Venizelos' Early Life and Political Career in Crete, 1864–1910
A. Lilly Macrakis

This chapter discusses Venizelos' early life and political career in Crete. It covers his childhood and youth; law career; his articles as a journalist at the newspaper Lefka Ori; his entry into politics; his participation in the armed rebellion on 23 January 1897; and his recognition as a national hero with the revolution of 1897, the final rebellion of the Cretans against the Turks.

Reconstructing Greece as a European State: Venizelos' Last Premiership, 1928–32
Ioannis D. Stefanidis

This chapter focuses on the events following Venizelos' political comeback in 1928. The return of Venizelos to Greek politics and high office in 1928, despite its controversial domestic impact, proved a watershed for the country's foreign affairs. His four-year term as prime minister confirmed the Cretan politician's reputation as an astute master of diplomacy who combined vision with the precepts of Realpolitik. Having thrived in circumstances of turmoil and war, Venizelos was able to prove his skills in time of peace.
Venizelos' Diplomacy, 1910–23: From Balkan Alliance to Greek-Turkish Settlement

Michael Llewellyn Smith

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship

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This chapter describes Venizelos' diplomacy and foreign policy, and assess his achievement in the crucial phase of his career which stretched from his assumption of office in Greece in 1910 to the turning point in Greek foreign policy marked by the Treaty of Lausanne. It argues that, though briefly attracted after the Young Turk revolution by the idea of co-existence of the Greek and other Christian minorities with Muslims, in a modernised, multinational Ottoman Empire, he soon developed a foreign policy based on the nationalist premises of the Great Idea. He pursued this by means of internal reform and alliances with the liberal Western powers, until circumstances destroyed it in fire and bloodshed in 1922. This foreign policy was consistent with Venizelos' vision of a modernised, European Greece. The dominant influence of the Great Powers in the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkans, though it sometimes entailed humiliation for Greece, justified Venizelos' willing dependence on them.

Venizelos' Intellectual Projects and Cultural Interests

Paschalis M. Kitromilides

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship

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This chapter focuses on Venizelos' intellectual and cultural interests. His intellectual interests are reflected in the extensive holdings of his library on contemporary — that is, early twentieth-century — European history, politics and diplomacy, with a special focus on Greece and her Balkan neighbours, as well as the extensive presence of the great nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historians, including Guizot, Hippolyte Taine, Ernest Lavisse and Seignobos. Venizelos' translation of Thucydides is his most significant and serious intellectual pursuit, a lasting monument to a rare combination of scholarship and statesmanship that integrated him in the most appropriate way in a distinctly European tradition of political leadership. Venizelos also showed a preference for modern painting in
his time and encouraged by means of state purchases of works of art, the work of his contemporary artists, who were attempting to renew academic painting in Greece through the introduction of new aesthetic tastes emanating primarily from France.

The Experiment of Inclusive Constitutionalism, 1909–32
Ioannis Tassopoulos

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This chapter discusses Venizelos' constitutional ideals. Popular sovereignty, the rule of law, and effective government were the three pillars of Venizelos' constitutional edifice. Depending on the exigencies of the time, he did on occasion compromise these principles, but he never abandoned them. The chapter is organized as follows. Section II examines the key notion of ‘inclusive constitutionalism’, which is crucial for understanding Venizelos' constitutional philosophy. Subsequent sections trace the rise and fall of Venizelos' option for a more inclusive constitutionalism, in the course of Greece's political history. At the beginning, with his appearance on the Greek political scene in 1909 (Section III), Venizelos was quite moderate on the issue of the regime (that is, the controversy over a monarchical or republican form of government — Sections IV, V). However, in the inter-war years, following the National Schism, Venizelos abandoned the inclusive and conciliatory approach which prevailed in 1909 (Sections VI, VII).

Venizelos and Economic Policy
Christine Agriantoni

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This chapter discusses Venizelos' economic policies. Venizelos' first four-year term (1910–14) in power is distinguished by the dynamism and the strong will of a leader, whose personality was still pristine, and of the new political personnel who surrounded him. The heralded ‘recovery’ had a dual content: economic development — ‘our policy for the development of agriculture and wealth in general’, as he himself characterised it —
and social justice: on this issue, with obvious political aim, Venizelos concurrently gave shape to the diffuse social protest which had been manifested in many ways in the conjuncture of the military mutiny of 1909, which had also brought him to power. The 1917–20 period, which corresponds to the stepping-up of the war effort, represents a critical turning point. The liberal management was abolished de facto, albeit provisionally. State control of the economy expanded significantly, new views on the Greek economy began to take shape, while attitudes to social protest hardened decisively.

Venizelos' Advent in Greek Politics, 1909–12

Helen Gardikas-katsiadakis

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship

This chapter discusses Venizelos' entry into Greek politics. Venizelos was an ambitious man. His success in solving the deadlock in Greece and the leadership gap he discovered there encouraged him to prepare for a political career on the mainland, although it is difficult to establish the exact point in his career when he began to think of such a step. Most likely it was long before 1910, by which time he was already forty-six years old; but it was only in 1910 that a clear opportunity arose. Venizelos was elected first deputy for Attica and Boeotia during the 8 August elections (in 1910). On 5 September, he addressed an impressive Athenian gathering in Constitution Square and set forth his political agenda. This appearance marked the beginning of a political relationship between Venizelos and his supporters that transformed the nature of political leadership in Greece.

Venizelos and Church-State Relations

Andreas Nanakis

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship

This chapter discusses Venizelos' relations with the church. His view of the church was shaped by his personal experience of the stance and activities of the Orthodox Church in Crete. The Church of Crete naturally
played its part in the crisis in relations between Venizelos and Prince George, high commissioner of Crete, and in the division that followed — a reflection in miniature of the future breach between Venizelos and King Constantine.

Introduction: Perspectives on a Leader
Paschalis M. Kitromilides

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship

This chapter discusses the career and leadership of Eleftherios Venizelos (1864–1936). Venizelos may be considered as the most important statesman in Greek political history and the creator of contemporary Greece. Throughout his active political life and during several decades following his death Venizelos had been the object of the deepest admiration and devotion, as well as of the strongest contempt and hatred on the part of his respective followers and opponents. These feelings at times ran so high that they led to profound divisions in Greek politics. The chapter then sets out the book's main purpose, which is to present a rounded perspective on Venizelos as a Cretan revolutionary leader, as a reforming prime minister of Greece, as a European diplomat, and as a protagonist in the deep division in Greek society provoked by his modernising policies. The most significant policy areas upon which he left his mark as a statesman are also analysed.

Protagonist in Politics, 1912–20
Thanos Veremis and Helen Kardikas-katsiadakis

This chapter considers Venizelos' political views. Venizelos was less devoted than Trikoupis to the principle of the superiority of parliamentary politics over all other forms of democratic governance. His own inclination was toward the Aristotelian division of politics into pure and corrupt versions. He was therefore less concerned with the political system than with its actual operation. This view of politics naturally placed the burden of state management on the persons in power,
rather than on the system of politics. Success, therefore, would depend mostly on the attributes of the personalities who were placed, by choice or chance, in the key posts of power. When Venizelos restored the damaged prestige of the monarchy, after the 1909 coup had challenged its legitimacy, and reinstated King George as the arbiter of parliamentary politics in 1910, he was depending entirely on the moderation and prudence of the particular monarch for the viability of the institution. He could anticipate neither the assassination of George nor the character of Constantine, who replaced him on the throne in 1913. Before the National Schism, Venizelos had encouraged a bipolar system of governance in which the head of state and the head of government shared substantial authority. His hope was that the grateful monarch would be willing to grant his consent on vital issues of reform and foreign policy.

The Last Years, 1933–6
Ioannis S. Koliopoulos

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship
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This chapter discusses Venizelos' departure from the Greek political scene, which came about in the same way that he entered it: in the wake of a military coup. Unlike the other great statesman of twentieth-century Greece, Constantine Karamanlis, who did everything in his power to abstain from activities that called into question constitutional legality, Venizelos more than once acted under the conviction that political requirement must occasionally be allowed to prevail over legitimate government. Unlike Karamanlis also, who prepared for himself the place in history he thought appropriate for a great statesman, Venizelos did not appear to care much about how posterity would judge his actions. From the point of view of respect for established institutions, then, Venizelos belonged to a set of new men, like Camilo di Cavour and Otto von Bismarck, who believed that their nation's interest justified all means, including revolution against legitimate authority.

Eleftherios Venizelos
Paschalis Kitromilides (ed.)

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Eleftherios Venizelos, Prime Minister of Greece, 1910–1920 and 1928–1932, could be considered from many points of view as the creator of contemporary Greece and one of the main actors in European diplomacy in the period 1910–1935. Yet the last book-length study discussing the man, his politics and his broader role in twentieth-century history, appeared in English more than fifty years ago. The aspiration of the present book is to fill this lacuna by bringing together the concerted research effort of twelve experts on Greek history and politics. The book draws on considerable new research that has appeared in Greek in the last quarter century, but does not confine the treatment of the subject to a purely Greek or even Balkan context. The entire project is oriented toward placing the study of Venizelos' leadership in the broad setting of twentieth-century politics and diplomacy. The complex and often dramatic trajectory of Venizelos' career from Cretan rebel to an admired European statesman is chartered out in a sequence of chapters that survey his meteoric rise and great achievements in Greek and European politics in the early decades of the twentieth century, amidst violent passions and tragic conflicts. Five further chapters appraise in depth some critical aspects of his policies, while a final chapter offers some glimpses into a great statesman's personal and intellectual world. The book offers a sense of the hopes and tragedies of Greek and European history in the age of the Great War and of the interwar crisis.

Venizelos and Civil-Military Relations
Thanos Veremis

in Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship
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This chapter examines Greek civil–military relations. Military interventions between 1909 and 1935 can be divided into two basic categories: those that acquired wider national significance and were endorsed by the public, and those aimed merely at promoting the private interests of various influential military figures and their clienteles. The coups of 1909, 1916 and 1922 made the army a champion of national aspirations and expansionist dreams, or an instrument to punish erring politicians. Civilian participation was considerable in these coups whose main objective was to substitute one set of civilian rulers for another. With the exception of the 1935 coup, interventions between 1923 and 1935 were usually instigated by officers with personal grievances, leaving civilians uninvolved and uninterested.
This chapter focuses on the evolution of primary and secondary education during the Venizelos era. For the greater part of the period under review, vocational education was essentially non-existent as a structural part of the system. As for the tertiary level, the Venizelos governments attempted two major legislative interventions: one at the very beginning (1911) of the period and another at the very end (1932). The main axis of both was the power relations between the government and the professorial establishment. During the years that intervened, many related matters were discussed, dominant among them being those concerning the living, schooling and study conditions of students. However, all this did not directly affect (nor did it lead to different interpretations of) the factors which, on other levels, shaped and expressed educational policy in each period.