

# Orthodox Christianity in 21st Century Greece

## The Role of Religion in Culture, Ethnicity and Politics

- One of the predominantly Orthodox countries that has never experienced communism is Greece, a country uniquely situated to offer insights about contemporary trends and developments in Orthodox Christianity. This volume offers a comprehensive treatment of the role Orthodox Christianity plays at the dawn of the twenty-first century Greece from social scientific and cultural-historical perspectives.

This book breaks new ground by examining in depth the multifaceted changes that took place in the relationship between Orthodox Christianity and politics, ethnicity, gender, and popular culture. Its intention is two-fold: on the one hand, it aims at revisiting some earlier stereotypes, widespread both in academic and others circles, about the Greek Orthodox Church, its cultural specificity and its social presence, such as its alleged intrinsic non-pluralistic attitude toward non-Orthodox Others. On the other hand, it attempts to show how this fairly traditional religious system underwent significant changes in recent years affecting its public role and image, particularly as it became more and more exposed to the challenges of globalization and multiculturalism.

- **Contents:** Foreword, Grace Davie; Preface; Introduction: Tradition, transition and change in Greek Orthodoxy at the dawn of the 21st century, Vasilios N. Makrides and Victor Roudometof; Part I Orthodox Christianity, Greek Ethnicity and Politics: The evolution of Greek Orthodoxy in the context of world historical globalization, Victor Roudometof; An intriguing true-false paradox: the entanglement of modernization and intolerance in the Orthodox Church of Greece, Anastassios Anastassiadis; Scandals, secret agents, and corruption: the Orthodox Church of Greece during the 2005 crisis – its relation to the state and modernization, Vasilios N. Makrides; Domesticating Islam and Muslim immigrants: political and church responses to constructing a central mosque in Athens, Dia Anagnostou and Ruby Gropas; Non-Orthodox minorities in contemporary Greece: legal status and concomitant debates between church, state, and the international community, Prodromos Yannas. Part II Orthodox Christianity and Greek Culture: 'The traditional modern': rethinking the position of contemporary Greek women to orthodoxy, Eleni Sotiriou; The mosque that was not there: ethnographic elaborations on Orthodox conceptions of sacrifice, Dimitris Antoniou; Religion and welfare in Greece: a new, or renewed, role for the church?, Effie Fokas; Faith and trust: tracking patterns of religious and civic commitment in Greece and Europe. An empirical approach, Theoni Stathopoulou; Sacred words in a secular beat: the Free Monks phenomenon at the intersection of religion, youth and popular culture, Lina Molokotos-Liederman; Index.
- **About the Editor:** Vasilios N. Makrides (born 1961) studied theology at the University of Athens (1979–1983) and religious studies, history of religions and sociology of religion at Harvard University (1984–1986) as well as the University of Tübingen (1986–1991), from where he obtained his doctorate in 1991. He taught at the University of Thessaly, Volos (1995–1998) and from 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 include comparative religious and cultural history as well as sociology of Orthodox Christianity.

Victor Roudometof (Ph.D. Sociology & Cultural Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 1996) is Associate Professor with the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Cyprus. In the past, he has held positions at Princeton University, Washington and Lee University and Miami University (OH). His main research interests include globalization, historical sociology, sociology of religion (Eastern Orthodoxy), and sociology of culture.

- **Reviews:** 'This is a deep, masterly and penetrating exploration of Orthodox Christianity in contemporary Greece. Intellectually powerful and methodologically rigorous, the chapters converge in a general cohesion of the cultural themes of the volume which bear directly on the public role of religion in Greek society and beyond. The result is an invaluable contribution to the study of a specific and rather under-researched area of contemporary European religious culture.'

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