

# MORAL VALUES IN GREEK SOCIETY & THE DIASPORA

The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis 13 APRIL 2013



Which of the two have developed beyond the paradigm cultures and customs of the past? What was unacceptable before is it acceptable in today's society. What is to say who is correct and who is not? Is there a decline in our moral values in Hellas and that of the Diaspora?

For example the raising children, parents responsibilities. Moral values and sense of responsibilities. Is dress and fashion amongst the young acceptable? Do skimpy dresses arouse the men and scantily dressed men arouse women. Is it ok to leave the children at home without supervision while the parents go off to the tavernas, casino, cafenio or off partying. Who is to say what is right and what is wrong.

If a man can be a man, then is it fair that a woman can be a woman and do what a man does. But then again are we stating that despite what the gender make is, should there be a respect to each other and what do genders expect of each other. Woman's equality has not brought them the respect that they deserved. ) I think not. (Just look at the amount of domestic violence in our own environment.

Has the equality of women brought them the equality that they south or was the woman's movements a means to be treated differently or the same. If it is to be equal does that mean that they have shed their effeminacy? Have mothers molly coddled their sons and were overprotective, who are to say unless you are a parent.

As a single father I brought up my four sons as best as I could on my own, even though I was still serving in the Australian Regular Army. I did my best at providing with the best comforts of home that I could afford, instilled into them the Hellenic

(Greek orthodox) and Australian values and morals I was brought up with and experienced along the way. I also advised that about what to expect and what not to expect from life and that it was matter of believing in one's self.

This and much more. I found that despite all my good intentions and advice, my sons would find their own way in life but would still seek my advice and support. The sons that went off the beaten were drawn back by the values that they were brought up with. This contribution to this topic as an example and I would like to see the views of others. But methinks that members may be reluctant to speak such matters. Still I could yet be proven wrong.

If moral values have declined, how do a community and/or a society arrest this matter and realign it with values that define itself in the modern world of global social media. Which of the two Hellas or those in Diaspora have retained and/or declined in moral values and customs of the Hellenic culture?

Is it fair to say do conclude that the same can be said for other regions of Hellas. Remember that post Greek War of Independence it was the Lakonians who migrated to the USA for seeking a quality of life and to escape poverty and hunger.

The Greeks from Hellas of those days were a of different breed then. I feel judging by my research and oral histories that the they were extremely proud, very tough, resilient, cunning, resourceful, moral values, respectful, philanthropic ("filotimos to a point"), vibrant, extrovert at times, loved their "kefi", hardworking, and very family orientated.

Are we Hellenes of today of the same caliber or have we lost something along the way. I do know that pride in ones origins is still there to a point, but I am not sure about all the other characteristics of our forbearers. I believe I am trying to compare whether all Greeks in the Diaspora have changed or have those in Hellas changed.

If we in the Diaspora have changed and developed, do we have a right to dictate to those living in Hellas and vice versa. After some of Hellas politicians and advisers studied and lived abroad. I will be interested to hear other points of view and specially fro Hellas and Canada if at all possible. As I am sure that I will probably attract criticism from my contemporaries here in Australia.



*The Voice from the Pavement* - Peter Adamis is a (not for profit) Journalist/Commentator. He is a retired Australian military serviceman and an Industry organisational & Occupational (OHS) & Training Consultant whose interests are within the parameters of domestic and international political spectrum. He is an avid blogger and contributes to domestic and international community news media outlets as well as to local and Ethnic News. He holds a Bachelor of Adult Learning & Development (Monash), Grad Dip Occupational Health & Safety, (Monash), Dip. Training & Assessment, Dip Public Administration, and Dip Frontline Management. Contact via Email: [abalinx@netspace.net.au](mailto:abalinx@netspace.net.au) or via Mobile: 0409965538

## COMMENT: Elias I. Katsos:

The Hellenic Diaspora is spread out over many continents and its people from various Hellenic areas and socio-economic backgrounds and subcultures (within Hellenism) and that it is difficult to get a unified concept of Hellenic moral values (decline or otherwise) or customs (since they differ slightly by region).

Therefore I will that in my experience speaking and relating to the American Diaspora only that people from our region (the Northern Taygetos) who have emigrated directly from its upper highland villages have not differed much over time (except recently) as it relates to past moral values and culture on both sides of the Atlantic.

People from these towns , including my grandfather, started to coming to the U.S. in the 1890's over generations (and back and forth) and there are very few families in these towns who did not have various family members in the U.S. from that time period.

They settled in the Northeast states ( New York to Massachusetts) and always kept in contact with families from the area again both in the U.S. and in Hellas. Initially 1890's to about 1910 only men came over and would accumulate some capital and go back home and get married, have children and come back again.

When they married even in the U.S. they tended to marry people from their villages both in the U.S. and in Hellas. When they brought their families over their children would also in many cases marry people from their former towns. As such there was really no cultural break as it related to their specific cultural Hellenism even in the Diaspora.

And many through the decades would relocate back to Hellas and other generations would restart the process. Over a hundred years later the linkages still exist (now even more so with the internet) both in the U.S. and Hellas and still strong even though the villages have become somewhat depopulated with the populations swelling in the summer.

Of interest is that a much larger disparity relating to Hellenic culture and morals exists between those that left and are in the Diaspora and those that left the same villages and went to Hellenic cities from the villages and live in Hellas and who adapted other Hellenic cultural traits over time. **Elias I. Katsos, NY USA**