

Greece in
Anatolia

(class 5,
OLLI, Living
History in
Turkey



Turkey is a fabulous place to explore Greek and Roman historic sites!

But there is a curious silence on what happened to that Greek heritage in the last 120 years. Greek speaking populations were present in Anatolia for more than 3000 years. Many of the great poets, historians, philosophers and statemen of Greek history and literature came from Anatolia – but the tragic end of that presence after WWI is still a bitter topic in both Greek and Turkish national memory.

Today's talk includes some nice pictures to encourage you to visit (many of you already have) but also to play up the difference in the treatment of ancient Greek and Roman sites, which are valued by Turkey in part for tourism, and the erasure of more recent Greek history since WWI. For Turkey, the elimination of the Greek heritage is tied up with the national mythology of Ataturk as rescuer of the Turkic nation from predatory neighbors.

(I am lumping Greek/Roman and Byzantine a bit here because these all were based on Greek speaking subjects and because they share a similar corner of the national memory space)



Ephesus perhaps the most famous site for tourists. Its significance in early Christian history part of the appeal (as its proximity to cruise ship ports)

Ankara 'regrets baseless' remarks by Greek president on Turkey's history: Ministry

ANKARA



2022 Jan. (100th Anniversary of the Independence War and "the Population Exchange" Is prompting some hot emotions)

Greek remarks: "Despite their tragic history that includes persecution, slaughter and violent attempts at Islamization, Pontian Greeks who left their Asia Minor homes as refugees "brought to Greece their drive and values ..."

Turkish Statement: "These allegations do not change the very fact that it was Greece that attempted to invade and occupy Anatolia and that the Greek army committed barbaric crimes against humanity, especially against innocent civilians in the Western Anatolian region," the ministry said.

A Little Timeline

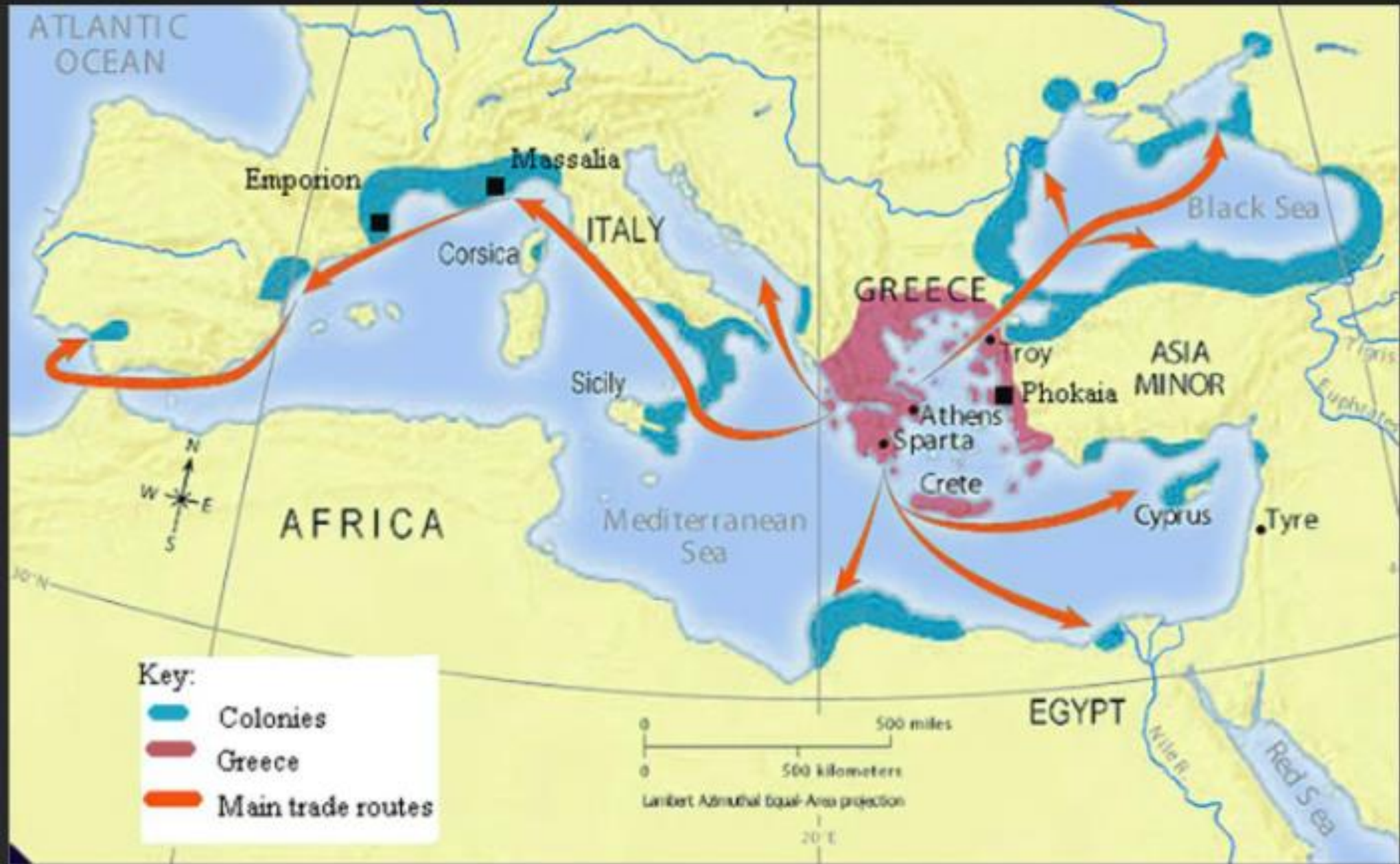
- 2000 BCE Greek speaking trade colonies, towns emerge in Anatolia and along the Black Sea
- Alexander the Great, Romans, Byzantium all rule over Greek speakers)
- c. 1000 ce Turkic tribes begin to arrive. Seljuk and Ottoman Empires have majority Christian/Greek subjects.
- 1820s-90s. Greek independence, 1829. Nationalist movements in some Anatolian Greek circles .
- WWI. Famine and Refugees. Greece expects to be rewarded by allies with land after the war.
INVADES 1919 TO PROTECT GREEK POPULATION.
- 1919-22. Ataturk rallies Turkish army to drive out Greek Army. 1922 Smyrna (Izmir) Fire.
- 1923. The "Population Exchange" the peace treaty requires "Greeks" to leave the Turkish Republic and "Turks" in Greek territory to leave for Turkey.

Defining "Greek" not an easy task.

Map: Areas with Anatolian Greeks in 1910 showing language variations within the Greek community. These communities may have spoken Greek, but not until the late 1800s was there any nationalist movements. Even then, they may have begun to think of themselves as Greek, not Turkic, but they regarded Anatolia as home.

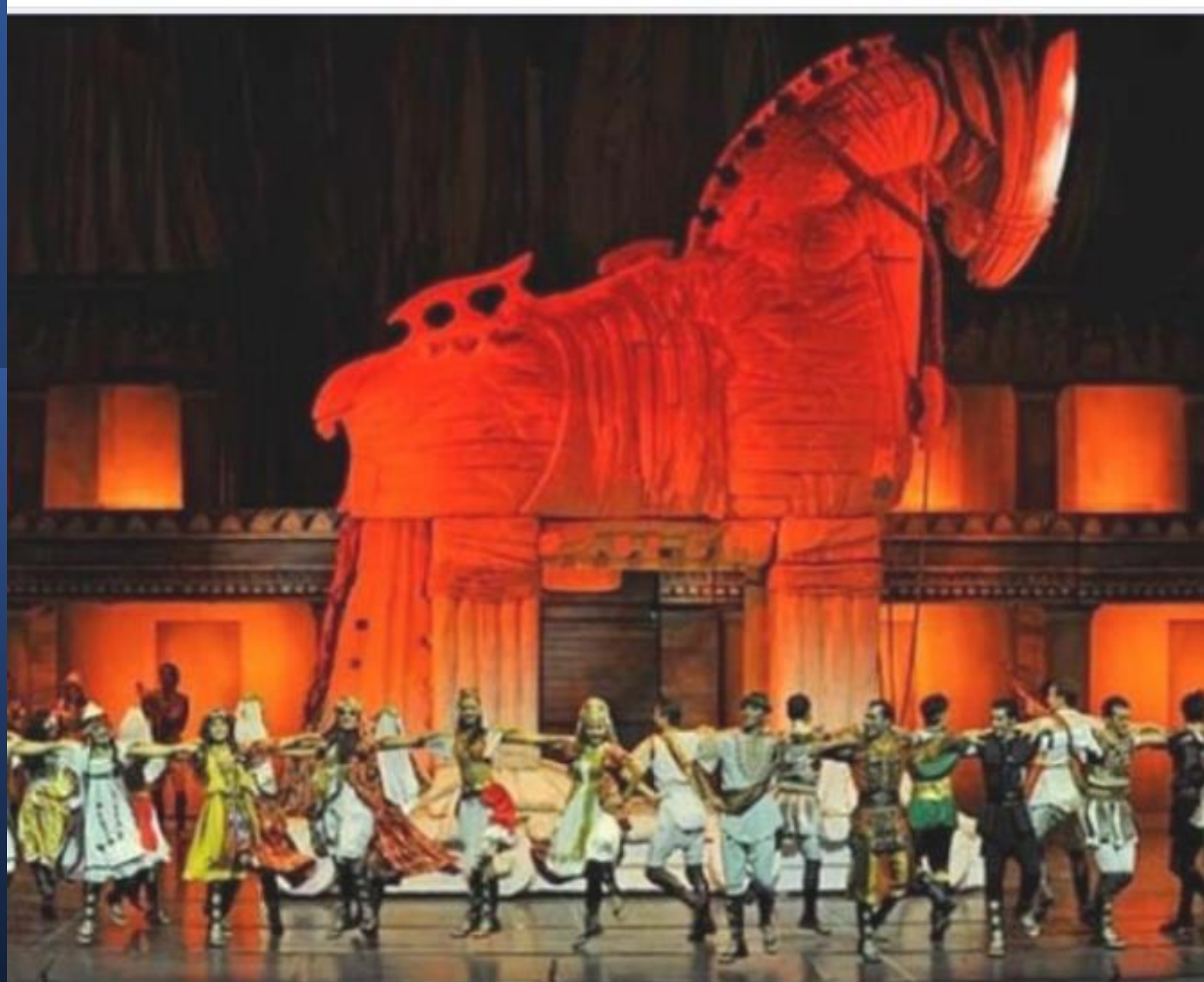


Greek communities before Alexander.




Troy the
Opera, 2018

Turkish
language
opera



Alexander the Great took advantage of Anatolian Greek support in Anatolia in his campaigns

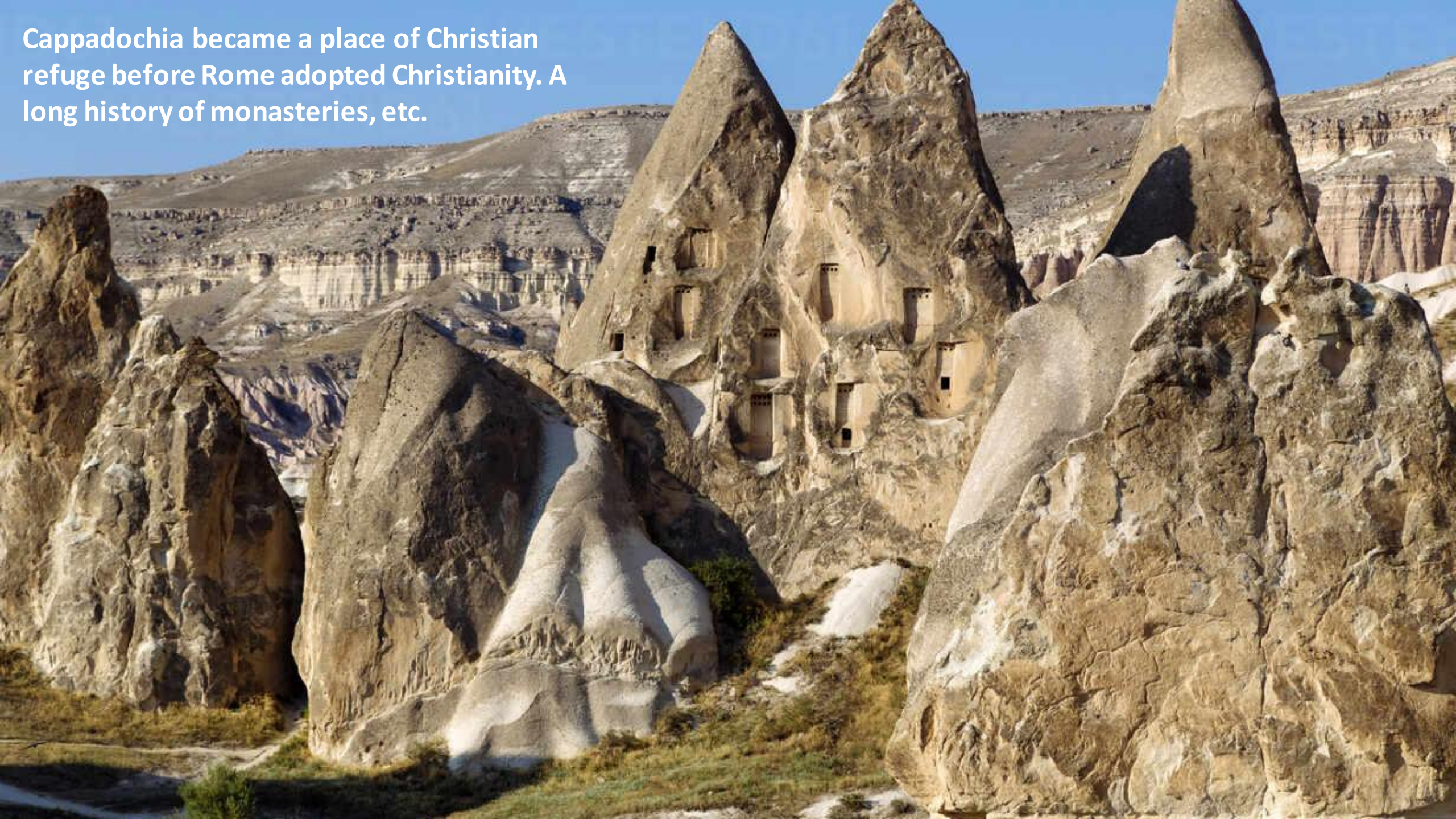


 The Empire of Alexander the Great. Alexander's conquests united Eurasia from Greece to India into a cultural and, briefly, a political unity.

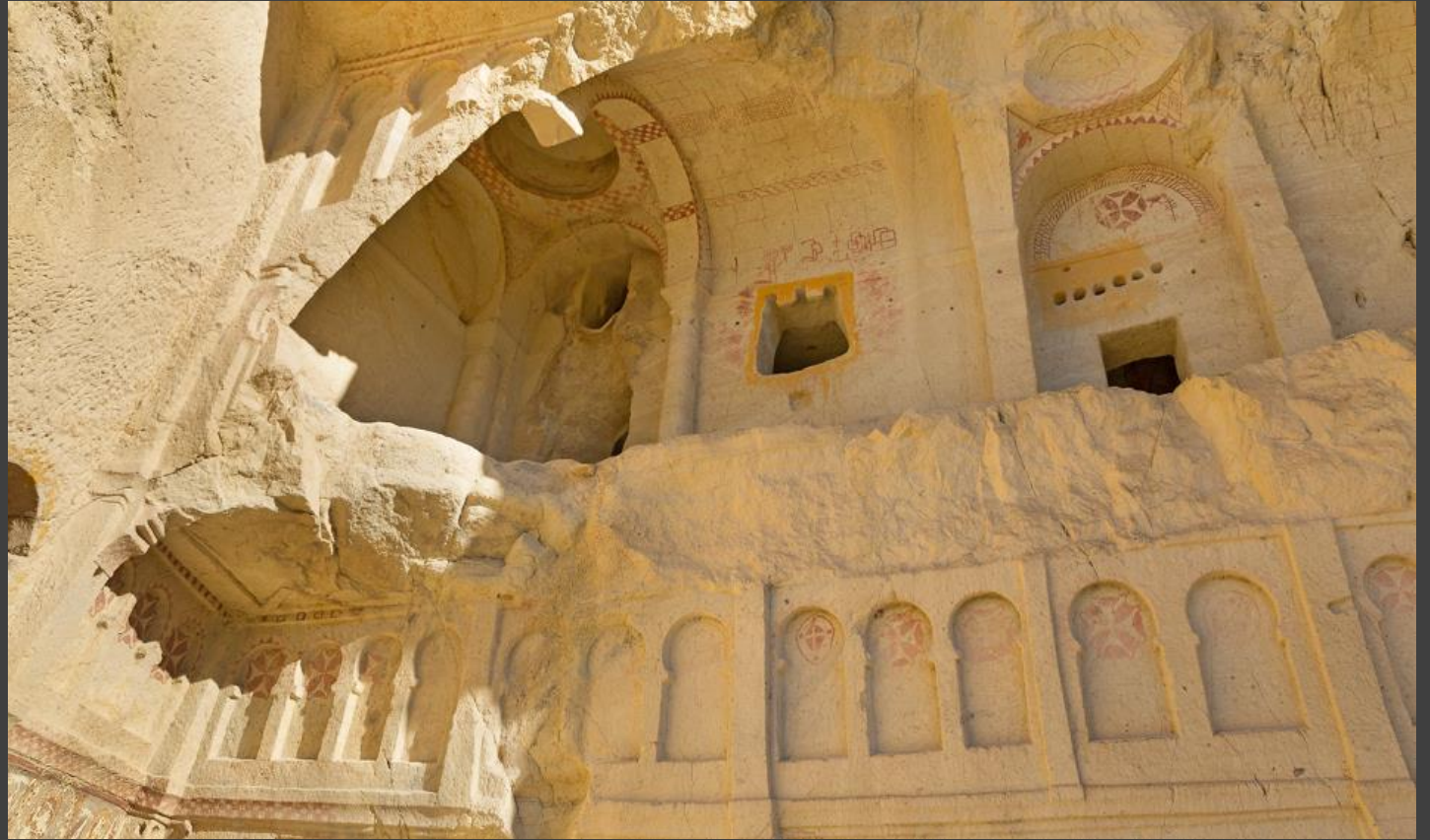
Anatolia, c 63 Bc.



Cappadochia became a place of Christian refuge before Rome adopted Christianity. A long history of monasteries, etc.







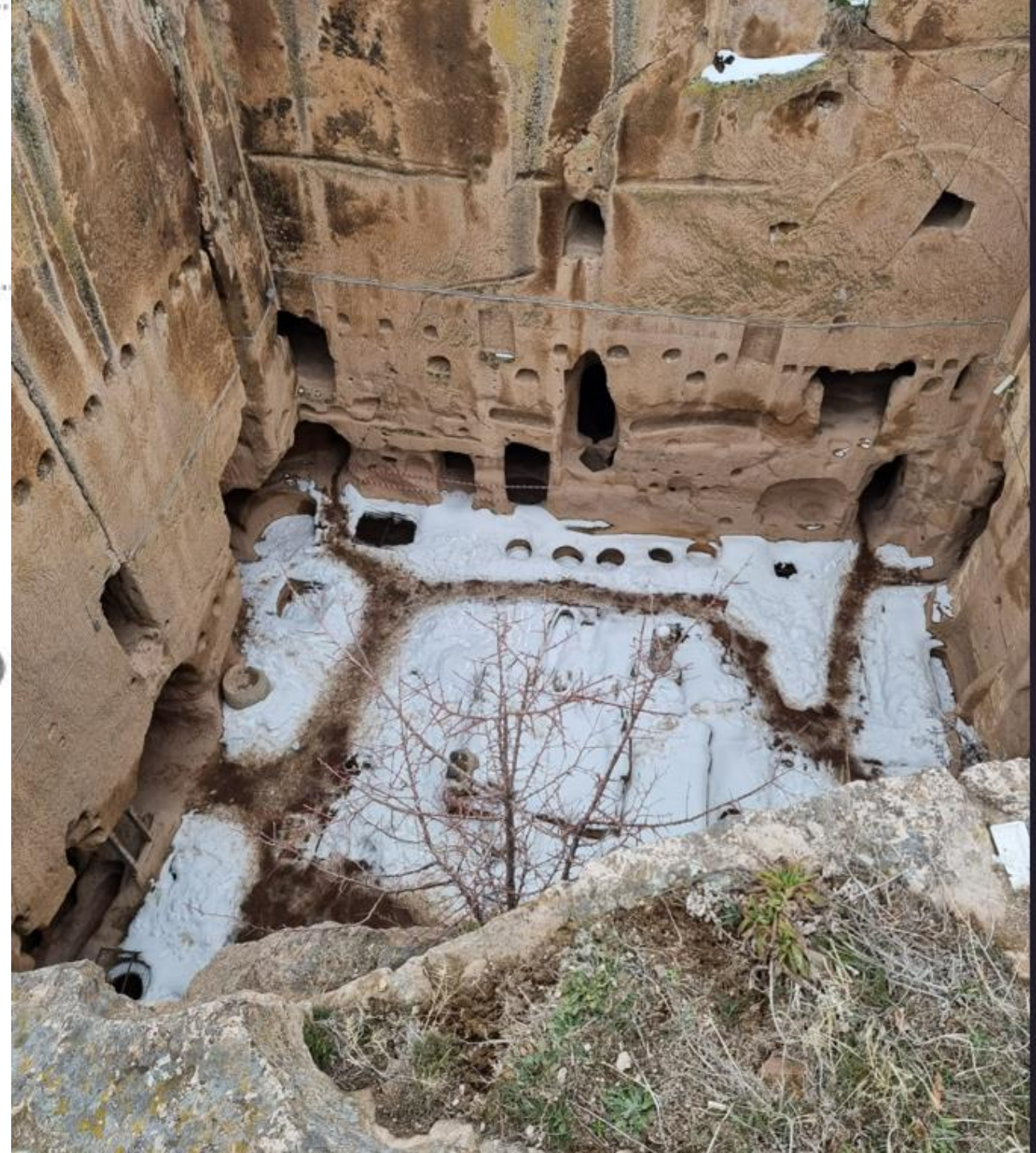
Goreme Chapel

- Collapsed monastery, Goreme. For millenia people had carved fortress homes down into the rock. The early Christians established religious communities in the area.





Nigde
Monastery
(also Cappadocchia)





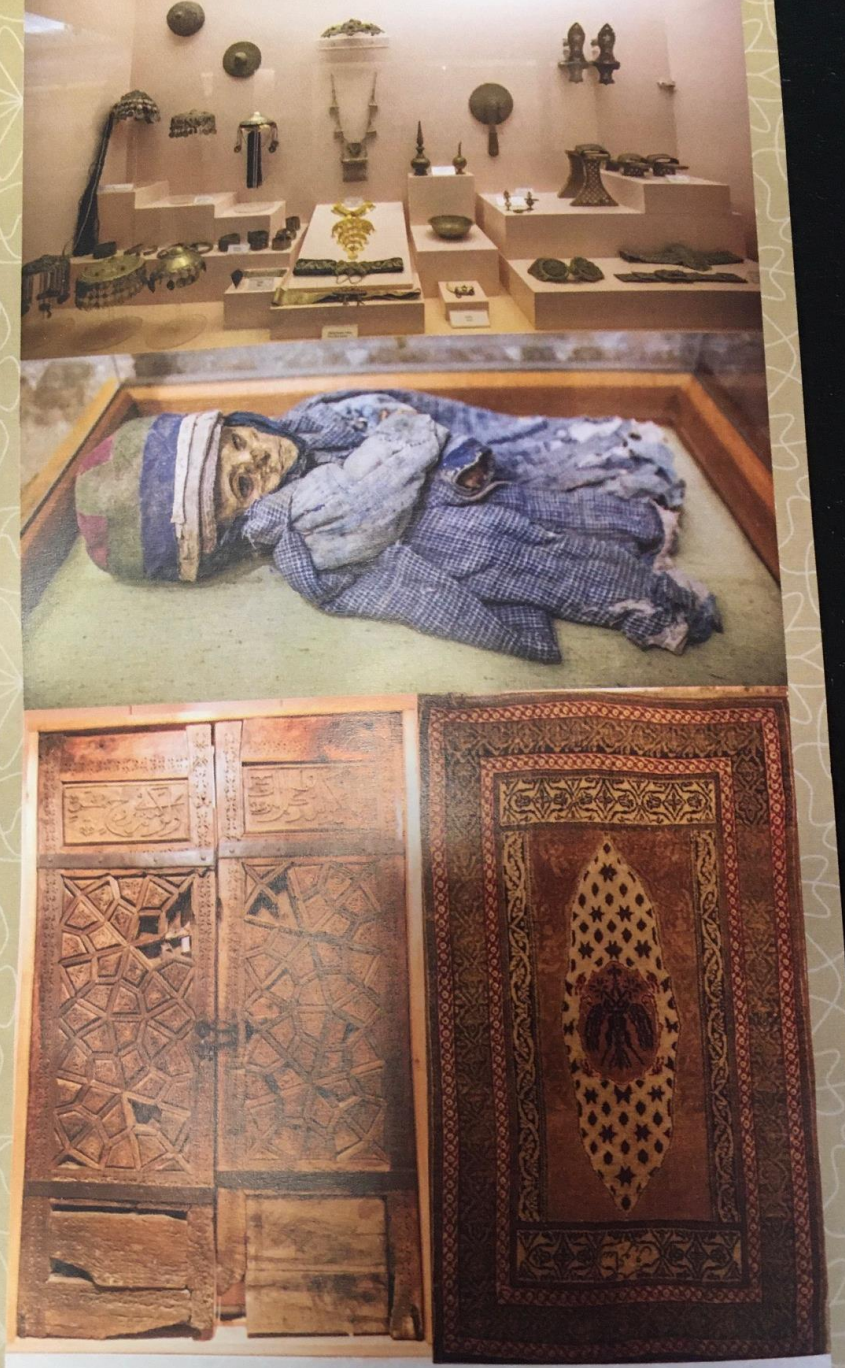
Museum exhibits at Nigde in Cappadochia

I found the exhibit showing a baby from a local Greek Christian graveyard (from about 1000 ce) a bit upsetting. I found it inconsistent with how Turkey treats other human remains. I can't really imagine muslim graves being studied in this way.

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The pre-
exchange Greek
neighborhood
being
"remodeled" in
Nigde



Mustafapasa/Sinasos in Cappadochia

Abandoned Church
in former Greek Town
emptied during the
population exchange.

The guide said most
Turks visit because the
mansion in the next
slide was the filming site
of a soap opera. There
is no mention that it
was the home of a
Greek merchant
deported in 1923. There
is some new investment
by Greek descendants.



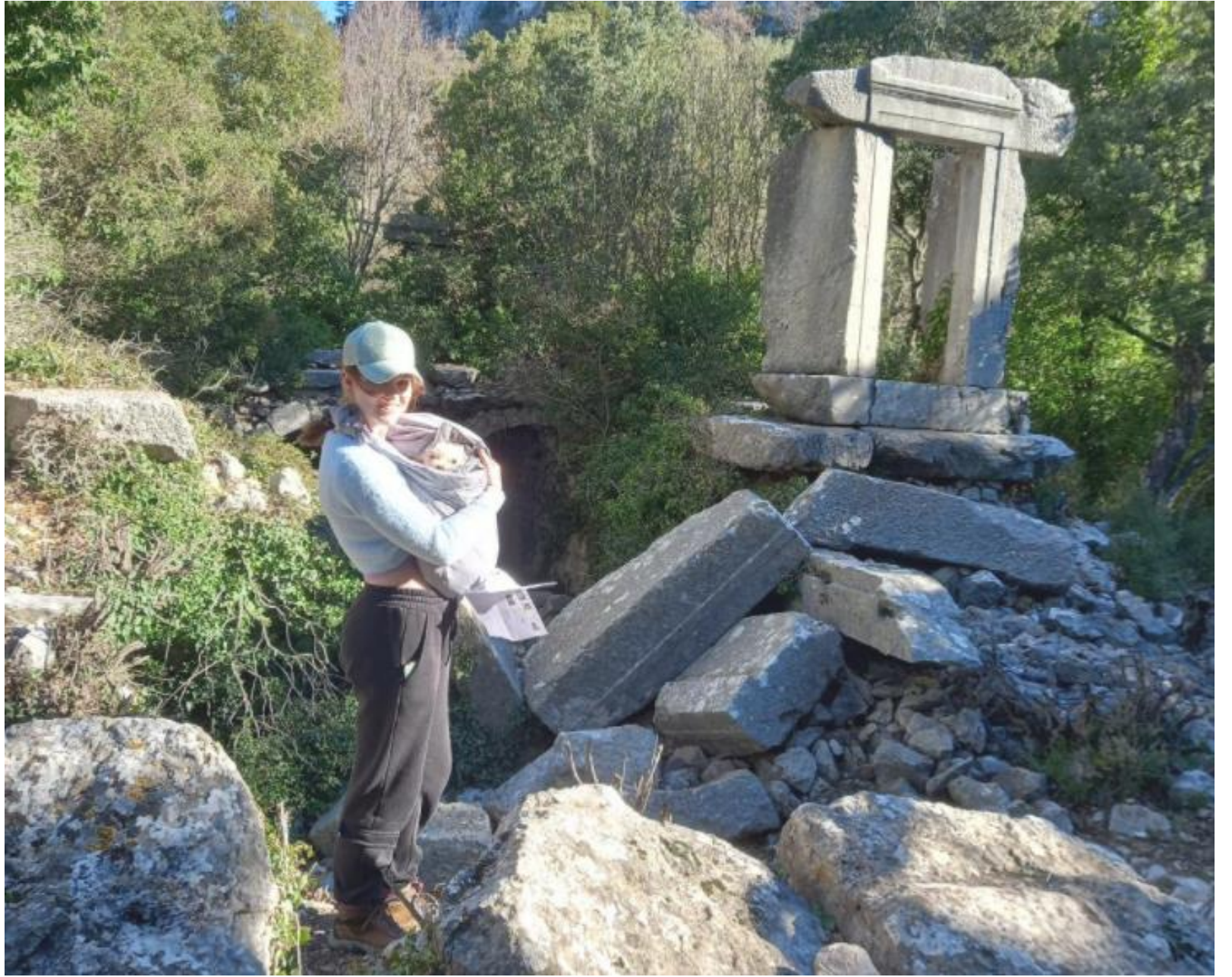


OLU GIBEKI JACQUE
HOTEL & RESTAURANT
PANE MAERSEL TURKISH KULL

Termessos, near Antalya (my favorite site so far)









Olympos,
near Antalya

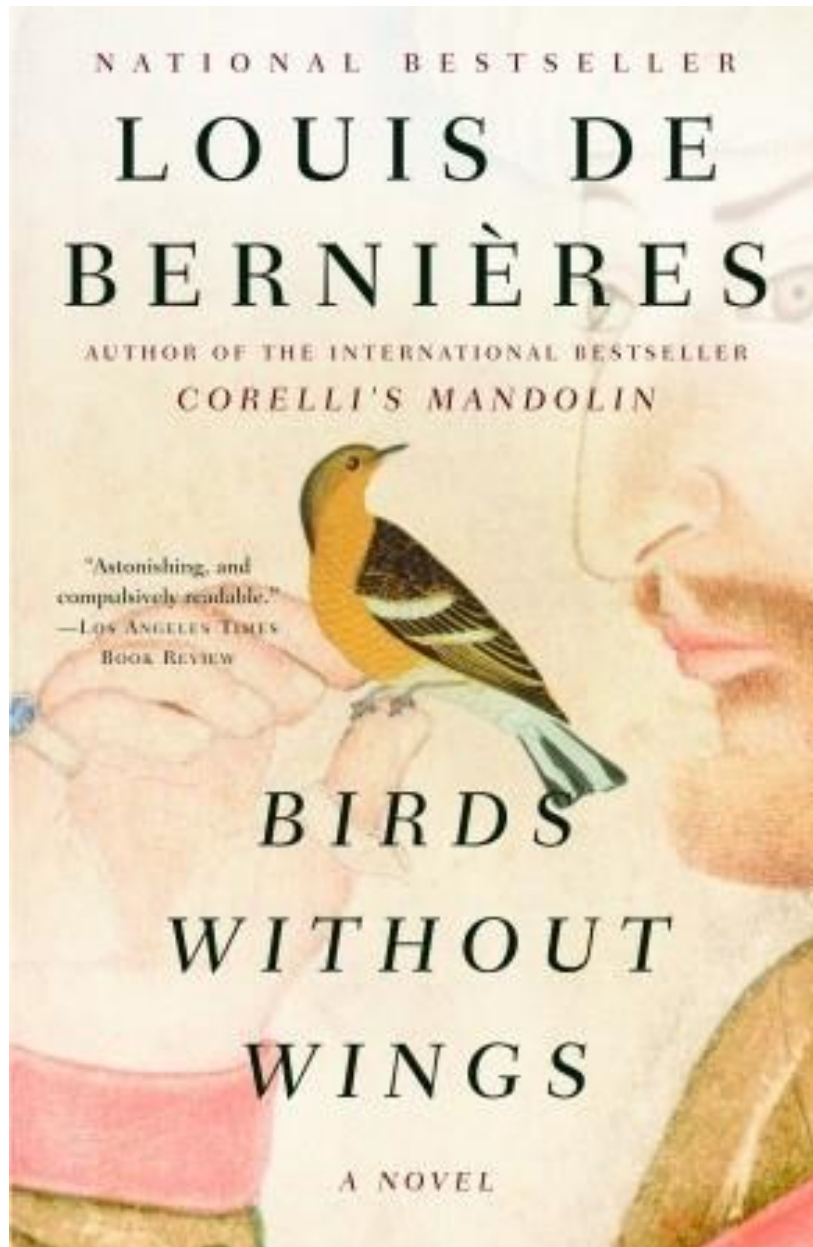
Lycean Tombs south of Antalya



Click to add text

Kayakoy, Greek village emptied in 1923 and now a tourist hiking destination





Best Book on the WWI era in Anatolia (in my opinion)

This novel is set in a village like Kayakoy – some say inspired by Kayakoy.

Antalya Harbor – one of the busiest in the world in Greek, Roman and Byzantine times





Antalya's Hadrian's Gate (and my dog Sputnik)

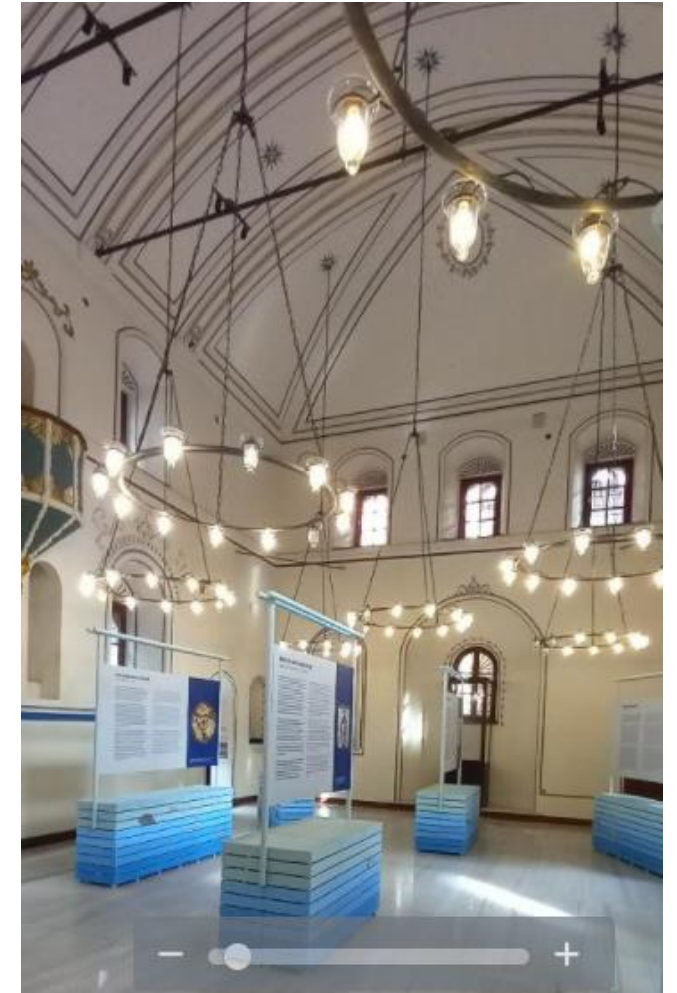


The old walled town in Antalya was predominantly Greek before the 1923 exchange, but new development is "Ottomanizing" and erasing the Greek legacy.





Door from former
Orthodox church,
now a private
museum



<https://kenancruzcilli.wordpress.com/2016/05/05/discovering-antalyas-greek-heritage/> Panhagias church (now a mosque) and ceiling detail.



Doorway shows Greek symbols, only the front wall remains and now leads to open air restaurant



**Chapel, now a
small store in old
Antalya**



Perge
Stadium
(near Antalya)



How the
Greek chapter
appears in
Kemalist
history

(photo in Anitkabir
monument to Ataturk



By the time the Turkish military found out about the treaty the Sultan signed with the WWI victors, the Greek Army had already invaded intending to take control of the South West, an area of significant greek-speaking communities.

Ataturk directed the military in campaigns against the Russians/Armenians, the Italians, the Greeks and the French.



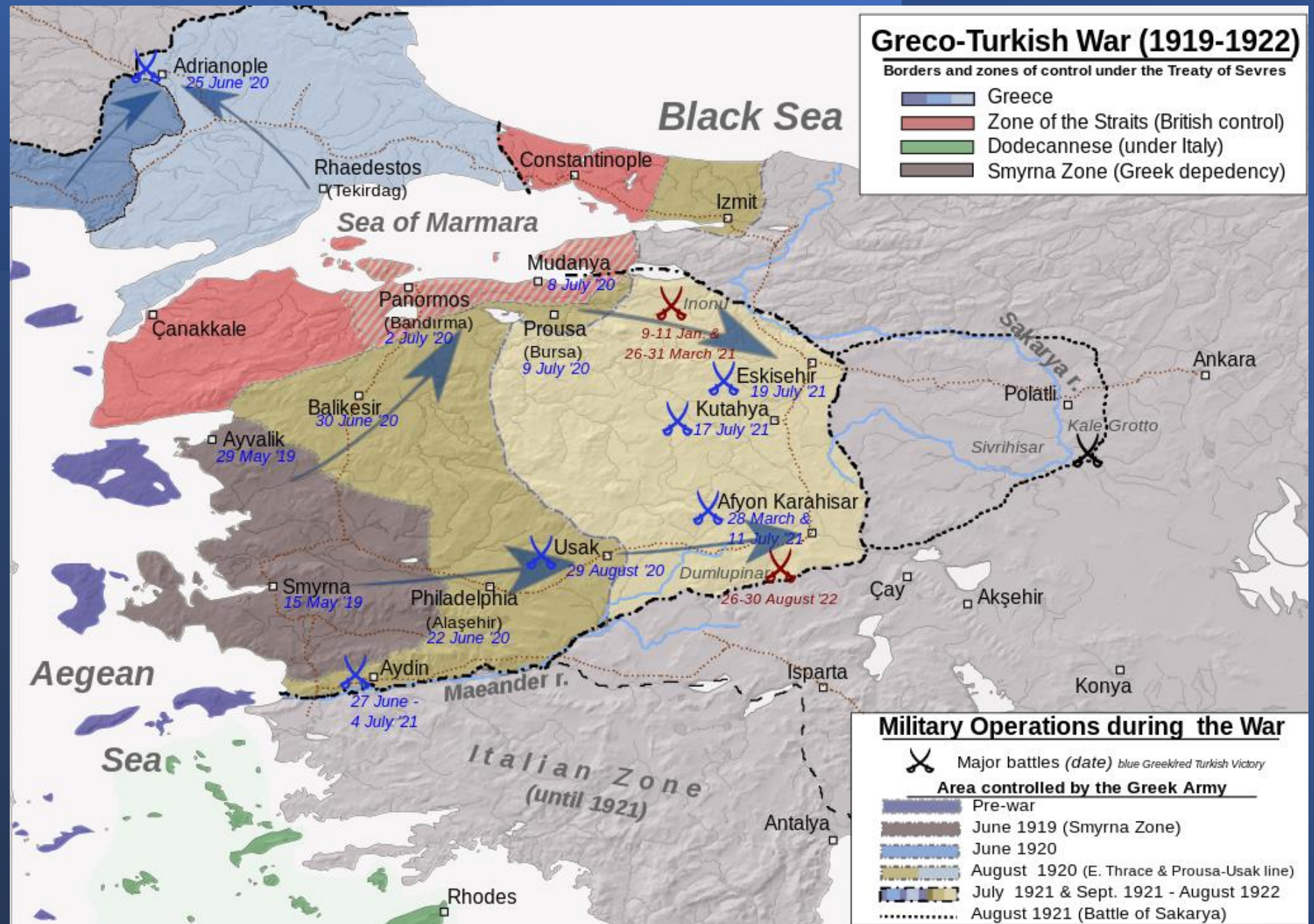


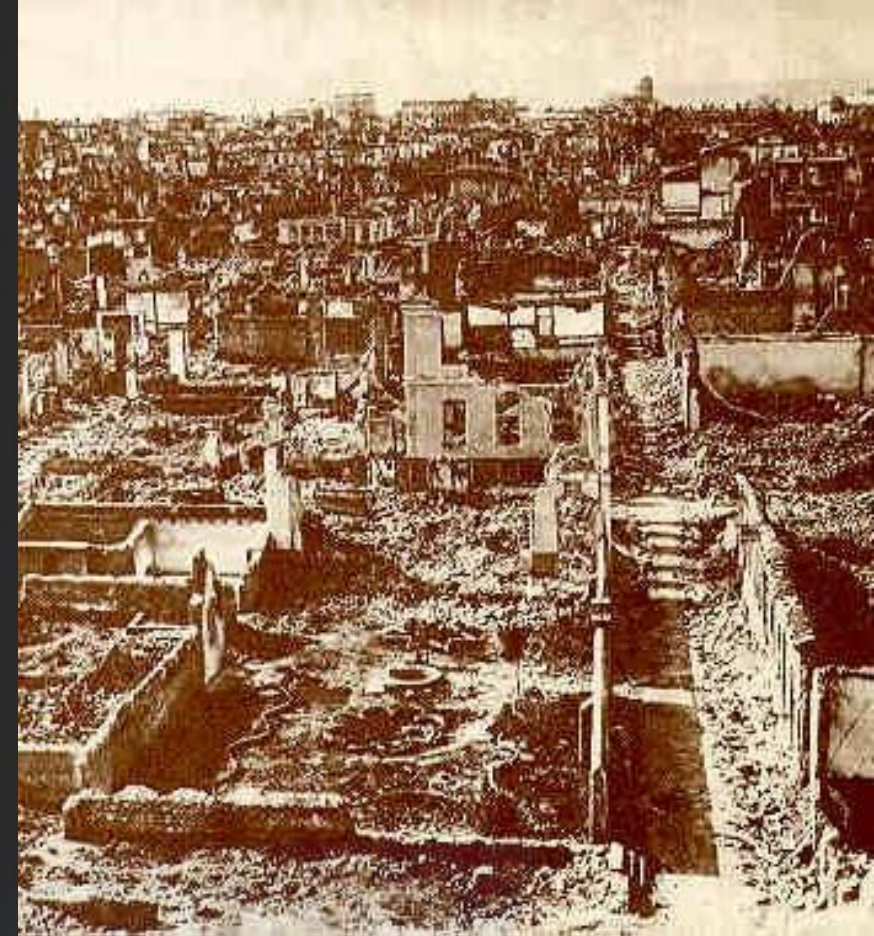
Murals inside the Anitkabir show the way Turkey recalls the Greek invasion of 1919



The war of independence culminated with atrocities committed by both sides. Retreating Greek soldiers took revenge on Muslim villages. Advancing Turkish troops took revenge on greek speaking villages that they felt had cooperated with the Greek invaders.

By 1922 the Greeks were cornered in the port of Smyrna, joined by 100s of 1000s of refugees.





Smyrna, Before and after the fire of 1922
Greek histories say the Turkish army deliberately started the fire that killed 1000s, the Turkish history blames it on the chaos and refugees.

Burning Of Smyrna (1922)



BRITISH
PATHÉ



Burning Of Smyrna (1922) - YouTube

Burning Of Smyrna (1922)



Smyrna (1922)



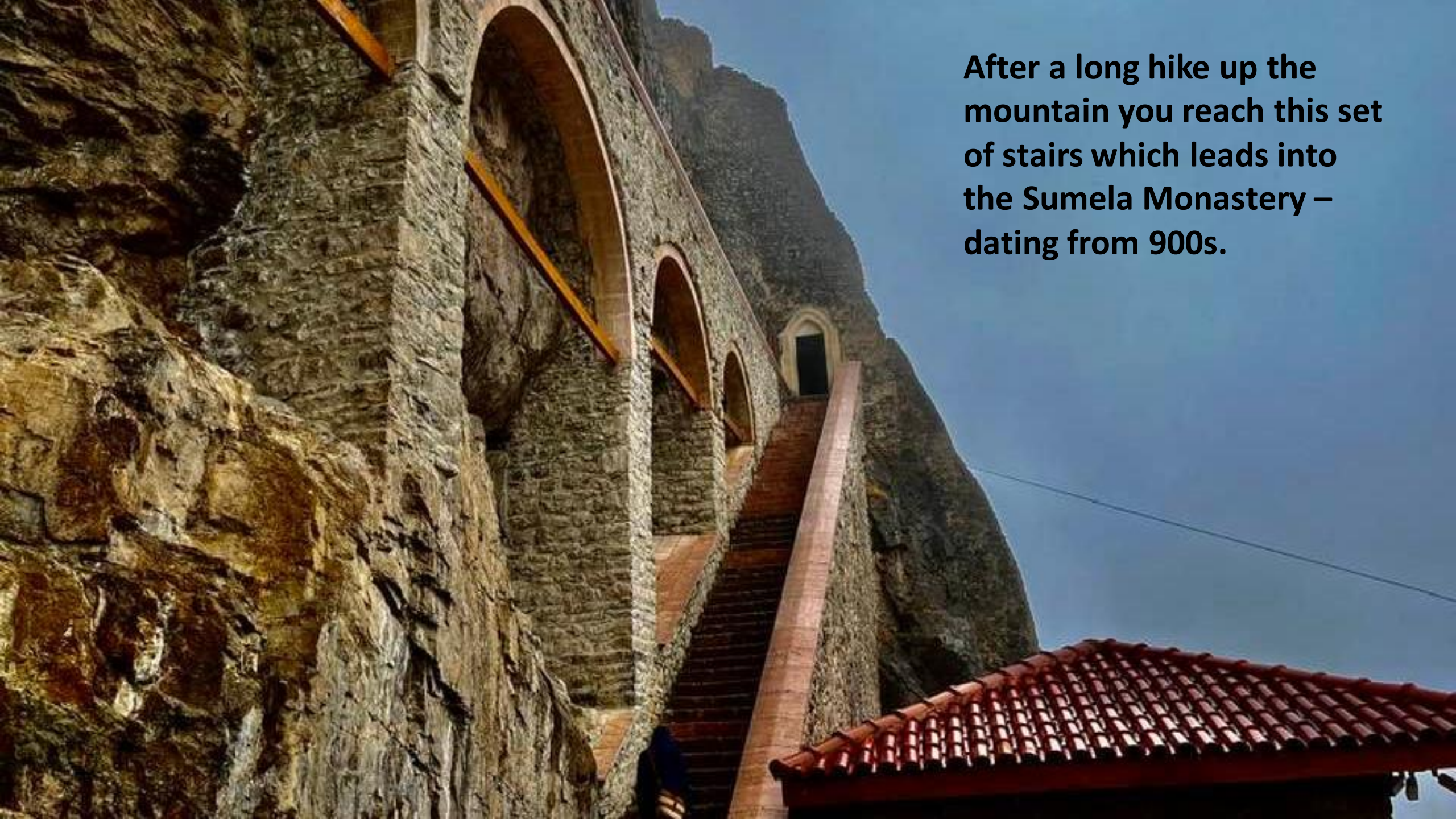
American YMCA worker Asa Jennings is credited with arranging a truce that allowed more than 300,000 to escape by ship to Greece. One of those evacuated was a 16 year old Aristotle Onassis.

Trabzon,
capital of the
Pontic Greeks



There is a
reason
Trabzon
seldom was
conquered by
land





After a long hike up the mountain you reach this set of stairs which leads into the Sumela Monastery – dating from 900s.







Back in the city of Trabzon, many visit the Atatürk Pavilion

Ataturk stayed here while in Trabzon, notably when directing the campaign against Dersim in 1937.

The site marker skips over the population exchange that forced the owner to leave in 1923, and made Greek property state property. Supposedly people were to be compensated, but that was uncommon. The state came into the possession of religious property, private property, and community buildings.

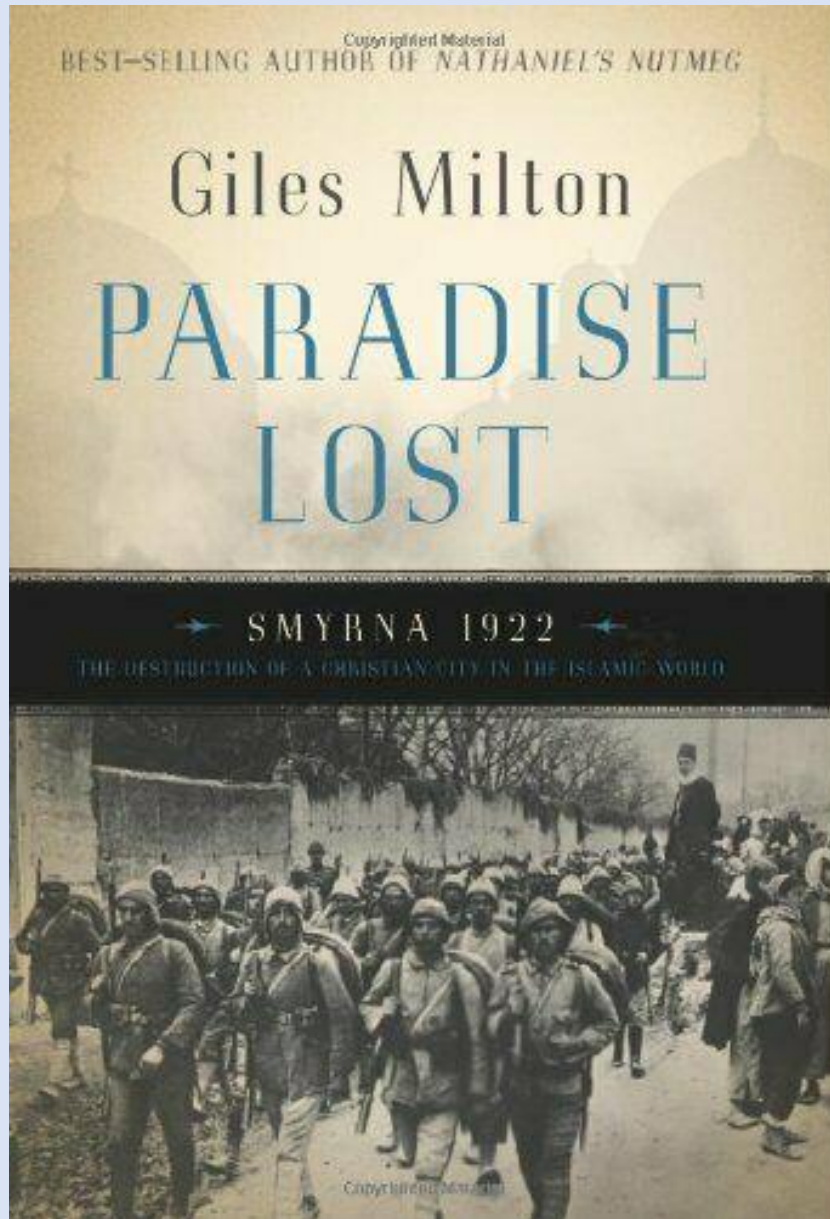
ATATURK PAVILION

Built in Soğuksu quarter, in 1890 by an Ottoman citizen Konstantin Kabayandis as a summer house. After population exchange it was given to the treasure in 1923. On 15th September, 1924 Atatürk visited and liked the pavilion on his first visit to Trabzon. Upon this fact, in line with Constant Province Council's decision by 361 Number, dated 18.05.1931, the pavilion was given to Atatürk as a gift by the people of Trabzon. Atatürk stayed here only on time during his last visit to Trabzon from 10th to 12th June, 1937, also took a decision leaving his property to the Turkish Nation. After his death, the pavilion inherited by Makbule Hanım, sister of Ataturk and was bought on the 6th April, 1943 by Trabzon Municipality, was decorated and opened as Atatürk Museum. The building is built by stone and brick has some traces from European

Temple of Aphrodisias, 3rd c. BCE, Carias
(just because it is pretty!)



Recommended Reading:



DISCOVERING ANTALYA'S GREEK HERITAGE
NOW AVAILABLE AT ST. PAUL'S
CULTURAL CENTRE!

Kenan Cilli wrote the guide to cultural heritage in Antalya at age 15!! He is only 23 now but his website is full of interesting articles on "lost history" <https://kenancruzcilli.wordpress.com/>

