The concept of "Philotimo": Semantics, Tradition, and Globalization of the Term for Greek Identity in an Era of Crisis

Thematic Unit:
“Terminology in specific subject fields – Lexicographical and terminographical studies”

And philotimo is a sense of dignity and respect, as well. It’s the determination that has

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A Philotimo Mosaic in this Presentation ...

From Homer to co-ops

Greek soccer players has philotimo, under one condition.

Greek Navy men have something unique... has philotimo
Philotimo in Greek Collective Self

• In Greek culture “philotimo” is a central value (Kostoulas, 2008; Skyftou, 2005; Hoban et al, 2004; Koutsantoni, 2004; Triandis, 2000; Mavreas et al, 1989; Kourvetaris, 1971; Vassiliou et al, 1966), a non translatable and unique conscious “arete” of honor and pride (with a rational capacity of logos), with the basis of empathy for others, as expressed through acts of generosity and sacrifice (building pathos).

• Philotimo may boost people to do more than what is expected. Hence, philotimo is a life principle for Greeks; it is interpreted as love for honor, honor “to show” to the others and honor “to receive” from the others, a characteristic of intense in small communities of the Greek periphery.

• It is a case of an ideal occurrence where participants generally accept a norm based in the foundation of that normative society, as defined by Habermas (1990, pp.182-183).
Philotimo Meets Kalokagathia?

• The Greek value system since antiquity offers insights on atomistic behavior, private ownership of property and its protection, the division of labor, free foreign trade, exchange value, money and interest, and policy issues using the ideas of Hesiod, Democritus, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle and others (Doukas, 2007; Petrochilos, 2002).

• Originally, kalokagathia uses human physique (kalos) in pair with virtue, justice, and wisdom (all in agathos) that emphasizes the moral responsibility found in Homer’s texts. The pragmatic content of the concept suits to a community organized on the basis of scattered individual households to defend against enemies (of the time) in a society with a “shame culture”.

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Philotimo as a Virtue …

• Furthermore, the three central concepts of virtue ethics *virtue, practical wisdom* and *eudaimonia* are comprehensible, objective, and empirically truthful (Held, 1980; p.331) in various manifestations of philotimo.

• It is a virtue that matches with credibility, with the tendency to cooperate and the ritual of keeping your word (face and commitments) without reserving it in a contract; it is a way of life with *ethos*, consistent with the teleological approach of Aristotle.

• Philotimo has its anthropological roots in the “*poetics of manhood*” (Herzfeld, 1991; p. 8) that are easily observable in micro-communities of the Greek periphery, like Crete, and challenged by various categories of non European foreigners residing and working in contemporary Greek society (Petronoti, 2003).

• Philotimo cultivates a reflective fabric of “pay-it-forward” ties.
Tracing Philotimo Back to Homer’s Iliad

• One of the most famous scenes in Greek literature occurs in book Book One of the Iliad. Agamemnon, commander of the Greeks, is forced to give up Chryseis, because she is the daughter of a priest of Apollo. The only way to lift the plague is to give her up, which Agamemnon, a man of duty who sacrificed his youngest daughter to make the expedition against Troy possible, duly does.

• Achilles obeys, but announces that he will no longer fight for the Greeks, and returns. Overcome by grief, from the death of Patroklos went back.

• Both Achilles’ departure from battle and his return to it are prompted by matters of the heart, but also of honor, respect, generosity and sacrifice. In the first instance, the dishonor of losing Briseis prevents him from continuing to fight in the common effort of the Greeks; in the second instance, honor and pride demands that he leads again the battle (for his friend and the Greeks).

(Psaropoulos, “From Homer to co-ops”, BusinessFile, Dec 2009)
The name of the leading role "Mavrogyalouros" has become part of the political terminology in Greece. Despite the original demagogic rhetoric, "Mavrogyalouros" recalls philotimo traits to correct and defends the public good, in the end.
A stereotype of the tourist industry that “Greeks are the waiters of Europe”, triggered the response of the former Greek Tourism Minister Olga Kefalogianni emphasized that this is as an unacceptable message. “Greece is the place of hospitality and philotimo and we have to promote it.” (January 26, 2013).

Philotimo, in this case, is used as a skill in service industry.
Mantinades are folk rhyming couplets very popular in the island of Crete. E.g.:

• Wherever a shepherd is that is where to find manhood, generosity, philotimo, sentimentality, and captainship (hegemonic status).

• A man of philotimo deserves respect and nothing humiliates him but death.

• After “apologize” was invented, philotimo was lost.

This cultural perspective includes (Jones, 2007):

• learning values; i.e. dominant beliefs and attitudes,

• following rituals; i.e. collective activities,

• modeling against role models, and

• understanding symbols.
Power Distance (PD): describes the extent to which unequal distribution of power and wealth is tolerated between social strata.

Masculinity (MF): refers to the degree to which stereotypical masculine traits like authority, assertiveness, performance and success are preferred to female characteristics like personal relationships, quality of life, service and welfare.

Individual and Collective orientation (IC): determines whether people prefer to work alone or in groups. It indicates the degree of social and community integration.

Uncertainty Avoidance (UA): measures how people will deal with the future, whether they have inherent control, or whether events are of fatal realization. Hofstede found Greece to have the lowest UA score. Therefore, people in Greece will be unwilling to make decisions and they will require very structured work routines.

In the Greek cultural practice philotimo leads to trust. Trust as a bond of collective self. Trust is described (Salem, 2009; p. 73) as reflex, as a fixed expectation of culture, sometimes as being learned and situational. Trust is also considered as a resource of - social capital, power, and social support; an “interaction variable leading to a probability to engage [the] (an)other”. This type of engagement is in the hardcore of business relationships, especially in the banking sector. Trust is a bond of a collective self.
Chnaris “the mediator” to reconcile at Livadia for a working compromise is called “sasmos”, namely….tranquility. We are mountaineers, we have philotimo and ego without tolerating insults. “Sasmos” means that logos and dignity, still exist, and is instrumental even in court rooms. (Recognized in rural mountainous areas of Crete).


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfJcJYGuTyk 4.20 min
Prime Minister Samaras speech on Mar 14, 2010 in a position speech to his political party youth union conference: “In this era of crisis all those who insulted the people and their philotimo will be expelled for the party.” At http://www.tanea.gr/default.asp?pid=2&ct=1&artId=4564997


Oct 21, 2014, Current PM Tsipras (then leading the opposition party) in a statement during the visit in the Ministry of National Defense (on the left the then Minister Avramopoulos):

[Despite the crisis] The preventive capacity of the Greek Armed Forces remains robust due to philotimo of the human factor.


PM G. Papandreou (2010): …“The Greek People have proved their philotimo from the start of the Memorandum.”


PM L. Papademos (Feb 11, 2012) addressing the nation: “Greeks have pride and philotimo. We know how to fight. And this fight is for our country.”

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Philotimo Still Exists in “our Poor Country”

Regarding the event of singer and UNESCO Ambassador Nana Mouschouri who donated her salary back to the State. Philotimo connects Greekness and integrity.
Philotimo as Motivation to Comply to the Law

Philotimo of Faculty Members Won Over any Opposition.

In the event of a new bill in the Parliament regarding the introduction of Governing Councils in the Greek University System, a group of professors had started implementing the new provisions while others were protesting to protect the status quo.

Full article of V. Kinti, Faculty Member in University of Athens at http://www.ethnos.gr/entheta.asp?catid=25862&subid=2&pubid=63735363
Fernanto Santos, former Greek National Soccer Team Manager, claims: “Greek players are not lazy. They have philotimo with one condition. They need to comprehend “why” they are asked to do what they are instructed to do. More in To Vima at http://www.tovima.gr/default.asp?pid=2&ct=5&artId=374882&dt=27/12/2010#ixzz19QIYm4es

“I was expecting that referee [Giahos] would have philotimo to request to be excused, but he did not. It is a pity...”, Dimitris Bakos, top executive of Asteras Tripolis Football Club in the event of the controversial performance of the referee in Greek Soccer Cup against Olympiakos F.C., May 31, 2013. (http://www.sentragoal.gr/article.asp?catid=11077&subid=2&pubid=129848355). Philotimo as a response to conflict of interest.

Moras, a Veteran member of the Greek National Soccer Team: “I don’t like this status. My colleagues in Verona make a fool out of me... I am annoyed to go back and hear, you did loose again, did you? Vaggelis Moras in a testimony of philotimo and self-respect when Greek national Team lost over North Ireland, Oct 8, 2015. In Imerisia paper at http://www.imerisia.gr/article.asp?catid=30031&subid=2&pubid=130181532

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Philotimo in Critical Environments

Greek Armed Forces during that night [of Imia crisis of Jan 31, 1996], according to all the unit commanders with whom we have spoken, responded effectively with readiness and efficiency while in readiness. The wit, philotimo, pride and speed with which they responded to all orders was phenomenal. Reported retrospectively by Paris Karvounopoulos, Chief Editor of OnAlert .gr (Jan 31, 2013 at [http://www.efylakas.com/archives/15968](http://www.efylakas.com/archives/15968))

Philotimo is used as an indication of patriotism.

In the Hellenic Air Force drama series “Aerines Siopes’ (Silence in the Air, Anosis 2000-2003, Episode #30) action forwards with the saying: *When apologize was invented philotimo is lost*, in a conversation between a fighter pilot and his training officer. It was used to show the importance of sincerity during the debriefing phase of a flight mission.
Philotimo Challenged In a Kidnap Situation

The victim [Karamolegos] used a philotimo rhetoric and was finally able to release himself after infusing the doubt in one of his kidnappers. Philotimo is used as a latent conscience, in this case of the media coverage.

(Anchorwoman M. Zacharea [to the reporter]: “Do you think that the Moldovan guy who was challenged for philotimo will have a judicial treatment in court?”)

(Star Channel News Report, Jan 16, 2014)

At http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItTkrQYdKtl&feature=c4-overview-vl&list=PLCg0cLoEdHTyRwg_or-jlAeYMescscMOI
I met people with guts, dignity, [and philotimo]. People that opened their door neglecting the risk they were taking for themselves.

A notorious fugitive (Palaiokostas, 2010) http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=127064

“The Greek sailor has something unique ... laced with ship
Is there something like a word or elsewhere ... in connection
with the foreigner, he has philotimo and he has it in the
extreme”. Constantakopoulos testimony
(Video in SKAI/Folders at http://folders.skai.gr/main/theme?locale=el&id=171)

A tycoon of international shipping concludes about his experience in business performance and human resources.
Philotimo is used for differentiation and dedication in business.

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Philotimo is Compatible with Cooperative and Social Economy and International Cooperative Principles

- The traditional Greek value of philotimo is the origin of security and status that are very important for Greeks in business, as well as the need for self-esteem (Bourantas & Papadakis, 1996). These cultural traits explain to an extent the “small, family-owned firm” phenomenon in Greece.

- In such a format, business ventures somehow deal more with agape and altruistic behavior, accountability, professionalism, symmetry in action and impact, and put in act the heart of survival as a “collective entity with a common destiny” to rediscovering community (Muel, 2004). The same notion seems to be the cultural foundation recognized with a Nobel Prize for the institution of Grameen Bank (Yunus, 2006) and another for the practise of cooperation (Ostrom, 2009).

**Principles of cooperatives (ICA)**

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic control by members
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for the community
Philotimo Documented…from US NPR (2007)

• All things considered, Shapiro (Aug, 2007) “At Home on the Island of Warmth and Hospitality”

Audio file http://www.npr.org/templates/player/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=12359170&m=12359171

(after 4.24 min)

• In Crete, people are known for the generosity and hospitality they show

(...) : Money and beauty and power can have nothing to do, have no place when philotimo’s involved, because philotimo is about offering of yourself, expect nothing in return, and only because you want to create, perhaps, beauty or a wonderful moment for somebody because you’re inspired to do it. (Ms. Katerina Taiganides De Ezcurra live in NPR)

"Filotimo" [Philotimo]. It’s a sense of right and wrong, and a duty to do what’s right.
in time, we'll be reminded of the spirit that has defined Greece and its people for all time. There's a concept that captures it, and it doesn't translate easily; it — love of honor. But, of course, it means much more than that. It's a sense of love,
Philotimo as a Sense that Starts from “Self”...

she used to pull off the shelf were the legends of Greek mythology. Philotimo — it's a sense of right and wrong and a duty to do what's right. And so, 189 years ago, Americans remains true today: We are "friends, co-patriots and brothers." So thank you all for coming.

And philotimo is a sense of dignity and respect, as well. It's the determination that has
A time honored tradition, philotimo represents a unique characteristic of the Greek mindset. Many of the ills plaguing Greece and the Hellenic Diaspora today could arguably be attributed to a present day deficit of that all-important philotimo. …

While destitute in material goods, Psorokostaina was rich in philotimo …

• It is almost as if there is an incompatibility between prosperity and philotimo. Most of the honorable accomplishments made by Greeks seem to be achieved during periods of dire economic hardship.

• Greece has known poverty all its life. If anything, the current financial crisis may purge some of the hubris and nouveaux riche decadence, and help the people remember that economic hardship is sometimes a spring-board for spiritual profit.

• It's not more loans or bailouts that we Greeks need, it's rediscovering our philotimo.
When Philotimo Stood With African-Americans

By Andreas N. Akaras
Special to The National Herald

BALTIMORE, MD – February is Black History Month, a month-long celebration of the African diaspora's contributions to America. During this month long observance, we Greek-Americans are reminded of the many outstanding Hellenes who stood with the African-American community in its struggle for freedom and dignity.

From grade school, we come to know that America is a melting pot, a country where “out of many” we stand as one nation, under God, indivisible. Scratch deep enough, and every American can tell that story of segregation. When a young man named Barack Obama sought to enter the political arena in Chicago, his Greek-American friend Alexi Giannoulias convinced his family and friends to offer invaluable support to the fledgling politician. Alexi and Barack were friends before either made his way up the political ladder. Dr. King and Archbishop Iakovos are no doubt smiling that Greek-Americans and African-Americans have walked hand-in-hand all the way to the White House.

This March, inspired by Congressman John Sarbanes' Hellenism in the Public Service Initiative, the Johns Hopkins Hellenic Students Association is

- What role did the high ideals and values of Hellenism play in the legal and social considerations that moved our government in the direction of freedom and liberty?
- What motivated Hellenes from Baltimore to Johannesburg to stand on the side of liberty, justice, and freedom for all?
- No matter what we deduce from studied introspection, each of these outstanding Hellenes deserves our recognition, and we must honor their courage and conviction by embracing our Philotimo.

Andreas Akaras, National Herald, Feb 2013
http://politis-dukakis-center.act.edu/blog/2013/02/15/when-philotimo-stood-with-african-americans/

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There are huge cultural differences between Germans and Greeks which may seem trivial but lead to not properly understand each other... So if you look beyond superficial impressions you need to understand what “philotimo/filotimo” means for the Greeks in order [for Germans and others] to realize what happens in this country. The aim of my book was to say 'look at this country, "go and dial a personal opinion. Then we can really talk rationally about this crisis.”

Andreas Deffner


Philotimo as the supreme humanistic ideal.
On April 9, 2011, the American Hellenic Council honored Earth Friendly Products owner and CEO (late) Van Vlahakis with the Aristeio Award in Business. This is the bio video in his honor that was presented to all attendees.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gGoMP6l-DA

In one of the interviews regarding the effect of Eftichios Van Vlahakis (who died on 2014), Rick Fully described how his managerial style was affected by Vlahakis’s ethical principles and revealed:

“…He taught me what philotimo means”: in 4:05 min

"To me, the undercurrent of Hellenism, the commonest and starkest theme that unites us all as Greeks, is philotimo… duty, loyalty, integrity, honor, love, trust, faith and, perhaps most important of all, the pride in being decent. The fabric of what we have built as a family and a group has been underwritten by philotimo.” George Logothetis, Chairman and CEO of Libra Group (Mar 15, 2012).

“What We Have Built Has Been Underwritten by Philotimo”. Libra Group presentation for Greece, 2012 National Innovation Conference in NYC. Available at http://www.greekamerica.org/nic/nic-talks/talks-2012/ (or http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBEXkmNGgDE)
Philotimo Drives New Terminology?

Timocracy (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/timocracy?s=t)

• tahi-MOK-ruh-see\ noun
  1. a form of government in **which love of honor** is the dominant motive of the rulers.
  2. a form of government in which a certain amount of property is requisite as a qualification for office.

Quotes

• The individual who answers to **timocracy** has some noticeable qualities. He is described as ill-educated, but, like the Spartan, a lover of literature…
  -- Plato, *The Republic*, translated by Benjamin Jowett, 1856

• Origin

• **Timocracy** entered English in the late 1500s, and finds its roots in the Greek *tīmo-* meaning "honor, worth," and *-kratia* meaning "rule, government." In Greek, Plato and Aristotle used the "love and honor" and "property" senses of this term, respectively.
“The definition of ethical includes the hedonic [...] and through that kind of pleasure hope is ahead” (Aug 25, 2013)

Ms. KATERINA TAIGANIDES DE EZCURRA: “Money and beauty and power can have nothing to do, have no place when filotimo's involved, because filotimo is about offering of yourself, expect nothing in return, and only because you want to create, perhaps, beauty or a wonderful moment for somebody because you're inspired to do it.”

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Questions and Comments are welcomed…