

Konstantinos Travlos (ed), *Salvation and Catastrophe: the Greek-Turkish War, 1919-1922*, Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, USA, 2020

Reviewed by Stavros Stavrides

Summary

This is an edited collection of 12 research papers including appendices arising out of book workshop held at Cekmekoy Campus of Ozyegin University (Istanbul, Turkey) on November 24-25, 2018. The contributors to this book come from the fields of political science, international relations, modern Turkish studies, military history, and migration studies which offer differing views of the Greek-Turkish War, 1919-22.

The book is divided into three parts the: Onset, Conduct and Aftermath of the war. Konstantinos Travlos provides an excellent overview of events covering the period of 1914 -1922. Moreover, Travlos highlights the partisan views of the war from the Greek and Turkish perspectives given in his introductory section. He points out the important roles played by Greek premier, Eleftherios Venizelos and the Turkish nationalist leader, Mustapha Kemal in their respective societies in the prosecution of the war. In Part.1, Ch.2 Profiling the Political leaders –Oner Akgul uses theoretical studies from leadership and historiometry to provide insights into personalities of Venizelos and Mustapha Kemal before and during the 1919-22 conflict; and Ch.3 The Correlates of Obsession- Travlos utilizes a 'theoretical framework of selectorate theory' to explain Venizelos's attempt to resolve the Greek element of the Eastern Question.

Part 2 offers contributions from the conduct of the war. In Ch.4 'The Asia Minor debacle'-Dionysios Tsirigotis focuses on the decision made at the governmental level of the Venizelos and Royalist administrations to explain what contributed to the Greek defeat in Asia Minor. His chapter is based on a neo-classical realist theoretical framework of international relations. In Chapter 5 'The Greek military strategy in Asia Minor campaign"- Ioannis Nioutsikos uses Clausewitzian theory to explain the turning point of the war in September 1921, and strategic studies to elucidate on the Greek offensive in Asia Minor. Edward J. Erickson's Ch.6 uses strategic studies to evaluate decisive battles in

the 1919-22 conflict and in Ch.7 "Legacy of the Storm Troop" –Doruk Akyuz uses Turkish military archives in his contribution. Akyuz mentions that the Kemalists sought to employ German storm troop tactics against the Greek army.

In Ch.8 Life in the Rear- Stefanos Katsikas uses primary source documents on the Muslims in Greece during the war.

Part 3 covers the aftermath of the conflict. Ch.9 Kemalism on the March-Markos Troulis is interesting contribution by offering a Greek perspective of how the Greek-Turkish conflict affected the development of the guiding ideology of the early Turkish Republic. The next chapter.10 'The Greek-Turkish War and the waves of migration'-Deniz S.Sert provides a holistic approach to the migration waves before and after the Asia Minor debacle. In Ch.11 'The tale of Karamanlis'-Nazli Ozdil provides a good survey of the Karamanlis, the Turcophone Greek Orthodox population who lived in Central Anatolia. The author looks at the question of identity, their war-time experiences, and attempts to avoid exchange that was part of the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. The final contributor, Meri Erol's 'Between Memories of Persecution and Refugee Experiences' is primarily based on oral history interviews of Armenians in Greece before and after the conflict in 1922. The final chapter by Erickson provides an overall assessment of each author's contribution to this book.

The book contains useful appendices with maps and an index for the reader.

Strengths

The contributors of this volume give different disciplinary perspectives in three key areas of the war: its onset, conduct and aftermath. We see 'novel perspectives' in the contributor's accounts using psychology, political science, international relations and strategic studies which are woven into their historical narratives.

The book also lays down the ground work for a holistic approach in studying of this war by future historians. This volume was written so that it would inspire others "for a truly ambitious coverage of the war in its centenary."

Travlos has further identified areas that were not addressed in this volume for example, the diplomatic aspects, the roles of minor powers such as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, 'the Greek army as an institution during the campaign', covering the war from a gender perspective, and that it did not mention 'controversies concerning atrocities'.

All the chapters are well researched with copious endnotes including updated bibliographies. The theoretical perspectives offered by the writers fit well into their accounts of the Greek-Turkish conflict. The book brings to fore Greek and Turkish sources that are either unavailable or difficult to access in the English-speaking world.

There is a detailed chronology of events in Appendix.1 allowing the reader to follow key events as they unfolded during the period 1919-22. The maps show place names of the conflict allowing readers to see where the battles actually took place.

Weaknesses

There are a couple areas that could have been covered and were not. For example, the potential of war between the Greeks and Turks in May 1923 over the issue of reparations during the second phase of the Lausanne Conference and documentation concerning atrocities should have been addressed with a contribution concerning how the Greek populations suffered in areas under Kemalist control. Even the coverage in the Greek and Turkish press would have been useful addition highlighting letters to the editor, editorials, news reports from the Asia Minor and how the combatant newspapers viewed the great European powers Another gap is the exclusive use of maps created based on information derived from the Turkish General Staff. This should have been balanced with the inclusion of maps from the Greek General Staff.

Another area worthy of inclusion would have been the Armenian view of the Greek-Turkish war and Lausanne conference 1922-23. This would have balanced the Greek and Turkish views of the war.

Recommendation

This book makes an invaluable contribution to the historiography of Asia Minor war listing the latest bibliographies and access to hard-to-find sources. It fills an important gap in our knowledge using novel approaches to examine an under-studied conflict in the English-speaking world. I would add this book to my personal library.

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