

## **Winston Churchill and the Battle of Crete (1941)**

Emmanouil Peponas<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

The defending of Crete by the Commonwealth troops was one of the most crucial moments of World War II. On this island, in 1941, Australians, New Zealanders, Greeks, and British soldiers faced the elite Hitler's paratroopers. The result of the conflict determined by Churchill's decisions, as well as the tactical mistakes of the commander of the 2nd New Zealand Division, General Bernard Freyberg. This paper aims to illuminate unknown aspects of the British Prime Minister's actions and present his experiences during the battle.

**Keywords:** Crete, Churchill, World War II, Greek history

### **Churchill and the Outbreak of World War II**

Winston Churchill is one of the most dominant figures in British history. His contribution to the defeat of the Axis was great because he handled a devastating case for his country and encouraged his co-patriots. However, Churchill was not only the Prime Minister of the British Commonwealth in World War II; he was also a politician responsible for critical decisions that determined the fate of his homeland. Some of them were a disaster: for example, his service as the First Lord of Admiralty (1911-1915) stigmatized by the Gallipoli Campaign, where over 50.000 English and French soldiers killed without a significant result for the outcome of World War I (James, 1974, p. 72 – 74; Travers, 2001; Moorehead, 1997; Erickson, 2015; James, 1995; Haythornthwaite, 1991; Carlyon, 2001; Broadbent, 2005). In other cases, Churchill was accused of as carpetbagger and hot-head. During his political career, he faced opponents who had a lot of doubts about his skills, and they were always ready to remind him that he was a “traitor” who moved from Conservative (1900-1904) to the Liberal Party (1904-1924) and then back to “Tories”, at the period 1924-1964 (Hayden, 2015).

---

<sup>1</sup> Emmanouil Peponas is a Ph.D. Candidate at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece.

As a son of a noble family, he represented an old school of thinking, which was characterized by the idea of British imperialism (Addison, 1980, pp. 23 - 47). For the biggest part of the Interwar Period, Churchill was isolated. Without having a key position in the Government, he expressed radical ideas against the policy of “Appeasement”. His point of view was clear: Britain ought to face Axis instantly. In his “Memoirs” he wrote dramatically about “The Rape of Austria” (1938) or the “Tragedy of Munich” (Churchill, 1987, p. ix), and believed that the dignity of his country was more significant than every act of diplomacy. In this way, most of his contemporaries were criticized by Churchill. For example, the conservative Stanley Baldwin (Prime Minister at the periods 1923 – 1924, 1924 – 1929, 1935 – 1937), the man who declared in 1932 that “the bomber will always get through” and disagree with the effort to focus on the evolution of the fighter aircraft, accused by Churchill for not expanding the RAF rapidly (McLean, 2016, p. 101).

Churchill’s opposition to “Appeasement” had, as a result, his upturn to the Government: when Britain declared war on Nazi Germany (3 September 1939), Churchill was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty. From that position he proved that he was the most energetic politician of his homeland, ordering the active confrontation of Germans in the Scandinavian Peninsula (Lunde, 2009, pp. 11 - 14). So, when Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned in the spring of 1940, Churchill replaced him. The main competitor, Lord Halifax, had been stigmatized by the public opinion as to the “arch-appeaser” and was unable to ensure the support of three major parties in the House of Commons (Cowling, 1975, p. 9).

May of 1940, the month that Churchill appointed as Prime Minister by King George IV, was very hard for Britain. France was defeated totally by Hitler’s troops and the Low Countries were occupied easily by Wehrmacht. For the survival of thousands of Allies soldiers who were fought in France and faced the danger of captivity by the victorious Germans, Churchill ordered Operation Dynamo: over 300,000 men evacuated Dunkirk and were ready to fight again (Dildy, 2010; Jackson, 2003; Thompson, 2011). In the same period, Luftwaffe bombed again and again targets in Britain, but RAF succeed to eliminate its threat. The Battle of Britain (10 July - 31 October 1940) had, as a result, the revival of the British combativeness, and its outcome proved that Churchill was a politician who could lead his people to victory (Bishop, 2010; Collier, 1968; Hough and Richards, 2007; Korda, 2010).

## **2. The British intervention in Balkans**

Churchill's political ideology was very simple: Britain could act as a dominant state, which had nothing (and no one) to fear. In this way, every promise to other countries ought to be kept. In this way, Churchill decided to support Greeks not only because of factors of geopolitical importance; in fact, the British Prime Minister wanted to profess that the policy of his state had changed: in 1938 the lack of support to Czechs had, as a result, their total collapse. That might not happen in the case of Greece. For this reason, Churchill was able to divide British forces in the Near East and send thousands of soldiers to Greece and its largest island, Crete (Manchester, 2012, p. 119).

Moreover, Churchill thought that he had a chance to create a Balkan coalition against Axis. As he described in his "Memoirs":

*Now that moment had come when the irrevocable decision must be taken whether or not to send the Army of the Nile to Greece. The grave step was required not only to help Greece in her peril and torment, but to form against the impending German attack a Balkan Front comprising Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey, with effects upon the Soviet Russia which could be measured by us (...). Our limited hope was to stir and organise united action. If at that wave of our wand Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey would all act together, it seemed to us that Hitler might either let the Balkans off for the time being or become so heavily engaged with our combined forces as to create a major front in that theatre (Churchill, 1987, p. 420).*

As it seems, Churchill was dreaming of the creation of an alliance of the Balkan states against the Axis, including at least Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey. In this way, he gave orders to General Sir Archibald Wavell for a coordinated offense against Tripoli, at the same time he sent Commonwealth forces in Greece. His ambition was the withdrawal of the Italians of Libya while his Balkan allies were pushing the Axis out of the peninsula. Of course, the British intervention could cause a German reaction; Hitler was not able to accept the presence of his enemies in a vital strategic position like Southeastern Europe, especially when Mussolini's men were defeated by the Greeks in Northern Epirus (south Albania). The fear of a possible Wehrmacht's attack for the rejection of Churchill's proposals by the governments of Turkey and Yugoslavia. Even the Greek dictator Ioannis Metaxas, a retired General with great military

experience, did not accept the British promises. After that, Churchill lost his enthusiasm but remained loyal to his plans (Thompson, 2011, p. 26-27).

Metaxas' attitude can be interpreted without difficulties: he did not want to provoke a German attack as a reprisal for the British intervention. So, if Churchill wanted to persuade him, he should send enough troops and airplanes. In this way, the Greek dictator accepts a British military delegation under Major-General Michael Gambier-Parry in Athens, to discuss the opportunities for further cooperation. Gambier-Parry selected to stay in the high-class hotel Grande Bretagne, at the center of the Greek capital city. There, British and Greek officers were met frequently and took crucial decisions about the future of the war.

Despite that, Metaxas continued to fear the presence of British troops in his country. At the same time, his health problems -he suffered from throat cancer- were not enough to stop him administrating every aspect of Greece's policy. He tried to handle the difficult situation as charm as he could: he invited RAF squadrons, only after the German minister in Athens assured him that it was not a cause of war. At the same period, Metaxas asked the British to take responsibility for the defense of Crete (Thompson, 2011, p. 66).

Metaxas wanted to use the V (Cretan) Infantry Division at the battlefields of Epirus. If the British looked after Crete, Greece's war effort could be more affordable. At the capital of Great Britain, the high-ranking officers of the Army and Royal Navy agreed with Churchill about the significance of Crete and, especially, the harbor of Suda Bay on the north coast of the island. The Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham was ready to establish a naval base there, after Metaxas permission (Beavor, 2005, p. 8).

Eden was maybe one of the politicians who supported Churchill's decision about the need of military assistance to Greece. The two men shared common ideas about the future of their country, although Eden had a more realistic way of thinking. When he arrived in Cairo (19 February 1941) to make recommendations about the British policy in the Balkans and the Middle East to the War Cabinet, he had great powers because of Churchill's favor. On 20 February, a conference took place to decide on sending or not troops to Greece. They were participating Eden, Wavell, Cunningham, Dill, and Longmore, but not Freyberg or Blamey. Indeed, the Commonwealth soldiers were sent to Balkans without the permission of their leaders. A telegraph from Eden to Churchill with the message "There is a fair chance that we

can hold a line in Greece” was enough for the begging of their mission in the Balkans (Thompson, 2011, p. 110).

On the other side, Wavell never agreed with the Prime Minister’s strategy. He knew that his resources were extremely scarce and Crete was near the Italian airfields in the Dodecanese. For him, the British had too much to lose if they accepted to defend the island, so the best choice was to use it as a transit camp. He agreed with Churchill's interest in holding strategical positions like the Suda Bey, but was not so ambitious to believe that his troops could halt the Germans in a large-scale operation (Beevor, 2005, p. 36). On the other side, Crete was vital for the Axis because RAF could bomb the precious Romanian oilfields creating bases on the island. Moreover, Hitler’s staff had already planned Operation Barbarossa, so Wehrmacht ought to secure its southern flank. Besides, Crete was not far away from Northern Africa, where Rommel needed supplies. In this way, it is clear that the island was more significant to Hitler than the British generals (Thompson, 2011, p. 187).

As it was noted before, Churchill's plans had significantly affected the war in North Africa. Wavell already faced a lot of problems with the Italians, so the last thing that he wanted was to send troops to other war fronts. He had spent approximately one year training inexperienced soldiers from New Zealand and Australia, so now thought that it was the right time to attack against the enemy. As the General once again explained to Eden, the Balkan intervention was a huge mistake. Despite that, Churchill was clear: the day (12 February 1941) that Erwin Rommel arrived in Tripoli and began planning a counter-attack against the British in Cyrenaica, the Prime Minister cable Wavell that his major effort should be to aid Greece and Turkey. In this way, every operation against the Libyan city must be postponed. That was the worst scenario for Wavell (Thompson, 2011, p. 70, 104).

### **The Battle of Crete**

Some months before the battle of Crete (January 10th, 1941), Ultra decrypted German signals about Wehrmacht's intentions to enforce its position in the Balkans. Although Wavell remained calm, Churchill believed that it was the right time to reinforce the Greeks. In Cairo, Wavell continued to speak about “a war of nerves” by their opponents, and General Heywood agreed with him. The last had visited Athens and had spoken with Metaxas’ officers, having the opinion that Germans just warned them of the Balkans. However, Churchill had already taken

his decisions: it was essential to provide as much assistance as they could to the Greeks, helping their war effort with any means (Beavor, 2005, p. 9).

Churchill's hopes about the defense of the Greeks never accomplished. Although the Greek Army succeed to defeat Italian troops and conduct a counter-attack in Albania -then an Italian protectorate-, the involvement of Hitler in the Balkans had, as a result, the victory of the Axis. On 6 April 1941 Wehrmacht attacked Yugoslavia which capitulated after eleven days. Afterward, German troops invaded Greece and reached Athens on 27 April 1941. Over 50,000 British soldiers withdrawn successfully from the Greek mainland to Crete (Pelling, 1989, p. 467).

Churchill expressed the opinion that the operations in Greek mainland caused just few casualties. It was partly wrong: although only 2,000 men were killed and 14,000 became prisoners of war in a total amount of 58,000 troops that were sent in Greece, 104 tanks, 40 anti-aircraft guns, 192 field guns, 164 anti-tank guns, 1,812 machine guns, about 8,000 transport vehicles, and over 200 aircraft were lost. In fact, the British Prime Minister had a variety of reasons to think that the whole mission was a disaster (Beavor, 2005, p. 31).

For a former member of Anzac Corps, Churchill's idea about the involvement in Balkans was good, but not sufficient:

“Greece was a disaster waiting to happen. It was another one of Churchill's great ideas and it didn't work, but as usual Churchill had to have his way. We were up against ten German divisions which had fought in Poland, Holland, Belgium and France – these fellows weren't the Afrika Korps, these were the real bastards. At the head of them was Hitler's favourite division, the Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler Division. We never had a chance to settle down as a defending force. We were accused of running away but we didn't run away – we fought them all the way down the Greek archipelago and one of the New Zealanders, Sergeant Jack Hinton, won the Victoria Cross attacking the Germans right at the very end” (Thompson, 2011, p. 26).

New Zealanders were sure that the British Prime Minister was able to sacrifice them to delay the Germans; their transport in Crete was a proof (Thompson, *ibid*).

The defense of Crete was vital for Churchill's plans. Already in June of 1940, Admiral Andrew Cunningham had suggested the occupation of Crete to use the harbor of Suda (on the north coast of the island) as a naval base (Roskill, 2004, p. 204). Churchill had the same point of view: he dreamed to modify Suda to "a second Scapa". In May of 1941, British forces in Crete numbered approximately 30,000 men assisted by over 10,000 Greeks. Also, there were less than 30 old British planes distributed between the airports of Maleme, Rethymno, and Heraklion. The leader of the Allies troops was Lieutenant General Bernard Freyberg from New Zealand, a 52 years old veteran of World War I. For Churchill, Freyberg was "the Salamander of the British Empire"<sup>1</sup>, a tough man ready for every mission. However, the General from New Zealand was a warrior, not a strategist (Barber and Tonkin-Covell, 1990).

Freyberg was Churchill's personal choice. The Prime Minister had numerous reasons to admire him. First of all, the New Zealander commander was an undoubtedly brave man: when Churchill asked him to strip and show his wounds, he counted 27 of them. Those wounds signified that Freyberg never retreated from the war front: a charisma that the British politician always wanted to inspire his compatriots. Moreover, the General from New Zealand was one of the most loyal military men to the Crown and the imperialistic ideals of the British Empire. In the past, he had proved that he was able to fight anyone and anywhere, despite the number of soldiers he was commanding or the superiority of the enemy. Those things were enough to put Freyberg in a so difficult position (Thompson, 2011, pp. 38, 198).

After the collapse of the defense in the Greek mainland, Freyberg was sure that he would be transferred to Egypt. His meetings with staff officers like Colonel Keith Stewart and Lieutenant-Colonel William Gentry had as a target to prepare his troops for the transport to Alexandria. In this way, he planned to fly in Egypt where he would reorganize the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand Division. His conversations with other officers were satisfying and make him think that the presence of the New Zealand troops in Crete was temporary. He even asked his wife, Barabara, to travel in Cairo. The notification of Churchill's order was quite unexpected (Thompson, 2011, p. 193).

Freyberg never believed that Germans could decide to use airborne forces for the occupation of Crete (Holland, 2015, pp. 201 – 217), but both Wavell and Churchill did not agree with his concern about a sea invasion (PREM 3/109)<sup>2</sup>. Also, the British Prime minister wrote to the Prime Minister of New Zealand on 3 May that his information was showing clearly an airborne

attack, with possibly an attempt of a seaborne attack. According to him, Royal Navy was strong enough to prevent the latter, so the airborne insult was more dangerous. The evidences showed that New Zealanders had to fight hard against their enemies in close combat without tanks and artillery (Beavor, 2005, p. 46).

Freyberg's men had very low morale. This was not unrelated to Churchill's decisions during the Great War. Young officers like the 20-year-old George Vasey were born some years after the Gallipoli Campaign, however learned its events from their parents or other witnesses. Rumors about the loss of thousands of men because of Churchill's mistakes were well-known in Oceania and very few of them could trust the British Prime Minister. The legend of the brave men who lost their lives over the Turkish strongholds feared them maybe more than anything else (Thompson, 2011, p. 32). Moreover, the lack of reinforcement, despite New Zealand Prime Minister's continuous urges to Churchill, was significant for the war effort (FO 954/4A/304).

Their enemies were 22,000 elite paratroopers and mountain troops supported by hundreds of bombers, dive bombers, fighters, and transport planes.<sup>3</sup> Commanding men like them, General Kurt Student, had the advance. Although he arrived in Crete at the final stages of the battle, he had influenced significantly the attitude of his troops. Their fighting ability, but also the atrocities against civilians were the result of Student's doctrines (Guard, 2007).

After a heavy bombardment, the battle of Crete began on 20 May 1941. Germans had as main targets the three airports of the island (Maleme, Rethymno, and Heraklion), but faced great resistance by their defenders. Churchill noted:

“Never was a more reckless, ruthless attack launched by the Germans. In many of its aspects at the time was unique. Nothing like it had ever been seen before. It was the first large-scale air-borne attack in the annals of war. The German Air Corps represented the flame of the Hitler Youth Movement and was an ardent embodiment of the Teutonic spirit of revenge for the defeat of 1918. The flower of German manhood was expressed in these valiant, highly trained, and completely devoted Nazi parachute troops. To lay down their lives on the altar of German glory and world power was their passionate resolve” (Churchill, 1987, p. 442).

Although Churchill's admiration for their combativeness, the invaders had heavy losses. By late afternoon of the same day, the British Prime Minister telegraphed to Roosevelt. He was very optimistic and informed the President of the United States that the battle "has opened well". However, at the night, the 22<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand Battalion which was in charge of Maleme inexplicably decide to withdraw (Peponas, 2019, p. 57). Its huge mistake determines the outcome of the struggle. On 21 May 1941 Germans were the dominants of the small airfield and they were able to transport supplies and reinforcements (Manchester and Reid, 2012, p. 200; FO 954/11A/3869).

In the air, Luftwaffe was dominant. The British authorities recognize their inferiority, which was crucial for the outcome of the battle (FO 954/11A/65). If Churchill had sent more planes to Crete, German plans could have been failed. However, RAF had not enough resources in the whole region and there was the danger of weak more the British positions in Egypt. For example, Sir Michael Palairret telegraphed to Foreign Office on 1 May 1941 the following:

"With fullest realisation of strength of points made by Palairret I submit with all respect that from the point of view of defending Egypt there would be grave risk, as I see it, in weaking our already inadequate air strength here, thereby perhaps risking loss of Egypt in order to save Crete, which we might fail to do. We already have far too little air in Western Desert where there is crying need for more. There is also now Iraq on our hands" (FO 354/5a/68).

In this way, the victories of the British Royal Navy at the sea were not notable, because the operation was executed by the air. Gradually, Germans moved eastwards to Maleme and occupied the greatest part of the island. Less than two days after his last telegraph, Churchill informed Roosevelt that "Battle in Crete is severe" (Manchester and Reid, 2012, p. 200). In fact, after the fall of Maleme, the battle was over for the troops of the British Commonwealth. After few days of resistance, Allies soldiers had to evacuate Crete (Peponas, 2019, pp. 70 - 77).

From Sfakia, a small port at the southwest part of the island, the British force was embarked for Egypt (28 May - 1 June 1941). The Royal Navy succeed to rescue some 16,500 soldiers, however, for Cunningham it was a "disastrous period in our naval history": thousands of others remained in Crete and were captured by Germans or were hidden in mountainous villages assisted by the locals (Roskill, 2004, p. 208). At the battle, Greece and Britain had

approximately 23,000 casualties. Also, 19 ships of the Royal Navy sunk and 22 damaged, and 33 RAF aircraft shot down or destroyed on the ground.

Despite those things, Churchill remained optimistic:

“The Battle of Crete is an example of the decisive results that may emerge from hard and well-sustained fighting apart from manoeuvring for strategic positions. We did not know how many parachute divisions the Germans had. But in fact the 7th Airborne Division was the only one which Goering possessed. This division was destroyed in the Battle of Crete. Upwards of five thousand of his bravest men were killed, and the whole structure of this organisation was irretrievably broken. It never appeared again in any effective form. The New Zealanders and other British, Imperial, and Greek troops who fought in the confused, disheartening, and vain struggle for Crete may feel that they played a definite part in an event which brought us far-reaching relief at a hingeing moment”. (Churchill, 1987, p. 447-448).

### **Conclusion remarks**

The outcome of the battle of Crete was a personal failure for Churchill. He was the main supporter of the opinion about the defense of the island, as a key point to the British intervention in the Balkans. A lot of his Generals -especially Wavell- disagreed with him, not wanting to waste men and guns at a battlefield far away from the Middle East. Churchill never heard them. In this way, it is easy to understand why the Prime Minister faced criticism from his political opponents. According to the Parliamentary Secretary, Harold Nicolson, after the loss of Crete, the British public was in “a trough of depression over” and became pessimistic about the capability of the Commonwealth troops.

Also, the outcome of the battle of Crete had a great influence on Britain’s public opinion. During the Battle of Britain, Churchill assured a significant political unity and gained the support of the public. However, that did not last for a long time: after the failures of the campaigns at Dakar, in Greece and Crete, the Commons debated a motion of no confidence. Honorable politicians like Lloyd George criticized Churchill’s advisors and characterized them as inexperienced “yes-men”. As an answer, the British Prime Minister compared Lloyd George

to Petain and attacked his opponents. The result was Churchill's victory: at the end of the debate, there was an overwhelming vote of confidence for him (Pelling, 1989, p. 473-474).

In the same period, despite the military failures and political skepticism about Churchill's decisions, the Gallup Polls confirmed the public approval of the Prime Minister. For example, in February of 1941, those who approved Churchill as a Prime Minister numbered 85%. Also, in March, June, and October of the same year, the proportion remained over 80%. On the other side, according to the same researches, the British people were almost dissatisfied with the government's conduct of the war: in October 1941 only 44% of the respondents approved the government's decisions and 58% before the invasion of Crete. After the end of the battle, the proportion was remarkably low (Pelling, 1989, p. 479).

To end up, in May 1941, Churchill's country was bombed every day by Luftwaffe and the Nazis had conquered the biggest part of Europe. That was the moment he ordered his troops to defend Crete, the Greek island which stands at a crucial geopolitical crossroad. Because of the lack of supplies and their leaders' mistakes, the soldiers of the British Commonwealth were defeated. However, according to his "Memoirs", Churchill remained optimistic, mainly because the battle of Crete caused the death of a lot of elite German paratroopers. Also, despite the conflict's outcome, the Prime Minister continued to be popular and secured an overwhelming vote of confidence to the House of Commons.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Freyberg's nom de plum was given by Churchill and it means the "protector" according to heraldic.

<sup>2</sup> On 28 April 1941, Churchill telegraphed to Wavell:

"It seems clear from our information that a heavy Air-borne attack by German troops and bombers will soon be made in Crete. Let me know what forces you have in the Island and what your plans are. It ought to be a fine opportunity for killing the parachute troops. The island must be stubbornly defended" (PREM 3/109).

<sup>3</sup> About their spirit and training of the paratroopers, Christopher Ailsby cited:

"Fallschirmjager training was vigorous and tough, emphasised by Hitler's own "10 commandments to the Fallschirmjager", the first of which stated: "You are the chosen fighting men of the Wehrmacht. You will seek combat and train yourselves to endure all hardships.

Battle shall be your fulfillment”. One commandment was typical Hitlerite: “Against an open foe, fight with chivalry, but extend no quarter to a guerrilla”. All recruits to the Fallschirmjager were volunteers, both before and during the war, which meant they responded well to arduous training maintained a high level of morale throughout the course. All volunteers had to be relatively lightweight -85kg (187lb)- and not suffer from dizziness or air sickness. Recruits had to have to fear of height, which was tested by making individuals jump from a height of 15.2m (50ft) into water, Next, they were taken aboard aircraft for flight testing, during which they were given a “feel of the air” and to determine whether they suffered from air sickness or not. Throughout the induction process instructors looked for courage, initiative and intelligence in recruits” (Ailsby, 2000, p. 34).

### Sources

1. Archival material  
FO 354/5a/68  
FO 954/11A/3869  
FO 954/11A/65  
FO 954/4A/304  
PREM 3/109

### References

- Addison, Tom (1980). “The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill”, Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Vol. 30, pp. 23-47.
- Barber, Laurie; Tonkin-Covell, John (1990). *Freyberg: Churchill's Salamander*. London: Hutchinson
- Beevor, Antony (2005). *The Second World War*, London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. [epub version]
- Bishop, Patrick (2010). *Battle of Britain: a day-by-day chronicle, 10 July 1940 to 31 October 1940*. London: Quercus
- Broadbent, Harvey (2005). *Gallipoli: The Fatal Shore*. Camberwell, VIC: Viking/Penguin.
- Carlyon, Les (2001). *Gallipoli*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan
- Churchill, Winston (1987) [1959]. *Memoirs of the Second World War*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company
- Collier, Richard (1968). *Eagle Day: The Battle of Britain, 6 August – 15 September 1940*. London: Pan Books

- Cowling, Maurice. *The Impact of Hitler: British Politics and British Policy, 1933–1940*, Cambridge University Press, 1975
- Dildy, Douglas C. (2010). *Dunkirk 1940: Operation Dynamo*. Oxford: Osprey
- Erickson, Edward J. (2015) [2010]. *Gallipoli: the Ottoman Campaign*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword
- Guard, Julie (2007). *Airborne: World War II Paratroopers in Combat*. Osprey.
- Hayden, Tom. “The 10 greatest controversies of Winston Churchill's career”, *BBC News Magazine*, 26 January 2015
- Haythornthwaite, Philip (2004) [1991]. *Gallipoli 1915: Frontal Assault on Turkey*. Campaign Series. London: Osprey
- Holland, James (2015). *The War in the West*, vol.1, Bantam Press - Transworld Publishers, London
- Hough, Richard; Richards, Denis (2007), *The Battle of Britain: The Greatest Air Battle of World War II*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co Inc
- Jackson, Julian (2003). *The Fall of France: The Nazi Invasion of 1940*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- James, Robert Rhodes (1974). *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897–1963*. London: Chelsea
- James, Robert Rhodes (1995) [1965]. *Gallipoli: A British Historian's View*. Parkville, VIC: Department of History, University of Melbourne
- Korda, Michael (2010), *With Wings Like Eagles: The Untold Story of the Battle of Britain*, New York: Harper Perennial
- Manchester, William; Reid, Paul (2012). *The Last Lion. Winston Spencer Churchill, Defender of the Realm, 1940-1965*. New York: Little, Brown and Company
- McLean, Thomas Owen (2016). *A selection from the war diaries of Dan Davin*. Unpublished MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Moorehead, Alan (1997) [1956]. *Gallipoli*. Ware: Wordsworth
- Pelling, Henry (1989) [1974]. *Winston Churchill*. London: Macmillan
- Peponas, Emmanouil (2019). *The Battle of Crete (1941). Maleme and its defenders from New Zealand*. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Ioannina [in Greek]
- Roskill, Stephen (2004) [1977]. *Churchill and the Admirals*. Barnsley: Pen&Sword
- Thompson, Julian (2011) [2008]. *Dunkirk: Retreat to Victory*. New York: Arcade
- Travers, Tim (2001). *Gallipoli 1915*. Stroud: Tempus