

Türkiyeli meslektaşlarla iki taraflı ya da uluslararası toplantılarda aktif birliktelikten yanayım. Ayrıca iki ülkedeki Marksist bilim insanları ile geliştirilecek ve planlanacak ortak programlar bence çok iyi olur. BAA'nın gelecekteki olası ortak çalışmalar için KKE'nin ilgili grubu, özellikle İdeoloji ve Bilim/Araştırma birimi ile ilişki kurmasını dilerim.

**Çok teşekkür ederiz, yeni çalışmalarda kısa zaman sonra tekrar birlikte olmak dileğiyle....**

*Madde, Diyalektik ve Toplum Dergisi Yayın Kurulu olarak Prof. Dr. Zühal Okuyan'a Yunan Bilim İnsanı Prof. Dr. Yannis Missirlis ile gerçekleştirdiği röportaj ve Türkçe'ye çevrilmesindeki emeğinden dolayı teşekkür ederiz.*

## An Interview with Prof. Dr. Yannis Missirlis

Greek scientist and marxist Prof. Dr. Yannis Missirlis attended the 6th Symposium on Evolution, Science and Education in Istanbul organised by BAA on 23-24 December 2017. We had an interview with him on science, Marxism and current problems of science.

**You have been to Turkey several times and you have given conferences in various occasions. Lastly you spoke in the 6th Symposium on Evolution, Science and Education in Istanbul organised by BAA. Can you tell us about your relationship with science?**

All my life so far has been spent around books, reading, studies at all academic levels and working in Academia for 40 years until retirement 4 years ago. My fascination was with History (official and otherwise) and Literature, however I studied Engineering (Chemical), at the advice of my godfather so that I could secure a job after graduation.

For a number of reasons I slighted from normal engineering science to one dealing with the human body (biomedical engineering). Since then I fell «in love» with biological sciences and I

continue to this day to attempt to understand the various aspects of life. My engineering education has helped me in approaching the various aspects of manifestations of life in health and disease with an interdisciplinary logic.

**You are a member of KKE. Since when? Is there a contradiction between being a scientist and a struggler as a communist?**

I have been attracted to the communist ideas since my early teens, seeing the inequalities and the persecution of «good» people in my neighborhood. Right after my birth KKE was outlawed (in the midst of the Greek Civil War). It was legalized again in 1974 after the «fall» of the military Junta. I am a member since then.

There is no contradiction between being an active communist and an active scientist. On the contrary. Each of these two attributes reinforces the other in my trying to reach a higher level of understanding of how nature and society works, and contemplating how to improve both.

There is an inherent difficulty however. To be in academia, doing research, being in the forefront of “your” science, in a capitalist system, and at the same time trying to overthrow this system creates a

situ-ation, which in some instances can reach schizophrenic conditions. By this I mean that sometimes you choose to apply to the institutional funding agencies to get the material tools for “your” research, knowing very well how and for what goals these institutions support research funding. If you choose not to apply, because of this system you are left, in some scientific fields, out of the current “state of art” with consequences that may be harmful to your professional career.

That is where your communist ideology can be a great advisor on how to conduct yourself and find the ways to be of service to your students, your colleagues, to the people in general.

**In Turkey some people from various scientific fields have started to work to strengthen the relationship between their fields and marxism. How do you find these efforts?**

Not only it is commendable but, in the current social circumstances in your country it is imperative. Marxism, as a philosophical system, with dialectical materialism as one of its major pillars is an invaluable companion and guide for those wishing to understand and unravel the general (and specific) laws of motion and development of nature, of the human society and of human thought. As a Greek, I felt somehow naively proud to learn that Marx presented his doctoral thesis on “The difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature”. The conscious utilization of dialectics as a tool to design experiments and analyze data and results in the natural sciences is invaluable.

**What do you think about the gap between social sciences and so called natural basic sciences today? And about over specialization?**

I am not a social scientist. I only follow as a layperson the social sciences' outcomes. It does not come as a surprise, however, the lower position, if I may say so, that the social sciences find themselves in our capitalist countries. If one

looks at the percentage of funding in the EU programs for Social Sciences it is obvious that they do not wish to support research in those areas. The selective funding is for those scientific areas that promise a technological outcome resulting in economic profit. More interesting is the fact that whatever social sciences' projects are funded have the purpose of convincing the people of the inevitability of “status quo” and of brainwashing accordingly.

The issue of overspecialization is also a serious outcome of the values of the capitalist society. The reductionist approach in the biological and physical sciences has produced some excellent results. However, if this approach is left on its own, if it is not accompanied by the systemic and general environmental space of its microcosm may lead to a fragmented understanding of science and consequently of the dialectical unity of the natural processes.

**Do you think as BAA we can collaborate with greek marxist scientists in near future? (articles, joint meetings, common scientific work...)**

I participated the 6th Symposium on Evolution, Science and Education. To the extent that I could understand some of the lectures through translation I was satisfied. But I cannot form a full opinion as the language gap hinders my understanding. I am in favor of active collaboration with Turkish colleagues, either with bilateral meetings or in international ones. To extend collaborative schemes with Marxist scientists in both countries would be more that welcome on my part. I hope that BAA will contact the CC of the GCP (KKE) , especially the Ideological and Science/Research team to explore the various possibilities for collaboration.

**Thank you very much. We wish to see you again soon.**