

The Two-Way Relationship of Tradition and Quality

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Abstract. The term Tradition refers to all those elements that are handed down from one generation to another in the cycles of life, and the term Quality refers to all those that make the cycles of life easy and pleasant. Tradition and Quality are elements that have existed and still exist in all beings of Nature. However, only in humans do these elements operate consciously and not only by instinct. Although it is considered that the human race differentiated itself from the rest of the beings on the Planet when it took an upright position, the essential differentiation occurred when humanity acquired a quality of life with the creation of civilization.

Tradition in the human race was recorded in the past with its Myths and History, and today History is complemented by the findings of Astrologers and Paleontologists. We would say, though, that today Tradition concerns all those findings from the creation of the Universe to the future. The analysis of life cycles from the creation of the Universe to the present day presents a continuous repetition of beginning, growth, peak, decline and end. These "Life Cycles" are in this way standardized, but they are influenced by random events that cause disasters that overturn the order of succession or break them up.

In the standardization of Life Cycles, disasters are scientifically classified into "Natural" and "Endemic". When the end was definitive for the beings of the Planet, they disappeared, and so, in the History of some peoples of the human race the end was definitive and they disappeared. For some other peoples, though, a new beginning followed after the end, and these peoples survived. For humans, as for all beings, the survival depends on the ability to adapt to changes in the environment. In the History of the human race, the peak before the disaster was identical to their civilization. And of all the human developed civilizations, only the civilization of the Greeks has survived to this day, because it emerged from the socio-economic system of Democracy.

After the Industrial Revolution, though, tradition was displaced in the human race by Technology and today the prototypes, that were handed down from one human generation to the next, have been replaced by the industrial standards. Although today, at the end of the Industrial Age, the standards have been evolved with the "Quality Systems", they continue to lead the human race to destruction and extinction, because they are dominated by Technology. Only the Balkans, which share the tradition of the Ancient Greek Civilization and have not yet been industrialized, are the exception to this rule. Thus, here in the Balkans, the "Post-Traditional" human civilization can be developed, and the Balkan peoples could help the human race to survive, reach its peak and remain there during the Post-Industrial Age.

Keywords: Tradition, Prototypes, Scientific-knowledge, Quality

1 Definition of Tradition and Quality

In every dialogue we must first define, as Aristotle said, the object, and this requires a background of knowledge. Aristotle then defined what knowledge is and its forms. He had defined “certain knowledge” in contrast to “Doxasia” (from ΔΟΞΑ, the concept of opinion) (1), which is the subjective view. In Aristotelian teaching, knowledge, “when it has been confirmed, documented and is commonly accepted is always true, while dogma sometimes is and sometimes is not”. Anyone who knows the unique “conceptual language”, which is Greek, defines “ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΗ” (science) with this Aristotelian definition, which comes from the verb “ΕΠΙΣΤΑΜΑΙ” that means “to know” (1). We therefore define science as that which arises through confirmation, documentation and consensus principal (Fig.1).



Fig. 1. Science by Aristotle Confirmation, documentation and consensus principal in Democracy

Consensus principal, as an element for the cohesion of groups (2), appears also as an instinct in all beings on the planet, but it is graded according to the evolution of each group. In its most primitive form, it is the imposition of the personality of the strongest in the group. Power was so initially only that of strength, and gradually the power of the spirit was added. This role of the spirit was developed in nature as the brain was evolved. Evolution ended in Man, who today is the only one who possesses the highest level of power from the other beings on the planet, because he possesses the most evolved form of brain. Because the human brain evolved gradually, initially the power was also only the one of strength too, and gradually the power of the spirit was added to the observation of nature (2).

In the social groups of the Protohumans, power was only that of strength, so the imposition of the personality of the strongest in the group is the lowest level of quality. When in the social groups of Prehistoric Times, spirit also participated in strength, this gave human strength a higher quality. This transition of human strength to a higher quality is handed down to us in the myths of Hercules. In human social groups, therefore, the lowest level of quality appeared in the Prehistoric Era, before the brain began to evolve, and the highest emerged during the full development of the human spirit, when sociability evolved with the perception of common acceptance (3) (Fig.2).

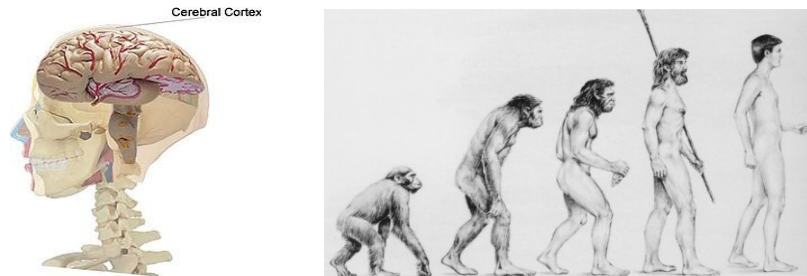


Fig. 2. Since the Prehistoric Times, the spirit participated in the power, while in the Protohumans the power was only strength

2 The Evolution of Tradition and Quality

The evolution of quality in human social groups of Prehistoric Times had initially occurred in each intelligent human individually. It reached the highest level, according to the consensus principal, when there was a balance between power and spirit (2). However, the effectiveness of each individual activity differed qualitatively, so the effectiveness of each member was then evaluated in the social group, and thus the relevant "Social Model" of the group emerged. As the conditions of the group's environment were constantly changing, the social group had to adapt to the changes in order to survive. In order for the social group to have the "power to survive", the Social Model had to be transmitted from one generation to the next, and thus the "Traditions" emerged.

In the social groups of Protohumans this was done with the instinct of imitation, as in all living organisms on the planet. However, when in the social groups of Prehistoric Times, Intelligent Man acquired the ability to speak, the Social Model was transmitted from generation to generation, additionally with the "articulate speech". Thus human myths transmitted from generation to generation the Social Models of the group. The myths added then to the articulate speech the "intermediate" one, that of the soul. In this way, myths became the connecting and synthetic element of each social group. With this transmission of Social Models from generation to generation with myths, the human race evolved.

With myths, therefore, human herds evolved into tribes and peoples. Out of the myths that all peoples possess, the certain knowledge is that the various myths of the Greeks proved to be the richest and most complete in the world. When indeed the Greek articulate speech of the prehistoric generations evolved into written language in the historical times and delivered the models to the soul and intellect of the Greeks, the Greek Social Models of highest quality emerged. It was then that from the tradition of myths and history, the Greek Civilization was created, which is considered the one with the highest quality in the world. It is a certain knowledge that the consensus achieved is that which gives to the Greek culture its highest degree of quality (Fig.3).



Fig. 3. Myths of power as spirit and strength in Hercules, Proteus as the creator of civilization, and Minotaur of technology means, as models for the Ancient Greek society

3 The Evaluation of Quality in Tradition

The certain knowledge of Greek Culture's supreme quality, was founded by the West-Europeans Enlightenments, but it had been considered as a Social Model first by the Romans. Already from the early stages of the creation of their own nation, when on the hills of Rome, the Romans were neighboring and coexisting with the first Greek social groups, the Social Models of the Greeks were copied by the Romans. The Romans then founded the development of their own culture with the Greek Social Model. When after the Romans, in the cycles of the life of generations, the Greek Social Models were evaluated as optimal, it was copied by other peoples too, and thus they became universal and created the "Western Civilization"(4).

The embedded discourse however, which was handed down together with the Greek spoken and written discourse, was received by each people with its own different perception. First, the Roman and Greek people developed their civilization in parallel in the first centuries of History, which was based on the democratic "principle of consensus." Of those two first in quality Civilizations, that of the Greeks was the first to reach the peak of popular evaluation (5). This was documented by the Enlightenment, but the Era of Enlightenment was preceded by the Renaissance, and the Renaissance was preceded by the Age of Iconoclasm.

Iconoclasm, Renaissance and Enlightenment mark therefore the last points of Greek Civilization's, quality evaluation, and the preceding eras of the Roman Empire and Christianity up to the Byzantine era of Iconoclasm are the early ones. During the Age of Iconoclasm, the tradition of Greek Civilization was dramatically interrupted, with incalculable disasters. The causes of the reversal course of Greek Culture's quality assessment, which transformed it from an example to be imitated into a "negative model" (6) have not yet been investigated in depth. It took the Enlightenment to continue the cycle of establishing Greek Culture as a Global Social Model (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Iconoclasm, Renaissance, and Enlightenment, marks of Greek Civilization

4 The Tradition of Greek Culture in East and West

The tradition of the Greeks' Social Model began to be transmitted to the West by the Romans, but in the East it had been in some ways already transmitted by Alexander III, whom the History defined as "the Great". It is certain knowledge that there is a decisive difference between the tradition of the Ancient Greek Models in the East and those that were transmitted to the West. The reason for the difference is that at the same time of the Greeks' Social Model transmitting in the East, the tradition of the Greek spoken and written language was spread by Alexander. Thus, during the decisive turning point of developments, brought about by the coming of Christ, the Social Model of the Greeks had been transmitted to the West with the Roman spoken and written language, while in the East with Greek.

The Standards of the peoples of the East were formed in the Post-Christian Era after the Hellenistic cultural tradition, while in the West the cultural tradition of the Roman Empire prevailed. It should be noted here, though, that both the Social Standards of the Macedonian Kingdoms and the Roman Empire differed radically from the Social Standard of the Greek Classical Era, with the highest quality worldwide. From Christ onwards, a decisive turning point in the development of the peoples of the Middle East, Asia Minor and North Africa on the one hand, and Western Europe on the other, began. It was the prevalence of multinational states, within which the peoples of the Classical Age were integrated.

During the Post-Christian Era, began also a new era of peoples' migrations from North to South and from East to West. At the same time, the Muslim religion was created in the footsteps of the Jewish religion and Christianity. The decisive shift in the development of peoples in the West and the East was that social groups were then organized based on religions and not on nations. So, West and East moved further away from the tradition of Ancient Greek Models. In Western Europe the religion of Christianity had spread after the Roman Tradition, as at the beginning of the Post-Christ Era it was a territory of the Roman Empire (Fig.5).



Fig. 5. Greek and Phoenician Cultures, Greek and Roman influence, Muslim Empire

5 The Traditions of Religions and Peoples

When the religion of Christianity prevailed in the East, the Byzantine Empire retained the Greek spoken and written language, but followed the Social Models of the Roman multinational tradition, and was organized on the basis of the religion (7) and not of the nation. The multinational Byzantium thus, gradually became more and more distant from the Ancient Greek models. So, for most of its history, the Byzantine Empire was a continuation of the Roman cultural tradition. In Western Europe, on the contrary, the Germanic tribes, who came down from the North to the South, shaped the Western European version of Christianity according to their own folk tradition.

This West-European Christianity, which from the 8th century abandoned the Roman cultural tradition, approached the Ancient Greek Models with its folk tradition of the “feudal system”. And this version of the Ancient Greek Models determined the developments there from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. Then, from the time of Charlemagne, the West distanced itself from the Byzantine tradition and, by overlapping the differences in religious details, distanced itself from the peoples of the East and created a Western European culture (8) based on the German folk tradition.

It was around that time that the Balkans also received Slavic peoples, relatives of the Germans, from the North, and from the South Semitic. From the East, Mongol peoples moved in Eastern and Western Europe. Then Muslim religion gradually spread to the new tribes that came to the Middle East and Asia Minor. The Balkans were thus at the center of the transformations in the quality of social models. At times, therefore, and until the peak of developments with the Industrial Revolution, the Byzantine tradition remained local and coexisted with the Muslim religion in the Balkans (Fig.6).



Fig. 6. Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire, East and West world

6 The Peculiarities of the Balkan Peoples and Democracy

In the Balkans, the Byzantine tradition and the Muslim religion clashed or mixed and coexisted, from the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution. This is how a folk tradition of the Balkan peoples' culture was shaped during the Industrial Age, having elements of Greek, Roman and Asian Models. This tradition of the Balkan societies of Greco-Roman models, which were then enriched with Muslim ones, bring the Balkan peoples to have common traditions, while maintaining their national models. These are the "Balkan Folk Cultures", which historians make the mistake of not combining with the ancient Greek History.

Although the West European Enlightenment adamantly rejected the "Roman Catholic" tradition (9) and admirably highlighted Ancient Greece, the knowledge they established about the Tradition of the social models of the Greeks proved to be uncertain, so it is ΔΟΞΑΣΙΑ, subjective view (1). In fact the Enlightenmentists revived mythology and focused on what they called "Classical Age". They completed Greek History with Alexander the Great, and they considered the Greek people to be the sole heirs of the ancient Greek tradition. Greek people, though, poorly as they understood it according to their own understanding of ancient Greek models. By doing this, they ignored the folk tradition of all Balkan peoples.

In the idealized Greek History of the Enlightenment, which they inherited throughout the Industrial Age, the ancient Greek Tradition was defined as "Democracy", borrowing the term from the Social Models of Athens. They idealized this Democracy, ignoring its defects which are also defects of the Greeks and some other Balkan peoples. At the same time, they did not follow the developments of the Greek tradition after Alexander the Great. From the certain knowledge acquired during the Industrial Age though, it is proven that the Democracy of the Westerners differentiated and distanced itself from the Greek tradition (6, 8, 10), as it happened in Ancient Greece from the time of the poor territory of Macedonia (Fig.7).



Fig. 7. Balkan folk cultures in nutrition and customs

7 The Diachronic Evolution of Democracy

The poor Doric Kingdom of Macedonia of the Classical Age was a Republic like the Kingdom of Sparta. This Macedonia, had developed under Philip II and his son Alexander into an extremely wealthy empire. The successors of Alexander the Great, who inherited this empire, divided it after struggles among themselves into kingdoms. The "Kingdoms of the Heirs" distanced themselves from the ancient model of Democracy

and followed thenceforth the Asiatic tradition of the absolute monarch. One such successor kingdom, that of Macedonia, continued to control in various ways the rest of Greece, which maintained the democratic tradition in variations.

The various versions of Democracy in the Hellenistic Era were indeed an evolution of the prehistoric tradition in the Greek tribes of the Historical Times, with adaptation to the changes in the environment (5). It did not everywhere, though, preserve the quality it had in the Classical Era. Only in Lacedaemon, which continued to be called “Kingdom” but was Democracy, did the quality of the Classical Era remain. In Lacedaemon, the socio-economic system had been called by Lycurgus “Megali Ritra”, which means “Great Tradition” and was a record of the certain knowledge of Spartans’ ancestors.

Lycurgus knew that Tradition is all that certain knowledge, that is handed down from one generation to another in the cycles of life. This “Tradition of Certain Knowledge” is based on the principles (7) that stem from the myths of Prehistory and do not change but are timeless. Thanks to the philosophy of Lycurgus, the peak of the quality of Greek Models reached the Classical Age in Sparta and their tradition was maintained there until their violent end by Christianity in the 11th century. In Athens, on the contrary, the Tradition of the principles of Greek myths that had been established by Drakon was altered during the development of the Athenian Democracy (Fig.8).



Fig. 8. The poor Kingdom of Macedonia developed into an empire, and then divided into kingdoms of absolute monarchs

8 Concluding

During the Prehistoric Age, the certain knowledge was acquired from the observation of nature and from the experience that stemmed from the traditions of myths. That certain knowledge was handed down from one generation to another, in the cycles of life, and passed down solutions to recurring problems and models to imitate. During the Historical Age, the certain knowledge was acquired from History and the solutions it yielded were exemplary objects to study for the formation of Social Models. Thus, arose the philosophies that created the Greek civilization. In the Athenian Republic, the tradition of principles according to the “Draconian Laws” began to be spoiled by the “Laws of Solon”.

Solon was a great philosopher, but he was also a well-traveled merchant. So, the spoiling of the principles of tradition occurred in Athens when trade flourished, along with the increase in its population. The certain knowledge that stems from this Athenian experience is that quality cannot be achieved when there are large quantities and numbers. That is why the decline of Democracy, which began with Solon and Pericles,

brought its essential end during the Hellenistic Era. Corresponding certain knowledge also derives from Rome, where the quality of its oligopolistic democracy was degraded when it became a multinational empire of 70 millions.

On the contrary, in Sparta of the Great Tradition, despite its small population, the quality of its democracy was maintained for millennia. Sparta was, however, networked with other “City-State” democracies in the “Peloponnesian Alliance”. In fact, all ancient City-States were similarly networked, either with alliances or with “Confederations”. And all these networks were connected in a huge shape, which we will call the “Network of Greek Culture”. The certain knowledge that derives from the experience of this Greek Culture’s Network is that quality is intertwined with a small number of networked units, when they are grouped together and compose larger groups that nevertheless maintain their quality variety.

In the various aspects of the Network of Greek Culture, technology also flourished. The share of technology in human civilization began to increase, though, from Alexander the Great until the Roman Era, when technology began to be considered as civilization. After the Industrial Revolution, the quality of this “Civilization of Technology” was lost (10), as the philosophical treatment of nature was essentially abandoned and the observation of phenomena was done with the exclusive purpose of exploiting it. The exploitation of nature gave the humans of the Industrial Age the illusion that they could control it with technology (11) (Fig.9).

In this way, after the Industrial Revolution, the friendly towards humans nature, which constitutes the necessary environment for their survival, was gradually destroyed, and humanity’s very existence is in danger today (12, 13). The belief of the Industrial Age, that the human can subjugate and exploit nature with technology (14), is opposed by the certain knowledge of the Megali Ritra and the Greek folk tradition. They both have as a common starting point the study of nature, with the aim of preserving its variety. The paradox is that achieving the pursuit of quality by protecting nature can be done in the underdeveloped Balkans by utilizing industrial technology (15, 16). This will be the “Post-Industrial Civilization” that will save nature and humanity (Fig.10).

The peoples of the Balkans, with their common traditions and common heritage in their lands of Ancient Greek Civilization, have today acquired industrial experience without fortunately possessing neither industrial tradition nor industrialization. At the same time, they have communication with parts of industrialized Europe that were in antiquity parts of the Greek Culture’s Network. Risking being accused of being Greek-centric, we propose that the Balkan states, having their ancient Greek civilization and traditions as valuable tools, network together, utilize modern means, and structure their post-industrial future starting from zero. A post-industrial political-economic system will then be created in southeastern Europe from this network of peoples, and will replace the corresponding system of globalization, which was once American and is now Asian.

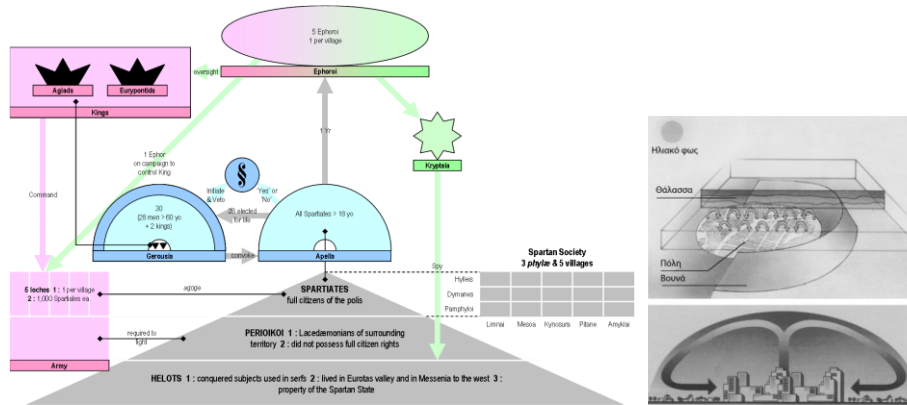


Fig. 9. The peak of the quality in Sparta of the Great Tradition, Waste of forces in the civilization of Technology

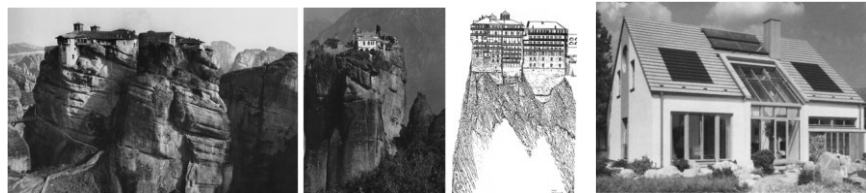


Fig. 10. Economy of forces in traditional and ecological architecture

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