

PREFACE

The year 1987 found Panteios School in the midst of an anxious effort to elevate and upgrade itself as an Institution which has the ambition and ought to play a significant role towards the development of the social sciences in Greece. With this understanding the celebrations for the 60th Anniversary of Panteios School, besides its symbolic character, was determined to be in the service of these new orientations and targets of the Institution.

Indeed, the transition from the classic industrial period to the technological way of production and communication which became very vivid in the seventies changed a great deal the role and the University's part in connection with the national State and the process of knowledge in general. This very evolution from the traditional, national and all-sciences, classic University to the ecumenical University was the outcome of the catalytic major changes which determined the process of production and circulation of scientific knowledge. At the same time new learning areas in the social sciences were asked to play a part in studying the new social phenomena and the unprecedented development of the societies in total. The transition from the representative pluralism to the democratic pluralism which is evident nowadays seems to be the top of a process that presupposes mainstream changes in the particular parts of modern societies. Cosmogony and quick evolution, along with the enormous accumulation of knowledge, forces not only to a critic look and self-knowledge but also to systematic watching and active participation in the international and domestic being in order for someone to find himself in accordance with his era. Within this framework the scientific knowledge proves to be itself the main factor towards understanding of human relations, and the approaching and participating in the development process as well.

This observation tends to be critical for Greece because the basic factors of the Greek society-among which first is the political one-by being neiled on a pure empiricism kept a contemptuous safety distance from the scientific knowledge and documentation. A distance which, undoubtedly, was dictated by fear and ignorance. It is however this distance which in fact kept the Greek society away from the fundamental formation of its historical

past up to the Turkish occupation, in other words from its continuous attention to the scientific and empirical knowledge.

The Panteios School's administration knowing their historical and scientific responsibility, as soon as they were elected, in 1984, elaborated a general reformation plan for the Universities' system in Attica. It included mainly all the Schools of Higher education but also the National and Kapodistrian University. This plan was the opposite of a totally irrational, old fashioned and unattainable proposition for an Attica University which aimed to put together all these Schools of Attica under a unified central administration which in a way could be able to control their opinion.

The new proposition of ours provided that the Schools of Higher Education would be independent, flexible and somehow specialized University units in the framework of which Panteion University was supposed to undertake a dominant role to the further development of social sciences and generally to the reordering and revitalising the Greek University. Thus the change of Panteios School's name to Panteion University implied a reality and pointed out a symbolic and at the same time essential moment of the whole process of transformation exemplified by developments such as: foundation of five new departments which would cultivate new scientific areas of social sciences, new directions and study programs, institutions for supporting research (Research Centers) and graduate studies; development of international cooperation and participation in the European exchange programs; establishment of an Institution suitable for the improvement of the ecumenical physiognomy of Panteion University; direct involvement of the Panteion Community to programs of continuous education and its involvement and appearance in scientific activities related to various mainly underdeveloped areas of the country; the institutional separation of the administrative, economic and supply activity of the Univ. from its educational and research essentially character; Finally the technological modernization, the expansion of its Central Library, and the buildings structure and of course the increase of the teaching and research staff.

As it was expected the reaction of the political authority and of the establishment in the university's community was as big as the undertaking was reaching thus up to a point so that mobilize even the President of the Republic in order to prevent it. Such an attitude as this was expected, however, because the process of modernization in the social sciences is directly related to the self conscience of the society and subsequently to the control of the political authority since the latter negates its uncontrolled and lethargic intention or in other words its tendency to use the social good that the state represents for itself or for its own interest.

In other words the celebration, which remained in a strictly scientific frame without useless and expensive shows, was getting into the frame of a global policy in which justification and persuasion didn't allow the political authority to misunderstand that the new reformation program was looking forward to the future and the progress.

Furthermore it had all the will and the convenience to refer to the reactionary surrounding of the rulers but had the means to overcome them as well. Upon this thinking is based also the de facto change of the Panteios School's name to Panteion University for which the great political leader of the post war period, the former chancellor of Germany Willy Brandt, came especially to Athens, thereby honoring and legitimising it with his presence and his inspired speech in the ceremony Hall of our Institution.*

The results which have been achieved to a great extent until 1990 and are typically confirmed by the Presidential decree (No 377/89) mark a new period for the University matters and particularly for the Social Sciences in our country.

Based on the abilities of the University's community to make these achievements worthy and its will to work within an institutional and democratic surrounding—in the spirit of the customary rules imposed by civilization and culture—it will be determined the continuing of this reform. A reform which first of all ought to show that the critical approach of social and political matters, the acceptance of differentiation and objection, the knowledge attempt that rejects whatever is self evident and beliefs and that the personal consequence and self responsibility as well constitute the fundamental preconditions of freedom.

The collection and publication of all the speeches delivered at our University during the year 1987 to honor Panteion Institution for its contribution both to social sciences and the country's development is a small offer towards this direction.

Athens, 20 Dec. 1991

GEORGE D. CONTOGEORGIS

*Professor of Pol. Science, ex Rector of Panteion
University (1984-1990)*

** It has been published in a special festal volume (1987) under the title: «Peace and Development: Their Interdependence».*