

ARISTOTLE

THE UNIVERSAL PHILOSOPHER

Demetra Sfendoni-Mentzou
University of Thessaloniki-Greece
www.dikam.auth.gr

Abstract

Aristotle, the student of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great, who was born in Stageira of Chalkidiki in 384 BC., had a continued influence on human thought for a period of 2.500 years. He has left indelible marks on the Hellenistic world, on the Byzantium, on Arabic philosophy, on the Medieval thought of Europe and on the Modern Western world, so that he can rightly be characterized as the “universal philosopher”. Furthermore, his philosophy continues to be present in the intellectual life of contemporary Western civilization, as an essential part of its cultural heritage. The ideas he developed in his Ethics and political philosophy, and by which he educated Alexander, can help us today to face contemporary problems in the field of our moral and political life, as well as in the field of Education. Finally, our acquaintance with Aristotle’s work in the area of science and scientific thought, can lead us to a deeper understanding of the new discoveries of science, thus completing the overall picture of the timeliness and timelessness of his work.

On the basis of this idea, the "Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies" was recently established at Aristotle University. Its goal is to study Aristotle’s work from an interdisciplinary perspective and promote it, on an international scale, in areas covering traditional branches of Philosophy, as well as areas related to the basic fields of science. It is our ambition that that the "Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies" becomes a pole of attraction and a point of reference, both for Aristotle scholars and students worldwide, as well as for those who are interested in getting acquainted with the work of the Stageirite philosopher. And this is because it has the unique privilege not only of operating in the country where Aristotle was born, but more specifically at Aristotle University that bears his name and is located a breath’s distance away from Stageira, the birthplace of the Macedonian philosopher and from Mieza, the place of his teachings with Alexander as his student.