

The historiography of the Greek-Turkish War in Asia Minor: Britain, Greece, and others, 1915 - 1923

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2023 marks the centenary of the Treaty of Lausanne, which ended the state of war between Turkey and the western allies, in particular Greece, and reordered the Near East, settling frontiers and providing for the protection of minorities. This essay reviews the historiography of the period 1915-23 through Greek and British sources in printed books and papers, covering the Greek irredentist claim to western Asia Minor, the Paris peace conference, the occupation of Smyrna, the Greek war against Mustapha Kemal's Turkish nationalists, the collapse of the Greek army, the Lausanne treaty, and the convention on the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations agreed at Lausanne in 1923.

Keywords: Asia Minor; Greece-Turkey war; Paris Peace Conference; Smyrna; Venizelos; Constantine I; Treaty of Lausanne

One way to approach the disaster that overtook Greece in 1922-3, the 'Asia Minor Catastrophe', is to browse the transcript of the so-called 'Trial of the Six' which took place in November 1922.¹ The Six were Dimitrios Gounaris, the chief of the Greek government for most of the period leading to the trial, and five of his colleagues: Petros Protopapadakis and Nikolaos Stratos, each of them prime minister for a short period; Nikolaos Theotokis, war minister; Georgios Baltatzis, foreign minister; and the sixth, Georgios Hatzianestis, commander of the Greek army in Asia Minor at the time of its collapse in August 1922. A book by the historian Thanasis Diamantopoulos explores the trial in some detail.² There is also a book by the writer Vasilis Vasilikos,³

1 *Η δίκη των Έξι: επίσημα πρακτικά* (Athens 1976).*

2 Th. Diamantopoulos, *Ο Εθνικός Διχασμός και η κορύφωσή του: Η δίκη των Έξι* (Athens 2022).*

3 N. Vasilikos, ed. V. Vasilikos, *Το Ημερολόγιο της Μικρασιατικής Εκστρατείας* (Athens 2017).* Diamantopoulos omits this from the bibliography of his own book about the Trial of the Six because of errors he finds in it.

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DOI: [10.1017/byz.2023.16](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2023.16)

consisting of a memoir by his father Nikos of the army's arduous expedition deep into the interior of Asia Minor, in summer 1921, which was halted at the Sakarya river not far from Ankara. This book contains also a much abridged and controversial version of the proceedings of the Trial of the Six, written to be performed on stage. But readers should start with the full transcript of the trial, or Diamantopoulos' book, rather than Vasilikos. These reveal the final reckoning with those whom the 1922 'revolution' of Plastiras and others chose to regard as the guilty men, who must pay with their lives to expunge the shame of the army's defeat. The reckoning came on 15 November 1922 with the execution of the Six at Goudi in the Athens suburbs. The books I refer to focus on the responsibility of politicians for the disaster. They do not convey the pain of the many thousands of Greeks of Asia Minor uprooted from their homelands.

The 'Asia Minor Disaster' (or 'Catastrophe') is the usual term for the collapse of the Greek army, its evacuation – or flight – to Greece, and the destruction of Smyrna, all of which took place in 1922. The disaster includes also the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations agreed at Lausanne in 1923. These events inflicted on Greece a trauma greater than any other in the life of the independent Greek state. The catastrophe did not come out of the blue. It had origins, and an afterlife. I shall present in this essay some of the ways in which the story has been presented by Greek and British historians. The Greek press has been particularly active in republishing works so as to reach a new generation.

The historiography

The Asia Minor disaster has challenged Greek authors to explain how and why it came about and who was responsible. A vast bibliography has accumulated, mainly in Greek. Most of my bibliography consists of printed books and papers from British and Greek sources. In placing the catastrophe in its setting of Greek history one faces the problem that there are two irreconcilable versions of the causes of the events.

Victoria Solomonidou wrote a useful essay, in Greek, about the bibliography of Asia Minor and the catastrophe, for the 1983 edition of the *Bulletin of the Centre of Asia Minor Studies*.⁴ This special edition covers the countries involved, including Greece, the great powers and Turkey, through books and materials published before 1983. In this essay I shall note useful books which post-date Solomonidou's study, and add my own suggestions. In the notes, books in print in 2023 are indicated by an asterisk, digitized works by two asterisks.

Early days

Since time immemorial there have been Greek settlements in Asia Minor. The presence of Greek communities in modern times was a result of the settlement of Greeks from the late

4 V. Solomonidou, 'Η Ελλάδα στη Μικρά Ασία, 1919-22. Συμβολή στην ιστοριογραφική θεώρηση', *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 4 (Athens 1983) 351-60.**

eighteenth to the early twentieth century, particularly in western Asia Minor. Settlers increased as a result of the migration of Greeks during the Balkan Wars of 1912-13.⁵ There is a substantial literature about the lives, pursuits, culture, religion, and economy of these settlements, particularly on the west coast but also in Pontus and Cappadocia. But until shortly after the outbreak of the Great War few if any Greeks believed that Greece in Asia Minor was a feasible object of Greek irredentism.

Those who wish to absorb the story of Hellenism in Asia Minor from ancient times until the Disaster and the Exodus and resettlement of the refugees in Greece should consult the catalogue of the great exhibition *Asia Minor Hellenism: Heyday — Catastrophe — Displacement — Rebirth*, edited by its curator Evita Arapoglou.⁶

Greece and the Great War: the origins of Greek involvement

In the early stages of the Great War Asia Minor became a live object for Greek irredentism. The war brought Greece into closer than ever diplomatic contact with Britain, Germany, and other belligerents as a result of the country's importance to the war aims of both belligerent camps, the Entente on one side, the central powers on the other. It is Britain and her Entente allies who mainly concern us here. When Serbia came under the threat of attack by Bulgaria, in January 1915 the British foreign secretary Sir Edward Grey offered Greece important territorial concessions in Asia Minor if she would join the entente. Prime Minister Venizelos reported this offer to King Constantine with a passionate recommendation that Greece should accept it. He believed that the British offer gave him the platform he needed to convert his interest in Asia Minor into practical politics.⁷ The King, though tempted, disagreed. The disagreement developed into the rift between king and prime minister that came to be known as the National Schism (Εθνικός Διχασμός).⁸ At the end of the war the effects of Grey's offer and Venizelos' interest in Asia Minor came to be realized through the

5 A. A. Pallis, 'Racial migrations in the Balkans', *The Geographical Journal* 16 (1925) 313-31** . See also Pallis' personal memoir *Ξενητεμένοι Έλληνες: αυτοβιογραφικό χρονικό* (Athens 1954), and Alphatrust (Kifisia 2021)* with introduction by Antigone Lymperaki.

6 Athens 2022.* This presents the exhibition created by the Benaki Museum and the Centre for Asia Minor Studies, shown at the Benaki Museum branch in Piraeus Street in 2022-3, accompanied by a superbly illustrated book with the same title.

7 For Grey's offer and the discussions that followed, see M. Llewellyn-Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-22* (London 1973, third edn 2022)*, and Greek edition *Το Όραμα της Ιωνίας* (Athens 2002).

8 The National Schism has generated a mass of commentary in books and articles, not surprisingly because writers find it difficult to fathom its origins and intensity. See G. Mavrogordatos, *1915: ο Εθνικός Διχασμός* (Athens 2015)*, and *Μετα το 1922, Η Παράταση του Διχασμού* (Athens 2017); Th. Diamantopoulos, *Ο Εθνικός Διχασμός και η κορύφωσή του* (Athens 2022)*. *Η Ιστορία του Εθνικού Διχασμού κατά την αρθρογραφία του Ε. Βενιζέλου και του Ι. Μεταξά* (Thessaloniki 2007) presents the verbal combat of Venizelos and Metaxas which Venizelos started in 1934. This consists of 107 articles printed in *Eleftheron Vima* and *Kathimerini* respectively, 27 by Venizelos and 70 by Metaxas. For a recent contribution, see S. Rizas, *Βενιζελισμός και Αντιβενιζελισμός στις απαρχές του εθνικού διχασμού* (Athens 2019)*.

Paris peace conference, which Venizelos attended as prime minister of one of the victorious Entente powers. Venizelos laid claim to territory in the western coastal region of Asia Minor, as Greece's main territorial claim.

The question was: should Greece join the Entente powers (Venizelos) or remain neutral (the King and his advisers)? Venizelos was firm for joining the Entente, Constantine for neutrality. Their schism is described by the historian Mavrogordatos in the first of a trio of books.⁹ It was a complex political and social phenomenon, and an important component of the Asia Minor tragedy. Some Greek commentators hold that it actually caused it. The recent book *Asia Minor Catastrophe: 50 questions and answers* by Angelos Syrigos and Evanthis Hatzivassiliou is a good introduction to the period from the Great War to the Peace Conference and beyond, and explores the effects of the schism on Greece's fortunes in Asia Minor.¹⁰

Great War to Peace Conference

Grey's approach provoked a struggle between Venizelos and the King over whether the offer should be accepted and Greece should join the Entente. Constantine had the support of Georgios Streit, foreign minister and trusted adviser, and of Ioannis Metaxas, the Chief of the Greek General Staff, a man who had close links with the King and the royal princes, and who had earlier given valuable advice to Venizelos as his Aide de Camp. (Venizelos' choice of Metaxas for this post was evidence of his readiness to look to expertise rather than simply political sympathies.) The relevant letters of early 1915, and Metaxas' advice, can be found in the collection of Venizelos' texts edited by his private secretary Stefanou;¹¹ in Ventiris' classic book *Greece 1900-1920*;¹² and in Metaxas' diaries.¹³ These documents set the scene. Constantine, Metaxas, and Streit on one side, and Venizelos on the other, remained leading actors

9 See n. 8 above; for completeness, I mention also the same author's *Εθνική ολοκλήρωση και διχόνοια: η Ελληνική περίπτωση* (Athens 2020)*; and his classic work *Stillborn Republic: social coalitions and party strategies in Greece, 1922-1936* (Berkeley 1983).

10 *Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή, 50 ερωτήματα και απαντήσεις* (Athens 2021).*

11 S. Stefanou (ed.), *Τα Κείμενα του Ελευθερίου Βενιζέλου* I (1909-1914) (Athens 1981) and II (1915-1920) (1982). After serving as Venizelos' private secretary, Stefanou devoted much of his life to compiling these books and writing others about Venizelos. Venizelos' letters to the King of 11 January, 17 January and 17 February 1915 are at pp. 65-74 of vol. II.

12 G. Ventiris, *Η Ελλάδα του 1910-1920: ιστορική μελέτη* I (Athens 1931)*, 361-6, presents the exchanges of letters between Venizelos and the King concerning the Dardanelles expedition, Venizelos' letters to the King of 11 and 17 January, and Metaxas' letter to Venizelos of 17 January in which he rebuts Venizelos' arguments.

13 I. Metaxas, *Το Προσωπικό του Ημερολόγιο*. Metaxas' essay on the difficulties for Greece in occupying Asia Minor, dated 14 January 1915, is entitled in Greek 'περί Μικράς Ασίας - δυνατότητες διανομής' ('About Asia Minor - possibilities of its division'). Texts by Metaxas are best located by tracking them by date in one of the several editions of his diaries. I have used the undated Govosti edition, vols III and IV (Athens).

in the developing story of the breach between King and prime minister, the wider National Schism, and eventually the disaster.¹⁴

Following the initial debate in Athens over war versus neutrality, Venizelos resigned, and a succession of governments amenable to the King's views took charge. Venizelos returned to power following an election but was soon forced out again. Losing patience with the King and his new advisers, he moved to Thessaloniki, established there a provisional government, and raised Greek troops to join the war on the side of the entente allies in Macedonia – which they did, successfully. The armistice in 1918 with Bulgaria not only ended the war in Macedonia but contributed to the early ending of the Great War itself. It was Greece's ticket of entry to the 1919 Paris peace conference, at which Prime Ministers David Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau, and President Woodrow Wilson assigned Smyrna (Izmir) to Greece: a fatal step in the involvement of Greece in Asia Minor. In May 1919, when Lloyd George and his fellow leaders, with the support of Venizelos, authorized the Greek landing of troops at Smyrna, it became evident that this was the start of a process intended by Lloyd George and Venizelos to end in the annexation of western Asia Minor to Greece. The Greek prime minister seems to have calculated that this was his best or only way to save the Greek communities on the west coast from the apparent decision of the Young Turks to eliminate them.

The Paris Peace Conference, 1919

The peace conference brought Venizelos into the political and diplomatic circles within which post-war issues were to be resolved. There is a voluminous literature about the peace conference and Greece's claims.¹⁵ Along with Asia Minor itself, and Thrace, the Greek delegation had to become familiar with other issues, such as the German peace treaty and the establishment of the League of Nations, which were the prime objects of the entente allies and the USA, and had priority over the Turkish treaty in which Greece was mainly interested. There were divisions of approach between the allies – Britain, France, the USA, Italy – but a recognition that the Asia Minor issue, as part of the wider question of making peace with the defeated Ottoman empire, would have to wait its turn. The delay was damaging to the Greek cause, and frustrating for Venizelos.

Venizelos' Asia Minor policy was dependent on British support. But the British political class was not solid for Greece. (It is not clear how soon and how clearly Venizelos saw this.) Lloyd George and his cabinet saw Ottoman affairs as closely involved with Britain's political and economic interests in the Near and Middle East, but were divided over the policies to pursue. Lloyd George, believing that former

14 Tracking these letters is complicated by the difference between Greek time (the Julian calendar: Old Style OS) and British time (the Gregorian calendar: New Style NS). Grey made his offer on 23 January 1914 NS, but Venizelos reported it to Constantine on 11 January OS.

15 For example, and notably, N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference* (Thessaloniki 1980).

policies of support for the Ottoman empire had no future, saw Greece as a promising rising power and a potential support for British policy in the Near East, and for Imperial interests extending as far as Suez and India.¹⁶ Lord Curzon, the foreign secretary, was pushed to the sidelines by the commanding figure of Lloyd George, and had less impact on affairs than was justified by his superior knowledge of the East.¹⁷ Winston Churchill, whose cabinet positions gave him a say in policy towards Greece and Turkey (minister of munitions from July 1917, secretary of state for war and air from January 1919, colonial secretary February 1921) was anxious to see Britain patch things up with Kemal's Turkish Nationalist movement.¹⁸ There was an Indian component in British government which favoured Turkey. Others, including the dynamic figure of Lord Beaverbrook¹⁹ saw Turkey as more important than Greece. So divisions in the cabinet, as well as British concentration on Germany, Russia, and the economic troubles of Europe, combined to delay the peace with Turkey; and this gave Kemal time to cultivate the nationalist movement.²⁰

In May 1919 Lloyd George, Clemenceau and President Wilson, taking advantage of the temporary absence of the Italian prime minister Orlando, authorized the landing of Greek troops at Smyrna.²¹ It was a hasty, unwise decision, taken to bypass the Italians who were Greece's rivals and competitors for territory in Asia Minor. British military advisers in Paris were sceptical about the landings, and so were some politicians including Churchill.²² The initial landing at the quay of Smyrna was badly mishandled and gave scope for propaganda damaging to the Greek cause. Kemal, who moved from Constantinople to the east at the time of the Greek landing, was able to exploit

16 Lloyd George established his close relationship with Venizelos during the Balkan Wars, 1912-13. He was prime minister and British war leader throughout the period of the Greek-Turkish war, and fell from power as a result of the war on 19 October 1922. He described his experience of the Great War in *War Memoirs of David Lloyd George*, 2 vols (London, n.d.).

17 Curzon was foreign secretary during the Asia Minor war. After the fall of Lloyd George he was disappointed of his ambition to become prime minister, and remained, as foreign secretary, Britain's chief negotiator at Lausanne. He knew, and knew he knew, more about the Near East than his colleagues, but failed to impose himself on events in Asia Minor.

18 Churchill was involved in wartime Greek affairs from 1912-13 during the Balkan Wars to 1944 when he visited Athens to resolve the British stand-off with EAM/ELAS, the communist-led Greek forces. During the Asia Minor War he pressed on the prime minister his view that Britain should wind up the war in Asia Minor and settle matters with the Turkish nationalists. His book *The Aftermath: being a sequel to The World Crisis* (London 1929) chs XV11, XV111 and XV1V deals rhetorically and fascinatingly with Turkey and Greece.

19 Lord Beaverbrook, *The Decline and Fall of Lloyd George: and great was the fall thereof* (London 1963). See Churchill's letter to Lloyd George of 11 June 1921, reporting on his talk with Venizelos, at p. 245.

20 For a British historian's analysis of one episode in the war and its aftermath, viz. the Chanak affair, see J. Darwin, 'The Chanak crisis and the British cabinet', *History* vol. 65, no. 213 (1980) 32-48.

21 Llewellyn-Smith, *Ionian Vision* (ch. 5)

22 'I cannot understand to this day how the eminent statesmen in Paris, Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Venizelos, whose wisdom, prudence, and address had raised them under the severest tests so much above their fellows, could have been betrayed into so rash and fatal a step. . . Here then we have reached a new turning-point in the history of the peoples of the Middle East.' Churchill, *The Aftermath*, 369.

this. As he gained in prestige, so the Sultan's government in Constantinople was weakened. Greece now had to face the difficulties of administering the multiethnic zone assigned to her, which contained more Muslims than Christians.²³ Aristeidis Stergiades, a Cretan lawyer and friend of Venizelos, was appointed High Commissioner, charged with the task of exercising a 'civilizing mission' in the newly occupied territory.²⁴ This soon brought him into conflict with the Greek army chiefs, and with leading members of the Greek community of Smyrna.

The story of the Paris peace conference is told by Harold Nicolson, who as a member of the British delegation was appointed to the territorial committee which dealt with Greek claims. He wrote a lively and thoughtful eye-witness account.²⁵ The historian Margaret MacMillan,²⁶ a relative of Lloyd George, painted a colourful picture of the whole conference including a chapter on Greece. Nikos Petsalis-Diomidis' ²⁷ account of Greece at the conference, written from a Venizelist standpoint, is well researched, detailed, and of enduring value to historians. Petsalis followed this late in his life with a mature reflection in Greek on Venizelos' irridentist policies.

Greek troops occupy Smyrna

The landing at Smyrna led to increasing tension within and outside the Greek zone of occupation which was agreed between Greece and her allies. Michael Rodas, a Greek journalist from Asia Minor, wrote a book about the landing and what followed.²⁸ The discussions arising from the landing over responsibility for the violence, and the extent of the Greek zone, are best followed in the splendidly edited series of official British diplomatic documents (*Documents on British Foreign Policy*) and the correspondence of Venizelos and his military advisers such as Alexandros Mazarakis-Ainian.²⁹ The allies were involved, though pulled every which way by other preoccupations, Lloyd George in the lead, firmly supporting Venizelos and his expansionary policy, France showing the first signs of doubts over the wisdom of the enterprise. Lloyd George's commitment remained durable even as Greece's position became more difficult. It was grounded not merely on his liking for Venizelos but in geopolitical considerations: Greece as a factor of stability in the Near East, support of Britain's

23 Greeks may have been the largest single element in Smyrna itself. Muslims predominated in the wider zone.

24 V. Solomonidis [the same author as Solomonidou in n. 4], *Greece in Asia Minor: the Greek administration of the vilayet of Aidin, 1919-22* (KCL PhD thesis, London 1984).

25 H. Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919* (London 1933).

26 M. MacMillan *Peacemakers: six months that changed the world: the Paris conference of 1919 and its attempt to end war* (London 2001).*

27 N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)* (Thessaloniki 1978). His views were developed in *Ο Βενιζέλος και η Πρόσκληση της Μεγάλης Ελλάδας*, ed. I. Stefanidis (Athens 2021).*

28 M. Rodas, *Η Ελλάδα στη στην Μικράν Ασία* (Athens 1950).*

29 A. Mazarakis-Ainian, *Απομνημονεύματα* (Athens 1948).* *Documents on British Foreign Policy* 1919-39, 1st series, vol. XV, 1921. See also vols I, II, IV, XI, XII.

imperial interests, the route to India. Some of this comes through in Lloyd George's war memoirs.³⁰ Clemenceau, the chairman of the conference, gave his support to Venizelos at first, while seeking his help over Ukraine, where French troops were struggling with the Bolsheviks for control. President Wilson, changeable, stubborn, inexperienced in international diplomacy, was unhelpful to Greece over many issues, but engaged Venizelos' help over the establishment of the League of Nations. The Italian leaders had territorial interests of their own which clashed with those of Greece and acted as an irritant and complication for Greece's mission. It was Italian pursuit of a colonial role in Asia Minor that persuaded the heads of government of Britain, the USA and France to authorize the Greek landing, so as to keep the Italians out of Smyrna.

On the other side was Mustafa Kemal Pasha, later Atatürk, now established in the central part of Turkey, opposed to the Entente powers but ready to agree local deals with France and Italy, as well as Russia, opposed to the Greek occupation of Asia Minor and determined to end it. His views are contained in the Great Speech he delivered in October describing the foundation of the Turkish Republic, which was built on the defeat of the Greeks.³¹

Occupation turns to war

Greece's undeclared war against Turkey was an attempt to control Turkish nationalist bands and bands of irregulars. In their efforts to exert control, assist the British troops in the area of the straits, and defeat the Kemalists, the Greek military expanded their occupation. The British historian Arnold Toynbee was one of the first to try to explain the nature of the war, which he summed up as the 'western question' in Greece and Turkey.³² Toynbee was the first holder of the Koraes Chair of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature at King's College London, and had been an adviser to the British delegation at the Paris peace conference, alongside Harold Nicolson. He visited Asia Minor between January and September 1921, when the war was approaching its acute phase. His frank reports on what he saw, including the behaviour of the Greek army, were published in the *Manchester Guardian* and shocked the Greek contributors who had funded the Koraes Chair. What matters is not so much the academic row, well described by Richard Clogg,³³ but the story of

30 D. Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, 2 vols (London 1933). His mistress, and later wife, Frances Stevenson, comments interestingly on his belief in the importance of the Greek cause, in her diary: *Lloyd George: a diary*, ed. A. J. P. Taylor (London 1971).

31 Few will read Mustafa Kemal's Great Six Day Speech in full. The gist will be found in Andrew Mango, *Ataturk* (London 1999)* or in Lord Kinross, *Ataturk: the rebirth of a nation* (London 1964),* the former biography authoritative, the latter rather more fun. A good short introduction to Atatürk is M. Şükrü Hanioglu's *Atatürk: an intellectual biography* (Princeton 2017).*

32 A.J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey: a study in the contact of civilisations* (London 1922).

33 R. Clogg, *Politics and the Academy* (London 1986).*

Toynbee's experience of the war, which is uniquely valuable. His book could only have been written by an outsider, neither Greek nor Turk.

Toynbee's book is unusual among non-Greek writings in how close he comes to the battle field, to the terrain contested and the field of atrocities. Greek authors also get close, but tend to be subject to self-imposed limits to what can be written about the nature of the hostilities. One of the best books, comprehensive and fair minded, is *Greece's Anatolian Venture and after*, by A. A. Pallis.³⁴ Pallis was born in India, brought up in Britain, educated at Eton and Oxford, and first visited Greece before he was twenty years old. His book was published long after the war and the Lausanne treaty, which enabled him to take account of other narratives. He was involved for many years in refugee issues of relief and housing. Though not himself a politician, his wide acquaintance with Greek politicians, officials, and refugee communities enabled him to present a balanced account of the whole story.

Greek accounts of the period

Among the accounts of Greek history which cover this period, that of Aspreas is one of the best,³⁵ but less accessible and up to date than several collective accounts. Spyros Markezinis' *Political History of Modern Greece* stands out for his insights as a practising politician.³⁶ Another practising politician was Constantine Zavitzianos, who frames his memoir around the National Schism, which he calls a 'historic disagreement'.³⁷ Zavitzianos started as a Venizelist but shifted his ground later. Both Zavitzianos and Ventiris,³⁸ with his classic book on Greece in the decade 1910-1920, are stronger on the early period of the schism than the later.

There are numerous Greek books focussed on the Asia Minor war itself, its politics, and its aftermath. Among the best are the former diplomat Sakellaropoulos' *Shadow of the West*,³⁹ which picks up the western reference of Toynbee, and Mostras' *The Asia Minor Enterprise*.⁴⁰ Aggelomatis' *Chronicle of a Great Tragedy* is an example of the many accounts that cannot accept the failure of the Greek campaign. He blames the tragedy on the national curse of division, and implausibly argues that the Greek army was not really defeated in Asia Minor, but as it were went on strike: Greece was betrayed.⁴¹

34 A. A. Pallis, *Greece's Anatolian Venture and after* (London 1937).

35 G. K. Aspreas, *Σύγχρονος Ιστορία των Ελλήνων και των λοιπών λαών της ανατολής απο 1821 μέχρι 1921*, 3 vols (Athens 1924),**

36 S. Markezinis, *Πολιτική Ιστορία της Νεωτέρας Ελλάδος*, III (Athens 1966).

37 K. Zavitzianos, *Αι Αναμνήσεις μου εκ της ιστορικής Διαφορίας Βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου και Ελευθερίου Βενιζέλου* (Athens 1947).*

38 Ventiris, *Η Ελλάς του 1910-1920: ιστορική μελέτη*, 2 vols (Athens 1931).

39 K. Sakellaropoulos, *Η Σκιά της Δύσεως: ιστορία μιας καταστροφής* (Athens 1954).

40 V. Mostras, *Η Μικρασιατική Επιχείρησης* (Athens 1969).

41 Ch. Aggelomatis, *Χρονικών Μεγάλης Τραγωδίας: το έπος της Ασίας* (Athens, n.d.).

By contrast, among English books, Richard Clogg's *Concise History of Greece* has established itself as the standard account and stands out for its selection of illustrations;⁴² and the relevant chapter of the recent book *Greece* by Roderick Beaton is well researched, and challenging to the Venizelist cause, which is unusual in English language accounts.⁴³ The quotation from James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Beaton's preface ('A nation? says Bloom. A nation is the same people living in the same place...Or also living in different places.') is apposite in the case of Greece in the period we are dealing with.

I assumed when starting this essay that the historiography would be weighted to the Venizelist side, and this turns out to be the case. Prominent Venizelist interpretations of the period include Mavrogordatos⁴⁴ with his books about the National Schism; he is the harshest critic of the King and the anti-Venizelist politicians, and a prolific contributor to the periodical press, especially *Kathimerini*, which is performing a useful service by republishing important books which have gone out of print. Thanos Veremis⁴⁵ and Nikos Petsalis-Diomidis⁴⁶ are others. A thoughtful approach is that of Hatzivassiliou in various articles, and recently in his *Questions and Answers* book, written with Syrigos.⁴⁷

Because the anti-Venizelist cause is so closely associated with the failed diplomacy and failed military campaign of the governments of Dimitrios Gounaris and his colleagues, there are fewer scholars who have written about them. Of modern anti-Venizelist books the best is by Stamatopoulos, who has also written extensively and well about the Greek royal family.⁴⁸ Mariana Christopoulou's biography of Gounaris is the best account of this talented and tragic figure whose successful early career ended in ruin.⁴⁹ Metaxas' largest contribution came later in the day, in 1934, in a series of short essays on the Schism which were one half of a gladiatorial debate with Venizelos, published in *Kathimerini* newspaper and *Eleftheron Vima* respectively.⁵⁰ But his contributions at the time of the schism, in particular his essay of 1915 on the reasons not to invade Asia Minor, and his painful meeting with Gounaris and others in March 1921 (for which see below) are of critical importance.

A. A. Pallis, who had stood unsuccessfully in the elections of November 1920 in the Venizelist interest, shifted his ground somewhat, putting emphasis on the wisdom of

42 R. Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (4th edn, Cambridge 2021).*

43 R. Beaton, *Greece: biography of a modern nation* (London 2019).*

44 Mavrogordatos, *1915: ο εθνικός διχασμός*.

45 Veremis has written more than one biography of Venizelos: for instance, *Ο Ελευθέριος πίσω από τον Βενιζέλο* (Athens 2014), and *Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος, ο οραματιστής του εφικτού* (Athens 2017).*

46 Petsalis-Diomidis, a student of Douglas Dakin, wrote the classic account *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference 1919*. Stefanidis took on the editing of the book he was working on before his death: see n. 27 above.

47 Syrigos and Hatzivassiliou, *Μικρασιατική καταστροφή*.

48 K. Stamatopoulos, *Πως φτάσαμε στην Καταστροφή* (Athens 2020).*

49 M. Christopoulou, *Δημήτριος Γούναρης: πολιτική βιογραφία* (Athens 2017).

50 E. Venizelos and I. Metaxas, *Η Ιστορία του Εθνικού Διχασμού*.

Metaxas' early advice. Pallis draws on the long and detailed book by the former diplomat Frangulis, who takes an anti-Venizelist position.⁵¹

The military: the Greek army in Asia Minor

The treaty of Sèvres was signed In August 1920: it was never to enter into force. In November 2020 Venizelos fell from power in the Greek general election which he had called. The change of regime that took place, the assumption of power by the Antivenizelist Royalists, and the return of King Constantine, made it more difficult for Greece to maintain her position in Asia Minor. The new governments, of which Dimitrios Gounaris was the leading figure, were confronted by the dangerous military situation which had developed in the final months of Venizelos' term of office, with the added economic problem posed by the deterioration of Greece's finances, and now the allies' blocking financial support for Greece as a result of the return of Constantine. The new regime's popularity was directly linked to the King, yet the King's return dealt a sharp blow to their relations with the Entente allies, not least financial. They did not dare sacrifice the King, or admit that the occupation of Asia Minor was unsustainable. They put their trust therefore in stepping up the war, aiming at defeating Kemal, while relying on the British to resolve the diplomatic impasse.

For the first part of this combination Gounaris, the strong man of the new regime, turned to Metaxas. For the second, Gounaris relied on his own diplomatic skills, such as they were. He had a difficult hand to play, owing to the recall of King Constantine. When the British, with France and Italy, convoked a conference in London to attempt to find a solution to the Greek-Turkish impasse, Gounaris attended, seeking financial as well as diplomatic help from Britain.⁵² He made a good impression on Lloyd George, but left empty handed. Curzon's efforts to find a compromise with the Greek and Turkish delegations failed. The Greeks would not abandon Smyrna, and the nationalist Turks would not agree to half measures which fell short of complete evacuation. The Greeks preferred the hazard of war to the humiliation which would be a consequence of leaving Smyrna. Lloyd George did not deter them. So the war continued, reaching its climax in July-August 1921.

In 1917 Metaxas had been banished by the Venizelos regime to Corsica, along with Gounaris and other anti-Venizelist leaders. He was able to return to Athens, after a spell in Italy, in time for the November 1920 elections. His contribution to the 1921 events is determinedly negative, and can be found in his diary record of discussions with Gounaris, Theotokis, and Prototopadakis in March 1921, at which they failed to persuade him to

51 A.F. Frangulis, *La Grèce, son Statut international, son Histoire diplomatique* (Paris 1940).

52 Llewellyn-Smith, *Ionian Vision*, ch. 9, 'The London Conference', and ch. 10, 'Summer offensive'. The London Conference was attended by Greece (Kalogeropoulos, interim prime minister, followed by Gounaris) and by Turkey, which was represented by a nationalist delegation, and a separate delegation representing the Sultan's government in Constantinople. The former held the real power. For the diplomacy, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy* 1st series, vol. XV, which covers 1921.

rejoin them as Army Chief of Staff. The meetings confirm the politicians' judgment that Metaxas was the right man for the job, but Metaxas was determined not to be seduced into accepting it. A key passage from these extraordinary discussions comes when Protopapadakis says that if they fail Metaxas will be destroyed along with the government, because there will be an internal uprising which will bring back Venizelos. Metaxas replies:

Don't worry, Venizelos will not come back. But if he were to come back, because the people wanted him, I am not afraid of him. In the final analysis, if Greece can be saved only by the return of Venizelos, let him return. Does our country have to go to the devil so that Venizelos will not come back?

Metaxas preserved his integrity and refused the blandishments of Gounaris and Protopapadakis.⁵³

Stepping up the war meant marching eastwards to try to pin down the Turkish nationalist forces and crush them. In summer 1921 the Greek army advanced through the salt desert as far as the Sakarya river in the approaches towards Ankara. They failed to inflict the crushing blow, and retreated. The final collapse came in August 1922. The interest of the Greek reading public has been fed by a series of articles about this phase of the campaign, some of them very good, by historians and other experts in the newspaper *Kathimerini* and elsewhere. With the collapse of the Greek army in August 1922, and the flight of the troops, followed by anguished civilians, military considerations became political, with the revolution of Colonel Plastiras and his followers, the exile (once more) of the King, and the arrest of Gounaris and his fellow ministers.

Three further sorts of military documents are of interest: eye witness accounts by private soldiers of their experiences of war,⁵⁴ comment in the press, and accounts by those who played a semi-political or a general staff role. Alexandros Mazarakis-Ainian, a senior Venizelist, is an example of the latter. He wrote a memoir of his life which covers the period of the Asia Minor war including incisive judgements about the sensitive issue of division in the officer corps.⁵⁵ General Spyridonos' memoir is also of interest.⁵⁶ As to press comments, the most significant are the two leading articles presumed to be by G. Vlachos, founding editor of *Kathimerini*: 'Οίκαδε' ('homeward', or, loosely, let's go home) and 'Οι Πομπερανοί'. These were published on 14 and 17 August 1922 and were, to say the least, unhelpful to the government. They reflect the

53 Metaxas diary for 25 March 1921: 'Discussion between Gounaris, Protopapadakis and me', and of 29 March. Metaxas noted after recording these discussions, 'completed little by little up till 25 May 1921'. They are of absorbing interest both for the political and military content and for the characters of the participants.

54 There are many of these, including accounts later found in cupboards or on shelves, e.g. Vasilikos, *Το Ημερολόγιο της Μικρασιατικής Εκστρατείας*.

55 A. Mazarakis-Ainian, *Mémoires* (Thessaloniki 1979); Greek edn *Απομνημονεύματα* (Athens n.d.)

56 G. Spyridonos, *Πόλεμος και Ελευθερία: η μικρασιατική εκστρατεία όπως την είδα* (Athens 1957).

view that mainland Greece and Asia Minor Greece were different worlds. Vlassis has written a detailed account of the events leading to the publication of the two articles.⁵⁷

The splendidly named Xenophon Stratigos held a senior position on the army staff in Asia Minor, and was one of the accused at the Trial of the Six; but his book is hard going because of the high *Katharevousa* in which it is written.⁵⁸ Another potential victim of the Trial of the Six was Prince Andrew, father of Prince Philip, the late Duke of Edinburgh. Andrew served as a general commanding the Second Army Corps in Asia Minor in 1921. (All the royal princes had a military education and did service in the army.) He was arrested after the collapse of the Greek army and brought to trial on a charge of disobeying orders, found guilty, but by agreement between the leaders of the revolution and the British, spirited away on a British ship by the former British attaché Gerald Talbot. In exile in France he wrote a book vigorously defending his conduct in the war.⁵⁹ It is interesting mainly for its insights into the politics of the war.

The publications of the Army General Staff Historical Directorate are detailed accounts of the military campaigns of this period, not recommended reading except for those who need detailed military information or maps showing the terrain.⁶⁰

The National Schism

Woven into the above accounts of the war are accounts, more or less detailed, of the national schism and its effect on the Greek venture. Greek authors have much to say on this score, in books and newspapers. A good example, already referred to, is the joint publication by Syrigos and Hatzivassiliou posing questions and answers about the disaster.⁶¹ The schism which overshadows this and other such books is addressed directly in Diamantopoulos' recent book with its striking title.⁶² Its effects extended long after the treaty of Lausanne and the exchange of populations, and are still felt – for example in the successful recourse to the Greek courts by the grandson of the executed prime minister Protopapadakis, to clear the name of his grandfather and the others who were condemned to death by the court martial of the Six. Other accounts worth attention include Mavrogordatos, Ploumidis,⁶³ and Rizas.⁶⁴ A more recent

57 K. Vlassis, *Οίκαδε: κυβερνητικός και πολεμικός σχεδιασμός το κρίσιμο 1922* (Athens 2022).*

58 X. Stratigos, *Η Ελλάς εν Μικρά Ασία* (Athens 1925).

59 *Δορυλαίων-Σαργάριος 1921* (Paris 1928). English language version *Towards Disaster*, translated and with introduction by Princess Andrew (London 1930).

60 *Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού, Διεύθυνση Ιστορίας Στρατού* series of publications.

61 *Μικρασιατική καταστροφή, 50 ερωτήματα και απαντήσεις*.

62 Diamantopoulos, *Ο Εθνικός Διχασμός* (Athens 2022).* The book contains short essays by some well known historians who welcome its publication and comment on it.

63 S.G. Ploumidis, *Τα Μυστήρια της Αιγηΐδος: το μικρασιατικό ζήτημα στην Ελληνική πολιτική (1881-1922)* (Athens 2016).*

64 S. Rizas, *Το Τέλος της Μεγάλης Ιδέας, ο Βενιζέλος, ο αντιβενιζελισμός και η Μικρά Ασία* (Athens 2015)* and *Βενιζελισμός και Αντιβενιζελισμός στις απαρχές του εθνικού διχασμού 1915-22* (Athens 2019).*

account of the schism dealing with the period 1915-36 is by Klapsis and Koumas.⁶⁵ The late K. Svolopoulos,⁶⁶ a distinguished historian, made a brave attempt to defend the proposition that in the circumstances of 1920 Venizelos' decision to press ahead with a forward policy in Asia Minor was rational as well as inevitable. Improbable, I would say.

The Trial of the Six itself has a place in any narrative of the Asia Minor war, even though it took place after the end of the fighting. It is the pinnacle of the struggle between the Venizelists, who mounted the trial, and their opponents. Foremost among the Venizelists who called for the death penalty was Theodoros Pangalos, the future dictator, who was in charge of the enquiries preliminary to the trial. But though formally the trial was about the alleged treachery and incompetence of the six, it somehow ceased to be only a struggle between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists and turned in people's minds into a search for scapegoats to salve the bad conscience of the officer corps.

The key document is the transcript of the proceedings of the trial itself, and the speeches of the defendants.⁶⁷ The leading defendant, Gounaris, was badly affected early in the trial with typhus, so his long defence was read on his behalf. The trial was a legal absurdity in two different ways: first, it was outside the Greek constitutional order: five of the six should have been tried not at a court martial but at a special court for ministers of the government; second, the list of charges was deeply flawed. The main element on the charge sheet was 'high treason'; that 'willingly and of design you supported the incursion of foreign forces' onto the territory of the [Greek] kingdom, viz into the Asia Minor territory held by Greece as confirmed in the treaty of Sèvres; and that you 'surrendered to the enemy cities, garrisons, a large part of the army and very valuable war materials. . . .' There were other charges too. They did not make good sense, and the whole trial amounted to a parody of justice.

In 1934 Venizelos and Metaxas fought over the old ground in a series of newspaper articles, initiated by Venizelos in *Eleftheron Vima*, to which Metaxas replied in *Kathimerini*. The long series has been published in a convenient form, 37 articles by Venizelos and 70 by Metaxas, in a book entitled in Greek *The History of the National Schism*, but I suspect few will want to read these.⁶⁸ For all the books about the schism, there is no final explanation, or rather there are too many explanations, of why and how it came to have so decisive and disastrous an effect on Greek history of the period.

The Trial of the Six had a long and bitter afterlife. It had taken away five of the leaders of the Antivenizelist cause. Their successors, such as Panagis Tsaldaris who assumed the leadership of the Popular Party, would not allow their outrage at the trial and executions to be forgotten.

65 A. Klapsis and M. Koumas, *Ο Εθνικός Διχασμός* (Athens 2019).*

66 Svolopoulos, *Η απόφαση για την επέκταση της Ελληνικής Κυριαρχίας στη Μικρά Ασία, κριτική αναμνηλάφηση* (Athens 2009).*

67 *Η Δίκη των Εξ. Επίσημα Πρακτικά.*

68 *Η Ιστορία του Εθνικού Διχασμού.*

The last days of old Smyrna

The last days of Greek Smyrna, the catastrophe, the shocking scenes on the waterfront, the fire and billowing smoke, the capital ships of the allies, all these yielded their own literature. Giles Milton explores in details what he calls ‘the destruction of Islam’s city of tolerance’.⁶⁹ Another account which has had an afterlife including translation into Greek is that of the US consul general in Smyrna, George Horton.⁷⁰ Marjorie Housepian Dobkin presents a vigorous account with information about the characters involved, such as the Turcophile American Admiral Bristol.⁷¹

Assessment

Many of the books I have referred to attempt an overall judgment of these events, usually couched in Venizelist/antivenizelist terms. The foreigners come in for blame, France and Italy for breaking ranks and settling with Kemal, Britain, especially Lloyd George, for promising Greece more than Britain could deliver. Most of the Greek books and articles see matters against the background of Greek internal politics and the schism. Some blame Venizelos and his liberal party for lack of realism, or over-confidence in his reliance on the words of Lloyd George. Some take the persecution, abuse, or expulsion of Greek communities by the Young Turkish regime as aimed at eliminating the Greek population, and as justifying, or necessitating, the Greek occupation of Asia Minor. Some Greek authors see the involvement of the Great Powers of Europe, and the United States, as pernicious, exploiting Greece to serve selfish imperialist interests. The most outspoken of these is Nikos Psiroukis, whose Marxist approach emphasizes the powers’ pursuit of the oil of the Middle East.⁷² Most Greek authors see the election of November 1920 as a key moment in the unravelling of the Greek cause, providing France, Italy, and to some extent Britain, an escape clause enabling them to step back from obligations undertaken at the Paris peace conference and in the treaty of Sèvres.

The signing of the Treaty of Sèvres⁷³ had done little or nothing to avert the gradual darkening of the skies for Greece. The loss by Venizelos of the election of November 1920 followed by the return of the King was a blow to Greek hopes largely because of the changes of policy of the allies, but also because of the inexperience of the new regime including in military and diplomatic matters. The only way the damage could have

69 G. Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922: the destruction of Islam’s city of tolerance* (London 2008).*

70 G. Horton, *The Blight of Asia* (Indianapolis 1926). Greek edn (with extensive notes by V. Solomonidou): *Η Μάστιγα της Ασίας* (Athens 2022).*

71 M. Housepian Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of a City* (New York 1971).

72 N. Psiroukis, *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή 1918-1923, η εγγύς ανατολή μετά τον πρώτο παγκόσμιο πόλεμο* (1964; 4th edn, Nicosia 2000).

73 For the treaties of Sèvres of August 1920 and of Lausanne of 1922-3 see H.J. Psomiades, *The Eastern Question: the last phase: a study in Greek-Turkish diplomacy* (2nd edn, New York 2000). This includes texts of the treaties of Sèvres and Lausanne.

been averted was by persuading the king to stay away, but that was exactly what the new government could not do because their own prestige depended on the king. They made matters worse through the attempt by Gounaris and his colleagues to outdo Venizelos in military achievement, culminating in the advance of the Greek army to the Sakarya river, followed by its retreat to safer quarters. This was the end of the Greek hopes of crushing Kemal's nationalist movement. There followed a winter of discontent and appeals by ministers to the British for help. Then came the collapse of the Greek army, evacuation, and the flight of the Christian Greek people of Asia Minor. The diplomats restored order through the treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The treaty was a sensible re-ordering of the Near East. Turkey found a place in the new arrangements as a nation state. But Turkey insisted that the new order had to be completed by the convention imposing the compulsory exchange of populations, which put an end to Greece's irredentism in Asia Minor. This was a turning point. The Great Idea was dead. The task now was settlement of the refugees, reconstruction, and revision of foreign policy.

The aftermath

A further category of books and articles deals with the aftermath. The word 'aftermath' was used by Churchill to describe what followed the 1918 armistice. I use it here to describe what followed the collapse of the Greek army in August 1922: the revolution of Plastiras; the negotiations at Lausanne in 1923, in which Venizelos represented Greece; the treaty of Lausanne, the exchange of populations, and the relief and resettlement of the Greek refugees. A good guide to Lausanne is Harry J. Psomiades on the 'Last Phase' of the Eastern Question.⁷⁴ Further detail on the negotiations, the exchange of populations, the status of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the territorial arrangements agreed will be found in the recent publication by *Kathimerini* of two books by Syrigos and Klapsis.⁷⁵ Psomiades' book prints as appendices the texts of the treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923)⁷⁶ and the Lausanne convention on the exchange of populations (30 January 1923). These international agreements were duly ratified. The treaty of Sèvres⁷⁷ of 10 August 1920 remained unratified, being overtaken by the treaty of Lausanne. The Lausanne treaty remains in force although parts of it are contested by Turkey. Harold Nicolson's *Curzon: the last phase* is an enjoyable picture of the great Viceroy, who dominated the early proceedings.⁷⁸ The immensely long text of the treaty of Sèvres, which never entered into force, is a reminder of the unfortunate treatment of Turkey by the Allies, against which Kemal struggled successfully.

74 Psomiades, *The Eastern Question*.

75 A. Syrigos and A. Klapsis, *Συνθήκη Λωζάνης και Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις*, 2 vols (Athens 2023).*

76 The Treaty of Peace with Turkey signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923, was published in 'The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923, II, (New York- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924); see also the convention on the exchange of populations signed at Lausanne, 30 January 1923.

77 The treaty of peace with Turkey signed at Sèvres, 10 August 1920

78 London 1934.

No doubt in this anniversary year new studies will appear on the exchange of populations, which ended a phase of Greek history, that of the Great Idea, and enforced a transformation in the lives of hundreds of thousands of Greek Christians. A publication of the Bank of Greece about the establishment of the refugees in their new homes in Greece, with a substantial introduction by Lena Korma, provides necessary information about the legal and administrative measures put in place by the Greek state, the Bank of Greece, the League of Nations, and the political leaders, experts and institutions involved, such as Fridtjof Nansen, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.⁷⁹ The Muslims included in the population exchange were equally affected, often dramatically. This is brought out in Bruce Clark's book *Twice a Stranger*,⁸⁰ a remarkable re-imagining of refugee lives in Turkey and Greece. Renée Hirschon, in *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*⁸¹ approaches the settlement of the Greeks from an anthropological standpoint; her edited collection of essays gives a broad appraisal of the exchange.⁸² To these should be added two much earlier works which helped to establish refugee studies on the right path, A. A. Pallis' post-war articles on racial migration in the Balkans and Dimitri Pentzopoulos' book on the Balkan exchange of minorities.⁸³ The main focus of historians who write about the settlement of refugees has been on Macedonia (for example Elisabeth Kontogiorgi's book about rural settlement in Macedonia)⁸⁴ but special studies have been written about the Athens region, about Venizelism and refugees in Crete, and other regions affected by the exchange.⁸⁵

The afterlife of the Asia Minor war and its effects on Greek political life lie outside the scope of this paper. The standard study is Mavrogordatos' *Stillborn Republic*.⁸⁶ Two recently published works examine a subject which was developed only recently: Robert Gerwath's book on why the first world war failed to end, which includes a chapter on Greece,⁸⁷ and Jay Winter's 'The second Great War, 1917-23'.⁸⁸

79 *Πτυχές της Αποκατάστασης των Προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα, 1922-30*, with introduction by Lena Korma (Athens 2021).*

80 *Twice a Stranger: How mass expulsion forged modern Greece and Turkey* (London 2006).*

81 R. Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: the social life of Asia Minor refugees in Piraeus* (Oxford 1989, 3rd revised edition Oxford 2023).*

82 R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an appraisal of the 1923 compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey* (Oxford 2003).*

83 Pallis, 'Racial migrations in the Balkans' and D. Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact on Greece* (Paris 1962).

84 E. Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: the rural settlement of Refugees 1922-30* (Oxford 2006).*

85 *Η ατική γη υποδέχεται τους πρόσφυγες του '22* (Hellenic Foundation of Parliament 2006). *Βενιζελισμός και Πρόσφυγες στην Κρήτη: πρακτικά ημερίδας* (Heraklion 2008).

86 Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*.

87 R. Gerwath, *The Vanquished: why the first world war failed to end, 1917-23* (London 2016)*

88 In *The Macedonian Front, 1915-1918: politics, society and culture in time of war*, 56-67, eds V. Gounaris, M. Llewellyn-Smith, and I. Stefanidis (Abingdon 2022).*

Among the subjects which belong to the period treated in this essay and the aftermath is the fate of the Greeks of Constantinople, who included a communal elite which championed the nationalist approach of the Great Idea. A study of the part these Greeks played in the Asia Minor struggle would take a whole essay of its own. It is no surprise that they reflected the dissonance and divisions of the Greek national schism, in ecclesiastic affairs, and in their involvement in the desperate search for a solution to the Asia Minor impasse. The Greek senior officers who took refuge in the City after the change of regime in Greece of November 1920 played an active role in this. Dimitris Kamouzis' book on *Greeks in Turkey* is a good introduction to this important story.⁸⁹

Finally, as noted above, those who wish to go deeper into the history of the Asia Minor tragedy should read the two books which reflect the exhibition 'Heyday — Catastrophe — Displacement — Rebirth', curated by Evita Arapoglou and mounted in Athens, and later in Cyprus, by the Benaki Museum and the Centre for Asia Minor Studies. They should also sample the relevant volumes of *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*⁹⁰ which faithfully record conferences, meetings, and correspondence. Though that may sound dry, some of the contents are far from it. For the experience of victims and refugees, and the memories of the displaced, the series *The Exodus* tells their stories, a project inaugurated by Melpo Merlier at the Centre for Asia Minor Studies and edited by Paschalis M. Kitromilides.⁹¹ There is information about the role of imaginative literature, a subject I have not been able to deal with, in the American School of Classical Studies' *The Asia Minor Catastrophe in Literature Between the Wars*, presented in a bilingual exhibition catalogue. This reveals a literary and artistic field of great interest.⁹²

Evita Arapoglou, whose relationship with Asia Minor is a personal one, wrote movingly in her foreword to the book of the exhibition about the way her father's generation was able to externalize what the first generation, which experienced the catastrophe and displacement, had often not been able to express. These stories resonate with the present generation: they recall the tragedy and they echo the troubles of the world today. Arapoglou wrote about 'the perplexity of those who survive over what has happened, the anxiety about the unknown in the new land where they have found themselves, the gathering of strength for the next day'. She salutes 'the strength for survival, of patient endurance of what is to come, of a thirst to create and for the

89 D. Kamouzis, *Greeks in Turkey: elite nationalism and minority politics in late Ottoman and early republican Istanbul* (Abingdon 2022).*

90 *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, ed. R. Butler and J. Bury, First Series, vol. XV, 1921; see also vol. XIII, ch. XIV.

91 The series consists of the edited testimonies, in Greek, of those who were forced to leave their homes and go into exile. It was republished by *Kathimerini* in 2022 to mark the anniversary of the exodus from areas of Asia Minor which had been occupied by Greeks, mainly the western coastal area, Cappadocia, and Pontus.

92 N. Vogeikoff-Brogan and N. Lemos, *The Epic of Anatolia in the Greek Imagination: the Asia Minor Catastrophe in literature between the wars* Athens (2022).*

start of a new life'. That is the note on which I wish to end this essay. With a thought, too, about the cost and meaning of the events here described. The cost was very great for Greece and Greeks, in the loss of relatives and friends, the upheaval of migration, the pain of separation and the economic disruption. What if any are the gains to set against these? The gain often cited is the increased security of northern Greece, where many of the refugees found homes: areas now occupied by compact bodies of Greek citizens. This gain is substantial for Greece, but cannot be measured against the losses. But we can, like Arapoglou and Kitromilides, salute the resilience and creativity of those who, coming from Asia Minor, created new lives for themselves and their children.

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