

national hellenic FREE PRESS

VOL. 36

NO. 376

CHICAGO, IL.

JANUARY, 2017

Where Was Jesus Christ From the Age of 12 to 30?

By: Louis A. Palivos

Prophecy

Scholars have enumerated 353¹ Messianic Prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ, written before His birth, over a period of 1,500 years. Prophecies regarding Jesus Christ's place of birth, where He would be raised, teaching method, number of disciples, betrayal, manner of crucifixion and His resurrection. Except the prophecy out of Egypt below, these prophecies speak to Jesus Christ being in a place of Galilee/ Nazareth/ Judea. Further, two mathematicians have calculated the statistical probability of just 48 of these prophecies to be fulfilled in one person to be 1 in 10¹⁵⁷. This number is extremely large and it's statistically not possible to have happened by chance². This statistic is extraordinary evidence of the divine!

A number of prophecies, types or shadows, singled out that the Messiah would come from a low estate and that He would be rejected. Ps. 22:6-8, 13; 69:8,20,21; Is. 11:1, 49:7; 53:2,8; and Dan. 9:26. Particularly the Prophet Isaiah, 11:1, used the Hebrew word for "branch" (*neser*) which is built around the same consonants as "Nazarene". Also, "out of Egypt I called my Son." Matt. 2:15; Hosea 11:1.

New Testament

While Joseph and Mary were in Egypt, an angel appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child to the land of Israel. Joseph and Mary left Egypt and went to live in the City of Nazareth, "So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: He will be called a Nazarene." Matt. 2:23

Four evangelists, St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. Mark and St. John, gave us hints as to where Jesus grew up from 12 to 30 years old.

"Then He went down to with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men." Lk. 2: 51-52. "So He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. And as was His custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read." Lk. 4:16

A reasonable inference is that St. Luke received this history from either the Theotokos, St. Paul or St. Peter.

"And He went out from thence, and came into His own country (*πατρίδα*); and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath Day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, 'From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?' And they were offended at Him. But Jesus, said unto them, 'a prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.' And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them." Mk. 6:1-5

The Greek word *πατρίδα*, *patrída*, country, suggests that Jesus was known in Nazareth.

"And when He was come into His own country (*πατρίδα*), He taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, 'Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and His brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?' And they were offended at Him. But Jesus said unto them, 'A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.' And He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt. 13:54-58

(Continue p. 2)

Commissioner Mariyana Spyro- poulos was re-elected for a second term



Mariyana Spyropoulos and Consulate General of Greece, Polyxene Petropoulos

Three officers of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Board of Commissioners were re-elected to their positions of leadership to serve the people of Cook County and protect the region's water environment.

During the January 5 Board meeting, Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos was re-elected for a second term as board president of the MWRD, while Commissioner Barbara McGowan was re-elected vice president for her fourth term, and Commissioner Frank Avila was re-elected as chairman of finance for a second term. three officers lead fellow Commissioners Timothy Bradford, Martin Durkan, Josina Morita, Debra Shore, Kari Steele, and David Walsh.

Vice President McGowan motioned to nominate President Spyropoulos to serve as president, complimenting her pride in the work of the MWRD and her willingness to perform outreach throughout Cook County to spread the word of the MWRD's work.

"I thank my colleagues on the Board of Commissioners for their support as President and look forward to pursuing our mission to protect the health and safety of Cook County," said President Spyropoulos. "I am humbled to represent the taxpayers of Cook County, and I will continue to advocate on their behalf for clean water, flood protection, and fiscal responsibility."

President Spyropoulos was appointed to the Board in 2009 and was elected to a full term in 2010. She was elected as chairman of finance in January 2013 and board president in January 2015. President Spyropoulos has served as chairman of three committees: Judiciary; Pension, Human Resources, and Civil

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NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS

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THE PLATFORM OF THE GREEK PRESS

1. To applaud the achievements of our ethnic group
2. To support the ideas of the Hellenic-Christian tradition
3. To promote the preservation of the Greek language
4. To encourage all worthy Community causes
5. To assist all the Greek-American fraternal, cultural patriotic and religious organizations
6. To install Americanism in the Greek-American community
7. To advance the just causes of Hellenism.
8. To promote the ideals Greece has given to humanity.

Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos re-elected for a second term

Service; and Real Estate Development. She has also served as a trustee on the Pension Board. In January 2011, the Board of Commissioners appointed her to



Barbara McGowan, Mariyana Spyropoulos, Frank Avila

the Public Building Commission. President Spyropoulos received her law degree from The John Marshall Law School and her MBA from Loyola University Chicago. She also completed graduate work in American government at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. With her attorney experience, she brings a unique legal and business perspective combined with environmental activism.

Commissioner Debra

Shore motioned to nominate Vice President McGowan to serve as vice president. "Vice President McGowan is the dean of our board, not by the number of years she has served, but for her wisdom and experience gained from serving," said Commissioner Shore. "She has been an advocate for women and minorities and worked to provide fairness in the workplace and is known for her booming laugh and deep faith. I am proud to nominate her as vice president."

Vice President McGowan has served on the MWRD Board since 1998. Besides serving as vice president and twice as acting president, she has served as chairman of the Affirmative Action Committee and the Procurement Committee and vice chairman of the Pension, Human Resources and Civil Service Committee and the Public Information and Education Committee.

"Thank you to my colleagues for supporting me as vice president and the voters who have elected all of us to serve the larger community," said Vice President McGowan. "As vice president, I vow to protect our water environment, advance our work in resource recovery and shelter our homes and businesses from flooding."

Based on a motion from Commissioner Bradford, Commissioner Avila was nominated and re-elected as chairman of finance for a second term. Commissioner Avila was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 2002 and was re-elected in 2008 and 2014. He has served as chairman of the Engineering Committee, the Maintenance and Operations Committee and the Public Health and Welfare Committee. He has also served as Vice Chairman of the Affirmative Action Committee and the Industrial Waste/Water Pollution Committee. Commissioner Avila received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois-Champaign in 1961 and his Master's Degree in Finance from the University of Arizona-Tucson in 1968. He owned a civil engineering company and practiced engineering and land surveying for over 45 years. Under his leadership, Commissioner Avila helped MWRD maintain its financial health, stabilize the pension fund, and bolster high credit ratings, garnering a AAA rating with Fitch Ratings and a AA+ rating from Standard and Poor's. The Civic Federation recently announced its support of the MWRD fiscal year 2017 budget.

"I thank my colleagues for this honor and our committed staff for their valuable efforts to ensure the District is on solid financial footing," said Chairman Avila. "We will continue to work together in 2017 to strengthen our financial standing and grow our value in services, resource recovery revenue and energy savings."

Where Was Jesus Christ From the Age of 12 to 30?

The phrase, "is not this the carpenter's son," suggest familiarity that Jesus was Joseph's son, a carpenter, and that He had brothers and sisters, probably Joseph's children from another marriage.

"Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?'" Jn. 7:14-15

This passage also suggests familiarity with Jesus in the area as an uneducated man.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew, the two references to the eye are in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 6:22-23, and in the context of not hurting an innocent child, Matt. 18:9. Clearly, these verses do not refer to a "third-eye" or locus of power and wisdom in the forehead that Hinduism teaches.

Jesus' Teachings

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17

"And beginning with Moses and with all the Prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in the Scriptures." Lk. 24:27

"Now He said to them, 'These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.'" Lk. 24:44

"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My Words?" Jn. 5:39, 40, 46, 47

"And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says, 'You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; and you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive.'" Matt. 13:14

"This is the one about whom it was written, 'Behold I send My messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'" Matt. 11:10 (on John the Baptist)

"Jesus said to them, 'Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner stone.'" Matt. 21:42

"But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the Prophets may be fulfilled." Matt. 26:56. "And then they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." Mk. 13:26 (referring to Daniel 7:13, 14)

"And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'" Lk. 4:20, 21

"But they have done this in order that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'" Jn. 15:25

Modern Reports

A report by Nicolas Notovitch, in the story of the "Unknown Life of Jesus", that Jesus had travelled to the Hemis Monastery in Ladach, Tibet, at 13 years of age, turned out to be a fabrication. Another story: "The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ", by Levi H. Downing, follows Jesus' travels to India, Tibet, Persia, Assyria, Greece and Egypt, but is based on speculation.

There are other stories of Jesus in the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha. Claims have been made by the Essenes and the Arthurians. Also, that after the crucifixion, Jesus feigned death, revived and travelled to India, as per the Indian spiritual master, Meher Baba. Furthermore, a German writer, Holget Kersten, also popularized the idea that Jesus had travelled to India.

However, there is not one iota of either historical or archaeological evidence to support these claims that Jesus visited India or Tibet or travelled outside of Galilee from the age of youth to the age of 30.

Conclusion

The Lord Jesus Christ's teachings, the New Testament writers quoted above and the prophecies, disprove any inference that Indian or Tibetan swamis, gurus or masters may have educated Jesus. For example, Jesus quoted the Old Testament; He did not quote any Hindu or Buddhist teacher; the people in Galilee were surprised at His teachings and depth of the Old Testament; He did not quote any Hindu or Buddhist Holy Writings; He presents Himself as the I Am of the Old Testament, not a self-realized god; He taught the real existence of sin and forgiveness, not that each person had a path of righteousness, *dharmā*; He called people to repentance and to save them from judgment; He taught that there would be a resurrection, not a reincarnation; He taught forgiveness of sin, not an endless working-out of *karma*; He taught there is a heaven, not a oneness with a mystical being; He ate fish and lamb unlike the vegetarian gurus; He taught that He was a God, not striving to become a God; He taught love, humility and gave Himself to others, not to strive for one's own pleasure or mastery of yoga postures; He came to be crucified for others not to cultivate His own school or following; He did not teach that each person becomes a drop in the ocean, but that each person retains his/her own personality, free will, soul and made in the image and likeness of God; and He claimed He was The Truth, not one of many paths to the truth.

Critically important is that before the Lord Jesus Christ began His ministry, He went to the wilderness and was tempted by the devil. Three times, the Lord Jesus Christ quoted the Old Testament: first, "it is written, 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God,'" citing Deut. 8:3, Lk. 4:4; second, "for it is written, 'you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve,'" citing Deut. 6:13, Lk. 4:8; and third, "it has been said, 'you shall not tempt the Lord your God,'" citing Deut. 6:16, Lk. 4:12.

Therefore, it becomes abundantly clear that the New Testament record is reliable and speaks to Jesus *growing up* in Nazareth, in Galilee, as a carpenter's son. Moreover, what Jesus taught opposes the teaching of Hinduism, Buddhism and so many other -isms.

1. www.accordingtothescriptures.org ;

2. Peter W. Stoner and Robert C. Newman, *Science Speaks*, Moody Press, 1963.

GREECE 2016 IN PICTURES



Ties hanging on a tree in front of the Parliament building in Athens, having been placed there in a symbolic gesture by protesting Greek lawyers during a demonstration against a set of planned pension reforms on January 21.



A man clings onto a bag of tangerines as people receive free produce, handed out by farmers, during a protest over the government's proposal to overhaul the country's ailing pension system in Athens, January 27



Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei protects himself and others from the rain as Nour Al Khizam, from the city of Deirez Zor in Syria, plays the piano during a performing at a refugee camp, Idomeni in northern Greece, March 12



A refugee takes a selfie with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Special Envoy Angelina Jolie during her visit at the port of Piraeus, near Athens, March 16 (Kathimerini).

GREECE 2016 IN PICTURES



Pope Francis, leader of the Catholic Church, holds a baby during his visit to the Moria hot spot for migrants and refugees near Mytilene on the Greek island of Lesbos, April 16. The pontiff challenged leaders to respond to migrants 'in a way worthy of our common humanity' and pointedly called for Europe to remember its roots as 'the homeland of human rights.'



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras (r) and Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos (l) attend a parliamentary session in Athens, May 22, ahead of a vote on fresh cuts and tax hikes, the ruling leftist party approved a fresh round of austerity incorporating 1.8 billion euros in tax increases on May 22.



Russian President Vladimir Putin (c) visits the Church of the Protaton, dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, in Karyes, administrative center of the all-male Orthodox monastic community of Mount Athos, northern Greece, May 28.



A man sails a laser in front of the newly built Athens National Opera (l) and Library buildings at the Stavros Niarchos Cultural Center in the southern Athens suburb of Faliro, June 24. The 1,400-seat opera, library and adjoining park designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano cost nearly 600 million euros (\$680 million) and took eight years to design and build. The Stavros Niarchos Cultural Center, expected to fully open in mid-2017, occupies 20 hectares (50 acres) overall

GREECE 2016 IN PICTURES



Dense smoke over Lithi village seen during a wildfire on Chios island, July 25. The huge blaze destroyed 3,500 hectares of forest and farmland. Over 90 percent of the mastic trees at the villages of Lithi, Elata and Vessa were destroyed while a large number of mastic trees were also burned at the villages of Mesta, Armolia and Pyrgi



Spyros Gianniotis, of Greece, (c) rests on a raft with Richard Nagy, of Slovakia, and Jordan Wilimovsky, of the United States, after finishing the men's marathon swimming event at Copacabana beach at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 16. Ferry Weertman of the Netherlands took the gold in a photo finish. Gianniotis, 36, appeared to cross the finish line first, but the Dutchman touched the timing pad before him. Gianniotis won silver.



US President Barack Obama tours the Acropolis with Dr Eleni Banou , Ministry of Culture, November 16. Obama offered solidarity with Greece over its debt and migrant crises during his final trip to Europe as President.

Pappas says Schaeuble 'never wanted Greek program to succeed'

"The German finance minister never wanted the Greek program to succeed," Telecoms & Media Minister Nikos Pappas said on Saturday referring to Wolfgang Schaeuble, one of Athens's staunchest critics.

Speaking on Skai TV, Pappas said that the Greek bailout program will not undergo any changes until 2018, adding that lenders are divided in the approach to Greece and making particular reference to the International Monetary Fund.

"The IMF is not necessary to the Greek program as the European Commission questions its numbers," Pappas said in reference to a disagreement between Brussels and the Fund concerning fiscal targets and the need for debt relief. "The IMF is arm-in-arm with the German Finance Ministry."

Greece, said the minister, is facing a "political confrontation with the lenders. This is the first time that a program for Greece is working and this is because low primary budget surpluses have been agreed, with the priority being given to protecting the most vulnerable.

"Only someone who is one-sided politically can refuse to see that the Greek economy is stabilizing," Pappas added in another apparent dig at Schaeuble.

"There is no reason for Greece to agree to additional measures," the minister said responding to speculation that the cash-strapped country may need another rescue package to get back on its feet.

Pappas also dismissed suggestions that the leftist-led government is considering snap polls amid flagging popularity. "Elections is something that [conservative New Democracy leader Kyriakos] Mitsotakis is dreaming and propagandizing about in order to tame his parliamentary group," he said. "The elections will take place in 2019 and it is obvious that political expediency has seeped into public opinion polls. New Democracy does not have a 15 percent lead."

Elections, Pappas said, "will take place when Greek citizens have the chance to compare what we took on and what we have done to improve the situation. No one says that the situation is easy. From the taxes being implemented, 20 billion euros stem from commitments made by previous government. The ENFIA [property tax] did not go up, but remained stable or was reduced for those who couldn't afford it.

"The lion's share of the burden is on the middle class," Pappas said.

EVANGELOS VENETIS *

Aleppo: The beginning of the end

In the last few days, Syria and Turkey have experienced dramatic developments on a massive scale. The prevalence of Syrian troops in Aleppo with the support of Russia and the execution of the Russian ambassador in Ankara are



directly connected, marking both the beginning of a new period in Syrian-Turkish relations but also in the relationship between Ankara with Russia and NATO.

Damascus's victory in Aleppo means slowing or even the end of the West's efforts to split Syria by establishing a Sunni state with its capital in Aleppo in north-

ern Syria, as sought in the first instance, and the removal of Bashar al-Assad from Damascus. Assad's victory in Aleppo puts an end to his opponents' dreams and enhances the effort to keep Syria united, preventing at this time any effort to redraw borders in the region. What now remains for Assad's opponents is the prospect of Syria's partition by supporting the separatists Kurds. However, from now on – and after the outcome of the battle of Aleppo – Assad is expected to have one more ally on his side: Turkey.

Aware that it is unable both to expel the Syrian president and to keep the Kurds under its influence, Ankara is likely to change its strategy in Syria. A 180-degree shift in attitude towards Assad is expected to bring Recep Tayyip Erntoan at least two benefits: first, the marginalization of the Kurds, given that Damascus and Ankara have common interests amongst Kurds, and secondly strengthening the Moscow-Ankara alliance at a time of intense pressure in Turkey's economy and security by circles of the so-called international community. Such an alliance is expected to offer Erdogan a medium-term boost not only in regards to the Kurds but also over the reforms being pursued within Turkey.

Such an approach however, entails a price. The modus operandi in the murder of the Russian ambassador corresponds to circles opposed to Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin – circles sending the Turkish president a message about the overall insecurity in his country, while also reminding Moscow of the deterioration of geopolitical competition not only in the Middle East but also on other fronts. It is likely, therefore, that this development will not only exacerbate the confrontation between Russia and the West, but also contribute to the prospect of deteriorating relations between Turkey and NATO, including the prospect of withdrawing from the military wing of the alliance if short-term developments in the case of the Kurds and the Turkish financial system contribute to this. More developments lie ahead.

HELLENIC SENIOR CITIZENS OF NORTH SHORE CHICAGO



L. to R. (Bottom Row) Tom Aralis, Michael Vlamis, Chris Demopoulos, Paul Theodosis, Chris Aralis, Adreas Roiniotis, John Skordalos, Andy Kartsistaris, Jim Sellis. (Middle Row) John Mellos, James Papadakis, Diamond Mendonidis, Christos Bilissis. (Top row) Sam Stamatis, Tom Syreggelas, John Xamplas, Gus Demos, Theodore Ioannou.

Rocky Vander's Sports Bar and Night Club, Prospect Heights and raised \$ 3,600.00 for the benefit of the Greek children at the Hamogelo tou



Paidiou (Haamogero.GR) a non-for-profit organization located in Greece. In keeping with the spirit of Christmas and the Holidays Jim and George



On Thursday, December 8, the Helleic Senior Citizens of North Shore Chicago hosted a fund raising Goat luncheon prepared by Mr. Chris Aralis at



Sellis donated their time, facilities and staff at Rokcy Vender's and Tom Bairaktaris, Park Packing Co., Chicago donated the two delicious baby goats.



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Clouds gather as bailout review hangs in balance



The protracted delay in wrapping up the country's bailout review is beginning to take a heavy toll on the government's plan of action for putting the country on the path to economic recovery.

The leftist-led administration was initially aiming to complete the review by the end of 2016 at the latest in order to begin in-depth negotiations on debt relief and enter the European Central Bank's (ECB) quantitative easing program before heading back to international markets.

The latest blow came last Thursday at a meeting of the Euro Working Group, which Athens expected would trigger the return to Greece of the creditors' technical advisers to resume negotiations. But again, nothing came out of the talks that would meet the government's expectations, and Athens will now have to wait for a meeting of the ECB's board on March 9. In anticipation of the ECB, the coalition is now hoping for the review's completion by late February or early March.

However, despite the government's effort to raise the alarm over the consequences of the delay in wrapping up the review, it has recently sounded a more defiant tone, saying it is in no hurry as it can "cover costs over the next few months."

The toughening of its stance has raised eyebrows at home and abroad as, to many observers, it brings to mind the acrimonious negotiations that took place in the summer of 2015, which pushed Greece to the brink of a eurozone exit.

Pappas says Schaeuble 'never wanted Greek program to succeed'

The German finance minister never wanted the Greek program to succeed," Telecoms & Media Minister Nikos Pappas said on Saturday referring to Wolfgang Schaeuble, one of Athens's staunchest critics.

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GREEK NEWS

Anastasiades: Natural gas supply an incentive for Turkey



Cyprus's newly-discovered wealth of offshore natural gas could boost the prospects for a peace settlement on the divided island, President Nicos Anastasiades has said a few days after Nicosia said it had picked Eni, Total and ExxonMobil for three exploration licenses.

In an interview with Kathimerini newspaper ahead of next month's crucial talks in Geneva, the Greek Cypriot leader said that the prospect of covering a significant part of Turkey's energy needs and of transforming his country into a regional energy hub could prompt Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan into making the much-needed concessions that would pave the way for a deal.

"The most important thing is for [Turkey] to become an energy hub. The normalization of ties with Israel and the need to get natural gas supplies from there, presupposes that that pipelines will run through Cyprus's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The Cyprus Republic may not have veto rights, but it can raise objections over the pipeline route," said Anastasiades, adding that Ankara could also be interested in the discovery of natural gas deposits.

"Turkey might show interest in buying natural gas from Cyprus; but the possible transfer of natural gas to the European Union could also be of interest to them, given their plans to become an energy hub," he said.

On Wednesday, Cyprus's Energy Ministry said that the government had awarded Eni and Total a joint exploration block. Eni also won another on its own while a third went to ExxonMobil in partnership with Qatar Petroleum, the ministry said.

In the same interview, Anastasiades repeated that the withdrawal of Turkish troops, stationed in northern Cyprus since 1974, was key to reaching an agreement, while stressing that Athens and Nicosia were on the same page regarding the negotiation process. A multilateral summit on Cyprus will take place in Geneva on January 12.

Six in 10 Greeks see snap polls in 2017



Sixty-three percent of Greeks believe that early elections are likely next year, according to a new public opinion poll published over the weekend.

The poll, conducted for Real News by MRB, found that the majority of respondents felt that a rift between the leftist-led government and international creditors, as well as growing public discontent, will lead to early elections in 2017.

Asked to identify the words that best

describes how they feel, 63.1 percent of respondents chose "worry," 47.9 percent "fear," 29.7 percent "anger" and 24.3 percent "shame."

Widespread pessimism was evident in the poll, as 77 percent of respondents said that they do not believe they will be able to maintain the same standard of living next year compared to this, and seven in 10 respondents aged 18 to 24 said they would emigrate if the opportunity presented itself.

Athens responds to Ankara's claims over sea border



Greece has written to the United Nations to complain about and challenge a letter from Turkey's Permanent Mission that questions Greek sovereign rights in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In the Greek missive, sent by the country's permanent representative to the United Nations, Aikaterini Boura, Athens accuses Ankara of trying to impede Greece from agreeing a maritime delimitation with other states. The official challenged the Turkish claim that the Greek islands in the maritime area in question are not entitled to their own continental shelf and exclusive economic zones. This runs counter to the international law of the sea, Greece argues.

The letter argues that Turkish challenges to the delimitation of the continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean are unfounded and an attempt to interfere with Greece's right to move ahead with agreements with other countries. Boura's letter was sent on December 8 but only made public now.

Roupa, 25-year-old woman charged with running new terror group

An Athens prosecutor yesterday brought charges against Panagiota Roupa, a leading member of the Revolutionary Struggle guerrilla group, and a 25-year-old woman, of running a new terrorist organization.

Roupa and the woman were arrested early on Thursday in separate raids in two different suburbs of Athens following months of police surveillance.

The two women face charges of forming and operating a terrorist organization, including procuring guns and explosives, and of theft aimed at funding terrorist acts.

On the run since 2014, 48-year-old Roupa was found in hiding with her 5-year-old son during a raid shortly after 6 a.m. on Thursday by officers of the Greek Police's counterterrorism department and the EKAM special forces.

According to police sources, Roupa, whose partner is the jailed leader of Revolutionary Struggle Nikos Maziotis, did not attempt to

resist arrest or reach for a gun she had on her but asked officers to protect her child.



In a parallel operation, police arrested a 25-year-old woman after raiding an apartment in Aghios Dimitrios. The woman, who was detained on charges of harboring a criminal, is alleged to have helped Roupa during her time on the run.

Both Roupa and Maziotis have started a hunger strike, demanding that their child, be released from authorities into the hands of relatives.

The Justice Ministry on Friday rebuffed reports that the child was being held on ministry premises.

ESM prepares to ease Greek national debt

The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) is set to implement short-term measures to ease Greece's national debt by the end of January, as agreed at a December 5 Eurogroup meeting. To this end, the ESM will borrow more funds from the markets than originally planned.

The revised plan for long-term bond issues within 2017 provides for a 14 percent increase on the amount in the original plan, in order to cover the liquidity requirements related to lightening the Greek debt. However, the size of the ESM loan issue has not yet been determined.

ESM Secretary-General Kalin Anev Janse said in an interview with Dow Jones Newswires on Tuesday, "If there is a reason to change the volume of bond issue in the future, we will change it." Taking into account that all short-term measures to ease the Greek debt will be implemented this year, the ESM's target for the issue of long-term debt in 2017 amounts to 57 billion euros.

According to the plan drafted by the ESM and Greece's Public Debt Management Agency (PDMA) on the

of the debt to stem from their application in the long run is estimated at 40 billion euros, or 21 percent of gross domestic product.

More and more Turks buying Greek property



Turks acquiring property in Greece are mostly people with a high level of education, medium or high income, originating from western Turkey and mainly from the Aegean coast and Istanbul, and constitute one of the most dynamic group of buyers in the local market along with the British, the Germans, the French and the Italians.

Market professionals say that the number of buyers from Turkey has increased considerably since 2011, when property prices in Greece started to nosedive, to peak with annual rates of 11.7 percent in 2012 and 10.9 percent in 2013, according to Bank of Greece data.

Yet the number of Turkish buyers has jumped since last summer, experts say. Mina Bougonikolou, head of the InterCasa real estate agency, which has worked with several Turkish investors in recent years, told Kathimerini that demand has taken off after the failed coup in Turkey last summer. "The political situation and insecurity felt by many Turks has translated into an investment interest in Greece," she said, adding that besides seeing buying a property in Greece as an investment, there are many Turkish citizens who would consider moving to the country.

Another factor sending Turkish buyers to Greece is a slump in the price rally in Turkey, as after a period of high increases in prices, rates have now stabilized, reducing the prospects of future capital gains for investors.

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Barack Obama legacy: Did he improve US race relations?



Barack Obama sealed his racial legacy the moment he sealed victory in the 2008 election - a black man would occupy a White House built by slaves, a history-defying as well as history-making achievement. In 1961, the year of Obama's birth, there existed in the American South a system of racial apartheid that separated the races from the cradle to the grave. Whites-only water fountains. Whites-only schools. Whites-only graveyards. In some states, his very conception - involving an African father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas - would have been a criminal offence. Washington, too, remained a largely segregated city.

Little more than half a century later, a black man ran the White House - occupying the Oval Office, sitting at the head of the conference table in the Situation Room, relaxing with his beautiful young family in the Executive Mansion - a family that has brought such grace and glamour to America's sleepy capital that it is possible to speak of a Black Camelot. When demonstrators assembled in August 1963 to hear Martin Luther King deliver his I Have a Dream Speech at the Lincoln Memorial, few would have thought that a black man would one day take the oath of office at the other end of the National Mall.

In legacy terms, his very presence in the White House is one of the great intangibles of his presidency. Just how many black Americans have been encouraged to surmount colour bars of their own? Just how many young African-Americans have altered the trajectory of their lives because of the example set by Obama?

And behaviourally, what an example it has been. Because of the lingering racism in American society, the Obamas doubtless knew they would have to reach a higher standard, and they have done so, seemingly, without breaking a sweat. In deportment and personal conduct, it is hard to recall a more impressive or well-rounded First Family.

The "when they go low, we go high" approach to racists who questioned his citizenship has made the Obamas look even more classy. His family's dignity in the face of such ugliness recalls the poise of black sit-in protesters in the early 60s, who refused to relinquish their seats at segregated restaurants and lunch counters even as white thugs poured sugar and ketchup over their heads, and punched, kicked and spat at them.

Yet racial firsts, of the kind achieved by Barack Hussein Obama, can present a distorted view of history and convey a misleading sense of progress. They are, by their very nature, a singular achievement, a milestone indicative of black advance rather than a destination point.

Hollywood did not become colourblind the moment in 1964 that Sidney Poitier became the first black man to win best actor at the Academy Awards any more than discrimination ended in the justice system when Thurgood Marshall first donned the billowing robes of a Supreme Court jurist.

America's racial problems have not melted away merely because Obama has spent eight years in the White House. Far from it. Indeed, the insurmountable problem for Obama was that he reached the mountaintop on day one of his presidency.

Achieving anything on the racial front that surpassed becoming the country's first black president was always going to be daunting. Compounding that problem were the unrealistically high expectations surrounding his presidency. As also misinterpreted as an act of national atonement for the original sin of slavery and the stain of segregation.

Yet Obama did not win the election because he was a black man. It was primarily because a country facing an economic crisis and embroiled in two unpopular wars was crying out for change.

Doubtless there have been substantive reforms. His two black attorneys general, Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch, have revitalised the work of the justice department's civil rights division, which was dormant during the Bush years.

The Affordable Healthcare Act, or Obamacare, as it was inevitably dubbed, cut the black uninsured rate by a third. As well as calling for the closure of private prisons, he became the first president to visit a federal penitentiary. "There but for the grace of God," said a man who had smoked pot and dabbled with cocaine in his youth.

Early on, he used the bully pulpit of the presidency to assail black absentee fathers, and, more latterly, spoke out against police brutality. But that record of accomplishment looks rather meagre when compared to the drama of hearing "Hail to the Chief" accompany the arrival of a black man on the presidential stage.

Race relations have arguably become more polarised and tenser since 20 January 2009. Though smaller in scale and scope, the demonstrations sparked by police shootings of unarmed black men were reminiscent of the turbulence of the 1960s.

Public opinion surveys highlight this racial restlessness. Not long after he took office in 2009, a New York Times/CBS News poll suggested two-thirds of Americans regarded race relations as generally good. In the midst of last summer's racial turbulence, that poll found there had been a complete reversal. Now 69% of Americans assessed race relations to be mostly bad.

But while he was happy to cloak himself in the mantle of America's first black president, he did not set out to pursue a black presidency. He did not want his years in office to be defined by his skin colour. As a candidate, he often left others to attach racial meaning to his candidacy, rather than doing so himself.

His famed race speech in the 2008 primary campaign, when his friendship with a fiery black preacher threatened to derail his candidacy, was as much about his white heritage as his black.

This remained true when he won election. Besides, there were pressing problems to deal with, not least rescuing the American economy in the midst of the Great Recession and extricating US forces from two long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Early on in his presidency, his efforts at racial mediation also seemed ham-fisted. The "beer summit" at the White House, when he brought together the black Harvard academic Henry Louis Gates and the white police officer who had arrested him on the porch of his own home in an affluent suburb of Boston, all seemed rather facile.

Seemingly, he did not want to come across to the public as a black man in the White House. Rather in those early years, it was as if he was trying to position himself as a neutral arbiter in racial matters, though one sensed his preference was for not intervening at all.

As his presidency went on, however, it became more emphatically black. He spoke out more passionately and more intimately. Telling reporters that his son would have looked like Trayvon Martin, the unarmed high school student shot dead in Florida by a neighbourhood watch coordinator, was a departure. That month he seemed to be at the height of his powers.

The Confederate flag, a symbol for many of black subordination, was about to be brought down in the grounds of the South Carolina State Capitol because the Charleston gunman Dylann Roof had brandished it so provocatively.

Obamacare had withstood a Supreme Court challenge. On the morning that he flew to Charleston, the Supreme Court decreed same-sex marriage would be legal in every state. Progressivism seemed to have triumphed. Obama seemed to have vanquished many of his foes.

But that month Donald Trump had also announced his improbable bid for the White House, and the forces of conservatism were starting to rally behind an outspoken new figurehead, who sensed that nativism, xenophobia and fear of the other would be central to his electoral appeal.

That America's first black president will be followed by the untitled leader of the Birther movement, a candidate slow to disavow support from the Ku Klux Klan and happy to receive the backing of white nationalists, Donald Trump can easily be portrayed as a personal repudiation and also proof of racial regression.

The truth, though, is more complicated. Obama is ending his presidency with some of his highest personal approval ratings, and clearly believes he would have beaten Trump in a head-to-head contest. Moreover, although Trump won decisively in the electoral college, almost three million people more voted for Hillary Clinton nationwide.

In judging the mood of the country, the 2016 election hardly produced a clear-cut result that lends itself to neat analysis. What Trump's election does look to have done, however, is end Obama's hopes of being a transformative president, not least because of the proposed rollback of his signature healthcare reform.

Nor has he been transformative in the attitudinal sense. Indeed, Trump's victory, messy though it was, can easily be viewed partly as a "whitelash".

Much of his earliest and strongest support came from so-called white nationalists, who saw in his candidacy the chance to reassert white cultural and racial dominance. Some of the loudest cheers at his rallies came in response his anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim invectives. Trump's message, from the moment he announced his candidacy to the final tweets of his insurgent campaign, was aimed primarily at white America.

The billionaire's victory also makes it harder to view Obama as a transitional president. Eight years ago, it was tempting to cast the country's first black president as the leader who would oversee a peaceable demographic shift from a still strongly Caucasian America - the last census showed that 62.6% of US citizens are white - to a more ethnically diffuse nation.

But the talk now is of walls, not human bridges.

His formative years were spent in Hawaii, America's most racially integrated state, and the whites he encountered, namely his mother and grandparents, were doting and loving.

Obama was not the victim of discrimination in the same way as a black kid growing up in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, or even New York or Illinois. As a result, he may have underestimated the forces that would seek to paralyse his presidency and to impede racial advance more broadly.

The president has said repeatedly since election night that the result proves that history is not linear but rather takes a zig-zagging course.

He is also fond of paraphrasing Martin Luther King's famed line that the arc of history bends towards justice. However, that curvature has veered off in a wholly unexpected direction. Besides, even to talk of arcs of history at this moment of such national uncertainty seems inapt.

For as we enter the final days of the Obama presidency, the more accurate descriptor of race relations is a fault-line - the most angry fault-line in US politics and American life, and one that continues to rumble away, threatening small explosions at any time. From Obama we expected seismic change of a more positive kind. And although it was a presidency that began atop a mountain, it ended in something of a valley.