The Making of Refugee Memory

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The Making of Refugee Memory:

The Asia Minor Catastrophe, Historical Writing and Life Practices

(Durrell Studies 10)

By

Emilia Salvanou

Cambridge
Scholars
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The Making of Refugee Memory: The Asia Minor Catastrophe, Historical Writing and Life Practices (Durrell Studies 10)

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For my son

Periklis

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SERIES EDITOR'S FOREWORD

When I learned that Emilia Salvanou had published *Η συγκρότηση της προσφυγικής μνήμης: Το παρελθόν ως ιστορία και πρακτική* [*The making of refugee memory: the past as history and practice*] I realised that an English translation would have a natural home as volume 10 in the "Durrell Studies" series (and in fact the concluding volume, under this imprint). "Asia Minor" and "Anatolia", as codewords for displacement and dispossession, have permeated modern Greek history and modern Greek consciousness. Historians, sociologists and critics such as Michael Llewellyn Smith, Renée Hirschon, Bruce Clark, Erik Sjöberg and Thomas Doulis[1] have attested to this unprecedented sense of loss, while many novelists, including Ilias Venezis, Stratis Myrivilis, Stratis Doukas and Dido Sotiriou,[2] have brought the sense of *memory* to bear on the repossession of identity. *Memory* becomes the core of Emilia Salvanou's eloquent reconstruction of that identity in both the politics and the social realities of the new lives experienced by the refugees from the "Anatolian Catastrophe" as it is commonly known.

Lawrence Durrell was especially alert to this catastrophe. He wrote a "Preface" in 1949 to the first English translation of Ilias Venezis' *Aeolia*, in which he observed:

> The tragedy of his expulsion from Anatolia still weighs heavily upon the heart of the modern Greek […] He cannot forget it. If he is an exile he returns again and again to Anatolia in his dreams […] a sense of a lost richness, a lost peace of mind.

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[1] M. Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922* (1973/1998); R. Hirschon, *Heirs of the Asia Minor Catastrophe* (1989); B. Clark, *Twice a Stranger: how mass expulsion forged modern Greece and Turkey* (2006); E. Sjöberg, *The Making of the Greek Genocide* (2017); T. Doulis, *Disaster and Fiction: Modern Greek Fiction and the Asia Minor Disaster of 1922* (1977).

[2] I. Venezis, *Aeolia/Land of Aeolia* (1943/1949/2020); S. Myrivilis, *The Teacher with the Golden Eyes* (1933/1964); S. Doukas, *A Prisoner of War's Story* (1929/1991); D. Sotiriou, *Farewell Anatolia* (1962/1991).

To write that, in the immediate aftermath of the second world war, had extra poignancy for Durrell, due to his friendships, in the exile of Egypt, with two poets whose homes had been in, or near, Smyrna: George Seferiades [Seferis] and Elie Papadimitriou, to both of whom he dedicated his own poems.

In her Introduction and Chapter 1, Emilia Salvanou creates a sense of the Balkan melting-pot in which, following the first world war and the Anatolian Catastrophe, the status of "refugee" was redefined as new nation-states came into being. I have seldom read a more lucid and convincing exposition of how the end of empires (which extended throughout the Balkans) can lead to humanitarian crises. The pain, anxiety and misunderstandings which these two phenomena caused is evident today in our own witnessing of mass-migrations with millions of refugees seeking both to establish new lives and to sustain their own identities. As the author says, "Today we are all refugees". "Evros", which she discusses as a point of reference in the Thracian experience, has today become another codeword for the fragility and peril of borderlands. She refers to "the triangle of trauma, collective memory and identity" in which refugees are trapped, not as individuals but as a social category. Her Chapter 3, "Intermediaries of memory", is central to this dilemma while her case-study of the Thracian experience, in Chapter 4, is exemplary in exploring the way memory of a previous life and its experiences can be integrated into a new sense of meaning and social reality.

In the "Durrell Studies" series we have already benefited from Gail Holst-Warhaft's evocation of the Anatolian memories which permeate the music of Mikis Theodorakis, while her studies of *Rebetika* illustrate the cultural ambiance into which some of the music of Anatolia found its way into modern Greek society.[3] Emilia Salvanou's *The Making of Refugee Memory* adds significantly to our knowledge and appreciation of a searing experience of trauma in the Greek psyche which continues to affect us.

Richard Pine
Durrell Library of Corfu.

[3] G. Holst-Warhaft, *Mikis Theodorakis: His Music and Politics* (Durrell Studies 6), 2023; *The Road to Rembetika* (1975/1994).

PREFACE

The Asia Minor Catastrophe and the refugees it produced is usually a story told within the national contexts of Greece and Turkey respectively, and usually as if the national reality of the expelled had been always monolithic. Most of the relative scholarship is either focussed on one of the two respective sides or, at best, on their comparative approach. What was missing, though, was an approach that would put the Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922 and the refugee movement it caused in a broader context, that of the wars that preceded and followed the First World War. Such a shift would recontextualise the interest in the Asia Minor Catastrophe, in a way that it would become part not only of the Greek or the Turkish history, but of the entangled history of the First World War. That was the scope in which the book was initially written and published in Greek, but the language barrier did not allow for a wider readership. It was a great coincidence that it was translated into Turkish (by Saim Örnek) and published by Kitap Yayinevi, yet still the readership limited the discussion on the book to a comparative approach between Greek and Turkish views or, at best, as a case of shared history. So, when Richard Pine invited me to rework the original book in English for an international readership, I was thrilled with the challenge – the size of which I realised in the process. Rewriting the book in English could not be a mere translation. On the one hand, because it had already been about five years since the first edition, so there were aspects of the research that needed to be updated. But most importantly, because details that made sense for a readership that shared the cultural memory of the exchange were either excessive for an international readership or needed contextualisation (often both). In this sense, the book, as much as it is based on the original Greek edition is not a translation – it is reworked and benefitted from later research and publications on the subject.

Still, the main rationale that sustains the backbone of the book remains more or less the same. First of all, it attempts to understand the way memory sites emerge. For the Greek national memory 1922 is one of its most important sites. It condenses and mediates the memory of violent population movements both of the preceding decade – which began with the Balkan Wars of 1912 and continued with the First World War – the memory of those lost in defeat and fleeing to the route of maritime rescue,

as well as the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1923-24 based on the Treaty of Lausanne. As a site of memory, it is so powerful that even today, when referring to refugees in Greece, despite the contemporary refugee waves, Greeks associatively think of the "refugees of 1922". Retrospectively, those who had fled their homes in 1914 (or even in 1912) were also included in the same category. What materials is this site of memory made of? When Greeks think of these refugees today, they construct the image through the stories that circulate about Asia Minor and the Asia Minor Greeks. Stories that usually concern the violence of persecution but also the peaceful life in places that are retrospectively presented as paradisiacal, thus intensifying the magnitude of loss. These images are created by literature, songs, and cinema, as well as, as the decades pass, through monuments, memorial days, and school history. Indeed, all these are so powerful that they have created a "truth regime" around the history of war and refugees, the questioning of which often equates to an insult to the core of national identity and provokes memory wars.

The second direction which the book attempts to address is to recontextualise the experience of the Asia Minor refugees in Greece in the historical context of the First World War and its consequences. In other words, as opposed to mainstream narratives that the case of Asia Minor refugees was exceptional, the book attempts to put these refugees in the framework of the major refugee waves that the First World War caused and, therefore, to the social, political and cultural adaptations made. The transition from the imperial order of the world to that of the nation states meant that reforms were necessary. And although we usually refer to the initiatives of the states and the international organisations, we rarely take into account the initiatives of the refugees themselves and the strategies they followed in order to shape their future. Turning our gaze to the refugees, or for that matter to those considered underclass, is to correct, even decades later, a historical injustice that added depersonalisation to dislocation and expatriation. This recontextualisation of the history of the refugees from a regional issue to one connected to the First World War and from the margins to the centre of our interest helps us grasp the way in which historical narratives may differ from what happened in the past, how they change through time and most importantly how, along with memory, narratives are often shaped having in mind not only what happened, but the expectations for the future. Furthermore, it underlines that memory is in its core political, and that its carries, along with experience and emotion, individual and collective strategies.

This book would not have come into life without the active support of friends and colleagues. Prof. Antonis Liakos followed this research from its planning through all its stages and turns. Prof. Tatiana Markaki discussed in many different settings the issue of memory politics, and with Dr. Kristina Gedgaudaitė we had many chances to discuss on issues of memory and heritage. Special thanks are owed to Richard Pine for inviting me to contribute to the "Durrell Studies" series and for following the making of the book in every step.

The structure of the book

The shaping of national ideology is not only a state issue. It is not imposed only in a top-down manner. On the contrary, it takes form in the space where institutionalised ideology meets local narratives.[4] This book will explore how refugees, who were economically and socially marginalised, succeeded in challenging the dominant narrative of what Greekness was about and in creating space for their inclusion. The triangle of trauma, collective memory, and identity forms the core of this book. However, it is a triangular relationship that is not a given but in a constant process of construction.

Most of the examples used in this study come from the associations of refugees who originated from Thrace. However, they concern not only them. More than being just another study about Thrace, the book aims to highlight the grammar of integration of refugees into the national imagination: the content may vary depending on the case, but both practices and narratives follow a common structure. Therefore, Thrace is used as a case study; while it has its specific characteristics, as the other refugee groups do, it follows the main lines of integration that apply to the interwar refugees in Greece. That is the reason why often the term "Anatolian refugees" is used, although geographically Thrace is not in Anatolia. It is a term used to describe the shared experience of Christian refugees to Greece during and after the First World War and until the Exchange of Populations in 1924. Interestingly enough the experience has become shared not only from the reality of expatriation, but due to the way the refugees were received in Greece.

[4] On locality and nationalisation see among others I. Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*. On the way associations make space of inclusion see J. Bodnar, *Remaking America*.

The first chapter, “Refugees of the First World War”, discusses how refugees of the interwar period, contrary to previous historical periods, emerged as a distinct social category that played a critical role in shaping the society of modernity. In a brief introduction, the chapter examines the refugee phenomenon in the European context and the way the emergence of the modern refugee is connected both with the experience of the First World War and the massive population movements it caused, and with the need to organise the world that emerged thereafter. It then focusses on the refugee phenomenon in the Greek context, approaching it both in its historicity – how it was formed as an aspect of the Balkan nationalisation process in the early twentieth century – and in its social role in the interwar context. It focusses on the mutual dynamic that developed between the state and the refugees and the way refugees served as a catalyst for implementing a series of structural reforms that concerned not only refugees but the entire Greek society.

The second chapter, “War and Refugees as a Historiographical Event”, deals with the historiographical trajectories through which the First World War was conceptualised and constituted as a historiographical event within different national contexts. Regarding the Greek case, we focus not on the historiographical construction of the war *per se*, but on the way the narrative is created through the history of refugees and their attempt to integrate into Greek society and the national imagination. In this context, we examine the different questions that arise as the historical context changes and generations of historians evolve, as well as how gradually the interest shifts from the grand narrative of the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the political rivalries associated with it, to the inclusion of the history of refugees not only in the national context but also in that of the dissolution and nationalisation of the Ottoman Empire.

The third chapter, “Intermediaries of Memory”, brings refugees and their intellectuals to the forefront of historical events and transforms them from objects into subjects of historical narration. How did the refugees themselves speak about the experience of war and displacement, especially when there was no space for it in the official narrative of national memory? How were the multiple voices of individual memory mediated, how were they composed to shape the collective narrative of refugees? Through which institutional channels did they negotiate their past to become recognisable to their new compatriots, the native Greeks, and gradually overcome social exclusion? These are some of the questions that will occupy us in this chapter.

The fourth chapter, "The making of refugee memory: the case of Thracian refugees", focusses on the case of the Thracian Centre, the largest and longest-standing association of Thracian refugees in Athens. The goal is not to examine this association as a particular case of a refugee organisation, but as an example of the politics of memory that developed in almost all refugee associations of the time. Therefore, it starts with the assumption that history is a cultural relation with the past and that this relationship is shaped through historical narratives and historical practices and follows how these two were developed in the framework of the association, resulting in the shaping of a refugee memory that appeared cohesive, communicative, cultural and most importantly public until the mid-1960s.

The Aftermath comments on aspects of the refugee memory that have not been included in the mainstream narrative that the study follows.

Lastly, one small clarification on the use of the terms nationalise/ nationalisation that appear throughout the book. As opposed to their mainstream meaning in English – to take something into state ownership – when used in this study the terms mean to include something otherwise alien or marginal to the national imaginary and therefore to endorse it into the national narrative and memory.

GLOSSARY

This Glossary gives a brief survey of references in the text which may not be familiar to readers outside Greece. In particular, the survey focusses on the core period **1821 to 1922**; that is, from the start of the Greek war of independence until the "Asia Minor Catastrophe" of 1922, with which this book is principally concerned. The Glossary is arranged chronologically.

- **Greek revolution of 1821** (also referred to as the national revolution or Greek war of independence): it refers to the war between the Ottoman Empire and Greek revolutionaries between 1821 and 1829, resulting in the formation of the first Greek nation state (Greek Kingdom) in 1830.

- ***Megáli idéa* / Great idea:** The "Great Idea" appeared as a term in 1844, during the debate in the National Assembly concerning the civil rights of Greeks who lived in the Greek state and those from regions that remained within the Ottoman Empire. From that point onwards, it became a political programme that defined the domestic and foreign policy of the Greek state, based mainly on the idea that Greekness does not coincide with the limits of the Greek state.

- **Treaty of San Stefano 1878**: The Treaty of San Stefano ended the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, in which the Ottoman Empire was defeated. Its most important consequence was the establishment of an independent Bulgarian principality, and the recognition of the independence of Serbia, Montenegro and Romania. It is usually referred to in relation to the emergence of competing national claims in the Balkans.

- **Bulgarian Exarchate:** was the name of the Bulgarian Church from **1872**, when it claimed its autonomy (autocephaly) from the Ecumenical Patriachate. Its autocephaly was recognised by the Sublime Port, despite the disagreement of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The foundation of the Exarchate was connected to the rise of Bulgarian nationalism.

- **Treaty of Berlin 1878:** The Treaty of Berlin was part of the Congress of Berlin and replaced the Treaty of San Stefano. Unlike the previous one, it was signed by the major political powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Russia and the Ottoman Empire). It revised the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano, limiting the gains of Russia and providing for a smaller Bulgaria (which although autonomous was under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire) and creating the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia, which was also under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire but was to have a Christian governor.

- **Young Turk Revolution (1908):** The Young Turk Revolution was a revolt against the reign of the Sultan Abdülhamid II. It was empowered by the emergence of the Young Turk movement, a coalition of liberal Turkish groups, many of which were formed by emigrés in Paris, aimed at the modernisation of the Ottoman Empire, in the direction of democracy and national sovereignty. As a result of the revolution of 1908, a constitutional government was established in the Empire and constitutional rights were granted to all Ottoman subjects. Nevertheless, soon after, and with the spiral of nationalism taking over the Balkans, Young Turks became the pioneer group of Turkish nationalism and played a crucial role in the Turkish War of Independence.

- **Goudi Coup 1909:** A military coup in Athens in 1909 which led to the arrival of Eleftherios Venizelos as prime minister to Greece. It is considered a turning point for the political system in Greece.

- **National Schism**: The National Schism was a division that led the country to the brink of civil war in **1915**. It began as a disagreement **between King Constantine and prime minister Eleftherios Venizelos** on whether Greece should enter the First World War on the side of the Entente (Allied forces of Britain, France and Russia), as Venizelos argued, or remain neutral (which would favour the Central Powers), as King Constantine argued. The disagreement culminated when the "National Defence" established a rival government in Thessaloniki in 1916, which was eventually joined by Eleftherios Venizelos. The country was divided, with two governments, and most importantly, with the supporters of Venizelos (Venizelists) and the supporters of King Constantine (Royalists/Anti-Venizelists) caught in a spiral of enmities. Although the Schism ended in 1917, when the Allied Powers ousted King Constantine and supported Eleftherios

Venizelos to move his government to Athens, the climate of the Schism and the political tension and enmity between Venizelists and Royalists defined the political climate in Greece through the interwar period.

- **November events of 1916:** A series of violent events that broke out in Athens and nearby areas in connection with the National Schism. After the "National Defence" formed a government in Thessaloniki, a royalist paramilitary unit targeted Venizelists in Athens and nearby areas. In a culmination of the violent events, in November 1916, the royal paramilitary units (known as Epistratoi) confronted in Athens soldiers of the Entente. The clash resulted in deaths on both sides and in a reign of terror against Venizelists in Athens, including refugees from Anatolia, who were considered supporters of Venizelos.

- **Armistice of Mudros 1919:** The pact between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Forces that marked the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War.

- **Paris Peace Conference / Treaty of Versailles (1919-1920):** The Paris Peace Conference was a series of diplomatic meetings among the parties involved in the First World War that aimed to bring the war to a diplomatic end. Its major result was the formation of the League of Nations and the five peace treaties with the defeated states. The first of these treaties was the **Treaty of Versailles** (the peace treaty with defeated Germany, 1919) and the other four were the **Treaty of Saint-Germain** (1919) with Austria, the **Treaty of Neuilly** (1919) with Bulgaria, the **Treaty of Trianon** (1920) with Hungary and the **Treaty of Sèvres** (1920) with the Ottoman Empire.

- **Treaty of Lausanne (1923):** The Treaty of Lausanne was the final Treaty of the First World War, which was signed by Turkey on the one side and Britain, Italy, France, Japan, Greece, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on the other. As far as Greek-Turkish history is concerned, the treaty is marked by its convention concerning the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations – an exchange that was compulsory and was decided based on the religion of the populations to be exchanged.

- **Treaty of Ankara 1930:** The treaty is also known as the **Treaty of Friendship between Greece and Turkey.** The treaty affirmed the respect of boundaries between Greece and Turkey, and settled property

claims for refugees on both sides. Diplomatically it is considered an achievement of **Elefterios Venizelos** and **Mustafa Kemal Ataturk**. On the other hand, it created discord among the refugees in Greece towards Venizelos, since it was perceived as an unjust settling of their property claims.

- **1936 dictatorship (also known as Metaxas dictatorship):** it was an authoritarian regime under the leadership of General Ioannis Metaxas in Greece from 1936 to 1941. It re-established the monarchy and had strong fascist and anticommunist traits.

- **Other references:**

- **Karamanlides/Karamanlis**: Turkish speaking Greek Orthodox population in the South East region of Anatolia. Their written language was Turkish, written with the Greek alphabet.

- **The "Cold War"**: The "Cold War" (1947-1991) was a period of significant geopolitical tension between the Western and the Eastern blocs (the USA and the USSR, along with their respective allies) that followed the end of the Second World War. It was marked by a strong ideological struggle between liberalism and communism, characterised by a focus on armaments and on the development of nuclear weapons.

INTRODUCTION

Greeks originating from Asia Minor, the region of Pontos, Eastern and Northern Thrace (collectively referred to as "refugees"), the status of refugee and the related collective experience and the Asia Minor Catastrophe are fundamental elements of national historical memory and culture in contemporary Greece. Collectively, as a site of memory, the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the related events are conventionally referred to as "1922". The memory of Asia Minor Greeks is present in the family memory of those originating from across the Aegean, in their surnames and their cuisine, the photographs they pass down through the generations, their songs, the Turkish words that insist on surviving in everyday language, the ornaments and artifacts that remain current in families and remind them of the life "there". It is also present as part of the communal memory, especially as far as refugee associations and their historical practices are concerned, as for example are the excursions to Asia Minor, the annual commemoration ceremonies, celebrations and exhibitions, the preservation and recirculation of Asia Minor culture, the journals they publish. It is also part of the national cultural memory, in the sense that it is referred to as the exemplary national trauma which has unanimous acceptance from Greek society and does not raise any issues of difference or guilt like other sites of traumatic memory do.

In all its manifestations, the memory of 1922 has a dramatic undertone. And, as the trauma of the catastrophe itself is set against the narrative of how the Greek state addressed it, it has become an archetype of the way in which historicity is perceived in the Greek national ideology: either referring to the Greek nation in general or specifically to the refugees, the movement between the catastrophe and its successful resolution signifies the nation's resilience and the power it has to be reborn from its ashes. In this sense, it is a story of sacrifice and heroism. Its place is so central, that over time it has constituted a truth regime: acknowledging the site as such, its traumatic nature and the refugee drama as unapparelled events in modern Greek history is almost obligatory if loyalty to the state and nation is not to be called in question. Taking this for granted, though, this narrative hinders any possibility of understanding its historicity and the ways in which it came into the making.

Past and history are often perceived as interchangeable concepts. They are not. If the past is a sea of events and experiences, we should think of history as a selective narrative, which includes only the events (along with their interpretations) that are rendered as meaningful in a given period. Additionally, the process is dynamic, as historical narratives are constantly rewritten, so as to become relative to the time of their production. History and the past are in a constant dynamic relation. Historicising the past means that a community needs first to disassociate itself from it, so as to be able to see it critically and from a distance. Only then can the community relate anew to its past and reframe it as history. The critical point here is emotions: While emotions are an inseparable aspect of history, they need to be worked through before being historicised. It is a different condition from what holds true in memory. In the field of memory, the past enters with force into the present, and emotions are raw and unprocessed, often becoming building blocks of identity formation.[1]

Even if today refugees are central to the memory narrative of 1922, the case was not always such. And when refugees eventually became part of the narrative, it did not happen without difficulties. During the First World War and the Interwar period, refugees were not the subjects that the trauma referred to. On the contrary, they were perceived as a social problem that needed attention and that potentially put at risk social order and cohesion. The traumatic nature of the event was articulated around the defeat in the Greek-Turkish war and the subsequent abandonment of the attempt to materialise the political programme of the Great Idea – with all the ideological implications such an abandonment had. The story that this book aims to tell is how the contemporary site of memory of 1922 was articulated through time. In other words, it is not a book about what happened in the Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922 or about the process of the refugee restoration. There is already an extensive and meticulous scholarship on both of these subjects.[2] On the contrary, it aims to explore the making of refugee memory. What were the processes and memory politics through which refugee memory shifted from being a personal memory or a marginalised collective memory to being at the centre of the memory site of 1922 and of the national historical memory as a whole? At

[1] Α. Λιάκος, *Πώς το παρελθόν*, [A. Liakos, *How the past*], p. 211 ff.

[2] Among others, R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean*; Α. Λιάκος (ed.), *Το 1922 και οι πρόσφυγες*, [A. Liakos (ed.), *1922 and the refugees*]; V. Lytra, *When Greeks and Turks meet*; Κ. Τσιτσελίκης (ed.), *Η ελληνοτουρκική ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών* [K. Tsitselikis, *The Greek-Turkish population exchange*]; Σ. Πλουμίδης, *Τα μυστήρια της Αιγηίδος*, [S. Ploumidis, *The mysteries of Aegiis*].

the same time, though, it tells a story of a transformation: what did it take for a marginalised memory to become institutionalised? How does it make space for itself in an existing memory culture? What kind of adaptations does it take – by whom and who do they affect? How does it become relatable to groups that have no relevant experience in their personal or family history? Do aspects of memory become whitewashed or silenced in the process? Does cultural memory form new types of identities that, although new, claim their authenticity through projecting their existence in the past? How did refugee memory become part of the national memory and the historical culture of contemporary Greece? These are the main questions that this book aims to explore.

These questions, though, should not narrow our frame in a way that we approach the Asia Minor Catastrophe and its memory as issues that concern solely the Greek national history or as exceptional events, dissociated from their historical context. On the contrary, it is crucial that we open our lens and contextualise the Greek case in the broader scope of the First World War and the ideological, political, and social fermentations that it caused and that defined the interwar period. Asia Minor refugees are not a self-contained phenomenon, nor could their production be interpreted only as part of Greek, Ottoman and Turkish history. During the First World War and its aftermath, millions of refugees sought shelter all over Europe, after having becoming stateless due to the collapse of the historical empires of the continent. Their presence, along with the serious social and economic consequences of war and its casualties regarding human lives, put the prewar certainties into question – including the idea of progress and the patterns of political organisation. The refugees functioned as a visible reminder that the old world had ended and that there was a pressing need to organise societies, economies, identities and discourses anew. On the other hand, it would be fair to say that, even if the need for transition from the prewar condition to interwar modernity was obvious, it was not self-understood that the memory and the narratives of the refugees would find space in the new context. The appreciation of memory as a valid way to relate to the past in contexts broader than personal or communal has its own historicity and demanded longer time and additional historical traumas in order to be acknowledged.

This book argues that the story of refugee integration in interwar Greece was not as smooth as it is narrated today – after three or four generations from the event. And it did not happen without resistance and serious memory work. Refugees were not socially accepted as people who shared a Greek ethnicity and, besides the serious challenges of dealing with their

uprooting and with the problems of everyday life, they had additional complexities to face. Anti-refugee feelings had already manifested in Greek society during the First World War and were closely connected to the National Schism. The main slogan due to which Liberals lost the elections of 1920 was "Bring them home", referring to the soldiers who were fighting in Asia Minor. Although such an attitude can be attributed to the fatigue continuous wars had caused (Greece, with small breaks, was at war from the Balkan Wars, 1912, onwards), fatigue does not fully explain the reluctance. On the contrary, one could argue Asia Minor was not fully integrated in the national imaginary – at least not to an extent that Greek soldiers continued to die for its "liberation". This quasi-inclusion was after all the case for the regions that were integrated into Greece after the Balkan Wars as well – with many of the inhabitants talking about imperialistic politics implemented in Macedonia by the Greek state. How would this barrier of exclusion or at least marginalistion be overcome and population groups referred to as "coming from the land of the Turks" or "baptised in yogurt" (which was a discriminating reference to the way that Ottoman Greeks shared a similar cuisine with Muslims) come to be considered as fully Greek citizens?

The challenge here was twofold: on the one hand it was about dealing with the marginalisation of refugees by Greek society and their perception as liminal subjects on the threshold of the national imaginary. On the other hand, it was about convincing the refugees to develop a national aspect in their identities, that would make their inclusion more feasible. Both were demanding challenges. All over Europe, refugees were constructed as the new social underclass. The problem was so acute, that new-born international organisations, such as the League of Nations, paid special attention to elaborating a framework for the social and political inclusion of the refugees and, as expected, policies for their rehabilitation. So, it was by no means a Greek peculiarity. On the contrary, since in Europe the League of Nations had to deal with uprooted populations earlier and more intensively in 1919 at the borders of the USSR and Poland, in the case of Greece and Turkey provisions were taken already at the stage of the signing of the treaties. The Treaty of Lausanne provided that uprooted populations from both countries would be granted the citizenship of the country to which they were headed (i.e. Greece and Turkey respectively). [3] Tellingly enough, in the Treaty the term used is not "refugees" but "emigrants", a term that on the one hand discerned them from the stateless

[3] Α. Σαλβάνου, *Αρρώστια και περίθαλψη*, [A. Salvanou, *Illness and relief*], p. 146.

populations that the war had produced and on the other defined a normative framework for their political and social management.[4] So, in the case of Greece, the use of the term "refugees" echoed mostly cultural perception of the newcomers' status, that was only gradually adopted by them through a series of performative practices (that is practices that were regularly repeated, often compulsory, resulting in the embodiment or the imposed identity) – as for example registration at the ports of arrival and refugee identification cards used by the Committee for the Rehabilitation of Refugees.[5]

In the new societies where they found themselves, refugees became the new "underclass". They were perceived as aliens who do not belong to the country they had found themselves in, in a void of social and political place. Additionally, they were perceived as dangerous – a danger that, after the war has ended, had moved from outside the nation into a society that was imagined ideally as homogenous, threatening the wellbeing of the native population.[6] Poverty and illness only made such perceptions worse. The homogenised perception of the refugees by the natives obscured the differences among the refugees that often became acute. For example, locality and culture (often the combination of the two) prevailed in the way in which refugees defined their identities, echoing the community identity they had developed while living in the Ottoman Empire. How would the experienced identity ferment into an imagined national one? And what adaptations and working through regarding cultural and social differences would this process call for? Among the refugees were people who had arrived in Greece earlier, to pursue university studies, business or political careers. This is because, according to the Lausanne Treaty, refugee status was granted to all who had arrived in Greece from the Ottoman Empire since 1912. So, individuals who originated from the Ottoman Empire but were well established in the Greek society and its social, economic, political and cultural networks mediated the process of the refugees' integration.

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[4] Σύμβασις περί Ανταλλαγής των Ελληνικών και Τουρκικών Πληθυσμών και πρωτόκολλον υπογραφέντα τη 30η Ιανουαρίου 1923 [Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations]. Also M. Repoussi, "La Grèce et la Turquie"; O. Yildirim, "Diplomats and refugees"; R. Hirschon, *Crossing the Aegean*.

[5] M. Βαρλάς, «Η διαμόρφωση της προσφυγικής μνήμης>>[M. Varlas, "The shaping of refugee memory"].

[6] On similar cases of refugees and migrants perceived as dangerous see T. Gallant, *Violent August*.

How did this mediation work? In previous decades we would talk about organic intellectuals – that is about intellectuals who have organic ties with a group and who articulate through cultural practices what the majority lack the intellectual resources to articulate. Today, with the new lenses and theoretical framework we use to approach the past, we would attempt a different path in understanding the process. We would care to understand not only the crucial role that the mediators played and the material means that made the intermediation possible, but also how mediation shaped a new reality, both for the refugees and the natives and formed a new "truth regime".[7] Through this process both groups changed and the foundations of modern Hellenicity were established.[8] A key point of the process was the shaping of collective memory (both communicative and cultural) as well as the way in which the uprooting contributed to its formation. In other words, the intellectuals with refugee origin became the catalyst for a process that transformed the interwar refugees and with them the Greek society as an entity.[9]

What were the main features of this process? The practices adopted aimed not only to intervene in how Greekness was perceived by the natives, but at the reconstitution of refugee identities as well. It was not a Greek peculiarity. As relevant scholarship has established, in refugee and immigrant communities a dynamic balance is developed between practices of resistance and questioning the dominant framework of power and imposed categorisations on the one hand, and practices of inclusion developed by refugees and migrants themselves.[10] In the case of Asia Minor refugees, the role of memory work and renegotiating the past was central in this process, having both discursive and practical aspects. Moreover, this centrality was justified. In order for a refugee or migrant community to be included in a host community, it is crucial that shared spaces are found (or created), so that they can serve as points of reference.[11] Such spaces can relate to religion (which was by definition the case with refugees from the Ottoman Empire), language, customs, history. With the exception of large urban coastal communities of Anatolia, rarely all these characteristics coexisted as far as the refugees of 1922 are

[7] Μ. Φουκώ, *Εξουσία, γνώση, ηθική* [M. Foucault, *The birth of the clinic*], p. 35.
[8] See Δ. Τζιόβας, *Οι μεταμορφώσεις του εθνισμού* [D. Tziovas, *The transformations of ethnicity*].
[9] On the way in which historians participate in the shaping of national ideology see S. Berger and C. Lorenz (eds.), *Nationalizing the past*, pp. 1-25.
[10] See for example A. Ong, *Budha is hiding*, p. 276.
[11] A. Huyssen, "Diaspora and nation"; E. Salvanou, "Muslims in Athens".

concerned. In each community different elements prevailed, based on its lived experience. If, for example, the Karamanlides, who were Christian Turkophones, balanced the lack of sharing the same language with native Greeks with systematic cultivation of historiography even before the uprooting, the Bafralis, who were also Turkophones, addressed the social stigma by systematically developing and investing in their religious identity.[12]

In any case, religion was not a problem for national integration. On the contrary, it was the main connecting feature. The challenging part was integrating locality in the national imaginary. In order to do so, locality as a geographical space and locality as a space in history were the two points around which the new narrative, that would facilitate inclusion, needed to be articulated. In other words, the goal was to "translate" the refugees' past, their recent experience and the way they understood their historicity, in a way that would be meaningful for native Greeks. Therefore "translation" was a cultural practice, which made the "text" of the past intelligible and transform it into a bridge between two cultural systems.[13]

As far as the narrative is concerned, the translation would mean that the past of the Anatolian Greeks needed to be aligned to the schema of Greek national history and its sense of continuity – well established in the country since the nineteenth century. This would contribute to convincing natives that refugees were co-ethnics, despite possible cultural differences. But it would not be enough. In order for the translation to be successful, it would not be materialised only in discursive terms. Developing a national identity among the refugees, or in other words putting experienced identities based on religion and locality in national frames, called for historical practices. By adopting and systematically performing practices that transformed the past into lived experience, the refugees gradually shaped new identities that on the one hand did not negate existing ones while on the other becoming meaningful in the Greek context. [14] Refugee associations, their journals and the cultural and historical practices they adopted gradually created new collective identities that were articulated around reference to a shared national past and at the same time were

[12] On Karamanlides, I. Petropoulou, "Changing frames of historiography" and S. Anagnostopoulou, "Greek diplomatic authorities in Anatolia". On Bafralis, N. Μαραντζίδης, *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ* [N.Marantzidis, *Yasasin Millet*].
[13] G. Spivak, "The politics of translation", pp. 179-200.
[14] On the importance of historical practices see P. Herman, "Performing History".

performed in the present and orientated towards the prospect of the refugees' integration along with their cultural identities.

The study of memory

Refugee memory raises a more general question: how do we study memory? Is it a reliable source for approaching the past? How is it related to history? Often memory is perceived as history's stepchild: it may refer to the past, but it is always "lagging behind" history's "objectivity". Memory sometimes distorts what happened in the past, carrying with it emotions, often revealing more about how emotion or knowledge gained afterwards translated the experience than about events themselves.[15] That's why it is dynamic, flexible, and susceptible to change. However, its role is crucial if we wish to understand how the past is remembered both by those who lived through it and by those to whom it was bequeathed – often as moral debt. After all, we often talk much more about the debt to memory than about the debt to history. Or, more precisely, when we talk about the debt to history, we usually refer to the debt to the (expected) future, while when we talk about debt to memory, we usually refer to the debt towards the past and the wounds it carries.[16] The separation between history and memory occurred in the nineteenth century, with the shaping of history as a scientific field and the prevalence of historicism as a dominant example of historical knowledge. The detailed and precise reference to the "archive", the need for thorough cross-referencing and verification of information, the almost metaphysical perception that the truth about the past is hidden in the archive and the historical narratives of historicism, formed a framework in which memory and its subjectivity had no place.[17]

However, people continued to experience daily life – experiences that did not always fit into the official historical narratives. Discontent increased because experience did not fit existing forms of historical narrative. The First World War served as the framework through which the contemplation of memory began to gradually take shape.[18] Not as a biological phenomenon – that had already begun to develop by the end of the nineteenth century and was mainly linked to significant advances in medicine – but as collective memory, as the way a community of people gives meaning to the individual and collective experiences of its members.

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[15] D. L. Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory*, p. 9.
[16] See Y. H. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor*.
[17] Α. Λιάκος, *Πώς το παρελθόν* [A. Liakos, *How the past*], pp. 81-89.
[18] P. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*.

In this sense, the First World War largely redefined the questions people posed about their past and how they envisioned its reconstruction. The goal was to find space for the experiences of ordinary people, for the history that would not be recorded by the war stories or national histories. Regardless of its outcome for each of those involved, this war was a deep trauma for the European world. A trauma in the psychoanalytic sense, i.e. a rupture in continuity, and a trauma in the sense of an open wound, one that demands immediate healing to enable the transition to a new condition. The immediate, the utterly apparent in daily life, was the millions of dead and wounded, both soldiers and civilians. Although precise calculations are difficult, if not impossible, recent research estimates that more than 10,000,000 soldiers were killed, and in many cases (such as in the Ottoman Empire, for example), the civilians who died due to the war's hardships exceeded the battle deaths.[19] The losses of human lives in this war surpassed all previous records. The picture was complemented by the refugees. Millions uprooted, sacrificed in the name of reorganising Europe into nation-states. What would happen to their stories? What meaning would the disabled, uprooted, and orphaned give to their suffering to find the strength to continue living?

The discussion about memory and its mechanisms that had developed in the years preceding the First World War provided the framework within which contemplations of memory as a collective and social phenomenon were subsequently formed. Already by the end of the nineteenth century and especially in the first two decades of the twentieth century, intellectuals such as the French philosopher Henri Bergson, the German art historian Aby Warburg, the English psychologist, social anthropologist, and psychiatrist W.H.R. Rivers, the French writer Marcel Proust, the German writer Thomas Mann, and the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud had shaped the framework for a discussion about memory, focussing though on its biological and individual dimensions. After the First World War though, the focus shifted, with Maurice Halbwachs' work pioneering in this shift. In his work *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, published in 1925, (and later translated as "On Collective Memory") Halbwachs departed from the previous discussion on memory, arguing on the one hand that memory is not individual but a collective affair, and on the other hand, that it does not concern the recall of experiences that have happened in the past but the rational reconstruction of the past with

[19] A. Prost, "The dead".

elements and mechanisms of the group.[20] He argued that, while individual memories may fade, collective memory survives and passes from generation to generation through mechanisms and practices adopted by the community. Therefore, for Halbwachs, memory is more about the present than it is about the past and is always social – both in its formation and transmission. This approach to memory – that memory is a process that concerns the present, is collective, and has materiality – was decisive for how states managed the memory of the First World War in the interwar period.

This issue may not have directly influenced historical studies at the time – the transition required more time and more major traumatic global experiences. It was reflected, however, in the practices adopted by the nation-states regarding the dead of the war. It was the first time in European history that such a systematic effort was made to preserve the memory of the war and its victims through a process that would clarify the meaning of an otherwise senseless sacrifice. What was the meaning of this sacrifice? It probably differed from nation to nation, in relation to each one's cultural background. In some cases, such as in France, the emphasis was on sacrifice through loss of life, while in others, like Germany, the focus shifted more towards the destructiveness of the war.[21] In any case, throughout Europe, monuments were erected specifically for this purpose (obelisks, heroes' monuments, military cemeteries, tombs, cenotaphs dedicated to the Unknown Soldier), which constituted the centre of related memory ceremonies. Undoubtedly, many times these monuments and the memory associated with them were instrumentalised and incorporated into the political designs of the nation-states.[22] However, the critical issue at this point is different. It concerns how collective memory functioned during this period as a means to reaffirm the bonds and identity of the community – bonds that had been affected by the traumas and losses of war.

Jan Assmann contributes to this discussion by introducing the concept of cultural memory. Assmann argues that Halbwachs' position, that memory is confined to the lifespan of the individuals participating in a society, is problematic. Therefore, he distinguishes between communicative and

[20] Ρ. Μπενβενίστε, "Ο M. Halbwachs και το ζήτημα της μνήμης" [R. Benveniste, "M. Halbwachs and the issue of memory"].
[21] J. Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 70.
[22] On Greece and Bulgaria, Σ. Πλουμίδης, *Έδαφος και μνήμη στα Βαλκάνια* [S. Ploumidis, *Land and memory in the Balkans*].