

S. E. Tsitsonis

THE EARL OF GUILFORD'S INTEREST IN THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND HIGHER EDUCATION OF GREECE ACCORDING TO A PART OF HIS UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE OF THE YEAR 1827

These copies of five of Guilford's unpublished letters and extracts from letters lie in the Department of Manuscripts of the Gennadeion Library in Athens.¹ They were sent to General Church,² to the British Ambassador to Constantinople, Stratford Canning, and to two of his friends, Captain Rowan Hamilton³ and James Robertson⁴ respectively.

Lord Guilford, the famous British philhellene, who founded the Ionian

1. Frederic North, Earl of Guilford, copies of his letters, the Gennadeion MSS 108.

2. Early in March, 1827, Sir Richard Church sailed from Leghorn and on March 13th he landed near Hermione and was received by the renowned Greek General Theodore Kolokotronis and Captain Hamilton of HMS *Cambrian*, an ardent philhellene. Church enjoyed the reputation of a born soldier and General Gordon agreed to conduct operations in Greece until Church arrived. Yet Church was to prove a poor substitute for the experienced Gordon whom he supplanted.

Church's philhellenism was beyond any doubt, as proven also by a letter written by him to George Canning, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, on January 8th, 1827. In this letter Church expressed his conviction that the Greeks would obtain their freedom, and congratulated Canning on his efforts to help emancipate them. Church accepted his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Greek land forces on condition that the internecine feuds cease. (see Ferriman, Z. D., *Some English Philhellenes, Sir Richard Church* (London, 1919), pp. 111, 136. Grimble, I., *The Sea-Wolf, The Life of Admiral Cochrane* (London, 1978), p. 299).

A long time before coming to Greece, Church was in communication with Lord Guilford, Lord Exmouth, George Canning and other influential philhellenes. At that time the Greeks whom he was to lead were already divided into two Assemblies quarreling almost to civil war while they were threatened with extermination by the Turks. Missolonghi had fallen and the Egyptian army ravaged the Morea. These two distinct Assemblies, each styling itself the National Assembly, were sitting, one at Aegina and the other at Hermione. The former under President Notaras advocated moderate measures, the latter under Theodore Kolokotronis was turbulent and militant. Both of them hampered the efforts of the President of the provisional government, Zaemes, who tried to reconcile them. Church mediated successfully between them. He smoothed away their differences and rapidly united them in an combined Assembly which met at Troezen. This Assembly appointed John Capodistrias President of Greece, Lord Cochrane High Admiral, and Sir Richard Church Commander-in-Chief of the land forces. [see Church, E.M., *Chapters in an Adventurous Life: Sir Richard Church in Italy and Greece* (Edinburgh and London, 1895), pp. 309-316]. Lane-Poole, S., *Sir Richard Church, Commander-in-Chief of the Greeks in the War of Independence* (London, 1890), pp. 48-49.

3. Rowan Hamilton, the staunch Scotch-Irish philhellene Captain of HMS *Cambrian*, is included in Makriyannis's list of Philhellenes (for more about Hamilton see Woodhouse, C.M., *The Philhellenes* (London, 1969), pp. 64, 71, 120, 126, 135, 152, 164-165).

4. James Robertson was also a philhellene, secretary to General Gordon [see Dakin, D., *British and American Philhellenes During the War of Greek Independence* (Thessaloniki, 1955), pp. 28-29].

Academy in Corfu in 1824 and financed and supported it until his death in October 1827, demonstrated a vivid interest in the political affairs and educational developments of Greece.⁵ This interest was strikingly depicted in his correspondence with General Church, Stratford Canning, Captain Rowan Hamilton and James Robertson. Thus in the first letter, published here, dated 15th March 1827, addressed to General Church, Guilford expressed his anxiety about the civil strife between the two political factions in Greece and wished that an end might be put to it the soonest possible through General Church's mediation.⁶ But above all, Guilford wished that the Greeks should be persuaded to accept a form of government, arranged in Constantinople, which would secure for them efficient internal independence, even if they would have to pay a sort of tribute to the Porte. In this way the Sultan might be satisfied and stop further hostilities against the Greeks, as war against them might also lead to an increase of the power of some rebellious Pashaws who would take advantage of the situation to place the finances of Greece in their pockets. Besides, Guilford asserted that it would not be a disgrace for a new and weak State such as Greece would be in the future, to yield some kind of respect to the old Ottoman Empire, as the Porte would be flattered and appeased in this way.

It should also be remembered that up to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, when the Ottoman Empire was much stronger, Moldavia and Wallachia had achieved almost complete internal independence by paying tribute to the Porte. Later on, the Porte began to appoint her ex-Dragomans governors of these provinces of the Ottoman Empire, while they retained a considerable measure of internal independence until they were fully subjugated to the Porte, due to the fact that they were often the battlefields in the wars between the Ottoman Empire and other powers, such as Russia, Hungary and Poland.⁷

5. On Guilford's life and activities in Corfu, his visits to Greece and relations with various Greeks see Anonymous, «Περὶ τοῦ λόρδου Γκυίλφορδ», *Πανδώρα* IV (undated), 279-280. Papadopoulos-Vretos, A., *Βιογραφικά ιστορικά υπομνήματα περὶ τοῦ κόμητος Φριδερίχου Γκυίλφορδ* (Athens, 1846). Balanos, S.K., *Ὁ κόμης Γκυίλφορδ. Διατριβὴ ἀναγνωσθεῖσα κατὰ τὴν συνεδρίασιν τῆς 4 Δεκεμβρίου ἐν τῷ Παρνασσῷ* (Athens, 1890). Ferriman, Z.D., *Lord Guilford. The Anglo-Hellenic League* (London, 1919), VI, 75-109. Marshall, F. H., «Lord Guilford and Greece», *The Link*, I (1938), 37-47. Diamantis, K.A., «Ἡ Ἰόνιος Ακαδημία τοῦ κόμητος Γκυίλφορδ», *Ἑλληνικὴ Δημιουργία*, I (1948), 725-741. Salvanos, G. I. and Salvanos, B.G., «Ἡ Ἰόνιος Ακαδημία, ὁ ἰδρυτὴς αὐτῆς κόμης Γύλφορδ, οἱ καθηγηταὶ καὶ σπουδασταὶ αὐτῆς», *Ἑλληνικὴ Δημιουργία*, 30 (1949), 763-801. Spatalas, G., «Φρειδερίκος Γκυίλφορδ», *Ἑλληνικὴ Δημιουργία*, I (1949), 747-751. Dakin, *op. cit.*, 6, 27, 73, 83, 99-100, 143, 156, 160. Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 18-19, 35, 63, 69-70, 81, 97, 116, 128, 142.

6. Church soon smoothed out the differences between the two Greek factions and reconciled them.

7. On the Porte's policy towards Moldavia and Wallachia during this time see Cazza, J. L., *Histoire de la Moldavie et de la Valachie* (Neuchatel, 1781), pp. 32-124. Regnault, E., *Histoire*

The situation of Greece, however, was different, Guilford wrote, as Turkey was her only neighbour by land and the Greek state would not be threatened by a possible invasion of Turkish troops, as she had no other limitrophous neighbour that might attack her, thus causing the intervention of the Porte or the assemblage of a Turkish army on her frontier. Besides, the internal independence of Greece would be guaranteed by Great Britain, France and Russia, who were then conducting negotiations among themselves on the issue of the establishment of a Greek State.⁸

Guildford went on to write that the Ottoman Empire governed her subject peoples tyrannically, but she would not be a bad neighbour, as already proven by her policy towards the Republic of Ragusa, which had been one of her tributary, internally independent States.⁹ Ragusa had managed to be on good terms with the Porte by ceding a small part of her territory to the Ottoman Empire at the Peace of Passarowitz,¹⁰ thus ceasing to be limitrophous with the Republic of Venice.

What worried Guilford at present was that, according to information he had received, Lord Cochrane had received a tempting invitation from the Order of St. John of Jerusalem to fly their flag, abandoning the Greek cause.¹¹ He tended to believe, however, that this piece of information was not true, that hostilities between the Greeks and the Turks would cease and peace would be concluded between them. Continuing his letter Guilford advises Church

Politique et Sociale des Principautés Danubiennes (Paris, 1855), pp. 57-79, and Seton-Watson, R.W., *A History of the Roumanians* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 50-101.

8. Finally Great Britain, France and Russia concluded the Treaty of London early in July 1827, whereby Greece was established as an autonomous, though tributary State under Turkish suzerainty.

9. About the Republic of Ragusa during the Hungarian and Turkish suzerainty over her see: Villari, L., *The Republic of Ragusa* (London, 1904), pp. 163-305. About the political and economic developments in Ragusa from the late seventeenth century to her fall see: Bijelovic, H., *The Ragusan Republic. Victim of Napoleon and Its Own Conservatism* (Leiden, 1940), pp. 18-138, and Celcio, G., *Dello Sviluppo Civile di Ragusa* (Ragusa, 1884). Bibliography on the Republic of Ragusa, see in Iorga, N., *L' Histoire et les Historiens de Raguse* (Extrait, Mélanges offerts à M. Resetar, 1931).

10. On the cession of a small part of the territory of Ragusa to the Porte according to the peace of Passarowitz, concluded on July 21, 1718 between Austria and the Porte see: Noradoughian, G., *Recueil d' Actes Internationaux de l' Empire Ottoman* (tomes 1-4, Leipzig, 1897), I, 216-217.

11. Late in 1826 Cochrane had received another tempting invitation from the knights of Malta to fly their flag. Thus Guilford had some reason to fear that Cochrane might abandon the Greeks. Besides, General Gordon suspected Cochrane of dawdling at a time of critical urgency and of behaving frivolously. It seems, however, that Gordon exaggerated, as Cochrane's objective was to unite the Greeks and his influence over them was so strong that faction for a moment was silenced. Cochrane used his influence to compel the two contending Greek parties to cease their disputes and join together in the common cause. He also played a decisive role in the election of Capodistrias as President of Greece (see Grimble, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-297, 300, 310).

to get in touch with Spiro Tricupi, of whom he thought very highly and whose character and abilities he extolled.¹²

With regard to higher education in the future independent Greek State, Guilford thought that the Greeks would not be settled enough for some time to establish a well-organized university. Thus they should send their sons to the Ionian Academy as long as the government of the Ionian Islands, and especially the British High Commissioner there, agreed to its proper functioning.¹³ Otherwise Guilford feared that the Greeks would not know where to send their sons to be properly educated, as they would find it difficult to establish a good system of education and a proper establishment of Higher Education.¹⁴

Concluding this letter, Guilford referred to the successful exertions of an obscure captain, probably a philhellene, by the name of McHail, at Cerigo, of which he had been informed by Church and which he valued highly.

In an extract from a second letter published here, sent by Guilford to

12. Spiro Tricupi had been acquainted with Lord Guilford when he was about 20 years old at the home of the British Consul in Patras. Guilford appreciated his character, intelligence and abilities and later on he granted him a scholarship to follow higher studies at the Universities of Rome and Paris. When Tricupi completed his studies Guilford made him his private secretary. Through Guilford Tricupi became acquainted with some outstanding British statesmen and politicians and probably with George Canning, the future Prime Minister of Great Britain. It was Guilford's intention to appoint Tricupi professor or supervisor at the Ionian Academy.

During the Spring of 1827 while Zaemes and many of Tricupi's friends were involved in political disputes, Tricupi tried to reconcile the contending factions and unite them in the common cause. Even the historian Finlay, who has prejudiced against the Greeks, wrote that Tricupi served his country very well. Indeed Tricupi's efforts were crowned with success as he greatly contributed towards the reconciliation between the two contending Greek factions [see Protopsaltis, E.G., «Σπιριδων Τρικούπης», *Νέα Εστία*, 47 (1973), 122-140 and Goudas, A.N., *Βίοι Παράλληλοι. Πολιτικοί Άνδρες* (vol. VII, Athens, 1875), pp. 165-202].

13. Despite what Guilford wrote in this letter, he intended to transplant the Ionian Academy to Greece along with its professors, students and scientific instruments. But his death in October 1827 put an end to that plan. [see Diamantis, K. A. *Η Ιόνιος Ακαδημία του κόμητος Γκίλφορντ* (Athens, 1949), p. 14].

The Ionian Academy continued functioning after Guilford's death, but it decayed gradually. The Ionian government stopped paying its professors and staff and no scholarships were granted to students any more. Soon its School of Medicine was abolished and some of its professors were dismissed. Thus in the last three years before the union of the Seven Islands with Greece the Ionian Academy was an institution of higher learning in name only [see Balanos, S. K., *Ο Κόμης Γκίλφορντ. Διατριβή* (Athens, 1890), p. 13].

14. Guilford was wrong about the difficulties for the establishment of a university in Greece, as ten years after this letter was written the first Greek university was established in Athens [on the establishment and organization of the University of Athens in 1837 see Evangelides, T.E., *Ιστορία του Όθωνος. Βασιλείως της Ελλάδας, 1832-62* (Athens, 1893), pp. 148-152]. See also *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους* (Vol. XIII, Modern Greece from 1833 to 1881), pp. 69-70 and 462-63]. Nevertheless, the Ionian Academy became the nucleus of the first Greek university, as many of its professors came and taught at the University of Athens (see Diamantis. *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16).

Stratford Canning,¹⁵ British Ambassador to Constantinople, on March 20th 1827 Guilford urged him to do his best so that peace could be concluded as soon as possible between the Porte and the Greeks. Among other reasons for the speedy conclusion of a peace treaty, as Guilford wrote, was his eagerness to know whether the future independent Greek State would be able to establish a university. His interest in the education of the Greeks was vividly demonstrated here, as he stressed that should the government of the Ionian Islands, which was undoubtedly dominated by the British High Commissioner, give him the means he would do his best to provide Greek students who would study in the Ionian Academy with the best possible education. Otherwise he would try to help the Greeks establish their own university.¹⁶

In the same spirit Guilford wrote to another philhellene, Captain Rowan Hamilton, on March 22nd, 1827, expressing his satisfaction at the development and progress of the Ionian Academy and cherishing the hope that many more students from Greece would come to attend its courses as soon as peace was concluded between the Porte and the Greeks.

In another letter to Sir Richard Church, dated April 9th 1827, Guilford seemed to be enthusiastic over the reconciliation between the two contending Greek parties, effected through the joint efforts of Church and Cochrane,¹⁷ and expressed his conviction that this reconciliation was more valuable for the Greek cause than any victory Church might gain by land or Cochrane by sea. Guilford also referred to Spiro Tricupi again in this letter, praising him highly and expressing his hope that Tricupi would be very useful to his country. Furthermore, Guilford revealed to Church that he had written to Tricupi advising him to avoid getting involved in political disputes.¹⁸ Undoubtedly Guilford realized that political disputes would inevitably arise in an independent Greek State, as in all other States, but he hoped that such disputes would not become an obstacle to the proper functioning that he was to visit the other Ionian islands and asking Church to continue to write to him as often as he could.

15. Stratford Canning was also a philhellene. He had been a friend of Sir Richard Church and a colleague of Capodistrias in Switzerland. He encouraged the Greeks openly while he was on his way to Constantinople as British Ambassador for the first time (see Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, p. 153).

16. Neither of Guilford's dreams was fulfilled, as in October 1827 he died, and his Ionian Academy decayed gradually and stopped functioning (see Balanos, *op. cit.*, p. 13).

17. About this great success effected through the strenuous efforts of both Church and Cochrane see Church, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-16. Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49. Grimble, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

18. Apparently Tricupi did not need Guilford's exhortations to keep out of party disputes as he had already made it clear by his mediation between the two contending parties that he considered unity absolutely necessary for the success of the Greek cause (see Protopsaltis, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-140).

Finally, in an extract from a letter written by Guilford to James Robertson, dated April 9th, 1827, his vivid interest in the political affairs of Greece was made evident again. In this letter Guilford rejoiced at the raising of the siege of Athens, Cochrane's successful operations, Church's gathering an army of twenty thousand Greeks, and above all, at the reconciliation of the disputing parties in Greece.

UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

1*

(Guilford to Church, March 15, 1827, Gennadeion MSS 108)

Corfu, 15th March, 1827.

My dear Church,

I received your letter of 2nd March very lately and will send its inclosures by the first opportunity. Your good intentions of reconciling parties will be of more use, if they succeed, than the most brilliant military achievements. Above all things it appears to me desirable that you should persuade them to consent to any form of Government arranged for them at Constantinople, which could secure their efficient internal independence. A tribute of some value paid directly into the Hasné of the Grand Signior will prove of the greatest advantage to the Greeks; as it will be a great inducement to Him not to hazard expensive and dangerous wars for the purpose of placing the finances of Greece in the pockets of two or three rebellious Pashaws. Exterior forms of respect to an old established Imperial throne, like that of Constantinople, may be yielded, without disgrace, by so new and confined a Power as that of Greece must be; and no Power is so easily kept in good humour or at least out of war, as one whose pretensions exceed its strength, in the proportion of those of the Porte. The Porte is certainly much weaker than she was one hundred and fifty years ago, when she began to place Her Ex-Dragnans on the thrones of Moldavia and Vallachia. Till that time, both those provinces paid a paid «considerable tribute, indeed, but were completely independent in their interior governments and the influence of the Porte in the election of their Hospodars was, like that of Hungary, Poland, Russia and the Cossachs, with which Powers she was alternately in Alliance or in war, of which those provinces were the theatre. That system brought on the entire subjugation of those provinces to the Porte. The situation of

* No corrections or changes have been made to the spelling and punctuation of the manuscripts published in this work.

Greece is different. Greece has no Neighbours by land except the Porte, disputes with whom might justify the entrance of Turkish Troops into her territory, or a great assemblage of them on her frontier. Any circumstance of that kind must be levelled at the independence of Greece and the Country would be armed in a moment. The Great Powers which negotiate the arrangement will, virtually at least, guarantee it when made. The Greeks have only to remain within bounds, and they are sure of support. The Turks, tho' execrable Masters, are not bad Neighbours, as was proved by the wise Republic of Ragusa, during her long independent, tho' tributary existence. She gave up a small slip of her territory to the Porte at the Peace of Passarowitz, that she might not be limitrophous with the Republic of Venice. I am, therefore, very sorry to hear that some of your principal people and particularly Lord C. are said to have engagements with the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which are incompatible with the accomplishment of peace. I hope that these reports are not true, and that peace will be made and agreed to, as generally as anything can be general where there are always eleven Captains among ten individuals.

Pray write to me when anything is settled. You will, I am sure, find Tricupi of great use. He has extraordinary abilities and an excellent character. If the Greeks should find themselves sufficiently settled to think of learning, they will still find it difficult for some time to establish a good University and had better send their sons to us here, in case this Government consents to keep up this University on a proper footing, otherwise we cannot promise to be of use to them and they will have a new cause of embarrassment and quarrel in forming a plan of education as well as an Establishment for it.

I am very glad that you were so much pleased at the exertions of Captain Mac/hail at Cerigo. I assure you that I value them highly, and that I should be most happy to visit that island.

*Addieu, my dear Church. Believe me with the greatest truth,
ever your's affectionately
(signed) Guilford*

*Lusignan is going to
England for his health.*

2.

(Guilford to Canning, March 20, 1827, Gennadeion MSS 108)

Corfu, 20th March, 1827

.....

 Pray settle your Peace as soon as you can, for many good reasons, but among others, that I may know as soon as possible, whether the Greeks will form a University of their own, or send their Youth to study here. If this Government will give me the means, I will do what I can to have a University here equal to all their wants. If not, I must do what I can to help my Neighbours in forming one.

.....

 Your affectionate humble servant
 (signed) Guilford

3

(Guilford to Hamilton, March 22, 1827, Gennadeion MSS 108)

Corfu, 22nd March, 1827

My Dear Captain Hamilton

.....

 This University is going on admirably and I hope that we shall have a good many more scholars from continental Greece as soon as peace is made, which I trust will be soon.

4

(Guilford to Church, April 9, 1827, Gennadeion MSS 108)

Corfu, 9 April 1827

My dear friend,

I am delighted to hear that you and Lord Cochrane have reconciled the discordant parties, and made agree to unite at Poros. No victory which you may gain by land, or he by sea, would be of so much use to the Greek cause. I sent a letter to you (or rather Lusignan sent it) which came from Italy and I

will continue to send all that arrive, if possible to Napoli di Romania, or wherever you may be if not to Zant, to be forwarded to you. Lusignan is gone to Ancona and will proceed thence to England. I hope that my dear little Spiro Tricupi will be of use to his country. He has great talents and excellent principles. I have written to exhort him not to get into party disputes, which, indeed, it is difficult for him to avoid circumstanced as he is. There must be some political dispute in Greece, as in every free Government, but they ought not to prevent essential cooperation and separation of legitimate authorities. Adieu, my dear Church. I must conclude as the ship which carries this is on the point of sailing. I have no time to write even to Spiro Tricupi. Pray write to me as often as you can. I am going to the other islands in a day or two and shall be absent from Corfu for a month. I will give orders about the forwarding of your Letters to you during my absence.

Believe me ever yours most affectionately

(Signed) Guilford

5

(Guilford to Robertson, April 9, 1827, Gennadeion MSS 108)

Corfu, 9 April 1827

My dear Robertson

.....

The affairs of the Greeks are, I hope, taking a favourable turn. The siege of Athens is raised. Lord Cochrane is arrived, and has gone on a secret expedition with a pretty little fleet; and my friend Sir R. Church is said to have twenty thousand men under his command. What is still better, they are said to have reconciled all the disputing parties. Adieu. Pray write to me soon.

Yours ever af/ly

(signed) Guilford

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Σ. Ε. Τσιτσώνης, *Το ενδιαφέρον του λόρδου Guilford για την πολιτική κατάσταση και την ανώτατη εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα σύμφωνα με ένα μέρος της ανέκδοτης αλληλογραφίας του κατά το 1827*

Η εργασία αυτή βασίζεται σε πέντε ανέκδοτα γράμματα ή σε αποσπάσματα των γραμμάτων αυτών του Guilford, αντίγραφα των οποίων βρίσκονται στο τμήμα χειρογράφων της Γενναδείου Βιβλιοθήκης στην Αθήνα. Ο Guilford τα είχε αποστείλει αντίστοιχα στον στρατηγό Church, στο βρεταννό πρέσβη στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, Stratford Canning, και σε δύο πλοιάρχους του Βρεταντικού Πολεμικού Ναυτικού, τον Rowan Hamilton και τον James Robertson. Στα γράμματα αυτά φαίνεται καθαρά το ζωντανό ενδιαφέρον του Guilford για την πολιτική κατάσταση και την ανώτατη εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα.

Ο Guilford ενδιαφερόταν να τεθεί τέρμα στη διαμάχη ανάμεσα στις δύο πολιτικές φατρίες στην Ελλάδα και να πεισθούν οι Έλληνες να δεχθούν την παραχώρηση στην Ελλάδα αυτονομίας από το Σουλτάνο ακόμα και αν θα έπρεπε να πληρώνουν κάποιο φόρο υποτέλειας στην Υψηλή Πύλη.

Σχετικά με την ανώτατη εκπαίδευση στο μελλοντικά ανεξάρτητο κράτος της Ελλάδας, ο Guilford πίστευε ότι για αρκετά χρόνια οι Έλληνες δεν θα ήταν σε θέση να ιδρύσουν ένα καλά οργανωμένο Πανεπιστήμιο. Για το λόγο αυτό θα προσπαθούσε να τους βοηθήσει ο ίδιος να ιδρύσουν το Πανεπιστήμιό τους. Μέχρι όμως την ίδρυσή του οι Έλληνες θα έπρεπε να στέλνουν τους γιους τους στην Ιόνιο Ακαδημία στην Κέρκυρα, εφ' όσον βέβαια θα το επέτρεπε ο βρεταννός Υπάτος Αρμοστής των Ιονίων νήσων.