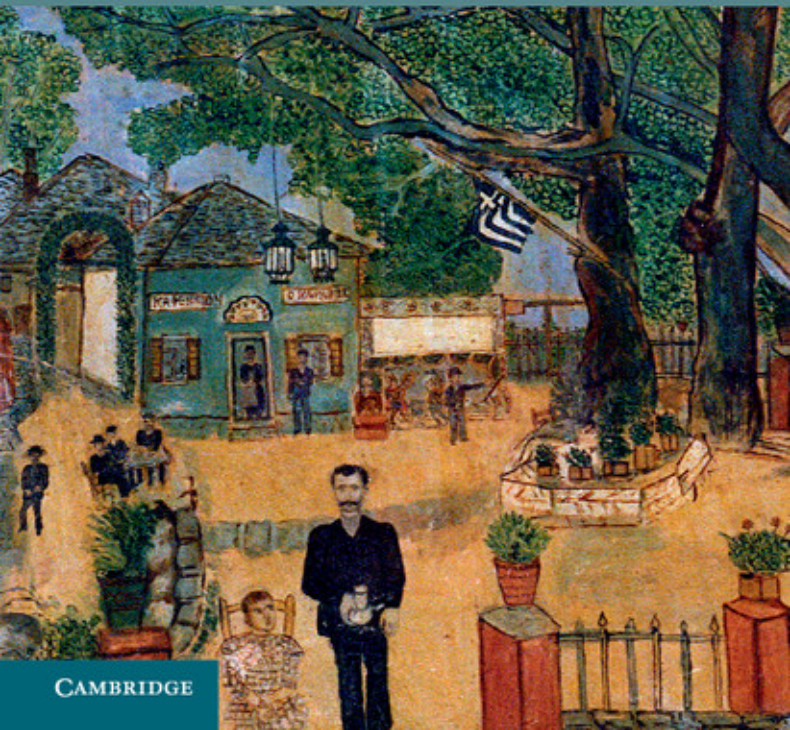


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Richard Clogg

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THIRD EDITION

RICHARD CLOGG



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press,  
New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of  
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107612037](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107612037)

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First published 1992

Reprinted 5 times

Second edition 2002

10th printing 2012

Third edition 2013

Printing in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-107-03289-7 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-61203-7 Paperback

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*For Mary Jo*





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## PREFACE

The text has benefited greatly from the critical scrutiny of my friend and colleague Dr Lars Baerentzen and, as always, of Mary Jo Clogg. To both, as to Professor Susannah and Dr Rolandos Katsiaounis, I am much indebted. I am also very grateful to the following for help in connection with the illustrations: Guy Evans, Manos Haritatos, David Howells, Dimitrios Kaloumenos, Paschalis Kitromilidis, John Koliopoulos, Fani Konstantinou, Nikos Linardatos, Ioannis K. Mazarakis-Ainian, Georgios Mountakis, Helen Zeese Papanikolas, Nikos Stavroulakis, Fani-Maria Tsigakou, K. Varfis and Malcolm Wagstaff.

March 1991/2001/2013



# I

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## Introduction

All countries are burdened by their history, but the past weighs particularly heavily on Greece. It is still, regrettably, a commonplace to talk of 'modern Greece' and of 'modern Greek' as though 'Greece' and 'Greek' must necessarily refer to the ancient world. The burden of antiquity has been both a boon and a bane. The degree to which the language and culture of the ancient Greek world was revered throughout Europe (and, indeed, in the United States where some of the founding fathers were nurtured on the classics) during the critical decades of the national revival in the early nineteenth century was a vital factor in stimulating in the Greeks themselves, or at least in the nationalist intelligentsia, a consciousness that they were the heirs to a heritage that was universally admired. Such an awareness had scarcely existed during the centuries of Ottoman rule and this 'sense of the past', imported from western Europe, was a major constituent in the development of the Greek national movement, contributing significantly to its precocity in relation to other Balkan independence movements. The heritage of the past was also important in exciting the interest of liberal, and indeed of conservative, opinion in the fate of the insurgent Greeks. In the 1820s, even such an unreconstructed pillar of the traditional order as Viscount Castlereagh, the British foreign secretary, was moved to ask whether 'those, in admiration of whom we have been educated, be doomed . . . to drag out, for all time to come, the miserable existence to which circumstances have reduced them'. Indeed such attitudes have persisted to the present. During the debate in the British

parliament in 1980 over ratification of Greek membership of the European Community, a foreign office minister intoned that Greece's entry would be seen as a 'fitting repayment by the Europe of today of the cultural and political debt that we all owe to a Greek heritage almost three thousand years old'.

That an obsession with past glories should have developed is, in the circumstances, scarcely surprising. *Progonoplexia*, or 'ancestoritis', has been characteristic of so much of the country's cultural life and has given rise to the 'language question', the interminable, and at times violent, controversy over the degree to which the spoken language of the people should be 'purified' to render it more akin to the supposed ideal of ancient Greek. Generations of schoolchildren have been forced to wrestle with the complexities of the *katharevousa*, or 'purifying' form of the language. Only as recently as 1976 was the demotic, or spoken language, formally declared to be the official language of the state and of education. One result of this change, however, is that the new generation of Greeks does not find it easy to read books written in *katharevousa*, which comprise perhaps 80 per cent of the total non-fiction book production of the independent state.

Early Greek nationalists looked for inspiration exclusively to the classical past. When, in the 1830s, the Austrian historian J. P. Fallmerayer cast doubt on one of the founding precepts of modern Greek nationalism, namely that the modern Greeks are the lineal descendants of the ancient, he aroused outrage among the intelligentsia of the fledgeling state. The first American minister to the independent state, Charles Tuckerman, an acute observer of mid-nineteenth-century Greek society, observed that the quickest way to reduce an Athenian professor to apoplexy was to mention the name of Fallmerayer. Such attitudes were accompanied by a corresponding contempt for Greece's medieval, Byzantine past. Adamantios Korais, for instance, the most influential figure of the pre-independence intellectual revival, despised what he dismissed as the priest-ridden obscurantism of Byzantium. Indeed, he once said that to read as much as a single page of a particular Byzantine author was enough to bring on an attack of gout.

It was only towards the middle of the nineteenth century that Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, a professor of history in the University of Athens, formulated an interpretation of Greek history

which linked the ancient, medieval and modern periods in a single continuum. Subsequently, mainstream Greek historiography has laid great emphasis on such continuity. By the end of the century the rediscovery and rehabilitation of the Byzantine past was complete as intellectuals looked more to the glories of the Byzantine Empire than to classical antiquity in justifying the irredentist project of the 'Great Idea'. This vision, which aspired to the unification of all areas of Greek settlement in the Near East within the bounds of a single state with its capital in Constantinople, dominated the independent state during the first century of its existence.

If the nascent intelligentsia of the independence period looked upon the classical past with a reverence that matched their contempt for Byzantium, they had no time at all for the heritage of 400 years of Ottoman rule. Korais, indeed, declared in his autobiography that in his vocabulary 'Turk' and 'wild beast' were synonymous. Yet the period of the *Tourkokratia*, or Turkish rule, had a profound influence in shaping the evolution of Greek society. Ottoman rule had the effect of isolating the Greek world from the great historical movements such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, the Enlightenment and the French and Industrial Revolutions that so influenced the historical evolution of western Europe. For much of the period the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire in Europe broadly coincided with those between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. The conservatism of the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church reinforced this isolation. As late as the 1790s, for instance, Greek clerics continued to denounce the ideas of Copernicus and to argue that the sun revolved around the earth. This conservatism was reinforced by an anti-westernism that had its roots in a profound bitterness at the way in which Catholic Europe had sought to impose papal supremacy as the price of military help as the Byzantine Empire confronted the threat of the Ottoman Turks.

The capriciousness of Ottoman rule and the weakness of the idea of the rule of law helped to shape the underlying values of Greek society and to determine attitudes to the state and to authority that have persisted into the present. One form of self-defence against such arbitrariness was to secure the protection of highly placed patrons who could mediate with those in positions of power and privilege. This was coupled with a distrustful attitude towards those outside

the circle of the extended family. The need for patrons continued into the new state and, once constitutional government had been established, parliamentary deputies became the natural focus for clientelistic relations, which pervaded the whole of society. In return for their support at the hustings, voters expected those for whom they had voted to help them and their families to find jobs, preferably in the inflated state sector, the only secure source of employment in an underdeveloped economy, and to intercede with a generally obstructive bureaucracy. *Rouspheti*, the reciprocal dispensation of favours that has traditionally oiled the wheels of society, and *mesa*, the connections that are useful, indeed indispensable, in many aspects of daily life, were both reinforced during the period of Turkish rule.

The Greeks are a people of the diaspora. It was during the period of Ottoman rule that patterns of emigration developed that have continued into modern times. Even before the emergence of a Greek state Greek merchants established during the late eighteenth century a mercantile empire in the eastern Mediterranean, in the Balkans and as far afield as India. In the nineteenth century migration developed apace to Egypt, to southern Russia and at the end of the century to the United States. Initially, these migrants to the New World were almost exclusively male. They were driven by poor economic prospects at home and, for the most part, intended to spend only a few years abroad before returning permanently to their motherland. Most, however, stayed in their country of immigration. The emigrant flow was limited by restrictive US legislation during the inter-war period, when Greece herself welcomed within her borders over a million refugees from Asia Minor, Bulgaria and Russia. Emigration once again got under way on a large scale after the Second World War. Prior to the ending of US quota restrictions in the mid-1960s much of this new wave of emigration was to Australia, where Melbourne, with a Greek community of over 200,000, had by the 1980s emerged as one of the principal centres of Greek population in the world. The postwar period also saw large-scale movement of Greeks to western Europe, and in particular to West Germany, as 'guest-workers'. In the course of time many of these returned, using their hard-won capital for the most part to set up small-scale enterprises in the service sector. For a considerable number, however, the status of *Gastarbeiter* took on a more or less permanent nature.

*Xeniteia*, or sojourning in foreign parts, on either a permanent or temporary basis has thus been central to the historical experience of the Greeks in modern times. As a consequence the relationship of the communities overseas with the homeland has been of critical importance throughout the independence period. The prospect of the election of Michael Dukakis, a second-generation Greek-American, as president of the United States in 1988 naturally aroused great excitement in Greece and, inevitably perhaps, unrealistic expectations. His emergence as the Democratic presidential candidate focused attention on the rapid acculturation of Greek communities abroad to the norms of the host society and highlighted the contrast between the effectiveness of Greeks outside Greece and the problems they experienced at home in developing the efficient and responsive infrastructure of a modern state. The existence of such large populations of Greek origin outside the boundaries of the state raises in an acute form the question of what constitutes 'Greekness' – presumably not language, for many in the second and third generation know little or no Greek. Religion is clearly a factor, but again there is a high incidence of marriage outside the Orthodox Church among Greeks of the emigration. In 119 of the 163 weddings performed at the Greek church of Portland, Oregon, between 1965 and 1977 one of the partners was not of Greek descent. It seems that 'Greekness' is something that a person is born with and can no more easily be lost than it can be acquired by those not of Greek ancestry.

In the United States, in particular, the existence of a substantial, prosperous, articulate and well-educated community of Americans of Greek descent is seen as a resource of increasing importance by politicians in the homeland, even if the political clout attributed to the 'Greek lobby' is sometimes exaggerated, particularly by its opponents. Despite some successes Greek-Americans have had relatively little effect in generating pressure on Turkey to withdraw from northern Cyprus and in negating the tendency of successive US administrations to 'tilt' in favour of Turkey in the continuing Greek-Turkish imbroglio.

Outsiders are inclined to dismiss Greek fears of perceived Turkish expansionism as exaggerated. But those who argue that the facts of geography condemn the two countries, which in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s more than once came to the brink of war, to friendship,

fail to take account of the historical roots of present-day antagonisms and of the extreme sensitivity to perceived threats to national sovereignty that can arise in countries whose frontiers have only relatively recently been established. Whereas the heartland of 'Old' Greece has enjoyed at least a notional independence since the 1830s, large areas of the present Greek state have only been incorporated within living memory. The Dodecanese islands became sovereign Greek territory as recently as 1947, while many of the other Aegean islands, together with Macedonia, Epirus and Thrace, were absorbed only on the eve of the First World War. Konstantinos Karamanlis, elected president for the second time in 1990, was born in 1907 an Ottoman subject.

Geographically, Greece is at once a Balkan and a Mediterranean country. Its access to the sea has given rise to greater contacts with the West than its land-locked Balkan neighbours. It was, indeed, in the eighteenth century that the foundations were laid of a mercantile marine that in the second half of the twentieth century had emerged as the largest in the world, even if a sizeable proportion of it sailed under flags of convenience. Greece's Orthodox and Ottoman heritage had, however, for many centuries cut it off from the mainstream of European history. The country's identity as a European country was uncertain. Indeed, from the earliest days of independence Greeks had talked of travelling to Europe as though their country was not in fact European. Such uncertainty gave Greece's accession to the European Community as its tenth member in 1981 a particular significance, for, aside from the perceived economic and political benefits of accession, it seemed to set the seal in an unambiguous way on her 'Europeanness'. The Greek national movement had been remarkable in that it was the first to develop in a non-Christian environment, that of the Ottoman Empire. One hundred and fifty years later, Greece's full membership of the European Community was significant in that she was the first country with a heritage of Orthodox Christianity and Ottoman rule and with a pattern of historical development that marked her out from the existing members to enter the Community. The process of the reintegration of Greece into 'the common European home' forms a major theme of this book.



## 2

---

# Ottoman rule and the emergence of the Greek state 1770–1831

Constantinople, the ‘City’ as it was known in the Greek world, fell to the Ottoman Turks after a lengthy siege on 29 May 1453. This was a Tuesday, a day of the week that continues to be regarded as of ill omen by Greeks. The capture of this great bastion of Christian civilisation against Islam sent shock waves throughout Christendom, but the reaction of the inhabitants of the pitiful remnant of the once mighty empire was ambiguous. The great bulk of the Orthodox Christian populations of the eastern Mediterranean had long previously fallen under Ottoman rule. Moreover, in the dying days of the Byzantine Empire, the Grand Duke Loukas Notaras had declared that he would rather that the turban of the Turk prevailed in the ‘City’ than the mitre of the Catholic prelate. In this he reflected the feelings of many of his Orthodox co-religionists who resented the way in which western Christendom had sought to browbeat the Orthodox into accepting papal supremacy as the price of military assistance in confronting the Turkish threat. There were bitter memories, too, of the sack of Constantinople in 1204 as a result of the diversion of the Fourth Crusade. At least the Orthodox Christian *pliroma*, or flock, could now expect, as ‘People of the Book’, to enjoy under the Ottoman Turks the untrammelled exercise of their faith with no pressure to bow before the hated Latins. The fall of the Byzantine Empire, indeed, was widely perceived as forming part of God’s dispensation, as a punishment for the manifold sins of the Orthodox. In any case the Ottoman yoke was not expected to last for long. It was widely believed that the end of the world would come



Map 1 *I kath'imas Anatoli: the Greek East*. Greek communities have been widely scattered throughout the Near and Middle East in modern times.



about at the end of the seventh millennium since Creation, which was calculated as the year 1492.

After 1453 the Ottomans gradually consolidated their hold over the few areas of the Greek world that were not already within their grasp. The pocket empire of Trebizond, on the south-eastern shores of the Black Sea, which had been established as a consequence of the Fourth Crusade, was overrun in 1461. Rhodes was captured in 1522, Chios and Naxos in 1566, Cyprus in 1571, and Crete, known as the 'Great Island', fell after a twenty-year siege in 1669. The Ionian islands (with the exception of Levkas) largely escaped Ottoman rule. Corfu, the largest, never fell to the Turks. The islands remained as Venetian dependencies until 1797, when they passed under French, Russian and British rule, constituting a British protectorate between 1815 and 1864.

The Ottoman Turks, nomadic warriors by origin, were confronted with the task of ruling a vast agglomeration of peoples and faiths that embraced much of the Balkan peninsula, north Africa and the Middle East. This they accomplished by grouping populations into *millets* (literally 'nations') which were constituted on the basis of religious confession rather than ethnic origin. Beside the ruling Muslim *millet*, there was the Jewish *millet*, the Gregorian Armenian *millet*, the Catholic *millet* (even, in the nineteenth century, a Protestant *millet*) and finally the Orthodox *millet*, the largest after the Muslim. The *millets* enjoyed a wide degree of administrative autonomy and were ruled over by their respective religious authorities. The Ottoman Turks called the Orthodox the *millet-i Rum*, or 'Greek' *millet*. This was something of a misnomer for, besides the Greeks, it embraced all the Orthodox Christians of the Empire, whether they were Bulgarian, Romanian, Serb, Vlach (a nomadic people scattered throughout the Balkans and speaking a form of Romanian), Albanian or Arab. But the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, who was the senior patriarch of the Orthodox Church and the *millet bashi* (head of the *millet*), together with the higher reaches of the Church hierarchy, through which he administered it, were invariably Greek. With the growth of nationalism in the nineteenth century, this Greek dominance of the Orthodox *millet* increasingly came to be resented by its non-Greek members and the hitherto seamless robe of Orthodoxy was rent by the establishment of national Churches.

The *millet* system in its classical form did not develop until quite late and the precise nature of the privileges granted by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror to the Orthodox Church immediately after the conquest are not clear. The original *firman*, the document in which these were vouchsafed, was lost and Mehmet's concessions to the Church had to be reconstructed in 1520 on the basis of the testimony of three aged members of the sultan's janissary guard who had been present nearly seventy years before when Mehmet had allowed the Greeks to keep their churches. Mehmet chose Georgios Gennadios Scholarios as the first patriarch under the Ottoman dispensation. This choice was welcome to many for Gennadios had been a staunch opponent of the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and it was clearly in Mehmet's interest to perpetuate this traditional hostility. The power and privileges of the Orthodox Church were more extensive under the Ottoman sultans than they had been under the Byzantine emperors. Moreover, the patriarch's authority over the Orthodox faithful extended beyond strictly religious affairs to the regulation of many aspects of everyday life. So much so, indeed, that Orthodox Christians would for the most part have had many more dealings with their own religious authorities than with Ottoman officialdom.

The quid pro quo for the granting of such a high degree of communal autonomy was that the patriarch and the hierarchy were expected to act as guarantors of the loyalty of the Orthodox faithful to the Ottoman state. When the sultan's authority was challenged, then, the hierarchs of the Church, in their role as both religious and civil leaders, were the prime targets for reprisals. Thus it was that, on the outbreak of the war of independence in 1821, the ecumenical patriarch, Grigorios V, together with a number of other religious and civil leaders, was executed in circumstances of particular brutality. His hanging outraged opinion in Christian Europe, and indeed helped to mobilise sympathy for the insurgent Greeks. But to the Ottomans, Grigorios had manifestly failed in his primary duty, that of ensuring the loyalty of the faithful to the sultan. When the Russian ambassador protested about the execution, the *reis efendi*, the Ottoman foreign minister, tartly observed that a Russian *tsar*, Peter the Great, had actually abolished the office of patriarch in his country.



1 The fall of Constantinople, as depicted by Panayiotis Zographos in a series of paintings of scenes from the war of independence, commissioned in the mid-1830s by General Makriyannis, a veteran of the war. Against the background of the city of Constantinople, the victorious sultan, anachronistically smoking a hookah, declines the gifts proffered by the clergy and prominent citizens, and orders that they be placed under the yoke. In the distance, those who have refused to submit have taken to the hills, pursued by Ottoman troops. In the bottom left corner the embodiment of enslaved Greece, in chains, points a reproachful finger at the tyrant. Immediately above, Rigas Velestinlis, the proto-martyr of the independence movement executed by the Turks in 1798, sows the seeds of Greece's eventual freedom. He is flanked by one of the *klefts*, the bandits who, in the popular imagination, symbolised a form of primitive national resistance during the period of the *Tourkokratia*, the centuries of Turkish rule. Makriyannis commissioned the series of twenty-five pictures, whose robust vigour matches that of his own prose, to correct what he considered to be the lies and distortions of certain historians. They are accompanied by detailed captions giving his version of events surrounding many of the major battles of the war. Panayiotis Zographos, the artist, had himself taken part in the war and his two sons helped make the copies. Four sets were made, and in 1839 these were presented by Makriyannis at a great banquet in Athens to King Otto and to the ministers of

The concentration of power, civil as well as religious, in the hands of the Church led to furious rivalries for high office. These were encouraged by the Ottoman authorities, for the grand vezir, the sultan's chief minister, became the recipient of a vast *peshkesh*, or bribe, each time that the office of patriarch changed hands. To recoup the payment the patriarch himself was obliged to accept bribes and the Church thus became enmeshed in the institutionalised rapacity and corruption that was endemic to the Ottoman system of government. In theory a patriarch enjoyed life tenure of his throne but it was not unknown for the same individual to hold office on more than one occasion. Indeed, during the later seventeenth century Dionysios IV Mouselimis was elected patriarch no less than five times, while the 'national martyr', Grigorios V, was executed during his third patriarchate. Small wonder that the gibe of an eighteenth-century Armenian banker that 'you Greeks change your patriarch more often than your shirt' struck home uncomfortably. Nor was it surprising that over the centuries a strong current of popular anti-clericalism, prompted by the exactions of the Church and the greed of many of the clergy, came into existence. In the decades before 1821 this coalesced with the resentment of the nascent nationalist intelligentsia at the extent to which the higher reaches of the Church hierarchy had identified their interests with those of the Ottoman state. The argument advanced by the Patriarch Anthimos of Jerusalem in 1798 that Christians should not challenge the established order because the Ottoman Empire had been raised up by God to protect Orthodoxy from the taint of the heretical, Catholic West was by no means untypical of the views of the hierarchy at large.

Our Lord . . . raised out of nothing this powerful Empire of the Ottomans in the place of our Roman [Byzantine] Empire which had begun, in certain ways, to deviate from the beliefs of the Orthodox faith, and He raised up the Empire of the Ottomans higher than any other Kingdom so as to show without doubt that it came about by Divine Will . . .

Anthimos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, *Didaskalia Patriki* [Paternal Exhortation] (1798)

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Caption for Plate 1 (*cont.*).

the 'Protecting Powers' of the newly independent Greek state, Britain, France and Russia. The British set is still preserved in Windsor Castle.

Notwithstanding the fact that, in keeping with Islamic tradition, the Greek *raya* (literally flock) enjoyed under Ottoman rule a considerable degree of religious freedom, they were nonetheless subject to a number of disabilities which emphasised their inferior status in the Ottoman order of things. The word of a Christian was not accepted in court against that of a Muslim, nor could a Christian marry a Muslim. A Christian might not bear arms and in lieu of military service was required to pay a special tax, the *haradj* (in practice this was a privilege, if an unintended one). Until the demise of the institution towards the end of the seventeenth century, the most feared disability was the *paidomazoma* (literally child gathering) or janissary levy. This was the obligation, imposed at irregular intervals, on Christian families in the Balkans to surrender their bestlooking and most intelligent children for service to the Ottoman state as elite soldiers or bureaucrats. The requirement on those conscripted to convert to Islam, apostasy from which invariably resulted in death, was particularly feared. But because the levy did afford the opportunity for children from poor backgrounds to rise to the very highest echelons of the Ottoman state structure there were instances of Muslim parents trying to pass their children off as Christians so as to be eligible for the levy. Moreover, highly placed janissaries were sometimes able to show favours to relatives or to their native villages.

The various forms of discrimination to which Christians were subject, when coupled with particularly harsh treatment by local Ottoman authorities, could lead to conversion, individual or mass, to Islam. In such instances, which were particularly common in the seventeenth century in the remoter regions of the Empire, it was not unknown for Christians outwardly to subscribe to the tenets of Islam, while secretly adhering to the precepts and practices of Orthodox Christianity. When, in the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman Porte (as the central government was known), under pressure from the Christian Powers, formally espoused the notion of the equality of Muslims and Christians, many of these 'crypto-Christians' revealed their true religious allegiance, to the consternation of their erstwhile Muslim co-religionists.

The effect of these various forms of discrimination was mitigated in practice by the fact that, particularly in remote mountainous regions, the control exercised by the Ottoman central government



was sketchy. The *Agrapha* villages in the Pindos mountains, for instance, were so called because they were 'unwritten' in the imperial tax registers. Other Greek-inhabited regions of the Empire, such as the prosperous mastic-growing island of Chios, enjoyed particular privileges and immunities.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were something of a 'dark age' in the history of the Greek people. Armenians (regarded by the Turks as the 'faithful' *millet*) and Jews had not been compromised by resistance to Ottoman conquest and at this time enjoyed more favour than the Greeks. From time to time, however, Greeks emerged into prominence. One such was Sheytanoglou (the 'Son of the Devil'), a descendant of the great Byzantine family of the Kantakouzenoi. His control of the fur trade and of the imperial salt monopoly resulted in the amassing of a fortune large enough for him to equip sixty galleys for the sultan's navy. This over-mighty subject was, however, to be executed in 1578.

Even during this darkest period in the fortunes of the Greeks there were sporadic revolts against Ottoman rule. Uprisings on the mainland and in the islands of the Archipelago were prompted by the crushing defeat inflicted on the Ottoman navy by a fleet under the command of Don John of Austria at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. In 1611 a short-lived revolt was launched in Epirus by Dionysios Skylosophos. Although the prolonged war of 1645-69 between Venice and the Ottoman Empire had resulted in the fall of Crete, nonetheless the Venetian occupation of the Peloponnese between 1684 and 1715 demonstrated that Ottoman power was not invincible.

Moreover, throughout the period of the *Tourkokratia*, the *klefts* afforded a visible and suggestive example of pre-nationalist armed resistance to the Turks. The *klefts* were essentially bandits whose depredations were directed against Greeks and Turks alike. But their attacks on such visible symbols of Ottoman power as tax collectors led to their being seen in the popular imagination as the defenders of the oppressed Greek *raya* against their Muslim overlords and to their being credited with almost superhuman powers of bravery and endurance. In an effort to control brigandage, and to ensure the safety of the mountain passes that were essential for the maintenance of trade and imperial communications, the Ottomans established Christian militia forces known as *armatoloi*. The existence of



2 A seventeenth-century engraving of the Greek church of Aghios Georgios (St George) and of the *Phlanginion Phrontisterion*, or College, in Venice. With its large Greek community, Venice was an important centre of Greek commercial, religious and cultural activity during the *Tourkokratia*. In 1514 the Greeks were granted permission to build their own church and the Greek Bishop in the city enjoyed the title of Metropolitan of Philadelphia in Asia Minor. In 1665 the *Phlanginion Phrontisterion*, founded with a lavish benefaction from Thomas Phlanginis, a former president of the community, opened its doors to prepare young Greeks for study at the University of Padua. Catholic Venice's relative tolerance of Orthodox 'schismatics' led to the city becoming for a long period the main centre of printing for the Orthodox world. Almost all the service books used in churches throughout the Ottoman Empire were printed in the city, while a lively commercial trade developed in secular literature. The *Serenissima Repubblica* of Venice ruled over the one area of the Greek world free of Ottoman rule, the Ionian islands. These comprised Corfu (Kerkyra), Cephalonia, Zakynthos (Zante), Cythera, Levkas (Lefkada), Ithaca and Paxos. Corfu never fell to the Ottomans. The other islands had only a very brief experience of Ottoman rule, with the exception of Levkas, which for some 200 years formed part of the sultan's domains. After the fall of the Venetian republic in 1797 the islands came under various forms of French, Russian and

such armed formations of Greeks, the one outside the law and the other within it (although boundaries between the two were never rigid), meant that by the time of the outbreak of the struggle for independence in the 1820s the Greeks were beneficiaries of a long, if erratic, tradition of irregular warfare.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the prospect of throwing off the Ottoman yoke appeared remote indeed. Such aspirations as existed among the Greeks for an eventual restoration of 'their race of princes to the throne and possession of Constantinople' were enshrined in a body of prophetic and apocalyptic beliefs which held out the hope of an eventual deliverance not through human agency but through divine intervention. These reflected the persistence of Byzantine modes of thought which saw all human endeavour as constituting part of the divine dispensation. Particular credence was attached to the legend of the *xanthon genos*, a fair-haired race of liberators from the north, who were widely identified with the Russians, the only Orthodox people not in thrall to the Ottomans. But there was little feeling that the Greek people could hope to bring about their emancipation by virtue of their own efforts.

We hope for the fair-haired races to deliver us,  
To come from Moscow, to save us.  
We trust in the oracles, in false prophecies,  
And we waste our time on such vanities.  
We place our hope in the north wind  
To take the snare of the Turk from upon us.

Matthaios, Metropolitan of Myra (seventeenth century)

During the course of the eighteenth century, however, there were a number of highly significant changes in the nature of Greek society.

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Caption for Plate 2 (*cont.*).

British rule before being united with the kingdom of Greece in 1864. Between 1204 and 1669 Crete also formed part of the Venetian Empire and witnessed a great flowering of Greek literature which was much influenced by Italian models. It was also the birthplace of the painter Domenikos Theotokopoulos, better known as El Greco. After the fall of the 'Great Island' of Crete to the Turks in 1669, following a twenty-year siege, the Ionian islands remained a window onto the West for the Greeks.