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## EDITORIAL

The first issue of the second volume of the journal contains seven original articles as well as further translations of classical texts, discussions, bibliographical outlines, and reviews. These materials are prepared by the participants of the international interdisciplinary seminar “Teaching Classics. Fundamental Values in the Changing World”, organized by the Centre for Ancient Philosophy and the Classical Tradition (Akademgorodok, Novosibirsk region, Russia) and supported by the Open Society Institute, Budapest.<sup>1</sup>

The volume opens with an article by John Dillon (Trinity College, Dublin) on “Monist and Dualist Tendencies in Platonism before Plotinus” in a Russian translation. In the original version of the article the author summarizes its content as follows: “The Platonism that Plotinus inherits – setting aside Ammonius Saccas, of whom we know all too little – is by the later second century distinctly dualist in tendency, and is able, especially in the case of Plutarch, to quote Plato to its purpose. Plato himself, though, I would maintain, is, despite appearances to the contrary, what one might term a ‘modified monist’. That is to say, he fully recognizes the degree of imperfection and evil in the world, and holds it to be ineradicable, but he does not in the last resort believe in a positive countervailing force to the Good or the One. What we have is simply a negative force, whether Indefinite Dyad, disorderly World-Soul, or Receptacle, which is an inevitable condition of their being a world at all, but which, as a side-effect of introducing diversity, generates various sorts of imperfection. It is this scenario that justifies his follower Hermodorus in declaring that Plato recognizes only a single first principle, and it to this sort of monism – if anything, in a more pronounced form – that Plotinus returns”.

Three consequent studies deal with various aspects of ancient science. Eugene V. Orlov of the Institute of philosophy and law, Novosibirsk, discusses the basic elements of analysis in Aristotle, including the stages of scientific inquiry, the composition of a valid syllogisms, and applying universal knowledge thus gained to particular inferences.

Ludmila S. Sychova of Novosibirsk State University considers the earliest ancient theories of literature, esp. these by Plato and Aristotle, in the framework of the sociology of sciences. She argues that these theories initiated the process of accumulation of knowledge and shows how they have considerably changed the character of all consequent artistic creativity and literary activity.

Andrej I. Schetnikov (ΣΙΓΜΑ: The Centre for Educational Projects, Novosibirsk), on the basis of testimonies by Nicomachus of Gerasa, Theon of Smyrna and other later authors, reconstructs an algorithm of developing all the numerals (provisionally called the ‘algorithm of Nicomachus’) and demonstrates how this algorithm could be

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <http://www.nsu.ru/classics/reset/index.htm>

found in the background of the so-called Plato's ideal numbers. Besides, he suggests that the *Platonicus* by Erathosthenes, preserved in a fragmentary form by Theon, could be used as a supplementary source for reconstructing the content of the famous lecture of Plato *On the Good*.

An annotated translation of the *Manual of Harmonics* by Nicomachus of Gerasa (the first century A. D.), also prepared by Andrej Schetnikov, supplements his recent translation of the *Introduction to Arithmetic* by this famous Neopythagorean philosopher<sup>2</sup>. This short treatise, important for the history of ancient mathematics and musical theory, is translated into Russian for the first time.

Year 2006 / 2007 was an *annus mirabilis* for all lovers of Pseudo-Dionysius. Three important studies, dedicated to the *Dionysian corpus* and its philosophical sources have been published almost simultaneously, and a long-awaited third volume of the critical edition of the *Corpus Dionysiicum Areopagiticum*, containing the *Scholia* of John of Scythopolis to the *Divine Names*, should have appeared in 2007/2008<sup>3</sup>. Fully recognizing importance of these advances in scholarship we decided to outline them in two bibliographic summaries, dedicated, respectively, to the *Dionysian corpus* and the classical tradition and Dionysius the Areopagite in the context of Byzantine-Slavonic literary relations. The former outline is in Russian and it will be continued in the next issue (this time focused in the Christian sources of Pseudo-Dionysius), while the latter is prepared in English, since, to the best of my knowledge, no detailed outline of this subject is available in English so far. The outlines are supplemented with a short bibliography and enhanced by an article by Vladimir Itkin (a former curator of the Department of Manuscripts, State Public Library in Science and Technology, Novosibirsk)<sup>4</sup> on a fragment of the corpus, "A vision of St. Carpus about two sinners", transmitted independently in the Russian literary tradition.

A discussion on the origins and nature of Gnosticism, conducted in the framework of the interdisciplinary seminar "Teaching Classics" in August 2007, is quite relevant to the general subject of our project which is a study of fundamental values in the changing world. The period concerned is very interesting in this respect, since in the second century A. D. the Mediterranean world underwent a profound change in ethical attitude towards the *kosmos* and human society, and the change is especially well reflected in one of the most controversial intellectual movement of the Late Antiquity, the so-called Gnostic tradition. Although attempts to draw a coherent picture of Gnosis which have been undertaken so far have yielded no satisfactory result, the basic patterns of thought, commonly labeled as 'Gnostic', are reasona-

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. <http://www.nsu.ru/classics/pythagoras/favorite.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Schäfer 2006, Perl 2007, Dillon-Klitenic Wear 2007, Suchla 2007. Besides, a new study on the problem of evil in Proclus is now available (Phillips 2007) and, closer to home, one of our project's participants, Petr Moiseev, had his dissertation on Dionysius defended in March 2007. Finally, it seems that a critical edition of the most important Slavonic manuscript of the corpus, prepared by H. Goltz, G. M. Prokhorov and their collaborators, is finally submitted for publication and should appear fairly soon (cf. Fahl 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. <http://www.nsu.ru/classics/dionysius/itkin.htm>

bly well known. Taken in the broadest sense of the word, Gnosticism is a specific world attitude. In the framework of Judeo-Christian world-view the Gnostics contemplated the world affairs from a global prospective, put them in the context of world history and developed a specific form of eschatology. The discussion opens with my paper, entitled “Lernaean Hydra and the Problem of the Origin of Gnosticism”, and a presentation by Alexey Kamenskikh on the *Evangelium Veritatis*. In my paper I have undertaken to interpret selected historical evidence, which can throw the light upon the development of this quite diverse and controversial tradition, including a passage from the *Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria (Strom. III 29, 1–2 St), which, surprisingly enough, was not previously treated in this context.

Undoubtedly, *happiness* has always been considered one of the most important goals of human life, and the attitude to happiness and especially a *change* in this attitude in a given culture or a social strata, or in a specific period of time helps to understand the process, determining the evolution of other fundamental values. In this issue the ancient concept of εὐδαιμονία is treated by Panos Eliopoulos (University of Athens) in two different cultural contexts. He compares the attitudes to happiness taken by two Christian philosophers, separated by a very wide margin of space and time, Gregory of Nyssa and Søren Kierkegaard.

E. A.  
June 11, 2008  
Akademgorodok