Innovation in the Orthodox Christian Tradition?

The Question of Change in Greek Orthodox Thought and Practice

Edited by

**Trine Stauning Willert and
Lina Molokotos-Liederman**

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The Question of Change in Greek Orthodox Thought and Practice

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Notes on Contributors

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Elisabeth Kontogiorgi completed her DPhil at St Antony's College, Oxford University (1996) and is now senior research fellow at the Research Centre for the Study of Modern Greek History, Academy of Athens. She is the author of the monograph *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. She has also published on the history of Greek nationalism, religion and politics. Current interests include history of the movement for reunion between the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox Churches in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century; and the social policy of the League of Nations in Greece, with the emphasis on the public health sector.

Tore Tvarnø Lind is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at the University of Copenhagen. He has conducted extensive ethnomusicological fieldwork at various monasteries at Mount Athos and in Copenhagen on biomedical and heterodox healing practices with music. Since 2000 he has presented his work at numerous international conferences in Europe and the United States, and in 2002 he was research fellow at the University of Chicago. His research on music centres on questions of tradition, modernity, history, authenticity, identity, tourism and spirituality. Other and new areas of scholarly interest include music as torture in the so-called global war against terror; music and censorship during the Greek Junta; and punk/heavy metal in Greece. He has recently published *The Past Is Always Present: The Revival of the Byzantine Musical Tradition at Mount Athos*, Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2011.

Vasilios N. Makrides studied Theology at the University of Athens (1979–83), at Harvard University (1984–86) and at the University of Tübingen (1986–91). Since 1999 he has been Professor of Religious Studies (specializing in Orthodox Christianity) at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Erfurt, Germany. His main research interests are the comparative religious and cultural history of Orthodox Christianity, as well as the sociology of Orthodox Christianity. Recent books include: *Hellenic Temples and Christian Churches: A Concise History of the Religious Cultures of Greece from Antiquity to the Present*, New York and London: New York University Press, 2009; and *Orthodox Christianity in 21st*

Century Greece: The Role of Religion in Culture, Ethnicity and Politics, Farnham: Ashgate, 2010 (co-edited with Victor Roudometof).

Lina Molokotos-Liederman is a researcher specializing in international issues of religion and education, gender, migration, social welfare and humanitarian aid. Educated in Greece, France and the United States, she received her MS in Mass Communication from Boston University and her PhD in the Sociology of Religion from the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE) in Paris. Her dissertation compared cases of religious expression by Muslim students in state schools in France and Britain. As a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Exeter, Centre for European Studies, she was the principal researcher for the project 'The Religious Factor in the Construction of Europe: Greece, Orthodoxy and the EU', funded by the Leverhulme Trust. As a member of the research teams of the 'Welfare and Religion in a European Perspective' (WREP) and 'Welfare and Values in Europe' (WaVE) projects (coordinated by the Uppsala Religion and Society Research Centre), she has also worked on the role of religion in social welfare. She is also affiliated with the GSRL/CNRS research laboratory in Paris. She lives in London, where she works on a project basis as an independent scholar and academic translator for universities and non-profit organisations (such as the IOCC, IOM and Open Society Foundation). She is the author of numerous journal articles and research reports.

Dena Fokas Moses is a graduate of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, New York, where her work concentrated on contemporary theological issues and her thesis focused on Orthodox responses to the war over Kosovo. She also holds an MA in Theological Research from Durham University and a BA in Political Science and Religion from Furman University, South Carolina. She is currently outreach coordinator for the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and project coordinator for the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation.

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Dimitris Stamatopoulos is Assistant Professor at the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki. He was a member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, for the academic year 2010–11. He is the author of numerous articles on the history of the Orthodox populations in the Late Ottoman Empire, as well as the relations between religion and politics in the Balkans. He has written the monographs: *Reform and Secularization: Towards a Reconstruction of the History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the 19th Century*, Athens: Alexandreia 2003 (in Greek); *The Byzantium after the Nation: The Problem of Continuity in the Balkan Historiographies*, Athens: Alexandreia, 2009 (in Greek).

Trine Stauning Willert is Assistant Professor in Modern Greek Studies at University of Copenhagen. Her research has focused on national identity, religion and education in contemporary Greece and the cultural relationship between Greece and Europe in a historical as well as contemporary perspective. In her latest research project funded by the Danish Research Council she examined new agendas in Greek theology and religious education attempting to provide religion with a pertinent role in present-day globalized and multicultural Greece. In 2009 she was the organizer of the scientific symposium 'Orthodoxy and Innovation in the Greek-Speaking World from Byzantium to the 21st Century' at the University of Copenhagen. Recently, she has received a research grant from the Carlsberg Foundation for a project on representations of Ottoman heritage in Modern Greek literature and its relationship with western European literary trends. She is co-editor (with Catharina Raudvere and Krzysztof Stala) of the volume *Rethinking the Space for Religion: New Actors in Central and Southeast Europe on Religion, Authenticity and Belonging* (forthcoming by Nordic Academic Press). She has published chapters in edited volumes and is preparing a monograph under the title *A New Role for Orthodoxy in Multicultural Greece? Nation, Europe and Pluralism in Greek Theology and Religious Education*.

Preface

The inspiration for this volume originated in Copenhagen in June 2009, when Trine Stauning Willert initiated and organized a scientific symposium on 'Orthodoxy and Innovation in the Greek-speaking World from Byzantium to the 21st Century'. The symposium was held in honour of the 40-year contribution of Sysse Engberg, Associate Professor of Modern Greek Studies at the University of Copenhagen. It was also held in memory of a close colleague of Sysse Engberg, Sophia Scopetéa who, until her death in 2007, was an important scholar of Modern Greek Studies and a translator of parts of the work of Søren Aabye Kierkegaard into Greek.

The topic of the symposium was at the intersection of the research fields of two scholars: Sysse Engberg's longstanding contribution to Byzantine palaeography and the study of Byzantine music and liturgy; and Trine Stauning Willert's involvement in the research project 'Between Conservative Reaction and Religious Reinvention: Religious Intellectuals in Central and South-East Europe on Community, Authenticity and Heritage'. This project, funded by the Danish Council for Independent Research in the Humanities, was under the direction of Professor Catharina Raudvere from the University of Copenhagen. Trine Stauning Willert was more particularly involved in a sub-project dealing with new discourses in contemporary Greek theological and religious space. Professor Charles Lock from the Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies at the University of Copenhagen, and Karsten Fledelius, Associate Professor at the Department of Media, Cognition and Communication, also at the University of Copenhagen, contributed inspiration and practical advice to developing the concept of the symposium. The symposium was funded by the Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, the Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture, as well as various academic institutions at the University of Copenhagen: the Centre for Modern European Studies (CEMES); the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies; the Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies; and the SAXO Institute.

Lina Molokotos-Liederman was on the list of speakers of the symposium, but was unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances. However, her research includes work on the innovative attempt by a group of Orthodox monks to create a rock band promoting Orthodox Christian values, which was included in the volume *Orthodox Christianity in 21st Century Greece* (Ashgate 2010), edited by Victor Roudometof and Vasilios N. Makrides.

Following the success of the symposium, Trine Stauning Willert and Lina Molokotos-Liederman were eager to disseminate the original pieces of research presented at the symposium and decided to work together in the challenging task

of bringing together into an edited volume some of the presented papers and entirely new pieces of research relating to the concept of innovation in Greek Orthodoxy. This was the beginning of a long process of expanding and enriching the original papers presented at the symposium and adding new pieces of research offering other perspectives on the theme of innovation. Seven chapters in this volume are based on expanded and reworked papers which were presented at the 2009 symposium. Four new chapters have been added to cover themes that were not part of the symposium.

The editors wish to thank all of the authors working in different corners of the world (starting from Greece, Germany, Denmark and the UK to North America and going as far as Australia). Their hard work in writing, rewriting and editing multiple times the chapters of this book is what made this volume the result of a great transnational collaborative effort. The editors also extend a special thank you to Vasilios Makrides for his invaluable support and advice during the editing process. The editors also wish to thank Ashgate for their assistance in the production process. Last but not least, very special thanks must be extended to Povl Vedel Villumsen, former Associate Professor of Computer Science at the University of Aalborg, holding a BA in Modern Greek Studies from the University of Copenhagen, who has generously provided the economic funding for the realization of this book.

The Greek titles of books and articles referred to by the authors have been transliterated and translated into English. Although every effort has been made to follow the same transliteration rules throughout the volume, some contributors have used different rules of transliteration.

Conceptual Overview

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How Can We Speak of Innovation in the Greek Orthodox Tradition? Towards a Typology of Innovation in Religion

Trine Stauning Willert and Lina Molokotos-Liederman

This book explores specific innovative attempts or achievements, as well as negotiations and power struggles over the issue of innovation within Greek Orthodox religious practice and thought. Through the prism of innovation we examine various case studies of innovation and change in Greek Orthodoxy in a historical and contemporary perspective. Rather than understanding innovation as a concrete event taking place at a specific point in time, the chapters in the book demonstrate how various actors use the concept of innovation and its indispensable counterpart, tradition, as rhetorical or symbolic markers to put forth specific ideological or political agendas. These agendas include Greek national identity, the Church's administrative influence and power in the late Ottoman Empire, the right to local autonomy, as well as discursive and other strategies aimed at strengthening the relevance or the influence of the Orthodox Church.

Given the long historical tradition of Greek Orthodoxy through the centuries and its emphasis on being and remaining an original, true and authentic Christian tradition, the tension between continuity and tradition on the one hand, and renewal and change on the other, is of particular interest. This tension touches on the question of innovation (which will be defined below), a concept that has often been related, either to sects and new religious movements, which seem to be inherently associated with the idea of novelty, or to the way in which established religions with long historical traditions progressively adapt to the effects of secularization and rational modernity. Religious systems, like all other cultural systems, are transformed over time despite the determination of their followers to maintain continuity through tradition. As noted by Earhart (1974: 180f.) in one of the few existing books on religious innovation, by Williams, Cox and Jaffee (1992), 'crisis theories tend to assume that equilibrium is a permanent condition in religion, thus treating innovation as only a temporary response to the disruption of equilibrium' (Earhart cited in Williams, Cox and Jaffee 1992: 9). Within this context, and in line with other non-essentialist analytical approaches to culture (Baumann 1999: 69, 83), the volume does not approach innovation or moments of change within Greek Orthodoxy as responses to critical situations, but rather as an inherent modality of this religious tradition. Innovation and change are thus conceived as inherent to

any human activity and social structure, including a religious tradition. Therefore, the underlying assumption and thesis of this volume is that, contrary to general belief and to the self-understanding of Orthodoxy itself, Greek Orthodoxy has evolved and undertaken some degree of innovation throughout different moments in history and in response to specific circumstances in a variety of areas, including religious practices, theology and the structure or governance of Church institutions and organizations. As this book illustrates, innovative attempts or achievements have often occurred under the cover of traditionalist and conservative discourses, which, as Vasilios Makrides explains in the second chapter, constitute an intrinsic characteristic of Greek Orthodoxy. This is why, paradoxically, advocates of innovation in Orthodoxy have often presented their arguments in a traditionalist rhetoric, which often seems to act as a cover for more innovations (Roudometof 2010: 35 and Anastassiadis 2010: 39). Paraphrasing Halbwachs, Anastassiadis has noted that 'a successful innovation has to appear as non-innovative as possible' (Anastassiadis 2010: 52, note 11).

Renewal and innovation in Greek Orthodoxy have up until now been addressed peripherally in studies on modernity or religious change and adaptation. More specifically, the relation between Orthodoxy and modernity has been considered only recently in Greek Orthodox theology. In these cases the use of the term 'innovation' has been avoided, as indicated by the titles of several works by Greek theologians who use other terms such as 'modernity', 'meta-modernity', 'the contemporary world' or 'modernization' (Vasiliades 2002; Loudovikos 2006; Ioannis (Zizioulas) 2006). Another indicative example is the work of the theologian Pantelis Kalaitzidis, who has addressed in two Greek-language books the issue of change in Greek Orthodoxy, but through the prism of modernity (Kalaitzidis 2007; Kalaitzidis and Dodos 2007) rather than that of innovation *per se*. In a more historical and sociological perspective, the book by Victor Roudometof and Vasilios Makrides (2010), *Orthodox Christianity in 21st Century Greece*, addresses the issue of innovation through several cases, such as Church reforms and modernization, Orthodox rock music and the possible new role of the Church as a provider of public welfare. However, not all chapters in the volume deal directly with innovation and change. In this context, the present book attempts more specifically to make a contribution to the study of religious change and transformation by addressing the concept of innovation head-on and placing the question of innovation in Greek Orthodoxy at the core of the book's scope.

The concept of traditionalism, which has often been expressed as the opposition between east and west and through a typically anti-western perspective, is a feature of Greek Orthodoxy that illustrates how closely it is bound to tradition (Roudometof and Makrides 2010: 4). Such observations may confirm the widespread perception of Orthodox Christianity as closed, inflexible and heavily bound to tradition (Papageorgiou 2000). At the same time Greek Orthodoxy has been determined to a large extent by both history and geography. Greek Orthodoxy has remained in the periphery of most of the historic, political and socio-economic developments that shaped western

Europe and western Christianity, including the Enlightenment and the process of secularization. However, this does not mean that Greek Orthodoxy has remained a monolithic and unchanged religion. On the contrary, evolution and transformation, alongside tradition and continuity, have shaped the development of Greek Orthodoxy through the centuries, but in very specific and different ways, especially compared to western Christianity. As a result, Greek Orthodoxy has not been immune to the effects of globalization, which has pushed it to contemplate 'its future direction and the mode of its participation in the globalized cultural universe of the times' (Roudometof 2010: 35). The ongoing conflicts and debates that have taken place within the Church over the past few decades in Greece (for example, debates on the status of property owned by the Greek Church, the inclusion of religion on ID cards, the representation of the Church in Greek history textbooks etc.) bear witness to this point and illustrate how the Church of Greece, as an institution, and Greek Orthodoxy, as a faith, have responded to the various effects of globalization in different but overall traditionalist and defensive ways.

Since Greek Orthodoxy exists in a socio-cultural context that is constantly changing, it is by default forced to adapt itself to new social, political and economic realities. In February 2008 the Church of Greece underwent a change in leadership, with a new Archbishop (Hieronymus) generating many academic, as well as lay discussions on his overall impact on the Greek Orthodox Church as an institution (e.g. Fokas 2008; Konidaris 2009). Expectations of how the change in leadership may possibly lead to a change in the Church's overall outlook and role in Greek social and political life are due to the differences in the public persona of the new Archbishop and the differentiated discourse between the new Church leader and the previous one. However, as Konstantinos Papastathis explains in this volume, it is not yet clear from the Church's new discourse whether or how the change of leadership may lead to deeper structural changes, let alone innovations, in the Church of Greece and its role in Greek public life.

A key question at this point is whether, in a context of undeniable change and in the specific case of Greek Orthodoxy, one can speak about innovation as an intended durable or sustainable change or break from the past, or as a change occurring merely in response to specific circumstances at a particular point in time. In this book, we suggest that processes of innovation are more complex because innovation may at the same time involve changes initiated by human actors inside the religious tradition, as well as transformations taking place as a result of the need for adaptation to external circumstances. One cannot speak of intended change as a 'purer' form of innovation because internal changes will always to some degree have occurred as a reaction to external changes or as an inspiration or influence from external systems of thought or practice. In the following section we further discuss religious innovation and how it is defined and conceived in this volume.

What is Innovation? Concepts and Definitions

Defining the meaning of innovation involves considering the meaning of related concepts such as continuity, change and tradition. Addressing these concepts generates a new set of questions: Does innovation mean change and/or renewal? How are they different? Is innovation the opposite of tradition or can innovation also be a part of tradition? What do we mean by tradition?

According to Marshall's *Dictionary of Sociology*, '[a]ny change in religious practice, organization, or belief is religious innovation'. Marshall explains that 'religious innovation is seen as a departure from orthodoxy because it is a threat to tradition' (Marshall 1998), especially in the major world religions that have developed orthodox bodies of belief, custom and practice which are regarded as part of a sacred tradition. Regardless of how religious innovation is evaluated within the framework of a religious tradition, it is inevitable as a social fact and, therefore, according to Marshall, 'there is a permanent tension between belief in the unchanging nature of orthodox tradition, and the actual social change of religious organizations' (ibid.).

Religions, as tightly structured systems, are upheld through the preservation and reproduction of cultural elements and aspects of tradition such as origin myths, moral narratives and religious practices. However, as Gerd Bauman (1999: 25–6) reminds us, 'all making of culture, no matter how conservative, is also a remaking. Even at its most conservative, it places old habits in new contexts, and it thus changes the significance of these habits. […] If culture is not the same as cultural change, then it is nothing at all'. When approaching religion as a social phenomenon and not as the expression of essential truths it makes sense to talk about religion as culture. Therefore, religion is just as likely to generate change as any other social and cultural system.

The volume aspires to more than just analysing and describing change in a cultural system because the concept of change is very broad and vague. Our interest is more particularly focused on moments and topoi of substantial and even radical changes that in some way break or attempt to break from the previous context or way of doing things. Such changes, in certain cases, are presented not as the introduction of something new or modern but as reintroducing what is perceived as a traditional and original/authentic religious framework because the existing one is considered to have deteriorated or removed itself from its intended origin and mission. This is the case in the chapters by Katerina Seraïdari and Dimitris Stamatopoulos, where arguments for new models of governance are founded on the idea of going back to a local or original tradition. The chapter by Trine Stauning Willert illustrates how some contemporary Greek Orthodox theologians argue for a return to the ideals of Christianity in pre-national times, thus aiming to lead the Orthodox Church towards a change of direction by bringing it closer to what is perceived as a truer and more authentic tradition. These examples seem to point to cultural change as a deliberate human act involving will, power struggle and repositioning. Therefore, the advantage of using the concept of innovation, instead

of change, is that innovation seems to indicate the active human role in the 'making of culture', while change can be used more impersonally as something happening outside the will of humans due to changing circumstances in the political or social environment. Therefore, we take innovation to mean a deliberate and intended form of change or break from the usual way of doing things.

When trying to determine the degree of impact of an innovation across time and space there is a fine line between analysis and evaluation because innovation tends to be closely linked to progress. Therefore, in a modern western context there is a strong tendency to evaluate innovative events as positive because of the underlying perception of innovation as equivalent to progress and moving forward. Feminist approaches to theology (for example, equality of the sexes in all aspects of religious practices and traditions), as well as encounters with and openness toward otherness (for example, embracing diversity), are notable cases where innovation and progress overlap. In his chapter, Vasilios Makrides presents a comprehensive comparative study of tradition and innovation in Christianity. The issue of innovation and progress is particularly relevant to western Christianity and the rise of modernity in the west, which generated a more linear perception of history as a progression, whereas in eastern Christianity the focus has been more on the past than on the future, thus resulting in a more cyclical perception of time .

Turning our attention to the relationship between tradition and innovation, both concepts are mutually interdependent in a dialectic relationship. Hence, innovation can only happen within tradition and we can only speak of innovation provided that there has been tradition. Tradition is a part of any cultural system, such as religion. It is a means to structure and facilitate cultural reproduction, thus creating a context for human actors to relate to the system and to each other within the system. If innovation is a deliberate human act and the counterpart of tradition, then it seems that innovation challenges a system that is upheld by tradition, even in cases where innovation may actually be intended to strengthen a tradition. Since no cultural system can be static, as mentioned above, an intended change, thus an innovation within a tradition, can also be seen as inevitable, even as vital and essential for the survival of the tradition. Within such an understanding, innovation becomes an important or even founding factor within the cultural system of tradition. Thus, an institution or group dealing in an innovative way with the traditional context of which it is part can be considered essential to the survival of the tradition.

A key challenge when working with the concept of innovation is that it is a highly relative and contextual idea. Williams, Cox and Jaffee, in their work *Innovation in Religious Traditions*, point out that insiders and outsiders of a religious community may perceive tradition and innovation very differently. Therefore, even more important than defining the concepts, it is critical to define the perspective of the interpreter. Thus, 'the outsider to a tradition may see innovation in instances where the insider sees continuity' (Williams, Cox and Jaffee 1992: 3). An example of the different interpretation by insiders and outsiders can be seen in Katerina Seraïdari's chapter, where local actors, who introduced a new model

of governance believing that it corresponds to the local tradition, were confronted with the centralized institution of the Church that could not accept such a deviation from what it considered the true tradition. The chapter also illustrates how the conflict between a local shrine and the Church is a matter of power and economic privilege. Therefore, the tensions between innovation and tradition are activated as strategic negotiating points in order to legitimize various claims. This case study illustrates that the usefulness of religious innovation as an analytical concept 'is dependent both on a careful establishment of *context*, as well as on a determination of what *perspective(s)* is/are in fact germane to a given analysis' (Williams, Cox and Jaffee 1992: 4, italics added).

It is unlikely that what was considered an innovation at a particular point in time would still be considered as such later on, thus further illustrating that innovation is highly contextual and deeply rooted in history. This can be exemplified by the role of nationalism in the history of Orthodox Christianity. In the first half of the nineteenth century the establishment of national autocephalous churches (e.g. the Church of Greece in 1830) was condemned by the Ecumenical Patriarchate as a deviation from the Orthodox tradition and, thus considered an unacceptable innovation. From the mid-nineteenth century national autocephalous churches became recognized and, today, many consider the close bonds between Church and state and between national and religious identities an integral part of the Christian Orthodox tradition (Vasilios Makrides, Elizabeth Kontogiorgi and Trine Stauning Willert address this issue in their respective chapters). However, as Willert illustrates more specifically, after the establishment of national Orthodox churches became something more of a tradition, contemporary theologians now seem to advocate a return to the values and traditions of pre-national times as a move that is innovative and progressive, yet also in accordance with tradition.

Our intention in editing this volume has been to provide a point of reference for a methodological and conceptual reflection on innovation but not to introduce a common definition to be used by all of the contributing authors in the volume. The title of the volume itself and the titles of several of its chapters are formulated as questions. This indicates the ambiguities involved when discussing innovation in relation to Greek Orthodoxy. The chapters aim to illustrate the ambiguous relations between innovation and tradition within Greek Orthodoxy and, therefore, present various interpretations or versions of innovation.

The chapters in the volume do not share an evaluative or normative mission (in favour of or against innovation), but rather an academic approach that aims to be as objective and neutral as possible by further illustrating a point that has been made by historians and sociologists (Roudometof and Makrides 2010), namely that Greek Orthodoxy is a religious tradition that is both strongly bound to tradition and also bound to some forms of change. In some cases the innovative aspect lies in moments of change in terms of religious practices or governance of the Orthodox Church (see for example the chapters by Eftichia Arvaniti, Katerina Seraïdari and Dimitris Stamatopoulos) or in terms of raising a new awareness or identity (see for example the chapters by Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou,

Vassilios Adrahtas and Effie Fokas and Dena Fokas Moses). In other cases the innovative aspect could be understood as a revival of past traditional practices, such as reform through a return to the roots of the tradition (see the chapter by Trine Stauning Willert). Furthermore, in other cases the innovation could be oriented towards the secular world, thus outside the Church, suggesting that the Orthodox tradition has something to offer the world of today (see the chapter by Tore Tvarnø Lind). Finally, in some cases innovation takes shape in the form of change in the orientation of the Orthodox Church (see the chapters by Elisabeth Kontogiorgi and Konstantinos Papastathis).

Developing an Initial Typology of Innovation in Religion

We have distinguished five types of innovation, which are defined below. Each case study may illustrate several types of innovation, and not all of the types can be defined in clear-cut categories, but share traits with some of the other types. This way of organizing the case studies highlights different types of innovations in an attempt to develop an initial typology of innovation in religious traditions, something that will hopefully inspire further research.

1. The first type is of innovation is a *purist innovation* that is promoted by actors who claim that the innovation is in fact a return to a more authentic tradition which has been neglected or rejected by the existing 'tradition'. The arguments in favour of such a type of innovation are drawn from sources that are said to represent an 'authentic' and 'purer' tradition. Despite the adherence to traditional sources, the proposed changes represent innovations because in the historical and geographical context they are a deviation from a dominant form of tradition. This type of innovation is illustrated by Katerina Seraïdari, who discusses how local administrators of a religious shrine argue that their 'untraditional' way of governing the shrine is in accordance with a local and God-given tradition. Likewise, Trine Stauning Willert discusses the impulse of change towards a new direction for the Greek Orthodox Church as suggested by contemporary theologians on the basis of an authentic Christian and ecumenically oriented tradition, which has so far been mistakenly abandoned in favour of a nation-based tradition.
2. A second type of innovation is a *strategic innovation* that includes negotiations over innovation and tradition relating to the loss or retention of privileges and struggles over power and influence. Konstantinos Papastathis illustrates how the new Archbishop has strategically opted for a new way of communicating the goals and messages of the Church in Greece. However this 'new way' is merely a strategic move without any substantive changes in the ideology of the Church. Dimitris Stamatopoulos also shows in his chapter how the Greek Orthodox clergy reacted to the

attempts by the Ottomans at modernization through the Tanzimat reforms. Instead of rejecting any form of innovation, Greek Orthodox clergy saw this as an opportunity for the Church to re-establish its power during a period of political reform. Elisabeth Kontogiorgi examines the attempts of rapprochement in the nineteenth century between the Orthodox Church of Greece and the Anglican Church that were initiated by an otherwise conservative prelate. The motives behind this form of rapprochement do not seem to originate in a wish to bring about innovation in the Orthodox Church, but rather stem from a strategic promotion of good relations between the two churches and the strengthening of western support for the political and military aspirations of the new Greek nation state. Innovations that belong to this category should not be viewed as less innovative or less important just because they are strategically motivated. They simply reinforce the fact that Church and religion are part of the social and cultural systems that surround them, and when it seems advantageous the Church and actors within the Church may take some innovative steps.

3. The third type of innovation has to do with innovations that happen due to specific external circumstances. Therefore, this type can be referred to as an *adapting innovation* that takes place as an adaptation to changes in the social, political or physical environment. Innovation of this type could also take place out of necessity; yet even in cases of necessity there is always a choice as to the degree and form of innovation to be made. Eftichia Arvaniti, in her chapter, shows how Orthodox rituals and church buildings were adapted to the presence of Catholic communities under Venetian rule, bringing about innovative constellations of shared rituals and church buildings. Effie Fokas and Dena Fokas Moses also describe such adapting processes in contemporary diasporic communities where the influence of Protestantism in the American context has influenced and brought about certain innovative approaches to religious identity within the Orthodox community, as well as in relation to individual religious practice.

4. Yet another type of innovation is one that is not intended, i.e. an *unintentional innovation*. This kind of innovation is the result of religious practice or thought taking inspiration from external sources without seeing this as a conflict with tradition. An example of such unintentional innovation is illustrated by Vassilios Adrahtas, who shows how the poetry of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Australia draws on indigenous Australian mythology and spirituality, thus creating a new image of Orthodoxy, but without intending to create an innovation. Tore Tvarnø Lind also illustrates how the monks at Mount Athos actually take part in the search and wish for the authentic, which is so characteristic of modernity (along with its desire for progress), by bringing their chant as close as possible to the Byzantine tradition. Transmission of the traditional chanting (through CDs and other multimedia), the traditional art of the monks, unintentionally becomes part of modernity and the commercialization that it seems to reject.

5. Finally, another type of innovation represented in this book is one that relates to some form of spiritual or personal development, namely an *emancipatory innovation*, where the goal of new ways of thinking and practicing the religion constitutes a form of emancipation from earlier restrictive forms. Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou illustrates this type of innovation through the ways in which Christian women use their religious faith to create a free space where they can redefine their gendered roles in society. The innovation in this chapter lies in the creation of sisterhoods and coenobiums where women can contribute to society and live in accordance with their faith, but still break away from some of the societal bonds imposed on them by the patriarchal norms of the time.

As noted above, these types of innovation are not impermeable, and several of the chapters that have been mentioned as representing one type of innovation also exhibit traits from other types. In this volume we have, therefore, discovered the multifaceted, complex and thought-provoking nature of innovation in Greek Orthodoxy.

Presentation of the Book

The book is structured according to five thematic clusters that bring together relevant chapters and case studies. The chapter following this introduction is an overview by Vasilios Makrides introducing in a historical approach the issue of innovation in Greek Orthodoxy in the broadest of contexts by focusing on the parallel, competitive and contradictory trajectories of the three large denominations of Christianity in Europe: Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Protestantism.

i) The first thematic cluster includes two chapters dealing with innovative practice and thought as a result of the encounter of Greek Orthodoxy with other Christian denominations.

Eftichia Arvaniti introduces a very interesting phenomenon of Orthodox and Catholic shared churches on Greek islands. Her approach is based on architecture studies which help her provide detailed accounts of the physical and ritual adjustments and innovations brought about in the religious practice of the two denominations through their sharing of church buildings. The historic background to this unique phenomenon goes back to the beginning of Venetian rule on the Greek islands from the fifteenth century. Arvaniti's fieldwork shows that the introduction of shared rituals several centuries ago has survived so these practices can still be seen today on islands with considerable Catholic communities. However, it is mostly the architectural modifications of the churches that are the main visible legacy on the islands. The above-mentioned religious practices were the result of a long symbiosis. These practices were consequently acts of an unavoidable syncretism under the specific historical circumstances. Believers

and clergy must have perceived the need for a shared space without nevertheless perceiving it as innovative. What seems even more interesting is the fact that, after 300 years of coexistence, believers and clergy have pleaded to both Church and State the necessity to preserve this intermingling in the same ways and in the same buildings as the Venetians tolerated from the beginning of their rule, allowing this practice to become part of the tradition.

Elisabeth Kontogiorgi illustrates how in the mid-nineteenth century the relation between religious and nationalist thought was dialectic and 'clerical politics' were interwoven with both international diplomacy and national affairs. She concludes this from her examination of the initiative by the Greek Orthodox prelate and Archbishop of Syros, Alexandros Lykourgos (1827–75), for a rapprochement of the Greek Orthodox Church with the Anglican Church. Her chapter suggests that, due to his political aspirations, Lykourgos appeared as an innovative prelate open to change and reconciliation with a western denomination, but on many local religious matters he was actually a traditional prelate. In both cases his motive for being, either innovative, or traditional was his purpose of preserving and strengthening Greek national interests.

ii) The second thematic section includes two chapters presenting case studies on identity development and positioning in Greek Orthodox practice and spirituality as a result of adaptation to different aspects of modernity.

In her chapter, Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou turns our attention towards the history of religious women in Greece. Through unpublished archival material, publications of the time and interviews with principal actors, the author tracks the development of the sisterhoods that were founded in the 1940s. The author highlights religious organizations such as the Zoe sisterhood and their importance in the development of a Christian version of feminism. This type of Christian feminism argued for women's rights and active roles in the public sphere, but failed to challenge traditional gender roles and the conventional 'natural vocation' of women to motherhood and family life. Kypriou suggests, however, that the sisterhoods provided Greek religious women with a certain degree of emancipation, especially for unmarried women, whose particular celibate lifestyle, typically viewed as abnormal, was valued by members of their religious community. Kypriou argues that the Zoe movement and its sisterhoods provided women with a context where celibacy was viewed as a legitimate choice of lifestyle. Therefore, even if the sisterhoods and the emergence of a Christian feminist consciousness did not lead to innovations regarding women's position in the institutional Church, they did provide pious women with a choice to break away from their traditional roles and create an independent life as active members of society.

Tore Tvarnø Lind presents a stimulating report from his fieldwork at the Vatopaidi Monastery on Mount Athos.[1] Using an ethnomusicological perspective,

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[1]   Since 2008, the Vatopaidi monastery and some of its monks along with public officials have been implicated in a very public real estate scandal in Greece. A commission

Lind explores the revival of Byzantine chant among Athonite monks and suggests that the revival can be seen as an attempt to strengthen the position of Christianity as part of the European Union and as a way of insisting that (Greek) Christian Orthodoxy is legitimately European in its own right. Related to this political, theological and cultural agenda, the revival of Byzantine music is a way to illustrate that Greek Orthodoxy is traditional but has a modern appeal: the new and cultivated Orthodox voice of Vatopaidi insists on a religion full of vigour and promise for the future of the tradition, not only locally and nationally, but also across Europe.

iii) The third thematic cluster includes two chapters relating to religious governance that analyse more specifically the power struggles and arguments activated by the imposition of Church reform or centralization of power.

Dimitris Stamatopoulos examines how the Greek Orthodox clergy dealt with demands for lay participation in the governance of the millets of the Ottoman Empire when the second phase of the Tanzimat reforms was introduced in 1856 with the Islâhat Fermânı. The institutionalization of lay participation was an attempt by the Ottomans to 'secularize' the empire. Through two case studies, Stamatopoulos illustrates how the Orthodox clergy succeeded in remaining almost untouched by the reforms through their invocation of the Holy Canons. The clerical elites, through the invocation of the Holy Canons, were able to renegotiate the Church's position in relation to the state. Consequently the problem of 'innovation' was perceived, not only as a threat, but also as a great opportunity for the Church to re-establish its power in an era of political reform. The issue of lay participation, which was a key feature of Protestant churches, was dealt with in such a manner as to be exclusively concerned with the financial management of the Patriarchate. Lay participation was not to have consequences for the way the flock would understand the concept of the 'Church'. The Church would continue as such, represented by the clergy, and the clergy would comprise its main core. Stamatopoulos, thus concludes that the question of innovation was not connected with a reversal at the theological/dogmatic level in the way the Orthodox clergy coped with the challenges of modernity, but with the means it discovered to retain its privileged position within the state mechanism.

Katerina Seraïdari also presents a case study where religious actors attempt to establish a new model of Church governance. In contrast to the traditional style of governance of the Orthodox Church of Greece, the Tinos sanctuary of Evangelistria has been governed by both clergy and elected lay people. As Seraïdari's study shows, the sanctuary became an arena where conflicting agents negotiated their rights and the issue of innovation functioned as a diachronic source of competition, where not only different administrative models but also important

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was set up to investigate allegations of fraud and embezzlement. The case is pending and remains in the hands of the Greek justice system. The chapter by Lind is based on fieldwork undertaken in 2000 and 2001, and has thus no relation to this much debated case.

economic resources were disputed within the larger matrix of social relations and networks of power. Evangelistria has been viewed from its foundation, not only as a vehicle of modernization and change but also as the defender of local interests. This innovative model of governance has also been presented as an open-ended process that cannot become a fixed structure because of the reaction of the institutional Church. This has given the lay administrators the opportunity to develop and maintain a discourse of resistance by defining the Church of Greece as the dominant religious establishment and itself as a continuously threatened entity. After the recent initiative of the bishopric of Syros and Tinos to promote the option of an 'electronic devotion' of the Evangelistria icon, the struggle for control over this specific devotional space, as well as its use and funds, may take new forms in the future.

While most of the chapters referred to so far present case studies in a historical context, the case studies in the last two thematic sections in the book include chapters that are situated in a fully contemporary setting.

iv) The fourth thematic cluster includes two chapters addressing theological and ideological positions and strategies in the contemporary socio-political context in Greece.

Trine Stauning Willert deals with changes in contemporary negotiations about the identity and image of the Orthodox Church. Her chapter provides an example of the crucial importance of context in evaluating religious change as innovative. The chapter illustrates the paradox that in one historical period, the nineteenth century, the Orthodox Church went through modernization by binding itself to the Greek nation state through the establishment of the autocephalous Greek Church in 1833. However, in a later historical period, the present, Orthodox theologians propose a modernization of the Church through its detachment from the nation-state and in particular from national ideology. Thus, what seemed innovative in the nineteenth century is interpreted as conservative in the twenty-first century.

Through a discourse analysis, Konstantinos Papastathis provides a comparative study of the different communicative strategies of the previous head of the Church of Greece, Archbishop Christodoulos, and its current leader, Archbishop Hieronymus. Papastathis suggests that the ecclesiastic goal of both leaders has been to retain for the Church as many privileges and as much influence in Greek society as possible. However, his analysis indicates that they have attempted to reach their goal in very different ways. Hieronymus represents a new or innovative strategy in his choice of public appearance and 'branding' of the Church. Instead of interfering in political affairs, Hieronymus has respected the autonomy of the political domain; instead of maintaining a hostile attitude towards any modernist modification that enjoyed a large social consensus or was legally imperative, Hieronymus has adopted a flexible stance on the condition that the constitutional and economic privileges of the Church would not be abrogated. Consequently, Hieronymus' policy is not based on breaking away from the traditional form of ecclesiastical conduct *vis-à-vis* the state (namely the functioning of the Church

as its ideological apparatus in return for preferential status within Greek political space). Instead, his policy is articulated through a differentiation from the rigorist hierarchical group and from Hieronymus' predecessor. Papastathis names this strategy a 'controlled compromise' which compared to the 'mobilizing' policies of the past may be labelled as innovative, since it constitutes a break from the ecclesiastical rule. The stance of Hieronymus, although not changing the long-term aims of the Church, has an innovative character because of the distinct means employed to pursue them.

v) Finally, the chapters in the last thematic section examine, also from a contemporary perspective, case studies of renewal, change or innovation in contexts where Greek Orthodoxy is situated in a diasporic environment and is thus removed from the Greek context.

Vassilios Adrahtas presents a literary analysis of the poetry of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Australia, Stylianos. He suggests that the poems, through their 'dialogic' with indigenous Australian spirituality, articulate new and challenging views on some of the most cardinal themes of twentieth-century Christian theology. Instead of perceiving innovation as some kind of great moment that constitutes a cultural rupture within a given historical situation, Adrahtas suggests that the poems are in dialogue with indigenous Australian spirituality through an unintentional and unexpected process. He, therefore, points to an often overlooked aspect of innovative processes, namely the field of everyday life experiences, which can partake in the process of innovation through small, imperceptible and continuous rearrangements.

In their chapter, Effie Fokas and Dena Fokas Moses seek to identify elements of continuity and change over time in the way Orthodox Christian Greeks in America experience their faith and in relation to their ethnic identity. The chapter also examines continuity and innovation in terms of the link between ethnicity and faith, Greekness and Orthodoxy, and how intertwined religion and ethnicity can be for Greek Americans. Based on interviews with parish members from the Church of the Annunciation in Memphis, the authors conclude that belonging, as linked to Greek ethnic identity, does rank highly among the motivations behind participation in church life. However, they also distinguish an increasing awareness among parishioners to exhibit an element of choice: others have chosen to leave the church (though many of the latter still baptize their children in the Orthodox Church); some have opted to attend Bible studies in other churches but are otherwise committed to the Orthodox Church; and still others have 'shopped around' other Orthodox churches before settling on the Church of the Annunciation. The authors discuss whether the observed changes are part of an assimilation process that makes the Orthodox faith 'more American' (i.e. more focused on the Bible), especially because of the increased exposure of many parishioners to Protestantism through their children's school experiences. However, the evidence is inconclusive as to whether being more American relates to a will to assimilate or is more a *result* of assimilation.