

## Introduction

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It is a sad honor to dedicate this volume 14 issue of the *American Journal of Contemporary Hellenic Issues* to two dear friends and close associates of the American Hellenic Institute that we have lost: Aristide D. Caratzas (September 30, 1945- June 16, 2016) and James L. Marketos (March 24, 1954-May 13, 2022). The dedication is especially appropriate, because the contents relate directly to subjects and issues they were both passionate about. I first met Aristide in 1974 at Columbia University where we worked together to help establish a Modern Greek Studies program. This began a close collaboration and friendship that lasted throughout his life and resulted in many projects focused on the promotion of Hellenic national issues, and Byzantine and Modern Greek history, including two books. It was Aristide who introduced me to Gene Rossides in the midst of the effort to convince Congress to initiate an embargo over the Cyprus invasion. I first met Jim in 1998 when he served as Chairman of the American Hellenic Institute, and I was a speaker at a conference in Washington D.C. on Turkey and Human Rights that he helped organize. From that point on, we had frequent contact concerning Greek national issues of common interest, and I saw him whenever I was invited to Washington by AHI to make a presentation.

Both Aristide and Jim, were accomplished writers and scholars as well as men of action. They quickly rose to the occasion to speak “truth to power” whenever Greece was maligned or critical issues concerning human rights, democracy or territorial rights were threatened. They were often among the first voices in the Greek American community to speak out, whether the issue was the theft of Macedonian identity, or the crisis in the Aegean over Imia. Both were also particularly passionate about the Anatolian genocide and the Smyrna catastrophe, and often wrote and lectured on the subject. As I gathered together the contents of this issue, I often felt their influence and guidance, and I know that they would have been especially proud of it. I join Nick Larigakis and AHI in dedicating it to their eternal memory—Aionia e Mneme.

As I write this, Ukraine is in the midst of an offensive to regain its territory from the illegal, brutal, and immoral Russian invasion and Russia itself has just experienced what appears to have been an attempt to topple and/or check the regime of Vladimir Putin. Both events remind us of the importance of maintaining European territorial integrity based on the rule of law, and the fragile nature of democratic institutions and their continued erosion in the face of powerful elites and arbitrary authority. At the same time, recent elections in both Greece and Turkey have returned their incumbents to power, and it remains to be seen if this stability will result in any improvement in their relations. The coming year, 2024, will mark a half century since the illegal invasion and occupation of Cyprus' northern part, a precedent in the use of aggression to justify a supposed protection of the rights of a kindred ethnic minority in another state, which is directly relevant to the Ukraine crisis. An active concern is Turkey's continued use of its status as a NATO member to pressure the United States and the West, to enable it to increase its military capabilities by obtaining F-16 fighter jets in order to pursue what it perceives to be its political and economic interests in the region by threatening its neighbors.

These current vital issues are well illustrated and represented by the contents of volume fourteen of our *Journal*, and the scholars who have contributed them, draw upon historical precedents which enable us to understand their evolution, what the stakes are, and how we can learn from the past, to build a better future. Panayotis G. Agelarakis's discussion of the complex legal issues concerning Greek island sovereignty, is a timely assessment of the background to Turkey's continued illegal violations of Greek airspace and the disputing of Greece's sovereignty over several Aegean islands whose status has been settled by the Treaty of Lausanne and its successors. As Agelarakis' analysis shows, the distortion and misuse of international law by the Erdogan regime is nothing more than a systematic attempt to justify its expansionist agenda in order to threaten its Eastern neighbors with aggression which could result in further destabilization of the European border system in the Aegean and elsewhere.

The articles by Christopher and Ismini Lamb, and Ilias Chrissochoridis, concern the recognition and importance of truth and responsibility when states commit horrific acts of genocide upon the innocent as part of extremist nationalist agendas. In this connection, they discuss and provide vital insights concerning Turkey's genocide of its Anatolian Christian minorities during the first decades of the twentieth century. The Lambs focus upon an analysis of U.S. Consul Horton's revelations concerning official U.S. policies during the Asia Minor catastrophe and why the truth still matters. It is based on their important new biography of Horton, who was in Smyrna before and after the First World

War, and they utilize a wide variety of unpublished official and unofficial sources including Horton's diary and letters. Similarly, Ilias Chrissochoridis analyzes and makes available for the first time, an unpublished report written by H.C. Jaquith, the Managing Director of the Near East Relief, concerning the Turkish occupation of Smyrna and its destruction in 1922, drawn from the Hoover archives at Stanford University. The report was written at the request of the U.S. High Commissioner in Constantinople, Admiral Bristol, and is based on Jaquith's diary. Both articles provide compelling documentary evidence from impartial American eyewitness, that show that Kemal's troops were responsible for the massacre of innocent civilians and the fire that destroyed the Christian sections of the city, facts which Turkey continues to deny.

The article by Constantine P. Danopoulos concerning the responsiveness and quality of democracy in Greece is extremely timely and important, given the elections that just took place in Greece. In fact, former President Barak Obama was recently in Athens where he attended a gathering of future leaders sponsored by his foundation. CNN carried an interview live from the Greek capital in which he discussed the challenges faced by democracy around the world and its prospects for the future. Danopoulos presents a sweeping and penetrating analysis of Greece's social and political challenges and democratic evolution during the last fifty years, and especially during the debt crisis. A central theme of his discussion is whether various governments acted responsibly or responsively and how a lack of fundamental reforms was handled over time. After a detailed analysis, he states that: "The preceding discussion make clear that post-1974 democratic governments in Greece tended to act more responsively than responsibly. This was true with center-right as well as center-left cabinets." His conclusion, however, strikes what I consider a very hopeful note, he writes that: "Despite its many failures and shortcomings, liberal democracy in Greece seems to have survived a baptism of fire in fairly good shape and is poised to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the not too-distant future." In reading this conclusion, I am reminded that Greece is also still celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> year anniversary from its war of liberation from Ottoman tyranny. I would like to think that General Makrygiannis and his generation would smile in reading Danopoulos' conclusion.

Finally, our Journal issue presents three reviews of important books, all related to the themes, issues and values I have already outlined. John Frangos discusses Roderick Beaton's *Greece: Biography of a Modern Nation* which presents an overview of modern Greek history from 1821 onwards. As Frangos makes clear, Beaton is comprehensive but also discusses not only unique aspects of the Greek people's historical journey but also

its pitfalls, divisions as well as its triumphs. Stavros Stavrides reviews an important new collection of studies edited by Konstantinos Travlos, *Salvation and Catastrophe: the Greek-Turkish War, 1919-1922*, a period on which he is an acknowledged expert. As he points out, all of the contributions are well-researched with copious endnotes that make use of Greek and Turkish primary sources that are difficult to access in the English-speaking world. It is a book that is indispensable for anyone who wishes to better understand the military aspects of this crucial period. I have also contributed a brief review of a new book that concerns the Greek Revolution, entitled: *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence*, edited by Yianni Cartlege and Andrekos Varna, which I think stands out for its treatment of subjects not often dealt with, and for presenting interesting insights during a period when so many other fine and important books have been published for the bicentennial. Although its contents were contributed by an international team of authors, the volume was initiated and supported by Greek institutions in Australia, and so, also represents that vibrant and influential center of Hellenism which continues to make important contributions to the scholarship on Modern Greece.