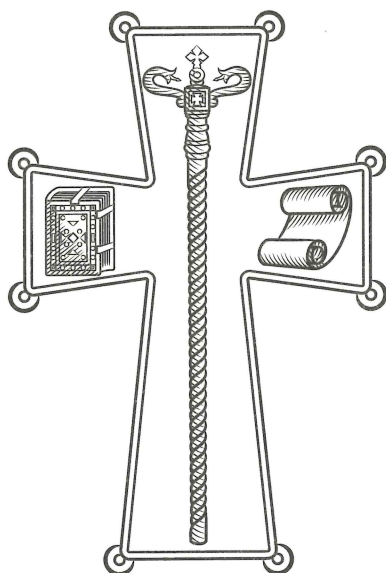


EVANGELIST, SHEPHERD, AND TEACHER

Studies in Honor of Archbishop Demetrios of America

EDITED BY

James C. Skedros, V. Rev. Archimandrite Maximos Conostas,
and Vasiliki M. Limberis



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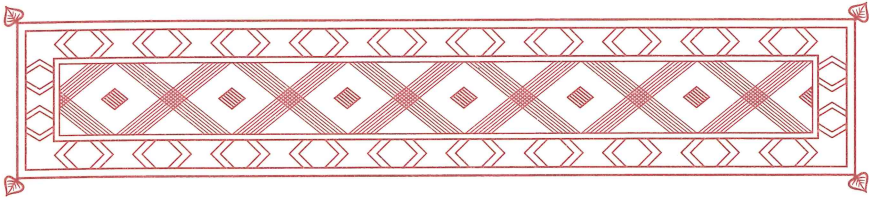
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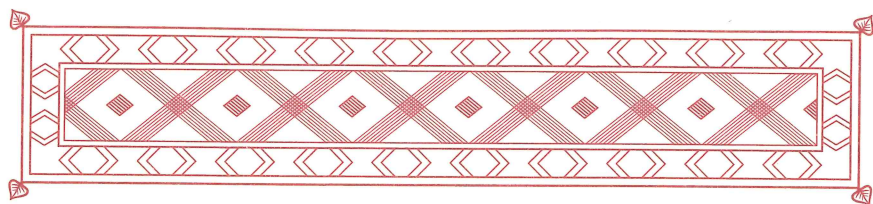
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POSTSECULARITY IN ORTHODOX CONTEXTS?

The Case of Modern Greece

VASILIOS N. MAKRIDES

Introduction

Postsecularity is a recent and fashionable notion in scholarly discussions about the future of modern secular societies and the role of religion therein. It relates to certain conceptual revisions that have taken place in the last two decades in hopes of better capturing new societal developments and their consequences. A central point concerns the reassessment of the conventional religious/secular divide. For example, Peter Beyer, a globalization theorist, has pointed to the current existence of a “post-Westphalian global context,” which goes beyond the regulation of religion and politics as two differentiated systems in the wake of the Westphalian Peace Treaty of 1648.¹ Sociologist of religion James A. Beckford has dealt with various understandings of postsecularity and has classified them in six different clusters, also arguing against the inconsistent use of this term in the humanities and social sciences.²

¹ Peter Beyer, “Socially Engaged Religion in a Post-Westphalian Global Context: Remodelling the Secular/Religious Distinction,” *Sociology of Religion* 73 (2012): 109–129.

² James A. Beckford, “Public Religions and the Postsecular: Critical Reflections,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 51 (2012): 1–19.

The notion has—historically speaking—a clear connection to Western Europe, which is regarded as experiencing, or being on the verge of experiencing, a postsecular phase. The term presupposes a certain treatment of religion by various actors, political, social or otherwise, and calls into question the self-evidence of the secular or religiously neutral nation-state in Western Europe. Even in a country with a long and strong secular tradition like France with its *laïcité*, there have been considerable discussions pertaining to a reconsideration of the strict religious/secular divide.³ The so-called worldwide “resurgence of religion” has also brought the notion of postsecularity to the fore. For example, the rise of religious nationalism has created serious challenges for the secularly conceived modern state.⁴ Secularization theory is still hotly debated, and both its supporters⁵ and opponents⁶ continue to present arguments and evidence for and against it. This has led to the revision of several of the theory’s tenants over the years. Enthusiasm for the supposed growth of religious privatization has been tempered by the realization that religions have in many cases become serious factors shaping politics and the public sphere (cf. the so-called “public religions”).⁷ Further, the assumed strong connection between modernization and secularization has been critically reassessed. It has since come to be considered a contingent West European process that is simply not applicable to the rest of the world. In connection with this, the overall development of Western Europe in many sectors including religion is considered to be an exception

3 Jean Baubérot, *La laïcité falsifiée* (Paris: La Découverte, 2012).

4 Mark Jurgensmeyer, *Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

5 David Voas, “The Rise and the Fall of Fuzzy Fidelity in Europe,” *European Sociological Review* 25 (2009): 155–168; Steve Bruce, *Secularization: In Defence of an Unfashionable Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

6 Peter L. Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington, DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center, n.d.).

7 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).

rather than a rule.⁸ Secularization is no longer considered one-dimensional, linear and determinist.⁹ Instead, it is understood as depending on many different parameters that cannot be assumed stable across time. Demographic dynamics, fertility differentials between religious and non-religious people, immigration processes and generational shifts may lead to de-secularizing countercurrents in the future.¹⁰

Does all this necessarily amount to a “crisis of secularism,” and particularly of political secularism as a specific mode of officially and publicly treating religion in liberal secular democracies? This is not to imply a uniform system of secularism in both theory and practice, but rather a variety of cases on a global scale beyond Western Europe.¹¹ One observable consequence of postsecularity is the greater respect for religions and their representatives on the part of secular authorities and actors. Religions, for their part, have started reacting against their social and political marginalization demanding various sorts of rehabilitation. It should be kept in mind that most Western-type democracies practice moderate forms of secularism, rather than aggressive and militant ones. The outer limits of such a moderate secularism are both broad and flexible, thus it manages to accommodate a wide range of positions. Within such a context we can, for example, observe a decline in religious practice paired with a rise of religiosity at a national level. This is not the contradiction it might seem. As long as religions are not perceived as a threat to the main secular socio-political order or to its overt neutrality on questions of faith and religious

8 Grace Davie, *Europe: The Exceptional Case: Parameters of Faith in the Modern World* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2002); Hartmut Lehmann, *Säkularisierung. Der europäische Sonderweg in Sachen Religion* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004); Peter Berger, Grace Davie and Effie Fokas, *Religious America, Secular Europe? A Theme and Variations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

9 Loek Halman and Veerle Draulans, “How Secular is Europe?,” *British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2006): 263–288.

10 Eric Kaufmann, Anne Goujon and Vegard Skirbekk, “The End of Secularization in Europe? A Socio-Demographic Perspective,” *Sociology of Religion* 73 (2012): 69–91.

11 Jonathan Fox, “Separation of Religion and State and Secularism in Theory and in Practice,” *Religion, State and Society* 39 (2011): 384–401.

practice and they respect its basic coordinates, they also have a role to play, not the least of which is cooperation with secular authorities and actors. This is largely true with the Christian Churches in Western Europe, which seem to fit best into this postsecular logic.

However, new challenges, problems, and conflicts have arisen in connection with the presence of numerous Muslim communities and new immigrants, whose different cultural backgrounds do not share the West European tradition of secularity. Philosopher Jürgen Habermas has thus called on secular actors to exhibit greater respect for religions including Islam. He advocated for a reevaluation of the secularist tradition that would push it to become more self-reflective and tolerant in order to promote the conflict-free inclusion of religious people as citizens with equal rights in modern democratic societies. Without renouncing the basic tenets of the still dominant secular tradition, secular actors need to show a greater respect for religions and the sensitivities of their promoters. In his view, religious actors should also be encouraged to participate on an equal footing in public debates in order to build a viable common future (e.g., in terms of civil society). Secular actors should stop treating religion as an irrational, threatening, and non-civic element. In this way, increased balance between different views, mutual respect, and the avoidance of radical positions could prove beneficial for society at large.¹²

Bearing this in mind, it is safer to conceptualize postsecularity not as the end of the secular state or political secularism, but as an observable change in the treatment of religions by political, social and intellectual elites (both multiculturalists and secularists) and institutions, especially in Western Europe. But in no way can the postsecular condition be portrayed as a "victory" of the religious over the secular. It is thus crucial to clearly distinguish postsecular discourse from

¹² Jürgen Habermas, "Religion in the Public Sphere," *European Journal of Philosophy* 14 (2006): 1-25; Habermas, "Secularism's Crisis of Faith: Notes on Post-Secular Society," *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25 (2008): 17-29.

that of the revival, renaissance or revitalization of religion at the turn of the twenty-first century. These represent two distinct phenomena that are often confused in contemporary analyses. The postsecular discourse implies a certain public rehabilitation of religion, but this hardly means that the secular sociopolitical establishment is ready to surrender itself to some religious authority or that some form of a theocracy is about to return through the back door.

Modern Greece: Religious, Secular or Postsecular?

Can the notion of postsecularity be applied to modern Greece and its predominant Orthodox Church? This question arises because the notion of postsecularity has been increasingly applied in the last years to predominantly Orthodox countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe that have emerged from decades of communist rule, which entailed state-imposed secularism in various forms.¹³ The doubtful question is, however, whether this rationale can be carried over to the case of modern Greece, which had no share in that Iron Curtain experience. Hence, the best way to treat this issue is to look at and evaluate the entire process of secularization in modern Greece.

Due to its long-standing ties to the Western world, secularizing trends under the impact of the Enlightenment touched Greek society while under Ottoman rule already in the 18th century, and these aimed at limiting the Church's broader role and influence. They remained, however, moderate and incomplete, having been constrained by many factors, especially by the dominant traditionalist milieu.¹⁴ Secularizing tendencies in Church-state relations were also at play during the

¹³ See some relevant articles and discussions in the journal *Religion, State & Society* 36/1 (March 2008): 5–44. See also Alexander Agadjanian, *Turns of Faith, Search for Meaning: Orthodox Christianity and Post-Soviet Experience* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014).

¹⁴ Vasilios N. Makrides, "The Enlightenment in the Greek Orthodox East: Appropriation, Dilemmas, Ambiguities", in: *Enlightenment and Religion in the Orthodox World*, ed. Paschalis M. Kitromilides (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2016), 17–37.

Greek War of Independence (1821-29),¹⁵ yet the major breakthrough took place only after the foundation of the modern Greek state in 1830 in the frame of the modernizing reforms during the reign of the Bavarian King Otto (1833-62). These included the unilateral declaration of an autocephalous Church of Greece, which was separated from the Patriarchate of Constantinople and was subjected to direct state control.¹⁶ In addition, more than seventy percent of the monasteries were closed, and their property was confiscated.¹⁷ If nothing else, these two actions were similar to those inflicted in early modern Western Europe and led to the coining of the term "secularization." These reforms accompanied an increased criticism of the Church by Westernized intellectuals, often coupled with anticlerical sentiments, and the promotion of liberal ideas. Nonetheless, these changes met with various reactions among the population, and the Church was able to mount a counterattack. Various revivals of Orthodox religiosity including popular protest movements highlight that the Church was not completely neutralized by those secularization measures. Rather, the institution managed to slowly adapt itself to changing circumstances, seeking out new areas of influence, and eventually emerging once again to occupy a significant role in Greek society, even receiving backing from the state.¹⁸

The entanglement of state, society, and church persisted through

¹⁵ Vasilios Chr. Karayiorgos, *Τό ζήτημα τῆς σχέσεως Ἐκκλησίας καὶ Πολιτείας κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς Ἐπαναστάσεως (1821)* (Koropi, Athens: Diigisi), 141-173.

¹⁶ Theodor Nikolaou, "Mauers Einfluß auf die griechische Kirchenpolitik," in *Bayers Philhellenismus*, ed. Gerhard Grimm and Theodor Nikolaou (Munich: Institut für Orthodoxe Theologie der Universität München, 1993), 47-65; Andreas Müller, "Eure Religion gewissenhaft zu beschirmen. Zur Kirchenpolitik des katholischen Wittelsbachers Otto im Orthodoxen Griechenland," *Kerygma und Dogma* 50 (2004): 226-257.

¹⁷ William McGrew, *Land and Revolution in Modern Greece, 1880-1881: The Transition in the Tenure and Exploitation of Land from Ottoman Rule to Independence* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985), 136-149.

¹⁸ Spyros N. Troianos and Charikleia G. Dimakopoulou, *Ἐκκλησία καὶ Πολιτεία. Οἱ σχέσεις τους κατὰ τὸν 19^ο αἰῶνα (1833-1852)* (Athens: Ant. N. Sakkoulas, 1999).

the subsequent reign of King George I (1863-1913), despite further secularization measures.¹⁹ These often unfolded in the context of a formation of Western-educated Greek intelligentsia expressing critical views on the Orthodox Church and religion in general. We should not forget that the nineteenth century is generally considered as the timeframe in which de-Christianization and secularization in Western Europe reached their peak.²⁰ In fact, secularizing changes were also evident at the Patriarchate of Constantinople under Ottoman rule during the same period.²¹ Most importantly, the Greek Church began incorporating itself into the nationalist vision of the Greek state and became progressively worldly as a result of a self-induced secularization. The Church's endorsement of a secular ideology like nationalism, with full support of Greek irredentism, precipitated its transformation from a traditionally supranational entity into a haven of nationalist ideas and related mythologies. Taking as its point of departure a narrative casting the Orthodox Church as a perennial shelter for the Greek nation, Greek historiography has integrated Orthodoxy into its efforts to formulate a unified, diachronic history of the Greek nation from antiquity through Byzantium to the modern era.²² In this discourse, promoted by politicians, Church officials, intellectuals and other public actors, Hellenism and Orthodoxy were presented as forming an organic, harmonious, and indissoluble whole guaranteeing

¹⁹ Vasilios N. Makrides, "Secularization and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Reign of King George I," in *Greek Society in the Making, 1863-1913: Realities, Symbols and Visions*, ed. Philip Carabott (Aldershot: Variorum/Ashgate, 1997), 179-196.

²⁰ Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf, eds., *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

²¹ Dimitrios Stamatoopoulos, *Μεταρρύθμιση και εκκοσμίκευση. Προς μια ανασύνθεση της ιστορίας του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου τον 19^ο αιώνα* (Athens: Alexandreia, 2003).

²² Vasilios N. Makrides, *Hellenic Temples and Christian Churches: A Concise History of the Religious Cultures of Greece from Antiquity to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "Orthodoxy and Hellenism in Contemporary Greece," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 54 (2010): 365-420.

the perennial survival of the Greek nation.²³

The Church's strategic partnership with the state and nation remained vital and valid well into the twentieth century, despite opposite views and reactions from different parts of Greek society. Nationalist tropes would survive within the walls of the Church even after 1922 when the Greek "imperial aspirations" came to an abrupt end. This holds true for the interwar period,²⁴ but also throughout the Second World War and the Greek Civil War (1946-49). In this period, secularizing currents were mostly connected with the rise and the antireligious stance of the Greek communist movement, which managed to expand its influence in many social strata, including the intellectuals and the working class. Nevertheless, the Church, in its self-understanding as a bearer of values instrumental to the survival of the Greek nation, was able to retain its key position and role, in large part due to the wholesale support it received from the state, as during the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas (1936-41) for example. Organized Orthodox counterattacks against antireligious currents can be observed throughout the 1930s and the 1940s. The Church also played a crucial role in supporting the Greek army and people during the Second World War, and the same happened during the ensuing Civil War, which ended with the victory of the Greek National Army over the communists.²⁵

As Greece emerged into Cold War Europe in the early 1950s as a strategic member of the West and NATO, it seemed like little would change. This was a period of a wholesale reconstruction of the country

²³ Victor Roudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization, and Orthodoxy: The Social Origins of Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2001); Vasilios N. Makrides, "Why are Orthodox Churches Particularly Prone to Nationalization and even to Nationalism?," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 57 (2013): 325-352.

²⁴ Theodosios Ath. Tsironis. *Εκκλησία πολιτενόμενη. Ο πολιτικός λόγος και ρόλος της Εκκλησίας της Ελλάδος 1913-1941* (Thessaloniki: Epikentro, 2010).

²⁵ Vasilios N. Makrides, "Orthodoxy in the Service of Anticommunism: The Religious Organization Zoë during the Greek Civil War," in *The Greek Civil War: Essays on a Conflict of Exceptionalism and Silences*, ed. Philip Carabott and Thanasis D. Sfikas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 159-174; Panteleymon Anastasakis, *The Church of Greece under Axis Occupation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).

through foreign financial assistance, in which the collaboration and closeness between Church and state was seen as imperative. This unified front was supposed to effectively defend the country against domestic threats and foreign enemies. This policy was also maintained throughout the politically turbulent period of the 1960s and especially during the Colonels' dictatorship (1967-74). Specific expressions, such as the "National-mindedness" and the "Hellenic-Christian Civilization," were mobilized and widely disseminated as a part of pro-religious and pro-national ideological schemes, which militated against the communist threat.²⁶ All this rendered the collaboration between Church and state official doctrine. While this clearly demonstrates that the Greek state had no intention to portray itself as a secular institution, it is not to suggest that the relationship was without contention. These moments of conflict simply did not act to further secularize Greek society.

The period after 1974 relates perhaps most directly to the issue under discussion as it was the first time in modern Greek history when the state showed its clear intention of separating Church and state in a more visible and effective way.²⁷ This took the form of limiting the Church's societal influence, implementing a greater religious neutrality of the state, and encouraging social acceptance for non-Orthodox Greek citizens. This was in part the result of serious criticism leveled against the Church for its collaboration with the Colonels' dictatorship. These changes coincided with the period of Archbishop Seraphim (1974-98), the longest one in modern Greek history. They included a slow, yet progressive liberalization of Greek society and the abolition of various privileges extended to the Church, which, however, retained recognition as a legal entity in Public Law. The shift to secularization was enacted first in the new constitution of 1975, which was formulated

²⁶ Vasilios N. Makrides, "The Orthodox Church of Greece," in *Eastern Christianity and the Cold War, 1945-91*, ed. Lucian Leustean (London: Routledge, 2010), 253-270.

²⁷ Vasilios N. Makrides, "The Orthodox Church of Greece", in *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Lucian N. Leustean (London: Routledge, 2014), 181-209.

under the right-wing conservative government of the New Democracy party (1974–81), then intensified after 1981, when the socialists of the Panhellenic Socialistic Movement (PASOK) came to power for the first time in Greek history. The first socialist period under Andreas Papandreou (1981–89) was marked by a number of measures to further liberalize and secularize Greek society limiting the Church's influence through legislation, such as introducing civil marriage in 1982. These measures were not part of some plan to combat Orthodoxy or other religions on Greek territory; rather, it was an attempt to establish a stronger separation between Church and state and to build a more pluralistic society. In any event, Greece joined the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1981, and this step was also connected with secularization, especially in terms of the gradual alignment of the country's legislation with broader European values, norms, and practices.

As expected, the Church was not immediately ready to accept such changes and often voiced its dissatisfaction, although Archbishop Serapheim generally followed a pragmatic policy of accommodation and compromise. Many secularizing laws could thus be implemented, while other secularizing measures were introduced in a modified form. Civil marriage, for example, was not made obligatory, as the socialists had originally intended. Nevertheless, the Church managed to retain much of its prestige and social appeal and did not feel fundamentally threatened by the renewed secularization process. The Church occasionally demonstrated its ability to mobilize large sections of the population against secularizing excesses, as in 1987 during the massive rally against legislation aimed at nationalizing Church and monastic property.²⁸ Although relations between the socialists and the Church remained cool in the 1980s, one could still observe that Greek society was not necessarily becoming more secular. The Orthodox factor still continued to play a role, and this was manifested in a revival

²⁸ Isabelle Dépret, "Tradition orthodoxe et symboles religieux en Grèce. La loi sur le patrimoine ecclésiastique," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 149 (2010): 129–150.

of Orthodox spirituality, an interest in Athonite monasticism, and an exploration among many intellectuals and artists of the notions of Hellenicity and Orthodoxy apart from the adulterating influences of the West. Political anti-Westernism and anti-Europeanism, which was cultivated by the socialists in the 1980s, coincided in many respects with the traditional anti-Westernism of Orthodoxy. This similarity led to novel phenomena, such as an unofficial Orthodox-Communist dialogue or the elitist intellectual “Neo-Orthodox Movement.” All this mitigated the impact of the socialist government’s secularizing measures.

The subsequent period from the 1990s onwards was marked by the radical events connected with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the consequent wars in Yugoslavia. These developments were met by a powerful rehabilitation of Orthodoxy in the Greek public sphere. Orthodoxy became a key factor in the 1990s, even beyond the strictly religious domain. One example of this was the way in which Orthodoxy was viewed as an instrument of foreign policy closely related to the quest for “new allies” in Eastern and South Eastern Europe. This shift in attitude was observable even among the socialists who came again to power under Andreas Papandreou (1993–96) and sought to secure various domestic and international benefits via the Orthodox Church. Increased politicization of Orthodoxy was evident throughout the 1990s, as when the strong solidarity among the Greek public with Orthodox Serbs coupled with virulent anti-Western sentiments and rhetoric to create conditions inimical to further secularization. At the same time, the Church’s involvement in politics, such as its engagement with Greek minorities and interests abroad, meant that it became still more worldly, and so, in a sense, more secular. Amidst these activities, the Church was able to further assert itself as a key factor in Greek history, society, and politics,²⁹ despite increasing controversies

²⁹ Vasilios N. Makrides, “Orthodoxe Kirche, Kultur und Politik in Griechenland in Folge der Wende von 1989”, in *Re-Sakralisierung des öffentlichen Raums in Südosteuropa nach der Wende 1989*, ed. Alojz Ivanišević (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2012), 179–200; Victor Roudometof,

concerning its actual historical role and the myths connected with it.³⁰ Orthodoxy thus became very popular in the 1990s, even among those who were previously barely attached to the Church. This, however, was more of a fashionable phenomenon, often marked by an abstract attachment to Orthodoxy as part of the Greek cultural identity, rather than a strict obedience to the dictates of the Church. Statistics from this time show increased rates of religiosity among the Greek population as measured by Church attendance and belief in God.³¹

However, a fresh wave of secularizing measures was initiated when a new generation of socialists came to power led by Costas Simitis (1996–2004). This time the socialists did not come as populists, but as modernizers who intended to carry out major reforms in Greek society by strengthening its links to Europe and the West. A clear goal of these plans was to limit the politicization of the Church as well as its wider influence, both of which had become stronger in the 1990s. In this way, these socialists returned to the post-1974 tactic of gradually but systematically secularizing Greek politics and society. One manifestation of this involved reform of legislation that had garnered condemnation from the European Court of Human Rights for discriminating against various religious minorities. Many outdated laws, such as the selective prohibition of proselytism, were repealed and brought into line with European norms.³² Another plan pertained to the gradual de-confessionalization of religious education in primary and secondary schools. Yet, the socialists encountered an unexpectedly

“Orthodoxy as Public Religion in Post-1989 Greece,” in *Eastern Orthodoxy in a Global Age: Tradition Faces the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Victor Roudometof, Alexander Agadjanian and Jerry Pankhurst (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira, 2005), 84–108.

³⁰ Isabelle Dépret, *Église orthodoxe et histoire en Grèce contemporaine. Versions officielles et controverses historiographiques* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2009).

³¹ Vassiliki Georgiadou and Ilias Nikolakopoulos, “Εμπειρική ανάλυση του εκκλησιασμού στην Ελλάδα,” *Koinonia Politon* 7 (2001): 50–55.

³² Adamantia Pollis, “The State, the Law, and Human Rights in Modern Greece,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 9 (1987): 587–614; eadem, “Greek National Identity: Religious Minorities, Rights and European Norms,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 10 (1992): 171–195.

strong adversary in the person of the dynamic Archbishop Christodoulos (1998-2008), who vehemently opposed their secularizing measures, instead hoping to create a “new public role” for the Church. Fueled by the revival of Orthodoxy in the 1990s, he intended not only to reverse the post-1974 secularization program, but also to eliminate any marginality of the Church in Greek society and render the Church a central axis of reference in planning the future course of the country. All this proved highly controversial, and the most serious conflict erupted in 2000 over the state attempt to issue new identity cards, which would not designate religious affiliation, as a means to avoid discrimination on religious grounds. However, in Christodoulos’ view, this was a devious plan to erase the predominant Orthodox character of the country.³³ At the same time, though, the Church continued to secularize itself internally as a result of the worldliness engendered by Christodoulos’ policies, which hinged on the use of modern communication technologies to increase its political relevance and national profile.³⁴

Can Christodoulos be characterized as a postsecular actor, one that has acted after the imposition of a certain secularization process on Greek state and society? At first glance, this may seem to be the case. However, the period of his influence contains certain historical contingencies that demand a differentiated approach and nuanced evaluation.³⁵ Greece, as already mentioned, never became a secular

³³ Lina Molokotos-Liederman, “The Greek ID Card Controversy: A Case Study of Religion and National Identity in a Changing European Union,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 22 (2007): 187–203; Isabelle Dépret, *Religion, nation, citoyenneté en Grèce: L’Église orthodoxe et le conflit des cartes d’identité* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2011).

³⁴ Nicolas Demertzis, Katerina Diamandaki and Dionysis Panos, “Religion Online: The Digital Secularisation of the Greek Orthodox Church,” <<http://www.myname.gr/dpanos/academic/religiononline.html>> (accessed February 2017).

³⁵ Victor Roudometof and Vasilios N. Makrides, eds., *Orthodox Christianity in 21st Century Greece: The Role of Religion in Culture, Ethnicity and Politics* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Dimitrios Oulis, Gerasimos Makris and Sotiris Roussos, “The Orthodox Church of Greece: Policies and Challenges under Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens (1998–2008),” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 10 (2010): 192–210.

state by Western European standards, despite the implementation of various measures to that end.³⁶ Further, it would be misleading to assume that Greek Orthodoxy has gone through a period of privatization from which it emerged into the public sphere, something often characterized as an essential prerequisite for the emergence of a postsecular condition. Christodoulos' attempts to forge a "new public role" for the Church did not constitute a transition from the private to public. This is because Orthodoxy has always enjoyed public visibility in Greece, even if in various forms.

Archbishop Hieronymos II, who succeeded Christodoulos in 2008, seems to fit closer to the pattern of modern liberal societies and to better understand the role of the Church in a plural, multicultural and differentiated environment, and as a result has pursued policies markedly different from his predecessor.³⁷ This change has been hailed as a positive step by the country's political and intellectual elites, although some have also criticized the new archbishop as dormant, compromising and inactive, refusing to raise a critical voice in society. Mainly this has concerned further secularizing policies introduced by the state (regarding traditional morals, education, and the rights of non-Orthodox immigrants),³⁸ to which, it is asserted, Hieronymos has too willingly capitulated. However, this should not be misconstrued as a signal of the complete concordance of Church and state in all matters, but rather it should be understood as a condition of mutual respect for each party's spheres of influence. Even if the Church and the state do not agree on many issues, they are still able to coexist and

36 Adamantia Pollis, "Greece: A Problematic Secular State," in *The Secular and the Sacred: Nation, Religion, and Politics*, ed. William Safran (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 143–156.

37 Konstantinos Ch. Papastathis, "Authority and Legitimation: The Intraecclesial Strategy of Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens," *Religion, State & Society* 39 (2011): 402–419.

38 Georgios Karyotis and Stratos Patrikios, "Religion, Securitization and Anti-Immigration Attitudes: The Case of Greece," *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (2010): 43–57; Nick Drydakis, "Religious Affiliation and Labour Bias," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49 (2010): 472–488.

cooperate on various projects deemed to benefit the common good.³⁹ Nonetheless, today there is mounting pressure on Hieronymos by many conservative circles to voice a stronger reaction against what is regarded as the ongoing secularizing policies of the state. The fact that Greece has been in the middle of deep and multifarious economic crises, with numerous consequences since 2009, is a cause of general dissatisfaction, protest and reactions. This grave situation has often forced Hieronymos to take a more active role and raise a more critical voice publicly on various issues. Such is the case today, especially with the left-wing party of Syriza in power (since January 2015), which has a more radical and systematic secularizing agenda. Nevertheless, Syriza tries to keep good and functional relations with the Church, given that the latter has emerged as the major provider of social welfare for both Greek citizens and the numerous migrants in the wake of the mounting refugee crisis.⁴⁰ In any event, Hieronymos' actions cannot be lumped into a postsecular context, as Greece is clearly a state that is still in the process of secularizing, rather than beyond it. A recent survey of the Pew Research Center showed that the link between Christian affiliation and national identity is still quite high in Greece (54%), whereas the respective European median reaches only 15%.⁴¹

³⁹ Vasilios N. Makrides, "Morality, Civil Law and Religion in Contemporary Greece. The Asymmetric Accommodationism of the Orthodox Church", in *Evangelie, moralité et lois civiles. Gospel, Morality, and Civil Law*, ed. Joseph Famerée / Pierre Gisel / Hervé Legrand (Vienna/Zürich: LIT, 2016), 267–285.

⁴⁰ Elisabeth A. Diamantopoulou, "Migration and Ethno-Religious Identity in Contemporary Greece: The Role of the Orthodox Church", in *The Changing Soul of Europe. Religions and Migrations in Northern and Southern Europe*, ed. Helena Vilaça et al. (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014), 69–88; Lina Molokotos-Liederman, "The Impact of the Crisis on the Orthodox Church of Greece: A Moment of Challenge and Opportunity?," *Religion, State & Society* 44 (2016): 32–50.

⁴¹ Bruce Stokes, "What It Takes to Truly Be 'One of Us'," <<http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/02/01/what-it-takes-to-truly-be-one-of-us/>> (accessed February 2017).

Concluding Remarks

The above sketch of the situation in modern Greece makes clear that this country cannot be classified as postsecular. Neither opposition to state policies of secularization, nor the popularity of a “return to Orthodoxy” since the 1990s, is alone capable of justifying that categorical description. More importantly, it should demonstrate that the secularization process in Greece was uneven and selective,⁴² and thus is still largely incomplete. In fact, the state supports a kind of a “symphonic secularism” vis-à-vis the Church,⁴³ namely a particular combination of modern secular orientations with traditional elements of Church-state relations in Eastern Orthodoxy. After all, the explicit categorization of Greece as a “secular state” is not appealed to in official Greek documents and legislation.⁴⁴ Greek jurists and other scholars assume the *de facto* secular character of the Greek state as a given. However, this quality does not appear so obviously in the discourses of many politicians, Church leaders, and the broader Greek population. This dissonance frequently leads to debates such as how to interpret the categorization of Orthodoxy in the current Greek Constitution of 1975 as the “prevailing religion” of the country.⁴⁵ There was and remains a formal separation between Church and state, yet there are numerous

⁴² Lina Molokotos-Liederman, “Greece: Selective Secularization and the Deprivatization of Religion?,” in *Secularism, Women & the State: The Mediterranean World in the 21st Century*, ed. Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar (Trinity College, Hartford, CT: Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture, 2009), 41–55; Evangelos Karagiannis, “Secularism in Context: The Relations between the Greek State and the Church of Greece in Crisis,” *Archives européennes de sociologie* 50 (2009): 131–167.

⁴³ Cf. Kristen R. Ghodsee, “Symphonic Secularism: Eastern Orthodoxy, Ethnic Identity and Religious Freedoms in Contemporary Bulgaria,” *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 27 (2009): 227–252.

⁴⁴ Charalambos Papastathis, “État et Églises en Grèce,” in *État et Églises dans l'Union européenne*, ed. Gerhard Robbers, 2nd edition, 2008, 121–146 <[http://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb5/inst/IEVR/Arbeitsmaterialien/ Staatskirchenrecht/Staat_und_Kirche_in_der_EU/06-Grece.pdf](http://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb5/inst/IEVR/Arbeitsmaterialien/Staatskirchenrecht/Staat_und_Kirche_in_der_EU/06-Grece.pdf)> (accessed Februar 2017).

⁴⁵ Kyriakos N. Kyriazopoulos, “The ‘Prevailing Religion’ in Greece: Its Meaning and Implications,” *Journal of Church and State* 43 (2001): 511–538.

official and unofficial ties between them based on historical traditions and customary practices. Thus, the Greek state continues to exhibit a certain “religious character,”⁴⁶ no matter how this is interpreted. This never led to the formation of a clearly secular *status quo* of the West European type, in which Church and state are clearly separated to varying degrees, and in which political power and authority does not rest on religious legitimation. Despite the probable continuation of secularizing measures in the future, the particular nexus of Church, state, and nation in Greece will account for the sociopolitical salience of Orthodoxy and for its role in the formation of national identity. The result has been that the Church, because of its institutional flexibility, has not been fundamentally weakened by the dual processes of modernization and secularization, which focused more on external aspects of the Church structure and left the institution’s internal dynamics mostly untouched. This happened in spite of the fact that the Church’s tendency to fuse with secular institutions has made it in many cases quite worldly.⁴⁷ Religious authority and its role in the public sphere still remain quite strong in Greece,⁴⁸ and the ongoing acute economic crisis has strengthened both individual and collective religiosity in numerous ways,⁴⁹ even in connection with the rise of the radical right “Golden Dawn” party.

Finally, the discussion of postsecularity is capable of offering space to reflect on the current state of Greek Orthodoxy.⁵⁰ In general,

⁴⁶ Antonis Papanizos, “Du caractère religieux de l’état grec moderne,” *Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones* 3 (1998): 183–207.

⁴⁷ Daphne Halikiopoulou, *Patterns of Secularization: Church, State and Nation in Greece and the Republic of Ireland* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011).

⁴⁸ Stratos Patrikios, “Religious Deprivatization in Modern Greece,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 24 (2009): 357–362.

⁴⁹ Aikaterini Stavrianea and Irene Kamenidou, “Religion in the Context of Economic Crisis: The Generation’s Z Perspective,” *International Journal of Strategic Innovative Marketing* 3/3 (2016): 56–68, doi: 10.15556/IJSIM. 03.03.005.

⁵⁰ Effie Fokas, “‘Eastern’ Orthodoxy and ‘Western’ Secularization in Contemporary Europe (with special Reference to the Case of Greece),” *Religion, State & Society* 40 (2012): 395–414. See

Orthodox Churches have not yet reflected systematically or creatively on the consequences of secularization as a historical process, and as such they have not benefited from it to the same extent as Western Churches.⁵¹ Most Orthodox thinkers are still prone to criticize and castigate secularization as a pernicious development, having originated from the “fallen West” and as such not intrinsically related to Orthodox Christian history. They usually reiterate worn arguments pointing to the Orthodox superiority vis-à-vis the Western Churches and proffering the rich Orthodox tradition as a solution to the problems of the modern secular world. This, however, excludes any productive encounter with the condition of secularity as a long-term, epoch-making development, one that has fundamentally framed discussions of modern Europe and subsequently of the entire world.⁵² Few Orthodox thinkers have moved beyond reactionary condemnation to sustained reflection on this phenomenon. An “Orthodox theology of secularization” could be thus an important step in assessing the fundamental changes that have occurred over the last centuries and articulating a timely Orthodox self-understanding and vision for the future.



also an issue of the theological and cultural journal *Σύναξη* 124 (October–December 2012), 3–78, which includes the Greek translation of a Habermas’ text on religion in the public sphere, as well as various Orthodox responses to and comments on it.

⁵¹ Vasilios N. Makrides, “Östliches orthodoxes Christentums und Säkularität. Ein Vergleich mit dem lateinischen Christentum,” *Transit. Europäische Revue* 47 (2015): 59–75.

⁵² Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).