

Constantine D. Skordoulis, Vangelis Koutalis, «**Investigating the Historical Development of the Concept of Matter: Controversies About/In Ancient Atomism**», in Georgios Tsaparlis and Hannah Sevian (eds), *Concepts of Matter in Science Education*, Springer, 2013, Chapter 22, pp. 463-483.

Abstract

This paper investigates the historical development of the concept of matter and the controversies surrounding it in antiquity when natural philosophers first speculated about the constitution of the physical world. By focusing in the controversy between the ancient Greek atomists who attributed all physical phenomena to atoms and their motion in the void and Aristotle for whom matter is linked by definition to a process of change, the paper intervenes in the current debate about the position of ancient atomism in the history of science. Our conclusions underline the distinctly speculative character of the ancient controversy over the atoms and the void and on this basis modern science cannot be considered a by-product of ancient philosophy.

And reversely, ancient, or early modern philosophy cannot be reduced into what is now science considered to be. Both the terms ‘science’ and ‘philosophy’ bear distinct significations and should be considered as such in history and philosophy informed science curricula.