

Attic Chronicle by Phocion

More on national leadership

Phocion raises the key philosophical issue for the anti-Papandreou movement: Plato versus Aristotle.

Readers of this column in Greece raised their figurative eyebrows when confronted by our indictment last week of the first head of the Greek state, Count John Capodistria. Many objected to the fact that national "dirty laundry" was being examined in a non-Greek publication. Few shared with us the great Adamantios Coray's contemptuous views of the "Venetian vermin," Capodistria.

The activists and leaders of the burgeoning Greek nationalist movement will have to become accustomed to greater psychological discomforts than this if they are to save that imperiled nation in the months ahead. Much more "family dirty laundry" has to be reviewed and examined before they can discover, within themselves, the moral and intellectual courage needed for a nation-building endeavor.

Neither the Church nor the Academy in Greece has placed a premium on instilling courage, either intellectual or moral, in the minds of the young. And no other institution has a greater influence over the formation of the Greek population's pattern of thought and emotion than these two, regardless of their extremely low visibility in the nation's and the population's daily life.

Both the Greek Orthodox Church and the Academy of Athens live by the perpetuation of the great historical hoax of Aristotle: the Church especially, but also the Academy.

It is not accidental that the premier university of the country, that of Thes-

salonica, is named *The Aristotelian University*. Of all the current and past members of the modern Academy of Athens, I would exclude only the great Theodoracopoulos and Papanoutsos from this sweeping indictment. From among the currently living non-Academy scholars, perhaps only Leonidas Bartzeliotis understands the deadly importance of the Plato-versus-Aristotle fight in matters of statecraft.

Theodoracopoulos and Papanoutsos are no longer among the living, and Bartzeliotis is not anywhere close to the Academy or to any position which might influence national educational policy. And in the meantime, a self-professed cultural boor, actress Melina Mercouri, is the government's minister of culture.

The gist of the matter: As was known during his own lifetime, Aristotle was literally a political agent of the Persian Empire at the time of the great conflict between Greek republicanism and Persian Empire despotism during the fourth century B.C.

Aristotle was promoted as a respectable "philosopher" after the assassination of Alexander the Great by the military and oligarchical interests of the Alexandria court, which professed an undying hostility to the republican world outlook and political program associated with Plato and the Platonic Academy, the inspirers of Alexander the Great. The Alexandria oligarchy promoted the reputation of Aristotle for the purpose of combating the republican influence of Plato.

This piece of ancient cultural warfare set in motion a train of events which shaped all subsequent development in Western civilization. The contemporary relevance of the Alexandrian "Aristotle myth" for Greek nationalist leaders attempting to salvage their nation today is twofold: First, for reasons to be explained at another time, without the pervasive influence of the "Aristotle myth," another modern Alexandrian, the raving homosexual poet Constantine Cavafy, would not have been made the great cultural lion and hero of 20th-century Greek culture, adored and worshipped equally by both the "left" and the nationalist "right" of the Greek political spectrum.

Second, without blowing up the "Aristotle myth," that which today calls itself the Greek nationalist *parataxis* will never be able to disentangle the obscene symbiosis between the oligarchical monarchist tendency, the imperial and oligarchical Church influence, and the republican orientation of the institutions of the armed forces.

Without breaking up this obscene symbiosis, those nationalist forces, which might even topple the present Papandreou tyranny, will likely find themselves in the same humiliated position as hero Adm. Constantine Canaris in the 1860s, begging hat-in-hand at the Danish Glucksburg court for a spare monarch for his nation.

So, you say, Admiral Canaris thus gave us our royal family: George I, Constantine XI, George II, Paul, Constantine XII. They all came and went, some toppled by military republican movements, others by civilian. The last royal exile was caused by a military government. The republican tradition of the military institutions has had difficulty finding compatibility with monarchy since the incarceration of Colocotronis.