

Preface to the Third Edition

Dominant Themes: Identity and Time

The Centenary of the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) and its preceding Convention (January 1923) provide the opportunity for issuing an expanded version of my book. By ratifying the compulsory expulsion of peoples on both sides of the Aegean, that legal instrument constituted a gross act of ‘ethnic cleansing’—or rather of ‘religious cleansing’—since the criterion for displacement was religion and not language, or any other factor. The result was that about 350,000 Muslims of Greece were compelled to leave their homes for Turkey while Greece received over 1.5 million newcomers. At the time, Greeks numbered 4.5 million so the influx represented an increase by about one quarter of Greece’s population. Within a few years, many refugee settlements were established in rural as well as urban areas and one of these, near the harbour of Piraeus, was Kokkinia, the subject of my research.

In writing a new Preface to this edition of *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, I have taken the opportunity to reflect on its shape and form as well as its remarkable longevity. It is not my intention to revise the text of the book, first published in 1989 (Clarendon, Oxford). This is because the book constitutes a historical record of conditions that have now disappeared. Certain themes from my original research have reappeared with topical significance so that this new Preface allows me to present them.

Updating My Findings

After a gap of some years, I began making return trips to Kokkinia, but I was not free to conduct systematic research. Using anecdotal evidence to elicit trends, I have attempted here to update the overall picture, recognizing both the constant elements and the changes which have occurred.

Housing is an obvious focus for updating research. In 2005, the Onassis Foundation granted me a short-term Fellowship specifically to examine the situation in the compact neighbourhood of Germanika within Kokkinia. My sample survey revealed that the prefabricated structures provided for temporary use in 1928 proved to be remarkably durable.¹

In 1970, only 20 per cent of the original buildings had been replaced while 80 per cent remained extant. Even thirty years later in 2001, despite increasing affluence, 40 per cent of the original structures remained. Four years later, my 2005 survey showed that 34 per cent of the original houses were still extant but not all of them were inhabited. These vacant houses are usually in bad condition, apparently awaiting rebuilding. Various reasons explain this situation. My enquiries revealed that many original buildings were caught in disputes over the feasibility of development plans. Some remaining dwellings are rented out to single migrants or to incoming families. Clearly, once the original first occupant had died, contested claims among heirs or among unrelated co-occupants produced intractable legal obstacles.²

Notably, the kind of rebuilding has changed through time so that the outward appearance of a building bears witness to its place in the sequence of local historical periods. In the early years, rebuilding took the form of apartment blocks only two to four stories high. In Germanika, the prevailing pattern whereby the original structure was subdivided to provide dowries for daughters was transformed into vertical additions. The result was that each floor of the new building was occupied by a family member. These were usually women relatives (mothers,

daughters, sisters, aunts) together with their in-marrying husbands. As one such woman said, ‘We’ve moved from the horizontal to the vertical. We call it “verticalization” (*Εμείς το λέμε καθετοποίηση*)’. She continued, ‘Otherwise it’s exactly the same. We still enjoy our neighbourhood company (*η γειτονιά*), sitting out on the pavement in the afternoons’.³ More recent rebuilding took the form of tall apartment blocks constructed by developers in a system of shared ownership called *antiparochi* (*αντιπαροχή*).⁴ Planning laws have allowed excessive development so that disproportionately tall buildings, often extending up to six or seven floors, are constructed on plots having only a few metres of frontage.

Smart apartment blocks, found chiefly along the main streets, suggest widespread modern development, but the apparently extensive amount of rebuilding is actually deceptive. In fact, the original refugee housing continues to exist in clusters throughout the district, or in a few houses scattered between newer constructions.

On one visit to my old neighbourhood, I discovered that those I had known as the elderly had passed away and others who had been middle-aged were struggling with poor health. Life expectancy, it seems, had been affected by peoples’ hazardous occupations (textile and tobacco factory jobs, building construction) together with environmental hazards (asbestos and lead used in the original buildings, air pollution from Piraeus factories). But I was delighted to discover that descendants of my **closest neighbours** were still present.

In my original fieldwork, among the features I had described was the tendency for **marriage** to be contracted within the community. On a return visit in 2008, I ascertained that the same pattern of preferential marriage (endogamy) was still evident. I discovered several instances where younger family members had contracted marriages within a few blocks of one another. Thus, in some parts of the locality, families who were simply neighbours and previously

unrelated, had achieved kinship bonds through marriage. Local solidarity and identity were reinforced as a result of their close relationships as kinsfolk—spouses, in-laws, and grandparents.⁵

In contrast, however, a clear sign of **change** is the occurrence of **divorce**, previously almost unknown. Among those born in Piraeus, divorce does occur, and I learnt about several instances among the families I had known well. This surely indicates a lessening of social conformity. Demographic change (see below) led to a more diversified population which in turn is probably associated with marrying outside the community. In the past, a form of arranged marriage was prevalent in Kokkinia. To ensure a stable basis for marriage, friends of the family, the ‘matchmakers’, would assess the suitability of potential spouses before introducing them. A shared cultural background was a primary concern, and the occurrence of divorce suggests that former pressures to conformity have now relaxed (Hirschon 1983a).

Among the significant factors for change was **Greece’s economy**, which expanded after the 1980s. Women undoubtedly were offered a wider choice of jobs increasing their economic freedom, which allowed them to live more independently, but that situation was short-lived. The crisis in the Greek economy from 2010 brought extreme hardship to people in the lowest income groups (Tziovas 2017). In many cases family solidarity provided the means for survival when the pensions of the oldest member(s) were divided to support younger relatives who had no income.

A striking element of change in the locality is revealed in its **demography**. All over Greece from 1923 to 1928 the Refugee Settlement Commission established numerous rural villages together with urban refugee settlements. Altogether, these added a new dimension to the country’s physical landscape as well as to its culture (Colonas 2003; Yerolympos 2003).

Like other refugee settlements, Kokkinia started out with a relatively homogeneous population since it was planned to provide housing for those displaced by the 1923 population exchange. The locality has always offered low-cost accommodation and, in recent years, it has attracted new immigrants resulting in greater demographic diversity. In 2001, for example 6,000 persons from eighty-three different countries declared their foreign origin. This number constituted seven per cent of the population at a time when Kokkinia's total population was more than 93,000. Most of the newcomers were from Albania (4.3 per cent) while a large number were from the Balkans and Eastern Europe (more than one per cent). People from India and Pakistan (the Asian subcontinent) also accounted for a substantial number—mainly single men whose plans to remain were temporary while they sent remittances home.

Official figures for 2011 in the now-combined municipality of Nikaia and Agios Ioannes Redi (see below, The Local Context) record a total of 10,065 foreign-born persons in a population of 105,430 persons. Thus, within eleven years, the proportion of foreign-born persons increased to around ten per cent of the local population. Immigrants are mostly from eastern Europe (Albania, Ukraine, Russia, Moldavia, Georgia, Armenia), while migrants from Pakistan and Egypt constitute the next largest numbers.⁶

The presence of newcomers from all parts of the world has resulted in changes, particularly in the differentiation among Kokkinia's inhabitants into small diaspora groups. They gather for jobs in particular venues or to socialize, thereby altering the visual and social character of the area. Persons of original refugee origin noted that their shared heritage, which had developed in a comparatively homogeneous population, was being diluted and that their familiar ways would disappear in time.

Summary of Findings

The main themes and cultural priorities that emerge from the ethnography can be presented summarily. In the 1970s, the clear division of **gender roles** was evident in all aspects of life in Kokkinia. Notably it was not a hierarchical relationship but was based on the complementarity of male and female roles. Besides the obvious difference in the domestic sphere, the complementarity is revealed in a paradoxical finding—the existence of vital religious activity in an urban society in spite of its overall left-wing political orientation. This puzzling phenomenon can be explained by the way gender roles structure the organization of social life. Gender distinctions were also expressed in a pervasive symbolic polarity which underlies many aspects of life (Hirschon 1983b).

At the symbolic level, the contrast between **‘open’ and ‘closed’ states** was revealed in a variety of metaphorical ways. In addition to linguistic expressions, this opposition can also be elicited in aspects of housing, in the use of space, and particularly in the ritual practices associated with death and bereavement.⁷

An ideal laboratory for revealing cultural priorities was provided in the standardized houses of Germanika, a small neighbourhood within Kokkinia. Given severely limited resources, these dwellings offered a solution to the need for shelter as well as for the provision of dowries for daughters. The allocation of a separate kitchen space for each married woman was clearly a primary concern, constituting a spatial expression of the independence of the nuclear family. Despite cramped conditions, shared kitchens, however minimal, were avoided. Every married woman claimed her own kitchen space, even though women were closely related as maternal kin (mothers, daughters, sisters) vividly expressing a cultural priority.

Similarly, **economic challenges** in this poor locality revealed culturally-prescribed values with the overriding aim being **self-employment**. Given the opportunity, men would choose entrepreneurial activities, for example, construction work, selling goods at the street markets, or transport services. Such high-risk jobs were preferred to a steady wage as an employee, for example, in a factory.

The case was similar for women whose employment, although clearly essential, was never accepted. It was seen as an undesirable compromise because of the stringencies of survival. Similarly, their abhorrence of working for others was stated openly. A woman would prefer to work in an impersonal cleaning job (e.g. in a bank) rather than being subject to another woman's orders as a domestic cleaner, even at double the wage.

Another paradox was the contrast between local living conditions and peoples' cultural perceptions. Their knowledge of diversity in a previous life—a pervasive **cosmopolitan** awareness—endowed them with confidence despite their lowly position in Greek society (Hirschon 2006).

Furthermore, my long-term experience among Mikrasiates suggests to me that the notion of a '**culture of hospitality**' is crucial for interpreting the ethos of the locality. I developed this notion independently of other researchers (Rozakou, Cabot) being impressed by patterns of food-sharing in the locality. Frequent sporadic exchanges occurred among neighbours together with regular daily meals provided by younger family members to elderly relatives living in nearby houses. Food, or a meal, was also frequently offered to me. When I thanked my hosts for their hospitality, they would indicate the ubiquitous icon displayed at the dinner table (either the Last Supper or the Hospitality of Abraham). Evoking a divine archetype, their generosity was a clear expression of a central cultural value (Hirschon 2017; see Rozakou 2012; Cabot 2014).

Innovative Aspects of My Work

Even though the re-publication of my book for its contemporary relevance might partially account for issuing a third edition, we should note that in 1972, far from riding on a fashionable wave of interest, I had embarked on a unique path. My early training in urban geography and archaeology together with more recent experience in the Athens Centre of Ekistics had equipped me to undertake an innovative anthropological study at a time when village studies predominated, and thus it was unique as the first full-length urban ethnography (see Hirschon 1998).

The time-honoured anthropological method of participant-observation, which I embraced, results in a deep understanding of social life through close daily experience. With detailed knowledge from immersive fieldwork it was possible, by extrapolation, to delineate the processes of adaptation in past periods that had resulted in the character of the area.

My initial intention had been to examine the relationship between cultural values and the organization of domestic space. Fieldwork by participant-observation, however, entailed my responding to the people I lived with, so that the central concerns of my research soon shifted to social identity since that was what chiefly concerned them. Given their firm insistence that they were not ‘Greeks’ in the nation-state sense, I was provoked to investigate and understand what constituted their separate identity.

That is why a major theme in my research turned to explaining processes involved in the development of identity during the fifty years of the Mikrasiates’ incorporation into Greek society. Therefore, the interweaving of various kinds of history — official, personal, oral, local — became an integral part of my approach even though, in those days, anthropological research

was largely synchronic and ahistorical. In my original work, I became concerned with history so that its interplay with identity issues took on a central dimension in my research.

Three decades ago, at the time of writing my book, little work had been done on the social role of memory and- even less- on its importance for the forcibly displaced. I was aware of needing to consider memory but the absence of supporting literature was a challenge. Memory, now a buzzword in contemporary anthropology, was at that time a novel focus of attention and little reference material was at hand (Herzfeld in Hirschon 1998: xiv).

Witnessing how memory was embedded in daily rituals, both secular and religious, and in the frequent narratives of their past lives, I soon realized that memory was an essential part of cultural practice. In personal expressions and social institutions, memory provided a kind of bridge between ‘the Ottoman past and the refugee present’.⁸ In Kokkinia, the oldest generation — in essence the last of the Ottomans — had been young adults at the time of their expulsion. They carried with them vivid memories of life in the final period of the Ottoman Empire and my field notes contain many accounts of their lives in a diverse multicultural society with its strongly cosmopolitan ethos.

For younger researchers interested in the Asia Minor exchange and its ramifications in Greek society, however, there is no longer recourse to the original refugees and their narratives. Consequently, memory and its representations about Asia Minor have become for them a key focus.⁹ In this respect, the research presented in my book covered new ground at that time.

The Book’s History

History pervades my book, which has also achieved a history of its own. Shortly after the English paperback (second edition) was re-published, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe* was

translated into Turkish in 2000, but it went out of print. It has now been re-issued with a new Preface and corrected translation (see Afterword, note 4). Somewhat later, in 2005, *Heirs* was translated into Greek by the Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece (MIET) in a luxuriously produced edition. Besides being used as a text in sociology and anthropology departments in Greek universities, it is also a prescribed text in history departments.

In November 2005, with the enthusiastic agreement of the Greek publishers and keen involvement of some local photographers, I decided that a book launch should be held in Kokkinia itself. The local Smyrnaian Association (*Σύλλογος Σμυρναίων*) offered us their large hall. Holding 500 persons, it was packed to capacity. Besides some Athenian academics, many of whom had never visited this run-down part of the city, local residents filled the hall and crowded into the lobby where enlarged photographs I had taken in 1970 were displayed. Evoking memories of a past period in their lives, the atmosphere became emotionally charged. A musical interlude with a live performance of Asia Minor songs concluded the evening. It remained a memorable event during which residents celebrated the book which is devoted to their life experience.

Time and Context

As I write, a remarkable symmetry of time springs to mind which plays with the numbers fifty and one hundred. Since 1972, when I conducted my field work, fifty years have passed. At the time, Kokkinia, a settlement designed to accommodate thousands of refugees, had achieved almost fifty years of existence and had itself become well established.

Furthermore, one hundred years have passed since the watershed event which caused tremendous geopolitical and demographic changes in the Middle East and throughout the region.

We should note, however, that prior to the decisive moment of the Convention population movements were far from unknown. In fact, they were a common feature of life in the late nineteenth century. State policies of social engineering were widely used by the Ottoman administration so that together with expanding economic opportunities, considerable population mobility resulted. Consequently, the actual picture—often glossed over—is one of demographic change and instability. Indeed, population movement in this part of the world involved huge numbers even before the hiatus caused by the 1922–23 events (see Quataert 1993; McCarthy 1993).

Between fifty and a hundred years, another interim marker was the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Convention and Treaty of Lausanne. The second edition of *Heirs* was published in paperback in that year and continues to be in demand. Prompted by a more comprehensive realization of the regional significance of the Treaty, I also took the initiative in reassessing some consequences of the international agreement which had carved up the Ottoman empire into various nation-states. The ill-informed decisions of the time are reflected in today's trouble spots (Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon), just as conflict in the Balkans and the violent breakup of the former Yugoslavia were also an expression of post-Ottoman ethnic problems (see Hirschon 1998: xvii). Adopting a bilateral approach in order to understand the multiple ramifications of the Lausanne Convention, I organized a four-day international conference in Oxford to mark its seventy-fifth anniversary (hosted by the Refugee Studies Programme, September 1998). The resulting multidisciplinary volume which I edited was published as *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* (Hirschon 2003).

The Local Context

The context of this research had a specific character determined by the time it occurred. At the local level, the time depth of the settlement was fifty years after its establishment in 1923. Bound up with the turbulent developments in the Greek state through successive decades, the locality and its inhabitants had passed through identifiable periods of political change.

Unsurprisingly, in the aftermath of their arrival in the 1920s, support among the refugees was strong for the Liberal Party led by Eleftherios Venizelos, a champion of Hellenic aspirations before the Greek Army's defeat in 1922. For the next period, the Liberal Party of Venizelos predominated, but the 1935 Greek national elections revealed a swing toward the Communist Party, giving it a notably improved presence in Parliament (Mavrogordatos 1983; Beaton 2019: pp. 249–52).¹⁰

The swing away from the establishment can be explained by the 1930 and 1932 Ankara Accords in which compensation owed to the exchanged peoples was cancelled. Together with Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic, Venizelos had recognized the new geopolitical realities and was determined to forge rapprochement between Greece and Turkey. He did this in the name of international statesmanship but there was a price to pay. Feeling betrayed by their political leaders, many inhabitants of Kokkinia turned to support the left (Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 3, 'Political Orientations'; Mavrogordatos 1983).

Over the following decade deep divisions in the country became manifest. At first, under the dictatorship imposed by General Ioannes Metaxas in 1936, a superficial calm belied the rumblings of dissent. With the outbreak of World War II, these tensions took active form and resulted in Civil War (1943–49). A destructive period ensued. The German occupation of Greece hit the metropolis of Athens-Piraeus where food supplies were severely restricted (Mazower

2001). In Kokkinia most families suffered from famine in the winter of 1942. I was told heart-breaking stories from friends, many of whom had lost family members through starvation.

Widespread left-wing resistance to the Nazi occupation took various forms in the urban refugee settlements. Kokkinia was in the front line of the action, and also provided support for the national resistance forces whose success in the mountains led them to infiltrate working class localities. Brutal reprisals followed. On 17 August 1944, a mass execution was organized in Kokkinia. Local collaborators serving in the Security Battalions (*τάγματα ασφαλείας*) identified suspects. On that day, 179 Kokkinia residents were summarily executed in the notorious *blóko* (*μπλόκο*), which is commemorated annually.¹¹

It is important to point out that my own engagement with life in Kokkinia occurred a mere twenty years after the end of the Civil War. Before embarking on fieldwork, I had been warned by some middle-class Athenians that Kokkinia was a dangerous locality. On the contrary, my experience of open hospitality and kindness belied these cautionary remarks. I soon realized that Kokkinia's stigmatized reputation derived from exaggerated tales of left-wing barbarity.

Although social divisions were not immediately evident in 1972, the legacy of wartime violence remained as a powerful undercurrent. The discernible mistrust that existed among some neighbours reflected the tensions caused by the harsh imposition of military rule on 21 April 1967. Neighbours warned me to avoid contact with certain individuals (probably former collaborators) who were known to be police informers (*χαφιέδες*) and to refrain from discussing my movements with them. I was shielded from knowing about the activities of a secret resistance group in order not to jeopardize my tenuous presence in the area (see Hirschon 2022: pp. 201-209). In my daily life, I showed no interest in political matters, and I avoided any reference to

politics. It was noticeable, however, that critical remarks about Kokkinia's deprived living conditions focused on the contrast with nearby localities of (right-wing) rural incomers with their better public provisions.

Kokkinia was purportedly a hotbed of communism. Election results, however, revealed a more varied picture of actual political allegiances.¹² With the fall of the junta in 1974, a change of political regime ensued in Greece, the period called the *metapolitefsi* (μεταπολίτευση).¹³

In Kokkinia after 1974, the Communist Party (KKE) re-asserted its presence and achieved control of municipal government. The infrastructural improvements which had already started (water borne sewage, street lighting), continued under popular elected mayors, and the pattern of left-wing support prevailed. In the early 2000s, the Communist Party won more than thirty per cent of the vote in local elections at a time when it achieved only fifteen per cent at the national level. Although PASOK, a social democratic party founded in 1974, soon became the main opposition party nationwide, it did not achieve much support in Kokkinia at that time.

A radical overhaul of local government reforms took place in 2011, partly to counterbalance the prevailing national pattern of clientelist politics. Another impetus for administrative reform was aimed at reducing the top-heavy Greek bureaucracy, a target of EU and international financial scrutiny during the 2010 economic crisis when Greece's economic profligacy was being investigated.

Under the reform plan called Kallikratis, the municipality of Nikaia (previously known as Kokkinia) was merged with Agios Ioannes Redis into one municipal unit under a single mayor (Demarchos) and municipal council. At that time, the combined population totalled 105,430 persons. In the 2014 and 2019 elections, the number of voters who registered was 94,000 and 92,000 persons respectively.¹⁴ With the ongoing digitization of public records in Greece, there is

now a significant amount of available archival material for the younger generation of researchers interested in the refugee past and in the Mikraistiko heritage in Kokkinia.

Identity

As already mentioned, my work started out initially with a focus on housing and the cultural priorities which influenced the organization of domestic space (Hirschon 1998: pp. xviii–xx). However, it was soon altered by the concerns of the people among whom I was living. In Kokkinia, the self-designation of identity was clearly articulated. People distinguished themselves from local Greeks using two different terms: one was as ‘refugees’ (*πρόσφυγες*), a politically loaded term,¹⁵ the other was ‘Mikrasiates’ (*Μικρασιάτες*), a cultural designator.

The first term conveyed how they operated as an ‘interest group’ since being a refugee conferred rights to compensation, to monetary indemnification, as well as to housing and social services. For an aggrieved section of the refugee population, unfulfilled expectations became a focal point vis-à-vis successive Greek governments. During my fieldwork, I heard about the Ministry of Social Welfare’s tribunals which were investigating families’ claims to titles and to alternative housing.¹⁶

The second term, ‘Mikrasiates’, conveyed a wide range of distinct features associated with their Asia Minor origins, including ways of cooking, standards of housekeeping and cleanliness, degrees of religious observance, economic skills, in short, every aspect of culture and lifestyle. These notions were accompanied by a sense of superiority over local Greeks, especially regarding rural dwellers who were characterized in various denigratory ways.¹⁷

The minutiae of cultural values and customs used as markers of identity and of the boundaries between various groups suggests that the position of Asia Minor refugees in Greek

society might constitute a limiting case of ethnic differentiation (Hirschon 1998: pp. xx).

Remarkably, the attitudes based on regional stereotypes endured even among Piraeus-born second and third generation persons, reproducing the social differentiation among Mikrasiates themselves.

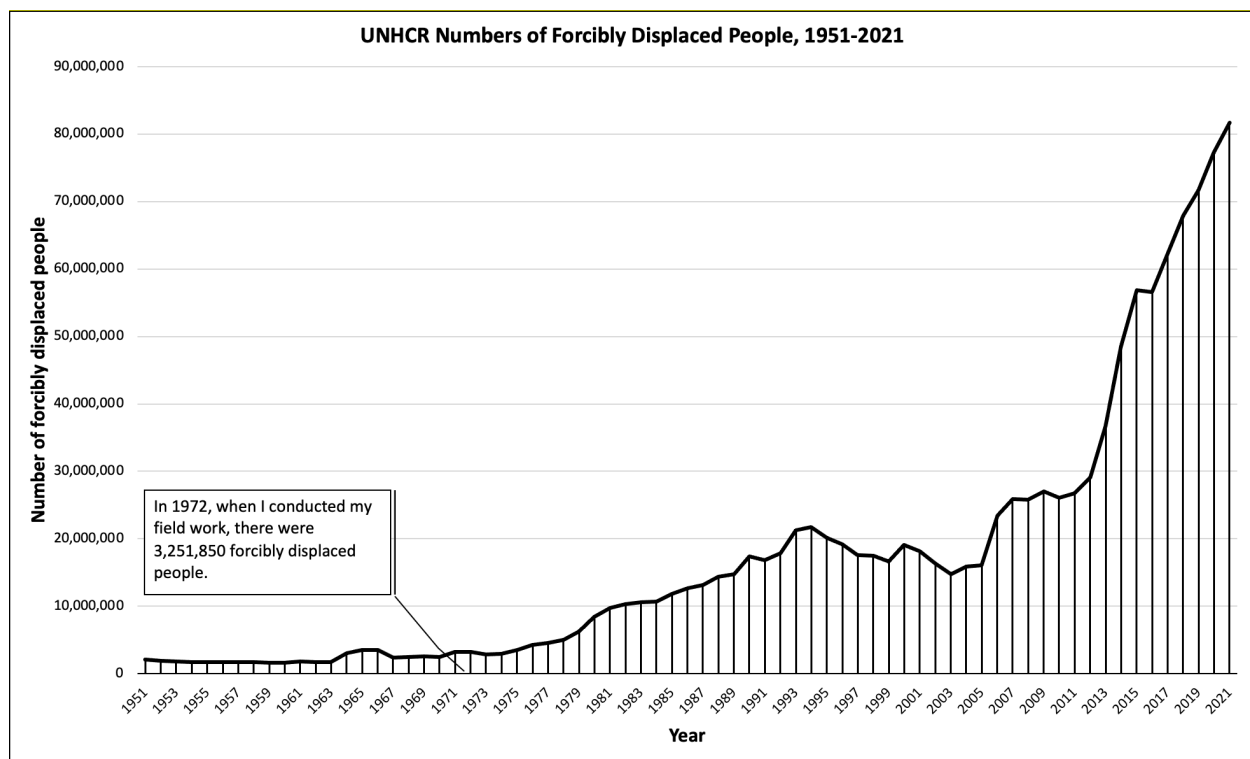
Current Refugee Problems

The re-publication of this book manifests its contemporary relevance in response to the increasing scale of worldwide population displacements. At the time of my original research and even of its publication, I could not have predicted that my work would have such longevity or relevance in subsequent decades. The reason for this is clear: nowadays we are beset by worldwide conditions of flux and of geopolitical instability. Ongoing violent conflicts in Central Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America together with a growing awareness of climate change highlight the precarious state of everyday existence. A new category of forced displacement, that of climate refugees, is now recognized. With continuing environmental degradation, the numbers of refugees will inexorably increase (Brzoska and Frolich 2016; Cohen 2019: pp. 184–88). In short, our relationship to the world around us is being shaken up by widespread challenges of a physical kind on the one hand, and on the other, by political and geopolitical turbulence.

Nowadays, the huge number of forcibly displaced peoples is a global issue with social, cultural, political, and economic ramifications. The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) provides shocking figures. Estimates in 2015 cite more than 65 million people being forcibly displaced worldwide because of violent conflict or individual persecution. This total included internally displaced persons (IDPs), with more than 16 million

people who were defined as refugees because they had crossed international borders.¹⁸

Tragically, each day in 2015, around 44,000 people were forced to leave their homes.¹⁹ In the same year, over one million migrants arrived in Europe of whom more than 50 per cent were children.²⁰ Furthermore, over the past decade, from 2011 to 2021, the number of displaced persons has tripled from more than 27 million to 89 million. In May 2022, the UNHCR declared that 100 million people were forcibly displaced across the globe, the highest number since World War II. The contrast is sobering: in 1972 when I was engaged in fieldwork in Piraeus, the number of refugees worldwide was only 3.2 million.²¹



Graph 0.1. UNHCR Data on the Number of Forcibly Displaced People, 1951–2021

As a consequence of the increasing numbers of forcibly displaced persons, ‘Refugee Studies’ can nowadays be seen to constitute a ‘refugee industry’. In her trenchant appraisal of

current trends in anthropology, Heath Cabot points out that ‘the refugee regime is a business, tied up in wide-ranging political-economic interests’ (2019: p. 262), and she criticizes anthropology for being complicit in such activity as a source of funding. In her words, anthropology risks replicating the ‘all-too-familiar logics of apartheid and marginalization’ (2019: p. 262).

Her forthright view provoked intense discussion among anthropologists, but the point is clear: refugee studies and the term ‘crisis’ are now at the centre of attention as a source of funding, career development, and prestige (Cabot 2019: p. 268). The preponderance of refugee studies is clearly illustrated by the number of major anthropological conferences devoted to forced displacement and by preferential calls for project applications on this topic.²²

How to Reconstitute Life, Post-Displacement

My analysis of life in Kokkinia in the 1970s revealed the various ways these people had responded to the disruption of their expulsion. Despite the chaotic conditions of their reception in Greece these people provide a heartening demonstration of resilience since most of them had managed to create a meaningful personal adjustment and, with it, a sense of community. Several elements were involved in this process but the main element, as I saw it, was the creation and maintenance of **continuity** through the generations.

As already noted, the practice of endogamy, which I had described in my original work, appears to have been maintained in some neighbourhoods. Clearly maintaining marriage within the locality proved to be an effective way of reinforcing their sense of shared identity.

Another of the processes that created continuity was the use of spatial metaphors, viz. the transposition of regional stereotypes from the homeland into Kokkinia. By assigning a particular character to an area using pre-existing **regional**

stereotypes,

an imaginary mental landscape was created. This process may have provided a critical step for adjustment in their new location and an effective basis for re-establishing social life among the urban refugees.²³ In my view this stereotyping of districts was a central element in reconstituting the residents' cultural heritage. In the 1970s, Kokkinia's neighbourhoods continued to be characterized by attributes based on regional stereotypes derived from the homeland, a lasting spatial differentiation which had developed through the early days of settlement.

Another mechanism of adjustment was the power of **narrative** to revive memories of the past. I was aware of the restorative power of narrative but only later did I discover its recognition in fields such as psychology and psychoanalysis, adding weight to my observations. Renos Papadopoulos (1997), a psychotherapist specializing in dislocation issues, emphasizes the vital importance of stories that articulate socio-cultural identity. He too posits the need for overcoming adversity through narrative.

Drawing attention to the importance of material objects, David Parkin (1999) mentioned a hitherto neglected element, how **continuity** is maintained through the transportation of **material objects**. In the case of the population exchange, the exiled Christians arriving in Greece brought their most treasured objects, both individually and communally owned, mostly icons, relics of saints and other holy objects. The richly endowed 2011 exhibition *Relics of the Past* contained a vast array of thousands of sacred and precious objects from all over the region (Ballian 2011).²⁴ That is not surprising since their identity under the Ottoman *millet* system was defined by religious affiliation and had been employed in the Lausanne negotiations as the criterion for their expulsion.

Ending

I must emphasize that the Mikrasiates' arrival in the Greek state was not a repatriation. It was a forced displacement, a brutal exile from a beloved homeland where they had deep roots (cf. Lewis 1968: p. 335). The international negotiators, however, framed it as a kind of repatriation, oddly ignorant of the differentiation in Asia Minor society, glossing as well over the problems of assimilation which followed.

For the uprooted, their destination in the parochial Greek state posed a huge challenge to reconstitute a meaningful existence. In my book I attempted to present the rich quality of life in Kokkinia that had developed over the decades despite great material hardship. Nowadays, as increasing numbers of people face violent displacement, we might ask about the adjustments whereby the Mikrasiates managed to create order out of chaos. Indeed, these might have practical significance, providing admirable examples of ways to deal effectively with the disruption of exile. Even though the context has changed, some coping strategies are suggested in this book.

Today forced displacement results from many different causes—warfare, climate extremes, environmental degradation, personal persecution -- which affect the lives of millions. Under conditions of global turbulence, many people will face the challenge of retaining a sense of order in their way of life, although displacement might not directly affect them.

Since my methodological approach entailed intimate daily experience in the locality of Kokkinia, deep bonds of friendship developed. Indeed, my way of seeing the world was itself re-formed from insights gained from these eloquent people. My ongoing interest in life in this locality continues to the present day. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the residents of Kokkinia who generously allowed me to share in their daily life. They provided me with insights about

achieving a meaningful life and about overcoming various kinds of adversity. In addition, I must reiterate my admiration for all the Mikrasiates whose vibrant heritage enriched Greek society and culture over the hundred years of their incorporation in the country.

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Notes

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1. Details are included in my 'End of Grant' report submitted to the Onassis Foundation in 2006, unpublished.
 2. Complicated legal issues have arisen over the decades of co-occupancy, see Hirschon [1989] 2008: Appendix 1.

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3. For a detailed discussion see Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 8, 'Neighborhood Life' pp. 166-169.
 4. *Antiparochi* is a system of building construction practised by developers in Greece and Turkey. As a kind of shared ownership, developers offer part of the new building in lieu of cash. In Kokkinia, one or two flats were granted to the original owners or to their descendants. For a detailed exposition, see Theocharopoulou, Rafson, and Frampton 2017.
 5. Compare the description of interlocking ties through marriage and baptismal sponsorship: Hirschon and Thakurdesai 1970.
 6. Source: Hellenic Statistical Service [ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ.]
 7. See Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 10, for the interpretation of this symbolic dichotomy in a variety of contexts.
 8. My recognition of the salience of memory was in advance of its time, demonstrated in Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 2, 'The Ottoman Past in the Refugee Present'.
 9. Significantly, the field of Memory Studies is developing rapidly with the official inauguration of an International Association in 2019, and its subsection on displacement. Among the younger generation of scholars researching the Asia Minor heritage are Anastasopoulou 2020; Gedgaudaite 2021; Kyramargiou 2019; and Kastrini 2022.
 10. For a comprehensive picture of the countrywide 1920s refugee settlement programme, see Clark 2021: Chapter 17, pp. 405–20.
 11. For details of wartime strife in the mountains and in the refugee settlements, see Beaton 2019: pp. 278–85. Mass executions in Kokkinia are vividly recalled in the oral accounts of residents in Thomas Sideris's interviews (in Greek): Διαβαση, Α. 'HISTORIA MINIMAS 1, ΑΠΟ ΤΑ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΑ ΣΤΟ ΜΠΛΟΚΟ'. *Mixcloud*. Retrieved 17 November 2022 from <https://www.mixcloud.com/thomas-sideris2/historia-minimas-1-απο-τα-γερμανικα-στο->

μπλοκο/?play=fb. Another resource in Greek is a video reconstruction, ‘ΤΟ ΜΠΛΟΚΟ ΤΗΣ ΚΟΚΚΙΝΙΑΣ’. *EPT*. Retrieved 17 November 2022 from <https://archive.ert.gr/7475/>.

12. When democracy was re-established after my fieldwork, I researched topics which were necessarily avoided during the junta (1967–74). For details of election returns both before and after World War II, see Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 3, pp. 46–48.

13. On the *metapolitefsi*, see a reflective essay in Greek assessing the many aspects encompassed by this term (Liakos 2022).

14. Source: Hellenic Statistical Service [ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ.)

15. An important benchmark is Roger Zetter’s article (2007) on the consequences of ‘labelling’ refugees.

16. For actual examples, see Hirschon [1989] 2008: Appendix 1, ‘Conflict in Close Quarters’.

17. Ayhan Aktar provides a close parallel in Turkey, see Afterword, this volume.

18. In terms of the internationally recognized 1951 UNHCR convention, persons may claim asylum if they flee across international borders and if they are subject to persecution, or to violent conflict. Strictly speaking, although flight within the same country also results in uprooting, loss of property and destitution, internally displaced persons (IDPs) do not have the same legal status as refugees. For the overall international context, see Betts, Loescher, and Milner (2012).

19. Data from ‘Refugee Data Finder,’ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accessed July 2022.

20. Figures from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), although other agencies reported much higher numbers.

21. Data from 'Refugee Data Finder,' United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accessed July 2022.

22. For example, the American Anthropological Association meetings in 2015 included the word 'refugees' in seventy papers but two years later, in 2017, the number had increased to 293. Cabot states that European research funders were also encouraging proposals on forced migration.

23. Hirschon [1989] 2008: Chapter 2, pp. 22-26, 'Regional Identity' describes how stereotypes were transposed and became associated with local landmarks. See also Chapter 5, pp. 67-70.

24. A remarkable exhibition curated by Anna Ballian and sponsored by the John S Latsis Cultural Foundation demonstrates this point. On view from February till July 2011, it displayed the Benaki Museum's huge collection of sacred and precious objects in the Museum of Christian Art in Chambésy Switzerland.