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The Memory in a Crisis: A Japanese Ship Helping Out Greek Refugees on the Quay of Smyrna in 1922

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I. Catastrophe in Smyrna

In September 1922, Greeks in Smyrna were facing a crisis that would threaten their very existence. Turkish revolutionary troops who had just come off a great victory against the Greek army triumphantly entered the city of Smyrna. The Greeks there were not sure whether they would be able to continue to live as they had before or if they would be expelled by force, or even killed. This was the crisis in the real sense of the word.

Smyrna or Izmir is a city on the western coast of Asia Minor that had been under Ottoman rule for centuries. However, the Greek military forces gained control of the city in 1919 with the permission of the Allied Powers. The Treaty of Sèvres concluded in 1920 guaranteed this Greek action. Smyrna had 2,500 year Greek history, which means that there had always been Greek inhabitants with a distinct Hellenic culture and tradition.¹ Therefore, the *Megali Idea* (Great Idea), the irredentist dream of the Greek Kingdom, naturally put Smyrna within its scope for incorporation into the state boundaries. As a result of the Allies' victory in WWI, the likelihood increased that the territory of the Greek Kingdom could expand to Asia Minor.

However, things and events did not go as Greece and the Allies expected. While the Ottoman authorities were in an almost hopeless situation, Turkish nationalists under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal started a war against the Greeks in order to establish a Turkish nation state in Asia Minor. Since the Greek army had been expanding its influence eastward to Ankara where the headquarter of the Turkish nationalist government was located, the Turks needed to expel the Greek army out of Asia Minor so that they could found the Turkish national state.

The enemies of those nationalist Turks were not only the Greek national army, but also

¹ According to Greek Patriarchate Statistics in 1912, there were 1,782,582 Greeks in Asia Minor. Among the provinces in Asia Minor Smyrna had the largest Greek population, i.e. 622,810. Dimitri Pentsopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact on Greece* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002), 30. TABLE III 15.

Orthodox Christian Greek civilians living in Asia Minor who were Ottoman citizens. While the Ottoman state was diverse in terms of religion and ethnicity, the new state the Turkish nationalists expected to build was to be “national”, which meant that non-Turkish peoples would be an uninvited obstacle and be preferably excluded from its national boundaries. Therefore, Kemal’s troops were fighting against the Greek army and at the same time were threatening and killing Orthodox Greek inhabitants in Asia Minor. Of course, it should be noted that the Greek army also devastated Turkish villages and killed the Turkish inhabitants. The power of nationalism was so strong that Muslim Turks and Christian Greeks could no longer continue to live together within one polity.²

Under this circumstance, Greek inhabitants in Asia Minor abandoned their native homes and fled to Smyrna and its environ controlled by the Greek army. In August 1922 when the Turkish victory was almost certain, the number of Greeks taking refuge in Smyrna for fear of violence and massacre by the Turks increased significantly. By September 8, Greek official activities ended and the Greek army and officials finally withdrew from Asia Minor, leaving their fellow Greek refugees in an uncertain condition.³ What happened to those miserably deserted Greeks in Smyrna?

Smyrna was an international port city where Europeans such as British, French, and Italians, and Americans had been living along with Greeks, Armenians, Jews and Turks. Those Europeans and Americans were neutral toward the Greek-Turkish war. Kemal’s troops triumphantly entered Smyrna on September 9, 1922. George Horton, then US consul-general in Smyrna, later testified that there was perfect order and quiet in Smyrna up until the arrival of the Turks.⁴ While inhabitants anticipated Turkish vandalism, Smyrna was in good order at the outset of their occupation. However, the Turks were determined to destroy Gâvur Izmir or “Infidel Smyrna”, and soon they began to behave outrageously without any restraint. On September 13 in the early afternoon the Turks allegedly set fire to the Armenian quarter and the fire spread to the Greek and European quarters. This sparked the mass evacuation from Smyrna of Europeans and Americans. Fleets and warships took their nationals on board, and Greeks stormed the city’s quay to avoid from the fire. The fire continued for many hours until the next day.⁵

Bertram Thesiger, a British on the *George V*, observed and described the scene of the

2 The animosity between the Turkish Muslim and the Greek Orthodox inhabitants in Asia Minor had been increasing since the Balkan Wars in 1912-13. As a result, the unprecedented scale of the Greek population movement from Asia Minor occurred. cf. A.A. Pallis, “Racial Migrations in the Balkans during the Years 1912-1924,” *The Geographical Journal* 66 no. 4 (1925): 315-331.

3 Marjorie Housepian Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of a City* (Kent, Ohio, and London, England: The Kent State University Press, 1966), 114; Michael Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), 304-305.

4 Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922*, 110.

5 Michael Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), 308-309; Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 94.

waterfront of Smyrna wrapped in flames:

About 1 a.m. the fire broke through these front houses almost simultaneously. It was a terrifying thing to see even from the distance. There was the most awful scream one could ever imagine. I believe many people were shoved into the sea, simply by the crowds nearest the houses trying to get further away from the fire. [...] Many did undoubtedly jump into the sea, from sheer panic. [...] It was certainly a horrible scene; mothers with their babies, the fire going on over their heads, and many of the bundles of clothes also on fire, and the people all screaming.⁶

This tragic event is called “the Catastrophe in Asia Minor” in Modern Greek history. It symbolizes the end of the 2,500 year history of the Greek community in Asia Minor and also of the *Megali Idea*. Any last hope of realizing greater Greece was now gone. The Turkish nation state was soon to be born.

II. Did Japanese Rescue the Greek Refugees in Smyrna?

Several years ago while reading the Greek-American novelist Jeffrey Eugenides’s work *Middlesex*, I came across the following passage:

Despite my grandmother’s corrective lenses, the world remained out of focus. Desdemona didn’t understand what the fighting was all about. At Smyrna the Japanese had been the only country to send ships to rescue refugees. My grandmother maintained a lifelong sense of gratitude. When people brought up the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, she said, “Don’t tell me about an island in the middle of the ocean. This country isn’t big enough they have to have all the islands, too?”⁷

The novel is set in a Greek-American family during the Pacific War (the Japanese-American war), one theater of WWII. Desdemona, the narrator’s grandmother, is a Greek from Asia Minor. She migrated to the United States after experiencing the Catastrophe in Asia Minor in 1922. Unlike most Americans, she does not speak ill of Japan after the surprise attack on the Pearl Harbor in Hawaii which led to the US participating in WWII. She has a good reason why she does not do so. This is because of her memory that in 1922 “at Smyrna the Japanese had been the only country to send ships to rescue refugees.”

During my stay in Greece in the latter half of the 1990s I had heard a second hand story about a Japanese ship that helped Greek refugees during a series of miserable events in

6 Smith, *Ionian Vision*, 309-310.

7 Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middle Sex* (New York: Picador, 2002), 171.

Smyrna in September 1922, but I had not taken it seriously. I thought it was just an unfounded rumor and could not think of any reason for the Japanese to be at Smyrna's quay. Also, I knew that Japan was neutral to the Greek-Turkish war. If a Japanese ship had helped the Greeks, that action would be seen as a violation of Japanese neutrality. I wondered if that was possible.

I was not the only one who had heard the story of a Japanese rescue operation of the Greek refugees. Stavros Stavriadis, a historian/researcher at the National Centre for Hellenic Studies & Research at Latrobe University in Bundoora, Victoria (Australia) had the same experience. When he visited the west coast of the United State in 2003 and 2004, his Greek American friends told him the story. According to what he heard, the Japanese ship brought Greek and Armenian refugees to Pireaus, an outer harbor of Athens, in September 1922.⁸

In any case, I found for the first time in Eugenides's words a written form of the story of Japanese rescuing desperate Greeks.⁹ I had been haunted by the story for some reasons, and I came to think that it might be worthwhile to explore if the story was true.

I had several questions in my mind. First, if the story is true, why was a Japanese ship at Smyrna? Second, was that action inspired simply by philanthropic feelings of the Japanese or were there other reasons why the Japanese rescued the Greeks? Third, how could the Japanese successfully communicate with the Greeks? What language did the Japanese speak to the Greek refugees and the Turkish troops so that they could make their intention understood? Did they speak to them in English? Or were there any crew members, not necessarily Japanese, who could speak Greek or Turkish? Among other questions, I wondered if those Greek refugees had some knowledge in advance of Japan and Japanese. Even though they lived in a multi-ethnic environment and Smyrnian Greeks in particular knew well Europeans and Americans and their way of life, for most of them, however, the Japanese must have been like aliens from another planet. How did the Greeks perceive the alien-like Japanese? Could it be said that they accepted the offer by those aliens only because they were in danger?

Forth, as a historian of modern Greece, what interested me most was how the Greeks kept this event in memory and conveyed it to later generations? Generally speaking, how are people's memories of an extremely critical situation constructed? And then how do they

8 Stavros Stavriadis, "Unsung Heroes of Asia Minor: The Search for the Japanese Ship at Smyrna," *The National Herald*, September 7, 2007.

9 Other books also referred to the rescue operation by a Japanese ship during the fire in Smyrna. For example, Dobkin writes without indicating sources: Later in the day [September 14, 1922] a Japanese ship arrived whose passengers praised the exceptional kindness of captain and crew; they had thrown cargo overboard to make room for refugees. Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922*, 174; Christos Papoutsy points out that in addition to Dobkin's book, *Smouldering Smyrna* published in 1995 by Lydia Kouroyen Karagianis, *Demoetrios the Survivor* in 2000 by Jasmine P. Andrew, and *the Dragatsis Family 1745-2001: An American Experience* by Christos Dragatsis of Joliet also includes the reference about the Japanese ship in Smyrna. Papoutsy also provide us the information that Stella L. Jatras, wife of a career diplomat with the US State Department, writes to the *Washington Times* in 2000 about this incident. Christos Papoutsy, *Ships of Mercy: the True Story of the Rescue of the Greeks Smyrna, September 1922* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Peter E. Randall Publisher LLC, 2008), 120-122.

narrate their memory in a distorted way years later? This distortion of memory is easily seen in Eugenides's work. Desdemona says that only the Japanese ships rescued the Greeks, which is incorrect. Some European and American fleets helped out the Greeks at the last minute after safeguarding citizens of their own countries.¹⁰ Although Desdemona is a character in a novel, I assume that the author of the novel wrote this story based on what he had heard from his relatives or someone who experienced this event. Eugenides makes Desdemona utter the word "only", which really expresses the gratefulness of the Greeks toward the Japanese.

III. *The U.S. Newspapers and the Consular Report*

We find in American newspapers various evidence that seemingly support the rescue effort by the Japanese. For example, a September 18, 1922 *New York Times* article wrote:

Refugees constantly arriving from Asia [*sic.*] relate new details of the Smyrna tragedy. On Thursday [September 14] last there were six steamers at Smyrna to transport the refugees, one American, one Japanese, two French and two Italian. The American and Japanese steamers accepted all comers without examining their papers, while the others took only foreign subjects with passports.¹¹

This article supports that the story that the Japanese-rescue of the Greeks is indeed true. As *The New York Times* is a third party with regard to this incident, it is unlikely that this world-renown newspaper fabricated the article. If *The New York Times* had wanted to praise American tolerance toward the Greek refugees in contrast to European intolerance, it would have been enough to write: "The American steamer accepted all comers without examining their papers, while the others took only foreign subjects with passports." The fact that it bothered to mention "the Japanese steamer" seems to support the authenticity of the story of the rescue effort made by a Japanese ship.

In addition to this article, some other American newspapers also wrote about this event. *The Atlanta Constitution* on October 15, 1922 included a description of the horror in Smyrna by Atlantan John S. Owens Jr. It read:

There was a Japanese warship in the harbor, Contrary to the action of every other man-of-war in Smyrna, this warship took board every refugee it could possibly find room for. There was also a cargo boat from Nippon there. When it saw this, it dumped a large part of its cargo overboard, and took off all the refugees and carried them to Piraeus. American, British, French and Italian, and everybody else told the refugees

¹⁰ Dobkin, *Smyrna 1922*, 171.

¹¹ "Smyrna's Ravagers Fired on Americans," *New York Times*, September 18, 1922.

that they could only take their own nationals on board, and it remained for the lowly Japs to prove their mettle...¹²

The Boston Globe on December 3, 1922 put it:

Japanese at Smyrna, Mrs. Anna Harlowe Birge, Wife of Professor Birge of the International College at Smyrna, Tells of an Incident when Smyrna Was Being Burned. The desperate refugees were crowding each other off the wharves, and the harbor was full of men and women swimming around in the hope of rescue until they drowned. In the harbor at that time was a Japanese freighter which had just arrived, loaded to the decks with a very valuable cargo of silks, laces and china, representing many thousands of dollars. The Japanese captain, when he realized the situation did not hesitate. The whole cargo went overboard into the dirty waters of the harbor, and freighter was loaded with several hundred refugees, who were taken to the Piraeus and landed in safety on Greek shores.¹³

The account by George Horton, the above-mentioned US consul-general in Smyrna during WWI and its immediate aftermath, is regarded as the most credible source concerning the Japanese rescue operation. He sent a dispatch to the Secretary of State, Washington on September 18, 1922. He wrote: "A Japanese boat brought off some refugees, and I have heard threw overboard some of their cargo for the purpose. Passengers on the ship speak in the highest terms of the kindness of the Japanese officers and men."¹⁴

IV. Greek Newspaper

I have found so far one contemporary Greek newspaper that referred to the rescue operation of the Greeks by Japanese. The Newspaper *Empros* [Ἐμπρός] on September 4, 1922, i.e. September 17, 1922 in Gregorian calendar reported under the headline "Massacre at Smyrna: The Brave Conduct of the Japanese":

It is worthwhile to refer to a philanthropic event as well as the brave conduct of a

¹² *The Atlanta Constitution*, October 15, 1922, A9, cited from "Stavros Stavridis Special to the National Herald," http://www.greece.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&id=59&Itemid=82 (Last accessed on October 9, 2016).

¹³ *The Boston Globe*, December 3, 1922, E4, cited from "Stavros Stavridis Special to the National Herald," http://www.greece.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&id=59&Itemid=82 (Last accessed on October 9, 2016).

¹⁴ Documentary Evidence (767.68/450) cited from "Stavros Stavridis Special to the National Herald," http://www.greece.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&id=59&Itemid=82 (Last accessed on October 9, 2016).

captain of a Japanese ship “Tokei-Marū.” He was successful in helping [our] 825 fellow Greek refugees, despite the threat from the Turks.

When the Japanese captain, moved by ferocious slaughters of and petitions from [Greek] refugees, sent out all the boats the ship had in order to take on board as many refugees as possible, officers of Kemal’s military forces surrounded the boats and threatened to sink them.

Then the Japanese captain immediately declared in person to the Kemalist officers that in case they touched even a hair of the refugees, he would regard this act as the insult against the Japanese flag and as a threat against the Japanese government, and he would request an immediate apology [from the Kemalist government].

Facing these threats, the Kemalists consulted their superior officer and were obliged to leave free from disturbances the refugees who had gotten on the Japanese boats.¹⁵

In contrast to articles in the above-mentioned American newspapers, this article recorded the words the Japanese captain was supposed to have uttered. Who heard those words? Who told this story so that a journalist for this Greek newspaper could write this article? It must have been the Greek refugees who were rescued by the Japanese and then landed somewhere in Greek territory.

V. Japanese Newspaper

I have also looked at the major Japanese newspapers from that time such as *Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun*. A large amount of news about Smyrna in September 1922 reached Japan. Newspapers, whose sources were mostly based on indirect information from London, reported that the Kemalist troops entered the city of Smyrna and behaved violently. According to newspapers’ report, the Turks massacred local inhabitants and intentionally started the fire so as not to leave any signs of their vandalism. Newspapers also described the scene of thousands of Greek refugees escaping from the Turkish violence in Smyrna. For example, *Yomiuri* newspaper on September 17 wrote: “Thousands of Greek refugees are floating on boats inside the harbor or gathering at the quay of Smyrna. They are totally miserable without food and water. The British take all measures so that the Greeks can be relieved.”¹⁶

Judging from the large number of articles in contemporary Japanese newspapers, we can

15 “Massacre in Smyrna,” *Empros*, September 4, 1922 [«Το Σφαγείο της Σμύρνης», *Εμπρός*, 4 Σεπτεμβρίου, 1922.]

16 “Massacre in Smyrna,” *Yomiuri Shinbun*, September 17, 1922. [「スミルナ大虐殺」『讀賣新聞』1922年9月17日]

conclude that the Greek-Turkish war and its consequence was not a fire on the other side of the river, but attracted many Japanese readers. Interestingly enough, in spite of the large interest in this event, I have not discovered so far any article in Japanese newspapers that reported the Japanese ship that helped out those miserable Greek refugees.

However, *The Japan Times & Mail*, an English paper that circulated in Japan at that time, mentioned a Japanese helping the Greek refugees. It wrote on October 21, 1922: “A Japanese merchantman brought succor to the refugees en route to Greece and gave them the kindest treatment.”¹⁷

VI. *One Photo with a Note in Italian*

There is also one photo in which a ship with a Japanese flag at the bay of Smyrna appears. Of interests is that it has a note in Italian on its margin saying “Smyrna September 8, 1922. The departure of the Greek army and the rescue of Greeks and Armenians by the Japanese steamer.” ([Figure 1])¹⁸

As written above, the Turkish troops entered Smyrna on September 9 and started the fire on September 13. It is true there were rumors that the Turks would attack the Christian population when they came, which made the inhabitants in Smyrna fearful and panicked, but we have no evidence that many Smyrnians tried to evacuate the city before the Turks appeared. Thus, it is unlikely that the Japanese ship in the photo was engaged in the rescue operation. The photo also lacks the tense atmosphere that would accompany such an operation.

[Figure 1]



17 “Consul Tells of Suffering in Near East,” *The Japan Times & Mail*, October 21, 1922, 8.

18 <http://www.geocities.ws/kegham.geo/smyrna.html> (Last accessed on November 12, 2016)

VII. *Japan's Involvement in the Greek-Turkish War*

Official diplomatic documents show that Japan took a neutral stance toward the Greek-Turkish war.¹⁹

In 1921 when the Greek-Turkish war was still ongoing, Greek naval forces captured the Japanese ship “Heimei-Marū” in the Mediterranean. It carried 1,013 hostages of Turkish and other ethnic origins from Siberia. The British government commissioned the Japanese government for this job. The Japanese government asked the Greek government for the unconditional release of the hostages, saying that Japan had no intention to get involved in the Greek-Turkish war.²⁰

The Japan Times & Mail on September 20, 1922, just after the devastation of Smyrna and when the Kemal’s army seemed ready to seize the Golden Horn, reported under the headline “Japan Neutral in Turco-Greek Development”:

There are no ships of the Japanese Navy west of Suez, which might be sent to the scene of latest trouble and none will be dispatched to join the British, Italian, American and French warships in the Dardanelles.

“Japan has no interests [in] whatever to guard in Europe and no inclination to interfere in any way in any European quarrel”, says an official of the [Japanese] Foreign Office.

“This country is a signatory of the Treaty of Versailles and of the Covenant of the League of Nations, but there is nothing in either the treaty or the covenant to oblige this country to send any forces anywhere and as the decisions of the League of Nations to call upon its members to act must be unanimous, the League cannot call upon Japan without Japan’s consent, which will never be given in any European question.”²¹

There is, however, an indication that the Japanese government had been supporting the

19 “...it is wise for Japan to keep neutral unless in terms of the territorial issue it is treated unfairly or the balance of power among the Great Powers is terribly damaged in a way which would lead to a negative impact on Japan’s position in the Near East...” (40. telegraph about the instructions to Ambassador to UK Chinda concerning Japan’s attitude toward Turkish-Greek question from Minister of Foreign Affairs Uchida to Ambassador to US Shidehara, on March 6), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Japan’s Diplomatic Documents 1920*, vol. 3, book 1, 53. [「…領土処分問題等二就テモ特ニ不当ナルカ若クハ甚シク列国ノ均勢ヲ害シ從テ極東ニ於ケル日本ノ地位ニ影響ヲ及ボスカ如キモノナキ限り成ル可ク中立ノ態度ヲ持スルヲ得策トスヘク…」「四〇 三月六日 内田外務大臣ヨリ在米国幣原大使宛（電報）日本ノ土耳其問題ニ対シ執ルベキ態度ニ関シ在英珍田大使ヘ回訓ノ件」外務省『日本外交文書 大正九年』第三冊上巻、53 頁。]

20 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Details of the Heimei-Marū Incident* (1922). [外務省『第四十五議會以下最近外交経過 大正十一年五月 第七、平明丸事件顛末』90 頁。]

21 “Japan Neutral in Turco-Greek Developments,” *The Japan Times & Mail*, September 20, 1922, p. 1.

Kemalist army by supplying ammunition. A correspondence on September 21, 1922, from Consul Hata in Copenhagen to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Uchida includes information based on an interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands that ammunition with the mark of the Japanese government (Marque de l'état japonais) was found among the ammunition of the Turkish army.²²

VIII. My Research in Progress

I started this investigation in order to identify the ship that rescued the Greek refugees at the quay of Smyrna. I found this was not an easy task, and my research is still ongoing. The following is a summary of what I have discovered so far.

“Tokei-Maru” in the Greek newspaper above is the only clue to the identity of the ship, and with this clue to go on, I began my research. I looked up two register books of shipping. One is *Poketto Nippon Senmeiroku* [PNS] published in 1920 by the publishing company *Kaiyou Bungaku Sha*.²³ The other is *Taisho Jusan-nen Nippon Senmeiroku* [TNS] published in 1926 by *Teishin-sho Kansen-kyoku* (Marcantile Marine Bureau, Department of Communications).²⁴

There is a “Tokei-Maru” [東慶丸] in the list of the *PNS* owned by *Dairen Towa Kisen Company* [大連東和汽船株式会社]. Its port of registry is Dairen (Da Lien City), now in China, but at that time in the Kanto District under Japanese control.²⁵ I have also found the ship “Tokai-Maru” [東海丸], which sounds close to “Tokei-Maru”, owned by *Nansho Yoko* [南昌洋行]. Its port of registry is Susami, Wakayama in Japan.²⁶ The *TNS* also includes

22 “On the return of the Princess of the Netherlands from Norway to her country, she visited Sweden again. A Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands accompanied her on this trip. In an interview with him by a journalist from a newspaper in South Sweden, the Minister referred to the Turkish issue. He said, ‘I was not surprised at the action by the Turks. Though the general public regards Turkey as a sick man, it was never one. The help from foreign countries, among others, from Russia, a state of farmers and workers, are not enough to surprise me. In addition, ammunition with the mark of the Japanese government (Marque de l'état japonais) was found, which means we must expect that a turmoil in part of Europe will cause an earth shaking event.’” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Paris Peace Conference: Near Eastern Question*, September 1922, 0102-0103. [「和蘭女皇ハ諾威ヨリ帰國ノ途再ヒ瑞典ヲ通過セラレタルカ其ノ途次随行ノ同国外務大臣ハ南部瑞典ノ一新聞記者トノ談話中土耳其古問題ニ言及シ土耳其ノ行動ハ少シモ余ヲ驚カスニ足ラス従来世人ハ土耳其ノ國力ヲ解セス病人扱ニ為シタルモ決シテ瀕死ノ病人ニアラサルベシ外國ノ援助就中勞農露國ノ援助モ亦何等余ヲ驚カスニ足ラス加之土耳其古軍ノ彈藥中ニ日本政府ノ「マーク」(Marque de l'état japonais) アルモノ發見セラレタリ吾人ハ歐洲紛乱ノ一角ヨリ驚天動地ノ出来事ヲ覺悟スヘキナリ」『巴里平和會議 近東問題』第三卷(大正11年9月)(2門3類1項84号) 大正11年9月21日(畑良太郎公使から内田康哉外務大臣宛) 0102 - 0103 頁。]

23 Kazuto/Kazuhito Hieda[?], *The Pocket List of Japanese Ships* (Nippon Kaiyo-sha, 1920) [稗田員人編『ポケット日本船名録』(日本海洋社、大正9年)]。

24 Marcantile Marine Bureau, Department of Communications, *The List of Japanese Ships in the Year of 1926* (1926) [通信省管船局『大正十三年日本船名録』(通信省管船局、大正15年)]。

25 Hieda, *The Pocket List*, 75-76.

26 Hieda, *The Pocket List*, 37-38.

“Tokei-Marū” and “Tokai-Marū.”²⁷ I have collated the ship numbers [船舶番号] and signal letters [信号符号] of “Tokei-Marū” and “Tokai-Marū” in the list of *PNS* with those of “Tokei-Marū” and “Tokai-Marū” in the list of *TNS*, and concluded that “Tokai-Marū” in *PNS* and “Tokai-Marū” in *TNS* are not identical while “Tokei-Marū” in *PNS* and “Tokei-Marū” in *TNS* are the same. “Tokai-Marū” in *TNS* was owned by *Tokai Kisen Company* [東海汽船株式会社] and its port of registry is Kobe.²⁸

As the *TNS* shows the record of the ships that existed in 1923 though it was published in 1926, it can be said that “Tokei-Marū” existed at least between 1920 and 1923. That means that there is a possibility that this ship was at the quay of Smyrna during the catastrophic event in September 1922. The problem is that we do not know if one of its routes included Smyrna and if so, if it was there the day of the destruction of Smyrna. With regard to “Tokai-Marū” in *TNS*, we are not certain if it existed in 1922 because it was not registered in *PNS*.

I provided Michio Yamada, a member of the Japan Nautical Society with the information I have collected so far in order to gain his insight. He guessed that the ship might be a tramp sailing among three countries because a captain would be given a relatively free hand to pilot the ship. He concluded, however, that it would be very hard to identify the ship based on sources in Japan. He suggested that we could identify the ship if we found the record of the ship’s entry, quarantine and port due at both ports of departure (Smyrna) and entry (somewhere in Greece).²⁹

Professor Hideo Kokaze at Ochanomizu Womens’ University also responded to my inquiry. He looked into the details of the companies that owned the above-mentioned ships and suggested that it was not surprising that a ship of *Tokai Kisen Company* sailed in the Mediterranean at that time if *Yamashita Steamship Company* chartered a ship from *Tokai Kisen Company*, but that further investigate was needed. He also suggested that it would be useful to look at contemporary periodicals located at the Japan Maritime Center’s maritime library.³⁰

IX. Associations organized by Greeks from Asia Minor

In Greece there are several associations organized by Greeks whose family originally came from Asia Minor. In most cases their fathers or mothers experienced the Catastrophe in Smyrna in 1922, and they share the memory of the rescue operation performed by the Japanese ship without any concrete evidence.

I contacted Kiriakos Likourinos, President of the Association of Asia Minor in Kavalla, a city located in the north-eastern part of Greece. He also wrote to me of the story of an

27 *TNS* includes five ships named “Tokai-Marū.” As four of them are too small and made of wood inappropriate for a European service, I removed these four ships from my investigation.

28 Marcantile Marine Bureau, *The List of Japanese Ships*, 61, 110.

29 Personal Correspondence on July 5, 2015.

30 Personal Correspondence on October 7, 2015.

unidentified Japanese ship. However, he did not have any additional sources other than what I already had.³¹

There is a district in Athens called New Smyrna [Νέα Σύρμη] where many Greeks from Asia Minor settled down after the Catastrophe. In June, 2016 *the Hearth of New Smyrna* [Εστία Νέας Σύρμης], an association of Greeks from Asia Minor, invited the Japanese Ambassador to Greece, Masuo Nishibayashi, to the party to express their appreciation for the help of the Japanese. The magazine *Ethnos* [Έθνος] published in July 2016 reported this event under the title “Big Thank You after 94 Years. The Japanese Who Saved Lives in Asia Minor.” While Giannis Papadatos, president of the association admitted that they did not know the identity of the ship or the Japanese captain’s name, he awarded a shield shaped plaque to Ambassador Nishibayashi in order to honor the Japanese helping out the desperate Greeks in Smyrna in September 1922.³² This magazine also includes an article in which a Greek-American told the story of his mother who was saved by a Japanese ship at that time.³³

It is surprising that many Greeks have still kept the memory of the Japanese ship for almost a century in spite of the fact that there is little concrete evidence. My research is still in progress, and I can only try as much as possible to find missing pieces related to this event in order to uncover its entire picture. This will surely contribute to illuminating an unknown part of modern Greek history.

31 Personal Correspondence on July 22, 2015.

32 “Big Thank You after 94 Years. The Japanese Who Saved Lives in Asia Minor,” *Ethnos* (July 1, 2016): 14, 27. [«Μέγαλη Ευχαριστώ 94 χρόνια μετά – Οι Ιάπωνες που έσωσαν ζωές στην Μικρασία», *Έθνος*, 1 Ιουλίου 2016, 14, 27.]

33 “My Mother Felt That She Was in a Boat with Magical Creatures,” *Ethnos* (July 1, 2016): 27. [«Η μητέρα μου ένιωσε ότι βρισκόταν σε ένα καράβι με μαγικά πλάσματα», *Έθνος*, 1 Ιουλίου 2016, 27.]