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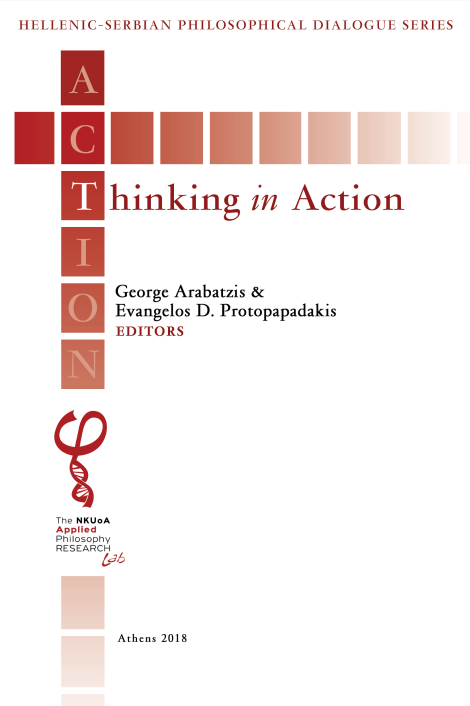

Chapter

Preface

Evangelos D. Protopapadakis, George Arabatzis

Thinking in Action

George Arabatzis, Nikos Erinakis, Željko Kaluđerović, Milenko A. Perović, Una Popović, Dragan Prole, Evangelos D. Protopapadakis, Kostas Theologou

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HELLENIC-SERBIAN PHILOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE SERIES

Thinking in Action

George Arabatzis and Evangelos D. Protopapadakis
Editors



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General Editors:
George Arabatzis, Una Popovic, Dragan Prole, Evangelos D. Protopapadakis

VOLUME I
George Arabatzis & Evangelos D. Protopapadakis, eds., *Thinking in Action*

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PREFACE

This volume is the offspring of friendship, respect and commitment between two academic communities that admittedly have a lot in common, especially with regard to philosophy, and hopefully as many differences as needed in order to secure a long-lasting and fertile exchange of ideas; it is also the natural-born child of necessity: philosophy is about argumentation, debate and confrontation.

Thinking in Action inaugurates Hellenic-Serbian Philosophical Dialogue Series that entertains no hesitation in being as ambitious as any philosophical series could be: it seeks to establish a permanent, wide and rich channel of fruitful philosophical interaction between the two philosophical communities. The initial idea for this venture belongs to the staff members from both the Department of Philosophy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and the Department of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad that are mentioned as the General Editors of this Series; the aspiration, however, is to make this Series a meeting point for all Serbian and Greek philosophers and scholars.

Greece and Serbia have long and undisturbed friendly relations throughout their history, but the philosophical background on which we hope to fructify our meeting is best exemplified in the person of the Serbian thinker and pedagogue Dositej Obradović (1739-1811). Obradović from the early days of his career, already a monk, was interested in classical Greece and the Greek language. His many travels as a young man, in Greece also, helped him to learn Ancient as well as Modern Greek and twice he had been a student in Greek land, first in 1765 in Smyrna, where he studied theology, philosophy, Greek literature, rhetoric with Hierotheos Dendrinos and, later, while he worked in Corfu, where he studied with Andreas Petritsopoulos. Next, Obradović will travel to Europe and become familiar with the ideas of European Enlightenment. This paradigmatic figure summarizes all that is common in Greek and Serbian philosophy: Greek culture and philosophy, European modernism, and, last but not least, Orthodox spirituality.

By committing ourselves to a discussion that aspires to persist in time, we see an opportunity to engage the philosophical understanding of both Greek and Serbian students and academics towards a mutually beneficial chance for our philosophical communities to debate on central ideas and collaborate on projects.

Together with these broad introductive ideas, the volume at hand has a specific interest as the scope of the papers presented clearly demonstrates.

George Arabatzis is concerned with the problem and the intellectual legacy of the concept of Byzantinism and its relation to action on the limits of philosophical constructivism. George Arabatzis compares the concept and its fundamental ambiguity with some key notions of the Byzantine tradition

and aims to demonstrate the ways that it surpasses the strict medieval or pre-modern context in order to infiltrate not only our present state of ideas but also our normativities and our proper modernity in its method to deal with fields of immense cultural capital like post-Byzantine anthropology.

Nikos Erinakis is studying two of the most debated notions of the modern philosophical vocabulary, i.e. "authenticity" and "autonomy" that although often indeterminate they eventually come into conflict. Nikos Erinakis seeks to detach autonomy from authenticity, recusing the idea that the latter can or must be a condition of the former, and he acknowledges that not always the same people exemplify both categorizations, the crucial test for them two being the degree of independence or even rupture of one from the other, leaving aside the axiological or even the meta-axiological judgment.

Željko Kaluđerović is writing about the actually dominant trend of globalization and is trying to determinate the criteria by which one can define it. After a summary of some major contributions on the field, Željko Kaluđerović insists particularly on David Held's opinions on the matter, who in a sense makes a theory of the theory of globalization, classifying the tribes of the relevant specialists and proposing, by the same, a range of comprehensive approaches and a span of possible actions one should undertake to deal with this multi-faceted and complex reality and the various serious repercussions it has on the lives of all.

Milenko A. Perović provides a brief account of the Philosophy of Praxis, once a pride and honor of the Yugoslavian thought. The Praxis School, nourished by a greater liberalization in former Yugoslavia and inspired by the theories of Karl Marx to which it aspired to give a second souffle, became an expanding thought that contributed greatly to the critical dialogue of the radical West. For Milenko Perović, the discussion concerned in particular the then much debated question of humanism and its relation to Marxism that the Praxis School defended against other currents, like Althusser's, that plainly rejected it.

Una Popović gives us a detailed account of the progress of the study of aesthetics in Modern Serbia. Beyond the research on the fate of a discipline and of the institutions related to it, Una Popovic's paper outlines something more general, which is largely representative of the adventure of philosophy in Serbia and of a real politics of difference, first from the former communist regimes and later from what can be called the consumption society. Yet, this politics of difference in the practice of the Serbian study of aesthetics is not one but multiple, a clear proof of its energetic character and vitality.

Dragan Prole undertakes a meditation on difference where he puts the postmodernist rhetoric of difference on critical trial together with a real and deep concern about the destiny of critical thought amidst a heavily homogenized world. The problem lies deeper than in what is believed to be political correctness; for Dragan Prole the rhetoric of homogenized difference implies a precise orientation in what Aristotle would name theoretical sciences towards some very un-differentiated metropolitan expectations. Holding high the torch of the

critical flame is, like before, still the clear objective of the philosophical theorist.

Evangelos Protopapadakis discusses the moral standing of autonomy in the fields of Medical Ethics and Bioethics by means of a thought experiment that concerns administering placebo medication without letting the patient know on purpose of serving the patient's best interests. Evangelos Protopapadakis argues that the conflict between autonomy and utility in cases as such is due to the strict concept of autonomy usually employed in Bioethics and Medical Ethics; the upshot is according to Protopapadakis that a patient-doctor relationship is not an ordinary social one, therefore the role of autonomy should probably be reconsidered.

Kostas Theologou in his essay examines the rather complex relationship between the Orthodox Church, the Greek Society and the Hellenic State. To this purpose he investigates the various historical and political circumstances in Greece after the official establishment of the Modern Greek-State, taking also into account the post-byzantine Ottoman occupation. Kostas Theologou argues that the identity of modern Greeks is due to various cultural sources and deeply tradition based. Theologou concludes with the view that only longstanding processes towards supranational paradigms have the power to reform traditional value-established national identities.

Having high aspirations is one thing; meeting these aspirations as well as the expectations of the reader is a totally different one. We wish *Thinking in Action*, the first volume of the Hellenic-Serbian Philosophical Dialogue Series, apart from being the initial step of a long journey, will also be a fascinating one to the reader.

George Arabatzis and Evangelos Protopapadakis
Athens, 3 April 2018