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On the general significance for Greece of the Derveni Affair

The reason why I insist on the controversy is that the case epitomises the chronic malfunctioning and *pathogeneia* of the production system for spiritual-cultural goods and services (knowledge, art, education, organization etc.) in Greece. The Derveni Papyrus affair is both huge in objective importance and colossal in the mismanagement and failure involved. It is also both typical of the modern Greek malaise and absolutely clear-cut. There is no escape for the perpetrators of this scientific and national crime if you want to chase them down. And I strongly believe that in the situation we now find ourselves in in this country, in order for the necessary reforms to really be implemented there is imperative need for the personalization of success and failure, esp. when they are paradigmatic. Diagnosis of the sickness of the body-political in general terms and equally generic discussion of recovery plans will simply not suffice even if they move on the right tracks. To ensure perseverance in the right direction (not least by fostering new interest- focuses and providing consistent and constant stimuli to the ablest part of society- now suffering under conditions of underperformance or marginalization- to *declare* themselves and thus create a majoritarian dynamic for radical reforms) success must be rewarded and failure punished irrespective of any moral character of the responsibilities involved. In the conditions of terminal crisis that the modern Greek state has now reached (with all its institutional basis in total disrepute) it is immeasurably more important to promote ability than sentimental good will, and to chastise incompetence than idiosyncratic self-will. Moral issues belong to the divine jurisdiction. Unlawful action falls under the cognizance of the law-courts. The political question is one of knowledge ,capacity, foresight and efficiency. Yes and of persuasive projection. But substance alone can consistently govern successful appearances (for the most part, as Aristotle formulates it, and in the final reckoning), not of course the other way round. That would have been an anomaly unworthy of God and Nature!

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(From a letter)