The Catastrophe in Asia Minor and Pontus
A 2-day conference held May 9–10, 2008 at the Westin Hotel in Rosemont, Illinois

Vision

“To promote research, knowledge, awareness and understanding of the history and culture of the Greeks of Asia Minor and Pontos.”

Mission

“The Institute for Pontos and Asia Minor Studies is an international center devoted to the research and documentation of Greeks in Asia Minor and Pontos and their diaspora throughout the world, and to promote awareness of the catastrophic loss of these at the hands of the Ottoman Empire during the early 20th century.”
The conference’s purpose was to explore the gathering, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of the genocide in Asia Minor.

Mr. John Davis acted as a moderator. Mr. Davis, a journalist who happens to be married to a Pontian, called the conference to order and welcomed attendees before calling upon Father John Rallis of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Des Plaines, Illinois to offer the opening prayer.

Father Rallis represented Metropolitan Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago. He emphasized that although our lands in Asia Minor were destroyed, our faith, family unity, and cultural identity was not. The Pontian people reinvented themselves in Greece and the diaspora, and we are here to speak the truth—even if it is painful—of the 350,000 Pontians killed. Father Rallis cited the example of a lady who had been displaced four times and ended up in Chicago. Her last dying words were to thank God for her life, painful as it had been.

Mr. Davis introduced the Ambassador of Greece, the Honorable Athanasios Petrovas, who after his introductory remarks said the following:

We must learn from the events that led to the catastrophe of the Pontian Hellenism, from the events that led to the catastrophe of the Asia Minor Hellenism. Today, we must gather all our strength to preserve our ideals, to preserve what is at risk in Northern Epiros, in Macedonia, in the Aegean, and Cyprus.

We must teach ourselves that our land that created a great civilization has the need for all of us to preserve the meaning of our Greek language, to preserve our heritage, to preserve our sacred traditions, and to preserve historical consciousness/awareness and territorial integrity.

I trust the meaning of this conference is to strengthen our belief that there are no lost homelands but only unforgettable homelands.
Mr. Davis then introduced the conference presenters:

**George Shirinian**, panel chair, is the Executive Director of the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute). The Institute is devoted to research, publication, and education in genocide, diaspora, and Armenian studies.

**Dr. Harry J. Psomiades** is Professor Emeritus of political science at Queens College and Graduate School of the City University of New York, as well as founder and director of the Queens College Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.

**Dr. Theofanis Stavrou** is Professor of History at the University of Minnesota and founding editor of *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*. His specialties include Eastern Orthodoxy and the Russian and Ottoman empires.

**Dr. William Samonides** was Associate Director of the Center for U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard University. He has also taught at the University of Massachusetts in Boston and the University of Kansas.

**Professor Ellene S. Phufas** teaches in the Department of English and Humanities at the State University of New York—Erie Community College. She has also taught at the State University of New York—Buffalo and at colleges and universities around the world.

**Michalis Charalambidis**, also scheduled, was unable to attend.
Keynote Speaker George Shirinian opened the first session.

“The Armenian Genocide: A Model for the Study of Persecuted Peoples”

The Zoryan Institute for Armenian genocide studies is a model of how a research center specializing in the history of the Greeks of Asia Minor and Pontus can be set up. The Pontian Genocide is important in the larger field of human rights studies and is therefore relevant today.

In the 1970s, a group of Armenians wanted a forum for analytical, scholarly, and detached study of their history, identity, and future as a nation.

The trauma of the 1915 genocide was so overwhelming for Armenians—especially in the diaspora—that they were still in survival mode generations later: their actions were not the result of strategies. Armenian intellectuals relegated themselves to classroom teaching, disregarding their essential role of providing theoretical ideas and the practical application of those ideas.

The forum would reestablish Armenian intellectuals in a leadership role as part of an effort to understand what happened, how it happened, and why it happened. What does it mean to be an Armenian when your people have not lived in Armenia for centuries? What are the markers of Armenian identity, and can you have more than one cultural identity?

Armenians needed to understand the diaspora experience and confront the issues of assimilation, loss of language, intermarriage, cultural preservation, genocide recognition, and the struggle for an independent homeland.

The Zoryan organization was formed with three missions:

1. Understand the forces and factors that brought Armenians to where they are today;

2. Express their history in their own voice and define themselves—not to leave that definition to others; and

3. Educate and involve the Armenian community in a higher level of discourse without claiming to have all the answers

We want to help our people understand where they came from and how they got here (the genocide) and where we are now (the diaspora) so they can make informed decisions about their future as individuals and as a nation.

The Zoryan Institute research center:

1. Collects, organizes, and preserves archival documents;
2. Identifies issues vital to the Armenian community;

3. Researches and analyzes the issues by working with individuals, scholarly teams, and by organizing high level conferences;

4. Publishes research findings;

5. Organizes educational programs; and

6. Provides for the future of Armenian scholarship, through universities, to motivate and train the next generation of scholars

The institute’s success has been based on:

1. Work that is conducted using the highest standards of scholarship;

2. Our issues being viewed in a universal context, in relation to what else was happening in the world at the time;

3. Our issues studied in comparison with similar experiences of other nations, such as the investigation into the diaspora’s meaning from the experiences of Armenians, Greeks, and Jews; and

4. Using an interdisciplinary approach, conducting analysis from the perspectives of history, political science, sociology, law, and other disciplines

These principles attracted to the Institute non-Armenian academics, who found common ground between their work and ours. The institute successfully attracts dissident scholars, who are driven by an ethical motivation to understand their own countries’ roles in genocide and its denial (e.g., Turkey, Germany, Israel), which in turn helps deepen our understanding of the genocide and exposes its ongoing denial.

The benefits of an academic research institute for the Greeks of Asia Minor and Pontus include:

1. Provides a structure to establish the facts and experiences of the Greeks of Asia Minor and Pontus;

2. Identifies and addresses political, social, and educational issues;

3. Eliminates the anger and emotionalism of sensitive issues through a scholarly approach that promotes sound decision-making;
4. Broadens our understanding by analysis and comparison of our issues with others and from the perspective of many disciplines;

5. Establishes a communications program through publications, conferences, and public lectures to create awareness of the Pontian Greek experience;

6. Assists in developing young scholars to enter the field;

7. Develops educational publications and programs for the non-academic community, both Greek and non-Greek;

8. Studies contemporary Pontian society in the U.S. and other countries and the impact of the genocide on its development and identity; and

9. Prepares compelling reasons and arguments for elected officials in the U.S. and other countries to address the political concerns and issues of the Pontian Greek community

Genocide—its pain and trauma—is not uniquely Greek or Armenian. It is a human experience shared by many and is ongoing today. People see how elected officials could intervene to save lives rather than avoid involvement. The world’s people today are more aware of genocide and more receptive to learning about it. They understand it is a gross violation of human rights and when one people’s rights are trampled, their own are not secure. We must all promote awareness to prevent it from happening again. Promoting awareness of the Pontian genocide is an integral part of this process.

Opening Statements from other panelists included:

**Dr. Harry Psomiades:** The study of the genocide in Asia Minor must be interdisciplinary. The Greeks owe a great deal to Armenian scholars; we share experiences. The refugees who came to Greece found the government hushed up their plight because it did not want to compromise its relationship with Turkey.

There was 40 to 50 years of silence before people began to ask “where are our roots?” During the ’70s, ’80s, and ‘90s, we saw scholarship by Armenians—now we want to understand what happened and why and show respectful memory.

We need a memorial dedicated to the dead as well as the living—the refugees. After the exchange, the psychological condition of Pontian refugees was terrible and the suicide rate was high.
(Dr. Psomiades is currently working on a major study about Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Norwegian explorer and League of Nations High Commissioner, who helped the relief effort for refugees in the Near East after World War I.)

**Dr. Theofanis Stavrou:** Anna Sikelianos said, “I do not want you to forget—what happened and what historians think happened.”

History isn’t fact until it is written about. In the 20th century, the people of Asia Minor were not historical fact because the expulsion and exterminations were not talked about. Few studies were done on behalf of the Greeks and Asia Minor. We can learn from the Armenians that we should not expect Greek experiences to be researched by others. Greeks must write the history of the Greeks of Asia Minor.

Do history properly, but do it in dialogue with others. Contextualizing is important. We can be pessimistic that little has been done to understand the resilience and survival of the Armenians and Greeks. They need to be studied.

There is a danger in letting others define you—it lets them set the terms of history (such as in Turkey’s denials). Write it yourself.

**Dr. William Samonides:** He came to Pontian studies reluctantly—he was not aware of it and mostly not interested. But it took hold when he was working on a family history project that went out of control. It started when he talked to the Greek community in Canton, Ohio.

Largely unexplored was the history of the Pontian Greek people there. They were proud of their past but couldn’t articulate it—they felt their story was important but lost.

He gathered Pontian history in the U.S. so it would not be irretrievably lost.

Gather documents and photos. Videotape and preserve the memories of the older generation—the first generation of Pontian Greeks that came here—because they know the story of their parents. An important part of the Pontian experience is the survival story of the tens of thousands of Pontians who immigrated to America. The study of the Pontian diaspora in North America is important to the larger story of the Pontians. Their unique story is also a universal story. This makes it important because of our shared humanity and shared inhumanity.

**Professor Eleni Phufas:** Her background is Arcadian, not Pontian, so she came to the topic through her Sudanese students. Leni Riefenstahl, biographer of Adolf Hitler, lived in the Sudan. Her students talked about the terrible genocide and oppression there. She began reading and viewed a film by an Armenian who told the story of the genocide.
She translated the book, *Noumero 31328: The Book of Slavery* by Elias Venezis, who himself was a survivor of a slave march and forced labor brigades for 18 months in Asia Minor/Turkey during the 1920s. The essence of the translation was not the literal words but bringing into English from the original Greek the feelings expressed by the author. Dr. Phufas wants to use scholarly resources to popularize stories—translate more personal memoirs into English.

Before opening the floor to questions and comments from the audience, Mr. Davis introduced two Greek American leaders:

**Mr. Christ Tomaras**, Chairman of the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation: A lot has been done and a lot more is needed to be done, and I admire the professors for approaching this matter with respect and great care. They have to teach us how to go about what needs to be done.

During my eleven years with SAE, a lot has been done for the Pontian Greek Genocide. We need to popularize it but not only through books—people don’t read as much as the professors may think. We need to turn to visual arts—TV, movies, perhaps theatre, if there is any way we can—and not rely on books.

A lot of work has been done with the 13 volumes by Dr. Fotiadis. One of them is in English, but it is cumbersome to read all those volumes.

In any case, I have a bone to pick with Dr. Stavrou that we are satisfied with the people here today. Today, we should have masses of people. With a large crowd, everyone who hears what is said and understands the significance of this, more can be achieved.

Mr. Tomaras finished his remarks by mentioning his personal story. His mother was born and raised in Constantinople. When her family was expelled from there, they came to a small town in Pireaus called Drapetsona where 30,000 people shared 7 bathrooms. This tells a lot about conditions for the refugees.

**Mr. Dimitrios Georgakopoulos**, President of the Hellenic American Organizations “ENOSIS:” After the moving speech by our friend, Christos, I would like on behalf of the Federation of the Greek-American organizations to extend warm greetings to all of you and to thank our special guests, the professors. Today we will hear them share their knowledge of the suffering and the catastrophe of our brothers in Asia Minor and Pontos. This information and knowledge is dedicated to honor and provide gratitude to those who struggled and suffered and those who gave their lives to defend the liberty and freedom of Hellenism and Greece.

Although I am not Pontian, I must have some Pontian element in me because in my 40 years of service as a schoolteacher, I always wanted to convey and teach my
students the suffering and pain of our brothers in the Pontos, Epeiros, Macedonia, and Asia Minor.

(Mr. Georgakopoulos, owner and publisher of the *Hellenic Voice* newspaper, referred the audience to the article “Turkish Revisionist Claims on Thrace” in the latest issue, which he distributed to all attendees.)

Ms. Soula Skoupas, schoolteacher, delivered a presentation on the Greek genocide for a north suburban high school. The class heard a presentation on the Armenian experience the previous week. She believes these kinds of presentations will make a difference in bringing the genocide story to light.

The panelists took questions and comments from the floor:

**Question**: In regard to the 40 years of silence: Why didn’t the older generation speak of their experiences?

**Dr. Psomiades**: They were so traumatized, they just wanted to forget and go on with their lives. The refugees who came to Greece had difficulty adjusting—they were resented by the locals.
The pain was so great, but they had to put it aside to adjust to new situations. There was guilt among those who survived, while so many others did not. Parents did not want to burden their children with irresolvable experiences.

**Question:** How do we popularize what happened? What do we do in North America to get recognition from the U.S. and Canadian governments? How do we get it in the minds of non-Pontians? Do we need movies? Articles?

**Mr. Shirinian:** Literature and fiction are good but first you need to establish the facts. Memoirs are not considered definitive.

**Dr. Stavrou:** Lots of people are not convinced. Having lots of photos is good. Workshops are needed to share experiences and develop practical measures we can take.

Our identity and background in the modern world are ideas that are promoted through universities—universities provide a forum that has a multiplying effect through generations of students. Teaching students has a multiplying effect to their families, friends, and associates.

Anything helps, but be especially concerned that we integrate experiences of these people into the curriculum of the university. People coming out should at least be aware.

**Question:** Do Pontians have a role in creating chairs at universities?

**Dr. Stavrou:** This is one objective a small group can take to get money, instead of presenting lots of ideas and getting nothing done.

**Mr. Shirinian:** One concern with a university is the proposal must demonstrate that there are appropriate educational resource materials—and we are not there yet.

**Dr. Samonides:** We also need to demonstrate significant interest. Today, schools in Greece teach about classical Greece; little is taught about Byzantium, even before the Pontians.

In contrast, the Japanese government spends millions on education. Warner educated Stimson to glories of Japanese culture. Movies, novels, exhibits—yes to all—put a face to suffering. Large groups have power to communicate, but it is not same as creating something that can touch people directly as photos, movies, and literature can do.

**Dr. Stavrou:** The Greek government has a problem sponsoring this education. The Turkish government, on the other hand, spends millions to
establish university chairs for the Turkish revisionist line. The government should not be invoked to politicize a subject.

**Question:** How do the Armenians view the radical acts that accompanied the protests? What is the effect on the Pontians?

**Mr. Shirinian:** The Armenians’ success came from the diaspora community during the ‘70s and ‘80s. Because of the exchange treaty, the case for recognition of the Pontian case as a genocide is diminished. The geopolitics of Greece is its relationship to NATO, and this affects the Greek government’s actions relating to this history.

A scholar can provide the tools for support in appeals to the government, but the Greeks don’t have strong documentation and a good argument now.

**Dr. Psomiades:** We must establish this as an area of serious study. There is a record of attempts to get the Turks to acknowledge genocide, but all of it stopped. There are no official trials on the Pontian side. In 1921, it was obvious and clear what happened in Pontus because it was reported by allies of Turkey (the Frunze diary). Initially, he was against the Greeks, but he ended up calling for the atrocities to stop.

In spring of 1922, British and American missionaries published what happened in Pontos. The Western powers said a commission should be formed and then argued about who should pay for it. In the end, the League did not go far because the Turks limited inquiries to western Anatolia, where there were minor atrocities compared to Pontos. The Turks insisted no one go to Pontos.

The Commission of Inquiry never took place because the Turks would not come to the peace table at Lausanne. The Turks needed to give permission for the return of Turks from Greece. If Greece expelled the Turks, resettling refugee Greeks could fail.

The great powers wanted Turkish cooperation for other reasons, so they didn’t want to pursue the inquiry. The compulsory exchange (the first in the world) legitimized Turkish ethnic cleansing.

**Dr. Stavrou:** We can’t justify Pontian genocide. Others are not willing to accept the Pontian genocide because not enough overwhelming scholarly information supports it. The task is the preparatory work that will make the case. Greek works need to be translated. There are lots of areas to be explored.
**Question:** I take issue with the fact we don’t have information. Genocide scholars have recognized the Pontian Genocide. Hasn’t the legwork already been done?

**Mr. Shirinian:** The IAGS decision is contested. The academic case has not been made. IAGS only gave its seal of approval that mass killing occurred. The term genocide has to be able to stand up in a court of law. It doesn’t, but they passed it as a favor. The documents needed to convince the West are currently in Greek; they need to be translated.

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Second Session Discussion: Preserving the Past: Gathering and Caring for the Sources

Third Session Discussion: Telling the Story: Publishing and Disseminating the Story of the Fate of the Asia Minor and Pontian Greeks

**Mr. Shirinian:** Prof. Stavrou told us history is not a fact until someone writes about it. The Zoryan Institute was formed in 1982 because documentation was important. What are the archival sources for Greek history?

**Dr. Psomiades:** Memoirs and published histories are secondary sources because they have no footnotes, but they constitute 95% of history. In fact, some have documentation, but sources are not cited for Pontos histories, or the footnotes shown are too general.
Mr. Shirinian: Any fact cited must be verifiable, or it won’t be accepted.

Dr. Stavrou: There are excellent archives in Athens, at the Center for Asia Minor Studies. The 1908–1922 period has so many dimensions, including documents in Russia, personal archives of Greeks of the diaspora, and personal libraries of Greeks that are not public and unavailable to scholars until they are bequeathed to a public institution.

There is information—how do you identify and preserve it so it is accessible by scholars who can document what is said?

Dr. Samonides: There are many sources for the early lives of Pontian immigrants in the U.S. Since all men registered for the draft, lots of information was collected on them, such as date of birth, place of birth, where they lived, etc. Other sources include naturalization papers, census information, church records, and city directories. There are newspaper articles about what was going on in the Pontian community. There are ship manifests that tell who the person came to visit, their relationship, and who was left behind.

Mr. Shirinian: The U.S. government was involved with the Ottoman Empire, so there is a wealth of information: diplomatic correspondence for the U.S., Great Britain, France, Germany; Russian and Ottoman archives. These are good sources that provide lots of work for many generations of scholars.

Dr. Stavrou: Students need to have the languages—it is best to know 4 to 5 languages. The archives will be written in 15–20 languages. There exists a catalog of names and maps of areas to be exterminated. This provides intent on the part of the Turks and is part of the debate on denying genocide.

We need to train people in the languages they need to do the research so the story can be told in all its complexity.

Mr. Shirinian: Consider the physical nature of the documents. Many are handwritten paper documents located in other countries. One can take photos of them or scan them and post them on the Internet.

Dr. Psomiades: When you write articles, include as much of the original document as possible in the body of the paper. This is another way of getting original information to more and more people.

Dr. Samonides: There is a lifetime of work for scholars. When language ability is limited or at the undergraduate level, original scholarship can be done using public works, for example. Photos are very important—scan them and find information about them while people are still available who can do
this. For unidentified photos, put them on website for a wider audience of people to see and provide identification.

Mr. Shirinian: Photographic evidence is doubly powerful. There are many ways of identifying photos, such as by the background curtain used in a certain studio, or other identifying marks.

Dr. Samonides: Hold photo parties. Bring copies of old photos and invite people to identify them.

Dr. Stavrou: Owners often don’t want to part with photos until it is too late. Children will clean out a collection and toss old photos if they don’t know the people. Sometimes photo libraries are brought in but they may be only partial collections. We need to save entire collections—get owners to promise to donate the library but let them hold onto them until they are ready to part with them.

It is important when preserving material to notify the community and make a master catalog of what’s available.

Dr. Samonides: Ask for old 78 rpm records. Make copies and keep a collection of Pontian music.

Professor Phufas: Look to other visuals, not just books. There are Pontian Greek and Asia Minor Greek families who have websites. Some have Web pages with photos and stories. Link to these sites through an online portal. Use technology to reach out.

Question: As to the location of archival material, we know several countries where individual professors have it. It needs to be released so work is not duplicated. We need to start to know where material exists and ask if the individual will give us the information.

Dr. Psomiades: One reason this is difficult is they are still using the material. When a research center is set up, Dr. Psomiades will turn over all material, except what he is currently working on. Not many scholars have material—about a handful.

Mr. Shirinian: Sometimes scholars hold documents and won’t share them. You need to establish one place to locate them and share them.

Question: We need to credit the person who did the work. Often it is a problem to read something and then try to find a document that is listed in reference.
Dr. Psomiades: When you have a center doing serious work and it is seriously financed, you will be surprised at how much comes in. We don't have such an archive anywhere in the world right now, though one is being set up in Australia.

Professor Pfufas: Why can't you digitally archive materials so they are transmittable anywhere?

Dr. Psomiades: Part of the reason is they don't want to release documents for duplication.

Question: We need to know who is working on what archives so work is not done twice. Government organizations in Turkey have archives, too. Rockefeller Center in New York, the International Red Cross, YMCA, missionary works (they wrote with lots of detail). There are university archives not yet seen. We also need young scholars to do this work.

Dr. Stavrou: YMCA archives are part of social work archives at University of Minnesota. Your list is indicative of the immensity of the problem. Once you establish a base to house archives, you have incentive and pressure to get these documents.

But, you can't just bring a load of archives to, say, the University of Chicago. They won't take it because space and personnel, etc., are limited. It helps if you have one staff person studying in the subject area. Librarians are there to preserve materials until the right person comes along to use it.

First, gather materials so you can approach a university with something real.

Question: We all see the necessity of a center for Pontian and Asia Minor archives. Where will the funds come from to gather, store, and catalog? What do we need to do? Will the center be standalone or in conjunction with an educational institution or another cultural institution?

Mr. Shirinian: We're brainstorming the business case. You need to overwhelm the community with the importance of this work to push this forward.

Question: This is a first step. The Greek-American Community could support us. This is why we are filming our conference—to demonstrate this is a serious effort.

We want to emphasize the catastrophe of Asia Minor. We want the Greek government to spend money for university chairs on Modern Greek History. We hope some institutions out there will respond if the request comes from people like you on the panel.
Dr. Stavrou. They think of you as ambassadors, and you get compliments on your work. But they realize generations of people studied the Greek Pontians out of passion, and now no one is replacing them.

Greece sends a few million dollars to organizations around the world as a symbolic gesture. You need someone in the business or political world to get any money—it is very difficult.

Dr. Samonides: Both Psomiades and Stavrou have sacrificed and been honored by students and universities. They devoted much of their professional lives to establishing centers, but it is a thankless job.

Mr. Shirinian: All the funding for the Zoryan Institute since 1982 is from many individuals giving small donations of $100–$250 each, plus a few large donors. The Greek diaspora will have step up—don’t depend on a government.

Dr. Stavrou: The trip has been rough, but there is lots of satisfaction. Attract graduate students with fellowships endowed by private citizens. There is a lot of goodwill out there from Greeks and non-Greeks. Governments will do only so much—and they can create complications.

You need a mechanism to approach citizens. You need long range planning, but you can do many things in the process.

Question: Look to the Pontian Greek organization in Greece for help—meet with their leadership to see how they can help. They know a center has to be established outside of Greece.

Mr. Shirinian: Taner Akçam is researching the common plight of the Armenians and Greeks in the ethnic homogenization policy of the Young Turks. Such research has to be disseminated to the public and governments, to motivate them that new work is being done and new information being uncovered. Solutions to support such work have to be proposed. The media can help, including the Hellenic Voice and Greek Star papers.

The Greek media have space to fill and will print articles, especially if you include photos. Follow-up articles are needed. I recommend concentrating on written media—and do it over and over again. Write stories so people who are not familiar with the Pontian Greek Genocide will read about it.

The Greek media should have been here. Mr. Shirinian volunteered to be part of a speakers bureau. The organization needs a Web site.
Research is essential. Scholars have obligations when publishing to make sure their work is original. This is a painstaking process that can take years, but there is a power to academic research. A publication documenting the German role in the Armenian genocide helped lead to its recognition in Germany, but it took 8 years of research and preparation. What does it take to interest a person to do research?

**Dr. Psomiades**: He went to Marseilles for the Constantinides archives, but his nephew, who inherited the archive, died just as he arrived. No one knows where the archives went.

**Dr. Stavrou**: He is looking for an area of research on Pontian history, and he can help with promoting the subject through the work he does at the University of Minnesota.

**Dr. Psomiades**: Why didn’t the work of the Zoryan Institute go to the university? What is the history behind archives not being at a university but at an independent center?

**Mr. Shirinian**: Most of the scholars are with the university, but some aren’t. If we attempted to institutionalize the archives, they may not have been accepted because the Armenian genocide is so politicized. What is the status of the Pontian Genocide?

**Dr. Psomiades**: There is ongoing publishing in Greek, and several people make a living as Pontian scholars in Greece. Some of it has been translated into English. The problem is there is a lot of material that is just straight descriptive and not analytical.

We have to rely on Greece to do the work because they get paid for it. No one can make a living at it here. It is disappointing there are no young scholars.

**Dr. Stavrou**: Most work being done is not analytical. In reading Fotiadis’ work, he was really impressed by the amount of productivity. All this is unknown outside Greece, because Greek scholars are not comfortable with English.

It is encouraging that a few young scholars are getting degrees in the U.S. He would like to see a course in 20th century Europe, with emphasis on the Asia Minor disaster.

**Mr. Shirinian**: Zoryan has commissioned research from scholars. Discuss subjects that need to be addressed. What is the feasibility of a major translation program?
Dr. Psomiades: Translation is so important because so many documents and works of fiction, memoirs, and first-person narratives are in Greek. These works are fabulous, emotionally touching, and have great interest beyond the Greek community.

Translating Asia Minor Greek from the 1920s into English that is readable by an American audience requires a special translator. Translating academic Greek into English is also a specialty.

It will take hundreds of hours of research to figure out what some works mean—for example, some Turkish is written using some Greek characters. Greek of a particular era is not easily translated into English of another era. Making it accessible in another language means not a literal translation, but rather must be interpreted translations that don’t lose the beauty of the original, the essence of the work.

Narratives of people who came through the suffering need to be translated into English. These are moving memoirs. Why aren’t more of them translated?

Many first-person experiences haven’t been written yet. These are important for posterity.

Getting documents published: Greece.org has money and will print materials. Be sure to get the permission of copyright holders.

Dr. Stavrou: This is the kind of rich literature that, if translated, would make a strong impact as antiwar literature.

Most Greek literature is not as accessible as it should be. There is a project in Greece to publish about 50 works of modern Greek literature and to translate them into several languages. Two are now completed.

If the entire program of 50 is completed, it will make a good resource for teachers.

In addition to translations of individual works, an anthology of several works of Asia Minor history would get an audience. This will lift Greek literature to modern European standards.

Question: Are there a number of books that cover the Asia Minor catastrophe and experience of Pontian Greeks? How do we know which are credible and which are not? Who determines which are credible?

Is anyone working on a comprehensive academic work on the history of the Pontian Greek Genocide in English?
Dr. Psomiades: Lots of books have chapters, but there is no comprehensive study.

**Question:** What in Greek needs to be translated?

Dr. Stavrou: The Fotiadis volumes, especially the 14th, which needs to be reedited. It requires some introductory pages and some work to make it sensible to an English-speaking audience.

Dr. Psomiades: It needs more than superficial work. There also is the problem of putting it together.

Dr. Psomiades: The central issue is how to get scholarly works from the native language into English. We must cultivate more from scholars because now there is nothing to read.

The Japanese put lots of effort and money into translating and making literature available to students to become the next generation of scholars. They published the works by bringing in professional translators but the end result was worthless. The best way is work with scholars who select works and translate them to make them accessible to English speakers. These were valuable and useful. The responsibility falls on the Greek government and Ministry of Education to do this.

Dr. Stavrou: Don’t expect the Greek government to do this. The Ministry of Education pays only $2,500 to a translator; no one will take the job. Copyediting and distribution is an even bigger problem for any book to be worth the investment—figure the printing cost times seven. If your book can recover these costs, it is worth printing.

Works published by universities have their own credibility, but universities won’t publish if they’re not making money. The information must get into hands of an interested audience—both scholars and the general public.

**Question:** Which ones do we publish? The three volumes of work and 10 volumes of backup were intended for publishing in six languages. The English translation has been done, but the Greek parliament won’t publish it.

We want to review the quality of the translation before it is printed. If the Greek Parliament refuses to publish it, our federation can publish the translation. Fotiadis wanted the Greek “stamp” on it, but politics are involved. Greece is in negotiations with Turkey.

**Question:** What is the role of the World Consulate of Hellenes abroad? What can they do to help translate books and establish archives?
They are a government agency so they can't assist if the government is unwilling.