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## The Coming False Prophet

Louis A. Palivos



In Revelation, St. John was revealed a Second Beast, that will cooperate with the First Beast, the Antichrist and his ten part entity, who shall have dominion over seven heads and ten horns, a ten parts empire. Rev. 13:1. Just who or what is this Second Beast? Is it a system? Is it a person? Where does this beast come from? Can the symbols of Revelation be unlocked? St. John is the only person in history to have received revealed truth regarding the False Prophet, which he wrote in the Book of Revelation, except the Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence to be presented suggests that the Second Beast is the False Prophet, a false Jesus, read on.

*Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth( Gk. γῆς,) and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. Rev. 13:11-14*

These verses and the following reveal several truths about the False Prophet:

- 1) He is influenced by Satan;
- 2) He will wield power like the Antichrist;
- 3) He will cause humanity to worship the Antichrist;
- 4) He will perform deceptive signs causing fire to come down from heaven on the earth;
- 5) He will cause humanity to worship images of the Antichrist;
- 6) He will cause the image of the Antichrist to speak;
- 7) He will cause those who do not worship the Antichrist to be killed (beheaded); and 8) He will cause humanity to take a mark on their foreheads or

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## The new archbishop of America



The new leader of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Elpidophoros, will be tasked with dealing with a slew of existential issues that have been testing the Greek-American community for the past couple of decades. These range from the degree of the Church's involvement in the community's secular activities or the thorny matter of language, to cooperation with other Orthodox communities in America, chiefly with regards to the degree to which they will project the same message and the scope of the Greek Orthodox Church's role.

There is also the question, which is brought up every so often, of the degree of the Archdiocese of America's dependence on the Ecumenical Patriarchate, particularly as the latter is based in Turkey, as well, of course, as the very important matter of the archdiocese's finances.

The 52-year-old archbishop will have to take careful stock of the issues at hand, assess the environment and decide on who and what he needs to change. The choices he makes – hopefully with respect for the past, but also with an eye on the future – could signal a new start. His relative youth allows him to design and implement a long-term plan for the Archdiocese of America, but also for the Greek-American community more generally, as – for better or worse – the Church's role in the affairs of the diaspora is not restricted to the flock, but extends to matters of the entire community, of which it is a pillar. The new archbishop will be called upon to have a unifying role, to limit rivalries between individuals and groups, and to help heal wounds that have harmed the community.

For their part, the diaspora's secular leaders need to give the archbishop their full support so that there can really be a new beginning that will respect, and in some cases utilize, the abilities and connections of some of the older members, but will chiefly aim to inject the institution with fresh momentum so that it is more representative and, at the end of the day, effective.

The fact that the new archbishop does not come from the Greek-American community may help to this end, as he is protected from infighting.

The former abbot of the Monastery of Holy Trinity in Halki is considered among the Church's most active clerics, has a distinguished academic career, speaks five languages and has spearheaded a multitude of initiatives, both locally and internationally. He also has the added advantage of a close bond of trust with Ecumenical Patriarch Vartholomaios.

The outlook for Elpidophoros' tenure appears positive. Still, the task at hand is not an easy one. His success will be a success for the whole Greek-American community, the most powerful segment of the Greek diaspora.



## NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS

**PUBLISHER**  
**SOTIRIS REKOUMIS**  
**EDITOR**  
**DENISE REKOUMIS**  
**LAYOUTS**  
**JOHN REKOUMIS**  
**CONTRIBUTORS**

**DR. STAVROS BASSEAS, JOHN REKOUMIS,  
DENISE REKOUMIS, DR JORDAN TSOLAKIDIS,  
CHRIS MERENTITIS DR. LOUIS PALIVOS**

### 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.

## Reduced travel demand concerns Greek tourism



Concerns are growing about serious turbulence in Greek tourism after warnings by Thomas Cook and easyJet that the reduced demand for travel services would have consequences on their financial results.

Brexit and the reduction of consumer confidence in key markets such as Germany are behind the current pressure on the sector, while there are also structural problems in the tour operators market. The major penetration of independent online platforms such as Airbnb and Booking.com have weighed on major operators' profit margins from holiday package sales, turning them instead to the hotel market, i.e. hotels that they own.

Yet the 90 percent slump in the Thomas Cook stock price in the last year and the 50 percent drop in its bond value is threatening to add new problems to the market, including Greece: Analysts such as Citi estimate it is a matter of time before hoteliers that tour operators cooperate with, and suppliers in general, start pressing for speedier payments, causing serious cash flow concerns at the worst possible moment. It is noted that Thomas Cook has already turned to its crediting banks with a request for extraordinary financing of 343 million euros.

In Greece Thomas Cook cooperates with a network of 47 hotels, of which it owns four. Company sources tell Kathimerini that the visitors it projects it will bring to Greece this year will be fewer than in 2018, as it has scheduled fewer packages anyway. Even so, it has only sold 457 percent of its packages to all destinations for this year, a rate that is 12 percentage points below that at the same point of 2018. The group continues to be optimistic about Greece, despite an overall warning about a profit decline for the second half of 2019. Four days ago it announced the acquisition of a hotel on Kos and said it is considering further purchases.

EasyJet also warned of lower results for 2019, announcing pretax losses of 313 million euros from October 2018 to March 2019. It also warned that revenues per seat will decline this year, "as consumers are discouraged from the uncertainty regarding Brexit and the financial weakness in Europe."

## The Coming False Prophet

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right hands as an act of submission or servitude and/or commerce. The False Prophet's objectives are deception, seduction, rebellion against the true God and turning humanity to worship the Antichrist.

*He (Gk. variant αὐτός) was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. Rev. 13:15-18*

**St. Ephrem the Syrian wrote:**

There will be signs and wonders by the Dragon with power manifesting himself as God with power with fearful phantoms (demons) in the air and all his demons rise in the air changing shapes as angels to scare humanity.<sup>1</sup> Again St. Ephrem the Syrian also wrote: The Antichrist shall send demons throughout the world, so they may proclaim, "The Great King has appeared in glory, come and see him."<sup>2</sup>

This False Prophet is granted power to cause the image of the Antichrist to speak, and cause those who would not worship the Antichrist to be killed. How is this possible? At present, there are three plausible answers. The more plausible answer is that given by St. Ephram, that demons on a worldwide basis would be the enforcers. A second plausible answer is some sort of artificial intelligence (AI) created in the near future to be the enforcer. A third plausible answer is demonic hybrids, as they were in the Days of Noah, will be the enforcers. Read Math. 24:37-39, and Lk. 17:26-30.

The Lord Jesus Christ revealed that, "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive." Jn. 5:43. The Lord Jesus Christ clearly prophesied that *another Jesus* will come and this *false Jesus* will be accepted by the Jewish people. This false Jesus must come from the "land" Gk. ἡ γῆ, Rev. 13:11, that is, Israel. Some reasonable inferences based on this prophecy are: that the False Prophet shall come from Israel; be Jewish; be accepted by the Jewish people; be accepted by Islam; and be accepted by the worldwide non-believers of the historical Jesus Christ. Except Believers who either read or hear the voice of Jesus Christ, or read Holy Scripture, humanity will be seduced to accept the False Prophet, be deceived and perish.

The Gospel for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. II Tim. 2:9-12. Islam is also awaiting its Muslim Jesus. This Muslim Jesus is probably also the Jewish Jesus who will partner with the Muslim Caliph, the Antichrist.

1. The Muslim Jesus will do the will of the Muslim Caliph, unlike Jesus Christ who did the will of Almighty God, the Father. 2. The Muslim Jesus will slaughter those faithful to the historical Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures, unlike Jesus Christ who saved those faithful to Almighty God, the Father and the Holy Scriptures. 3. The Muslim Jesus is not the Shepherd but rather a wolf in shepherd's clothing. 4. The Muslim Jesus is not about the Gospel but rather seducing people. Islam is awaiting the Caliph (Mahdi), the Christian Antichrist and also their Muslim Jesus, who is the Christian and Jewish False Prophet. Here is the description of the Muslim Jesus: When Jesus returns he will personally correct the misrepresentations and misinformations about himself. He will affirm the true message that he brought in his time as a prophet, and that he never claimed to be the Son of God. Furthermore, he will reaffirm in his second coming what he prophesied in his first coming bearing witness to the seal of the Messenger, Prophet Muhammad. In his second coming many non-Muslims will accept Jesus as a servant of Allah Almighty, as a Muslim and a member of the community of Muhammad.<sup>3</sup>

The Biblical Jesus Christ who spoke the most eloquent words ever and gave humanity the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the beautiful parables, who lived a life of no sin, and who died on the cross, is not the same as the Muslim Jesus who shall do false miracles, impose Sharia Law, on the point of beheading, to convert persons to Islam. The Muslim Jesus will especially pursue both Christians and Jews, the people of "Word of the God" Rev. 20:4. In what religion do people wear a creed on their forehead and/or on their right hand? What religion in humanity is the most Anti-Christian and anti-Trinity creed known to mankind? If someone desires to convert to Islam, he recites the *Shahada*. Throughout the Islamic world, the *Shahada*, or Islam's Creed, is declared regularly among Muslims. It is also the first pronouncement that every Muslim baby hears as the father whispers these words into his child's ears. In Arabic, the *Shahada* is transliterated as, "La ilah ha il Allah, Muhammadan Rasul Allah." The translation is, "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his final messenger." The first component of the Creed states that the Allah of Islam is the only one true supreme god and not Yahweh, the name that every prophet throughout the Old testament knew and used. The second component is that Muhammad, not Jesus Christ, is the final messenger, or sent one, of Allah. Thus, in one very succinct declaration, Islam has managed to formulate a perfect anti-Christian and anti-Trinitarian confession.<sup>4</sup>

What will happen to the False Prophet? "*The False Prophet who in the Antichrist's presence had worked the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who worshipped his image and the Antichrist were thrown into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur.*" Rev. 19:20-21

What religion beheads people for witnessing about Jesus Christ and for the Word of God? Please read this extremely carefully: *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded Gk. πεπελεκισμένων for their witness to Jesus*



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and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. Rev. 20:4.Assuming everything written is correct, hard as it may be, the Lord Jesus Christ has instructed His Followers to, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you and pray for those who spitefully use you.” Lk. 6:27-28.

Lastly, the Christian God is a God of Honor, Truth, Love, Compassion, Mercy and Grace. “God never lies.” Tit. 1:2. If any person on this planet desires to know Jesus Christ, He will draw close to that person, and reveal Himself in ways our finite minds cannot comprehend. The person who thirsts, hungers and seeks to serve the true God Almighty, will find Him; otherwise, the true God would be deceptive and one could never know the Truth or the True God Almighty.

1. Monk Nektarios, *Logos of the Holy Father Ephram the Syrian*, Mount Athos.
2. Ibid, Monk Nektarios.
3. Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, *The Approach of Armageddon? An Islamic Perspective*. Canada: Supreme Council of America, 2003.
4. Joel Richardson, *Mideast Beast*, WND Books, Washington, D.C., 2012.

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## Cyprus, France reportedly agree on use of naval base

Cypriot Defense Minister Savvas Angelides and French counterpart Florence Parly reportedly signed a statement of intent on Wednesday to allow the French Navy to use a naval station at Mari to permanently service its warships, according to news website politis.com.cy.



## Mueller report: Many looming legal battles between Congress and Trump



The US attorney general spent five acrimonious hours in front of a congressional committee explaining his handling of the Mueller report. The intensity of some of the exchanges suggests multiple legal and political battles lie ahead between the Democrats in Congress and President Donald Trump.

A day after Attorney General William Barr traded blows with senators, the stakes ramped up considerably as he refused to testify to another committee and the Democratic leadership accused him of lying under oath.

Here's a look at five areas where the fighting could be the most heated - and where they could be headed.

### Waiting for Mueller

Mr Barr's Senate testimony on Wednesday may have prompted as many questions as it answered, raising to a fevered pitch Democratic calls to hear from Robert Mueller himself. They want to ask him why he failed to reach a conclusion on whether the president obstructed justice, and what he thinks about the attorney general's handling of his report. They'll also want to question him about the contacts between the Trump campaign team and Russians - and how close they may have come to being a criminal conspiracy.

Although Republican Senate Judiciary Chair Lindsey Graham says he has no interest in calling Mr Mueller before his committee - insisting that the matter is closed - House Democrats have other ideas. The chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Jerrold Nadler, said negotiations are continuing over finding a date, perhaps in May, when the special counsel can testify before his committee.

Mr Barr has said he has no objection to Mr Mueller making such an appearance and Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway also said that Mr Mueller - who is still, technically, a Justice Department employee - can testify. But increasing conflict between the White House and Congress could change this calculus.

**Outlook:** Mueller spent most of his time as special counsel shrouded in secrecy and silence. It seems unlikely, however, that he will be able to quietly disappear from the national stage.

### Eight new things in the Mueller report

#### Punishing Bill Barr

In a press conference on Thursday morning, Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi straight-up accused William Barr of committing a crime. She was specifically referring to the attorney general's claims, during congressional testimony in early April, that he was unaware of reports of dissatisfaction with his handling of the Mueller report expressed by members of the special counsel's office. Democrats now believe this was a lie - based on a recent revealed letter from Mr Mueller to Mr Barr complaining that the attorney general's four-page summary did not "fully capture the context, nature and substance" of his work.

Mr Barr countered that his communications were with Mr Muller himself, not his team, and the dissatisfaction had to do with the media coverage of his letter, not how he relayed Mr Mueller's findings. Democrats aren't buying it.

Then there are other reasons Democrats are angry at Mr Barr - such as his refusal to testify before the House Judiciary Committee and his decision to ignore congressional document subpoenas. What are Democrats going to do about it? Mrs Pelosi only made vague references to a "process", but they have several options if they want to punish the attorney general. They could make a criminal referral for lying to Congress, which would be forwarded to a US attorney in Mr Barr's Justice Department. They could hold Mr Barr in contempt of Congress, which would have to be enforced by US attorneys in the Trump administration.

The House of Representatives could also vote to formally censure the attorney general, putting a black mark on his record but not much more. Finally, they could try to impeach the attorney general and have him removed from office. The process would be similar to that for removing a US president - a majority vote in the House of Representatives followed by a trial in the US Senate requiring a two-thirds vote to "convict". Only one White House cabinet official has ever been impeached - Ulysses S Grant's Secretary of War William Belknap in 1876 - and he was ultimately acquitted of corruption charges by the Senate.

**Outlook:** Legal proceedings seem unlikely. Censorship appears pointless. Impeachment would be an uphill fight, but it could also serve as proxy battle for the impeaching Mr Trump himself.

**The McGahn subpoena** While Mr Mueller's appearance before the US Congress would be a blockbuster occasion, he's not the only individual Democrats want to question in open testimony. The special counsel's report detailed how former White House Counsel Don McGahn felt the president pressured him to fire Mr Mueller and, later, write a memo saying that Mr Trump issued no such directive. When Mr Barr was questioned about the matter by Senate Democrats, he said the president only suggested Mr Mueller be "replaced" because of a perceived conflict of interest - and then instructed Mr McGahn to write a memo to correct inaccurate media reports.

## ACS Athens S.T.E.A.M. experiment blasts off into Space!



How will Greek honey and olive oil behave under microgravity conditions? What about ouzo and grape juice molasses? Will bubbles grow bigger and last longer? ACS Athens students sealed their experiment within the capsule carried by the groundbreaking Blue Origin's New Shepard reusable rocket where it will tested at an altitude of 100 km!

ACS Athens High School students are conducting one complex S.T.E.A.M. experiment, investigating how honey behaves at an altitude of 100 km. ACS Athens is one of the three non-US-based K-12 schools to have ever sent an experiment with Blue Origin.

spACS 1 experiment investigates the viscosity of honey under microgravity conditions, which is a Physics-based experiment on fluidity. The honey is carried in a 3D-printed container designed, prototyped, and built by an ACS Athens student.

The investigating team, formed in late 2017, is international and consists of 14 students and six ACS Athens faculty members beginning with Dr. A Karampelas (Principal Investigator), Dr. L. Tsigaridi (co-Investigator), Dr. I. Kerkines, Dr. E. Prodromidi, Ms. V. Poulou, and Mr. S. Arsenikos.

The student-built electronics of the spACS 1 experiment consist of a microcomputer, temperature and humidity sensors, a motor, LED lights, and a camera. They have researched both the science and mathematics of fluidity and have been conducting extensive relevant experiments since the first phase of the project.

The rocket was successfully launched on Thursday, May 2nd, from Blue Origin's West Texas Facility and the launch was broadcasted live. This payload flew on-board Blue Origin's New Shepard space vehicle.

The New Shepard vertical



takeoff and vertical landing vehicle is capable of carrying hundreds of pounds of payloads per flight and will ultimately carry up to six astronauts to altitudes beyond 100 kilometers, also known as the Karman Line, the internationally-recognized boundary of space.

The investigating team was thrilled to watch the rocket launch and is looking forward to proceeding to the next phase of their experiment. "We have been working hard for months on this experiment. It Page 2 of 2

feels like a miracle to watch the successful launch live!" Qi L., a student member of the team, commented.

Dr. Antonis Karampelas congratulated the team and expressed his pride in their work. "This is the students' achievement; my role was to consult and support their work. We need to show trust to the students and provide them the opportunity to develop their talents. All students can learn!" he highlighted.

The container of the experiment will be returned to ACS Athens a few days after its successful landing so that the students can process and analyze the collected data. Stay tuned for more information!

Rocket Launch Photos Courtesy of Blue Origin.

The video of the launch is available by Blue Origin.

More information about the experiment available.

For more information about Blue Origin.

The team has presented the spACS experiment at the Athens Science Festival, 2019, April 6th.



TOMELLIS

# Does the prime minister agree with Mr Polakis?

It is truly very, very difficult for someone to understand what is going on in Alternate Health Minister Pavlos Polakis' head. The "proud" Cretan publicly embarrasses a man with disabilities with disturbing ease. The total lack of humanity – much less manners – is shocking. Such pettiness brings into question the moral compass of the Left.

Even when the minister brings to the fore real problems facing the Greek political system – often finding an audience among his voters and occasionally beyond them – his manner insults and appalls many in society at large, not just his committed adversaries. In the case of Stelios Kymbouropoulos, the wheelchair-bound New Democracy MEP candidate whom Polakis appeared to accuse of using his disability to get a job in the public sector, the minister crossed every line.

On a human level the attack was unacceptable to the point of vulgarity. But even if one were to examine the comment in purely political terms, it was a move that irritated the great majority of SYRIZA supporters, angered moderate voters and certainly alienated every undecided citizen. In other words, he hurt his party.

I will not go into Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras' attempt to take political advantage of the incident by turning it into a vote of confidence in his government after New Democracy said it would file a censure motion against the minister. Nor will I touch on the implications from the legal action threatened by the National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities, accusing Polakis of discrimination.

Instead I will focus on the saddest part of the incident, which is that the prime minister was not able to get past his personal relationship with Polakis and distance himself from the unfortunate comment.

People – at least those with a sane thinking – appreciate politicians who have the courage to recognize mistakes, either their own or those of their associates. Was it so difficult for Tsipras to say the obvious? The least he could have done was to admit publicly that his minister committed a faux pas, to distance himself from his comment and ask him to apologize.

He should have followed the example of former education minister Nikos Filis, who largely expressed the collective consciousness of his party. This is not the first time Filis has done so, and that behavior has won him, albeit tacitly, the recognition of many – not only like-minded people but also his opponents. And of course he was not alone. SYRIZA MEP Stelios Kouloglou even telephoned Kymbouropoulos.

Then there is the possibility that the prime minister agrees with Polakis' vulgar remark, which would be really sad. There are some things that simply must not be said or done. There are many opportunities for political confrontations, even with the arrogant manner that some have, but they do not and must not include speaking to a person like Polakis did to Kymbouropoulos.

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# GREEK NEWS

## AHEPA thanks Archbishop Demetrios on the occasion of his retirement



The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) has released a statement on the occasion of the retirement of Archbishop Demetrios of America.

Here's the full statement, by AHEPA Supreme President George E. Loucas:

"Since 1922, the Order of AHEPA has forged a strong relationship with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. This relationship has often been described as embodying 'The Twin Pillars of Hellenism' in America. For the last two decades, with the wisdom and guidance of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, AHEPA's relationship with the Archdiocese has grown even stronger.

"Since the moment of His Eminence's enthronement, he has walked side-by-side, hand-in-hand, with AHEPA family leaders at significant, even historical occasions for the community. His Eminence graciously and warmly received each newly-elected Supreme President for a private audience at the beginning of their respective terms.

"We cannot recall a major national AHEPA family event that His Eminence has missed-whether it was a Supreme Convention in Puerto Rico or Athens-or a Congressional Banquet in Washington. His Eminence also made it a priority to participate at events hosted by our junior auxiliaries, the Sons of Pericles and Maids of Athena, investing the time to learn about the activities, projects and programs of our young leaders.

"His Eminence has provided the AHEPA family with many special moments, including when he accompanied His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on their historic first-ever visitation to AHEPA Headquarters, in Washington, D.C., in November 2009. Or when he humbly revealed to our audience at the 2000 Congressional Banquet, where we honored our veterans, that he too, was a veteran. We will always cherish these moments.

"Moreover, we were all proud to see Archbishop Demetrios comforting our fellow citizens of all faiths, races, and backgrounds, helping them to heal from a devastating event in our nation's history on September 11, 2001. He offered prayers and blessed the ground where so many innocent persons lost their lives. The image of His Eminence blessing a soldier amid the rubble, debris, and destruction comes vividly to mind whenever we think of this time. He conducted memorial services and funerals for the victims, and he met with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders at an international conference convened by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to discuss the impact of September 11.

"Archbishop Demetrios has our sincere gratitude, appreciation, and love for his 20 years of untiring service to His Flock. He was an erudite Spiritual Leader. Our best wishes are with Archbishop Demetrios as he enters his well-deserved retirement."

## DBRS upgrades Greece's rating, but brings outlook down to Stable



Canada-based rating agency DBRS has upgraded Greece's credit rating to BB (low) from B (high), but has changed the country's outlook from Positive to Stable, citing the very high debt ratio and the huge volume of nonperforming exposures that remain in Greek banks' portfolios.

In its rating report published late on Friday DBRS noted that "Greece and the European institutions have successfully concluded the first and second Enhanced Surveillance monitoring reviews. The release of the first tranche of policy-contingent debt measures has been approved and a close to 1-billion-euro disbursement, including returning SMP/ANFA income, is pending."

DBRS expects the economy to grow by 2.3 percent this year, citing the official Finance Ministry estimate, from 1.9 percent in 2018. "We expect the fiscal target for 2018 to have been exceeded. Moreover, Greece has returned to debt capital markets," it adds to back its rating upgrade.

It also noted that its decision to change the trend from Positive to Stable reflects the likelihood that Greece will continue on its reform path including reducing banks' NPEs: "At the same time, the debt ratio remains at a very high level and achieving an appropriate fiscal mix, while at the same time delivering primary fiscal surpluses, remains a challenge in the medium term. In addition, NPEs are currently at a very high level, restricting banks' capacity to support the real economy," it warned.

DBRS further pointed out that Greek unemployment may have declined but remains the highest in the EU, and "the recent increase in the minimum wage by 10.9 percent, despite the positive impact that it could have on domestic demand and growth in the short term, could have negative implications for employment in the medium term."

The agency also considered that "the continuation of the reform effort and the safeguarding of the reforms that have already been adopted, will support Greece's ability to remain on a sustained growth path. In the longer term, the challenge of sustaining primary surplus over many years to meet debt service payments raises questions in the context of the high debt stock." On the political level DBRS remarked that "the latest opinion polls show that center-right New Democracy is leading by almost 10 percentage points," and that "the increased political stability observed over the last few years is likely to be maintained and we do not expect any policy reversals under a potential New Democracy-led government." It rated as positive the recent dissociation of a failed election for a Greek President in Parliament from the holding of a snap general election.

## Turkey is waiting for its next opportunity



ALEXIS PAPACHELAS

Both the current administration and the next will be called upon to manage Greek-Turkish relations at their most critical phase since the invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

What is developing before our eyes is a systematic strategy engineered by Turkey to bring into question the status quo in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean regions. All evidence points to a climax in tensions next autumn.

Turkey always waits for the right opportunity to promote its claims. In 1955, there was a power vacuum in Athens and Greece was on a collision course with Britain.

In 1964, Ankara tried to take advantage of an unstable political situation in Greece but it was thwarted by the United States. In 1967, Turkey took advantage of the junta's inexperience and isolation and got what it wanted in the withdrawal of Greek troops from Cyprus.

In 1974 they had the perfect opportunity and they pounced on it. In 1996, they openly raised the issue of "gray zones" in the Aegean Sea, knowing full well they had before them a new government that did not control anything and was deeply divided.

Turks are patient. They build up their arguments and their claims while waiting for the next opportunity. The aim is to drag Greece to the negotiating table under unfavorable conditions. It is quite likely that Ankara will attempt to cause a crisis and, through it, to force a debate on all the issues that it wants to raise.

It sees the instability and political weakness of the government. The international climate is also blurry and unclear. The military asymmetry in some areas is quite worrying. A positive element is that Greece, like Cyprus, has powerful allies. It remains to be seen, however, just how solid and effective these allies would be in the event of a crisis.

The only good thing is that the channels of communication between the government and the opposition are currently open and working. So far, Greek-Turkish relations have not been dragged into the fierce political confrontation.

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## Anarchists attack officers guarding ND event, smash cars



Self-styled anarchists clashed with police guarding an event in Athens where former conservative prime minister Antonis Samaras and other New Democracy lawmakers were in attendance.

A group of about 15 to 20 people exited from the campus of Panteion University on Wednesday afternoon, crossed Syngrou Avenue through the underpass and hurled firecrackers against the officers stationed outside the building on the other side.

According to reports, the car of MP Notis Mitarakis was among the three damaged in the attack.

“That is [PM Alexis] Tsipras' Greece for you,” Samaras said, leaving the event.

In a separate incident, a group of anti-establishment protesters held a rally and shouted slogans in favor of jailed terrorist Dimitris Koufodinas outside a building where New Democracy's MEP candidate Vangelis Meimarakis was speaking.

A large police force kept protesters away from the venue where the event was being held.

## Pentagon warns it may drop Turkey from F-35 program over Russian S-400



The Pentagon may halt manufacturing support for the F-35 fighter jet in Turkey if Ankara insists on purchasing the Russian S-400 missile defense system, US Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said on Friday, according to Agence France-Presse.


“If Turkey decides that the S-400 is a decision they want to go forward with, then we have to move work out of Turkey,” Shanahan was quoted as saying, adding that Washington remains steadfast in its opposition to Turkey's adoption of the anti-aircraft technology.

Shanahan confirmed he had met with Lockheed Martin and United Technologies Corp last week. Lockheed is the prime contractor on the jet, while United Technologies makes the jet's engine.

“I want airtight plans that have near-zero execution risk so we can flawlessly deliver on all the other F-35s to our other customers,” Shanahan said, according to Reuters.

Reuters reported earlier this year that Washington was exploring whether it can remove Turkey from production of the stealth fighter jet, in reaction to Ankara's refusal to back down from its planned purchase of the Russian missile system, which is seen as a threat to western defense. [Combined reports]

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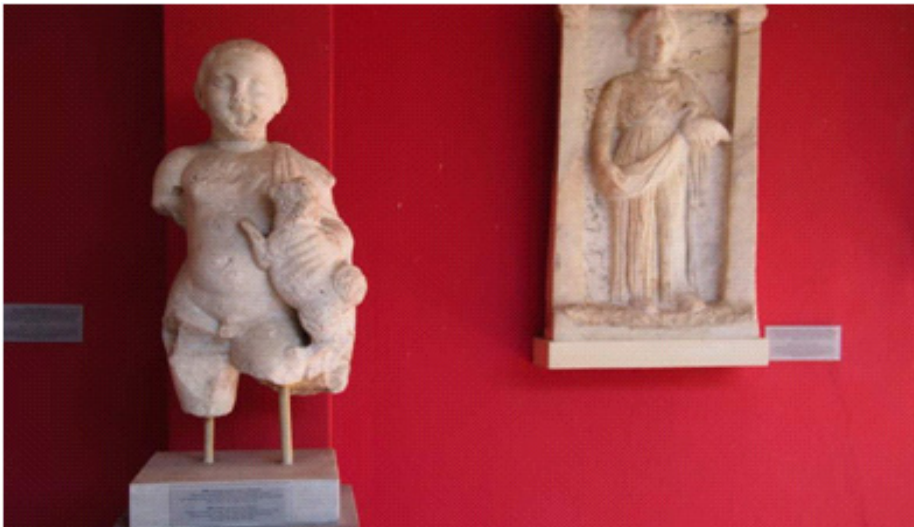
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## Divine symbols and adored pets in ancient Greece

JOHN LEONARD



A boy and his dog, late 1st c. BC/early 1st c. AD;

From cats and dogs to singing insects and drunken parrots, the ancient Greeks and Romans shared a deep and intimate connection with the animal kingdom.

Rabbits, dogs, snakes and birds... Everywhere we look in the archaeological and literary records of the classical world, it seems we find animals of almost every variety. Clearly, animals in ancient times featured commonly in people's daily experiences, in popular storytelling and in mythological beliefs; their likenesses appear in vase paintings, frescoes, mosaics, stone sculptures and ceramic figurines, as well as on utilitarian or decorative objects of intricately carved ivory or hammered gold. Living in an age prior to mechanization, much of the ancient Greek and Roman populations resided in rural areas outside cities, so they had more regular contact and firsthand familiarity with animals than most of us do today.

Even in urban settings, humans and their animals tended to share space and live more closely together than we might find comfortable today. Livestock, including calves, sheep, goats and pigs, were used for pious sacrifices. Lions, tigers, bears and other wild creatures became the focus of popular and elite entertainment; either hunted in nature or captured and pitted against each other – or human combatants – in bloody arena contests.

Horses and other draft or pack animals labored on farms, but in wartime they were called up for duty on the battlefield, occasionally serving alongside elephants. At all levels of society, animals played key roles in public, religious and military life. However, it's plain to see in ancient art and literature that the closest bond was felt in the home, between masters or mistresses and their domestic pets.

### Household companions

Within the home and garden, the range of animals kept as pets was almost boundless, including dogs, ducks, geese, caged birds, rabbits, hares, tortoises, goats, quail and mice. Snakes had chthonic (underworld), spiritual significance, but were also employed – along with cats, ferrets or weasels – to keep rodents at bay. Chirping insects were treated like songbirds, with children weaving small boxes from reeds or slender branches to accommodate their pet locusts, crickets and cicadas. Boys seeking amusement are reported by a scholar writing on Aristophanes' "Wasps" to have caught large beetles and tethered them with a thread tied to one leg – a practice also seen in red-figure vase paintings.

Religious reverence may have played a part in the selection of pets, as certain animals were symbolic of a particular god or goddess. Sacred to Apollo and Artemis, for example, was the quail (ortyx) – likely a common sight at the divine twins' central-Cycladic sanctuary on Delos, originally known as Ortygia or "Quail Island." Pindar (5th century BC) and later mythographers relate that Asterie, sister of Leto (who bore the twins on Delos), escaped from Zeus' advances by transforming herself into a quail, dropping into the Aegean Sea, then rising again as an island. Quails thus possessed a divine spirit and were coveted for their pleasing voices and colorful plumage. Far wilder pets are known from the Roman era, when the emperors Domitian and Caracalla kept lions in their palaces. Caracalla's beloved companion, Acinaces, ate with him at table and slept in his master's chamber.

### Raising the alarm

Household security was always a concern in antiquity. Canines were common gatekeepers – as mosaic thresholds in Pompeii reveal with their inscriptions "Cave canem" (Beware of the dog). Geese, a favorite pet of Penelope, could similarly serve a protective purpose. Caged birds, too, might alert homeowners to visitors, but were more often kept for their cheerful chirping. Talking green parrots, popular in Rome's affluent homes, are described by Pliny as imports from India and "especially frolicsome under the influence of wine." Even more ostentatious and expensive were pet peacocks, ridiculed alike by Greek comedic playwrights and Roman moralists.

### A faithful friend

Above all, pets provided comforting companionship, best displayed by the loyal dog. Ancient Greece's most illustrious hound was probably faithful Argos, who patiently awaited Odysseus' return from Troy, and then, after their reunion, died contentedly. Among valued canine breeds were Molossian, Laconian and Cretan guard dogs and the ubiquitous Melitan lap dog from Malta. The swineherd Eumaeus likely kept Molossians, as did nouveau riche Trimalchio, whose enormous beast Scylax, according to the Roman writer Petronius, caused a furious fracas during a banquet – attacking a smaller dog, upsetting a table lamp, smashing all the wine cups and sprinkling the guests with hot oil. Less ferocious was Publius' little Issa, extolled by Martial: "More pure than the kiss of a dove... more loving than any maiden... dearer than Indian gems... She lies reclined upon his neck, and sleeps... and has never sullied the coverlet with a single spot..."

This article first appeared in Greece Is ([www.greece-is.com](http://www.greece-is.com)), a Kathimerini publishing initiative.

## Erdogan's Turkey at a crossroads



A boy holds up a toy sword during the opening ceremony of Grand Camlica Mosque in Istanbul.

ISTANBUL – "Our country is finally blessed with a period of four-and-a-half years without electoral disputes," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan trumpeted some two weeks ago, addressing a crowd of public servants in Ankara. "It is now time to leave all tensions behind, embrace our opponents and focus on the challenges for the economy, security and stability of our country," he added, before the assembled crowd broke out in ceremonial applause.

Two days later and just a few kilometres away from where the Turkish president's podium had been standing, the leader of the country's biggest opposition party, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, came under a barrage of vicious punches from a nationalist mob, during the funeral of a soldier who fell in a battle against Kurdish paramilitary forces.

For weeks now, Turkey has been oscillating between two parallel realities: a disputed electoral period which gifted the country's biggest urban centers to the opposition – though they remain decked out with posters congratulating the government's candidates – and a lengthy period of presumed political stability, during which the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) promises to complete its vision of justice and development.

Against this backdrop of contrasts, a group of Greek journalists was invited to the neighboring country by the recently revamped Communications Directorate of the Turkish Presidency. It was a largely diplomatic, reconciliatory trip, aimed to promote mutual understanding through debate and interaction. At the same time, with scheduled visits to pro-government media – including state-run TRT World and Daily Sabah, owned by one of the president's closest allies – as well as the Presidential Communications Directorate, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Turkey's largest think-tank, SETA, the visit offered a hint of the Turkish government's narrative and views on the country and its place in the world.

Turkey's perception of its relations with the West – a hot-button issue amid tensions with the United States over the purchase of Russian S-400s – was aptly summarized by the selection of books we were given by SETA's researchers, after a lively debate. One was on the benefits of executive governance in Turkey's new presidential system, another on the Turkish strategy for reconstruction in Syria and a third on the rise of the Turkish defense industry: all signs of a country tackling the international arena with ambition and extroversion. In contrast, the publications regarding the West carried significantly more skepticism, with titles such as "Violent radicalization and extremism in Europe" and the annual "Islamophobia report." Turkey's disappointment with Europe's stance in accession negotiations was evident – despite the fact that a TRT World journalist asserted that Turkey has little to gain from joining the Union, unlike Europe itself.

When it came to Turkey's relationship with Greece, the picture was more amicably painted. The representatives of the president's Communications Directorate spoke warmly of the recent visit by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, expressing optimism about booming trade relations and security compromises between the two countries. The tone shifted when the issue of the eight officers who fled to Greece on the night of the failed coup of 2016 came up. "Greece is transforming itself into a magnet for Gulen's dangerous terrorists," was the message repeatedly conveyed by Turkish representatives, who also underlined their disappointment that Greece and the West for not supporting "Turkey's fight against the perils of terrorism of exiled cleric Fethullah Gulen and the Kurdistan Workers' Party."

Terrorism surfaced again multiple times, as a line of defense, when Turkish officials and journalists were questioned about the country's abysmal record in free expression – after all, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Turkey sits at the top of the list of countries with the most journalists behind prison bars, with a significant difference over China at second place. "If a New York Times journalist collaborated with the Islamic State, would he not be imprisoned?" was the candid response by one of the journalists of the Daily Sabah. Coincidentally, two days before our meeting at the paper's headquarters, Turkish police invaded the house of renowned economist Mustafa Sonmez and detained him briefly for a series of tweets criticizing the country's economy that were seen as offensive to the Turkish president.

When, 17 years ago, AKP was ushered into the top seat of Turkish politics, voters responded to its pledges for justice – for the country's forgotten pious Muslims – and, most importantly, economic development. The mammoth new Istanbul airport, the magnificent Camlica Mosque and the redevelopment of Taksim Square are all megaprojects aimed at demonstrating the strength of the Turkish economy – yet they remain largely half-finished. Meanwhile, this past week, the Turkish lira hit a six-month low. The Turkish president indeed faces a period of four-and-a-half years without electoral strife.