

## BOOK REVIEW

### **Dejan M. Radulović's book**

### **Women in Athens and Sparta - Legal, Economic and Social Position of Women**

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An introductory analysis of the historical, sociological, legal and economic aspects of social life in Athens and Sparta, the two largest ancient Greek polises, serves the author to reflect all aspects of women's subordination, inequality and marginalization in the ancient world through social and class conflicts.

The socio-economic position of women - the author rightly points out - was in the function of preserving the entire social system. To reflect all the social - class, economic and legal contradictions in these policies, there was no better way than to describe all the manifestations of inequality between women and men in these policies. This kind of inequality is paradigmatic for all other class and social inequalities in the ancient world.

The inequality and subordination of women is reflected in all aspects of social life; economically and legally she was dependent on men. She had a legal representative and did not even have property that represented a dowry. Although formally a citizen polis in public life did not appear. Her "sovereign" area was a family household where she performed numerous jobs that were not much more valued than slave labor. Its basic social "functions" were reproductive and the transmission of private property "for the benefit" of men. Her participation in religious and social ceremonies was ultimately a continuation of the patterns of patriarchal life and meant cementing her inferior position. Although in certain aspects and in certain historical periods the social position of women in Sparta was more favorable than in Athens, women were essentially instrumentalized in Sparta as well, ultimately in the function of reproducing a military-authoritarian system of government, at least until the Peloponnesian Wars.

At one point, Dr. Radulović very lucidly observes that looking at it from a legal, economic, and even sociological point of view is not enough to understand the position of women in ancient society. Although they do not appear in the title of this book, without his socio-anthropological and cultural observations we would not have such a complete picture of the social position of women in terms of cognition. That is why these observations are the most original parts of the book.

Regarding this topic, it can be concluded that the treatment of women in the past has left a legacy that has not been completely overcome in the 21st century. Consequently, the question only arises: "What has changed?" Since ancient times and how much women have managed to fight for a better status in all spheres of life and work over time. Namely, although the book focuses only on ancient times by placing this topic in the legal, economic and social frameworks of that time, it is a good basis to make a connection with modern times. This gives it a special quality, because there was a gap in our understanding of the role that women played, and because the author's research revealed interesting stories and historical facts. The research also showed that despite difficulties, prejudices and adversities, women significantly contributed to the economic and social development of ancient Greece through the various roles they played. Despite this, their contributions were often lost, or buried under a wealth of new knowledge.

The claims, opinions and judgments of the authors are substantiated and supported by arguments and examples from which follows the correct way of connecting and concluding. From the above, it can be concluded that this publication is very clearly and interestingly written and that it can be useful in educating students and researchers, at all levels, but also others who are interested in this issue.

Borislav Đukanović

Mirjana Radović-Marković