human desire to overcome the inevitable seems weird to Cicero, and he affirms that it is vital to accept the inevitable for the sake of preserving yourself in the world and the world in you. Education, which pervades all ages of

man, appears to him a key to this kind of preservation. "And these pursuits, with learning for their goal, to those who're prudent and well-taught, still grow with growing years" (Cic. Sen. XIV.49). Thus, in modern terms, Cicero talks about an ecophilosophical approach to education, which acquires particular significance as *a necessity, a need and a duty*. All these essences are both a process and a result of carefully constructing oneself through others in the city's space.

Education as a necessity. Asking himself a favorite question of Greek philosophers and mentors what virtue is, Cicero associates it with the necessity to materialise one's educational opportunities for the good of yourself and the city, "Besides, the working of the mind, which is never at rest, can keep us busy in the pursuit of knowledge even without conscious effort on our part" (Cic. Off. I.VI.19). For Cicero, a virtue is both an action and a potency to action; a set of dispositions that are systematically and continuously exposed in different life situations and rely on the knowledge of philosophy, history, jurisprudence, literature and rhetoric. Having outlined this set of subjects for study, he begins a philosophical survey of the history of Greek education, trying to find examples of those who educated themselves and others precisely according to this "curriculum". In particular, Cicero reminisces about Socrates and makes a very controversial hypothesis about the ways and means of introducing a person to knowledge. He argues that nature, which contains a great many of arts and sciences, cannot be mortal. It finds its immortality in the man whose nature is constantly urging him to search for new knowledge:

... 'tis clear that men know many things before their birth, for boys you often see, in studies that are difficult, attain such knowledge of them with such headlong speed, that needs must be they've known it all before, and but recall them from their memories (Cic.Sen. LXXI.77).

This "recall" is possible only under a wise mentor, for example, such as Anaxagoras for Pericles. Cicero emphasizes that Pericles was first who managed to achieve much due to the habit of doing mental exercises.

Cicero continues to develop the idea of the need to reconcile nature, education and culture. Culture, like nature, cannot be perceived in full because of its vastness, but only within a certain "segment", which is significant for a particular person. Following the logic of Socrates, Cicero argues that it is the mentor who helps a person to outline these "segments". However, he stresses that not all mentors are able to help the student to find himself in culture. Choosing a mentor is the most important choice in any person's life:

Those who by nature and training have made considerable progress towards virtue, unless they have actually attained it, are utterly miserable (Cic. De f. IV.IX.21).

According to Cicero, one should not tolerate a person who calls himself a mentor only because he gives new meanings to already known concepts, which he generally understands in a way similar to other mentors. A person becomes associated with a culture throughout his life; therefore, he can either have several mentors at different stages of his life, or not have them at all. For Cicero, written instructions, recorded in the writings of many ancient philo-

sophers, are in no way inferior to the oral instructions that the student receives in the course of direct communication with the mentor¹⁶. Cicero argues that “all principles of well-being and of the right conduct”, enclosed in philosophy, are somehow connected with “what does Nature pursue as the thing supremely desirable, what does she avoid as the ultimate evil” (Cic. De f. I.IV.11). Thus Cicero again suggests finding a harmony between the order-peace and the chaos-motion through education. Unlike Socrates, who believed that an educated person is one who is always restless about his educational results, Cicero believed that an educated person is one who achieved some kind of comfort and consolation due to education as the supreme good. In this treatise, Cicero clearly indicates how he understands this good – to live, following human nature, to set and achieve educational goals. Cicero uses the expression “*natura hominum*” (“human nature”) thirty times¹⁷.

Education as a need. In an oration “*Pro Archia poeta*” (62 BC), who was accused of illegally obtaining Roman citizenship, Cicero first used the word “*humanitas*”. Cicero argues that a heterogeneous by nature society, which periodically resents the Greek claims to Roman citizenship, must rethink what education and culture are. He appeals to all those people who not only realized their human nature, but saw in education a way to realize their own humanity. Cicero is willing to pay tribute to Archias as a humanitarian, whose contribution to the Roman culture should not be underestimated. In his last philosophical treatise *On Duties* (44 BC), which he dedicates to his son Marcus who was receiving education in Athens, he continues to insist on precisely understanding of *humanitas* as a strategy that binds culture and education together¹⁸. In attempting to define the nature of education through culture, Cicero elevates *humanitas* to the rank of attitudes that are inherent to the human nature and are able to regulate human thinking and behaviour. His initial message is that a person is not born with full knowledge and understanding not only of the surrounding, but also of his personal nature. Otherwise, he would not be able to make a mistake and would be deprived of the joy of the gradual discovery of the world and himself in this world through education. In reasoning about this, Cicero relies on the Delphic maxim on the need to know thyself – to find a path that would help one to find oneself in culture and to reveal one’s inner potential¹⁹. Natural human impulses should be gently directed towards self-preservation, self-knowledge, self-development, self-improvement and a number of other “selves”. It seems to Cicero that man, by nature, is looking precisely for “virtuous activity” (R.R. Wellman) and places it above other life goals. Society is held together by the mutual usefulness of

¹⁶ Here Cicero developed an idea that is more pronounced in the *Tusculan disputations*, where he emphasizes the natural and cultural aspect of education and argues that there are “seeds of virtue” in every person, but they grow only in those who “need both reason and learning” (Cic. Tusc.III.1.2).

¹⁷ Oniga 2009: 6.

¹⁸ See: Murphy 1995: 44-67; Zerba 2004: 215-240.

¹⁹ Wellman 1965: 354-5.

those who have chosen a humane life and educational strategy – that is, who seeks to combine the care of the self with the care of the others.

Cicero was solving the problem of the role of education in human life by relating the categories “the expedient” and “the useful” both at the state level and at the level of a particular person. He argues that the state structure is not a constant (Cic.R. I.XLIV.68). Changes may result in a decline or a revival, but the state can be called “alive” only when the old is replaced with the new and these changes can be qualified as expedient and useful. Something similar happens to a person who feels life only when it changes. In the very self of a person lies the need to take care of resources and power and consider safety, shelter, food, weapons, etc. useful.²⁰ The nature of man, backed by the nature of society and law, allows him to see the expedient in the useful and vice versa. However, this ability is not granted to a person by birth, it is acquired through education in the course of time. Cicero saw education as an institution protecting the man, creating all conditions for his self-development, self-knowledge, self-improvement and, in particular, for self-preservation.

Education as a duty. For Cicero, one of the key subjects was an educated man in power. In a series of letters to his brother Quintus in Asia, he teaches him to govern a territory under his control. In December 60, he writes:

Wherefore it requires an exalted character, a man who is not only equitable from natural impulse, but who has also been trained by study and the refinements of a liberal education, so to conduct himself while in the possession of such immense power, that those over whom he rules should not feel the want of any other power (Cic. Q.fr.I.1. VII.22).

Developing this idea, Cicero further writes that Xenophon’s essay “The Education of Cyrus” was not intended to provide a historically correct picture, but to give an idea of fair, caring and moderate ruling (Cic. Q.fr.I.1. VIII.23). In a letter from the end of the year 59, Cicero returns to this subject again and writes to his brother:

And that is just the sting of the matter, that though the men I have named are not more blameless than yourself, they yet outdo you in the art of winning favour, though they know nothing of Xenophon’s Cyrus or Agesilaus; from which kings, in the exercise of their great office, no one ever heard an irritable word (Cic. Q. fr.I.2. II.7).

He further states that his instructions undoubtedly helped Quintus during his stay in Asia, and now, upon leaving, he should try to leave the most favourable memory of himself. Cicero suggests that his brother be inspired by the example of Cyrus and Agesilaus, whose biographies are presented by Xenophon in such a detailed way. This practice of building oneself through education, offered to Quintus, is rather contradictory, but Cicero is trying his best to present it as convincingly as possible. The attempt of the collegial governance, which was undertaken in Cyrus’ circle, could not go unnoticed by Cicero, who keeps repeating to Quintus that any board requires reliance on friends, relatives and like-minded people. According to Xenophon, Cyrus’s

²⁰ Nicgorski 1984: 563.

attendants act out of friendly feelings to him, because they see him not only as a ruler by birthright, but also as a wise mentor by his own aspiration. Cyrus, as described by Xenophon, seems to Cicero a “role model” for the numerous Roman “military governors”, one of whom was his brother Quintus. In *On Duties*, Cicero speaks of those who are able to hold this post:

But those whom Nature has endowed with the¹ capacity for administering public affairs should put aside all hesitation, enter the race for public office, and take a hand in directing the government; for in no other way can a government be administered or greatness of spirit be made manifest” (Cic. Off. I.XXI.72).

But in his private correspondence, he mentions that the post of the Roman “military governor” is not so much public as a deeply personal care of the self and others, imposed on an educated person.

Comparing the expedient and the useful, Cicero is trying to set a certain educational standard that relies on the Roman “laws of history, customs and political institutions” (Cic. Off. I.XXI.72). He sees education as a duty imposed upon everyone and requiring great devotion. In *On Duties*, addressing his son, who was studying under the Greek mentors, Cicero writes, “For no phase of life, whether public or private, whether in business or in the home, whether one is working on what concerns oneself alone or dealing with another, can be without its moral duty” (Cic. Off.I.1.4.). Speaking to his son, Cicero makes it clear to his compatriots that they need to reconsider the mission of education and understand that it is necessary for “life”, but not for special moments in life. At present, we can say that Cicero strove to substantiate the selective function of education, which represents it as a regulating core principle in cultural space. His statement about it reads as follows:

The first principle is that which is found in the connection subsisting between all the members of the human race; and that bond of connection is reason and speech, which by the processes of teaching and learning, of communicating, discussing, and reasoning associate men together and unite them in a sort of natural fraternity (Cic. Off. I.XVI.50).

At present, education in the ecophilosophical paradigm is precisely this collective ecophilosophical interpretation of cultivating, creating culture and making culture, as Cicero points out.

Researchers who have been turning to Cicero’s heritage see it as a unique source of conceptual ideas that were destined to outlive their author. However, the recognition of uniqueness is not the equivalent of asserting that it is easily comprehended and carefully treated by researchers. On closer examination, Cicero’s heritage, which occupies quite a considerable place in the historical and cultural space, is misunderstood in the space of the history of pedagogical culture. In most cases, Cicero is viewed as an apostle of genuine eloquence and political diplomacy, and his legacy is viewed as terminological jungles of someone who was a Greek student in his past and a Roman citizen in his present. It seems to us that a new direction in the study of Cicero’s pedagogical heritage may allow us to view Cicero’s texts as a

conglomerate of original ideas, which largely foreshadowed the development of what we now call ecophilosophical education.

Despite the fact that Cicero outlined the key issues of modern education, he did not consider the history of education as a history of the problems that his predecessors had posed and solved more or less successfully. It is surprising but modern researchers are rather reluctant in recognizing Cicero's interest in solving problems that *were significant personally for him*. Cicero focussed, first of all, on the needs of his own philosophical and pedagogical conception, and it was for its sake that he interpreted the terminological constructs which we now so zealously interpret. It has to be admitted that he did not give an unbiased account of his predecessors' ideas, and by no means indisputably revealed such ideas to his followers, when he was outlining the ecophilosophy of education in *On the Ends of Good and Evil* and the *Tusculan disputationss*. A problem vision of Cicero's heritage is intended to warn against the interpretation of his texts solely as a convenient material for substantiating various contemporary problems (including those facing modern ecophilosophy of education). It is of fundamental importance to consider those problems that Cicero posed when he shared his experience of ecophilosophical interpretation of contemporary education, which somewhat resembled a boomerang, launched into the city's space and always returning to the thrower in the form of various educational practices.

The modern ecophilosophical approach to the educational process directs us both toward understanding of modern and future achievements of science and technology and to a value-reflective appreciation of the past. Cicero's legacy is an experience of an ecophilosophical interpretation of modern education, which he views as a necessity, a need and a duty to carefully create himself through others. Cicero's ecophilosophy of education is an area that has been outside research attention for a long time, and it is yet to make its way through numerous complicated interpretations.

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