

VIEWS ON BIOPOLITICS

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Man, the wisest of God's creatures, the highest form of nature and allperceptible creation - the perfect being - is distinct and superior to anyother form of life. But, what is this divine gift, this element given tohumans that makes them so superior, allowing them to realize extraordinaryachievements such as the exploration of the moon and the discovery of thestructure and motion laws of the astrological system? What is it that allowsman, through his wisdom and mental ability, as well as great scientificdiscoveries - especially in physics and mathematics - to split atoms? Byusing a brilliant and surprising electromagnetic technology, man attainstechnological achievements that evoke not only admiration but also realastonishment, a fact proving that man seems to be carrying on a spiritualrather than material revolution, similar to an enormously powerful nuclearexplosion. What is the talent that led mankind to the complete domination ofall natural forces and living beings and raised him to a ruling, masterfulrole? It is the mind's criterion, the logic, the leading, spiritual andtruly divine element that God inspired exclusively in man, the uniqueelement that is typical of man in all his actions, if he is to be regardedas a combination of a soul and body that lives, acts and moves forward at acontinuous and increasing rate towards the new, the unprecedented, theoriginal.

According to Aristotle, man's thirst for knowledge is never saturated. Vassilios the Great, in one of his letters addressed to Amphilochios of Iconio (233, Migne, P.G. 32, 86-48), confesses that even if the "mind is good", and furthermore the "mind's action is good", not every one of its mental actions is good. For "never ceasing to act, the mind sometimes thinksof non-beings as being, but on the other hand, it frequently discovers thetruth directly." This is proven by man's tendency to discover newtechnological methods. His self-confidence when facing the most difficultconditions of life, gives him hope that he will be able to develop newmethods to face even the most inconceivable difficulties. For instance, tofeed the explosively increasing population or to provide shelter within thelimited space of the earth. Obviously, his hope is based on his scientificand technological progress and achievements. Achievements such as biologicalactivities and research, especially the biochemical consistence of livingbeings, are so revolutionary that they can undoubtedly change the naturalevolution of human existence or even destroy it. Thus, it is proved that thewise Vassilios the Great was right to add, when praising the gift of themind, that "not every action of the mind is good."

The question posed is what means are available to suspend, limit orprevent the possible destruction caused by the overthrow of the physicallaws, as well as the existing natural, harmonic motion of the world? Theonly deliverance from these anxious problems is exclusively expressed in asingle term, "education". Innumerable books have been written analyzing thisterm which has occupied man since the beginning of time. The ideal educationis interpreted by pedagogues, historians, philosophers, theologians,physicists, biologists and chemists in many different ways. The essence ofeducation, according to the most important ancient and modern philosophers,is that man must be educated to know himself; to examine minutely hisexistential psychosomatic being, in order to discern the useful from theharmful, the good from the bad, the true from the false. All hisdistinguishing abilities must have their foundation in the correctly-educated conscience.

Education and proper instruction affect the soul, particularly of youngpeople, making them kalon kagathon cultivating their inclination andimpulse for the good and the true and their repugnance for the bad and thefalse. As long as the inclination for virtue and truth is cultivated, manascends scales of virtue and has a better understanding of the content andessence of truth. Philosophers, sociologists and pedagogues unanimouslyagree that there are 3 higher goals in human life: justice, equality ofhuman beings based on their fraternity, as children of God the father andfreedom. These goals constitute real axioms of belief and doctrines for allreligions, especially Christianity. Man, urged by his belief and helped byhope, lives, moves and works in every field of the understandable. As aconsequence of human research, reinforced by the belief in God, knowledge isachieved. These are conclusions drawn by cognition sociology. A childfirst trusts its parents and then understands the value of their words andactions. Pupils first trust their teacher when studying the meanings ofletters, words and operations, then due to belief in the teacher's lesson,appreciate the value of words and actions. Generally, human life is based onbelief, empirical belief. It is through experience that we understand andjudge the value or lack of value of our actions. As far as the metaphysicalbelief is concerned, knowledge precedes. For first we obtain knowledge ofthe existent world and through education we are led to believe in anomnipotent and wise Creator.

In conclusion, the education of young people and all humanity must relyon morality, and furthermore, theology. Both may act as spiritual provisionsfor man and enable him to search and distinguish truth from lies, good anduseful from bad, harmful or destructive. Theology and ethics, according tothe Christian teaching of love and philosophy, through the intermediarykaction of history, are the secure arms for the salvation of man.

The reason for this writing was the conclusion of the SecondInternational Conference of the Biopolitics International Organisation(B.I.O.). Its Founder and President, Dr. Agni Vlavianos-Arvanitis, pointedout new methods of human education and instructions for our spiritual andmoral

ascension so that technological progress, which can equally provoke surprise and fear, becomes harmless and pure humanism becomes a catalytic means to avoid danger through the promotion of new bios (life) values. Among the numerous proposals to fill the gap between technological progress and human values, Dr. Vlavianos-Arvanitis, in Biopolitics, proposes: international cooperation for all nations as a unified body to undertake common tasks in facing the dangers. More advanced nations should undertake a world educational campaign. The Founder of the Biopolitics International Organisation recommends Greece as the ideal meeting place for academicians, philosophers, theologians, pedagogues, sociologists, psychologists, physicists, mathematicians, scientists of all specialities, artists and musicians, as well as specialists and every person interested in the contribution of international interest, to meet and study regularly so as to form a creative and altering deeper reflection and therefore create a "Bank of Ideas". It is not possible to give further arguments of Dr. Vlavianos-Arvanitis' correct propositions here, but, finally, she stresses that human survival will depend on an increased respect for bios, further information and associated and developed ideas on the treated basis of ethics and theology will require great attention. Difficulties in successful application of these important proposals can be faced through belief and hope of the creator and unrelenting scientist, inspirer of the most successful theory and proposals of the Biopolitics International Organisation. I wish strongly that the great plans and propositions for the world incorporation and internationalisation of the ideals of "education and instruction", give resonance first to the United Nations and then to the academies of science, the important educational foundations worldwide, as well as to any lover of the Muses, also to the willing souls of gentle human existence, which are very sensitive to the word "humanism", in the higher conception and significance of this term.

The late **Constantinos Bonis**, former President of the Academy of Athens and President of the Archaeological Society of Greece, has been a Professor of Theology at the Universities of Athens and Salonica. He has published numerous books and articles and has received high distinctions both nationally and internationally.