State, society and the religious "other" in nineteenth-century Greece

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Introduction

As with other nineteenth-century successor states in the Balkans, from its inception Greek polity was grounded on the principle of nation-building through the homogenization of the realm. In a generic sense, homogenization comprised a series of interconnected processes aiming at reconfiguring political and civil authority along "national" lines in the name of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ and the *genos/ethnos*. Unsurprisingly, in the early days of the 1820s War of Independence, the exclusion of the religious "other" from the polity and society that the warring factions of the rebels envisaged went hand-in-hand with the victimization and discrimination of the indigenous Muslim and Jewish element and an innate suspicion and mistrust of the adherents of the Western Church.

As Great Power intervention became pivotal in securing a successful conclusion to the *agonas*, the practices associated with the exclusion of the religious "other" came to a halt. In their communication to Kapodistrias of the London Protocol of 3 February 1830, which provided for the establishment of an independent monarchical state and offered the crown to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the powers demanded that his government accept, immediately and unconditionally, that henceforth Greek Catholics would worship in full freedom, that their religious and educational establishments would remain intact, and that their clergymen would enjoy the same "duties, rights, and privileges" as hitherto. Eager to give Greece fresh evidence of their "sollicitude

bienveillance" and shield the nascent state from any mischief arising from the potential rivalry among people of different religious faiths, they also decreed that:

All subjects of the new State, whatever their religion, will have access to all public institutions, functions and honours, and will be considered equal in all their religious, civil and political relations, regardless of differences in their religious beliefs.¹

Kapodistrias's Senate, however, requested that the Powers clarify that the privileges bestowed upon the "Greeks of the Western Church" would not in any way impinge on the status of the Eastern Orthodox Church as the "established religion". Crucially, it also took exception to the principle of equality regardless of creed, specifically with regard to Muslims, and retorted that in such an eventuality "our independence" would be substantially qualified, rhetorically concluding: "And if so, what would the Greek have gained after nine years of bloody strife?" In response, on 1 July the powers confirmed that the "privileges" granted to Catholics would not "impose" any obligation that "might prejudicially affect the established church", clarifying that "equality of civil and political rights referred specially to [adherents of] the Christian Church".²

Christian Europe's alacrity in enshrining the rights of Christian Greek citizens only might be explained by the very small numbers of indigenous Muslims and Jews, mostly in Euboea, who had survived the turmoil of the *agonas* and had opted to stay put. Yet, subsequent international treaties pertinent to the cession of the Ionian Islands (1864) and Thessaly and part of Epirus (1881), while guaranteeing the religious, political and civil rights of all Christians and Muslims respectively, again failed to refer to the Jewish element by name, sizeable communities of which resided in the ceded regions. Whereas the 1881 treaty provided that all inhabitants of the ceded territories would "enjoy

¹ Papers 1835: 186-90, 211-12.

² Protocols 1832: 104, 112.

the same civil and political rights as Hellenic subjects of origin", that of 1864 decreed that the "principle of entire civil and political equality between subjects belonging to different creeds", established by the London Protocol of 1830, "shall be likewise in force in the Ionian Islands". And yet, this principle related "specially" to adherents of the "Christian church". This "omission" squares well with the powers' unwillingness throughout the long nineteenth century to either issue "universal pronouncements [on] Jewish emancipation [or] elaborate specific minority rights", other than in instances of blatant discrimination against the Jewish element, as for example in Romania.³

Greece, of course, was no Romania. In fact, by appearing to make *jus soli* into the main attribute of Greek citizenship as early as 1835, it could be argued that the nascent state promoted Jewish emancipation in as much as it did not distinguish its citizens along ethno-religious lines. Yet what the 1835 Law on Citizenship and the 1856 Civil Law did was to guarantee would-be citizenship through the adoption of *jus sanguinis*. As the British Minister in Athens put it, "the principle embodied in these Laws with respect to Greek nationality [citizenship] is that it is derived from hereditary transmission and not as a rule from the fact of birth in the country"; a principle attested in article 3 of the constitutions of 1844 and 1864 ("citizens are those who have acquired or shall acquire the rights of citizenship according to the Laws of the State").⁴

Following a concise account on the politics of exclusion from within during the War of Independence, I will examine specific moments of the religious "other" in the lands that constituted the Greek state in the nineteenth century by focusing on one age-old and one newly-founded religious "other": Greek Jews and Greek Evangelicals. I will seek to address how these two groups were perceived on the one hand by a state that did not distinguish its citizens along ethno-religious lines and on the other by a society

³ Wagstaff 2002: 194, 271; Fink 2004: 37.

⁴ Nikolopoulos and Kakoulidis 1859-62: I.364-6, III.316-25; Command Paper 1893: 62; Axelos 1972: 112, 128.

wherein the "established religion", to which the Greek nation "owe their political existence, what knowledge they possess, and the language of their ancestors", was inextricably "woven into the fabric of nationality". Did the principle of religious tolerance, guaranteed in all revolutionary and post-revolutionary constitutions, hold sway at the state/local level? Did the victimization and fear of the religious "other" survive the War of Independence? The hypothesis that I wish to put forward is that at the turn of the century and before the population movements of the 1910s and the 1920s among certain circles of Greek Orthodox society the religious "other" was perceived as a potential enemy within.

The "wasteland and levelling" of Tripoli: Its precursors and legacies

The conceptual precursors of what can be conveniently referred to as the politics of exclusion from within are to be found in the provisional constitutions of the revolutionary period. Crucially, all four documents avoided using the term *ithageneia* (citizenship) prior to the conclusion of the war, decreeing that "all indigenous inhabitants of the Realm, who believe in Christ, are Greeks"; and, while "tolerating every other religion" before guaranteeing that "all can practise their religious faith without hindrance", declared as the *epikratousa thriskeia* (established religion) of the realm that of the Eastern Orthodox Church.⁶

The unmistakably religious dimension of the agonas was too strong to overcome; the inherent value of Ottoman "tyranny" as a source of unity, in what was otherwise a divided society, too tempting to resist. That in his proclamation on "Fight for Faith and Motherland" (February 1821) Alexandros Ypsilantis spoke of the "motherland" whereas in his "Appeal to the European Courts" (April 1821) Petrobey Mavromichalis confined himself to the plight of "unhappy" kin in his backyard might be seen as an early sign of the civil strife that was to dominate the struggle for independence, as evidence of an as yet disparate national com-

⁵ Protocols 1832: 105; *Elpis* (15/27 July 1846) 1; Tuckerman 1878: 212.

⁶ Daskalakis 1966-67: I.283, 294, 309-10, 401-2.

munity. Yet it should not belie the fact that for both men the overthrow of the "insufferable" and "insupportable" yoke was contingent upon the "purge" of indigenous Muslims.⁷

The potential exclusion of the Jewish element from the would-be new polity was grounded on a number of age-old perceptions, religious practices, socio-economic stereotypes and folkloric prejudices, not dissimilar to those found in "the civilized nations of Europe". These were articulated and circulated by a gamut of individuals of the pre-revolutionary period. For example, the monk and preacher Kosmas the Aetolian (ca.1714–79), who was canonized by the Greek Orthodox Church in 1961, is recorded as having commonly referred to them in his sermons as the "devil's offspring"; to have castigated their alleged avarice as a constant; and to have urged his audiences to avoid any contact with them, because:

Those who mix with the Jews, buy and sell, what does this show us? It tell us that the Jews did well to kill the Prophets [...] did well and do well to defame our Christ and our Virgin Mary. They do well to muck us up and drink our blood. Why have I told you these things, my Christians? Not so that you kill and persecute the Jews, but that you pity them for leaving God and siding with the devil.

Lest I be accused of a "methodological flaw" here, let me argue that the fact that no manuscript penned by Kosmas himself has survived and that most of his recorded sermons date from after his death does not undermine the significance of this anti-Jewish discourse. The point here is not whether it can be reliably attributed to Kosmas but that it *has been* both by his generation and subsequent ones. For example, in a brief work on his life, edited by an archimandrite, Kosmas's anti-Jewish discourse is reproduced and his murder on the orders of the Ottoman authorities in southern Albania in 1779 is attributed to that "most cunning and most sacrilegious *genos* of the Christ-hating Jews".8

⁷ Daskalakis 1966-67: I.142-4, 147-8.

⁸ Menounos n.d.: 243, 244; Martinos 1894: 25.

A more modern, albeit by default, depiction of the Jews, which did not centre on the archaic and superstitious notions of deicide and blood-libel, was put forward in the *Greek Nomarchy* (1806). In the course of his detailed censure of the "filthy and vulgar people of the Phanar", the anonymous author of this polemical tract maintained that their alleged subservience to the Ottomans denoted "their spineless and indeed Jewish heart", whereas in his equally vitriolic attack on the Greek Orthodox priesthood he noted that the stance of *ethelodoulia* (submission to the powers that be) that it had adopted and had been promoting was turning the faithful into a people without a *patrida*, "like the Jews" – a people whose religion had made them into "misanthropes".9

The portrayal of the Jews as a people with no motherland, so common and diachronic an image in Christian discourse, is insinuated in the discourse of Rigas Velestinlis. Whereas in his projected Greek Republic he provided for the free exercise of "every kind of religion, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, etc.", his revolutionary call, so powerfully articulated in his *Thourios* (1797), was not addressed to the Jewish element of the empire. Was this simply an oversight on his part? Can it be construed as an implicit admission that the age-old stateless Jews had forfeited their right to a free existence because of their alleged collaboration with – and acceptance of – the Ottoman status quo? Or was it the case that, lacking in bravery, they were hardly potential allies-in-revolt? In Rigas's Greek Republic religious tolerance was a given; but Jewish emancipation was probably not. 10

In the event, Kosmas's admonition not to kill but to pity the Jews went unheeded. What undoubtedly led to their indiscriminate massacre in Vrachori and Tripoli in the early days of the War of Independence was the overt and voluntary siding of their coreligionists with the Ottoman authorities in Salonika against the Greek rebels and, primarily, the treatment meted out to the corpse

⁹ Anonymous 2006: 139, 140, 117, 149.

¹⁰ Rigas 2000: 37, 33, 74-5.

of the hanged Ecumenical Patriarch Grigorios V on Easter Day 1821. Irrespective of whether poignant contemporary accounts can be taken at face value, the parallelism between the martyrdom of Grigorios and that of Christ was not lost on the Greeks. As the Reverend Thomas Smart Hughes put it, the desecration of the patriarch's body by the Jews was but the "consummation of ignominy [...] in the eyes of Christians". The narrative of evoking the image of the Jew as an "enemy" of the *genos* survived the test of time and has been explicitly articulated in various public fora: from the "fabricated" folk song of the 1860s, which equates the Jews with the Janissaries, to the proclamation of the National Student Union on the eve of the torching of the Jewish neighbourhood of Campbell in Salonika in 1931, wherein the desecration of the patriarch's body appears top of the long list of alleged defamations of Greek ideals and of the Greek *fyli* by the Jews. 11

Indeed, the war cry "in the Morea shall no Turk be left / nor in the whole wide world" could equally apply in the case of the Jews, those "mythical evildoers". Following the fall of the Peloponnesian capital to the revolutionaries in early autumn 1821, a Greek from nearby Kalamata rejoiced at the fact that:

[Our] enemies, almost to a man, have fallen to the sword [...] Those Turks, who continued to offer resistance, were burned alive in their dwellings. And, at last, Nemesis the avenger befell those godless Jews.

It seems that blanket massacres of Jewish civilians were the norm each time a besieged town fell to the rebels; similar was the plight of Muslims – combatants and civilians alike. As the Reverend John Hartley noted,

"the sons of Isaac, and the sons of Ishmael, on [...] every occasion during the Greek Revolution, met with a common fate. [...] It may be remarked in general, that the Greek Revolution

¹¹ Walsh 1836: 316-17; Efthymiou 2002: 42, note 25; Pierron 1996: 18; Hughes 1830: 294; Papatheodorou 2009: 254; *Makedonia* (24 June 1931) 1.

has not left a single descendant of Abraham within the liberated territory." 12

The "wasteland and levelling" of Tripoli, according to Aristotelis Valaoritis's 1872 composition, constitutes an instructive case in point: principally because of the sheer volume of slaughter and pillage, but also because of the explanations advanced by eminent figures of the War of Independence when accounting for such carnage. The passage below, by no means either random or atypical, epitomizes the revolutionaries' raison d'être:

Wherever in the Peloponnese one went, one did not see but corpses [...]. The Greeks were accused of these atrocities; but as long they were to be liberated or constitute a state, their salvation dictated that they all covered their hands with the blood of their tyrants, so that they got used to killing the enemy [...]. They could only spare the women, children and the elderly; [...] in this way, they would demonstrate their humanity and hasten the fall of [Tripoli]. But what could prevent the Greeks from taking revenge for all the evils they had suffered even from these women, even from these children during the centuries and the passing-on of generations?¹³

Elpida Vogli has recently argued that the proposals and practices pertinent to the inclusion or exclusion of certain population groups from the would-be polity were conditioned by the pressing needs of a society at war – specifically, I hasten to add, in response to the massacres of thousands of Greek Orthodox civilians by the Ottomans and their Egyptian allies. As a physician and surgeon attached to the Greek forces put it:

Whatever judgement may be pronounced on the conduct of the Greeks towards the Turks, one good consequence arose from their cruelties. A line of demarcation was [...] established between the two nations; a barrier of blood, which rendered all future approximation impossible.

¹² Phillips 1897: 48; Efthymiou 2002: 41; Laios 1958: 248-9; Hartley 1831: 207-8.

¹³ Valaoritis 1981: 183-91; Spiliadis 1851: 246-7.

In fact, the Third National Assembly in spring 1826 was quite explicit when passing a secret resolution on the morrow of Ibrahim Pasha's "barbarization project", which provided that the "Turks should neither [own] property nor [enjoy] permanent residence in Greece"; while six months later, the gazette of the provisional government implied that the Jews of the Ottoman Empire (and hence the Jews of the insurgent lands) were not worthy to enjoy the fruits of an enlightened polity partly because of the callousness of their religion. Of course, the exclusivity of such perceptions was not always manifested on the ground. In a small number of instances, the contribution of native Muslims (and Jews?) to the *agonas*, and/or their conversion to the "established religion" as *neofytoi* offered them not only membership of the new polity but also pecuniary compensation, principally in the form of land, in later decades. 14

It would, however, be amiss not to consider that such perceptions have a historicity of their own, which cannot be merely explained in the context of an *ephemeral* "society at war". That much is also evident in the case of Greek Catholics. Six months after the promulgation of the Epidaurus constitution, the insurgents' eparch in Tinos noted that, as "brothers in Christ, we consider them Greeks [...] born of the same mother, breathing the same air [...], possessing the same rights and privileges", and called upon them to participate in the "sacred struggle" against the "barbarous tyrant". Yet, five and a half years later, Kapodistrias seemingly did not perceive them as a constituent part of the "Greek nation, which comprises those who since the fall of Constantinople have not stopped professing the Orthodox faith". 15

The fact that very few of the eighteen thousand or so Greek Catholics responded to the sirens of ethno-religious nationalism emanating from the mainland was not lost on the insurgents. At the time, Dimitrios Ypsilantis called it an "unpardonable sin", a

Vogli 2007: 56; Millingen 1831: 166; Daskalakis 1966-67: II.505;
Geniki Efimeris (25 August 1826) 543; Efimeris tis Kyverniseos 20 (1836) 81-3); Nikolopoulos and Kakoulidis 1859-62: II.886.

¹⁵ AEP 1973: 566, 565; Kapodistrias 1841: 190.

view that permeates much of the subsequent historical narrative. For example, Spyridon Trikoupis, politician, diplomat and official historiographer of the War of Independence, maintained that they had chosen the Crescent instead of the Cross, slavery instead of freedom; and in a summative maxim, to which I shall return later, concluded thus:

Fortunate is the nation that professes one dogma. Thank God, we possess such a providential thing, and cursed by the nation be the one who, for whatever reason, seeks by heteroreligious teaching or by any other means to contrive against the Greeks' unity of faith.

Admittedly, such a narrative also drew support from the age-old ingrained mistrust that existed between Orthodox and Catholic Greeks in the eastern Mediterranean, "an example of enduring hatred in human history", according to Braudel, and one which prompted the Reverend Josiah Brewer to write, somewhat overoptimistically, that "so strong is the hatred which the Greeks bear to the Catholics, that they almost love the Protestants in comparison." ¹⁶

In demographic terms, the outcome of what the Greeks' "salvation dictated" was staggering (see Table 1). One cannot draw a distinction between heteroreligious who perished and heteroreligious and heterodox who migrated. And although these estimates and figures are neither complete nor to be taken at face value, in absolute terms they demonstrate a near-complete "homogenization" of the regions that by the end of the War of Independence came to comprise the Greek state.

¹⁶ Papadopoulos 1971a: 182; Trikoupis 1853: 185-6; Efthymiou 2003: 7; Missionary 1829: 359.

Table 1: Population estimates/figures by religion (1821–1907)¹⁷

Year	Orthodox	Catholics	Muslims	Jews	Evangelicals	Other	Total
1821	675,646	18,000	90,830	5,000			789,476
1832	712,608						712,608
1835		17,648					
1854							1,041,270
1862	1,086,900	9,358	198	354			1,096,810
1870	1,441,810	12,585	150	3,349			1,457,894
1879	1,635,698	14,677	146	3,246			1,653,767
1907	2,597,011	23,261	3,516	6,127	1,909	128	2,631,952
	(98.67%)	(0.88%)	(0.13%)	(0.24%)	(0.07%)	(0.01%)	

¹⁷ Carabott 2005, and Ministry of the Interior 1909: 100-1.

The Greeks' "unity of faith": From Ionas King to that "most natural feeling"

In one of his first royal decrees as King of Greece, by the Grace of God, the Catholic Otto had promised to his Muslim subjects, who would opt to reside in "Our kingdom", due protection and "utmost liberty in performing their religious services", similar to that provided to all "Our subjects" irrespective of creed. Analogous pledges he had extended to Jewish notables who visited him in early 1833, assuring them that he considered his kingdom to be blessed and honoured to contain in its bosom the biblical race of Israel. Such official assurances were manifested in the appointment of a Greek Jew from Chalkis, Markos Vitalis, as royal tax collector in May 1833. But they seem to have had no perceptible effect on age-old superstitions around which collective beliefs on the religious "other" evolved. The US consul at Athens from late 1837 to 1842, while rejoicing "in the triumphs of the Greeks", could not "but sympathise" with the few remaining Muslim inhabitants of Chalkis, who were subjected to "humiliating insults to their nation and their religion", noting that Muslim "historical relics [...] have been most shockingly injured" at the hands of Christian bigots and spoilers. Roughly at the same time, a former member of the French Scientific Expedition to the Peloponnese opined that the "Greeks have a great dislike of the Jews". In Thebes such "dislike", underpinned by economic considerations, in early 1833 led the town's demogerontia to move the day of the local market from Sunday to Saturday as a means of driving out Jewish traders. Likewise, the predilection not to openly differentiate between Greek Orthodox and heteroreligious "subjects", overtly demonstrated by the fact that until 1846 the oath of allegiance to Otto was taken in the name of the Holy Trinity and the Bible, does not seem to have hindered a wide gamut of public expressions of anti-Jewish sentiments. These ranged from the bewilderment and concern that a local Greek expressed in late 1834 when finding out that the custom officer in Chalkis had appointed a Jew as guardsman of the custom house, wondering how was it that a Greek possessing the same qualities as the Jew could not be found for such a mundane post among the "impoverished and honourable Greeks in our city"; to the razing to the ground by malicious elements of the ancient synagogue of Chalkis, with its rich store of manuscripts and books, in 1846; and, of course, to the Judas-effigy practice — at best a favourite pastime for "children of the rabble", at worst the focal point of the "annual persecution of the Jews by the Greeks". ¹⁸

An official ban on the traditional burning of Judas effigies led to what is probably the most overt example of an anti-Jewish, and much more, "moment" in Greece prior to the notorious Corfu and Zante riots of 1891. It was ordered by the government out of deference to a member of the French branch of the Jewish banking family of the Rothschilds, who had just begun his visit to the capital as a guest of the Kolettis administration to renegotiate the terms of a number of loans that Greece had taken out. At the time, Athens did not boast an indigenous Jewish community, as all of the few Jewish residents of the capital were foreigners, principally from Bavaria, who had come to Greece with the entourage of Otto. One non-Bavarian Jew was a certain David Pacifico, a native of Gibraltar (hence a British subject). After acquiring Portuguese nationality in 1822, Pacifico was appointed Portuguese consul in Athens, taking up his post in 1839. Following his dismissal for financial irregularities in 1842, he was embroiled in an ongoing dispute with Otto and his government, which refused to compensate him for the appropriation of a plot of land near the palace that Pacifico had purchased in April 1843.¹⁹

¹⁸ Nikolopoulos and Kakoulidis 1859-62: I.7; Pierron 1996: 23; Efimeris tis Kyverniseos 17 (1833) 124; http://www.elia.org.gr/pages.fds? pagecode=17.04&langid=1; Perdicaris 1845: 108-11; Papadopoulos 1971b: 144; jewdaism&Itemid=59; Nikolopoulos and Kakoulidis 1859-62: I.5, II.416; Athina (29 December 1834) 4; BFSP 1863: 386; Elpis (31 March 1847) 1; PD 1853: column 1776.

¹⁹ Anonymous 1850a: 7; Molho 1953: 231-2; BFSP 1863: 342.

The physical maltreatment of Pacifico and his family and the despoliation of their house in central Athens on Easter Day (23 March/4 April 1847) were carried out by a crowd of some 300 to 400 people, the "wolves of our city". Religiously animated by the rumour, skilfully spread by the "scions of ministers and military officers" present at the scene, including the sons of the Minister of War Kitsos Tzavelas, that Pacifico had paid either the police or the church wardens to ban the burning of Judas effigies, the mob, shouting "death to the Jews", "battered down with large stones" the door of his house and, "swearing dreadfully", began beating its occupants, despoiling "every article of furniture", and robbing Pacifico of his jewels, candlesticks, gold and silver ornaments, diamonds, and money. "All this happened in the space of about an hour and a half, during which time neither the gendarmes nor the agents of police who were summoned, interfered to prevent the carrying off of the things of which I was robbed."20

The gist of Pacifico's narrative is corroborated both in the accounts of Athenian newspapers and by the proceedings of the Criminal Court in Athens in May, where three men were charged with conspiracy to violate the sanctuary of his house, causing damages thereto, and theft. Yet, the court discharged the defendants, "because none of the witnesses is really sure that they recognize any of the named accused, with the exception of one [witness...] and an accusation cannot be based on one witness alone" - thus giving added weight to Pacifico's early claim that he "could not find in Greece either a lawyer to defend a poor Jew like himself or a judge to uphold his rights". In his quest to find justice, he intensified his efforts to get the British government to intervene on his behalf. In the event, London connected the affair with other outstanding grudges it held against Athens and demanded compensation. The latter refused to give in, whereupon in early 1850 "Sheriff Palmerston, by the agency of his officer Parker, at the suit of Pacifico" forced the matter by blockading

 ²⁰ Athina (29 March 1847) 2; Aion (29 March 1847) 2; Taylor 2008: 3, 141, 142; Pacifico to Sir Edmund Lyons (7 April 1847), in BFSP 1863: 333-4; Elpis (31 March 1847) 1.

Piraeus, in what turned into an incident of blatant gun-boat diplomacy. ²¹

The issue of whether, or to what extent, the treatment meted out to Pacifico by the Greek authorities was informed by the fact that he was a Jew, and a "foreign" one at that, is a multifaceted one. Although the British Minister at Athens, Sir Edmund Lyons, had first raised the issue of compensation with Kolettis three weeks after the events of Easter Day, it was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the government of Kitsos Tzavelas who responded, as late as 8 January 1848, taking the line that Pacifico should pursue a civil claim for compensation. Unequivocally refuting the allegation the claimant had made that the "ministers of Otto are not enough advanced in civilization so as to understand the rights of men and the advantages of religious toleration", Georgios Glarakis argued that religious fanaticism was not enshrined "either in the laws or the mores of a country like Greece, which tolerates and protects the exercise of all denominations and all faiths". Pacifico, to whom Lyons forwarded Glarakis's letter, penned a long rejoinder, the gist of which centred on his belief that he had been attacked, victimized, discriminated against, and forced to stay indoors for fear of being assaulted by a lawless and superstitious populace because of his religious faith - concluding that, even if he were a Greek citizen, as an "Israelite", he would not enjoy the same rights as a Greek Orthodox citizen. Pacifico's wholesale refutation of Glarakis's response must have irritated the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, who questioned the claimant's state of mind. His rejoinder was described as one full of "extraneous expressions". "Jews have always been among us, and there are still in many parts of Greece", Konstantinos Kolokotronis maintained; he knew of no "acts of terror and barbarity committed by Greeks against the Israelites".

But why then, one could ask, [did] the crime of 4 April [take place]? The answer is simple: some miserable scum of society,

²¹ Fleming 2006; BFSP 1863: 337; Punch 18 (1850) 140; Taylor 2008.

prompted by the desire to plunder, attacked unexpectedly Pacifico's house and committed a robbery, as they could have done anywhere else.²²

Kolokotronis's blunt answer runs contrary to all the available evidence, as even Greek officials admitted that the culprits, the "scum", were indeed motivated by religious "fervour". In all likelihood, their response(s) to Pacifico's allegations and claims for compensation were informed by the fact that he was Jewish; as George Finlay put it, "the cry was he is a Jew, let him go to the Greek tribunals". In tandem, of course, with the fact that he sought refuge in his British nationality, at a time when relations between Athens and London were at a low ebb, that his claims for compensation were over the top, that he was already embroiled in a tug-of-war with the authorities over the royal appropriation of his plot of land, and that he ticked yet another anti-Jewish-related stereotype, that of a "professed money-lender" – by his own admission, lending money "at higher interest to parties in Athens".²³

In the aftermath of the Pacifico affair, the Judas-effigy practice was seemingly proscribed on the government's orders, though it hardly died out in areas with a visible Jewish presence, such as Chalkis. At the same time, a fair number of philo-Semitic articles appeared in a couple of learned journals of the kingdom. Offering an enlightened critique of anti-Jewish images worldwide, they were written in the spirit of highlighting the common threads running through the Greek and Jewish civilizations. Such narratives were of course in opposition to the ongoing dissemination of populist typecast notions of the "cursed" and "measly" Jews. Unsurprisingly, neither set of texts specifically referred to Greek Jews, whose limited visibility was hardly

²² Fleming 2008: 23-9; Pacifico to Lyons (8 October 1847), Glarakis to Lyons (8 January 1848), Pacifico to Lyons (24 January 1848) and Kolokotronis to Lyons (28 July 1848), in BFSP 1863: 337-8, 348, 352-67, 378-9.

²³ Praktika 1850: 58; Hussey 1995: 647; Christmas 1851: 295; Pacifico to Thomas Wyse (18 April 1850) in Command Paper 1850: 307.

conducive to raising "national passions" ²⁴ amongst the guardians of the "Greeks' unity of faith". On the contrary, when the Autocephalous Church and influential segments of the Athenian Press felt that the established religion was undermined and/or threatened they both responded with alacrity.

The trials and tribulations of the Reverend Jonas King are a case in point. Ever since his appointment as the principal missionary within the nascent Greek state of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), King had been no stranger to controversy. His opening of an elementary school for boys and girls in Athens, with ABCFM funds and the backing of Kapodistrias in May 1831, was considered by the Aiginaia newspaper as evidence of American efforts to spread the light of civilization. But the welcoming of this and other similar educational initiatives undertaken by missionaries throughout the realm was not unconditional. King and his like were admonished to employ as teachers Greek Orthodox kin (omogeneis) with proven knowledge and experience of the state-designed curriculum, and to demonstrate to the world that "the only reason why they have set up schools in Greece is to raise Greeks according to the mores and customs of the motherland, not [according] to foreign and alien ones". In other words, missionary assistance in regenerating the country should neither undermine in any way the quintessential traditions of the genos nor be motivated by the desire to turn its youth into proselytes – an ulterior motive that the ABCFM publicly admitted it espoused thirty years later.²⁵

This "savage, uncivilized [...] trafficker of his religion" was convicted by the Criminal Court of Athens in March 1852 under article 196 of the criminal code, which penalized with at least three months' imprisonment anyone who in public or through the written word "insults with contemptuous sneers or unfavourable

 ²⁴ Baird 1856: 129; Evripos (27 March 1871) 1; Abatzopoulou 1998:
203; Anonymous 1850b; Koumanoudis 1851; Driault and Lhéritier 1925-26: 377.

²⁵ US Senate Executive Document 67 (1854); Repousis 2009; Andrianopoulos 2003: 85; Hamister 2000: 6.

expressions the doctrines, ordinances and customs of the Eastern Church or any other religion that exists with the consent of the Government". Prior to that, his unabated questioning of the doctrines of the established religion, both during the Sunday sermons he held at his house and in his numerous polemical tracts, had not gone unchallenged. The Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Church responded by bringing out its own rebuttal of his tracts, anathematizing him in August 1845 (as did the Ecumenical Patriarchate a month later), and, in tandem with a segment of the Athenian Press, urged the government to act. His 1852 trial took place amidst fresh allegations that ritualistic orgies were taking place in his house, and during a legal dispute over a plot of land he had purchased from a departing Muslim in the early 1830s, which the government wished to appropriate without offering him adequate compensation. Sentencing King to fifteen days' imprisonment and to expulsion "beyond the bounds of the kingdom", the court ruled that although the country's constitution safeguarded freedom of speech and tolerated foreign religions, "it does not allow the condemnation of the principles, customs, doctrines and ordinances" of the established one. Having called on the capital's filochristoi to attend en masse the trial of the "notorious pseudo-apostle", presumably to "encourage the judges to severity and to deter them from a cowardly complaisance", the Aion hailed the court's decision, arguing that the "insulted religion" had been avenged, the genos "vindicated in the eyes of Greeks living abroad", state and society demonstrating that they would not tolerate "such snakes and enemies of Orthodoxy" in their midst. Its rivals were far less circumspect in attacking King, noting that his persecution, which ran contrary to the principle of religious tolerance, was spearheaded by the country's God-fearing zealots, those "Tartuffian imposters".26

^{Makrygiannis 1983: 189; Malagradis 1926: 178; Miscellaneous 1859: 623-30, 630-5, 762; Tuckerman 1878: 214; Hamister 2000: 13-16; About 1855: 206; Baird 1856: 355; Aion (27 February 1852) 1; Athina (26 February 1852) 2; Elpis (1 March 1852) 2; Efimeris tou Laou (23 February 1852) 3.}

Likewise, for a number of jurists and university professors it was not the alleged corruption of religious sentiments that was causing disquiet. Those who brought out a pamphlet entitled "Opinion of twelve lawyers" in the immediate aftermath of King's conviction in 1852 argued that the issue at hand was how in a secular state freedom of expression was stifled and the nonacceptance of the doctrines of the established religion considered a punishable crime. Their lingering questioning of article 1 of the 1844 constitution on the proscription of any "interference with the established religion" had already been raised in a candid critique by King's lawyer in 1846. In his "Petition" to the Supreme Court, Pavlos Kalligas, whose one and only novel Thanos Vlekas (1856) includes a character drawn upon King, maintained that the principle of religious tolerance was "the first basis of civilization, inseparable from liberty". To surrender that was tantamount to abandoning a cardinal Enlightenment principle. Without disputing the Holy Synod's right to warn its flock about the "miasma of heterodoxy", Kalligas concluded thus:

Do we wish to put on trial and convict an heterodox, not for what he expressed but for what he might believe? [...] Let us not go back to the time when with chains and torture the Inquisition interfered in matters of conscience, in order to seize the secret of a victim's inner convictions as he took his last breath.

Unlike the discourse of the Holy Synod and a segment of the Athenian press, in the "Opinion" and the "Petition" Greek nationality is not conflated with the established religion; for example, Kalligas refers to the Holy Synod as the "sleepless guardian of the Church" — not the nation. And in both a clear line is drawn as regards the remit of the spiritual and lay "guardians" of the nation. For Kalligas, the former had probably exceeded its bounds, the judicial branch of the latter undermining the principle of religious tolerance.

²⁷ Miscellaneous 1859: 798; Kalligas 1899: 464, 471-2, 476.

Charles Tuckerman, US Minister Resident in Athens in the late 1860s-early 1870s, was spot on when maintaining that the King affair was "instituted out of deference to public opinion", and that King's sentence of imprisonment was not carried out on account of his being an US citizen; to which one should add that he had been appointed US consular agent in March 1851 and that his wife was a Greek originating from Smyrna. In fact, King resumed his preaching in 1854, following the revocation of his permanent exile by the Minister of Justice, before dving in Athens fifteen years later at the age of seventy-seven. Notwithstanding his ongoing tribulations with the religious and judicial authorities of his adopted country, his 1852 trial and (below the absolute minimum) sentencing should be seen as a show-case, designed to allay the fears of the "priestly [Russian] party"28 and satisfy the scaremongering of both the Holy Synod and the populist segment of public opinion rather than as evidence of the secular state's intransigence and intolerance.

That much becomes evident when one considers that Michail Kalopothakis (1825–1911), a witness for the defence in King's trial and nephew of Petrobey Mavromichalis, six years later brought out a weekly newspaper (Astir tis Anatolis) in Athens with an unmistakable Protestant slant. This he followed up with his monthly Efimeris ton Paidon in 1868, a children's periodical with subventions from the Religious Tract Society of London and the Presbyterian Church of the US mission to Athens. Three years later he went on to establish the Greek Evangelical Church, endowing it with a place of worship opposite Hadrian's Arch in the capital.²⁹

The responses to Kalopothakis's religious, educational and publishing activities were mixed. The secular state seemingly sanctioned them, and refused on a number of occasions to follow up the request of the Holy Synod to commence legal proceedings against him on account of his alleged promulgating of "heterodox

²⁹ Kyriakakis 1985: 11-17.

²⁸ Tuckerman 1878: 215; Baird 1856: 367.

doctrines [...] for the purpose of proselytizing", as well as to ban religious books published by foreign Bible Societies and circulated by Kalopothakis and his agents on the grounds that "they were likely to entrap the simple-minded and interfere with their faith". But they were met with the disapproval, opposition, and scorn not only of the Holy Synod but also of intellectuals and a segment of public opinion. For example, in the first issue of its rival *Diaplasis ton Paidon* in 1879, with which generations of Greeks were brought up, the *Efimeris ton Paidon* was disdainfully characterized as an "insidious proselytizing organ of the heterodox missionaries"; and thirty-five years later, the demoticist novelist Galatia Kazantzaki, wife (at the time) of Nikos Kazantzakis, opined that it did not offer anything to children, "even from a national point of view", and maintained that never "did the word *Greece* appear in its columns".³⁰

The "national" was foremost in the mind of the Holy Synod as well, when issuing at least four encyclicals in a little over thirteen years, the first of which, in March 1891, unequivocally accused the Greek Evangelicals of misconstruing and falsifying the Lord's word. In a subsequent encyclical, it warned of the risks that the Greek (Orthodox) youth ran by attending the schools and seminars of the Evangelicals, and expressed its hope that:

The Greek Orthodox People will not only maintain our sacred religion unblemished and the ancestral manners and customs pure and intact [...] but will also take care of the schooling of its offspring according to our ecclesiastical and national traditions, through the prevalence of which every pious and valiant belief is developed, ensuring thus the happiness of our national and social life.³¹

What these encyclicals conveyed was a deep-seated concern lest, through their educational and publishing activities their preaching endeavours and their relative financial clout, in the long run the Evangelicals succeeded in making more heterodox out of

³⁰ FRUS 1873: 246, 248; FRUS 1877: 309-11; Patsiou 1987: 94-6.

³¹ Giannopoulos 1901: 402-5; ISEE 1955: 41, 55-6, 60-2.

Greek Orthodox citizens. They also sought to portray the country's Evangelicals as foreign "to our ecclesiastical and national traditions", thus questioning their right to self-identify as Greeks. In November 1895, in an incident akin to late twentieth-century practices vis-à-vis minority groups in Greek Macedonia and Thrace, the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece demanded that the police delete the adjective "Greek" from the sign "Greek Evangelical Church" that was placed on the façade of the Evangelicals' place of worship, for it "constituted proselytization and possible deception of the innocent passers-by". The police duly obliged, only for the sign to be reinstated in full a couple of weeks later after a ruling of the Ministry of the Interior that "Greek simply means that this Evangelical church is in Greece and comprises of Greeks. [...] Only those who gather within the church can undertake proselytism, not the sign itself." 32

The incident in question admittedly shows that the secular state was determined to uphold the principle of religious tolerance. Yet, it was seemingly found wanting in safeguarding it against the actions of "pious Christians" 33 under the Holy Synod's spell. Thus, for example, in broad daylight on 14 February 1892 the Evangelical church in a suburb of Piraeus was targeted by an "impetuous mob" of some six thousand faithful. With shouts of "death to the dogs, the infidels, the exorcists" and "burn, like Judas, the Masons who want to Turkify us", they entered the building, maltreating and injuring in the process more than ten Evangelicals, including six women, before setting it on fire. "The persecution of Christians and their slaughtering in uncivilized China", opined the daily To Asty, "are nothing compared to yesterday's savage scenes and the physical assault of Evangelicals in civilized Piraeus". And with a degree of despair, it reported that on the morrow of the incident, despite the presence of a strong police force outside the scorched church, "remnants of the impetuous mob stoned a nearby house where a few Evangelicals

³² Kyriakakis 1985: 19-24.

³³ Douligeris 1892: v.

had taken shelter". Undeterred, four months later, the Holy Synod recommended to "all Orthodox Christians" a treatise by Archimandrite Panaretos Douligeris, which sought to refute the theological doctrines and practices of Kalopothakis's "pseudo-Evangelicals", who were accused of proselytism and, crucially, of betraying the principles of being Greek.³⁴

The "wolves" of 1847, the "Tartuffian imposters" of 1852, the "pious Christians" of 1892 - all could be seen as agents (and guardians) of what Nikiforos Diamandouros has called Greece's "underdog culture", a major tenet of which was (is?) that "human and civil rights derive from the state itself and do not inhere directly in individuals". To these one should add the 1891 "bigoted Greeks of the lowest class" in Corfu. On the pretext of the discovery of the body of a young girl, allegedly the "victim of the diabolical fanaticism of the Jews", "our Ionian brethren" ran amok. Incited by religious fanaticism and age-old populist views on the bloodthirsty, inhumane and treacherous disposition of the Jews, as well as a desire to supplant local Jewish trading, scores of Greek Orthodox youths and adults ransacked the port-city's Jewish neighbourhoods and imposed a blockade, murdering in the process "at least half a dozen [...] unfortunate" Corfiot Jews in late April 1891. Troops from Patras were dispatched to reestablish law and order, the government publicly censured the rioters, and Britain, France and Austro-Hungary sent warships to the Ionian Sea, Such official manifestations of condemnation brought the siege to an end, but did little to halt the diffusion of anti-Jewish "activities" on the island of Zakynthos. 35

³⁴ Akropolis (3-4 February 1892) 2 and 3; To Asty (3-4 February 1892) 2 and 3; Douligeris 1892: iv-vi.

³⁵ Diamandouros 1994: 21; National Archives (London), F(oreign) O(ffice) 32/634: Consul Reade to Lord Salisbury (Corfu, 15 May 1891); Gennadius 1891; FO 32/626: Sir Edmund Monson to Salisbury (Athens, 20 and 27 April 1891); FO 32/627: Monson to Salisbury (2 May 1891). For a harrowing description of Jewish neighbourhoods at the time, replete with stereotypical images of its inhabitants with their "oblique glance, red lips, [and their] elongated and debauched nose", see Mitsakis 2006: 570-2.

Admittedly, the Corfu riots came on the heels of a welldocumented local tradition of Greek antipathy at best, hatred at worse, vis-à-vis the Jews. The island's incorporation into the Greek state did indeed lead to the civil and political emancipation of those Corfiot Jews who chose to take up Greek citizenship (some 2.500 in 1867 out of an approximate total of 4.500). But contrary to the claim of the London Jewish Chronicle in 1875 that "there has been an extraordinary change in the popular sentiment towards the Jews; [whereas] not many years ago they were despised and persecuted, [now] they are respected", their being on a "par with their fellow citizens" was not looked upon favourably by the Greek Orthodox element. Jewish emancipation meant competition for public positions, trade and jobs, at a time when the enosis had brought about a decline in the port's growth factors that were hardly conducive to the eradication of age-old prejudices, practices and mentalities. Though probably unduly exaggerative in its tone, four years after the Corfu riots the author of a front-page article in the Athens daily *Estia* poured scorn on the "equality" that the island's Israelites were said to enjoy, maintaining that "only as far as duties are concerned, they are veritable Greek citizens; when it comes to rights, the title Greek citizen is totally useless to them". This also helps to explain not only the decrease in the number of Corfiot Jews to 2,188 by 1907 but also the fact that the percentage of non-naturalized Corfiots (i.e. residents of the island who did not possess Greek citizenship) was the second largest in the country.³⁶

What make the events of 1891 stand out from previous anti-Jewish incidents was the unmistakably *modern* rationale of the culprits, expressed by one their ring-leaders, Iakovos Polylas, thus:

The disturbances, sooner or later, would have occurred. They are not something new. I had foreseen them a long time ago and I had said as much to the Jews I know. I told them repeatedly:

³⁶ Kasimatis 1937; Karlafti-Mouratidi 2005: 467; Preschel 1984: 56, 82; Gekas 2004; Mavrogiannis 1895; Psallidas 1997: 24, fn. 26.

beware, you have set your heads against us, you provoke us, you boast, you are behaving rudely towards the Christians. Beware, such behaviour will come to haunt you. They did not listen to me, they did not wish to listen to the voice of reason and what happened, happened. [...] Why should the Corfiot love the Jew? Why should he consider him his equal, his brother? They do not speak our language, they do not attend our schools, they do not consider Greece to be their motherland. [...] the money they earn from us they deposit in foreign banks. Despite all privileges, despite equality before the law, they continue to be foreigners, people in a foreign land. They are not Greeks [...] and they do not wish to be called Greeks. Taking advantage of the privileges [they enjoy], of the protection that over time governments have accorded them, they have become most insolent; they think that they rule over our island. They have isolated themselves. I-so-la-ted! Listen to me, [...] I do not consider anti-Semitism to be ridiculous, no I do not consider it ridiculous. It is a most natural feeling; it is the natural reaction of modern societies against the invasion, against the domination of the Jews. Listen to me, the Jew sucks up and does not give. He does not even have the quality of a leech, which after sucking blood spits it out! The people, in their practical wisdom, are aware of these things like nobody else. Religious reasons, political reasons drove them to this movement.³⁷

As the multi-faceted dimensions of the Corfu riots have recently been the subject of scholarly works, I will not dwell further on these. Suffice it to note that interest in the country's Jews was evinced in the unprecedented number of publications on Jews in Greek lands disseminating anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic narratives, a year after the government had accorded the Jews of Athens the status of an *adelfotita* (brotherhood). Indeed, the visibility of Greek Israelites was further augmented when on 12/24 April 1891, in the midst of the Corfu riots, the Holy Synod for the first time issued an encyclical forbidding the public burning of a Judas effigy as a practice that "greatly insults our Jewish fellow-citizens and incites religious hatred".³⁸

³⁷ Akropolis (13 May 1891) 1.

³⁸ Gekas 2004; Liata 2006: 122ff.; *Efimeris tis Kyverniseos* 101 (4 May 1890); Giannopoulos 1901: 405-6.



Figure 139

Epilogue

Admittedly anti-Semitism, that "most natural feeling", ushers us into modernity. An advertisement and two unsigned front-page leaders in the Athenian *Skrip* at the turn of the century are indicative of the new era. The former (see Figure 1), in an eerie manner reminiscent of Kosmas's sermons, asks the purchasing public not to have any financial dealings with Jews. Four years later, on the pretext of the alleged "virulent Jewish campaign against the Greek element in Romania", it was maintained that:

We do not foster any anti-Semitic movement, nor is hospitable Greece conducive to it, but of course if the enlightened Israelites do not seek to put an end to such behaviour [...], the

³⁹ Skrip (31 December 1895/11 January 1896) 4.

Jewish element that is protected by the existence of equality before the law will not continue to enjoy the privileges it has hitherto. [...] And we hope that the interested parties will see to this swiftly, because patience has its limits.

Though way off the mark, the leader is indicative of how for a section of the Athenian press equality before the law for the Israelites was perceived as an object of barter rather than a duty of a principled polity. Finally, in May 1904, and while a fresh plan for the colonization of Cyprus with Jews from Romania and Russia was on the cards, *Skrip* chastised the "machinations" of Baron Hirsch's Jewish Colonization Association, that "powerful" organization which "comprises Israelite kings of money worldwide". The carrying-out of such plans, it was noted with trepidation, would constitute a "hostile activity against the Greek people" of that "most Greek" island.⁴⁰

Such turn-of-the-century views underpin a perception of the Jewish "other" that was no longer solely grounded upon archaic characteristics. To the diachronic hypostasis of the Christ-killer, bloodthirsty, usurer Jew, that of the antinational economic rival is given added weight. In an era where most issues were seen through the looking-glass of the "national", the antinational stance not only of the native "enlightened Israelites", but of the Jews worldwide, is elevated by certain Greek Orthodox circles to a main attribute of the "national enemy" imagery – at least a decade before the incorporation of the Jerusalem of the Balkans into the Greek state and the consolidation in the latter of what has been defined as "modern anti-Semitism".⁴¹

The concept of the enemy within did not apply solely to the Jewish "other". The ongoing demonizing of the Muslim "other" in textbooks and literary works was part of an age-old imagery. It fed on perceptions of implacable animosity that contributed to a substantial Muslim exodus from former Ottoman Thessaly

 $^{^{40}}$ Skrip (14 June 1900) 1; Empros (16 June 1900) 1; Skrip (14 May 1904) 1.

⁴¹ Margaritis 2005: 38.

following the region's cession, and was manifested on both sides of the divide in the island of Crete in the late 1890s, leading to a considerable migration of Turco-Cretans on the morrow of the establishment of the *Kritiki Politeia*. As for the Catholic "other", the extract that follows is indicative of how dangerous for Hellenism an elite member of the established religion's faithful considered (Greek) Catholicism to be:

Hellenism and Orthodoxy are so intertwined that when even a shadow of the Latin appears, every Greek sentiment ceases to exist [...]. Unfortunately everywhere in Greece where Catholicism is to be found, the Greek *fronima* is not flourishing.⁴²

I will end with an "aphorism", which to my mind encapsulates in no small degree Greek Orthodox perceptions of the religious "other" at the turn of the century. Penned by Archimandrite Timotheos, the spiritual mentor (*pnevmatikos*) of the "Royal Family of the Hellenes" in 1911, it reads thus:

A Greek who is not a genuine Orthodox Christian, who is not a sincere friend of ancestral traditions, is and should be considered a traitor of the Greek motherland. Because it is impossible for a non-genuine Orthodox Christian to hold dear to his heart the enthusiasm for the ideal good and make a dash for self-sacrifice as regards the due observance of the Motherland's laws and the need to protect its sacred [principles]. This is the verdict of History and an undisputed precept of our experience.⁴³

⁴² Carabott 2006; Sokolis 1908.

⁴³ Anastasiou 1911: v-vi.

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