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Introduction

THE GRECO-TURKISH War of 1919 to 1922 was a watershed moment in the twentieth century. Not only did it draw the final curtain on the First World War; it simultaneously redrew the human geography between Europe and the Middle East. The conflict, which was marked by atrocities on both sides, reached its bloody conclusion in September 1922 with the victory of Turkish nationalists and the irregular flight of Greek occupation forces from Anatolia. Yet Greek soldiers weren't the only ones fleeing. Swept up in the chaos, nearly a million Ottoman Greek civilians abandoned their ancestral homes in Turkey and sought refuge across the sea in Greece. Over the long winter months that followed, while these refugees bundled up as best they could in makeshift tents and rags, Greek and Turkish diplomats and representatives of the Great Powers and the League of Nations were working feverishly to answer this one question: what to make of so much human misery?¹

What these diplomats eventually made was the Population Exchange of 1923. It entailed the wholesale uprooting of all remaining Greek Orthodox Christians from Anatolia (several hundred thousand had stayed on in their homes even after the conclusion of the war and the flight of the first million refugees) and their forced deportation to Greece, which in turn uprooted nearly all of its Muslims (some four hundred thousand) and deported them to Turkey. To resolve the refugee crisis, it seemed, more refugees would have to be created. The Exchange was an unparalleled act of mutual state-sponsored ethnic cleansing, and it was legitimized by a Nobel Peace Laureate: Fridtjof Nansen.² In his capacity as the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Nansen acknowledged the "very considerable hardships, perhaps very considerable impoverishment" that this solution would necessarily impose upon the now displaceable peoples of Turkey and Greece, but he nonetheless endorsed it. As he declared during the negotiations, "I know that the

Governments of the Great Powers are in favor of this proposal because they believe that to unmix the populations of the Near East will tend to secure [its] true pacification.”³ In the eyes of Nansen and his peers, this massive, ethnic “unmixing” of the so-called Near East was not simply the price of peace but the means of imposing it.

Paradoxically, however, the unmixing in fact hinged on a massive remixing of peoples. The Greek Orthodox Christians of Ottoman Anatolia displayed a startling cultural and linguistic diversity that found little ground for expression in the Greek state, which was at pains to homogenize its population. Several Greek dialects from Turkey bore witness to rich and heavy contact with Turkish and/or Levantine cultures, while hundreds of thousands of Greek Orthodox Christians from the interior in fact spoke Turkish as their only tongue, writing it in the Greek alphabet of their gospels. The Population Exchange tore all these groups from their regional cultures and languages and shunted them into Greece, where they were often ostracized as “Turkish spawn.” Many of the Muslims of Greece, meanwhile, found it difficult to integrate into Turkey for similar reasons, due to cultural or linguistic difference (not a few Muslims spoke Greek) that they often had to suppress amidst the cultural reforms of the Kemalist state, which also aimed at national homogenization at all costs.⁴ Refugees on both sides of the Aegean had been unmixed from their homes, cultures, and languages only to be violently remixed into what others had decided was their true home. This is what it meant to “pacify” the Middle East. The global foundations of modern humanitarianism were being set in the shifting sands of ethnic cleansing.⁵

Let me pause for a moment over that last term. Race and ethnicity were in fact key vectors of the Exchange and the international standards that it set. While the final official agreement defined the displaceables by their religion, a careful reading of the notes, memoranda, and initial reports before the convention—where off-hand and unguarded turns of phrase reveal the ideological assumptions and aims of the participants—suggest that religion was actually a proxy for race.⁶ As Kristina Gedgudaitė and I have argued elsewhere, the imbrication of race and religion in the negotiations betrayed a larger state project to mark not just the refugees but “the entire civic body of each country in blood-based terms of racialized homogeneity.”⁷ It took many more years of state policy to realize this vision of racialized majoritarianism in Turkey and Greece, yet it was at the Treaty of Lausanne that such a vision was first enshrined and diplomatically normalized. Indeed, Aslı Iğsız has argued that the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange was a definitive moment in the

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Geneva, November 15th, 1922.

REPORT BY DR. NANSEN.

PART I.

RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE OF RACIAL MINORITIES
BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the question of a reciprocal exchange of racial minorities between Greece and Turkey:-

When I was entrusted by the Assembly of the League of Nations with the study of the problem of the refugees in the Near East, my first aim was to get into touch with all the Governments interested in this problem. The question seemed to me of extreme economic and social importance for the countries of the Near East, and also of great importance for the peace of the world. Before leaving Geneva, I telegraphed on September 27th to His Excellency Mustapha Kemal Pasha expressing to him my earnest desire to enter into relations with the authorities of the Angora Government. The Persian Delegation of the Assembly of the League of Nations also telegraphed, at my request, drawing the attention of the Angora Government to the importance of the questions entrusted to me.

Immediately after the end of the Assembly, I went straight to Constantinople, because I considered it of primary importance to have an interview with the Angora authorities. A few days after my arrival I had the good fortune to meet several times His Excellency Hamid Bey, Diplomatic Representative at Constantinople of the Government of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. I discussed with him the various problems which in my opinion were involved in the question of the refugees, and I asked him to point

FIGURE 1. An early draft report of the "Reciprocal Exchange of Racial Minorities" by Fridtjof Nansen. Copyright held by United Nations Archives at Geneva. Folder R1761/48/24318.

birth of the modern border regime, infusing the border with a thinly veiled eugenicist biopolitics that, as she demonstrates in her book *Humanism in Ruins*, took root and blossomed over the course of the twentieth century. Even today, its foundational logic informs contemporary borders and population control across the region, from Israel-Palestine to Cyprus.⁸

In short, the Exchange set a precedent. Yet it also drew on past precedents, some of which were legal and diplomatic in nature—what we might call *procedural precedents*⁹—while other, more fundamental ideological precedents came from the humanistic sciences—what we might call *first principles*: who belonged where, where belonged to whom, and what were the identifying features of a collective people and their collectivity? Among the branches of learning dedicated to these questions, one of the oldest and most central pillars was philology, which I will examine here. I define philology broadly as the study of languages, literatures, and textual transmission, an admittedly large domain whose edges and subfields are somewhat fuzzy (ranging from analytical bibliography to historical linguistics), but all of them in essence concern themselves with the recovery and curation of the stories that humans have conveyed across space and time and the languages and material media in which they have conveyed them.¹⁰ Defined as such, philology might seem at first an unlikely tool for parsing out populations, but it came to be used not only for drawing lines of filiation between texts or tongues but, through the movements of those texts and tongues, for drawing lines of categorical division across racialized human geographies.¹¹ In the interstices between Europe and Western Asia, where the linguistic geography was so unyieldingly diverse, philology had been an early and essential player in articulating questions of belonging, mobility, and assimilation. Philology in fact can help us put our finger on some central questions of the modern border: Where did the language of race and ethnicity that these diplomats were drawing upon come from? What linguistic and cultural paradigms informed their vision of population movements and borders, and what was the role of philology in the formation of these paradigms?

The focus here on philology has to a certain extent been predetermined by my training as a literary scholar, but I nonetheless insist that the philological endeavor has played a crucial role in the larger ideation of the modern border regime. I will bear out this claim through the example of Greek philology, which I choose rather than Turkish philology not because the latter is in any way innocent of similar border violence—it is not¹²—but rather because Greek as a concept lies at the historical core of philology and informs not only

the regional border politics of the Aegean but the larger ideological machinery of Europe and the West writ large. I will have occasion to revisit Turkish literary history at several critical points in the following chapters, but my focus here is on Modern Greek philology, which was established in the shadow of European classical philology and found its voice in an often tense and asymmetrical dialogue with the latter.¹³ Greek had always lain near the heart of European philology, yet with the material and institutional expansion of the discipline over the course of the nineteenth century, the study of Greek and the construction of a Greek-language corpus gained immense institutional capital and extended its methodological and intellectual hegemony over ever greater swaths of world literature and indeed of the world itself.¹⁴ There was thus much at stake in demarcating who could lay a claim to the Hellenic and who could not.¹⁵ Determined to validate and protect its share in Hellenism's cultural and institutional capital, Modern Greek philology made large strides over the course of the nineteenth century and broke ground toward the philological border regime that I am tracing out here.

In the decades leading up to the Population Exchange, the terms of the debate had already been rehearsed through an explicit philological border regime of mixing and unmixing. As Greek intellectuals attempted to trace a throughline from antiquity to the present, they found it impossible to ignore the many mass movements of peoples and texts over the lands they claimed for their own. The border regime that they eventually developed to manage these population movements and textual traditions was subtler than a simple apartheid wall (although several forms and degrees of exclusion were applied); equally important were the internal mechanisms of assimilation, value extraction and partial omission, which thrust peoples and texts into several gray zones of semi-inclusion and -exclusion, semi-mobility and -immobility. Drawing from the field of border studies, we might call these mechanisms (and the peoples and texts moving through them and against them) a *borderscape*, which is to say a dynamic clockwork of funnels and filters and contested mobilities across an entire geography.¹⁶

Within this philological borderscape, which continued and expanded in the years and decades after the Exchange, certain diasporic textual bodies like the poems of C. P. Cavafy in Egypt could be absorbed and admitted into national Greek literature and mainstream media, but only after being subjected to significant reformatting and reframing. Other stories and storytellers, like the Turkish-language ballads of one or two refugee poets, found a partial foothold in minor regional press shops but were actively excluded

from mainstream publishing, literary anthologies, libraries, textbooks and, of course, from classrooms. Even less lucky were others, like the poetry of Greek-language Islam, which was almost entirely banished from the annals of literary history and left to cross the borders of world literature in manuscript formats that until today remain largely undocumented by national philology. At the same time, a given manuscript or oral performance by refugees was occasionally transcribed, reworked and rewritten by mainstream Greek authors, who supplied their own versions to a national publishing apparatus that in turn supplied them to foreign-language publishers, where we can now read, for example, *A Prisoner of War's Story* or *Farewell Anatolia*, whose title pages attribute the works to single, recognizably Greek authors (Stratis Doukas and Dido Sotiriou, respectively). Teasing the category of “literature” out from within these and similar contexts, I would thus define it as a modern philological invention, at the core of which lie mechanisms of partial inclusion, exclusion, extraction, and the production of institutional value. At the borderscape between Europe and the Middle East, philologists, critics, and publishers *made* literature by picking apart, pruning, and separating out a complex geography of texts and their human handlers (such as writers, oral storytellers, copyists, scholiasts, readers, binders, translators, etc.). Some of these pieces were reconstituted and printed as canonical works and authors, while others have wound up pushed into supplementary footnotes, appendices, archival ephemera, or singular manuscripts of various shapes and sizes in special collections or the ad hoc libraries of third- or fourth-generation refugee communities.

Literature's Refuge spans this entire literary spectrum. Breaking known and unknown literature down into its constituent parts, I ascribe literary value to each and every one of those parts (some of which have traditionally been denied literariness). Taken together, the chapters of this book raise important methodological questions for the larger discipline of literary studies. Over the past twenty years, the idea of “world literature” has come to frame many of the poems, novels, and stories that academics study and compare across national borders, yet not all texts can claim citizenship to the world as we have made it; not all texts bear the proper documentation to move freely through the checkpoints of modern philology,¹⁷ which ultimately forces certain border crossings underground. In short, the border logic initiated by the Population Exchange didn't just displace peoples from their place in the world; it has also displaced many of their stories from a place in world literature.

This book aims to open up a space to foreground and honor the border crossings of such stories and, in doing so, to reconsider and revise the larger philological borderscape through which texts pass. As Kader Konuk has done in a different context, I work hard to recover the “multiple attachments” that often extend across exile, forced displacement, and partition.¹⁸ To trace out these attachments is not simply to insert new textual objects into the existing economies of exchange that structure transnational publishing and circulation networks; it is to set our sights on alternative networks altogether and, by sifting through their material records, to seek more democratic protocols of textual transmission and exchange. These protocols draw their strength not from some core assimilatory power of institutional Hellenism or Turkishness but rather—and this is crucial—from a decentralized federation of languages and texts that identify in some way with localized Greek Orthodox or Islamic cultures, or those that do not identify but have coexisted alongside these cultures and claim a place in the cultural tapestry. This is a book of humble means—using for the most part what we might call the manuscript and ephemeral detritus of national philology—but its goal is lofty: to provide an alternative cartography of the eastern Mediterranean borderscape, which is a small but constitutive mechanism of the larger global border system that regulates our world today. Who belongs where, and who gets to decide? *Literature’s Refuge* attempts over the following five chapters to articulate some preliminary answers to those questions in the discipline of literature. Before that, however, I must sketch out in greater detail the philological border regime as it exists today and the methods and first principles that have helped shape it.

No Greece Left in Greece

To whom does the legacy of Greece and Greek belong? Already in the fifteenth century, European philologists had begun to question whether contemporary speakers of Greek could lay claim to their own tongue. Writing of his experiences in the final years of the Byzantine Empire, where he had traveled to learn Greek, Francesco Filelfo warned against

linguam vulgarem [. . .], quae et plebeia erat et depravata atque corrupta ob peregrinorum mercatorumque multitudinem qui quottidie [*sic*] Constantinopolin confluebant in urbemque recepti incolae Graecisque admixti locutionem optimam infuscarunt inquinarentque. Nam viri aulici veterem sermonis dignitatem atque elegantiam retinebant, in primisque ipsae

nobiles mulieres, quibus cum nullum esset omnino cum viris peregrinis commercium, merus ille ac purus priscorum Graecorum sermo servabatur intactus.¹⁹

the vulgar [Greek] language of the plebs, perverted and corrupted by the multitude of migrants and merchants who flowed into Constantinople every day. Welcomed as residents in the city, these travelers mixed in with the Greeks and tainted and defiled the Greeks' most beautiful manner of speech. For the ancient dignity and elegance of speaking was retained only by members of the court—first and foremost, by the noblewomen, who had no commerce whatsoever with foreign men and thus kept the uncontaminated and pure language of the ancient Greeks intact.*

Filelfo argued here that the Greek spoken in the capital had been tainted and defiled—or, if we translate the verb *inquinare* more literally, the language had been “shat into” by (and mixed up with the feces of) the migrant multitudes. The fatal mistake had been to “welcome” these migrants as “residents.” The ancient dignity of the language, according to Filelfo, had thus been perverted and corrupted by the unchecked “flow” of non-Greeks into the city, and it was only by walling itself off from this mass of human migration that a small cadre of Greek nobility (particularly women) had been able to preserve the Greek tongue from contamination. Linguistic integrity depended on a class-based border regime against the unregulated flow of human bodies in and out of the city. Europeans looking to learn Greek, he warned, would thus do well to similarly wall themselves off from the language of the masses and seek out tutors among the nobles.

In later centuries, after the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, many European philologists held increasingly deep suspicions of their Greek contemporaries, whose language they viewed as irreparably corrupted by a long series of population movements.²⁰ Daniel Heinsius, one of the most renowned scholars at Leiden University in the seventeenth century, penned a witty epigram in ancient Greek bemoaning,

Οὐκ ἔτι δὴ μένεν Ἑλλὰς ἐν Ἑλλάδι· τίς κε πίθοιτο;
Ἑλλαδικῆ γλώσση μίγνυτο Βαρβαρικῆ.

*Throughout this book, translations are my own unless otherwise noted. Block quotations, like the one above, will provide both the English and non-English text, while shorter quotations will shift the non-English text to footnotes.

Φωναὶ δ' ἀλλήλησι πάλαι μίγην· οὐδ' ἴα γῆρυς
Ὀψιγόνοισιν ἔην τοῖς ποτὲ γενομένοις.²¹

No Greece left in Greece now—who'd believe it?
Into Greece's tongue was mixed the barbaric;
all voices long since mixed together and not a single voice
remained to those lately born too late.

The verbs of mixture (μίγνυμι) immediately catch one's eye, continuing the same conceit of Filelfo, yet one finds a subtler and more devastating innovation in Heinsius's verses: the confusion of land and language. You will note that in my translation of the second line of the excerpt I write not "the Greek tongue" but rather "Greece's tongue"; Heinsius geographically marked the language as *Helladic* (rather than *Hellenic*), an adjective that means "of the Greek lands." If there is no Greek tongue—or at least nothing that European scholars acknowledged as a Greek tongue—left in Greece, then surely there is no Greece left there either, Heinsius quips. Not only does he dispossess Greeks of their speech and language, he simultaneously dispossesses them of their land. Born too late into a language and a soil no longer their own, these linguistic outcasts belong nowhere but to the roving masses of barbarians.

The prolific philologist Claude Saumaise happily piled on a few decades later, opining offhandedly in his *De Hellenistica Commentarius* that "today, vulgar Greek has in all its aspects been disfigured into such barbarity that it is hardly recognizable."* Ironically, Heinsius and Saumaise were in a bitter feud over the status of Koine Greek in the septuagint and the New Testament (this was the actual topic of the latter's *Commentarius*), yet the barbarity of modern Greek remained a point of common agreement between the two. Over the longue durée of ensuing decades and centuries, many Western intellectuals consolidated such remarks into a philological trope that could be picked up and widely repeated with or without citation.²² At the turn of the next century, for example, Johann Michael Lange endorsed the idea that "by now the Greek tongue has totally spiraled into barbarity" since it had "admitted innumerable barbarian voices: those of Arabs, Hungarians, Spaniards, Gauls, Italians, and other peoples. Therefore the Greeks of today must learn the Greek tongue just as we do: from tutors and from the books of the

* "Hodie vulgaris Graeca ex omni parte ita barbarie deformata est, ut vix agnoscatur" (Saumaise, *De Hellenistica*, 32).

ancients.”* Through the successive migrations of non-Greeks, the argument went, Greeks had corrupted their own language to such a degree that they were in fact on equal (if not worse) footing with the West. Perhaps, it was implied, it was time for Greeks to study under European tutelage if they were to understand themselves.

Up to the cusp of the nineteenth century, these kinds of philological attacks on contemporary speakers of Greek were often driven by the theological schism of Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Christianity. The central crux of the debate lay in the textual authority of the New Testament and whether Greek Orthodox Christians could even understand it. Nonetheless, the repeated metaphors of contamination, corruption, miscegenation, and purity had primed the soil for the racialist discourses that were to blossom soon enough. In 1830, just as the modern Greek state was in its final birth throes, a Bavarian historian named Jakob Fallmerayer published his *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters* (*History of the Morean Peninsula in the Middle Ages*), which argued that successive waves of Slavic immigration into Byzantine lands in late antiquity had effectively wiped out the “race of the Hellenes.” As a result, “Not the slightest drop of undiluted Hellenic blood flows in the veins of the Christian population of present-day Greece.”²³ Modern Greeks, he implied, were not only culturally illegitimate heirs to the title, they were *racially* illegitimate too. While Fallmerayer remains a minor figure in the history of German thought, it is difficult to overstate his colossal impact in Modern Greece, where he continues to this day to haunt and shape the national culture.²⁴ Admittedly, his thesis may have harbored a broader geopolitical aim beyond Greece—namely, to bolster the Ottoman state against Russian expansion²⁵—but his only lasting effects were limited to Greece, where the Greek intelligentsia of subsequent generations (who by no means remained passive observers, as I will discuss in the next section) responded with a reactive cultural agenda of their own, in which questions of racial belonging were to be answered definitively through language and literature.

Importantly, Fallmerayer helped to frame this agenda at least partially by partaking in discourses of scientific racism and colonialism, best seen in a

* “Nostra hac aetate, Graeca lingua plane in barbariem prolapsa est [. . .]. Innumeras admisit voces barbaras, Arabicas, Hungaricas, Hispanicas, Gallicas, Italicas, aliarumque gentium. Ideo hodie [] Graecam linguam Graeci illi, non minus ac nos, a praeceptoribus et e libris veterum debent addiscere” (Lange, *Differentia Linguae*, 5). Lange is quoting an unnamed source here that I have been unable to determine.

lecture he delivered in 1835 (i.e., five years after the publication of his initial thesis) to the Bavarian Academy of Sciences:

The Greek nation, which from the Trojan war until the sixth century after Christ lived in the Peloponnese and the mainland to the north, no longer exists today. Due to unfortunate circumstances of every kind, the Greek nation perished, or it melted into totally insignificant dregs and was so intermixed with foreigners that the initial character of the Greeks was snuffed out completely [. . .]. This doctrine, which was initially just an historical experiment, enters henceforth into the ranks of undebatable historical truths. It has become a fact that no one can deny save by self-delusion. This is not a political matter, it is of a purely scientific nature and is intended only for those who are seriously interested in the proper knowledge of the past and present. [. . .] It is a matter of mental exercise in the European fashion. Such exercises that only a European can bring to fruition [. . .] have sharpened the acuity of the mind of those who live in this region of the world [i.e., Europe] and have led them to such discoveries in the fields of nature, art, and science, that with their wise institutions and their skillful use of physical force have gained dominance over the entire human race.²⁶

Fallmerayer buttressed his argument within a vocabulary of phylogenetic miscegenation and decline (though his evidence as such was not genetic but philological²⁷), which was just starting to solidify into pseudoscientific discourse. Concepts of “racial families” and the presumed hierarchies that obtained among them had been circulating since at least the eighteenth century, in the taxonomies of Linnaeus and the offhand pronouncements of a Hume or a Kant,²⁸ yet they gained a concerted institutional force in the nineteenth century. Channeling this force into a linguistic analysis, Fallmerayer harnessed it to present his thesis as scientific fact and to foreclose debate. In the final sentence of the excerpt above, however, his rhetorical excess spills even further outward into the geopolitical manifestations of that racial discourse: empire and colonization, which Fallmerayer explicitly links to European knowledge production.

In the following paragraph, Fallmerayer turns this colonial lens back to modern Greece, but under a different light than that with which he had made his initial argument in 1830. In the intervening five years, the newly established state of Greece had become a “Kingdom,” and a young Bavarian prince, Otto Friedrich Ludwig, had been imposed upon the people of Greece as their king. This new status quo led to an important twist in Fallmerayer’s thesis:

Otto I was chosen by providence to deliver the benefices of this European superiority of intellect to the new, savage and unschooled, but energetic race of Greeks, who have taken the place of the ancient, physically and morally atrophied children of Deucalion. Like a second Kekrops, Otto came from a foreign land to Athens in order to meld together, with new legislation, the scattered and internally disparate races [living in Greece] and to seal all their minds with the common form of a new Hellenic intellect, bestowed by Europe: the rule of law and respect for the king.²⁹

The peoples living in Greece are marked here as primitive and ignorant, racially bastardized and dissimilar from one another—spilled across the lands of Greece through successive migrations. To rehabilitate these peoples, Fallmerayer calls on Otto to impose the civilizing mission of European law and acculturation, just like other populations in the colonies of Europe. Despite being stigmatized as illegitimate heirs to the Hellenic past, the peoples of Greece are nonetheless invited to participate in Hellenism if only they apprentice themselves to the true heirs of that tradition: the Europeans.³⁰ Fallmerayer extended to the people of modern Greece a kind of provisional invitation to Greekness, but only to the degree that they colonized their minds and bodies under the tutelage of Europe.

To be sure, Fallmerayer's attacks represent but one extreme of a larger and varied discourse, and there were many Europeans who expressed support for both modern Greeks and their independence. Nonetheless, these philhellenes tended to conform to and hence confirm the same paradigm as that of Fallmerayer, since they usually justified their support only by resort to classical Greece and its supposed Western European legacy.³¹ Rather than denigrating modern Greeks as barbarized, most philhellenes simply sifted through the supposed barbarism of the East to salvage the broken "ruins" of the West's ancient past that they wanted to see there, in the "living museums" of the modern Greeks.³² Even more complicated manifestations of philhellenism, such as those of revolutionary Italian circles or of feminist empowerment, often fell into similar antiquarian tropes.³³ Much of philhellenism, in other words, staked its defense of Greece on the same terms as anti-hellenism, playing by the same rules for the same prize: a classical culture "uncontaminated by foreign elements."³⁴ Situated within this system of thought, which legitimized a perceived pure Greek core in fifth-century Athens and devalued any cultural manifestations of Greekness to the degree that they diverged from the core, the twin faces of

anti-hellenism and philhellenism had a profound and lasting effect on the trajectories that modern Greek historiography and philology followed.³⁵

Hellenism at the Crossroads

Over the nineteenth century, self-identifying Greek intellectuals defended their language and history as legitimately Hellenic on many of the same basic terms set by European Hellenism. Most famously (and as a direct response to Fallmerayer) the Greek historiographer Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos wrote the five-volume *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους* (*History of the Hellenic Nation*, 1860–1874), which rehabilitated Byzantine history and offered it as the crucial missing link between ancient and modern Greece. The “Helleno-Christian” culture of Byzantium was institutionalized as a kind of narrative bridge—one that, through the stories they told about themselves, modern Greeks could traverse in reverse and lay claim to the ancient past lying on the other side.³⁶ There was, however, an important point of difference with European Hellenic studies of that period, which often seemed so obsessed with a static image of the fifth-century BCE: Paparrigopoulos, to the contrary, readily admitted that his model of continuity was founded on change and adaptation. Hellenism’s three-thousand-year adventure, he argued, was one not of stasis but of movement, which he categorized across four periods: Hellenic antiquity; Hellenistic late antiquity; Byzantine Hellenism; and contemporary Hellenism. Hellenism had survived in a single continuous lineage from antiquity to today not in spite of but because of its dynamism. Interestingly, however, Paparrigopoulos injected into this dynamism the same precise terms as Fallmerayer: colonial conquest and domination. Just as the Greek culture of fifth-century Athens seemed ready to collapse into extinction, Paparrigopoulos wrote,

Αἴφνης ἀναφαίνεται περιβαλλόμενος τὴν μοναρχικὴν πορφύραν καὶ ἐπιχειρῶν δι’ αὐτῆς τὴν εἰς μέγα μέρος τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ τῆς Ἀφρικῆς διάχυσιν τῶν ἀπείρων διανοητικῶν, τεχνικῶν, πολιτικῶν θησαυρῶν ὅσους παρήγαγε καὶ ἐτελείωσε καὶ ἐσώρευσε ἐν τῇ μικρᾷ ταύτῃ γωνίᾳ τῆς γῆς κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς ἱστορίας αὐτοῦ περιόδον. Τὴν δ’ ἀρετὴν ταύτην τῆς ἀναμορφώσεως μετέδωκεν ὁ πρῶτος Ἑλληνισμὸς, διὰ τοῦ δευτέρου, καὶ εἰς τὸν τρίτον, διὰ δὲ τοῦ τρίτου καὶ εἰς τὸν καθ’ ἡμᾶς Ἑλληνισμὸν.³⁷

suddenly it reappeared invested in the royal gowns [of Alexander the Great] and, by means of its royal scepter, it poured out its infinite intellectual, technical, and political treasures upon a large swath of Asia and Africa—treasures that it had produced, perfected, and amassed in that small corner of earth during its first period of life. This virtue of reconfiguration was passed from the first Hellenism to the second, and from the second to the third, and from the third on to our own Hellenism.

In Paparrigopoulos's narrative, which mirrored in striking ways the encomiastic narratives that European scholars were crafting about their own empires, Hellenism survived through territorial and linguistic conquest, expanding and assimilating foreign lands and foreign tongues to itself, and through that assimilation, reformulating itself in turn.

And this survival strategy did not end with Alexander's ancient conquests. Even in the Byzantine period, where the dominant narrative at this point was Greek decline amidst the population movements of so-called barbarians, Paparrigopoulos simply shifted the terms of the debate. While admitting to "miscegenation" (ἐπιμιξία), he chose to focus not on race or blood but on language and culture: "Fallmerayer had made the claim, with every assurance, that the Greek language had been wiped out from Greece [. . .]. We do not deny that Slavic blood was mixed up into the Greek blood in the Greek heartlands, but in the end it was Hellenism that overpowered Slavism," which essentially meant that "the Slavic tongue was wiped out and the Greek tongue dominated absolutely."* Amidst the population movements of the Middle Ages, Paparrigopoulos used the tools of philology to argue that Byzantium had preserved its Hellenism through linguistic and cultural domination. In this way, Paparrigopoulos bequeathed at least one core element to subsequent modern Greek narratives about Greekness: the rhetoric of miscegenation was not to be rejected but accepted and at times even celebrated—but only up to a certain point. So long as this border crossing could be managed, so long as the dominant assimilatory power belonged to Hellenism, such mixing was allowed a place in the pages of Greek historiography. If, on the contrary, any

*"Ο δὲ Φαλλμεράνερ εἶχε προβῆ μέχρι τῆς βεβαιώσεως ὅτι ἡ ἑλληνικὴ γλῶσσα ὄλωσ ἐξωστρακίσθη ἐκ Πελοποννήσου καὶ ἐκ τῆς Στερεᾶς [. . .]. Δὲν ἀρνούμεθα ὅτι αἶμα σλαβικὸν ἀνεμίχθη μετὰ τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ αἵματος καὶ εἰς αὐτὰς τὰς νοτιωτάτας ἑλληνικὰς χώρας. Ἐπὶ τέλους ὁμοῦ ὁ ἑλληνισμὸς κατίσχυσε τοῦ σλαβισμοῦ [. . .] ἐξηλείφθη ἡ σλαβικὴ γλῶσσα, ἐπεκράτησε δὲ αὐτῆς ἀπολύτως ἡ ἑλληνικὴ" (Paparrigopoulos vol. 3, 391; 382).

so-called miscegenation threatened the core elements of Greek continuity, the offending parties would have to be displaced from Greek memory, their heritage dispossessed or detained in the footnotes and appendices. For it was only in this way that Paparrigopoulos could claim that “the Greek nation did not cease to exist over the whole course of three whole thousand years [. . .] always speaking this same language, and bearing this same sentiment, spirit, and name.”* Ultimately, continuity depended on a kind of cultural demographic numbers game, one that was played out in the realm of mass migrations.

How did Paparrigopoulos’s model translate into literary history, though? The dynamic of miscegenation and assimilation presented some initial difficulties here, because the object of study was no longer populations but individual authors and intellectuals, in whose person migration and “mixing” often equated to crossing religious borders or even to religious conversion.³⁸ Konstantinos Sathas was the first to make sense of the literary terrain with his *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία* (*Modern Greek Philology*, 1868), which was essentially a massive biographical index of authors and their bibliographies.³⁹ As one would expect, Sathas viewed Greek literature primarily through the twin prisms of language and religion, yet he also allowed for exceptions and differentiated degrees of “Greekness,” as seen for example in his entry on Leo Allatios, a Greek convert to Catholicism who spent a good part of his career railing against the supposed heresies of the Greek Orthodox faith. Despite his anti-Orthodox writings, Allatios finds a welcoming and sympathetic host in Sathas’s *Modern Greek Philology*, which praises the former’s gift for locution and poetry and makes excuses for his anti-Greek polemics: “By necessity he became a strident critic of Orthodox Christianity, but not a supercilious reviler of the faith, like other renegades [*drapetidai*].”[†] Sathas expels most Greek converts to Catholicism from the Greek tradition, lumping them under the category of *drapetidai*—a derogatory term used by the Orthodox Church to mark converts literally as “fugitives” from Orthodoxy—but he opens the canon to those few whom he sees as deserving of attention, such as Allatios, and excuses their attacks on Greek orthodoxy as a matter of necessity. It was

* “Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ ἐθνότης δὲν ἔπαυσεν ὑπάρχουσα ἐπὶ τρισχίλια ὄλα ἔτη, [. . .] αἰετοτε δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν λαλοῦσα γλῶσσαν, καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἔχουσα αἴσθημα, πνεῦμα, ὄνομα” (Paparrigopoulos, vol. 1, 877).

[†] “Ἠγέρθη καὶ οὗτος ἐξ ἀνάγκης δριμύς τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας ἐπικριτῆς, οὐχὶ ὁμως καὶ ὑπερφίαλος ὑβριστῆς, ὡς ἄλλοι δραπετίδαι” (Sathas, *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία*, 270).

his way of managing cultural contact and border crossing without sacrificing the Hellenic core.

Since Sathas was willing to make exceptions for certain Greek-speaking Catholics in Europe, one might ask: did he extend the same courtesy to Greek-speaking Muslims of the Ottoman Empire? This is a critical question, and one that brings us to the heart of the Hellenic border regime. For, while early philologists and historiographers like Sathas and Paparrigopoulos were often willing to search out hybrid forms of Hellenism in the borderlands of Catholic and Slavic Europe, Ottoman Islam constituted the ultimate limit case. As I will discuss in chapter one, Greek-language Islam did in fact exist within the Ottoman Empire and developed its own literary traditions, which productively drew both from Greek Orthodox prosody and from Turkish, Arabic, and Persian Islamic genres and narratives. For the most part, this Greek-language literature was written not in the Greek alphabet but in the modified Arabic script of Ottoman Islam.

To my knowledge, throughout his career Sathas only recorded one Greek-language poem by a Muslim, the *Alipashiad*, an epic ballad sung by Haxhi Shehreti at the court of Ali Pasha in the early nineteenth century.⁴⁰ But even as he published an excerpt of the poem Sathas reviled it as “barbarous” and “illiterate” and went out of his way to displace it from the Greek canon. Sathas treated it not as a work of literature but as an historical curiosity from which he could stripmine any data of interest to national Greek historiography. This assessment was later taken up and repeated by Vasilis Pysinellas, who, as far as I know, was the only scholar in Greece to survey Arabic-script Greek literature. Yet rather than extolling his object of study, Pysinellas deemed Greek-language Islam aesthetically insignificant: “Regarding the poetic value of these works, there is nothing to speak of. The presence of Turkish and Arabic words, which were a source of intellectual flair for the Turks [i.e., Greek-speaking Muslims], creates for us [‘Greeks’] a series of ugly and displeasing phonetic impressions without anything poetic to add to the prosaic nature of the Greek verses.”* He concluded by admitting that the only value of this literature is of a purely historiographic or ethnographic nature, thus solidifying the trope begun by Sathas.

* “Ὅσον ἀφορᾶ δὲ περὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἀξίας τῶν ἐν λόγῳ ἔργων, οὐδεὶς λόγος δύναται νὰ γίνη. Ἡ παρουσία τῶν τουρκοαραβικῶν λέξεων, ἡ ὁποία ἦτο διὰ τοὺς Τούρκους πηγὴ πνευματικῆς ἐξάρσεως, εἶναι δι’ ἡμᾶς αἰτία δυσαρέστων μόνον ἠχητικῶν ἐντυπώσεων χωρὶς οὐδὲν ποιητικὸν νὰ προσθέτῃ εἰς τὴν πεζότητα τῶν ὑπολοίπων στίχων” (Pysinellas, “Ὁμολογίαι,” 164).

What was the reasoning behind this systematic circumscription of Ottoman Islam? Sathas hints at an answer in his *Τουρκοκρατούμενη Ελλάδα* (*Greece during Turkish Rule*, 1869), where he opines that after Greek Byzantium had been hit by the so-called Asiatic deluge (ἄσιανὸς χεῖμαρρος) of Ottoman Islam, Hellenism “rose up into the mountains, where it set up camp during those long and stormy years. It bore itself bravely under oppression, and while it sometimes met victory and sometimes met defeat it always preserved itself pure and untouched, just like the pure and untouched mountains that had rescued it.”* The key concept here is “pure and untouched” (literally: “virgin”), which applies both to the physical mountains of Greece and to the faithful Greeks atop them. Climbing up into the hills and engaging in guerrilla warfare for centuries, these Greeks kept themselves high above the supposedly murky and impure waters of the Asian deluge that had come flooding into erstwhile Greek territories below. In the decades leading up to the Population Exchange, this is how Greek philology seems to have narrated Ottoman cultural contact. Philologists defended Hellenism’s pedigree by categorically displacing Islam beyond the bounds of literary or aesthetic value. It was allowed a place on the page only inasmuch as it provided raw facts to the historiographic archive of the nation. As Konstantinos Tsitselikis pointedly remarks, Muslims were denied the possibility of integration into the Greek narrative; the best that they could hope for was “invisibility.”⁴¹ According to this paradigm, any Greeks who converted to Islam (or, more generally, any Muslims who spoke Greek) necessarily forfeited their claim to a place in the Greek canon.

Half a century later, most Muslims necessarily forfeited their claim to a physical place in Greece as well, when they were deported to Turkey as part of the Population Exchange.⁴² And of the Greek Orthodox Christian refugees who came to take their place, at least a couple hundred thousand did not in fact speak Greek; they spoke Turkish, writing it in the Greek alphabet of their bible. As I will discuss in chapter four, these refugees, known as Karamanli Christians, were likewise dispossessed of their place in the Hellenic canon, for despite their Greek alphabet and the shared Greek Orthodox cultural reservoir from which they drew, in the eyes of Greek nationalists their language was contaminated and unfit for direct integration. In both these and other cases,

*“Ὁ Ἑλληνισμὸς ἀμέσως ἀνακύψας καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὀρέων κατασκηνώσας κατὰ τὸν μέγαν ἐκεῖνον καὶ πολυχρόνιον κλύδωνα, ἠνδροῦτο διωκόμενος, καὶ ἐναλλάξ νικῶν καὶ νικώμενος παρθένης διετηρήθη, ὡς οἱ διασώσαντες αὐτὸν παρθενικοὶ βράχοι” (Sathas, *Τουρκοκρατούμενη, α'*).

like those of Armenian refugees in Greece, the stories and the status of such communities were discounted and ignored. Their uprootings remain always “minor losses” within the larger narratives of national loss, internally displaced within them.⁴³

In the years following the Exchange, the literature of both Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox Christians and Greek-speaking Muslims was stripped for parts and relegated to the footnotes of Greek literary history.⁴⁴ Other minorities who remained in Greece, such as the Turkish- and Slavic-speaking Muslims of Western Thrace, the Cham Albanians of Epirus, and the Slavic-speaking Orthodox Christians of Macedonia, were likewise denied entry into literary histories and sometimes targeted for outright linguistic suppression at the hands of the state. The absence of these voices was papered over by a louder, more systematic nationalist philology. In 1926, just a year after the first phase of the Population Exchange had been completed, the Academy of Athens was founded and charged with salvaging and studying the “national heritage.” In 1929, Nikolaos Tomadakis submitted the first doctoral dissertation in Modern Greek philology to the University of Athens; his topic was the editions and manuscripts of Dionysios Solomos, author of what had become Greece’s national anthem. In 1931, the Academy announced its plans to publish the *Greek Library* series, devoted to Ancient Greek titles in modern translation. By 1936, the figurehead of a new generation of philologists, Ioannis Sykoutris (whom we will meet again in chapter two), was arguing for the need to apprentice Greek philology explicitly to Western European knowledge production—as a defense, in part, against so-called Eastern despotism.⁴⁵ These and other philological pronouncements, initiatives, and organizations further cemented the implicit categorical limits on what kind of Greek literature was institutionally visible.

In the years following the Population Exchange, as the Greek state struggled to integrate and assimilate nearly one and a half a million refugees from Turkey, to many intellectuals it seemed as though the only appropriate response to the crisis was national revival. Greek-language Islamic poetry or Turkish-language Greek Orthodox refugee ballads were perhaps the farthest thing from the minds of most in Athens. But the problem was deeper than the discipline’s ignorance of such textual traditions at a given historical moment or a given political crisis; there was a structural problem embedded in the discipline’s basic definitions and first principles. The major histories of Modern Greek Literature written in the following decades—for example, those of K. Th. Dimaras (1949) and Linos Politis (1978)—subtly but categorically de-

limit Hellenism in ethno-linguistic if not racial terms and document its border crossing only in the West.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, one important new trope to emerge in Greek philology after the Exchange was the idea of Greek literature as a “crossroads between East and West.” How, one might ask, could Greek literature function as a crossroads between East and West when so-called Eastern traditions like Greek-language Islam and Karamanli Turkish had been denied entry? What kind of a crossroads was Greek literature when the philological gatekeepers had, more generally, foreclosed Ottoman Islam as a possible contact point? Yet it was precisely *because* such literary cultures had been dispossessed and immobilized, I believe, that Greek philology was able now to safely use them as props to playact its crossroads metaphor, embracing it as a core component of the Hellenic tradition. Islam and Islamicate literary traditions were not deported wholesale from Greek philology, in other words; they were stripped of their specific value and generalized as the “East” of Greece’s crossroads. Instructive here is Dimaras, whose *Ιστορία τῆς Νεοελληνικῆς Λογοτεχνίας* (*History of Modern Greek Literature*) was and remains formative. He writes, “Greece’s geographic position gives it an additional importance. It is located between two major civilizational masses that stand ever apart from one another [. . .]. East and West meet atop Greek lands, which thus become a crossroads where two fundamental forms of civilization constantly clash.”* Anticipating Samuel Huntington’s notion of civilizational clash, Dimaras paints a picture of two opposing worlds destined to stand in unceasing conflict. Between them lies Greece, which is traversed by each of the two. It is important to note that such a language robs Greece of any political agency and likewise excuses it of any political responsibility for its own role in such clashes or the forced migrations that they spark. Be that as it may, even amidst the geopolitical tensions and violence of such a geography, Dimaras seizes on the cultural advantages that it lends to Hellenism, which, since it is a crossroads, has thus been trained to “exercise its assimilatory power” (“νὰ ἀσκήσει τὴν ἀφομοιωτικὴ τοῦ δύναμη”) over the foreigners who travel across its lands. Recycling a key trope from Paparrigopoulos, Dimaras latches on to “assimilatory power” as the essential tool for his literary history, because it is only after he has assimilated

*“Ἐρχεται νὰ δώσει μιὰ πρόσθετη βαρῦτητα ἡ γεωγραφικὴ θέση τῆς Ἑλλάδας. Βρίσκεται ἀνάμεσα σὲ δύο μεγάλους πολιτιστικούς ὄγκους, ποὺ ξεχωρίζουν πάντα [. . .]. Ἡ Ἀνατολὴ καὶ ἡ Δύση σμίγουν ἐπάνω στὰ ἑλληνικὰ ἐδάφη, ποὺ γίνονται ἔτσι ἓνα σταυροδρόμι ὅπου ἀδιάκοπα συγκρούονται δύο πρωταρχικὲς μορφὲς πολιτισμοῦ” (Dimaras, *Ιστορία*, 5).

and thereby disarmed them that Dimaras can go on to celebrate the foreign elements that give Hellenism its dynamism: “Hellenic civilization, then, expresses itself within a ceaseless renewal sparked by its contacts with foreign cultures.”*

To better encapsulate this idea, Dimaras later coins one of the key conceptual metaphors for Hellenic culture, one that epitomizes the intellectual project of Greek philologists since the 1860s: “I might even speak of a kind of border-guard logic to our literature.”† Given its importance, I should unpack the word “border-guard” in my translation here, which stands in for the Greek concept of *akritai*: i.e., Byzantine border guards along the Eastern frontier. These guards were essentially irregular military units of the Byzantine Empire whose task it was to police the empire’s outermost lands neighboring the Muslim states to the east. These border guards’ participation in the frequent wars between Byzantium and its opponents led to a series of folk songs and epic poems in Demotic Greek—most famously, the *Epic of Digenis Akritas*. The name *Digenis* means “born to two [peoples]” and belongs to a mythical border guard whose father was a Muslim and his mother an Orthodox Christian. The former converted to Orthodoxy before their child was born, thus ensuring that the boy would be fully raised within Greek Orthodoxy, albeit at its outermost territorial limits. Growing up in this borderland, Digenis goes on to offer his service to the Byzantines and, roaming the limits of Hellenism, he protects its territorial integrity by means of his own cultural hybridity. His person thus symbolizes the exact assimilatory miscegenation that Greek philology had been at such pains to manage and control from the start. In naming Greek literature a “border guard” literature, Dimaras thus completes the circle begun by Paparrigopoulos.

Yet the *Akritai* poems are only one example that Dimaras lists for his notion of a “border guard” literature. This poem cycle reached its apex in the late Byzantine and early Ottoman periods and thenceforth fell into general obscurity until the late nineteenth century.⁴⁷ What other, more recent examples of frontier literature does Dimaras list? In fact, all the remaining examples are situated not in the East but in the West, among Italianate influences: the Cretan Renaissance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which was under

* “Ο ἑλληνικὸς πολιτισμὸς, λοιπόν, ἐκφράζεται μέσα στὴν ἀδιάκοπη ἀνανέωση τὴν ὁποία προκαλοῦν οἱ ἐπαφὲς μὲ τοὺς ξένους πολιτισμοὺς” (Dimaras, *Ἱστορία*, 5).

† “Θὰ μιλοῦσα ἐδῶ γιὰ ἓναν ἀκριτικὸ χαρακτῆρα τῆς λογοτεχνίας μας” (Dimaras, *Ἱστορία*, 6).

Venetian rule and thus blended Greek and Italian; or the nineteenth-century poetic output of the Ionian islands, likewise under Venetian rule for centuries. That such spaces constitute all of Dimaras's other literary frontiers is no coincidence. Contact with the East is all well and good when situated in the nearly mythical world of the *akritai*, who were active during the apex of Byzantine power a millennium ago, yet one would be hard pressed to find Dimaras recording more recent literary contact, exchange, or hybridity among Greek and Turkish, Arabic, or Islam in later centuries.⁴⁸ Such forms of contact continued to exist, as I demonstrate in this book, but they had been (and remain today) informalized and pushed to the margins of literary histories like those of Dimaras, where they can be alluded to vaguely and capitalized on as needed for the construction of "crossroads" or "gateways."

Reassembling the Hellenic Borderscape

Broadly understood, such is the institutional Hellenism that has been handed down to us today. Western discourses of purity and miscegenation, which from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries obsessively focused on the population movements of peoples across the Hellenic world, were internalized and slowly reformulated by Greek philologists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Rather than accept the dominant Western parameters of debate wholesale, they gradually pruned away some concepts and re-articulated others, slowly developing what we can now recognize as core elements of the modern border regime. Under the care of successive scholars from Paparrigopoulos to Sathas to Dimaras, institutional Hellenism no longer denied population movements or "mixing"; it channeled them, micromanaged them, assimilated what it could, and displaced into gray zones what it could not. In this way, philologists pioneered a method of "extraction and displacement."⁴⁹ Foreign elements deemed of value were incorporated into the Hellenic project while the foreign cultures from which that value had been extracted were often diverted or displaced.

Seen through the prism of this intellectual history, Greece becomes not a solid rampart of "Fortress Europe" but a borderscape—which, again, denotes a network of semi-inclusions and -exclusions that permeates the whole of a given geography. This is not to underplay the role of hard borders along the edges of Greece; rather, it is to see how those borders redound inward as well. As Mezzadra and Neilson have argued in their book *Border as Method*, the modern border regime may indeed draw hard lines in the sand, but behind

these lines it simultaneously filters and funnels people across a series of internal borders through a process of “differential inclusion.”⁵⁰ In other words, even after they had crossed the hard and fast geopolitical borders of the Eastern Mediterranean, the refugee and diasporic stories that you will read in this book remained entangled in an internal borderscape that sometimes displaced them out of print, at other times detained them at the edges of print in footnotes and appendices, or, on occasion, reformatted and reappropriated pieces of them into mainstream commercial print. In each case, institutional philology was extracting value of one kind or another from these texts. And while the concept of “value extraction” should remind us of the larger economic stakes of the modern border, where precaritized labor draws down wages in the wider economy,⁵¹ the differential inclusion on which it depends is not only of an economic nature but linguistic and cultural as well. Such interlocking forms of differential inclusion structure many of the modern world’s borderscapes, as seen in the situation of migrant workers and refugees in Greece today,⁵² yet early traces of this system were already emerging in the Population Exchange of 1923, where the economic predation and exploitation that awaited many of the “exchanged” peoples in their host countries was often justified by their linguistic and cultural differences⁵³—differences that had largely been systematized and institutionalized by philology.

How might we reform such a philological system? It goes without saying, of course, that I am not the first to ask this kind of question. Over the past forty years, a growing number of literary scholars have aimed trenchant critiques at the internal mechanisms of institutional Hellenism, placing a spotlight on the Global North’s intellectual and material colonization of modern Greece while also documenting Greek participation in that colonial model.⁵⁴ My book draws on the discoveries and connections charted out by this work, even as I move in a slightly different direction from much of it. For, although I share the desire to decolonize the Hellenic, I will do so not primarily through a critique of its core institutions (many incisive critiques already exist) but by tracing out lesser-known and complementary voices hiding within those institutions: texts and fragments of texts that have for a century or more been quietly held in limbo inside the internal borders or just outside the external borders of institutional Hellenism. Konstantina Zanou has written that there is “an entire universe of the ‘in-between’” that has gone missing from our historical memory and will remain institutionally invisible “if we stick to conventional national and state divisions of historical writing.”⁵⁵ And while she focuses on the nineteenth century, as empire just began to give way to nation-state, it is my

contention that this “universe of the in-between” remains legible into the twentieth and even twenty-first century, if we only commit the time and patience to apprentice ourselves to its media formats, scripts, and tongues. But I also do not want to reify these voices and texts as inherently “in-between”; I trace them back to the foundational and more recognizable forms of Hellenism and thus open spaces for dialogue between them. In other words, I build bridges between the margin and the mainstream and in doing so attempt to re-envision both as lateral coordinates in a shared topography. In this endeavor, I draw inspiration from recent scholars working in other disciplines or periods, such as Konstantina Zanou, Heath Cabot, Katerina Rozakou, and Michael Pifer, among others, whose ethos of care and curation I hope to bring to the refugee and diasporic literatures featured here.

This does not mean that I will abandon criticism, which has already played an important role in this introduction and will maintain a persistent albeit smaller footprint in each of the following chapters.⁵⁶ It does mean, however, that even in moments of structural critique I take care to use a diplomatic language that respects and approximates the divergent and disparate experiences of my potential readerships.⁵⁷ Because ultimately I aim to gain the broadest possible audience for this literary refuge. My book provides new voices, models and tools to a range of readers in the academy, but I also want to extend the conversation further to readers in and of the borderscape that I study, at the edges of Southeastern Europe, West Asia, and North Africa.⁵⁸ This is a complex and heterogeneous set of audiences, some of whom may indeed have grown disenchanted or dissatisfied with the stories that national philology has told them; others of whom were never represented by such stories in the first place; but also a great many others who remain deeply invested in those stories and identify with them. I want to speak to and assemble as many of these audiences as I can within a shared narrative.

Such a narrative remains available to us today through looseleaf papers, bits of ephemeral print, chapbooks, second-hand testimonies, reader marginalia scrawled onto flyleaves, entire manuscript codices written out and bound together by hand and passed from hand to hand among refugee communities, other manuscript codices redirected into the state libraries of Europe, or even printed books that one can purchase in a bookstore in Athens or in Istanbul, if one knows how to read between their lines. Taking up each of these in turn, I attempt to document philology’s undocumented. Crucially, I elevate these texts and their handlers not simply for the sake of diversity—a gesture that, if left to itself, would ultimately amount to a kind of empty tokenism—but also

to learn from them more participatory forms of textual transmission, migration, and exchange. This is an essential claim of my book and bears emphasis: stripped of philological power, several of the texts and stories that I examine survived not despite but thanks to the decentralized and lateral networks of their handlers. There are of course tensions in these networks, and greater or lesser degrees of power asymmetries may be hiding just beyond my field of vision. Nonetheless, I maintain that literary studies, whose textual conscience has been forged in the smithy of a strictly top-down philology, has much to gain from dialogue with the case studies in this book. This is particularly true at a moment when, spurred on by the call for public humanities, a growing number of scholars attempt to open our universities to the publics and the undercommons that lie beyond their facilities.

There are of course limits to what this book can accomplish. Much of the material damage is irreversible and it would be irresponsible to pretend that my work here offers any tactile reparations or an actionable political agenda (even as I feel both to be urgent needs). Many of the communities documented in the following chapters have been uprooted and decimated by the Exchange and the modern border regime that it helped create, and *Literature's Refuge* can neither undo that violence nor restore lost homelands, just as it cannot undo the ongoing legal grey zones, hotspot buffer zones, and systematic labor exploitation that continue to define the borderscape today. Such is the project not of a book but of on-the-ground organizing and broad coalition-building. Despite its limits, however, what this book *can* offer is a paradigm shift in the ideological mechanisms of the borderscape and, at its most ambitious scale, a blueprint for rebuilding those mechanisms. No longer bound to a system of linguistic and cultural extraction and displacement, the new borderscape that this book envisions would instead decentralize philological control and put it at the service of those on whose backs it has been built. As I wrote earlier in this introduction, the stories of such a borderscape might best be gathered under a kind of loose federation: Greek- or Turkish-language texts, non-Greek or non-Turkish language texts adjacent in some way to Greek or Turkish or Orthodox or Islamic culture, and other textual traditions that do not identify with Greek or Turkish but claim a place in the cultural tapestry. My logic is thus not merely comparative per se but what Lital Levy, in a different context, calls “integrative.”⁵⁹

To be sure, my study cannot hope to integrate all the threads of this tapestry, but it does take up a number of key strands, ranging from Epirus in the north to Egypt in the south, from Greek-language Islam in the west to Turkish-

language Greek Orthodoxy in the east. The journey that this book makes across that itinerary marks a small but necessary step in a larger collective project of the humanistic sciences today: rethinking the border regime not only of Greece but of the Global North *in toto*, whose institutions have for too long monopolized and weaponized the Hellenic.

A Road Map

Despite the word “global” in the previous sentence, this is not a book about world literature. When occasion demands I follow the texts of my study to far-flung corners of the globe, but for the most part I remain grounded in the borderscape of the Eastern Mediterranean, which straddles Europe and the Middle East. Nevertheless, the slow and regionally bounded mobility of my book, which reflects similar patterns of mobility among most of the refugee and diasporic actors whose stories I tell, may perhaps be able to speak productively to world literature in one small respect. But first let me clarify the terminology here: what do we mean when we say *world literature*? On its face, it gestures toward transnational networks of literary texts, translated and transited across borders and offering readers a window into the larger world around them.⁶⁰ For more than a decade, much literary scholarship written in English has been wrestling with a decidedly Western constellation of the term, namely Anglophone publishing conglomerates and Euro-American academic disciplinary formations—both of which have been critiqued for their practices of knowledge extraction, homogenization, and appropriation.⁶¹ Change is in the air, though. Building on but also pushing beyond these critiques, important and exciting work is now expanding our understanding of world literature in new directions, focusing on global South-to-South translation networks or explicitly communist or maoist publishing ventures in the soviet or Bandung sphere.⁶² These recent research agendas are reshaping the geographies of intellectual history and breathing new life into the category of world literature.

To my mind, however, at least one problem remains unresolved: the many bibliographic gaps torn open by forced displacement. What place in world literature can the displaced hope to claim? And let me be specific by what I mean with the category of “displacement”: I gesture here neither to this or that author exiled from their homeland,⁶³ nor even to the wholesale displacement of peripheral national literatures from large-scale transnational publishing⁶⁴—instead, I mean those displaced from the very categories of authorship and national literature in the first place. This might correspond, on the one hand,

to entire textual traditions such as Greek-language Islam or Turkish-language Greek Orthodoxy, uprooted from national literature, from modern authorship, and from the institutional visibility that both of them secure. But on the other hand, it also corresponds to canonical texts such as the poetry of C. P. Cavafy or popular fiction from the Greco-Turkish war, which have been fully integrated into the canon. Scratch the surface of these texts and here too you find a wealth of human voices, media constellations, texts, paratexts, and contexts that were once bound up in these literary works and their authors, only to be sloughed off by philology as it curated and nationalized them. Because ultimately, the canonical text is also a site of displacement, a residue of all that has been shorn or torn from the authorized story.

Of course, it should go without saying that the problem here is not the author-writer as an individual agent, who is in any case a relatively insignificant force in the alignment of global intellectual property regimes.⁶⁵ Looking to postcolonial authorship, for example, Sarah Brouillette and Caroline Davis have carefully demonstrated that if authorial brands sometimes function as important linchpins in global literature, the writers themselves often have less power than the material and legal infrastructure amassed around them.⁶⁶ The problem thus is clearly one of institutional infrastructures, access to which overdetermines how a text will move (or not move) across geographies of transnational publishing. I look for alternative visions of textual mobility by narrowing my focus to what I call “textual handlers” operating along the outermost edges of this infrastructure: writers, editors, printers, binders, readers, copyists, oral storytellers, translators, and others—most often refugees or diasporic peoples. Some of these textual handlers have been entirely displaced and forgotten, such as the writer, copyists, and readers of the Islamic codex discussed in chapter one, while others have seen their labor and their value extracted and reinvested into national authorship, such as the refugee narrator Nikolas Kazakoglou treated in chapter three. By tracing out these and other creative patchworks hiding beneath the surface of authorship, the following chapters attempt to gaze beyond the proprietary claims (that are made on stories, on texts, on knowledge) in national and transnational publishing and offer some sketches of alternative models.⁶⁷

These alternative models bring with them alternative mobilities. As I intimated at the start of this section, texts that have already been displaced from national philology and national publishing networks tend to navigate a slower, less formalized circuit of mobility, spread across community libraries, coffeehouses, village squares, family archives, private collections, and the rare book

holdings of a state library here or there—usually *there*, in foreign states. And this last point is worth unpacking a little further: despite their provisional and precarious infrastructure, the refugee and diasporic textual networks that my book examines are often international in scale and geographically extensive in their own right, each node hundreds or sometimes even thousands of miles from the other or from the point of origin of the texts with whose care they have been charged. Constitutionally different from large publishing conglomerates, this displaced geography has nonetheless silently helped to shape the contours of many transnational publishing networks—precisely through its silence. Because if Greek and Turkish literary history can teach us anything in this book, it is that the national literatures upon which transnational publishing has traditionally relied for most of its acquisitions sometimes place themselves on a map only by displacing their “others.” And this displacement is both epistemological and physical in nature, for when texts are *philologically* displaced, they are simultaneously rendered *geographically* displaceable, along with the communities that produced them.⁶⁸

How to build back a place for such displaceables? How to chart out their passage across the Mediterranean borderscape? Questions of method are particularly important here. In the chapters that follow, my main recourse will be to the history of the book, which studies literature as physical objects that are made and circulated from hand to hand. The book historian’s toolbox includes (but is not limited to) textual criticism, analytical bibliography, codicology, and network analysis. Some of these terms might benefit from a brief explanation: textual criticism is the comparison and close analysis of the multiple manuscripts and/or print editions that comprise the material traces of a given literary work’s production and transmission over time (think of the *Iliad*, which is commonly understood as a single work but exists in multiple versions in ancient papyri fragments from Egypt, in medieval manuscript codices from Constantinople, in early Renaissance printed editions from Venice, in scholarly editions over the past hundred years, in translations based on one or several of the former, etc.). Analytical bibliography and codicology, on the other hand, are the analysis and documentation of a specific textual object within that transmission chain (think of a single manuscript witness of the *Iliad*) and the stories hidden within its material components, such as paper sources, ink, binding, scribal and/or reader marginalia, colophons, etc. Together, textual criticism and bibliography allow us both to follow textual transmission networks over time and space and to pause and zero in on particular socio-material nodes within a given network. Using these various scales of analysis, the his-

tory of the book can accommodate everything from a single textual object's history to the national or transnational book networks within which it is assembled, transmitted, copied, consumed, reproduced, and recycled. Under a different name, book history might justly be described as a kind of philology in its own right. The two share many of the same methods, and this overlap is no coincidence. My book in fact seeks explicitly to take up some of the tools of traditional philology and to use them to elevate the border crossings traditionally driven underground by that same philology. I take to heart Aamir Mufti's assertion that elaborating new uses for these older philological tools stands as one of the most critical tasks of literary studies today.⁶⁹

If traditional philology has used its tools to construct authors, authorized texts, and canons, I use those tools instead to reverse engineer the process. I take a given work and disassemble it like the engine of a car, piece by piece, spreading it out across a flat surface as a mechanic does upon a workbench. Having done so, I set about examining the inner logic and interconnections of the work's constituent parts, using multiple scales as noted above, both within a single text and across the larger infrastructure supporting its reproduction and transmission.⁷⁰ Careful attention to these components and the relationships between them makes clear that literature often moves in explicitly non-linear ways back and forth across multiple media (manuscript to print, print to manuscript, composite codices, oral to manuscript to oral to print, print to oral, etc.); across multiple bindings (unbound newspapers and broadsheets, commercial case bindings, through-the-fold stitching, saddle stitching or even single cotter pins); across multiple editions (first edition, revised edition, critical edition, expanded edition); across multiple alphabets and languages (Greek-script Greek, Arabic-script Greek, Arabic-script Turkish, Latin-script Turkish, Greek-script Turkish); and most importantly, from one textual handler to the next, each of whom might variously read the work, mark it up, take it apart, reassemble it, remediate it, or indeed multimediate it.

Without this kind of reverse engineering, most of the stories that I want to tell are difficult to recover, cordoned off and silenced behind the standardized books of modern commercial publishing, which project an aura of fixity, finality, and singularity. This aura is powerful, but it is of course a fiction. Print brought many changes to human communication, but it by no means brought standardization.⁷¹ True, the late nineteenth century did see a growing consensus that stable, standard texts could and did exist, driven by faith in new print technologies, philological institutions, and international law. To take just this last domain as an example, by the turn of the twentieth century a web of inter-

national copyright agreements (both bilateral treaties and larger conventions such as Berne) seemed to foreclose most legal forms of unlicensed translation and reprint across many national borders.⁷² Nonetheless, it's worth noting that such agreements failed to achieve global dominance for much of the century (in Turkey, for example, unlicensed translation and adaptation of foreign works remained legally protected until 1952). More importantly, while unlicensed copying is certainly a significant factor in the destabilization of texts, I don't want to reduce the question of textual fluidity and variation to so-called piracy. All textual reproduction is inherently social in nature and hence it is open to the transformative agencies of many. Whether we are speaking of copying, compiling, rebinding, revising, reinscribing, editing or otherwise, all textual objects—even printed books in bookstores—remain indices not of stability and fixity but of a messy pluriform network. My book locates literature at this latter level, collapsing formats, media, and actors into one another, spreading them out across a flat plane to reveal less linear, more multidirectional movements and mobilities between textual handlers.

I follow these mobilities on two scales: textual and geographic. The easiest and perhaps most helpful way to join the two is to follow the movement of texts through space, which B. Venkat Mani has usefully termed “bibliomigrancy.”⁷³ This kind of textual mobility is important for me, but by itself it would have a hard time accounting for some of the more informal ways that literature is moved not just across geographies but between pages and media formats as well. To make this kind of mobility more visible, I would add a second scale of bibliomigrancy, one that Mani himself hints at: “Biblio may be opened up to acknowledge all kinds of books: written and oral, printed and handwritten, bound and unbound, stationary and portable.”⁷⁴ Such categories are not stable; they can be made and unmade, assembled, disassembled, and reassembled into one another. I can take a printed book and undo its binding, interpolate my own manuscript writing between the pages, and rebind them all together; I can take another book and read it aloud while my friend copies it down; I can take yet a third book and jot a poem onto its flyleaf. The migration of literature, as these examples demonstrate, simultaneously occurs across both geographic and bibliographic borderscapes. In fact, the two scales of migration might sometimes be mutually implicated in one another almost like a mathematical fractal—from the largest geographic units of analysis down to the smallest typographic marks upon a page. Indeed, *Literature's Refuge* argues that one can quite literally read the transformations of the larger region on the pages of the literary texts as they are reproduced, transmitted, and transformed

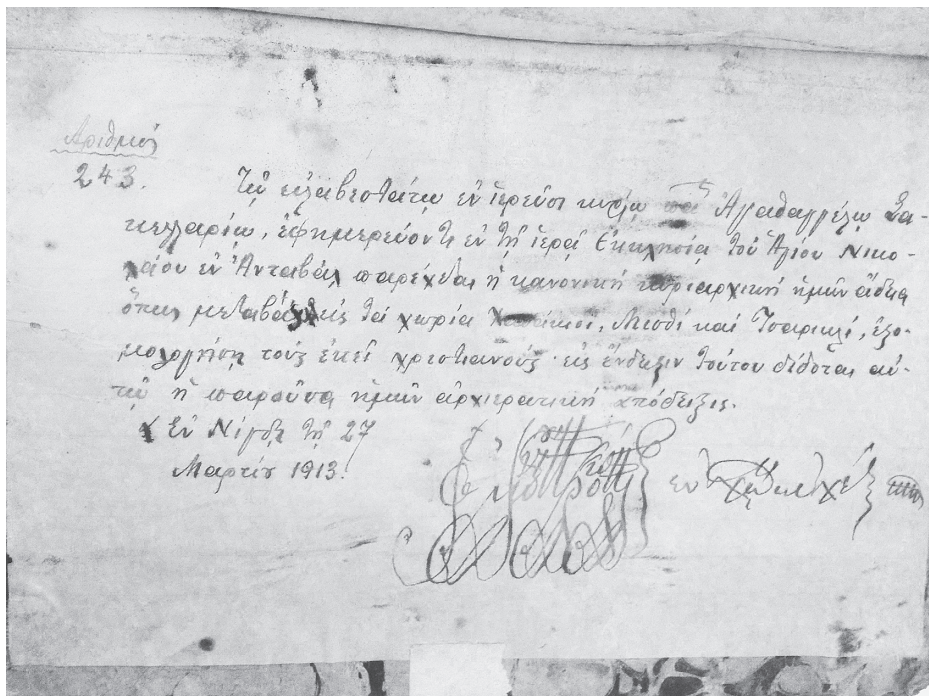


FIGURE 2. Pastedown binding of *To βιβλίον Ψυχοφελέστατον*. Courtesy of Giorgos Kallinikidis.

over time. Examples big and small abound in the chapters that follow, but to make my meaning clear here I offer a simple case in point, as seen in figure 2.

What you see here is a pastedown—i.e., a piece of paper that has been integrated into the binding of a book, joining the leaves of the text to the boards of its binding. The book belongs to Agathangelos, a Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox refugee poet whom I detail in the fourth chapter. Look closer, though, and you will see that this pastedown is living a double life, recycled from an earlier context. In his native Cappadocia (in what is today central Turkey), Agathangelos had served not only as a poet but as a priest. In 1913, he was granted permission by the Orthodox Church to perform his priestly duties beyond his home village of Andaval in the surrounding parishes of Hasaköy (Χασάκιοι), Misti (Μισθί), and Çarıklı (Τσαρικλί) as well. This official permission, written out and signed in an ornate calligraphic font by the bishop of Niğde, was an important document for Agathangelos’s livelihood and status, yet it was drained of all meaning by the Exchange a decade later. The bishop’s

(continued...)

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