

## GOVERNANCE FACING VALUES IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

In a long series of works<sup>1</sup> I have tried to transcend the classical controversy between axiological subjectivisms and objectivisms by alleging that values emerge from human consciousness under the aspect of desires needing to be filled, before they are expanded instead, by being projected on an objective background where from they irradiate to meet homologous aspirations of other consciences, thus reaching the statuses of both objectivity and intersubjectivity. In this context, the system of values, having acquired the condition of a reality widely accepted and wished for, has imposed itself as the moving power for the assessment of moral law within consciences and even societies.

Since ancient times the classical value system has been built on three cardinal values: the True, the Beautiful and the Good<sup>2</sup>, each one of them having admitted several secondary meanings according to the particular era in which – and the society by which – it has been experienced. One may thus consider the system of values as a threefold musical theme implying an indefinite number of variations<sup>3</sup> which nevertheless respect the theme's fundamental structure. Any attempt to seriously deviate from this structure would inevitably lead to the decline and, finally, to the crumbling of the structure itself.

This may grow particularly probable in times of abrupt shiftings in the course of societies. Such shiftings have already been experienced along the history of mankind<sup>4</sup>. Almost all of them relate to invasions of new ideas from outside into extant societies which however successfully resisted by developing proper defense systems. Sophists e.g. invaded Athens during the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., mainly from Magna Graecia, to be combatted by Socrates and his major school<sup>5</sup>. During the subsequent imperial eras, Hellenistic and Roman as well, both of which lasted for several centuries, the Stoic and

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1. Cf. E. MOUTSOPOULOS, *The Itinerary of Mind*, vol. 3: *Values*, Athens, Hermes, 1977; *Phenomenology of Values*, 2nd ed., Athens, Univ. of Athens, 1981.

2. Cf. IDEM, *Le problème du beau*, Aix-en-Provence, Ophrys, 1960; *P. Brailas-Armenis*, New York, Twayne, 1974.

3. Cf. IDEM, *Aesthetic Categories*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Athens, Arsenides, 1996.

4. Cf. IDEM, *Kairos. La mise et l'enjeu*, Paris, Vrin, 1991.





Christian cosmopolitanisms sealed the death of the ancient city-states and marked a kind of globalization within the limits of late Antiquity<sup>6</sup>, at least in the West, before they were overrun by the installation of a strict feudal society due to the shock of barbarian invasions. The *exodus* of Greek scholars to the West initially instigated, then whipped the movement of the Renaissance whose spirit, although fainting, remains still alive<sup>7</sup>.

The direct effect of the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial revolution has been a lasting confusion in the realm of values, whose impact remains visible through the traces it has left upon our societies. Not only has it evolved towards other kinds of revolutions such as economic, technological and even temporarily political, but it has also extended its influence to the domain of culture as well, where e.g. new conceptions of beauty and new techniques seem to definitely prevail, independently of their deviation from classical rules and precepts<sup>8</sup>. In every cultural field the *insolite* is searched after, in order to flabbergast. On the other hand, in societies where the principle of equal chances really dominates, people of lower culture and taste tend to favor lower forms of art, thus encouraging low-lying, though impressive, artistic productions<sup>9</sup>.

The value of Truth is highly cultivated in our days by scientists, thanks to spectacular technological performances, although philosophers and other thinkers are unable to take advantage of them. Progress, though not spectacular, has been achieved in economics and bioethics. The latter fields also relate to the value of Good which unfortunately is suffering of gradually deteriorating conditions of respect. Parallel to the official proclamation of human rights, our globalized societies experience their everyday violation by every kind of corruption due to the acquisition of excessive power and, hence, to oppressive practices: geopolitical, such as genocides plus destructive ecological and financial activities as well, like the periodical crises which shake the whole world. It seems that the present crisis was prepared at the end of the year 2000 thanks to the adoption of a bill that enabled the finance and trust institutions to freely operate without being subdued to any control. This turned out to be a deplorable decision of the legislative power which is part of the state in democratic countries.

Globalization is an economic theory; in addition, a kind of ideology and, of course, a *praxis*, which is being tested on the grounds of its efficiency. The high risks its adoption could entail had been denounced early enough. It is the duty of each well-educated governance team, cognizant and conscious of its task, to look after the world situation in order to prevent administrative

5. Cf. IDEM, *Philosophers of the Aegean*, Athens, The Aegean Foundation, 1991.

6. Cf. IDEM, *Creed and Reason. Roots and Development of Medieval Philosophy*, Thessaloniki, Gartaganis, 1967.

7. Cf. IDEM, Pléthon, *Proceedings of the International Congress on Pletho and his Time* (Mystra), Athens, 2003.

8. Cf. IDEM, Recent Processes of Creation in Contemporary Art? *Φιλοσοφία*, Academy of Athens, 38, 2008, pp. 60-64.

9. Cf. IDEM, *Aesthetics of Ethics*, Athens, Academy of Athens, 2009.



misfunctions ranging from mere transgressions of law to catastrophic conducts. Impeccable governance presupposes an adequate preparation of the citizens destined to exert it. The classical ideal of *kalokagathia*<sup>10</sup>, i.e. cultural competence and moral integrity is still valid today. Plato, after Damon of Oa, who lived one whole century before him, clearly indicated educational norms and methods to be followed and respected in order to make this ideal accessible to all citizens.

The continuous attempt to reach such an ideal could become a guarantee not only for the quality and skill of future governances, but for the sake of globalization and, ultimately, of the future of mankind.

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### Η ΔΙΑΚΥΒΕΡΝΗΣΙΣ ΕΝΩΠΙΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΑΕΙΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΠΟΧΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΟΠΟΙΗΣΕΩΣ

#### Π ε ρ ί λ η ψ η

Ἡ παγκοσμιοποίηση εἶναι μιὰ οἰκονομικὴ θεωρία. Εἶναι, ἐπιπλέον, καὶ ἓνα εἶδος ιδεολογίας, καί, φυσικά, μία *πρᾶξις*, ἡ ὁποία δοκιμάζεται ἐπὶ τῇ βάσει τῆς ἀποτελεσματικότητάς της. Ὁ ὑψηλὸς βαθμὸς κινδύνου ποὺ θὰ μπορούσε νὰ ἐμπεριέχεται στὴν υἱοθέτησή της ἔχει ἤδη καταγγελεῖ σχετικὰ νωρὶς. Εἶναι καθήκον τῆς ὁποίας εὐσυνείδητης καὶ καλὰ καταρτισμένης ομάδας διακυβέρνησης, ἡ ὁποία ἔχει καὶ συναίσθηση τῆς ἀποστολῆς της, νὰ μεριμνᾷ γιὰ τὴν παγκόσμια τάξη πραγμάτων, οὕτως ὥστε νὰ ἀποτρέπει διοικητικὲς δυσλειτουργίες, οἱ ὁποῖες μπορεῖ νὰ ποικίλλουν ἀπὸ ἐλαφρῶς παραβατικὲς συμπεριφορὲς μέχρι ἐντελῶς καταστροφικοὺς χειρισμούς. Ἡ ἄμεμπτος διακυβέρνηση προϋποθέτει τὴν ἀνάλογη προπαρασκευὴ τῶν πολιτῶν ποὺ πέφτουν νὰ τὴν ἀσκήσουν. Τὸ κλασσικὸ ἰδεῶδες τῆς *καλοκαγαθίας*, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν τῆς πολιτιστικῆς ἐπάρκειας καὶ τῆς ἠθικῆς ἀκεραιότητος, εἶναι ἀκόμα καὶ τώρα ἐπίκαιρο. Ὁ Πλάτων, στὰ βήματα τοῦ Δάμωνα τῆς Ὀας, ὁ ὁποῖος ἔζησε ἓναν αἰῶνα πρὶν ἀπὸ αὐτόν, ὑπέδειξε μὲ σαφῆ τρόπο τὰ παιδαγωγικὰ πρότυπα καὶ μεθόδους ποὺ πρέπει νὰ ἀκολουθοῦνται, προκειμένου αὐτὸ τὸ ἰδεῶδες νὰ καταστεῖ προσβάσιμο σὲ ὅλους τοὺς πολίτες. Ἡ ἀδιάλειπτος προσπάθεια νὰ ἀναχθοῦμε σὲ ἓνα τέτοιο ἰδανικὸ θὰ μπορούσε νὰ γίνῃ τὸ ἐχέγγυο ὅχι μόνον τῆς ποιότητος καὶ τῶν ἱκανοτήτων τῶν μελλοντικῶν κυβερνήσεων, ἀλλὰ καὶ νὰ ἀποβεῖ πρὸς ὄφελος τῆς παγκοσμιοποιήσεως, καί, ἐν τέλει, τοῦ μέλλοντος τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος.

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10. Cf. IDEM, L'idée de *kalokagathia* et sa fonction éthique et esthétique en Occident, *Les enjeux actuels de l'éthique, Entretiens de l'Institut International de Philosophie*, Tokyo, Centre International pour l'Étude Comparée de la Philosophie et de l'Esthétique, 1995, pp. 21-34.