Greeks and Arabs: The Orthodox Community of Jerusalem

Merav Mack, CRFJ, 7 May 2014

Open-Jerusalem Project
The Archives:

1. The Tribunal Court Archive
2. The office of the Orthodox Muchtar, at St. Jacob’s Church (Mar Ya’kub).
The Sources:

1. A notebook containing 170 records of Marriage Certificate (transcribed and translated from Greek by Gabriel Haritos), 1918-1926

2. Book containing 511 copies of baptism records or confirmation in Greek (transcribed and translated by Dr. Angelos Dalachanis), 1928-1959.

3. c. 1825 baptism records in Arabic (transcribed and translated from Arabic by...
170 Marriage Certificates
1918-1926
511 copies of baptism records in Greek
1825 baptism records in Arabic,
1928-1945
What can we learn from these sources about the Greek (and Arab) Orthodox community of Jerusalem?
Key issues:

- The impact of the transition from the Ottoman to the British Empire
- The impact of modernity (i.e. education, employment, gender relations, cross communal relations, secularisation)
- Change of spatial and geographical notions: locality vs. regional vs. imperial boundaries
- Orthodox sphere and the level of mixture between the Greek and Arab communities of Jerusalem
Marriage certificates and the composition of the lay community

- Greeks: 31%
- Arabs: 46%
- Mixed: 11%
- Other: 12%

Diagram: Pie chart showing the distribution of ethnic groups.
Prosopography:
Change in naming patterns

- From Ya’kub to Ilias
- From Jiris to George
- From Maryam to Maria
- New female names: Victoria, Alexandra and Julia
Why did so many people get married between 1920 and 1921?
What explains the drop thereafter?

Total weddings by year (1918-1926)
Marriage Age:

Average marriage age: 20.748

Average age: 30.767
Female professions

- **Deceased**: groom mothers (37%) brides mothers (24.5%) = (the grooms are 10 years older and so are their mothers)

- **Housewives**:
  - brides’ mothers 74% (the rest are deceased)
  - Brides 94%
  - Brides’ best women: 74% (the rest are mostly students (15%) and 5% are working in education

The brides’ παρανυμφή (best women) are the most interesting layer where we detect change (age unknown)
Female professions

- Tailors  9
- Nurses   2
- Maids    1
- Secretary 3
- Pupils   24
- Student  1
- Teachers 12
Male Professions

1. accountant
2. architect
3. baker
4. barber
5. blacksmith
6. bread baker
7. baker: Bread beating
8. British government office employee
9. businessman
10. businessman and landowner
11. butcher
12. Candle maker
13. merchant: candle vendor
14. car driver
15. car owner
16. carpenter
17. chief secretary of the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem
18. church chanter
19. coffee maker
20. coffee shop owner
21. merchant: coffee vendor
22. commissioner for the Tul Karem Head of District
23. contractor
24. cook
25. court employee
26. Court translator
27. dentist
28. director at a mechanical factory
29. director at the flour mill
30. Director - Government School in (Beit-Jallah)
31. Director - railway station in Wadi Sarar
32. director - telephone (or maybe public announcement) department at the railway station
33. doctor
34. education inspector
35. electrician
36. employee
37. employee at steamboat company
38. employee at the Ottoman Bank
39. engineer
40. farmer
41. food curator at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate
42. gardener
43. glass mason
44. goldsmith
75. officer
76. officer at the Patriarchate
77. painter
78. painter (artist) ζωγραφος
79. Pâtissier
80. pharmacist
81. photographer
82. plate manufacturer
83. police corporal
84. police officer
Professions analysis

• The Orthodox community was NOT living on charity
• There is only ONE unemployed person (and another mute)
• Inner hierarchies of professions (by the registrar)
• “new” professions cf “traditional” professions (how should we define these?)
Inner –hierarchies within the professions:

- **Bakers**: baker, bread baker, sweets baker (pâtissier)
- **Merchants** are almost always specified: meat, coffee, worry beads (koboloi), clothes, drinks, tobacco
- **Masons**: there is marble mason, stonemason, slab manufacturer (plate manufacturer?) (glass mason)
- **Directors** – a flour mill, (governmental) school, a railway station, a prison
High Education

- doctors, architects, dentists, pharmacist,
- School director
- Engineers
- Court translator?
- Accountants
- Regional commissioners
New technology and the notion of modernity:

- Drivers, mechanics, vehicle owner (what was the social status of vehicle engineers?)

New professions for Christians:

- Army, police and the navy: since when were Christian allowed to be officers?
“new” professions

1. accountant
2. architect
3. British government office employee
4. car driver
5. car owner
6. chief secretary of the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem
7. commissioner for the Tul Karem Head of District
8. education inspector
9. electrician
10. employee at steamboat company
11. employee at the Ottoman Bank
12. engineer
13. gardener (?)