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Trajectories of Displacement:  
A Comparative Historical Analysis of the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Aytek Soner Alban

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Professor Thomas W. Gallant, Chair  
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2022



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University of California San Diego

2022

## DEDICATION

To *Melikecik*,  
who has always been there for me through thick and thin

&

To the loving memory of my parents,

Ayşe Alpan (1947-2018)

Atilla Alpan (1937-2020)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dissertation Approval Page .....	<i>iii</i>
Dedication.....	<i>iv</i>
Table of Contents.....	<i>v</i>
List of Figures.....	<i>vii</i>
List of Tables .....	<i>ix</i>
List of Graphs .....	<i>x</i>
Epigraph.....	<i>xi</i>
Acknowledgements.....	<i>xii</i>
Vita.....	<i>xv</i>
Abstract of the Dissertation .....	<i>xvi</i>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Before the storm.....	1
1.2 Lexilogia: Preliminary clarifications .....	38
1.2-1 Population Exchange: “What’s that? Donkeys are to be exchanged, oxen are to be exchanged!” .....	38
1.2-2 Refugee - <i>Mübadil</i> - <i>Πρόσφυγας</i> : What’s in a word? .....	46
1.3 Displacement as an attempt of disentanglement.....	57
1.4 The argument .....	60
1.5 Sources.....	64
1.6 Outline of the study.....	68
<b>Chapter 2: Historians’ histories or what is history good for?</b> .....	<b>74</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	74
2.2 Early interest and the formation of the canon.....	77
2.3 Early academic reaction.....	95
2.4 Greek national historiography.....	107
2.5 Turkish national historiography.....	123
2.6 Persistent old trends and historiographical anxiety .....	130
2.6-1 Greek Historiography .....	131
2.6-2 Turkish Historiography.....	149
2.7 Common Pasts .....	162
2.8 Broader Contexts .....	166
2.9 Conclusion .....	171
<b>Chapter 3: The Muslim/Turkish Case</b> .....	<b>178</b>

3.1 Historical setting: The “long” 1924 .....	178
3.2 Is silence golden? When the refugees protest .....	186
3.3 “Tout état, et rien au plat”: Problem of shelters.....	248
3.4 Collective petitions .....	271
<b>Chapter 4: The Greek/Orthodox Christian Case.....</b>	<b>290</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	290
4.2 An overview of the refugee issue in the interwar period .....	291
4.3 Pan-refugee congresses.....	319
4.4 “Μουκαδδερατημηζά χακίμ ολαλήμ” .....	350
4.4-1 Refugee newspapers and Προσφυγική Φωνή / Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί.....	351
4.4-2 “Τζουμχουριέτ ιτσούν ΝΑΙ αταράκ...”.....	361
4.5 The 1925 local election in Thessaloniki .....	377
4.6 Conclusion .....	405
<b>Chapter 5: From the Marginal Margins: “Karamanlides,” “Tourkokritikoi” and “hostage minorities” .....</b>	<b>411</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	411
5.2 Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece: “Τουρκίαδα κιαβούρ, Γιονανιστάνδα μουχατζίρ”.....	417
5.3 Greek-speaking Cretan refugees in Turkey: Dispossession and Exclusion.....	442
5.3-1 An example of dispossession: <i>Rethymniotes</i> .....	443
5.3-2 Cretan refugees: "Greek-speaking semi-infidels." .....	460
5.3-3 “Other” Cretan refugees: Outcasts of the nation .....	495
5.4 “This calamitous fire was indeed the dawn of a blessed morning” How was Tatavla ‘liberated’? .....	510
5.4-1 Trapped minorities as mutual hostages .....	511
5.4-2 Fires in Constantinople: A brief history .....	514
5.4-3 Fire as a political means .....	519
5.4-4 The Tatavla fire: “While we have the opportunity at present...”.....	523
5.4-5 Tatavla as a “lieu de memoire”.....	552
5.5 Conclusion .....	560
<b>Chapter 6: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>565</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>614</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1–1:</b> “Greeks piling to get their passports.....	35
<b>Figure 1–2:</b> “Greek immigrants being sent to Piraeus” .....	35
<b>Figure 2–1:</b> “The Tragedy of Greece” .....	80
<b>Figure 2–2:</b> A refugee camp in Athens in front of the Temple of Theseus, 1922.....	177
<b>Figure 2–3:</b> Refugees from Syria in a Roman archaeological site in Ankara, 2014.....	177
<b>Figure 3–1:</b> A cartoon published in the <i>Vazife</i> .....	210
<b>Figure 3–2:</b> The <i>Akbaba</i> criticized the debates in the assembly.....	245
<b>Figure 3–3:</b> “A middle ground not exist?” .....	259
<b>Figure 3–4:</b> “Praise be! They are all fighting fit!” .....	270
<b>Figure 4–1:</b> The stamp of the All-Refugee Conference.....	322
<b>Figure 4–2:</b> A ticket for the lottery to raise funds for refugees.....	323
<b>Figure 4–3:</b> The Second All-Refugee Congress.....	338
<b>Figure 4–4:</b> The All-Refugee congress.....	339
<b>Figure 4–5:</b> The Refugee press.....	354
<b>Figure 4–6:</b> Hariton S. Polatoglou.....	355
<b>Figure 4–7:</b> Polatoglou’s name on the ballot.....	357
<b>Figure 4–8:</b> Prominent figures of the refugee press.....	360
<b>Figure 4–9:</b> The headline of the <i>Prosfygiki Foni</i> , (March 12, 1924) .....	369
<b>Figure 4–10:</b> Minas Patrikios in the 1950s.....	385
<b>Figure 4–11:</b> Cartoon about “comrade Patrikios” .....	387
<b>Figure 4–12:</b> The map of the “red” municipalities and townships.....	399

<b>Figure 5–1:</b> Madame Hortense.....	447
<b>Figure 5–2:</b> The signature of Mehmet Kürdaki in Greek letters.....	460
<b>Figure 5–3:</b> Ali Uğurel’s copy of the <i>Erotokritos</i> .....	492
<b>Figure 5–4:</b> “Arab girls in Crete”.....	501
<b>Figure 5–5:</b> “My dear mother with her nanny - Crete”.....	503
<b>Figure 5–6:</b> A street in Chania named after Salis Chelidonakis.....	505
<b>Figure 5–7:</b> Salis' tomb in the Agios Loukas cemetery in Chania.....	505
<b>Figure 5–8:</b> Zeynep, a domestic servant.....	509
<b>Figure 5–9:</b> <i>Tulumbacis</i> of Tatavla.....	526
<b>Figure 5-10:</b> Mr. Kastelno, manager of the Terkos Water Company.....	531
<b>Figure 5-11:</b> “A scene from the once beautiful demolished neighborhood”.....	533
<b>Figure 5-12:</b> A cartoon about the fire in Tatavla.....	534
<b>Figure 5-13:</b> A cartoon about the fire in Tatavla.....	541
<b>Figure 6–1:</b> The <i>aide-mémoires</i> in Greece.....	580
<b>Figure 6–2:</b> The <i>Efimerida ton Syntakton</i> (September 14, 2016) .....	585
<b>Figure 6–3:</b> A sticker of the Antifascist Initiative of Nea Smyrni.....	586
<b>Figure 6–4:</b> A cartoon on the descendants of Balkan immigrants and natives Anatolians.....	592

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 2-1:</b> A summary of the early academic reaction.....	106
<b>Table 3-1:</b> The refugees who died at the shelters.....	268
<b>Table 4-1:</b> Number of refugees and natives in Greece.....	294
<b>Table 4-2:</b> Number of refugees to Greece by years.....	294
<b>Table 4-3:</b> Number of refugees to Greece by place of origin.....	294
<b>Table 4-4:</b> Suicides in Greece 1923-1934.....	297
<b>Table 4-5:</b> Ethnic composition of Greek Macedonia, 1912-1924.....	305
<b>Table 4-6:</b> Ethnic composition of Western Thrace, 1912-1924.....	307
<b>Table 4-7:</b> Ethnographic composition of Greece, 1928.....	307
<b>Table 4-8:</b> Refugee resettled in the major cities, 1928.....	308
<b>Table 4-9:</b> Refugee organizations in the 1926 parliamentary elections.....	336
<b>Table 4-10:</b> Refugee and Native Vote Nationwide, 1928-1936.....	401
<b>Table 4-11:</b> Vote distribution in Greater Athens and nationwide.....	402
<b>Table 5-1:</b> Turkish-speaking population in Greece,1928.....	419
<b>Table 5-2:</b> Real estate that belonged to Selianaki Ali Vafi.....	455
<b>Table 5-3:</b> Lawsuits launched against Cretans.....	474
<b>Table 6-1:</b> The lyrics of the <i>Rembetiko</i> 's soundtrack.....	597



LIST OF GRAPHS

**Graph 4–1:** Number of refugee unions founded in Thessaloniki, 1922-1934.....334

## EPIGRAPH

The absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it, I shall be content.

Thucydides, 1:22

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Trajectories of Displacement:  
A Comparative Historical Analysis of the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange

by

Aytek Soner Alpan

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California San Diego, 2022

Professor Thomas W. Gallant, Chair

This dissertation offers a critical and in-depth analysis of forced displacement as a means of nation-state building and its consequences by concentrating on the exchange of the Greek Orthodox population of Anatolia and Thrace for the Muslims from Greece in the early 1920s. The focus is on the refugee experience in the aftermath of the exchange, which fundamentally challenges the current perception of this seminal event and its adoption as a means to resolve conflicts. Since the idea of exchanging populations came to the negotiating table in Lausanne,

this method was presented as a legitimate and indispensable, albeit challenging and unpleasant, way of avoiding existing and future ethnic conflicts due to the presence of different ethnicities within the borders of a nation-state. Being the first compulsory population exchange carried out under the auspices of the League of Nations, the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange quickly became the *locus classicus* for such practices. It was praised for its successful consequences and presented as proof of the League of Nations' functionality and the relevant nation-states' state capacity.

After the introductory chapter on the history of exchanging populations, Chapter 2 concentrates on the historiography of the population exchange and how historiography played a notable role in presenting exchanging populations as a legitimate method of peace-making with the scholarship's intrinsic bias toward conflict resolution. The chapter reviews a bulk of intellectual production and problematizes the discipline of history itself. Chapter 3 is about the Turkish/Muslim refugees, who, in the existing literature, were considered to be displaced not only from their ancestral homelands but also from agency, and shows that they established their organizations to pursue their claims and collectively raised their voices. Chapter 4, "The Greek/Orthodox Christian Case," analyzes the political strategies that the Greek refugees developed in order 1) to defend their rights, 2) to solve their pressing problems, and 3) to respond to the anti-refugee prejudices of the native population. This chapter shows how their activities reorganized the political sphere in Greece with a careful analysis of the hitherto neglected refugee publications and press. Chapter 5 deals with the refugee sub-communities/groups even more marginalized: the Grecophone Cretans, including Afro-Cretans and refugees suffering from leprosy; the Turcophone Greeks in Greece; and the Greek community of Constantinople, who were exempted from the population exchange and became a



minority. In the concluding chapter, the findings of this dissertation are revisited, and based on these findings, how the current meanings of refugeehood in Greece and Turkey are negotiated, reformulated, and reproduced is discussed.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Είναι παιδιά πολλών ανθρώπων τα λόγια μας.  
Σπέρνονται γεννιούνται σαν τα βρέφη  
ριζώνουν θρέφονται με το αίμα.  
Όπως τα πεύκα  
κρατούνε τη μορφή του αγέρα  
ενώ ο αγέρας έφυγε, δέν είναι εκεί  
το ίδιο τα λόγια  
φυλάγουν τη μορφή του ανθρώπου  
κι ο άνθρωπος έφυγε, δεν είναι εκεί.<sup>1</sup>  
George Seferis

## 1.1 Before the storm

This dissertation presents a critical and in-depth analysis of forced displacement as a means of nation-state building and its consequences by concentrating on the exchange of the Greek Orthodox population of Asia Minor and Thrace for the Muslims from Greece in the early 1920s. The focus is on the refugee experience in the aftermath of the exchange, which, I believe, fundamentally challenges the current perception of this seminal event and its adoption as a means to resolve conflicts. Since the idea of exchanging populations came to the negotiating table in Lausanne, this method was presented as a legitimate and indispensable, albeit challenging and unpleasant, way of avoiding existing and future ethnic conflicts due to the presence of different ethnicities within the borders of a nation-state. Being the first compulsory population exchange ratified and carried out under the auspices of the League of Nations, the

---

<sup>1</sup> Our words are the children of many people. / They are sown, are born just like infants, / take root, are nourished with blood. / Just as pines/ they keep the shape of the wind / after the wind has gone and is no longer there / so words / retain the shape of a man / even the man has gone and is no longer there.

1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange quickly became the *locus classicus* for such practices and was praised for its successful consequences and presented as proof of the functionality of the League of Nations as well as the state-capacity of the relevant nation-states, particularly Greece. Winston S. Churchill's speech to the House of Commons on December 15, 1944, concisely epitomizes this approach that shaped the political and academic landscape:<sup>2</sup>

The disentanglement of populations which took place between Greece and Turkey after the last war was in many ways a success, and has produced friendly relations between Greece and Turkey ever since. That disentanglement, which at first seemed impossible of achievement, and about which it was said that it would strip Turkish life in Anatolia of so many necessary services, and that the extra population could never be assimilated or sustained by Greece having regard to its own area and population—I say that disentanglement solved problems which had before been the causes of immense friction, of wars and of rumours of wars.

Although the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange was not the first example of legally and internationally-mediated external displacement practices defined as exchanging populations, none of them required—at least in legal terms—the compulsory departure of targeted communities. The earliest and best-known examples of these practices took place during the protracted crises of the Ottoman Empire. This is not coincidental at all. On the contrary, confronted with the gradual yet accelerating crumbling of the empire, ethnically “unmixing” the population of the Ottoman Empire was seen as one of the solutions to the Eastern Question. As early as 1878, the *Westminster Review* refers to “ethnic unmixing” as a proposed yet almost unattainable solution:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Winston S. Churchill: “House of Commons Debate (December 15, 1944),” in *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons Official Report*, vol. 406 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1944), 1484.

<sup>3</sup> “Russia Abroad and at Home,” *The Westminster Review* 110, no. 217 (1878): 150–80.

In Turkey, races are so strangely intermingled that, in many cases, no clearly defined geographical limits can be assigned to them at all. Hence, even some of the most thorough-going enemies of the Ottoman Empire formerly advised the establishment of an “Oriental Confederacy,” rather than try the almost impossible experiment of unmixing Turks, Bulgars, Albanese, Greeks, and other tribes, from each other, over a vast extent of territory.

Although this politically and intellectually influential journal called the “unmixing” of the Ottoman subjects according to an ethnoreligious blueprint an impossible experiment, the “mission impossible” had already been unfolding. Even though some political programs aimed to solve the Eastern Question by restructuring the Ottoman Empire in favor of a federative or confederative administrative organization, shortly these programs failed spectacularly, and those supporting them, be it within the empire or abroad, abandoned the ship for one reason or another and, *mutatis mutandis*, ventured out into the “almost impossible experiment of ethnic unmixing.”<sup>4</sup> Even today, the practice does not seem to have been “successfully” completed. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century witnessed the inexorable rise of nationalisms within the Ottoman Empire. This development led to competing and potentially disruptive nationalist movements, on the one hand, and to the proliferation of demographic engineering methods adopted by these nationalisms as instruments of various state-building strategies and international politics, on the other.<sup>5</sup> These nationalist movements were accompanied by or even

---

<sup>4</sup> Although the use of the word “unmixing” in this context is usually attributed to Lord Curzon and to the negotiations for the population exchange at Lausanne, as seen from the *Westminster Review*, it had been employed in the British colonialist vocabulary for the region long before the peace talks at Lausanne in the 1920s. Michael R. Marrus and Robert Brubaker are among those claiming that Lord Curzon coined the term of unmixing of peoples. See Michael Robert Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees from the First World War Through the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), 41; Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 152.

<sup>5</sup> For pathological homogenization see Heather Rae, “State Formation and Pathological Homogenization,” in *State Identities and the Homogenisation of Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 14-54.

overlapped with the plans of the Great Powers about carving up the obsolete empire in one way or another. In due course, *Rumeli*, as the heart of the Ottoman Empire, was also at the center of this complex power play. This is, to some extent, how this region became a metaphor for fragmentation, chronic political instability, ethnic strife, and violence. *Rumeli*, or “Turkey in Europe,” as the Europeans called it, became the Balkans.<sup>6</sup> “In the ethnic kaleidoscope of the Balkans”, asserts Mazower, “the principle of nationality was a recipe for violence,”<sup>7</sup> and violence was a decisive component of promoting segregation and distinctiveness, as André Gerolymatos has argued.<sup>8</sup> The exclusive territorial claims of these nationalisms resulted in constant diplomatic and, more importantly, military clashes in the region. These were coupled with, if not partially caused by, the European Great Powers’ intervention in the domestic policies of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania. The political turmoil in the region resulted in swiftly and constantly changing maps and claims to sovereignty over the same territories. These alternating authorities severely tested the loyalties of the local populations inhabiting their newly acquired lands and persecuted those who failed to prove their loyalties or achieve the standards of the exclusive moral community called nation. Meanwhile, all rival states collaborated or sought collaboration with their “unredeemed cognates” who were supposed to be loyal to them but still resident in a foreign country. In other words, potential disloyalty was the main pretext. The ethnoreligious blueprint classified the denizens of the region in a binary opposition creating an Us vs. Them polarity. Those not

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<sup>6</sup> Vangelis Kechriotis, “Ρέκβιेम για την Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία,” in *Η συγκρότηση του ελληνικού κράτους. Διεθνές πλαίσιο, εξουσία και πολιτική τον 19ο αιώνα*, ed. K. Gardika et al. (Athens: Nefeli, 2008), 42.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 115.

<sup>8</sup> André Gerolymatos, *The Balkan Wars: Conquest, Revolution and Retribution from the Ottoman Era to the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 130.

considered assimilable were deemed a minority in contrast to the majority, which was the genuine representative of the national culture.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, these states considered themselves as the rightful owners of these territories and attempted to annex them. Such attempts at irredentism and political interference triggered more cruel forms of persecution and created new victims in the name of national causes, especially after the 1877-1878 Russo-Ottoman War. The conflict eventually resulted in the loss of more than a third of Ottoman lands, the death of 250,000 to 300,000 Muslims, and the displacement of about 1.5 million ('93 *Muhacereti*).<sup>10</sup> During the

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<sup>9</sup> Nikos Sigalas and Alexandre Toumarkine underline that in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman context the construction of national minorities is a historical phenomenon and contemporaneous with violent nation-building processes. In the Ottoman Empire, the circulation of the term minority (*ekalliyet*) basically started at about the same time of the persecutions and mass violence targeting the civilian populations in the nineteenth century and became widespread in the Second Constitutional Era. In Greece, on the other hand, this term (*μειονότητα*) became a part of political and legal lexicon with the Balkan wars and became prevalent after World War I. Nikos Sigalas and Alexandre Toumarkine, "Ingénierie démographique, génocide, nettoyage ethnique. Les paradigmes dominants pour l'étude de la violence sur les populations minoritaires en Turquie et dans les Balkans," *European Journal of Turkish Studies. Social Sciences on Contemporary Turkey*, no. 7 (September 23, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 75; See also Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 152-56. For a detailed and impartial account of this politicized subject see Alexandre Toumarkine, *Les migrations des populations musulmanes balkaniques en Anatolie (1876-1913)* (Istanbul: Les Éditions Isis, 1995), especially 27-78. For the reasons and results of the migratory movements in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century see also Giannis Glavinias, "Οι μουσουλμανικοί πληθυσμοί στην Ελλάδα (1912-1923): Αντιλήψεις και πρακτικές της ελληνικής διοίκησης, σχέσεις με χριστιανούς γηγενείς και πρόσφυγες" (Ph.D., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2008), 49-124. Sia Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία 19ος αι.-1919 - Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες: Από το μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο ελληνικό έθνος* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1998), 109-22. Stathis Pelagidis, "Μετακινήσεις Πληθυσμών Μετά Τους Βαλκανικούς Πολέμους - Η Περίπτωση Των Μου-σουλμάνων Της Μακεδονίας (1913-1914)," in *Πρακτικά ΙΖ' Πανελληνίου Ιστορικού Συνεδρίου Της Ελληνικής Ιστορικής Εταιρείας* (Thessaloniki: Elliniki Istoriki Etaireia, 1997), 317-32. It is also worth mentioning Justin McCarthy's controversial work, *Death and Exile*, on the selective description of ethnic cleansing of the Muslim peoples in the course of Ottoman disintegration. McCarthy estimates that between 1912 and 1926, 27 percent of the Muslim population of the Balkans (632,408) died and 812,771 Muslims from Ottoman Europe managed to survive as refuge. Of the 2,315,293 Muslims who had lived in the areas taken from the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans (excluding Albania), 1,445,179 (62 percent) were gone in this time period. Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995), 163. For a criticism of this book see for example James J. Reid, *Crisis of the Ottoman Empire: Prelude to Collapse 1839-1878* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000), 42-3. McCarthy's earlier works that paved the way for his *Death and Exile* came under sharp criticisms. For a convincing criticism against his discrediting Greek sources regarding the changing demography of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth century see Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Alexis Alexandris, "Ethnic Survival,

peace negotiations in Berlin in February 1878, the Ottoman envoy and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Safvet Pasha, proposed exchanging the Muslims inhabiting areas to the north of the Balkan mountain range and the non-Muslim who lived in the south.<sup>11</sup> This offer presaged later developments. Historian Eric D. Weitz underscores the importance of the Berlin Congress of 1878 in terms of the politics of demography:<sup>12</sup>

This was also the period when population politics became inscribed at the international level through the Berlin Congress of 1878, the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884-1885, and bilateral treaties involving population exchanges. Even though these developments did not yet have the encompassing character they would attain after World War I, the various agreements laid out the contours of a system that defined majorities and minorities in ethnic and national terms. Depending on the category to which they were assigned, populations could be protected, deported, or civilized.

In addition to the Balkans, due to ethnic strife and state-sponsored persecutions, the Muslims of Crete (starting as early as the 1820s but especially after 1896) and Cyprus (after

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Nationalism and Forced Migration: The Historical Demography of the Greek Community of Asia Minor at the Close of the Ottoman Era,” *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 5 (1985 1984): 9–44.

<sup>11</sup> Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, ed. Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, vol. 2, 3 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1987), 315; Nedim İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri, 1877-1890* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999), 14, 31-2; Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986), 202; Toumarkine, *Les migrations*, 50. In addition to legally-mediated “unmixing” practices there were some *de facto* population exchange practices accompanying the partition of the Ottoman Empire. McCarthy speculatively claims that in the 1827-1829 Russo-Ottoman and Russo-Persian wars a massive *de facto* population exchange took place after Russian expulsion of Muslims in the Erivan region. *Ibid.*, 30. Similarly, Thomas Gallant claims that especially after 1895 a *de facto* population exchange took place in Crete: On the one hand, there was the Muslim population of the island running away from the countryside to Rethymno and Hania, and on the other, Christian town dwellers fled the island to the mountain villages or to Greece. Thomas W. Gallant, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1768 to 1913: The Long Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 295-96.

<sup>12</sup> E.D. Weitz, “From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions,” *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1319.

1876), as well as Crimea and the northwest Caucasus (after 1856), migrated to the Ottoman Empire, particularly Anatolia. Karpata summarizes the demographic earthquake as such:<sup>13</sup>

The movement of about 500,000 Tatars from Crimea in 1856 was followed, after 1862, by that of over 2.5 million Caucasians, practically all of whom were Muslims. The migrants were settled in the Ottoman domains in the Balkans, Anatolia, northern Syria, and Iraq. Subsequently, in 1877–78, the Caucasians previously settled in the Balkans were moved again to Anatolia, along with some Jews and approximately one million native Muslim residents of the Balkans—mostly Turks. Then, from 1878 to 1914, some 2 million more Muslims immigrated to the Ottoman state; for example, there was a huge exodus of Muslims from Macedonia during the years 1911–13, not to speak of Cretans and other fringe groups. In addition, about one million nomads (Turkomans, Kurds, Arabs) were settled in Anatolia, Iraq, Syria, and even the Arabian Peninsula. Though united by their faith and Ottoman political culture, the new settlers were divided into diverse linguistic, ethnic, and tribal groups.

In this period, Anatolia, as Gerasimos Augustinos noted, became “a land full of human wandering” and turned into “a sea increasingly stirred up as it filled with Muslims.”<sup>14</sup> This was, however, just the start of a violent domino effect that beset the empire until its ultimate demise. The centripetal migratory movement of the Muslim refugees into the shrinking borders of the Ottoman Empire led to their resettlement in Anatolia, and this move slowly but surely redefined it as the heartland of the Empire and the site of the “Turks’ last stand,”<sup>15</sup> and that changed the already disturbed social dynamics of so-called coexistence in the peninsula.

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<sup>13</sup> Kemal H. Karpata, *The Politicization of Islam Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 184. See also *idem.*, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), chapter 4.

<sup>14</sup> Gerasimos Augustinos, *The Greeks of Asia Minor: Confession, Community, and Ethnicity in the Nineteenth Century* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1992), 22, 31. Europe was not different at all. Observers of the contemporary Europe underlined the fact that “a radical chaos” and “a vast nomadic movement” of displaced people held sway of the entire continent. Cited from Count di Valminuta by Nevzat Soguk, *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 115, 122-23.

<sup>15</sup> For the formation of Anatolianism see Erik Jan Zürcher, “How Europeans Adopted Anatolia and Created Turkey,” *European Review* 13, no. 3 (July 2005): 379–94; Nikiforos Diamandouros, Caglar Keyder, and Thalia Dragonas, eds., “The Role of Religion and Geography in Turkish Nationalism: The



The region's ethnoreligious hostilities and political rivalries culminated in the two Balkan wars (1912 and 1913). Although the military confrontations in both wars lasted a relatively short time, this did not change the fact that they and the ethnic strife that predated them created unparalleled waves of displaced people moving from one country to another. Due to the wars and persecutions preceding and following them, hundreds of thousands of civilians, especially Muslims, who constituted/would have constituted either the majority or a sizable minority within the Balkan nation-states, were ousted from their homelands.<sup>16</sup> This unprecedented demographic reorganization triggered a domino effect that created a vicious circle of persecution and retribution the would haunt the Balkans and Anatolia for years to come.

As the number of desperate Muslim refugees called *muhacirs* (lit. immigrants) pouring into the Ottoman Empire to escape persecution in Russia and the Balkans increased by leaps and bounds. The economic and cultural florescence experienced by non-Muslims in the urban centers of Anatolia or simply their existence with moderate living standards drew negative attention from the incoming population. Within the shrinking borders of the Ottoman Empire, the growing influence of Islamism and/or Turkism, which were not always competing and mutually exclusive ideologies, over the government<sup>17</sup> filled the ideological vacuum left by the stillborn Ottomanism.

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Case of Nurettin Topçu,” in *Spatial Conceptions of the Nation: Modernizing Geographies in Greece and Turkey* (London; New York: I.B.Tauris, 2010), 100-101.

<sup>16</sup> Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995). None of the parties of this violent pandemonium can be singled out as the victim or the perpetrator, as Kasaba rightfully underscores. Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2011), 126.

<sup>17</sup> Official Islamism of the late nineteenth century and the centrifugal religious revivalist movements in the Ottoman empire created political basis for nationalisms of various Muslim communities while forging unity. In other words, modern Islamism in its various forms served as a protonationalist ideology. For Islamism's protonationalist character see Nikki R. Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," *The Journal of Modern History* 41, no. 1 (1969): 17–28; for the transformation of a diverse religious community into a nation in the catalyst of Islamism see Kemal H Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam*, Chapter 13 and 14,

The influx of homeless, landless, and destitute populations permanently fleeing their ancestral homelands to escape ethnoreligious persecution constituted a recipe for disaster. In addition to the political tornado that swirled in and around the Ottoman Empire and eventually swept across Anatolia, the communal dynamics, societal codes, and local modes of intercommunality were shattered by the outsiders tossed up and scattered around Anatolia by this tornado. As seen in many testimonies from the period and studied then as well as in recent studies, in many cases, the *muhacirs*, particularly the Cretan and Circassian immigrants, are singled out as the main perpetrators of the crimes or discriminatory activities against the native non-Muslim populations. For instance, in his monumental work, *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Geography of Asia Minor), Pantelis M. Kontogiannis writes that the Cretan Muslims (*τουρκοκρητές*, *tourkokrites*, lit. Cretan Turks) were found to be disagreeable even by the native Muslim communities due to their hotheadedness. Furthermore, he describes Cretan Muslims as the most ruthless and wildest persecutors of the Greeks before and during the World War.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Emmanuel Emmanouilidis, one of the leading Greek deputies in the Ottoman Parliament, describes the living conditions of the Greek community as “deluged with hundreds and thousands of fanatical and famished refugees” (“κατακλυζόμενοι από εκατοντάδας και χιλιάδας φανατικών και πειναλέων προσφύγων”).<sup>19</sup> As mentioned earlier, public memory verifies such observations. The testimony of Daniel Savvidis of Axo, Nigdi (today *Hasaköy*, *Niğde*) captures this vividly:<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Pantelis M. Kontogiannis, *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens: Syllogos Pros Diadosin Ophelimon Vivlion, 1921), 63.

<sup>19</sup> Emmanuel Ch. Emmanouilidis, *Τα τελευταία έτη της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens: G. Kallergis, 1924), 61.

<sup>20</sup> Archive of Oral Tradition of the Center of Asia Minor Studies (hereinafter KMS), φ. ΚΠ 207. Ryan Gingeras discusses at length the role of the settlement policy of the Ottoman Empire and the immigrants and refugees of various origins (Albanians, Caucasians, Crimean Tatars and the Balkan refugees) in causing internecine ethnic strife see Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire 1912-1923* (Oxford University Press, 2009). There are other recent studies that

When the wealthy left Axo, they left comfortably. Things were still calm. We were tortured though. After the seniors had departed, we were left unorganized. Each one of us left when we saw a neighbor leaving. Then, the *muhacirs* (μουνχαζιρηδες, *muhazirides*) got even more barbaric, we left in masses. In the end one night all of us left, we loaded our donkeys or shouldered whatever each of us could carry. In the dark, in order to avoid the *muhacirs* robbing whatever we had left. [...] When the few rich had left, the *muhacirs* had not understood quite well what had been going on. Then once they understood that it was time for all (of us) to leave, then they rose up to rob our things. The government enlightened them: “Do whatever you want,” he told them “as long as nobody sees you.” First, they dicker with you over your things and then when you asked for your money, they beat you. The old Turks (*natives*) knew you and they got ashamed. They came and gave you something to buy your livestock. But even they bargain with you at night, because otherwise the *muhacirs* lurked them and seized whatever they took from you. [...] At the end of August, the commission sent us to Mersin. [...] In Mersin they grabbed our fezes from our heads. There, in Mersin, we ran across other *muhacirs*, Greek-speaking butcher Cretan Turks. They made us buy their meat at an exorbitant price, by force.

At this point, the Ottoman state found itself caught in a thorny dilemma. On the one hand, due to the volume, longevity, and political-ideological background of these consecutive migratory movements, the Ottoman state started to suffer from extreme political and financial distress. On the other hand, having been overwhelmed by the national uprisings in the Balkans, the Ottoman elite, including the Sultan himself, considered the incoming populations inherently more loyal and assumed that in times of conflict, they would be faithful to the empire. Official

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explore intercommunitarity in Anatolia and its colossal collapse which is dated after the Balkan Wars based on such refugee testimonies and shed light on the role of the outsiders, namely violence refugees, paramilitaries, politicians, etc., as culprits of communal violence at least in the popular perception. See Nicholas Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late-Ottoman Anatolia* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Renée Hirschon, “‘We Got on Well with the Turks’: Christian-Muslim Relations in Late Ottoman Times,” in *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F.W. Hasluck*, ed. David Shankland, vol. 2, 3 vols. (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2004), 326–43. Although the trend of neglecting local and imperial power relations and describing tolerance as *the modus operandi* of the Ottoman Empire and repainting the empire as an Elysium of peaceful coexistence and harmony in comparison to the post-Ottoman nation-states is almost as problematic as nationalist historiographies, such studies, which manage to defy the gravity of this prevailing trend through a nuanced reading of imperial political apparatus and social structure and good command of a combination of conventional as well as non-conventional sources, go beyond the nostalgia for the empire and provides us a rich picture of the dynamics of the passage from empire to nation-state.

documents support the argument that the population influx into Anatolia disorganized social ecologies of localities by exposing the desperate attempts of the imperial center to resettle incoming populations without fundamentally disturbing the local equilibrium, which could have resulted in rebellions. The state's goal was to ensure gradual reinforcement of the dominant Islamic character of the Anatolian demography.<sup>21</sup> It was not only the Ottoman Empire that could not escape from this predicament. At the same time, all post-Ottoman countries in the Balkans faced the choice between homogenizing their population and managing the refugee influx. Among other dynamics, massive and uncontrolled migratory movements and limited state capacity to manage them were complicating factors in the crisis of the empire and the transition from the "Ottoman order of things" to the "national order of things."<sup>22</sup> In the face of this problem, it was apparent that unilateral solutions were doomed to fail.

For this reason, through new technologies, the Ottoman Empire, the states in the region, the Western powers, and international institutions under the influence of the West tried to regulate destabilizing, legally unmediated migratory movements to deal with these movements. Exchanging populations was supposedly the efficacious remedy for the malady. Instead of the uncontrolled, conflict-induced migration of terrorized populations, former belligerents would agree upon the exchange of people. As the result of this reasoning, the exchange of populations became a part of the repertoire of regional dispute resolution. For example, on June 21, 1913,

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<sup>21</sup> See, for instance, Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*; Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği, 1913-1918* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2008). See also Sema Erder, *Zorla Yerleştirmeden Yerinden Etmeye: Türkiye'de Değişen İskân Politikaları* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2018).

<sup>22</sup> Sarah F. Green develops the notion of "Ottoman order of things" in reference to Liisa Malkki's "national order of things" that conjures up Foucauldian buzzword "order of things." For Green's analysis see Sarah Green, "Performing Border in the Aegean," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 3, no. 2 (2010): 267. For Liisa Malkki's national order of things see Liisa Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 37.

while defending his Balkan wars strategy, Eleftherios Venizelos referred to population exchange as one of the possible policies that could have been adopted before the Balkan war: “There is enough room for all the peoples of the East, there is also a way to achieve a true distribution according to the just views of each people after an exchange of populations for geographical reasons for a comfortable life in the East and the prosperity of the East.”<sup>23</sup>

Having become a key concept of the political and diplomatic discourse, exchanging minority populations was soon employed in the settlement of the Balkan wars. The Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria made the first official attempt at exchanging populations in 1913.

The Treaty of Constantinople, signed between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire on September 29, 1913, called for a “voluntary reciprocal exchange of the Bulgarian and Muslim populations and properties within the zone not exceeding fifteen kilometers along the newly demarcated Bulgaro-Ottoman border.”<sup>24</sup> According to the treaty, the exchange would include entire villages. The determination of compensation for rural and urban properties would be under the supervision of both governments along with the participation of the elders of the villages. Finally, a mixed commission would be appointed by the two governments to resolve any potential disagreements and supervise the reciprocal emigration.<sup>25</sup> According to Stephen P.

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<sup>23</sup> *Embros*, June 23, 1913. In Greece until March 10, 1923 the dates were recorded according to the traditional Julian calendar also known as the old calendar. For the twentieth century the difference between the traditional Julian calendar and the modern Gregorian calendar is 13 days and the former is behind the latter.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of this exchange attempt see Stelios Sfériadès, *L'Échange des Populations* (Paris: Hachette, 1929), 46-8. It should be underlined that Sfériadès was an “outlier” in terms of the intellectual trend regarding population exchange as a method of minority protection and conflict resolution. He was uncompromisingly against exchanging populations and claimed that it was the violation of basic human rights.

<sup>25</sup> Coleman Phillipson, *Termination of War and Treaties of Peace* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1916), 447.

Ladas, in effect, this agreement was to affirm a *fait accompli*.<sup>26</sup> The Mixed Commission held its first meeting at Edirne on November 15, 1913 to determine the stipulations of the exchange and signed a convention regarding the population and property exchange. The commission met again on January 19, 1914 to discuss once more the practicalities of the transfer and property compensations.<sup>27</sup> Although the commission made headway regarding the method of appraisal and liquidation of properties in its following meetings in May 1914 and continued to work until November 1914, the entrance of the Ottoman Empire to World War I halted the commission's work. It is, nonetheless, possible to say that the Ottoman administration used this agreement as a pretext to displace the Bulgarian population not only living in this twenty-kilometer-zone but also living in Anatolia.<sup>28</sup> The exchange planned to cover 50,000 people from both sides. This was a Janus-faced agreement. On the one hand, with this agreement the Ottoman and Bulgarian states, as the two defeated parties of the Balkan wars, came to terms on extensive "minority" rights regarding the Muslims in Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire. Viewed this way, the agreement shows that "on a regional level, compromise in favor of minorities was possible, contradicting the stereotypical view—as widely held then as now—of inherently aggressive Balkan states."<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, the agreement is regarded as the first attempt for

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<sup>26</sup> S. P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 19. See also Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece* (Mouton, 1962), 54-55. Based on a similar reasoning, Stelios Séfériadès refuses to consider this as population exchange. He also adds that the agreement was never ratified by the Bulgarian Chamber of Deputies; therefore, carried the value of an international agreement, despite the Turkish thesis. Séfériadès, *L'Échange*, 48.

<sup>27</sup> For the convention signed in November 1913 and its re-evaluation by the Mixed Commission see BCA, 272..0.0.12 — 35.1..9. The zone subject to the population exchange was extended to twenty kilometers in November 1913.

<sup>28</sup> Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, 190.

<sup>29</sup> Philipp Ther, *The Dark Side of Nation-States: Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016), 63.

an internationally sanctioned ethnic cleansing that aimed to homogenize the ethnically mixed population of the regions agreed to in the Bulgaro-Turkish convention of the population exchange through forced displacement. Although the exchange would have been on voluntary basis according to the Bulgaro-Turkish convention, the notion of exchanging populations voluntarily is merely an oxymoron. Because, as seen in this particular exchange process and later examples of voluntary population exchanges, once a population exchange —strictly voluntary on paper— was agreed on, the states deprived the targeted populations of citizenship and civil rights, banned their languages, confiscate their properties or restricted their religious rights in order to encourage “voluntary” departures.

At the same time, the Ottoman and Greek administrations started to negotiate the terms of a population exchange in order to regulate “spontaneous” migration. Tension between Greece and the Ottoman Empire did not ease after the Balkan wars due to the uncertainties regarding the terms of the basic conditions of peace. There were two major issues: The sovereignty over the Aegean islands and the Macedonian issue. Greece almost doubled in size and took possession of all the Aegean islands except for the Dodecanese, which the Treaty of Ouchy (October 18, 1912) ceded to Italy. The Ottoman government regarded the expansion of the Greek state after the Balkan wars as a grave security threat. Neither the Treaty of London (May 30, 1913) nor the Treaty of Athens (November 14, 1913) completely resolved the issue of sovereignty over the islands. In addition to the Aegean issue, the Ottoman administration got worked up over the expansion of Greece into Thrace. In the view of the imperial administration, the solution was a demographic “correction.” In other words, the Ottoman subjects of Greek origin populating the Aegean coast adjacent to the islands and Eastern Thrace had to be removed and replaced by Muslims. This could also be considered and justified as a retaliation for the expulsion of the

Muslim population in Macedonia. This was the second major dynamic that, as mentioned above, generated a constant influx of people from Greece.

The Muslim population sought refuge within the shrinking borders of the Ottoman Empire to avoid the horrors of the policy of “total extermination” by the Balkan states, and particularly Greece.<sup>30</sup> The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) used the population escaping from torture, rape, forced displacements, and massacres as a pretext that provided them with the leverage needed to solve its security problem. While justifying their actions by evoking the tragedy of the Balkan refugees and the sociopolitical and economic trauma created by the Balkan wars, the CUP government terrorized Christians, by taking economic measures along with organizing police/paramilitary harassment and disseminating rumors to provoke anxiety among the Muslims and non-Muslims. As a first step the CUP initiated a boycott of businesses and goods of Ottoman Greeks. Although there were previous ethnoreligious boycotts, this was the first organized by the Ottoman government.<sup>31</sup> According to officials, the boycott was a necessary defensive measure to deal with the security situation created by the Balkan wars. Arguably the worst debacle ever suffered by the Ottoman army was the result of the fund drives organized by the Ottoman Greeks. Particularly, the acquisition of the armored cruiser “Averof” (purchased by the Greek navy in 1910) became a symbol of Greek treason. Because, as Ottoman

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<sup>30</sup> Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars* (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914), 201-202.

<sup>31</sup> In 1907 nationalist Greeks called on a boycott on Exarchist/Bulgarian population and businesses in Thessaloniki. According to Mark Mazower, this was the first ethnoreligious boycott and then spread to other communities: Muslim/Jewish boycott of Austrian products after the Austria-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia in 1908, Hellenic goods and businesses after the uprising in Crete in 1910 —mainly targeting Greece not the Greek citizens of the Empire at least in the official discourse—, and Italian businesses and goods in 1911. Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 254.



officials predicted in 1910,<sup>32</sup> the “Averof” changed fundamentally the balance of power in the Aegean. On its own, the Greek flagship practically bottled up the Ottoman fleet in the Dardanelles, leaving the Aegean islands unprotected and the Ottoman Empire unable to deploy troops to Thessaloniki front by sea.<sup>33</sup> The defeat of the Ottoman navy and the role of the “Averof” in it was not only utilized to justify an arms race with Greece but it also escalated the pressure on non-Muslim in the empire. The CUP’s “Averof” demagogy was based on a false claim that a country as small as Greece was only able to buy the battleship thanks to the donations of the Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. The moment that the “Averof” joined the Greek navy, this argument went into the circulation.<sup>34</sup>

In the June 1910 issue of the *Donanma Mecmuası* (Navy Journal) the “Averof” was presented as a perfect example of the importance of benefactors and fund raising activities for the navy and underlined that the largest financial donation that made it possible for the Greek state to buy the battleship came from an Ottoman Greek.<sup>35</sup> After the defeat of Ottoman forces in

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<sup>32</sup> During June and July 1910, there were various official correspondence between different levels of Ottoman bureaucracy regarding the superiority of the Greek navy in the Aegean Sea after the launch of the Averof and measures that had to be taken by the Ottoman army. See BOA, A.DVN.MKL., 89-27 [July 26, 1910] especially pg. 1 and 2.

<sup>33</sup> For the role of Averof in the Balkan wars John C. Carr, *RHNS Averof - Thunder in the Aegean* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword, 2014), see especially “Chapter 5: The ship that won a war” and Zisis Fotakis, *Greek Naval Strategy and Policy, 1910-1919* (London: Routledge, 2012), 35-68. For the Averof in Ottoman popular and political discourse see Zafer Toprak, “İslâm ve İktisat: 1913-1914 Müslüman Boykotajı,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 29/30 (Summer 1985): 181, 184; idem., “Balkan Yenilgisi, Kimlik Sorunu ve Averof Zırhlısı,” in *Osmanlı Donanmasının Seyir Defteri | The Logbook of the Ottoman Navy*, ed. Ekrem Işın (İstanbul: Pera Müzesi, 2009), 77-87; Dogan Cetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2013), 168-69.

<sup>34</sup> The launch of the Averof took place in Livorno on March 12, 1910.

<sup>35</sup> “Girid Bizim Hayatımız Demektir,” *Donanma Mecmuası*, no. 4 (June 1910): 376. In the Navy Journal, the Averof was a recurrent theme sometimes for technical reasons but usually as a proof of how treacherous the Ottoman Greeks were or to emphasize the importance of donating money to the navy. See for example *Donanma Mecmuası*, no. 43-44 (September-October 1913), 902; no. 53-5 (July 27, 1914), 67; no. 54 (August 3, 1914), 96; no. 61 (September 28, 1914) 2-3; no. 66 (November 2, 1914), 3. This was also the case for other periodicals. *Şehbal (the longest feather of a bird's wing)*, a periodical known

the Balkan wars, the argument concerning the donations of the Ottoman Greeks to Greece was developed further and popularized, leading to another anti-Greek boycott. In the pamphlets distributed to publicize the semi-official ban on commercial activities with the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire, it was explicitly and recurrently emphasized that Georgios Averof, who gave the largest donation for the purchase of the cruiser, was an Ottoman Greek citizen from Görice (Korçë). One of those pamphlets, *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtuluş Yolu* (Road to Liberation for Muslims), perfectly captures the essence of this argument and the boycott's relevance to the "Averof":<sup>36</sup>

"Ladies... Gentlemen... Do you know who lost those beautiful cities and raised the enemy's flag over our own lands? With a great sadness I would say: Us. Yes, we ourselves did it! Because we couldn't leave the Dardanelles. Because we couldn't transport reinforcements to Thessaloniki and the islands. Because we did not have to strength to resist the Greek. Because, there was the "Averof" right in front of us. [...] Alas, if we had had a battleship that counterbalanced the "Averof", then the situation would have been so different. [...] Yes, if it is up to that tiny, lazy and broke Greek government itself, it is impossible for them to purchase such battleships. Because, they cannot find the money. But it was not the government that purchased the ship but the nation! And it is not only the battleship. Whenever large sums of money are needed for anything it is the nation that defrays the expenses. You see, the person who bought the cruiser "Averof" is an Ottoman Greek called Averof. What tears our hearts asunder is that Averof is not from Greece (*Yunanlı değil*) but one of our Ottoman Greek compatriots (*Rum vatandaşımız*) from Görice.... Yes, an Ottoman Greek compatriot... He brought a great victory to Greece and make Greece twice, more than twice as large. We see them everyday or even shake their hands and under our nose they keep exert themselves day and night for the purpose of donating their wealth to the Greek government tomorrow or after their death. Who knows how many more such compatriots we have!"

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for its usage of visual elements like the *Navy Journal*, repeatedly refers to the Averof in its pages with the photographs of this battleship. For instance, on March 14, 1913 *Şehbal* publishes two photographs of the Averof and describes it as the only worthwhile battleship of the Greek Navy ("Yunan Donanması'nın kıymet-i harbiyeyi hâiz sefine-i yegânesi"). On November 28, 1913 the same magazine publishes a photograph of the Averof and refers to the battleship as the "locus of the catastrophe" ("*mihver-i felaket*").

<sup>36</sup> Ahmet Nedim Servet [Tör], *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtuluş Yolu* (n.d.: n.d., 1329 [1913]), 7-9.

The boycott was accompanied both by systematic persecution of Ottoman Greeks and by rumors that the government was considering a forced displacement (*tehcir*) of them. The speculation disseminated by pro-government newspapers created an atmosphere of panic, as was intended. The first systematic persecutions, such as interruption of economic — including agricultural— activities, ill treatment, forced evacuations, attacks by irregulars, imprisonment on false accusations, started at the end of 1913. In parallel with the boycotts and the settlement of Muslim refugees in Greek villages, indiscriminate violence against Ottoman Greeks erupted in Eastern Thrace. This was followed by the expansion of terror to the other coastal cities where a sizable Orthodox population lived. These factors quickly induced a mass flight of the Greek population from Thrace as well as the Marmara and Aegean regions. Ottoman estimates regarding the number of Ottoman Greeks who were forced to leave Eastern Thrace and the coastal cities of the Aegean region was between approximately 120.000 and 150.000.<sup>37</sup> The

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<sup>37</sup> As soon as demography, enumeration/censuses and minority - majority dichotomy were (re-)invented as instruments of nationalism to impose very particular political subjectivities upon individuals as well as communities in the nineteenth-century Europe, statistics became a contested terrain on which nationalist struggles were waged. Nation-states (or “nationalizing” states) had military and diplomatic confrontations over statistics and they utilized this discipline as a means to support their national causes and resolve these conflicts in favor of themselves. Hence, statistical data provided by nation-states for one reason or another reflected their nationalist vision. The “ideological” subjectivity of the statistical data was also coupled with the “scientific” subjectivity of methods and criteria utilized in collecting and gathering the data together. Having said that, the statistical data provided by the Greek and Ottoman sources regarding the Ottoman Greeks driven out from their homelands in 1914 unexpectedly do not show a divergence. July 1, 1914, the Greek deputies in the Ottoman Parliament tabled a parliamentary question on the reasons of the departure of the Greek Ottoman citizens addressing particularly Talat Pasha, Minister of the Interior, who had returned from his inspection tours of the situation in the region of Thrace as well as Aegean and Marmara regions. The question came upon the floor of the parliament on July 6, 1914. Speaking on behalf of the Greek deputies, Emmanouil Emmanouilidis, deputy of the vilayet of Aydın, underlined that the number of the Greeks driven out of the Ottoman Empire reached to 150,000. Emmanouilidis in his book refers to the statistics of the Patriarchate and estimates this number around 120.000. Emmanouil Ch. Emmanouilidis, *Ta Τελευταία Έτη Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens: G. Kallergis, 1924), 62. For similar statistics see A. A. Pallis, “Exchange of Populations in the Balkans,” *The Nineteenth Century and After: A Monthly Review* 47, no. March (1925): 378; Yannis G. Mourellos, “The 1914 Persecutions and the First Attempt at an Exchange of Minorities between Greece and Turkey,” *Balkan Studies* 26, no. 2 (1985): 405. For the statistics compiled by the Patriarchate see René Puaux, *La déportation et le rapatriement des Grecs en Turquie* (Paris : Bulletin Hellénique, 1919), 6-8. Mahmud

departure of Ottoman Greeks caused heated discussions in parliament, especially when Aydın's deputy, Emmanouil Emmanouilidis, representing the Ottoman Greek deputies, delivered a speech on the parliamentary question regarding the deportation and the measures taken by parliament.<sup>38</sup> These discussions and the Ottomanist attitude toward the Greek deputies echoed beyond the parliamentary rostrum. A passage from pro-CUP journalist Mehmed Şeref Bey's pamphlet *Edirne Vilayeti'nden Rumlar Niçin Gitmek İstiyorlar - İzmir Mebusu Emanüelidi Efendi'ye* (Why the Ottoman Greeks want to leave the Vilayet of Edirne - [A reply] To Deputy of İzmir Emmanouilidis Efendi) was indicative of the opinion of CUP intellectuals:<sup>39</sup>

Wherever you go with an Ottoman Greek majority, even though this place is under the control of the Turkish government, you see that Hellenism reigns there. When you enter the house of any Ottoman Greek, you see signboards that attack and insult the Turk (...) and celebrate and honor the Greek. After all, Hellenism, which carries an essence of rebellious to our country's law, can just keep following the same path. But the Turk is naturally free in his actions. My dear, (...) just like your commitment to and eagerness for the development of your nationality and seeing the Greek flag over the minarets of Hagia Sophia, we are desirous to take back Athens and Thessaloniki. (...) It is for sure that the government has to keep a relationship with you and treat you with justice and equality but it cannot and would not force me to do business with a man that killed my father, my mother, because I would never follow this order and my Turkish spirit will educate the young generation in a way foster an enmity towards the Ottoman Greeks. And since it is indispensable that these two elements, Turkish and Greek elements, will

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Celâl Bey [Bayar], general secretary of the CUP's İzmir branch and third president the Republic of Turkey, wrote in his memoirs that only from İzmir and its environs 130,000 Greeks were forced to leave and go to Greece. Mahmud Celâl Bey was a member of the three-person secret committee in charge of the deportation of Greeks. Celâl Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım: Milli Mücadele'ye Giriş*, vol. 5, 8 vols. (İstanbul: Sabah, 1997), 100; For Mahmud Celâl Bey's role in the deportations see Nurdoğan Taçalan, *Ege'de Kurtuluş Savaşı Başlarken* (n.d.: Milliyet Yayınları, 1970), 72. Halil Bey [Menteşe], who was known to be the "quadrumvir" of the CUP, writes in his memoir that in 1914 Talat was determined to "cleanse" the country from the possible fifth column members inhabiting the society and as a result the number of the Greeks driven out of the same region reached to 200,000. Halil Mentşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi Reisi Halil Mentşe'nin Anıları* (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1986), 165-66.

<sup>38</sup> For example, see the minutes of the sittings of the Chamber of Deputies on June 5, 1914 and June 23, 1914. Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, [Minutes of Proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies, (MMZC, hereinafter)], *Term III*, Volume 1, Session 1, 17th Meeting, June 5, 1914, 364-74 and III/1 - 26, June 23, 1914, 606-14.

<sup>39</sup> Mehmed Şeref, *Edirne Vilayetinden Rumlar Niçin Gitmek İstiyorlar* (Edirne: Sanayi Mektebi Matbaası, 1914), 20-22.

jump down each other's throat and one will exterminate the other in the future, I have to teach whatever it takes to guarantee the victory of the Turk to my nation, to the children of my nation...

Meanwhile, the influx of the Muslim refugees still went on.<sup>40</sup> The Muslim community in Greece, particularly in Greek Macedonia, was also living through harassment and violence.<sup>41</sup> After numerous reciprocal diplomatic exchanges and denunciations regarding the involuntary displacement of people, the crisis between Greece and the Ottoman Empire escalated to the brink of a war. Under these circumstances, Galip Kemali Bey, who was then the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire to the Kingdom, gave Venizelos his personal opinion that an exchange of the Muslim population and the Greek population of İzmir was desirable.<sup>42</sup> After the correspondence between Galip Kemali Bey and Venizelos in May 1914, the Ottoman Empire and the Greek

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<sup>40</sup> BOA, HR.SYS., 2035-6 [August 3, 1914]. It is estimated that in the early months of 1914 more than 50,000 Balkan refugees arrived in the Ottoman Empire mostly from Greece. Mourellos, op. cit., 405.

<sup>41</sup> Glavinias, “Οι μουσουλμανικοί πληθυσμοί στην Ελλάδα,” 74-78.

<sup>42</sup> “*En désespoir de cause, je proposais à M. Vénizélos, comme opinion personnelle, un échange des populations musulmanes de Macédoine con-tre les Grecs de Thrace, échange que plus tard nous étendions (sic), d’un com-mun accord, aux Grecs du Valayet (sic) de Smyrne où cet élément était en très grande minorité.*” Ghalib Kemaly, *Le Martyre d’un peuple : Les Turcs demandent une paix juste, prompte et durable* (Rome, 1919), 13. In the sequel of *Le Martyr d’un peuple, Assassinat d’un peuple*, Galip Kemali Bey refers to the 1914 population exchange agreement in a footnote in order to prove that in 1914 Venizelos agreed upon the fact that Smyrna was a Turkish city in terms of its demographic structure by accepting the exchange proposal. “It is useful to know that in the summer of 1914 Mr. Venizelos realized the necessity of populating Macedonia and of saving the Greek minority established in Smyrna from just reprisals that had manifested themselves as parallel to the excesses the Muslims were subject to in Macedonia, and signed with me an agreement on an exchange of the Muslim and Greek populations.” Ghalib Kemaly, *Assassinat d’un peuple : suite au “Martyre d’un peuple”* (Rome : Imprimerie Riccardo Garroni, 1921), 20, see also 30. It is important to indicate that this footnote was not included in the Turkish edition of the book, which was published thirty-seven years after Galip Kemali Bey had written it in Rome. See Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, *Yok Edilmek İstenen Millet* (İstanbul: Selek Yayınları, 1957), 26. In his memoirs, though, Söylemezoğlu repeats this claim. Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıraları - Atina sefareti, 1913-1916*. (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1946), 101. Yet in other sources there are different claims regarding who first offered the population exchange in 1914 as a solution to the tensions between Greece and Turkey: For instance, Alexander A. Pallis, who was one of the most authoritative names and the general secretary of the Committee for Refugee Care (Επιτροπή Περίθαλψης Προσφύγων) in Macedonia in 1914-1915, claims it was Venizelos, who first suggested the exchange in 1914. Pallis, “Exchange of Populations in the Balkans,” 378.

Kingdom agreed in principle to a voluntary exchange of the Greeks in the “Vilayet of İzmir” and the Muslim population inhabiting Macedonia and Epirus.<sup>43</sup> On this basis a sequence of negotiations between the two states commenced and heated negotiations went on, mostly concentrating on the issues concerning the appraisal and liquidation of properties.<sup>44</sup> A mixed commission was formed to do a feasibility study and to execute the exchange. The agreement between the Greek and Ottoman governments on a population exchange was welcomed by the Ottoman press. For instance, *Tanin*, the chief newspaper of the CUP, published an article titled “the Exchange of Muslim and Ottoman Greek Populations” (*İslam ve Rum Ahalinin Mübadelesi*) on June 26, 1914. In this article, the newspaper praised the agreement on exchanging populations provided that Athens had no ulterior motive. Population exchanges, said in the article, could not be seen as a necessary consequence of wars or upheavals provoked by wars. But the exchange under consideration was the consequence of the “unnatural situation” created by the Ottoman-Greek war and this “unnatural situation” could only be resolved by exchanging populations. According to *Tanin*, the exchange would provide not only an effective solution for one of the sharpest bones of contention in the future; but also, would be a test of whether or not each was serious or if they had an ulterior motive.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> On May 18, 1914 Galip Kemali Bey sent a letter to Venizelos stating that the Sublime Port was in favor of the fast execution of the population exchange. On May 22, Venizelos responded to Galip Kemali Bey’s letter saying the Greek government approached to his proposal sympathetically under the condition that the persecutions targeting the Greek population in the Ottoman Empire came to an end. Venizelos also underlined in his initial response to the proposal on the exchange of populations that the exchange would take place on voluntary basis and could be extended, as Said Halim Paşa insinuated to the Greek ambassador, to Thrace. For Galip Kemali Bey’s letter to Venizelos see BOA, HR.SYS., 2035-2, 1-5. Venizelos’ aforementioned letter to Galip Kemali Bey was also published by Yannis Mourellos. See Mourellos, “The 1914 Persecutions,” 412–13.

<sup>44</sup> For the details of the negotiations see Mourellos, “The 1914 Persecutions,” 394-410 and Nurten Çetin, “1914 Osmanlı-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi Girişimi,” *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 24 (2010): 155–65.

<sup>45</sup> “Vâkıâ her harbin çalkantısı mutlaka bir mübadele cereyanına kapı açmak, her çalkantıdan sonra mutlaka bir ameliye-yi terassübiye başlamak lazım değilse de Osmanlı - Yunan harbinin tevliid ettiği hal-i

The decision regarding a population exchange created an uproar among the Greek refugees and the Greek population in Anatolia and Thrace. The refugees in Greece started petitioning Galip Kemali Bey, Venizelos, the Sublime Porte, the Greek Parliament, and the Great Powers to express their disappointment with the decision to exchange populations. In one letter addressing Galip Kemali Bey by the representatives of the refugees from the Gulf of Edremit, Bergama, Dikili, Phocaea “and etc. etc.” under the leadership of Archimandrite Chrysostomos, such a population exchange is described as “a solution... contrary to all the laws of humanity and of reason.”<sup>46</sup> The refugees underscored the fact that they were not serfs but free Ottoman citizens whose rights were safeguarded by international law as well as the Ottoman constitution, which guaranteed equality, liberty and justice for all Ottomans. The petition also stressed that the refugees were the victims of painful events and despite that they were willing to return to their homes and live together with their “Muslim brothers.” They also wanted Galip Kemali Bey to warn the Ottoman government regarding their strong desire to go back to their fatherlands “by all

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gayr-i tabii ancak Rumların Yunanistan tarafında, İslamların da Türkiye tarafında birikmeleri ile izale olunabileceğini etmemek kabil değildir. Herhalde şurası muhakkak ki bugün Yunanistan idaresine geçen arazide İslamlar için yaşamak imkanı kalmamıştır; Yunanlılar gerek siyasiyeten, gerek iktisaden İslamlar aleyhine bir harb açtılar, bu harb resmen ve alelen görülme bile hakikatte mevcudiyeti inkar olunamaz. Anadolu’da ve bilhassa sahil taraflarında yaşayan Rumlara gelince vâkıâ bunlar kendilerinden hükümetin insılab-ı emniyetini müstelzim âmâl ve hissiyat beslemekte, hiçbir memlekette müsamaha ile görülemeyecek bir takım tesirata kapılmakta oldukları malumdur. (...) İşte İslam ve Rum Ahalinin mübadelesi tasavvuruna kuvvet verdiren sebepler bunlardır. Mübadele meselesi bir hal-i gayr-i tabiinin netice-i zarurisi add olunmak, tarafeyn bu meseleyi hulus-i niyetle tedkik etmek, bu sayede âtfin en mühim vesail-i nizadan biri ortadan kalkmış olacağı kanaatiyle işe girişmek esas hareket olursa hem iyi bir şey yapılmış, hem de iyiliğe doğru büyük bir hatve atılmış olur. Binaenaleyh biz musavvat ve adaletten ayrılmamak şartıyla bu babda lazım gelen fedakarlığı ihtiyare hazırız. Eğer dediğimiz gibi İstanbul ile Atina arasındaki ihtilaf sırf muhacerat meselesinden tevellüd etmiş ise ve eğer bu vesile ile bir çiban başı koparılmak isteniliyor ise bu teklif etrafında tutulacak meslek tarafeynin hüsn-i niyetine de bir miyar olur.” *Tanin*, June 26, 1914.

<sup>46</sup> In their letter to Venizelos they reminded Venizelos about their rights as citizens of the Ottoman Empire and a population exchange would most certainly violate their human and constitutional rights. For the letters of the representatives of the refugees from the Gulf of Edremit, Bergama, Dikili, Phocaea: Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 359-79/80/81 also 10-131.

possible means,” and under these circumstances a decision of exchanging populations would not contribute to the restoration of tranquility in the regions that so greatly needed it.

The Asia Minor Greeks who took refuge in Mytilini, for example, compiled documents regarding their efforts to deter the Ottoman and Greek governments from executing the population exchange. In the forward of this compilation, they clearly stated their view that the exchange was simply a continuation of the persecutions:<sup>47</sup>

A worse and more sinister situation [than that in Thrace] was created in the Hellenic portion of Asia Minor. In a few days' time they [the Greeks of Asia Minor] were expelled from their homes and today they are wandering throughout Free Greece homeless and penniless, deprived of bread or sustenance. The persecutions are continuing. Anything that was not dared in the previous grim century, is being committed in a frenzy in the twentieth century while civilized Europe is observing indifferently, in front of the eyes of Free Greece, which was founded and expanded with the blood and sacrifices of both Thrace and Asia Minor. Greece contributes to the execution of these incessant persecutions with the notorious method of exchanging populations and properties. *Nous molesterons les populations*, said the representative of the Ottoman state in Athens. Until now the Greek nation has been observing quietly and indifferently.

But it was not the steps taken by the Greeks of Asia Minor and Thrace that prevented Greece and the Ottoman Empire from finalizing the negotiations but rather it was World War I. With the Ottoman Empire's entry into the war on October 29, 1914 the negotiations between the Kingdom and the Empire ceased. Yet the refugees in Greece seemed to be so uncomfortable that on January 15, 1922 the potentially effected population's representatives in Athens issued a declaration expressing once again their opposition to the idea of exchanging populations.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Committee of the Asia Minor Refugees in Mytilini, *Οι διωγμοί των Ελλήνων εν Θράκη και Μικρασία - Αυθεντικά εκθέσεις και επίσημα κείμενα έκκλησις προς το ελληνικόν γένος και την δημόσιαν γνώμην του πεπολιτισμένου κόσμου* (Athens: Panellinio Kratos, 1915), 28. For the compilation of their petitions see *Ibid.*, 213-44.

<sup>48</sup> A translation of this declaration into French and its summary in Ottoman Turkish were sent to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See BOA, DH.EUM.3.Şb, 4-1.



Although this population exchange never took place, the negotiations resulted in the two states' discussing their roles concerning their citizenry. As Sia Anagnostopoulou clearly states, the year 1914 marked the recognition of the Greek state as the legitimate authority representing the Greeks of Asia Minor.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, it is not possible to make a parallel argument regarding the Greek state and the Muslim population of the so-called New Lands because it was too soon for the Greek state to have earned such legitimacy and, by extension, the ability to represent the local population at the negotiations.

Although WWI put the discussion of a population exchange on ice, as an idea and possible policy, transferring populations continued to be on the table. As a matter of fact, while officially maintaining neutrality, Greece, as well as the Great Powers like Britain, were seeking an exchange with Bulgaria. For instance, in a note dated September 23, 1914, Alexandros Naum, the Greek ambassador in Sofia, informed Eleftherios Venizelos that Noel Buxton, who was a British politician known for his unwavering support and at that time on a semi-official mission in Bulgaria with his brother Charles Roden Buxton to secure the neutrality of this country, asked him about the possibility of a population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria.<sup>50</sup> In the book about their tour in the Balkans, *The War and the Balkans*, the Buxton

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<sup>49</sup> Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία*, 536.

<sup>50</sup> For Naum's note to Venizelos see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 10-23. For the activities of Noel Buxton and the Balkan Committee he founded in 1903 see Michael Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922: With a New Introduction* (London: Hurst, 2009), 45; Sanlı Bahadır Koç, "Noel Buxton: Portrait of a Philontroghist as a Turcophobe" (MA, Bilkent University, 1997). After their Balkan tour the Buxton brothers, who were shot and wounded by a unionist Turkish assassin, Hasan Tahsin, in Romania during this tour, wrote a book on their experiences in the region and political perspective regarding the Balkans and its relevance to the European War. Noel Edward Buxton and Charles Roden Buxton, *The War and the Balkans* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1915).

brothers wrote the following lines about the policy of exchanging populations and its inevitability in the region:<sup>51</sup>

“It is not to be expected that, however carefully the new frontiers may be devised, the various populations will be allotted with any approach to exactness to the States to which they rightly belong. On every hand there will remain scattered remnants, living under government which they regard as alien. Populations are so intermingled that this cannot possibly be avoided. [...] There is no reason why the exchange of populations should not be arranged by international commissions, charged with the duty of valuing the properties concerned, and of facilitating the transport of their present occupiers. The hardship of leaving their homes cannot be wholly obviated, but it can be greatly mitigated.”

A population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria was the part of a larger scheme. In 1915 Venizelos, who was eager to commit Greece on the side of the Entente powers and against the Ottoman Empire in order to achieve the Megali Idea (*Μεγάλη Ιδέα* - Great Idea),<sup>52</sup> thought that for strategic reasons this was possible and meaningful only if Bulgaria remained a friendly neutral country or if it entered the war on the side of the Entente. In order to ensure Bulgaria's neutrality or its active participation on the Entente side, Venizelos was prepared to concede Kavala as a sacrifice for his larger cause: the creation of a real “Magna Graecia.” In order to “achieve the ethnological settlement in the Balkans” and “realize the idea of a Balkan federation” while ensuring Greece's potential gains in Asia Minor, this move had to be followed by a population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria, a point Venizelos clearly articulated in his famous memoranda to King Constantine dated January 11 and 17, 1915.<sup>53</sup> This idea was

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<sup>51</sup> Buxton and Buxton, *The War and the Balkans*, 107-8.

<sup>52</sup> For the formation of the *Megali Idea* and its becoming the determining factor in Greek politics throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century see Elli Skopetea, *Το “πρότυπο βασίλειο” και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα: όψεις του εθνικού προβλήματος στην Ελλάδα, 1830 - 1880* (Athens: Polytypo, 1988), 249-360.

<sup>53</sup> The exchange was explicitly mentioned in the first memorandum. For Venizelos' two memoranda see Benaki Museum/Sofoklis Venizelos Archive, 35-146/147 and 35-86. The memoranda, including other related documents, are reproduced in Georgios Ventiris' influential book. See Georgios Ventiris, *Η Ελλάδα του 1910-1920: Ιστορική Μελέτη*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Athens: Pirsos, 1931), 369-383. For the analysis of these

completely abandoned when Bulgaria joined the Central Powers and attacked Greek positions in Macedonia. This was followed by Venizelos's resignation on March 6, 1915. Even though King Constantine did not accept it, we should note that the idea of a Greco-Bulgarian population exchange dated back to the early days of World War I. However, it was not until 1919 that a convention of population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria was ratified.<sup>54</sup>

The idea of exchanging Greek and Bulgarian "minorities" and making "ethnic adjustment" in the Balkans gained currency once more when the Great War ended, and the international community became preoccupied with the pursuit of a solution to the problem of the displaced masses throughout Europe. This population exchange was brought up as a necessary measure for the protection of minorities in the Balkans. Ladas provides us with detailed background information on how they decided on this form of population transfer.<sup>55</sup> While the Committee on New States and for the Protection of the Rights of Minorities of the Paris Peace Conference was drafting the Treaty concerning the Protection of Minorities in Greece in July 1919, Venizelos, who was the head of the Greek delegation at the conference,<sup>56</sup> unconditionally guaranteed the protection of minorities in Greece and expressed his willingness to sign any agreement on minority protection. Meanwhile, the Greek delegation was hard at work behind the

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memoranda and their relevance to the Greco-Bulgarian population exchange see Smith, *Ionian Vision*, 44-47; Theodore A Couloumbis, John Anthony Petropoulos, and Harry J Psomiades, *Foreign Interference in Greek Politics: An Historical Perspective* (New York: Pella Pub. Co., 1976), 39-41; Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 28-29.

<sup>54</sup> The term "population exchange" is not used in the convention text.

<sup>55</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 27-37. See also Theodora Dragostinova, *Between Two Motherlands: Nationality and Emigration Among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900-1949* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 125-30.

<sup>56</sup> Thanos Veremis and Helen Gardikas-Katsiadakis, "Protagonist in Politics, 1912-20," in *Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship*, ed. Paschalis M. Kitromilides (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 127.

scenes contacting the other delegations to convince them of the necessity of a swap of Greeks and Bulgarians.

The sub-committee appointed by the conference to investigate Venizelos's proposal recommended a more extensive population exchange scheme, which included not only Bulgaria and Greece but also Serbia, the Ottoman Empire, Croatia, and Slovenia. But this plan did not garner much support and so the sub-committee recommended that the conference concentrate on an exchange of minorities solely between Greece and Bulgaria. Even though the Greek delegation tried to convince the Serbians to join the convention, these attempts failed. At the behest of the Greek delegation, an article was inserted in the draft peace treaty with Bulgaria requiring it to accept a *voluntary* reciprocal emigration with Greece. This suggestion was welcomed by the Bulgarian government and on November 27, 1919 the Convention for Voluntary and Reciprocal Emigration of Minorities between Greece and Bulgaria was signed. The agreement came into force on August 9, 1920.<sup>57</sup> The purpose of the convention was the regulation and facilitation of the reciprocal and voluntary emigration of racial, religious, and linguistic minorities and their securing property rights. Greece and Bulgaria estimated that about 30,000 Greeks and up to 200,000 Bulgarians would cross the border. Although the number of Greeks to come from Bulgaria was consistent with the initial estimates, it became obvious that the Bulgarian/Slavophone population in Greece was much less enthusiastic about leaving their homeland. In total 53,000 people departed Greece for Bulgaria. There were also the 16,000 Greeks and 39,000 Bulgarians who had left their homes during WWI and who were

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<sup>57</sup> The convention was based on the Section II: Greece (Articles 42-48) and Section IV: Protection of Minorities (Articles 49-57) of the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine, particularly the Article 56. For the Treaty of Neuilly see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924), 653-785. For Section II see *Ibid.*, 665-66; for Section IV see *Ibid.*, 667-70.

retrospectively covered by the convention.<sup>58</sup> As Ladas has argued, it is important to underscore two points. First, Venizelos devised the idea of a Greco-Turkish population exchange. Second, he and other leaders considered the exchanging of minorities as a method to protect them and to keep the peace.

One of the five peace treaties prepared at the Paris Peace Conference was the Treaty of Sèvres. This pact between the Allied Powers and the Ottoman Empire was signed on August 10, 1920 and inaugurated the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire. Since the last days of WWI, particularly after conclusion of the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918, Venizelos had been channeling all his energy into achieving the *Megali Idea* and so he pressed the Allied Powers to ratify Greece's occupation of the Aegean Islands, Smyrna and its hinterland, and Thrace. As Gallant points out, Greece now stood on the verge of fulfilling its Great Idea.<sup>59</sup> The treaty recognized Greek territorial claims regarding Thrace and the Aegean Islands including Imbros and Tenedos, and, most importantly, it gave Greece the authority to protect Smyrna and its hinterland.

On May 15, 1919, the Greek army landed this contested city.<sup>60</sup> Formally the Smyrna Protectorate was still a part of the Ottoman Empire but administered by Greece and in five years' time the fate of the city was to be determined by a plebiscite. At issue was whether the people of Smyrna wished to join the Kingdom of Greece or to remain in the Ottoman Empire. The Greek population deported in 1914 was returning to Asia Minor. There was a constant influx of Greek

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<sup>58</sup> Carlile Aylmer Macartney, *Refugees: The Work of the League* (London: League of Nations Union, 1931), 87-88; Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 60-61.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas W. Gallant, *Modern Greece: From the War of Independence to the Present*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 194.

<sup>60</sup> For the relevant provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres see Section V: Greece (Articles 84-87) *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, vol. 2, 813-14.

population to the new territory from the Aegean Islands and mainland Greece as well as the other parts of Anatolia.<sup>61</sup> In addition to this, the Muslim population was abandoning the area at almost an equal rate.<sup>62</sup> Consequently, Greece, confident about the result of the plebiscite, concentrated on further demographic adjustments to secure a numerical supremacy and avoid “future complications” with Turkey. In a short study on “population exchange and settlement” published in Constantinople, Alexander A. Pallis, the late secretary-general of the Central Committee for the Settlement of Refugees, explained the necessity of the deal between Greece and Turkey as such:<sup>63</sup>

Consequently, it is obvious that we should make every effort to attract into our own territory the Greek population of Anatolia, which is noted for its intelligence and industry. The most natural and, at the same time, the simplest solution would be to come to an agreement with Turkey for the exchange of this Greek population against the Muslim population of Smyrna district, which is largely composed of the *muhacirs* from Macedonia. By such an exchange, which should of course be carried out with all safeguards provided for the populations in the Bulgarian Convention, we should secure, on the one hand, homogeneity of population in our section of Asia Minor, and, on the other, the avoidance of future complications with Turkey arising from the existence of a

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<sup>61</sup> The Ottoman government diplomatically tried to stop the population influx in to this territory from Greece based on the argument that the Greek population that had left this region was subject to a population exchange according to the population agreement between the Ottoman and Greek governments hence their return was legally not possible. BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO., 128-43. Although the Ottoman Empire could not implement thoroughly, or at all, the population exchanges with Bulgaria and Greece in accordance with the conventions signed in 1913 and 1914 respectively, the imperial administration tried to avoid unwanted refugee/immigrant influx into its borders by referring to these conventions. Similarly, the Bulgarian refugees that came to Uzunköprü in May 14, 1919 were refused entry at the border. BOA, DH.EU.M.AYŞ, 40-36.

<sup>62</sup> According to the statistics provided by the Ottoman Ministry of Interior (September 20, 1920/1336; no. 46333) the number of people that left İzmir and its hinterland to take refuge in different parts of Anatolia reached to 146,131. It is also indicated that one out every three Muslim refugees that left this region was in need of state relief and the total number of people seeking relief was 50,772. BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO., 128-43. According to the same document, there were 509,922 Balkan *muhacirs* in Anatolia and 140,868 of them were resettled in the vilayet of Aydin.

<sup>63</sup> A. A. Pallis, *Περί ανταλλαγής πληθυσμών και εποικισμού εν τη Βαλκανική κατά τα έτη 1912-1920* (Constantinople: Publishing House of K. Mavridos and I. Alevropoulos, 1920), 17. For the English translation of this study in the form of a report see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 27-10. The preface of the study is dated as April 23, 1920.

large Greek minority within the Turkish Empire to whose aid we should always feel compelled to go whenever it was the victim of oppression.

A few months after the publication of this study in April 1920, the Treaty of Sèvres, which supposedly focused on the protection of minorities in the Ottoman Empire among other issues, was signed and this treaty too included an article calling a separate convention regarding the swapping of populations:<sup>64</sup>

ARTICLE 143: Turkey undertakes to recognise such provisions as the Allied Powers may consider opportune with respect to the reciprocal and voluntary emigration of persons belonging to racial minorities. Turkey renounces any right to avail herself of the provisions of Article 16 of the Convention between Greece and Bulgaria relating to reciprocal emigration, signed at Neuilly-sur-Seine on November 27, 1919. Within six months from the coming into force of the present Treaty, Greece and Turkey will enter into a special arrangement relating to the reciprocal and voluntary emigration of the populations of Turkish and Greek race in the territories transferred to Greece and remaining Turkish respectively. In case agreement cannot be reached as to such arrangement, Greece and Turkey will be entitled to apply to the Council of the League of Nations, which will fix the terms of such arrangement.

Although the Treaty of Sèvres was signed by the Porte, it was stillborn due to the nationalist resistance against the partitioning and occupation of the country. Even though the Ankara government unconditionally refused to accept the treaty, a population exchange between Greece and Turkey remained a goal of the national resistance movement, too. Since the very early days of the Greco-Turkish war, ethnic and religious purification, as they put it, of the state and territories under the administration of the Ankara government had been one of the recurrent themes in the nascent Grand National Assembly.<sup>65</sup> After the advance of the Greek army was stopped in 1921 and a Turkish military victory became almost certain, Britain, France and Italy

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<sup>64</sup> *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, vol. 2, 829.

<sup>65</sup> For example, see the parliamentary sitting on August 21, 1920. TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, [Minutes of Proceedings of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, (TBMMZC, hereinafter)], *Term I, Volume 3, Session 1, 54th Meeting*, August 21, 1920, 361-94.

declared the Treaty of Sèvres obsolete. Nonetheless, the transfer of non-Muslim populations remained a *leitmotif* in the Turkish press. This issue was brought up more and more frequently by the press especially after the Turkish Army entered in İzmir in September 1922 and subsequently the Ankara government was invited to a peace conference in Lausanne.

The transfer of the Greeks of Anatolia and Constantinople was presented as a *sine qua non* for a peace treaty. The main and recurring argument was that the peaceful coexistence of Greeks and Turks looked to be an increasingly remote possibility. The lead writer of *Renin* (former *Tanin*), Hüseyin Cahid, wrote in October 17, 1922 that population exchange was the only solution for the future of the country as well as the entire Orient.<sup>66</sup> His article titled “Greek Race” (“*Rum Irki*”) described the switching of populations as the natural result of the situation in the Orient and the only method that could resolve the “Oriental issues” (“*Şark işlerini*”) permanently because otherwise the animosity and hate between the races in the Orient could not be alleviated. In another article of his, “The Question of Exchanging Minorities” (“*Ekalliyetlerin Mübadelesi Meselesi*”),<sup>67</sup> Hüseyin Cahid repeated the same arguments regarding the indispensability of a population exchange between Greece and Turkey and challenged those who underlined the inhumane nature of this method and opposed the idea of exchanging population especially in Greece with the rationalization that if this was a disaster for the Orthodox Greeks in Anatolia, it would be equally disastrous for the Muslims in Macedonia. In December 1922, the same newspaper published a series of articles on the impossibility of Ottoman Greeks staying in Constantinople and the rest of the country, titled "Episodes from the Treachery of the

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<sup>66</sup> Hüseyin Cahid was not allowed to publish his newspaper under the title of *Tanin* after his return to Constantinople from the Malta exile and *Tanin* (Echo) appeared as *Renin* (Scream). In October 1922, Hüseyin Cahid was still publishing *Renin* and this article appeared in *Renin* on October 17, 1922.

<sup>67</sup> *Renin*, October 25, 1922.



Patriarchate..." ("Patrikhane'nin Hiyanet Vesikalarından...").<sup>68</sup> In an article claiming that there was no significant ideological and political difference between Ottoman Greeks and Hellenic Greeks, the author put forth three arguments in support of the proposal : 1. That Christians living in the occupied territories actively supported the Greek military occupation. 2. That those in the Black Sea region rose up against the Ottoman Empire and established a Christian Pontian republic. 3. That those in Constantinople demanded the incorporation of the city into Greece. Therefore, the Ottoman Greeks had to go. Another major Constantinopolitan newspaper, *Tevhid-i Efkar*, published a relatively long article on December 1, 1922 calling population exchange "the most natural method of "leveling" ("en tabii suret-i tesviye").<sup>69</sup> The newspaper underlined that the Turks were convinced that exchanging populations was the only solution to the Greek-Turkish conflict and they were determined to put it into practice no matter what happened.

This was not just some nationalist intellectuals' excessive speculations: the official stance of the Ankara government was also in favor of a population exchange. İsmet Pasha, who presided over the Turkish delegation in Lausanne, held a press conference on his way to the peace negotiations in Lausanne and clarified Ankara's position on the issue of exchanging populations. He told the press that this was the most suitable measure to take as far as the minorities were concerned.<sup>70</sup>

In Greece, too, population exchange was a hot topic. As mentioned above, before the sudden turn of events in Anatolia, Greece was in favor of a population exchange between the

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<sup>68</sup> *Tanin*, December, 21, 24, 27 and 31, 1338 [1922]. See also "Can they stay in Istanbul?," *Tanin*, December 28, 1338.

<sup>69</sup> *Tevhid-i Efkar*'s continuous publications on the expulsion of all non-Muslim populations particularly attracted attention in Greece. See *Makedonia*, December 1, 1922.

<sup>70</sup> Ali Naci Karacan, *Lozan konferansı ve İsmet Paşa* (Ankara: Maarif Matbaası, 1943), 40.

Greeks living in the Anatolian heartland and the Muslims living along the Aegean coast. Yet, after Greece lost the war in Anatolia, exchanging populations, especially in a way fiercely championed by the Turkish press, suddenly took on another meaning: complete “de-Hellenization” of the Aegean coast and particularly Constantinople. The eviction of the Greek orthodox population of The *City*, as Greeks called it, would also entail the deportation of the Patriarchate, and this would affect the vital interests of Hellenism in the Eastern Mediterranean. Patriarch Meletius IV, who had become a hated figure in the pro-Ankara Turkish press due to his active and vocal support for the Greek occupation, made statements to the press underlining the possibility of peaceful coexistence of Turkish and Greek elements in Turkey and his strong disapproval of a population exchange. Instead, he asked for a Greco-Turkish rapprochement:<sup>71</sup>

We are formidable opponents of population exchange. Can a person easily leave the land where he was born and raised? I hold no brief for the migration of the Christians in Turkey and Muslims in Greece. The continuation of existence of both elements in both countries constitutes the best nexus for the relationship of these two states. Indeed, even though Switzerland consists of German, Italian and French elements, it enjoys candid and friendly relationship with Germany, Italy and France. I am really sorry about the departure of Constantinopolitan Greeks. Frankly, I did not wait such a move from the

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<sup>71</sup> “Fener Patrikhanesi’nde Meletyos ile bir mülakat,” *Tevhid-i Efkar*, December 2, 1922. After the Turkish recapture of Smyrna, the Patriarch talked to some Turkish newspapers, such as *Akşam* and *İleri* and emphasized similar points. These interviews attracted the attention of the Greek press. For instance, *Μακεδονία* (Macedonia), the major newspaper of Thessaloniki, published the translation of these articles. “Σοβαράι δηλώσεις του Πατριάρχου - Ζητεί την ελληνοτουρκικήν προσέγγισιν,” *Makedonia*, November 29 [December 12], 1922. For other interviews of Meletius see for instance *İleri*, October 30, 1922. On December 19, Meletius IV talked to the French newspaper *Le Journal* on the expulsion of the Greek population of Constantinople. He told that the departure of the Greek population from the city would mean a complete disaster for the Turkish economy and the Turkish delegation in Lausanne had to be convinced in order to avoid such an outcome. In addition to that, while complaining about the uncertain future of his compatriots and the panic among them, he asked for the protection of the Greek existence especially in Constantinople not for the sake of Greece but for Western interests. He told “The departure of the Christians would be more fatal to the influence of French thought in the Balkans. In Constantinople, 4/5 of the pupils of the French schools are either Greek or Armenian, your institutions, whether congregational or secular, will be empty.” See “Le patriarche œcuménique nous expose la situation angoissante des 500,000 chrétiens de Constantinople,” *Le Journal*, December 19, 1922.

Constantinopolitan Hellenism (*İstanbul Rumluğu*). Today a delegation came before me and asked ‘We are terrified. Should we leave (Constantinople)?’

When I told them to keep their calm and stay wherever they live, they brought up what happened to the Christians of Şile and its neighboring villages.

According to the Patriarch, the solution could be solved by the government granting a general amnesty to those who supported the cause of Hellenism during the Great War and the Greco-Turkish War. On the other hand, as Patriarch Meletius IV mentioned, a deep, though not unfounded, fear of new waves of persecutions and deportations targeting Greeks in Constantinople, Asia Minor and Thrace was growing rapidly among the Greeks in Turkey as well as in Greece. There was a visible panic regarding the future of Greeks living in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace and not having been able to leave for Greece, they were left unprotected. Especially, after Smyrna perished in the inferno following the Turkish re-capture of the city and sporadic attacks on Greek neighborhoods and villages that almost completely destroyed them, as in the case of Şile [in Greek *Χηλή* (Chili)].<sup>72</sup> On the same day, *Akşam*, a Constantinopolitan newspaper, published the photograph of a large crowd of Greeks gathering in front of the central police station to acquire passports in order to leave the country. *İleri* published a photograph of a Greek ship packed with emigrants leaving Constantinople (Figure 1–1 and Figure 1–2).

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<sup>72</sup> The destruction of Şile, a distant sea town of Constantinople, is one of the lesser known episodes of complete destruction of Greek settlements of Anatolia and Thrace. The Greek neighborhoods of the town were looted and the town almost completely destroyed after the Fire of Smyrna. Vretos Menexopoulos, a native of Şile who witnessed the destruction of his hometown, tells that after the catastrophe they were not particularly terrified for their future even when they read from newspapers that 14,000 soldiers were approaching to their town. He adds, at first only 40 Turkish soldiers came to the town. The officer summoned a meeting of the inhabitants of the town in front of the court house and assured them “The war is over. What happened, happened. Now get down to your businesses. You don’t have anything to be afraid of.” According to Menexopoulos’ testimony, this speech was a relief for the local community. They opened their shops and returned to their daily routines but the same night thousands of people rushed into the town and destroyed it completely. Another interesting point made by Menexopoulos is that the Greek neighborhoods of the town were completely burnt to the ground by the local Muslim population of Şile in order to avoid the resettlement of Muslim immigrants in their town. F. D. Apostolopoulos, ed., *Η Εξόδοσ*, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Athens: Kentro Mikrasiatikon Spoudon, 1980); 343-45.



**Figure 1-1:** “Greeks piling up in front of the Fourth Police Division in order to get their passports.”

**Source:** *Akşam*, December 10, 1922.



**Figure 1-2:** “Greek immigrants being sent to Piraeus before a decision on population exchange is made [This photograph was taken on a Greek ship that departed yesterday.]”

**Source:** *İleri*, December 10, 1922.

Although Greece did not particularly welcome the population transfer, there was an increasing pressure on the war-torn country to act on this urgent problem while protecting the Greek population in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace.<sup>73</sup> A mandatory population exchange was considered to be quite unlikely by the Greek public based on the fact that the Turkish economy would suffer significantly by the expulsion of the entire Greek population from Anatolia and Eastern Thrace.<sup>74</sup> In addition to this, they were equally concerned about the economic and social burden the influx of new people would have on Greece.<sup>75</sup> Despite this, the newspapers in Greece were alarmed by the strong messages sent by the Turkish press and considered these messages as an indicator of the determination of the Turkish government to expel the Greek population in its entirety.<sup>76</sup> That being said, Greece, as a nation-state, aspired to national homogenization and to reconfigure its national identity in accordance with the new regional configuration created by the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922, which was the continuation of World War I.<sup>77</sup>

Under these circumstances the possibility of exchanging populations was brought to the negotiation table at the peace talks in Lausanne. How and why a Greco-Turkish population exchange was brought up and agreed upon in Lausanne will be discussed more fully in the following chapters. At this point, it is important to note that the idea of swapping populations

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<sup>73</sup> For example, see the parliamentary debate on the expulsion of the Greek population of Eastern Thrace and the the population exchange as a method of conflict resolution see *Makedonia*, June 10, 1922.

<sup>74</sup> For instance, *Makedonia* writes on November 29, 1922 “Turkey, neither as a state nor as a people, cannot stay on its feet without Greek, who controlled the source of their wealth. A society cannot be run by porters, shoeblacks and barbarians. In addition to this, the Greek population of Constantinople does not want to leave —not for [the purpose of serving] the Turkish interests, but simply they do not want to leave because they do not benefit from it.”

<sup>75</sup> *Skrip*, December 1, 1922; *Embros*, December 9, 1922.

<sup>76</sup> *Makedonia*, November 29, 1922; December 1, 1922.

<sup>77</sup> Theodora Dragostinova, “Continuity vs. Radical Break: National Homogenization Campaigns in the Greek-Bulgarian Borderlands before and after the Balkan Wars,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 18, no. 4 (October 1, 2016): 413–15.

was not a *deus ex machina*, but rather the outcome of policies implemented for decades by competing nations in the Balkans, the philosophical penetration of the European Enlightenment, and the political interference of Western powers.

The Lausanne Peace Conference and the Convention concerning the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange constituted a turning point in the history of the region for a number of reasons. First, the policy of exchanging populations before the Lausanne Peace Conference was implemented on voluntary basis — at least on paper as discussed above. Although this had little meaning in practice, the emphasis on voluntariness had implied the fact that compulsory and mutual transfer of people had been cruel and a decision far beyond the means of diplomacy. Secondly, previous population exchanges, whether realized or not, had been geographically delimited and only affected relatively small regions, usually at the borderland. The population transfer decided on at Lausanne was, on the other hand, all-encompassing regarding the geographical scope it covered except for small regional exceptions.<sup>78</sup> Finally, in these respects, the proposed exchange was seen as a model for the new international system of population management. The Greco-Turkish case was supposed to be implemented under the auspices and with the assistance of international institutions, particularly the League of Nations; and the exchange was imposed by the law. The reason why the Greco-Turkish proposal was considered as a total/final solution regarding the minority problems in Greece and newly born Turkey was these novelties—novelties that also gave ethnic cleansing a special and privileged place in world history as well as in the historiographies of Greece and Turkey.

Although the population exchange as a method of conflict resolution and of nation-state (re)building strategy has attracted scholarly attention, the current literature has limitations that

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<sup>78</sup> Ther, *The Dark Side of Nation-States*, 232-33.

are discussed in the following chapters. The dominant state-centric approach failed to develop a comprehensive analysis of the consequences of the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange and to address the experience of the refugees, who were displaced, or rather emplaced by this policy. Before delving into a discussion on the historiography of the population exchange, I need to clarify the terminology and language that dominate the discussions.

## **1.2 Lexilogia: Preliminary clarifications**

### **1.2-1 Population Exchange: “What’s that? Donkeys are to be exchanged, oxen are to be exchanged!”**

As in our times, a century ago, people were being displaced spatially, socially, and culturally at a brisk pace. The Great War had put the final nail in the coffin of the long-struggling multinational empires –the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman empires. As far as the Ottoman Empire is considered, the empire’s extended disintegration marked the triumph or unfulfilled dreams of numerous nationalisms. Each nationalist project aimed to construct its own spatially well-defined, well-proofed, historically justifiable and ethnically homogenous national geographies. Yet this goal was not easy to achieve: The imperial space constituted a continuum and it was to demarcate this space with fixed, guarded borders. Furthermore, competing nationalisms had conflicting territorial claims. And, finally, “unmixing” the former subjects of the empire, even if there existed an ethnic conflict between them, could potentially lead to greater humanitarian crises. These obstacles, however, did not stop competing and potentially disruptive nationalisms and led to the formalization of discriminatory and/or persecutory and/or repressive and/or terroristic practices, which today are characterized as ethnic cleansing.

Displacement and unmixing populations as its formalized and internationally recognized form was one of such practices.

The vocabulary related to the displacement was different in Turkey and Greece. This is closely related to how this particular displacement was experienced and perceived back in the time of the displacement and remembered later by the memory communities (*Gedächtnisgemeinschaften*) in both countries.

Before the nineteenth century, the word *mübadele* was exclusively utilized in economic contexts, be it exchanging fiefs (*timar*) or goods, and very rarely used for human beings except in some very specific circumstances, such as exchanging ambassadors or prisoners of war.<sup>79</sup> According to the major Ottoman Turkish dictionaries published in the late nineteenth century, the word *mübadele* simply means mutually exchanging, bartering or substitution and is used in the context of material things. In the twentieth century, the word started to be used for human beings as well. It is possible to follow this through the new editions of dictionaries. For example, while there is no reference for the usage of the word for humans, in the 1883 edition of Şemsettin Sami's *Kâmûs-ı Fransevî* (Turkish-French Dictionary), in the 1911 edition of the same dictionary, under the entry of the word *mübadele* the term *échange des prisonniers* is also given as one of the usages of the word. In the early twentieth century, with the introduction of population exchange into the diplomatic parlance, the word *mübadele* gained another meaning beyond the economic realm and became shorthand for describing this demographic engineering. Similarly, in Greek the word *ανταλλαγή* only meant the barter or exchange of goods and services.

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<sup>79</sup> İlber Ortaylı, "Mübādele," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. P. Bearman et al. (Brill, 2015), [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912\\_islam\\_COM\\_0769](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0769)



Only after the signing of the convention in 1923 did dictionaries start including a specific entry for the term *ανταλλαγή των πλυθησμών* (population exchange).

This semantic change was strongly related to the development of the modern concept of population, which was a new mode of state *imaginaire* based on enumeration, group taxonomy and other disciplinary mechanisms.<sup>80</sup> As people were grouped under the title of population and population replaced the old notions of subjection, its management became one of the fundamental problems of sovereignty and government. The management of the population became the blazon of the bureaucracy's ability of control and ability to control. Once the subjects of the state were reduced to numbers and statistics, people became disposable and thus exchangeable. That is why the management of population through demographic engineering, such as forced migration and population exchange, constituted one of the key aspects of state formation and nation building and became a part of the peace and war making processes. This turn of mindset made it possible to broach population exchange as a method of conflict resolution and to sign "the first interstate treaty on the exchange of populations in modern history"<sup>81</sup> between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire in November 1913. After some attempts and practices of "voluntary" population exchanges, together with the 1923 Greco-Turkish

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<sup>80</sup> Michel Foucault's approach regarding the development of the concept of population in Western Europe and its relation to the formation of the modern state as a political entity is not only provocative but also enlightening. Particularly his insight in his lectures at the Collège de France on January 18 and 25, 1978. For the aforementioned lectures see Michel Foucault, *Security, territory, population: lectures at the Collège de France* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 29-86.

Benedict Anderson developed the connections between the practice of enumeration and the rise and spread of nationalism as well as colonialism in his seminal work. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 163-85. For a similar approach concentrating on colonial context see Arjun Appadurai, "Number in the Colonial Imagination," in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament - Perspectives on South Asia*, ed. Carol A. Breckenridge and Pater Van der Veer, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 314-39.

<sup>81</sup> Joseph B. Schechtman, *Postwar Population Transfers in Europe 1945-1955* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), 22.

population exchange, exchanging populations compulsorily was recognized internationally as a method of conflict resolution.

The people, who were subject to it, found the very idea of being exchanged offensive because they did not embrace the semantic change in the word *mübadele/ανταλλαγή*. For instance, when Eugenios Samouilidis, a refugee from Semendra, Nigdi (today *Ovacık, Niğde*), tells that when he and his fellow villagers learnt that they were to be exchanged with the Turks in Greece, they asked “What’s that? Donkeys are to be exchanged, oxen are to be exchanged.”<sup>82</sup> Likewise, “animals are exchanged, but, how can human beings be exchanged?” asks the grandmother of Eugenios Lazaridis, a refugee from Dila, Kayseri, when facing the fact that an exchange agreement was signed.<sup>83</sup> Hristos Samouilidis, a novelist, ethnographer and long-term contributor to the Center for Asia Minor Studies, repeated the same sentiment in a scene in his pioneering novel, *Καραμανίτες - Οι τελευταίοι Έλληνες της Καππαδοκίας* (*Karamanites - The Last Greeks of Cappadocia*):<sup>84</sup>

- The Treaty of Lausanne was signed and an exchange of populations was decided.
- Population Exchange!
- These two words passed from mouth to mouth.
- And what’s that?
- What is “population exchange” supposed to mean?
- (...)
- But what are we? Will they exchange us as if we were sheep?

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<sup>82</sup> Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Giannis Mourellos, eds., *Η Έξοδος*, vol. 2, 5 vols. (Athens: Kentro Mikrasiatikon Spoudon, 2004), 238.

<sup>83</sup> *Η Έξοδος*, vol. 2, 158.

<sup>84</sup> Hristos Samouilidis, *Καραμανίτες: οι τελευταίοι Έλληνες της Καππαδοκίας: μυθιστόρημα*, 4th ed. (Athens: Vivliopoleion tis “Estias,” 2010), 383

There are similar testimonies on the Turkish side too. Although there was never a roar of popular disapproval for this semantic transformation, it took different trajectories in the two countries after the exchange, as I discuss in the next section. Displacements of this scale are generally characterized by mythological constellation of religious references so is the pain of the displaced. The term *Exodus* (Ἡ Ξεδοσ), which is deployed in Greece to describe the displacement of the Anatolian and Thracian Greeks, did not only reflect the course of events but also helped determine the course of memory construction. Such references are also clear in the testimonies of the Greek refugees. Sophoclis Triandafyllidis<sup>85</sup> published a poem in the refugee newspaper *Προσφυγική Φωνή* about the refugees' longing for their homelands and drew a direct parallel between the Greek refugee experience of 1922 and the Biblical Exodus:<sup>86</sup>

Πῆρ βακῆτ Γεχουτιλέρ ἐσίρ ὀλοὺπ τσικάρκεν  
σουλαρίν κεναριντὰ ἀγλαρλάρτη κατσάρκεν.  
Πίζτε ἄϊηνεν ὀνλάρ κιπῆ ἀγλάγιουρὺς οὺζακτὰν  
βατανιμίζ οὺζάκτιρ κιορέμεγιζ γιακιηντάν.

Bir vakit Yehudiler esir olup çikarken  
Suların kenarında ağlarlardı kaçarken.  
Biz de aynen onlar gibi ağlayoruz uzaktan  
Vatanımız uzaktır göremeyiz yakından.

In the days of yore, the Jews were exiled and enslaved  
as they fled, they stopped at lakes and rivers, cried and raved  
It's our turn now, we are the ones who're banished and so sad  
our homeland is so distant, not a glimpse can now be had

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<sup>85</sup> See Chapter 4 for information about Triandafyllidis.

<sup>86</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, January 28, 1926. The Karamanlidika (Turkish in Greek letters) poems published in this newspaper between 1924 and 1926 were compiled and published by Evangelia Balta and Aytek Soner Alpan. See Evangelia Balta and Aytek Soner Alpan, eds., *Μουχατζηρναμέ: poetry's voice for the Karamanlidhes refugees*, trans. David Selim Sayers and Aytek Soner Alpan, (İstanbul: İstos, 2016).

In the refugee testimonies housed at the Center for Asia Minor Studies there can be found numerous examples of refugees' comparing or likening their sufferings to those of Christ.<sup>87</sup> In addition to the refugees, foreign observers were also keen on using similar analogies. For instance, on September 3, 1926, the *Washington Post* reported at length on the population exchange and wrote that “*The greatest trek of human souls since the exodus of the Children of Israel is nearing completion in the Mediterranean countries. (...) Although little has been printed in the United States or Europe about this human movement it has been characterized by those who witnessed it as the greatest constructive work of the League of Nations since its foundation.*”<sup>88</sup> Charles P. Howland, the head of the League of Nations' Greek Refugee Settlement Commission, in his 1926 report referred to the event as “the Exodus.”<sup>89</sup> In Turkey, however, the term *muhacir* historically had religious connotations and referred to the migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Yathrib (*hijrah* in Arabic). For political reasons, the term gained little traction among those who were to be subject to the population exchange, as will be discussed below.<sup>90</sup>

The transformation was not limited to the semantic domain. As population exchange became incorporated into the diplomatic vocabulary, it was considered as a lesser evil in

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<sup>87</sup> “How much we endured cannot be described.” says Anna Tsiklitari of Sylata, Neapoli and adds: “Not even Jesus did not suffer like this.” KMS, φ. ΚΠ 183.

<sup>88</sup> My emphasis

<sup>89</sup> League of Nations, *Η εγκατάσταση των προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα* (Geneva: Trohalia, 1997), 9.

<sup>90</sup> In other examples, such as the case of the partition of India, the reference to *hijrah* and the analogy with the prophetic experience is much clearer. For the Muslim experience in the partition of India and how it was related to the *hijrah* see Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2007), 168-70. For the prevalence of biblical analogies likening Hutu refugees to Israelites Liisa Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 228-29. For the employment of biblical terms by Russian refugees displaced by WWI see Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011), 36, 74 and 200.

comparison to the genocidal violence that minorities could face if action was not taken. As shown earlier, it was even presented as necessary for the protection of minorities. It was this dominant understanding that sanitized population exchange as a political/demographic arrangement whereas it was, and *is*, essentially a method for the removal of the members of an ethnicity from what they considered their homeland. In other words, what is recognized by international law under the palatable title of population exchange was a form of ethnic cleansing.<sup>91</sup> After the signing of the international agreements, the affected population raised concerns about their civil rights, especially as the police suppressed protests by the dispossessed people and did little to halt the escalation of ethnic and communal violence. The transfer of people was accompanied by kidnappings, rapes, and looting. Similarly, the settlement of the exchanged people goes hand in hand with official, as well as popular, cultural and language restrictions, segregation, occasionally oppressive resettlement practices, and atrocities in their “new homelands.” In short, exchanging populations triggered different forms of violence. In the forward to his 1920 report, Pallis lamented about the violent nature of the exchange.<sup>92</sup>

The majority [...] regarded the situation regarded the situation brought about by the Treaty of Bucharest as more or less stable and were disposed to accept the violent exchange of populations involved, not indeed as an absolute good but *at any rate as a decisive, if somewhat drastic, step toward the simplification of the Problem of the Balkans.*

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<sup>91</sup> Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11.

<sup>92</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 27-10. My emphasis.

In another article by Pallis, a formal exchange of populations was defined as a “radical solution . . . , which is simply the old form of wholesale expulsion surrounded by certain guarantees as regards the rights to dispose of movable property and the liquidation of the estate left behind the emigrants.”<sup>93</sup> Gyanendra Pandey’s argument on the partition of India, which included a horrendous practice of population exchange for which the Greco-Turkish population exchange served as a blueprint, can be generalized more broadly: The historiographical separation between “exchanging populations” and “violence” is superficial and for those who experienced it, population exchange “*was* violence, a cataclysm, a world (or worlds) torn apart.”<sup>94</sup> The emphasis on the facileness of this separation is crucial to understanding the nature of the displacement and its formalization through diplomacy and provide a thorough critique of violence. As Walter Benjamin clearly puts it “the task of a critique of violence can be summarized as that of expounding its relation to law and justice. For a cause, however effective, becomes violent, in the precise sense of the word, only when it bears on moral issues. The sphere of these issues is defined by the concepts of law and justice.”<sup>95</sup> It was the international recognition of deportations in forms of compulsory or voluntary -as if this could be possible- population exchanges under the international law that provided states with the moral pivot around which they could easily condone their violent practices and conceal the real nature of forced displacements. By re-defining population exchange as a form of violence, a process in

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<sup>93</sup> Pallis, “The exchange of populations in the Balkans,” 377.

<sup>94</sup> Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition Violence, Nationalism, and History in India* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

<sup>95</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writing*, ed. Peter Demetz (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 277.

which violence is inherent, imminent, and perpetual or a rupture, “an interruption in meaning making of and in the life-worlds, daily lives, and/or in self-identification of individuals due to political and socio-cultural changes, both violently and nonviolently implemented by others or by political power(s).”<sup>96</sup> The meta-narrative on the Greco-Turkish population exchange could be challenged and the misery of the displaced can be seen as a natural outcome of displacement, rather than an unfortunate and coincidental side effect. That’s how the image of the displaced “seen through the windscreen of the diplomat’s limousine”<sup>97</sup> can be transcended.

### **1.2-2 Refugee - *Mübadil* - *Πρόσφυγας*: What’s in a word?**

Throughout this study, the term “refugee” is utilized to describe the people who were subject to the population swap.<sup>98</sup> This terminological choice has to be justified because these people, at least a considerable percentage of them, could not be classified as refugee according to the neat categories of international law. In addition to this, how these people and their descendants referred to themselves, in short, their self-ascription, is of utmost importance for this study.

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<sup>96</sup> By following Carol Bardenstein’s use of the concept, Aslı Iğsız describes the population exchange as rupture in her dissertation. See Aslı Iğsız, “Repertoires of Rupture: Recollecting the 1923 Greek-Turkish Compulsory Religious Minority Exchange” (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2007), 8.

<sup>97</sup> Sharif Gemie, Laure Humbert, and Fiona Reid, *Outcast Europe: Refugees and Relief Workers in an Era of Total War 1936-48* (New York: A&C Black, 2012), 13.

<sup>98</sup> For the development of the term refugee and related social categories see Liisa H. Malkki, “Refugees and Exile: From ‘Refugee Studies’ to the National Order of Things,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1995): 495–523. Malkki underlines the fact that refugee is a modern phenomenon and dates the birth of this social category to post WWII period, which I found too late. I think “the refugee” emerged in the late nineteenth century but officially it was recognized as an international category and “problem” during and after WWI.

In Turkey, the population exchange was called *ahali/nüfus mübadelesi*, or in short *mübadele*, as mentioned above, and those who were exchanged were called *mübadil*. In Article 3 of the convention, the term *émigrant* was used to describe those people subject to the exchange. Although this term was translated as *muhacir* in the official translations of the text, especially after the completion of their transfer, the emigrants did not deploy this term to describe themselves. In official documents as well, the word was not used to refer to them.<sup>99</sup> A new word, *mübadil* (Ottoman Turkish: مبادل, lit. exchangee) was coined to describe them. Although this word was of Arabic origin<sup>100</sup> and regardless of how frequently it was employed in this language, the word *mübadil* was not in use in the Ottoman Turkish up until that time. None of the major Turkish dictionaries published in this period had an entry for the word *mübadil*. Therefore, *mübadil* as a population category was *invented* to describe the victims of a particular form of displacement, that is to say, the population exchange, to separate *mübadils* from other people who had voluntarily relocated to the Empire or those who had been displaced by the wars.

The Muslims who were subject to the exchange were quick to embrace this term. But this was more of a conscious choice by those being transferred rather than a label imposed by the bureaucracy. Similarly, Sindhi Hindus displaced during the partition of India, considered the term refugee, in Hindu *sharanarathi* and in Urdu *panaahgir*, as pejorative and preferred the adjective

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<sup>99</sup> Article 3 of the convention reads “L’expression ‘émigrant’ dans la présente Convention comprend toutes les personnes physiques et morales devant émigrer ou ayant émigré depuis le 18 octobre 1912.” Allied and Associated Powers (1914-1920), Turkey, and Greece, *Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and Other Instruments Signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923, Together with Agreements between Greece and Turkey Signed on January 30, 1923, and Subsidiary Documents Forming Part of the Turkish Peace Settlement*. (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1923), 174.

<sup>100</sup> Hans Wehr, *A dictionary of modern written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan (Ithaca, N.Y.: Spoken language services, 1976), 46. The words *mübadil* and *mübadele* are derived from the stem بَدَلَ (badala) meaning to exchange, to change, to barter.



*purushartha* (industrious) in order to emphasize that they were not incapable and dependent.<sup>101</sup>

The Muslim people “uprooted” from Greece due to the exchange convention, strictly defined themselves as *mübadil* for four reasons: First, the term *muhacir* denoted social inferiority and such a self-designation would have meant embracing this stigma voluntarily and made themselves look like more vulnerable than they were. Second, *muhacir* had already been occupied by those displaced by the Balkan Wars. Third, in tandem with this second reason, the newcomers wanted to emphasize the fact that they ended up in Turkey against their will and as the result of the displacement process called *mübadele*. Fourth, they were neither *muhacirs* who had “willingly” deserted their houses to seek refuge in Anatolia nor ordinary immigrants who had left home of their own free will. On the contrary, they were the ones who had refused to leave their ancestral homes no matter how difficult the conditions they faced were. They were ordered to move from Greece to Turkey under the international law. These emphases on the distinction between *muhacir* and *mübadil* would be one of the main pillars of the political strategy that the *mübadils* adopted after their arrival in Turkey. One final point to note is that the proper Turkish counterpart of the word refugee is *mülteci* which was never used in the context of the population exchange.<sup>102</sup> Yet, as discussed in the following chapters, during the early years of

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<sup>101</sup> Nandita Bhavnani, *The Making of Exile: Sindhi Hindus and the Partition of India*, 2014, 289-91. Hannah Arendt starts her seminal essay “We Refugees” by stressing the fact that the term refugee was found obnoxious by “them” and the Jews that sought refuge in the US called themselves “new comers” or “immigrants” instead of refugee. See Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees,” in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston: Faber & Faber, 1994), 110.

<sup>102</sup> Although the concept of *mülteci* was also legally defined in the Ottoman Empire, the difference between *mülteci* and *muhacir* was not quite clear. The categories of *mülteci* and *muhacir* and the difference between them seemed to create uncertainty and confusion even for the Ottoman bureaucracy. On June 22, 1913 (Hijri: Receb 17, 1331) the Directorate of General Security of the Ministry of the Interior sent a detailed warning about the erroneous registration of the Balkan *muhacirs* as *mülteci* in order to prevent their mis-registration. BOA, DH.EUM.MH., 60—29. In 1913, *muhacir* was defined as those who immigrated to the Ottoman state with their *families* and ceased relations with their former homelands. On the other hand, *mülteci* was used those who *personally* took refuge in the Ottoman Empire. This is also how *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* described these terms. These terms were redefined with the 1930

the Republic, although a *mübadil* identity was politically and socially negotiated, it was impossible for the displaced to develop a fully-fledged and unitary identity. Only with the third generation of refugees, in the late 1990s were there efforts to develop and institute such an identity.

In Greece, too, even before World War I and the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the population influx constituted a pressing challenge that Greece faced and this challenge had been identified under the shorthand title of “το προσφυγικό ζήτημα” (*the* refugee issue). “Refugee” was not used to describe objects of international humanitarianism but a generic term referring to the *displaced*. According to the seminal works such as Athanasios B. Protonotarios’ *Το προσφυγικόν πρόβλημα από ιστορικής, νομικής και κρατικής απόψεως* (The Refugee Problem from historical, legal and state perspectives) or Aristoklis I. Aigidis’ *Η Ελλάδα χωρίς τους πρόσφυγας* (Greece without the refugees), before the Asia Minor Campaign, Greece was already under the pressure of incoming populations that had been terrorized and forced to leave the coastal towns of Asia Minor and Cyprus. With the formation and gradual sharpening of Turkish nationalism in the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, the number of people sought refuge in Greece increased as the result of the displacement of the Greek population in the Aegean coasts.

This was coupled with refugee waves due to the Balkan Wars and World War I.

According to a report of the Greek Ministry of Economy regarding the refugees pouring into

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Resettlement Law. H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Balkanlar’ın Makûs Talihi Göç* (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: Kum Saati, 2001), 143-44. See also Fikret Babuş, *Osmanlı’dan günümüze etnik-sosyal politikalar çerçevesinde Türkiye’de göç ve iskân siyaseti uygulamaları* (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2006), 123-27. The distinction between *muhacir* and *mülteci* was disregarded by some recent studies. For example, Isa Blumi translates *muhacir* as refugee in his erudite work *Ottoman Refugees*. See Isa Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World* (New York: A&C Black, 2013). For the evolution of the Ottoman legal jargon regarding the official migration regime see Ella Fratantuono, “Producing Ottomans: Internal Colonization and Social Engineering in Ottoman Immigrant Settlement,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 21, no. 1 (2018): 1–24.

Macedonia, the major turning point in the formation of the refugee issue in Greece was the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913. At this time, the difference between the term for immigrant (μετανάστης [*metanastis*]) and refugee (πρόσφυγας [*prosfyghas*] or πρόσφυξ [*prosfyx*]) was ambiguous and not formalized.<sup>103</sup> The legislative regulations were related less to the definition of these categories and more to addressing the issues of refugees, such as citizenship, settlement, compensation, etc.<sup>104</sup> The main difference between these two terms was compulsion. In the second half of the 1910s, in the Greek press there were discussions about how the term refugee should have been defined.<sup>105</sup> *Melissa*, a Greek newspaper published in Odessa, where a sizable Greek community existed, gives a detailed definition of the term:<sup>106</sup>

The term ‘refugee’ (*prosfyghas*) has acquired a new and unique meaning (*nean kai idiazousan semasian*) in the Greek language over recent years. It became a familiar term in the history of modern Greece, and fully identified with national struggles... Refugees are not merely those in need of protection from others in order to survive and maintain their existence. Everyone who flees his homeland involuntarily (*akousios*) and tastes suffering (*xenitia*) and by necessity (*kat’ anagen*) who is not able to return to his home is, and should be, considered a refugee.

Unlike the Ottoman approach to refugees, in Greece permanent residency was not the issue. On the contrary, in the report of the Greek Ministry of Welfare (Υπουργείο Περιθάλψεως) on the refugee issue between 1917 and 1920 we are told that the major obstacle in front of a

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<sup>103</sup> Even though the difference between these terms were ambivalent, the refugees from Asia Minor and Thrace protested vehemently the use of the concept of immigrant (μετανάστης) instead of the concept of refugee (πρόσφυγας) in 1915. The refugee organizations of Asia Minor sent a collective petition to the General Administrator of the Aegean islands underlying their rights by virtue of being refugees in Greece. See Committees of Asia Minor Refugees in Mytilene, *Οι διωγμοί των ελλήνων εν Θράκη και Μικρασία*, 230.

<sup>104</sup> *Η Περίθαλψις Των Προσφύγων 1917-1920* (Athens: Theodoropoulos, 1920).

<sup>105</sup> See, for instance, *Estia*, July 5, 1916; *Skrip*, July 6, 1916.

<sup>106</sup> Cited by Eftihia Voutira, “Refugees: Whose Term Is It Anyway? *Emic* and *Etic* Constructions of ‘refugees’ in Modern Greek,” in *The Refugee Convention at Fifty: A View from Forced Migration Studies*, ed. Joanne van Selm et al. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003), 69.

permanent resolution of this issue was that the refugees were expected to stay in Greece for an indeterminate period of time.<sup>107</sup> According to the *Επίτομον Ελληνικόν Λεξικόν* (Compendium Greek Dictionary) published in 1932, Greeks who had immigrated to Greece from Turkey, Bulgaria and Russia were categorically defined as refugees. In the seminal works mentioned above, the categories of refugee and immigrant were used interchangeably. The major refugee wave hit the shores of Greece after the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia. For Greece, the Asia Minor Catastrophe was, in Thalia Pandiri's words, "the refugee event par excellence."<sup>108</sup> The refugees from Asia Minor, Pontus and Thrace arriving in Greece before the formal exchange had a long-lasting impact on Greece. From this point onward, the word *πρόσφυγας* without any additional adjectives, became elliptical or rather a logogram for the people displaced from Asia Minor, Pontus and Thrace between 1914 and 1923. After the signature of the Lausanne convention, this term did not cease to exist but continued to be the common appellation for those displaced between 1919 and 1922 regardless of the fact that their status was as *ανταλλάξιμος* (lit. exchangeable). Except for legal jargon, this title has been almost never used. The population exchange was a tragedy for the refugees in a sense that it imposed a legal invisibility upon their experience. What they had been through was not an exchange of populations (*ανταλλαγή*) but persecution (*διωγμός*). Even today, the descendants of the refugees refuse to discuss their ancestors' experience in reference to the population exchange.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> *Η περίθαλψις των προσφύγων 1917-1920*, 21.

<sup>108</sup> Thalia Pandiri, "Driven out of Eden' Voices from the Asia Minor Catastrophe," in *The Dispossessed: An Anatomy of Exile*, ed. Peter Isaac Rose (Amherst, Bosn: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 44.

<sup>109</sup> While doing research in Greece on the population exchange, I sent an email to one of the oldest and most active refugee organizations functioning in Crete, namely the Σύλλογος Αλατσατιανών [Association of Alatsatians], in order to arrange an interview with them on the history of the association, the experiences of "the refugees of the population exchange" and their recent activities. The General Secretary of the Association, Giannis Aspropougos, responded to my email as follows:

In terms of self-designation, it is also worth noting that the Turkish-speaking refugees of the Asia Minor Catastrophe called themselves *muhacir* and used this word as the counterpart to the Greek *πρόσφυγας*. The Karamanlidika (Turkish with Greek letters) used in the bilingual refugee newspaper *Προσφυγική Φωνή* (Refugee Voice) was published under the title of *Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί* (*Muhacir Sedasi*, Immigrant Voice). In the Turkish pages of the newspaper, the stories about the people subject to the population exchange and sent to Turkey were referred to as *muhacirs* as well and the word *mübadil* was never used even for them. Therefore, for the Turkish-speaking refugees the term *muhacir* was the equivalent of the Greek term for refugee.

The refugees' unswerving adherence to *πρόσφυγας* for self-ascription is closely related to the emic construction of the term in the years prior to and after the Asia Minor Catastrophe. In addition to its common negative overtones, the term acquired some unique positive connotations as well. From the perspective of Greek nationalism, the vast majority of refugees were supposed to be of Hellenic descent and hence a natural member of the *Kulturnation*. This emphasis got strengthened after the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the failure to achieve its irredentist ambitions and so a new agenda emerged for the nationalist project, namely the rehabilitation of the refugees. For the sake of this new nationalist agenda, the displacement and suffering of the

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“The Greeks of the administrative unit of Smyrna, which includes our progenitors' homeland, Alatsata, are not a part of the population exchange under the Lausanne Agreement, which was signed in 1923. They are a part of the Greek civilians violently expelled in September 1922, which since you historically study the subject of “the exchange”, I believe, you will learn. Thus, we do not have any information on the population exchange in order to have an interview with you. [...]”

Although in my responding email I tried to explain that the term population exchange was not used to express a personal opinion and not to disparage the suffering of the people that experienced the cataclysm, but, due to the fact that the Convention concerning the exchange was retrospective, it did affect those who left their countries willingly or unwillingly after 1912, they did not respond to my subsequent emails. This strong reaction shows that his personal and the association's institutional identity is built upon the memory of expulsion as opposed to exchange, a sanitized and semantically neutral term, which masks the experiences of the refugees and their descendants' suffering due to this rupture.

Anatolian and Thracian Greeks was transposed from their unfortunate experience into a permanent and monumental inscription carved into the nation's history and memory. The refugees became emblematic of the trauma that prostrated the Greek nation and this was immediately echoed in cultural production, particularly in literature. For instance, Sotiris Skipis, prolific lyric poet published a book titled *Προσφυγικοί Καημοί* (Refugee Grievs) as early as 1923. In his poem "*Προσφυγικός Καημός*" (Refugee Grief) he described this as the following:<sup>110</sup>

Ω πρόσφυγες, με πάθος σας τραγούδησα  
μες στα τραγούδια τ' απροσποίητ' αυτά,  
γιατί κι εγώ, κι εγώ απ' τή δυστυχία σας,  
παιδάκι, δοκιμάστηκα πικρά.

O refugees, with suffering I sang to you  
through those songs such unfeigned,  
because I, myself, through the misery of yours,  
my child, was bitterly tested.

In this atmosphere, the refugees too were quick to embrace their emblematic position for the national grief and the new nationalist discourse built around it, and portrayed themselves as the primogenitor and the protectors of Hellenism. This discourse became the basic element of the "ideology of refugeeism" in Paschalis Kitromilides' terms.<sup>111</sup> Although the word was a term of honor for a segment of the society, its institutionalization and persistency sometimes raised questions regarding the integration of the refugees into the existing social structure. Even the major refugee newspaper *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος* (Refugee World) published a series of articles, most of which were signed by the art critic D. N. Kallonas, on this problem and the internal problems of the refugee world due to its isolation. The titles of the articles speak for themselves:

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<sup>110</sup> Sotiris Skipis, *Προσφυγικοί Καημοί* (Athens: n.d., 1924), 59.

<sup>111</sup> Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "Η Ιδεολογία Του Προσφυγισμού," in *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*, ed. Christina Koulouri (Athens: Ta Nea, 2010), 169.

“refugee ‘pessimism’” (July 10, 1927), “refugee ‘honor’” (21.07.1927), “refugee ‘naivety’” (July 31, 1927), “refugee ‘absent-mindedness’” (August 14, 1927), “refugee solidarity” (August 14, 1927), etc. In the article on refugee “pessimism” Kallonas stressed the fact that being a refugee was not a “profession” and should have been considered as a temporary phase in the lives of the displaced population.<sup>112</sup>

Refugee [*Πρόσφυξ*]! Here is a word that does not serve properly its purpose. It is adamant to jump in to all scopes! Strange but true! It has been two or three years that I have been chasing this word. I find it everywhere except for its literal sense.

— “Where are you from, sir?” — “I’m a refugee!”

— “What do you do, dear?” — “I’m a refugee!”

— “What do you study, pal?” — “I’m a refugee!”

— “Why do you want to see Mr. Officer, please?” — “I’m a refugee!”

— “Sir, what did this urchin do to you?” — “I’m a refugee, Mr. Officer!” And while giving this stock answer the man lowers his head blushing from embarrassment. He believes, or rather has gradually believed, that he is inferior to each and all human beings, since he is a refugee. That he is doomed to be outrageous. (...)

Refugee. Derived from the verb to flee [*προσφεύγω*]. At some point we all sought refuge somewhere. I do not see any superiority in those who accepted those who sought refuge. Why is this pessimism, lads? The word refugee has to vanish. Only the word human has to survive.

What are you, sir? I am a Greek citizen! Here is the answer! Where are you from? From Smyrna. What is your work? I am ... gravedigger!.. (...) These are the natural answers to such questions, Neohellenic lads (*Νεοέλληνες κύριοι*), and not “I am a refugee!” What does it say to us? There is no human being whose profession is being refugee.

These criticisms and their paradoxical nature persisted into the post-War period as well.

In the wake of the Greek Civil War when the society was politically and socioeconomically polarized, Anastasios Bakalbasis, a former minister of agriculture, in his speech at the Center of Refugees (*Κέντρον Πρόσφύγων*) strongly emphasized that the use of the label refugee had to stop because nobody in society and no political party benefited from it. According to Bakalbasis, the term was divisive and an obstacle to generating a “single national pulse.”<sup>113</sup> Despite these critical

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<sup>112</sup> *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, July 10, 1927.

<sup>113</sup> *Οι Πρόσφυγες* (Athens: Kentron Prosfygon, 1945), 16.

approaches to the term, refugee has never ceased to exist and indeed continues in use to today with certain alterations determined by the sociopolitical needs of the times and the social context. In the 1960s and 1970s refugee identity was revitalized with the full-fledged transformation of “1922” and the historical shadow tailing it into a *lieu de mémoire*. The occupation of Cyprus by Turkey in 1974 resulted in a new humanitarian crisis and the most visible aspect of this was the displaced Cypriots and the fate of the Cypriots still living in the remaining “mixed” villages. With the Turkish intervention and de facto partition of the island came the idea of a new population exchange between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. This exchange gained international recognition by the United Nations’ *Vienna III communiqué* of August 2, 1975.<sup>114</sup> With this agreement the displacement of more than 200,000 Cypriots, (Greek- and Turkish-) was formalized. The Civil War after World War II and the military dictatorship between 1967 and 1974 had already created thousands of political refugees scattered in various socialist countries. The same period was, not by coincidence, marked by what is called the second wave of migration from Greece, which is generally characterized as being triggered by the economic situation. Through the political refugees of the Civil War and the military dictatorship, and the economic migration in the 1960s, the Cypriot refugees turned the Asia Minor refugee identity and *the* 1922 into a site of memory,<sup>115</sup> which created the conditions for a moral necessity to

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<sup>114</sup> For the Vienna Agreement see Murat Metin Hakki, *The Cyprus Issue: A Documentary History, 1878-2006* (London; New York: I.B.Tauris, 2007), 194-95.

<sup>115</sup> Antonis Liakos, “Εισαγωγή: Το “1922” και εμείς,” in *Το 1922 και οι πρόσφυγες μια νέα ματιά*, ed. Antonis Liakos (Athens: Nefeli, 2011), 12. In another popular article of his, Antonis Liakos, similar to Paschalis Kitromilides referring to an ideology of refugeism, denominates this last meaning that the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the turmoil which followed the “ideology of the lost homelands.” idem, “Η Ιδεολογία των «Χαμένων Πατρίδων»,” *To Vima*, September 13, 1998. The tides in the Greco-Turkish relations did not only have a “trickle-down” impact on the collective memory of the displacement but directly affected the populations exempted from the population exchange and held hostage. This is discussed in the fifth chapter.



institutionalize the memory of the Catastrophe and refugeehood. Today, in the middle of a new humanitarian crisis due to the refugee influx to Greece from various countries from the Middle East and Africa, the word *πρόσφυγας* constitutes the bitterly contested terrain on which the battles of the past, present and future are fought.

Without ignoring this linguistic different in Greece and Turkey regarding naming the displaced, throughout this study I employ the term “refugee” to refer the *exodiens*, the displaced Orthodox population of Anatolia and Thrace and the Muslims of Greece. I do not use the term merely to refer to the subjects of international humanitarianism or as a notion defined by customary international law, which is a tool of state building and, in the final analysis, trivializing certain forms of displacement as a legitimate method of state building and as a legal matter. On the contrary, this choice aims to resist the plasticity of international categories created to define the displaced.<sup>116</sup> Nor was this choice only for the sake of terminological convenience; it was deployed with the understanding that refugee refers to a special mode of existence and a specific relation to the “host” state and society, which can be applied both to the *πρόσφυγας* and the *mübadil*. More specifically, refugee symbolizes instability, isolation, and the unknown, but most importantly it is defined by its inferiority in contrast to what can be called “citizen proper.”<sup>117</sup> This term also includes refugees’ responses and how they accommodate themselves after the temporal and spatial rupture. In other words, following Peter Gatrell’s description, refugeehood refers to a “shifting matrix of relations and practices to which refugees themselves

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<sup>116</sup> As Gemie et al. clearly emphasizes, although differences between dissidents, refugees, forced migrants, evacuees are clear in theory, in practice it is usually hard to distinguish these categories. This is a clear indicator of the plasticity of these categories and their state-centric derivation. Gemie et al., *Outcast Europe*, 5.

<sup>117</sup> Jacques Vernant, *The Refugee in the Post-War World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 13.

have contributed.”<sup>118</sup> Although their assigned countries granted them citizenship immediately upon their arrival, the refugees in Greece and Turkey continued to be marginalized and subject to discrimination for decades and generations to come as they struggled to acquire basic civil rights. It should be also underscored that the refugees did not form a monolithic group. They were divided along class, gender, and linguistic lines, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

### **1.3 Displacement as an attempt of disentanglement**

Tchavdar Marinov observed that regarding the emergence of nationalisms in the Balkans, “there is an entanglement not only between the histories of the ‘Orthodox Christian’ nationalisms but also between them and their “Muslim” opponents. The development of Turkish nationalism cannot be understood without taking into account the shrinking of the Ottoman Empire, in particular as a result of the creation of Balkan nation-states.”<sup>119</sup>

In this respect, the development of Greek and Turkish nationalisms was no different. Actually, their development was one of the most obvious cases throughout the Balkans. As two neighboring countries that waged their “wars of independence” against one another, Greece and Turkey have so far *constructed* and *conditioned* each other in many ways. Greek and Turkish nationalisms mainly developed and evolved in bitter struggle with each other in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which created a skein of ties and conflicts. The territorial claims of these nationalist projects were simply incompatible. For both nationalisms, vindictively purging the tainted elements within their imagined community, in other words, expelling the populace

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<sup>118</sup> Peter Gatrell, “Refugees—What’s Wrong with History?,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 30, no. 2 (June 1, 2017): 184.

<sup>119</sup> Tchavdar Marinov, “Introduction to Section One: Nations and National Ideologies in the Balkans,” in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, ed. Rumen Daskalov and Tchavdar Marinov, vol. 1 (National Ideologies and Language Policies), 3 vols. (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 6.

associated with the rival nationalism and purifying the national land by any means were the basic goal of their programs. In his *Τοπωνυμικά Παράδοξα* (Toponymic Paradoxes)--referring to the Turkish place names in Greece--, Dimitrios Kambouroglou writes with irony about his Turkish-sounding surname “on the Greek land anything non-Greek should remain.”<sup>120</sup> Similarly, the expulsion of the Greeks is praised in the textbooks of the 1930s in Turkey as the removal of barriers blocking the “Turk’s springs of talent.”<sup>121</sup> It is this reciprocity and connectedness that makes Özkırmılı and Sofos describe the relationship between Greek and Turkish nationalisms as “dissimilar yet symmetrical, antagonistic yet dialectical.”<sup>122</sup> This statement can be taken one step further and it can be claimed that even after the secession of Greece from the Ottoman Empire, these two countries continued to be interdependent, overlapping, and eventually historically entangled. The Treaty of Lausanne was a manifestation of this historical entanglement since it was mainly an attempt to diplomatically regulate it. In other words, like the independence of Greece from the Ottoman Empire, but to a much greater degree, the Treaty of Lausanne marked an attempt to transition from imperial entanglement to national disentanglement. Such a move was necessary for the two countries to move forward and it had far-reaching consequences manifest today in international as well as internal politics, culture and economy.

Greece and Turkey, which had not fully resolved the issues arisen in the 1920s and 1930s, found themselves in contention and rivalry as homologous game pieces of the same set in the post-WWII era’s geopolitical and ideological chessboard. This added new dimensions to their

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<sup>120</sup> Dimitrios Gr. Kambouroglou, *Τοπωνυμικά Παράδοξα* (Athens: Vivliopoleion tis “Estias,” 1920), 2.

<sup>121</sup> *Tarih IV: Kemalist eğitimin tarih dersleri (1931 - 1941)*, vol. 4, 4 vols. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2001), 301.

<sup>122</sup> Umut Özkırmılı and Spyros A. Sofos, *Tormented by History: Nationalism in Greece and Turkey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 2.

entanglement. The issues that were not settled in 1923 or created with the exchange convention, such as the exemption from the population exchange, the status and civil rights of those who were exempted from the exchange, the status of the Patriarchate, were coupled with other historical problems such as the Aegean sovereignty and Cyprus after WWII. Henry Kissinger, who has deeply influenced foreign policy makers in the US, once described the Greco-Turkish rivalry as centuries-old and almost certainly utterly incomprehensible.<sup>123</sup> From a US perspective American diplomat Monteagle Stearns called Greece and Turkey entangled allies for the same political and historical reason.

In recent years, on several separate occasions, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized the Treaty of Lausanne and claimed that neither the treaty nor the borders it demarcated were indisputable. According to Erdoğan, the western powers "threatened us with the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 and persuaded us to accept Lausanne in 1923." The leaders of several nationalist parties in Greece reacted in a similar way and with similar historical references. Former Minister of National Defense Panos Kammenos, who is also the leader of the populist, rightwing Independent Greeks, said that "if Erdoğan does not want the Treaty Lausanne, there is also the Treaty Sèvres." Similarly, neo-Nazi Golden Dawn's leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos called the western coasts of Turkey "enslaved homelands" (σκληρωμένες πατρίδες), that is to say, "the homelands to be emancipated." Even this example shows that there is still an indispensable historical, geopolitical and politico-legal entanglement between Greece and Turkey.

Given this "shared" past, geography and political lineage, the displacement of Orthodox and Muslim populations provides an important case of historical entanglement. Although the

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<sup>123</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 196.

displacement was seen as an attempt at “disentanglement,” in Winston S. Churchill’s words,<sup>124</sup> the displacement and its formalization through the population exchange resulted in further interaction and intermixture rather than homogenization and “unmixing.” But this was not presented in this way by the approaches that monopolize the early historiography with its methodological parochialism, do not hold images of “the other” and fail to analyze the complexity of historical processes. The Greco-Turkish population exchange still casts a long shadow over the two countries and exhibits a case of mutual articulation for both Greece and Turkey. In addition to this, the exchange, in terms of its consequences, cannot be regarded as a one-dimensional demographic operation. It certainly changed how the political actors behaved, how the economies operated, how the ideological structures interacted, and in what way all social relations functioned in these countries. Therefore, the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange should be seen as the entanglement of these social levels with complicated consequences rather the ersatz of a nationalist anxiety or obsession of either country, which was notwithstanding promoted with special vigor facilely emphasizing a lustrous list of overwhelmingly —and incongruously— positive political and economic outcomes conducive to social cohesion for the parts.

#### **1.4 The argument**

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<sup>124</sup> In multiple occasions, Winston Churchill called the method of exchanging disentanglement of populations and specifically referred to the Greco-Turkish population exchange as an example of this demographic method. See Churchill’s House of Commons speeches carried out on April 13, 1933 and December 15, 1944. Churchill: “House of Commons Debate (April 13, 1933),” in *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): House of Commons Official Report*, vol. 276 (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1933), 2788; See also 1944 speech cited above.

This study analyzes the subjective encounter of the people who experienced firsthand the population exchange. Refugees were marginalized and alienated by the “family of nations.” They were assumed to be unstable population because they did not fit in the “national order of things.” Thus, they had to be assimilated into the existing social structures of the “host” society silently, passively, and as quickly as possible. In the existing body of scholarly literature, the experience of these displaced and vulnerable people is either disregarded or discussed with the primary emphasis on their desperation and their living conditions. In this discourse, refugees tend to be depicted as inhuman, even animalistic, and as objects completely deprived of agency. The more refugees’ agency is obscured, the more silenced and victimized they are. Refugeehood, as a term and condition, has been dehistoricized, de-politicized and deployed to homogenize their actual lived experience. Consequently, their interaction with power is generally seen as a one-dimensional and a one-way relationship which was imposed on refugees from above. So, the pendulum of social sciences oscillates between nationalism and romanticism, in other words, between statist managerial paradigms making refugees invisible within the domain of nation-state and apolitical paradigms of histrionic compassion universalizing refugees and portraying them as quintessential victims.

Although this issue has been attracting international attention in the twenty-first century because of contemporary refugee crisis, this does not mean that mainstream scholarship has transcended the paradoxical predicament summarized above. Mainstream scholarship still approaches the refugee issue with an apolitical and managerial outlook, which completely overlooks the fundamentals of the refugee problem and the violence inflicted on refugees both before and after their displacement. This approach reproduces and reiterates the problem, particularly by reinforcing the conflict-resolution perspective that controls the established

discourse. On the other hand, there is a flourishing literature that considers and draws attention to the “western” roots of the refugee issue and considers not only the conditions “creating” refugees out of people but also humanitarianism that surrounds the political proposals and the so-called critical literature relating to the refugee issue as a form of domination and criticizes the managerial approach dominating mainstream social science. The literature critical of the dominant western paradigms follows in the footsteps of Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben and defines refugeehood as the epitome of “biopolitics,” as Michael Foucault called it, and forceful reduction to apolitical “bare life”---a term indicating refugees' complete removal from political life and their inability to conceive of political praxis.<sup>125</sup> Although this approach has resonated with some scholars and provoked new, insightful, and critical debates regarding political philosophy, the mode(s) of governance of the global system and re-conceptualizing the refugee in this context, this literature also tends to disregard the agency of refugees by reducing them to people preoccupied with eking out a “bare life” and it reproduces the managerial perspective of the mainstream scholarship, in which “the refugee” becomes visible only in relation to the policies of nation-states or as a function of international humanitarianism.

Given these limitations and pitfalls of the literature on refugees, this study focuses on the people exchanged between Greece and Turkey in 1923 experienced and responded to displacement. I argue, as opposed to the existing literature, that the 1923 refugees were not silent and subservient objects; on the contrary, the refugees were active both in their old and new “homelands.” They were neither beloved abstractions of political philosophers nor dry leaves blown by the high winds of history. On the contrary, they were real, living and historical women

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<sup>125</sup> Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees,” in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston: Faber & Faber, 1994), 118; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6-11.

and men who were able to act on their behalf, develop survival strategies, and whose actions not only shaped their own history but also contributed to the collective histories of their communities. Nonetheless, they posed challenges to the national narrative in myriad positive and negative ways. Not only did the refugees resist the demographic engineering imposed upon them, they also fought for their civil, political and socio-economic rights. One way to overcome their invisibility, their reduction to figures and percentages in government reports and debates, and their victimization is by bringing to light how they coped with their situation, what survival strategies they developed, along with the activities, personal or collective actions that they undertook. Moreover, we need to situate their experiences into a comparative context.

This study, then, focuses on how the refugees experienced the forced displacement and their actions and reactions in the face of forced displacement, dispersement and their subsequent marginalization. This study also examines their political efforts to create a new life and reshape the political landscape of their new country.

Focusing on the experiences of refugees in both countries is particularly important because asymmetry constitutes another flaw in the literature. The existing scholarship focuses mainly on the refugees in Greece. As discussed in the following chapters, to a certain extent this asymmetry is understandable considering the number of the Greek refugees who were displaced from Anatolia and Thrace and who took refuge in Greece; consequently, the volume of the documentation available on them is greater. What needs to be revised is the almost complete neglect of the study of the Muslim populations who were settled in their new homeland: Turkey. It is also important to note that this asymmetry has been instrumental in the attachment of the displacement and the experiences of the refugees into some nationalist success stories. Consequently, this study asserts that in order to get a full picture of the forced displacement that



the people subjected to the population exchange, it is vital to equally incorporate the experiences of the Muslim refugees as well as those of Greek Orthodox Christians.

## **1.5 Sources**

In a period when the national order of things shaped political culture, it was widely assumed that the refugees were an unstable, out-of-place population that had to be assimilated into the existing social hierarchy as expeditiously and as quickly as possible. This viewpoint was shared by mainstream social sciences. In the existing body of literature, the experience of the refugees is either disregarded or examined with a focus primarily on their desperation and their wretched living conditions. As discussed earlier, these factors have objectified them and deprived them of political and social agency. The more the refugees' agency is obscured, the victimized are they. Refugeehood, as an imposed term and condition, has stripped them of their own history, depoliticized them, and suppressed the discourse on how they defined what the term meant to them. Consequently, their interaction with power is generally seen as a one-dimensional and one-way relationship which was imposed upon refugees. The pendulum of social sciences oscillates between nationalism and romanticism, in other words, between statist paradigms making refugees invisible within the domain of the nation-state and sweeping comparisons universalizing refugees and portraying them as pure victims. So, the famous question posed by Gayatri Spivak, "Can the subaltern speak?", becomes particularly relevant to the case of refugees. As Spivak states, subalternity is about silence and non- or misrepresentation. Spivak underlines that the subaltern does speak, act and resist; yet, she is almost always indiscernible or

inaudible.<sup>126</sup> Yet this approach to subalternity bears methodological shortcomings similar to problems of the approach of the Arendt-Agamben school to “the refugee,” that is to say, this approach can re-impose to the subaltern a reverse form of invisibility and silence of history which is supposed to be internalized by them. Therefore, it also incurs the risk of reproducing and leaving the subaltern being caught up in the cycles of silence, in a state, as it were, of “dumbness.” To avoid any evasive interpretation of subalternity, one should take into account the criticism directed towards Spivak by Aijaz Ahmad, who considers Spivak’s emphasis on “complete silence” as tautologous,<sup>127</sup> and keep in mind the note of Antonio Gramsci, who originally conceptualized subalternity, to the “integral” historian: “Every trace of independent initiative on the part of subaltern groups should therefore be of incalculable value for the integral historian.”<sup>128</sup> As historical subjects upon whom a rigorous and institutionalized silence was imposed, analyzing refugeehood and writing the “subaltern” history of the displaced is challenging. It is, therefore, important to make the most of the sources that reveal the historical moments and processes when the displaced spoke. This was usually when they contested and resisted the conditions of their oppression and re-imagined the world around them.

In this respect, this study aims to make the voices of the displaced audible and comprehensible, by analyzing refugee testimonies and oral accounts. In addition to the already-collected materials, I talked to first- and second-generation refugees in Turkey and in Greece in the form of semi-structured interviews. Particularly in Turkey, such fieldwork was necessary in

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<sup>126</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313.

<sup>127</sup> Aijaz Ahmad, “Post Colonial Theory and the ‘Post-’ Condition,” *Socialist Register* 33 (1997): 378.

<sup>128</sup> Antonio Gramsci, “History of the Subaltern Classes: Methodological Criteria,” in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 55.

the absence of a systematic work similar to the one done in Greece by the Center for Asia Minor Studies in the aftermath of the displacement. I examined the oral accounts collected by the Center for Asia Minor and housed in the Center's Archive of Oral Tradition (*Αρχείο Προφορικής Παράδοσης*). This was accompanied by a study of manuscripts stored in the Center's Archive of Manuscripts (*Αρχείο Χειρογράφων*).

There are also the materials produced deliberately by refugees, sometimes for consumption by other refugees, to narrate personal or collective experiences of refugeehood and sometimes for nostalgic purposes. Although, as underscored by some scholars,<sup>129</sup> writing and refugees appear, at first glance, to be almost incompatible, these materials are extremely important particularly for the purposes of this study. In this regard, the publications of refugee organizations (pamphlets, brochures, handouts, books etc.), refugee memoirs and testimonies can be classified under this category. Even though there is a significant asymmetry between Greece and Turkey regarding the availability of such materials, I have tried to incorporate materials from both countries, thus providing the basis for comparisons. A significant number of them have been unearthed by me or utilized in an academic work for the first time. As far as the asymmetry between Greece and Turkey in terms of refugee publications is concerned, it should be mentioned that a special category emerged in Greece: the refugee press. Several refugee newspapers and periodicals started to be published after the displacement of the Greek population in Anatolia and Thrace. These publications constitute a rich source for the experience of the refugees and their absence on the Turkish side constitutes a considerable gap for the studies on the population exchange and the refugee experience in the 1920s and onwards.<sup>130</sup> In

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<sup>129</sup> Gemie et al., *Outcast Europe*, 10.

<sup>130</sup> It is important to note that in 1909 a short-lived refugee newspaper, *Muhacir*, was published in the Ottoman Empire by a refugee organization, *Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti*. For this newspaper

this study, a unique example of this genre, the only refugee newspaper published in Greece in Turkish with Greek characters, *Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί* [Muhacir Sedası, literally Immigrant Voice], to address the Turkish-speaking refugees is used and problematized while discussing the experiences of the Turcophone Greeks in Greece.<sup>131</sup>

The emphasis on refugee experience, however, creates a methodological pitfall. While trying to overcome the one-dimensionality of the existing literature, the examination of “the world that refugees made” usually dismisses the world around them and the interaction between these two and causes reverse reproduction of the isolation of refugees in the literature. In order to avoid this pitfall, the sources take on an added importance. This contributes to the silence imposed upon refugees. Therefore, the analysis of their interaction with the “outer” world, particularly with the state and the political organizations purporting to represent them or acting against the refugee cause, has cardinal importance for considering the bigger picture and contextualizing the refugee experience. This interaction is reflected in the official documents that regulated the consequences of the refugee influx after the displacement or in the documents produced by the refugees to address various state offices or personalities. These sorts of documents are dispersed in a number of archives. In Greece, for instance, the various types of documents on the population exchange from the Diplomatic & Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Benaki Museum’s Venizelos Archive or the State Archives of the Republic of Turkey are employed in this study. In addition to the archival documents, this dissertation draws on a wide range of media materials from Greece and Turkey and not only the

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see Züriye Çelik, “Osmanlı’nın Zor Yıllarında Rumeli Göçmenlerinin Türk Basınındaki Sesi: ‘Muhacir’ Gazetesi (1909-1910),” *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1, no. 28 (2010): 403–13.

<sup>131</sup> I would like to express my deep gratitude to my friend Ioannis Andronikos, who works at the National Library of Greece and helped me locate and work on this newspaper in the collection of the library.

refugee voices in the press are recaptured but this study avails itself of the newspapers of the time to analyze how the refugee issue was handled in the two countries and how the newspaper responded to this problem.

As far as the secondary literature is concerned, the next chapter of this study is allocated to a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature on the refugee issue in Greece and Turkey and the population exchange in 1923. The literature is problematized and treated as a source to portray the development of the skewed perception of forced displacement and exchanging people as a means of conflict resolution. The literature concerning the population exchange reveals also how historiography can be utilized as an effective ideological and political tool for not only state-building processes but also for international community regarding the solution of global problems, such as communal violence, “illegal” immigration and refugee issue, etc. through inhumane methods and measures.

## **1.6 Outline of the study**

There are four main chapters. Chapter 2, "Historians' histories or what's history good for?" presents an extensive survey of the literature on the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange starting from the early days of the population exchange till today by putting a special emphasis on a specific bias of the literature toward conflict resolution, or in more eulogistic terms, peace-making at the expense of refugee experience and the human cost of this method as a diplomatic tool. As understood from the title, this chapter tries to answer some basic questions regarding the development of the historiography: Why does the literature consider the population exchange as an exemplary model of conflict resolution? What factors led to this development? The first section of the chapter concentrates on the canonical works that determined the course of

the literature and the shortcomings of these works. After the creation of the "metanarrative" on the Greco-Turkish population exchange have been exposed, Section 2 of this chapter deals with the early reaction of the academia to the population exchange by analyzing the four theses written in the US universities in the 1930s and 1940s. The following two sections of this chapter provide a critical analysis of the national(ist) historiographies in Greece and in Turkey and where exactly the historiography on this particular issue stands in the context of Greek and Turkish historiographies. The national(ist) historiographies of Greece and Turkey to which the official discourses of the Greek and Turkish nation-states are committed were challenged by new trends in history writing. So were the nation-building processes in these two countries. This resulted in a historiographical anxiety, which constitutes the subject of Section 5 of this chapter.

Chapter 3 addresses a hitherto neglected subject: the experiences of the Muslim/Turkish refugees of the 1923 population exchange. As discussed in the following chapters, the center of gravity of the existing literature is toward a state-centric analysis of the impact of the population exchange on Greece, and this emphasis obscures the experiences of the Muslim refugees expelled from Greece. In addition to this, the existing studies on the population exchange and its consequences in Turkey, predominantly in Turkish language, almost always fails to adopt a refugee-oriented approach and the refugees of the population exchange become nothing but numbers in tables and are portrayed as mere dependents and recipients of the policies implemented by the Turkish state. Hence, the political potential of the refugees as well as their actual political actions are disregarded. The chapter tries to answer the following questions: How did the refugees react to this political atmosphere? How did the refugees become a part of the public dialogue over their fate and the matter of citizenship in Turkey? How did the refugees interact with the existing political party/parties and how and why did they establish their own

organizations? How did the refugees respond to their fundamental problems regarding the basic rights granted to them and how the Exchange Association mediated between its grassroots and the state? Finally, how did the refugees communicate and interfere with the state? The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section describes the political conditions and contexts that the refugees tried to navigate. The following section focuses on the self-organization experiences of the refugees and how they tried to influence the state policies. Through putting a particular emphasis on the activities of the Exchange Association and the rally it organized in Constantinople on August 17, 1924 to defend the civil rights and express the immediate needs of the population exchange refugees in Turkey the section tries to challenge the existing picture of refugees that assumes and portrays them inactive and submissive. It was not only the political atmosphere that put pressure on the refugees, but also the material conditions and hardships that they faced. These material conditions and hardships constitute the main theme of this chapter, which underlines that deprivation of basic material needs. Material want is a common element is a common theme in both the Greek and the Muslims' experience of refugeehood. Moreover, following the footsteps of the previous section, this one substantiates further the fact that one of the main sources of hardships was the state's haphazard, or rather, non-existent, settlement policy. The refugees spoke out in the face of the non-policy and unjust practices of the state. For them the most important and frequent means of "speaking out," in other words political participation, was personal and collective petitioning with various officials and offices. Through analyzing several examples of collective petitioning/pamphleteering this section aims at showing that refugees' repertoire of negotiation and contention broadened while looking for an efficient remedy through petitioning.

In a like vein, Chapter 4 discusses different episodes and methods of refugee reaction in Greece, which was greater and more organized in comparison to the case in Turkey. Although the center of gravity of the existing literature on the population exchange is Greece, the experiences of the Orthodox refugees were overshadowed by the national trauma of the ignominious defeat in Asia Minor in 1922 and the discourse through which the national narrative was revised after this catastrophic defeat. The chapter seeks to answer the following questions: What were the means of political participation available to and created by the refugees in interwar Greece? What political roles did the refugee organizations assume in the same period? Did the refugee factor cause or trigger any “continental drifts” in the interwar political life in Greece? What were the short and long-term consequences of the refugee politics in this country? In order to find the answers to these questions, the chapter is organized in four sections: The first section addresses itself to the self-organizations of the refugees founded in the immediate aftermath of the displacement. The ever-increasing number of refugee organizations resulted in the incapacitation of refugee politics due to fragmentation. This fragmentation tried to be palliated by an umbrella organization, the all-refugee congress, which was supposed to facilitate coordination among innumerable refugee organizations of different sizes and effects. For this purpose, the first two all-refugee congresses are looked closer. Following this, the second section focuses on one of the most remarkable historical turning points in the history of Modern Greece that took place in 1924: the declaration of the Second Hellenic Republic. More analytically, this section analyzes refugee republicanism through the pages of a refugee newspaper, *Prosfygiki Foni (Refugee Voice)*, which has not been studied before and unique in terms of its bilingual publication, Greek and Turkish in Greek characters. The third section, on the other hand, pinpoints a relatively well-studied subject, namely the relationship between the Communist Party of Greece and refugee



masses. To this end, I start my discussion with inquiring into the mayoral elections of 1925 in Thessaloniki, won by a candidate of refugee origin and supported by the Communist Party and then studies the relationship between the Communist Party and refugees in the interwar period and the reaction of the Greek state as well as the mainstream “bourgeois” politics.

There were also sub-groups within the “refugee mass” in both countries and episodes that more than usually drop beneath the radar of the existing historiography. These groups standing at the “marginal margins” and created by this particular displacement experience and the episodes protagonists of which were or became these people on the margins of the society constitute the main focus of Chapter 5. The chapter puts forward answers to the following question: What is marginality in a nation-state and how are national margins determined? Ignorant of the official language of their “new homeland,” one of the most transparent markers of marginality and the most essential skill for participating in social life, the Greek-speaking refugees in Turkey and the Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece were easily stigmatized and then ostracized not only by the relevant nation-states but also by mainstream society and even by their refugee brothers and sisters. In the atmosphere prevailing in both countries where the dominant mentality was heavily imbued by nationalism, non-Greek or non-Turkish speaking refugees were minoritized within a large refugee population. Speaking of minoritization, the final section of this chapter deals with another aspect of the population exchange, not with those people who had to leave their homelands but with those who were made to stay as minorities. In other words, this section is not about “refugization” but “minoritization,” more specifically the experience of the minority communities, which were *de jure* defined by the population exchange convention. By focusing on a hitherto academically untouched episode, namely the devastation of a historically Greek neighborhood of Constantinople by a fire, the suspicious break-out and consequences of which

inflamed a crisis between Greece and Turkey after the population exchange convention regarding the minorities and their rights.

## Chapter 2: Historians' histories or what is history good for?

Αλλάζουμε με ήχους και συλλαβές  
τα αισθήματα στη χάρτινη καρδιά μας,  
δημοσιεύουμε τα ποιήματά μας,  
για να τιτλοφορούμεθα ποιητές.<sup>132</sup>

Kostas Karyotakis, "Όλοι Μαζί"

### 2.1 Introduction

Being expelled from one's homeland and then settled in a foreign land as a refugee increases above all else, one's sense of distance, which, as Carlo Ginzburg suggests, has epistemological and moral implications. So does historical distance.<sup>133</sup> Here we should underline that the concept of historical distance is neither a mere alternative to that of temporal distance, nor can the former be reduced to the latter. Yet historical distance rather indicates a series of strategies employed to achieve effects of proximity and separation, that is to say the strategies that intensify the moral impact and political ramifications of an event through the idea of stepping back from the historical scene.<sup>134</sup> In addition, I suggest that historical distance is not necessarily the result of a volitional act performed only by professional historians; instead it can

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<sup>132</sup> "We change by sounds and syllables / the feeling in our paper hearts, / we publish our poems, / so that we may bestow on our good selves the title of poets." Karyotakis was a trade-unionist and bureaucrat. In Preveza he worked in the resettlement of refugees at the Office of Colonization and Refugee Settlement. Vangelis Calotychos, *Modern Greece: A Cultural Poetics* (Berg, 2003), 145.

<sup>133</sup> Jaap Den Hollander, Herman Paul, and Rik Peters, "Introduction: The Metaphor of Historical Distance," *History and Theory* 50, no. 4 (December 1, 2011): 1–10.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

result from the destruction of the physical and spiritual unity of time and place; thus, even those who have experienced a certain event may find themselves in personal or communal need of accentuating the results and meanings of this event and becoming historically distant from it in moral and cognitive terms. Both creating and gauging historical distance is facilitated by temporal distance—in this case, almost one hundred years have passed since signing of the Lausanne Convention and then the exchange of populations. The historical distance between the 1920s and 2020s may let not only us, the historians, but also those who have a direct or hereditary link to this event to rethink its consequences and history by adopting new analytical perspectives. Placing a historical event in new perspectives can, however, only be achieved through a critical engagement with the knowledge of how the episode was hitherto perceived and presented, seen or neglected in different times and places from an intellectual distance. Therefore, to adopt or provide new perspectives, history has to write its own critical account; likewise, the history of the population exchange has to write its own history venturing, or rather seeking, a historiographical anxiety in Pierre Nora's terms.<sup>135</sup>

The last point allows me to move to the case of the Greco-Turkish population exchange and its historiography, —or rather *historiographies*. The historiographies of the population exchange are also characterized by distance as being integral parts of two opposed national/nationalist historiographies. What I mean is that it can be considered as tautology; for nationalisms are mutually exclusive by definition. Yet Greek and Turkish official nationalisms exhibit a peculiar, if not unique, case.<sup>136</sup> These two nationalisms share a homology in terms of

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<sup>135</sup> Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, no. 26 (April 1, 1989): 10.

<sup>136</sup> For official nationalism see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 159.

their foundational myths or assumptions beyond nationalisms' common traits. Sticking to the nationalist jargon, the two countries waged their "wars of independence" against each other within a century (1821 and 1922) and continued to interact all the way down to this day. This "intimacy" made these two nationalist projects develop in tandem, bound them together inextricably and more generally it can be said that they were constructed interactively as some scholars claim.<sup>137</sup> Considering also the interrelationship among nation/nationalism, state and history, one can claim that it was this "reactionist intimacy" and continuous interaction of the two nationalist projects that creates the distance between Greek and Turkish nationalist historiographies, which are also among the pillars of the corresponding official nationalism and also the historiographies of the population exchange, which remained blocks of those pillars at least until the arousal of the historiographical anxiety in these two countries. Thus, the plurality of the historiographies of the population exchange does not only indicate the distance between how the subject matter is treated by one of the two official nationalisms, but it also suggests that those historiographies has been evolving and passing through fundamental changes.

This chapter provides an overview of the historiographies on the population exchange. I start by examining the early works on the subject that collectively formed what we can term the canon. Then it concentrates on the early academic reaction to the population exchange by elaborating on the theses produced at US universities in the aftermath of the exchange. Then I review Greek and Turkish national historiographies before the 1970s. Finally, I examine the new trends in the historiographies that have emerged since the 1970s.

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<sup>137</sup> See Özkırımlı and Sofos, *Tormented by History*.

## 2.2 Early interest and the formation of the canon

“I believe that an exchange of populations, however well it were carried out, must impose very considerable hardships, perhaps very considerable impoverishment, upon great numbers of individual citizens of the two countries who are exchanged. But I also believe that these hardships, great though they may be, will be less than the hardships which will result for these same populations if nothing is done.”

Fridtjof Nansen,<sup>138</sup> High Commissioner for Refugees of the League of Nations  
The Eighth meeting of the Territorial and Military Commission at Lausanne  
December 1, 1922

The whole constellation of developments in the early twentieth century, particularly the Great War, changed the world in profound ways. At the end of the War, the entire international landscape looked very different in comparison to the pre-War maps. The War resulted in the disintegration of empires and to the creation of new states based on the principle of national homogeneity and self-determination. New borders were drawn to demarcate the newly formed states and all borders were enforced to restore the destabilized international order and to avoid future conflicts. John Hope Simpson described the radical change in terms of borders that the world went through as the following: “I traveled a great deal before the War, all over the world, and I never needed a passport. But since the War frontiers have been closed and nobody can cross them, not only with a passport, but without a visa on the passport from the representative of

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<sup>138</sup> *Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs 1922-1923: Records of Proceedings and Draft Terms of Peace*. (London: H.M.S.O., 1923), 115. Here I should note that in one of the pioneering works on the population exchange, namely *Crossing the Aegean*, Michael Barutciski quotes this passage as the speech of Lord Curzon, chairman of the Territorial and Military Commission under the Lausanne Convention. Michael Barutciski, “Lausanne Revisited: Population Exchanges in International Law and Policy,” in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. Renée Hirschon (Oxford: Berghahn, 2003), 26. After Barutciski, some other studies cited Nansen’s speech as that of Curzon. For example, see Erin K. Jenne, “Ethnic Partition Under the League of Nations: The Cases of Population Exchanges in the Interwar Balkans,” in *Rethinking Violence*, ed. Erica Chenoweth and Adria Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), 117.

the country to which the traveller wishes to go. Thus, movements of population have been checked.”<sup>139</sup>

Simpson here sets out another reason why the borders were closed and tightly regulated. The war had uprooted millions of civilians and the nation-state formation practices in the wake of the imperial breakdowns after the war were being accompanied by drastic population displacements. Although refugees were known to the international community before the war, it took the shape of a grave problem in the 1910s and 1920s. Waves of refugees were sweeping Europe and the Middle East in an unprecedented way.

Alexander Anastasios Pallis, for example, counted 17 migratory movements in the Balkans alone between 1912 and 1924<sup>140</sup> and these population movements were so immense that they would be surpassed only by the tragedies of the Second World War.<sup>141</sup> Out of these tides Simpson specifies three definite post-war refugee movements: the Greek refugees who came into Greece, the Bulgarian refugees who came into Bulgaria; and finally the Turkish refugees who went to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey<sup>142</sup> Among those, hundreds of thousands of Greek refugees fleeing from Asia Minor, Thrace and Pontus particularly after the collapse of the Greek front in Anatolia in September 1922 attracted international attention.

On November 12 of the same year, for example, *The Washington Post* reported the call for help of the Greek Minister of Relief asserting “America and the other nations must decide

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<sup>139</sup> John Hope Simpson, “The Refugee Problem,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1931-1939)* 17, no. 5 (September 1, 1938): 607.

<sup>140</sup> A. A. Pallis, “Racial Migrations in the Balkans during the Years 1912-1924,” *The Geographical Journal* 66, no. 4 (October 1, 1925): 317–318.

<sup>141</sup> Maria Nikolaeva Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 175.

<sup>142</sup> Simpson, “The Refugee Problem,” 607.

whether it is worthwhile to the world for the Greek nation to live or die.”<sup>143</sup> Similarly, the British press watched the issue with special interest. Not only the newspapers but also the famous satire and humor magazine *Punch, or The London Charivari* could not stay indifferent to the subject and published cartoons treating of the destitution of the Greek refugees almost simultaneously with the signature of the Convention concerning the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey (Figure 2.1). Even the Australian newspapers of the period covered the refugee influx to Greece almost on daily basis.<sup>144</sup> The plight of the Anatolian and Thracian Greeks that took refuge to Greece was so alarming that it made a long-standing matter more visible and forced the international community to recognize and treat it as an urgent universal problem.

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<sup>143</sup> “Refugees Threaten Existence of Greece,” *The Washington Post*, November 12, 1922.

<sup>144</sup> See for example “Greek refugees suffer,” *New Castle Morning Herald and Miners’ Advocate*, March 8, 1921; “Greek refugees - Deaths at Salonika,” *The Mercury*, March 24, 1921; “Greek refugees from Turkish bands,” *Daily Telegraph*, November 25, 1921; “Greek refugees,” *Evening News*, September 20, 1922; “Greek refugees,” *Queensland Times*, October 13, 1922; “Greek refugees famishing multitudes,” *The Maitland Weekly Mercury*, October 21, 1922; “Greek refugees,” *The Register*, November 15, 1922; “Appeal for Greek refugees - Thousands are perishing,” *Singleton Argus*, November, 21, 1922; “Greek refugees ravaged by disease,” *Daily Telegraph*, March 6, 1923; “Greek refugees,” *Kalgoorlie Miner*, August 16, 1923.





## THE TRAGEDY OF GREECE.

HUMANITY. "WHO WILL HELP ME TO SAVE THESE?"

[Mr. Punch very earnestly entreats his readers, whose generosity he has so often tested, to send help, at the earliest possible moment, to the Greek refugees from Smyrna, Constantinople and Thrace, whose sufferings from hunger, exposure and disease are almost beyond telling. He begs to draw attention to the statement of facts furnished by the Imperial War Relief Fund and set out on the opposite page, where addresses are given to which help may be sent.]

**Figure 2-1:** "The Tragedy of Greece"

**Source:** "The Tragedy of Greece," *Punch, or the London Charivari*, January 31, 1923.

As in the case of the Greeks, the refugee problem was intermingled with another problem that preoccupied almost all European states, that is to say, the minority question.<sup>145</sup> The international presumption of the time was that the nation state was a normative order which required commitment to the principle and the goal of national homogeneity that states could only achieve this goal by somehow eliminating those designated as aliens. Due to the obsession with this principle, the same period witnessed discriminatory and violent practices that caused great human suffering such as expulsion, forced assimilation, ethnocide and genocide. In order both to avoid these inhumane practices and to achieve and protect national security, diplomatic efforts were directed to solve the minorities problem. Two diplomatic and *supposedly* humane methods were developed to attain this goal:<sup>146</sup> frontier revision and exchange of populations.

The logic behind these methods was simple. Either the frontiers would change to completely cut off all political relations between the majority and minority populations or the existing frontiers would remain but the population inside them would alter. Yet frontier revision would only work when there existed territory populated solely by a minority population. In other cases that did not satisfy this condition, particularly in those where “the frontier was natural but the distribution of population unnatural” exchange of populations seemed to be more “satisfactory” in terms of homogenization than the first method. As far as the Greco-Turkish population exchange is concerned, being “the most important of all population transfers in

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<sup>145</sup> It is worthwhile to note that how the concept of minority became a part of the diplomatic and political parlance is related to the subject matter. The concept was first used when Britain sent a diplomatic note to Greece about the protection of the Muslim “minority” in 1914. See Emre Öktem, “L’*évolution Historique de La Question Des Minorités et Le Régime Institué Par Le Traité de Lausanne Au Sujet Des Minorités En Turquie,*” *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 3 (1997 1996): 59–87. For the contemporary understanding of the concept of minority in the 1920s and 1930s see C. A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (London: Oxford U. P., H. Milford, 1934), 4-5; Otto Junghann, *National Minorities in Europe* (New York, [c1932]), 9-24.

<sup>146</sup> Macartney, *National Minorities*, 427-449.

modern history”<sup>147</sup> it received international attention as a method that was capable of solving both the refugee problem in Greece and the minority problem that the Greek and Turkish nation-states faced.

The political surgery of cutting out of millions of people based on their religion was decided and took place under the pressure of developing an urgent solution to the avalanching problem of refugees in Greece and the minority question of the Greek and newly emerging Turkish nation states. Although some condemned the population exchange as a barbarous, primitive and ghastly diplomatic innovation which was considered the most serious attack on individual freedom and property rights, and a regression in the evolution of the law,<sup>148</sup> most put emphasis on the solution of the twin problems and the treaty-regulated character of the population exchange. These optimistic and affirmative approaches were determined by the shortsighted presumption that this mechanism was a peaceful, rational and viable means to the resolution of protracted territorial or ethnic conflicts. They would also lead to peace, order and stability by removing a source of grave anxiety.

That being said, it is important to underline that these criticisms would lose their value after becoming ubiquitous in the literature and a banal yet fundamental argument of the

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<sup>147</sup> Joseph B. Schechtman, *European Population Transfers, 1939-1945* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1946), 16.

<sup>148</sup> See for example Anne O'hare McCormick, “When Greek Greets Greek,” *New York Times*, July 13, 1924; George C. Ténékidès, “Le Statut des Minorités et l'échange Obligatoire Des Populations Gréco-Turques,” *Revue Générale de Droit International Public* 31 (1924): 86. A later criticism voiced against the population exchange was that of Leonidas Leontiades. From a legal perspective Leontiades attacks the very idea of exchanging human beings for its capacity of “degrading people to an unconscious negotiation object” and says “the times when man actually mattered, at least among civilized peoples, are long gone. Regarding people as commodities, which are as such subject to exchanging should not only be condemned from a moral point of view, but it is also legally wrong.” Leonidas Leontiades, “Der Griechisch-Türkische Bevölkerungsaustausch,” *Zeitschrift Für Ausländisches Öffentliches Recht Und Völkerrecht* 5 (1935): 552-553. For a similar yet earlier analysis see Georgios S. Streit, *Der Lausanner Vertrag und der Griechisch-Türkische Bevölkerungsaustausch* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1929).

mainstream international consensus, which adroitly merged these two opposing arguments in a single sentence and trivialized this fundamental criticism by simply placing it before the conjunction “but”: For a number of reasons the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey could have seen unacceptable *but* it was the only workable solution, a panacea for the problems of the Greek and Turkish nation states.<sup>149</sup> No matter how it was justified, this was not an easy decision for both of the governments of Greece and Turkey and the other participants at the negotiations at Lausanne. After the signing of the convention, none of the parties assumed sole responsibility for the decision and blamed the others for the exchange.

Although the decision of switching Greek and Turkish populations, of which the parties shifted the blame to the other, turned out to be freighted with unclaimed baggage, a waif, from the very early days the international press coverage baptized the population exchange as “the only practical solution of several governments and persons,”<sup>150</sup> or as “the greatest peaceful exchange of population in history.”<sup>151</sup> Even the closest witnesses of the human cost of the population exchange emphasized the fact that the population exchange was indispensable no

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<sup>149</sup> Eric Michaelsen’s dissertation done at the University of Hamburg can be shown as an example for this discourse. The importance of this 54-page-work comes from when and for what purpose it was written. Michaelsen submitted his dissertation to the University of Hamburg in 1940, that is to say, during the Nazi rule and most probably prepared this study as an official report. In his dissertation, Michaelsen, after repeating the same criticisms for the population exchange and its compulsory character, underlines its *practical effectiveness* in creating the Greco-Turkish rapprochement in the 1930s. He goes on to suggest that the compulsory nature of the population exchange was not something to be condemned but to be appropriated as a factor that created the conditions for a *modus vivendi* for previously conflicting nations. The author concludes his work with the emphasis on the capacity of this method for resolving different intra- or international conflicts. Erich Michaelsen, “Die ‘Austauschbarkeit’ Im Sinne Des Griechisch-Türkischen Vertrages Vom 30. Januar 1923 Und Das Problem Des Austausches von Minderheiten, Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Dieses Vertrages” (Universitaet Hamburg, 1940).

For a brief account of this work see Cemil Koçak, “Nazi Döneminde Hazırlanmış Bir Doktora Tezinin Mübadeleye Bakışı,” *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 137 (May 1995): 62–63.

<sup>150</sup> James L. Edwin, “Oil Chief Barrier to Lausanne Peace,” *New York Times*, December 16, 1922.

<sup>151</sup> “Greatest Peaceful Exchange of Population in History,” *Washington Post*, December 2, 1923.

matter how much suffering it caused and would definitely contribute to peaceful coexistence of previously competing nationalisms. For example, Pallis, in his article published in 1925 in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, describes the population exchange as “probably inevitable” and “the only practical solution”. The bottom-line of the article is following:

The conclusion to be drawn from the preceding figures is that the emigrations and exchanges, in spite of the great suffering and loss of human life they have entailed, have at least had the *compensating advantage* of creating a more homogenous population where before there was a perfect tangle of races and religions. It is to be hoped that many causes of political friction between the countries concerned will thus tend *automatically* to disappear.<sup>152</sup>

Pallis was thoroughly convinced by the idea that in this case there remained no uncomplicated solution to the minority question. In the same year he published one of his most influential and frequently cited work on the demographic movements in the Balkans, *Στατιστική μελέτη περί των φυλετικών μεταναστεύσεων Μακεδονίας και Θράκης κατά την περίοδο 1912-1924*<sup>153</sup> [Statistical study of the racial migrations in Macedonia and Thrace in the period 1912-1924]. In his study Pallis utilized quantitative data that he compiled during his service as a member of the mixed commission of the Greco-Bulgarian population exchange, and then while

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<sup>152</sup> A. A. Pallis, “Exchange of Populations in the Balkans,” *The Nineteenth Century and After: A Monthly Review* 47, no. March (1925): 383. (My emphasis)

<sup>153</sup> A. A. Pallis, *Στατιστική μελέτη περί των φυλετικών μεταναστεύσεων Μακεδονίας και Θράκης κατά την περίοδο 1912-1924* / ([χ.ό.], 1925). For a shortened version of this leaflet see A. A. Pallis, “Racial Migrations in the Balkans during the Years 1912-1924,” *The Geographical Journal* 66, no. 4 (October 1, 1925): 315–31. Why this study become prevalent among the students of the population exchange is no coincidence. In this study Pallis presents a comprehensive analysis of the multiple demographic tides that affected the fate of the Balkans in the aforementioned period with new data and his first-hand observations upon the demographic changes after the successive population exchanges in an era of “struggle of statistics”, as Iakovos Mihailidis called the early 20th century. See Iakovos D. Mihailidis, “Ο αγώνας των στατιστικών υπολογισμών του πληθυσμού της Μακεδονίας,” *Ίδρυμα Μουσείου Μακεδονικού Αγώνα*, March 18, 2013, <http://www.imma.edu.gr/imma/history/12.html>.

he was pursuing the same position in the mixed commission formed upon the Greco-Turkish exchange convention. According to the author, the Greco-Turkish population exchange closed the era of racial migrations in the region and resulted in the solution of the vexed minority question, particularly in Greek Macedonia. In the first pages of his work, Pallis writes (in capital letters) “today no other country can claim national rights over Macedonia based on population.”<sup>154</sup> This quotation captures in a nutshell Pallis’ academic and political concerns<sup>155</sup>: Therefore, for Pallis, the exchange of populations was a desirable method that was needed to put an end to the demographic turbulence in the region and that also served the national purposes of the Hellenic state by proving the statistical preponderance of Greeks in the lands acquired after the Balkan Wars. Ever since Pallis, this predominantly particularistic and state-centric perspective has prevailed in the studies of the population exchange.

Similarly, Raoul Blanchard of the University of Grenoble, echoing like a bookkeeper, closes his article in the *Geographical Review* published only a few months after Pallis’ initial assessment in 1925 by glorifying the population exchange for its role in the realization of Turkey’s national unity which is, according to the author, “a great asset for the future” and by claiming “Greece draws the most profit from the operation.”<sup>156</sup> Furthermore, the author reiterates the standard platitudes verbatim and speaks of his hope for the beginning of a new peaceful and reconstructive era in the Near East. Interpretations based on the single-minded pursuit of national

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 4. This sentence is also quoted in the third-grade high school history textbooks taught in Greece. See *Θέματα Νεοελληνικής Ιστορίας*, 8th Edition, 2006, 167.

<sup>155</sup> Pallis’ political stance, Venisism and his academic concerns went always hand-in-hand. This can be best seen in his *Η ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών: Από αποψη νομική και ιστορική και η σημασία της για τη διεθνή θέση της Ελλάδος* [I. Vartsou print house, 1933], which he wrote as a member of the Hellenic parliament from the Venizelist Liberal Party.

<sup>156</sup> Raoul Blanchard, “The Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey,” *Geographical Review* 15, no. 3 (July 1, 1925): 456.

homogeneity and economic or political predictions showing groundless optimism regarding the consequences of the population exchange never ceased. As the transfer of populations continued, there appeared studies on the resettlement schemes in Turkey and mainly in Greece.

For example, in 1925 *The Fortnightly Review* started publishing articles on the consequences of the population exchange in Greece and Turkey and the problems of the refugees in both countries. Among those articles while Violet Rosa Markham's article, "Greece and the Refugees from Asia Minor," concentrates solely on the refugee problem in Greece, their resettlement and the complications of this process, and the performance of the various bureaucratic bodies, Maxwell Macartney assesses the new opposition in Turkey and how the embezzlement of the funds allocated for the settlement of the population exchange refugees was used by the opponents of Mustafa Kemal.<sup>157</sup> Markham's article, like others, accepts the premise that exchanging populations can be considered as an effective solution to the minority and refugee problems and does not depart from the "rule" of reproducing optimism in the name of refugees. She foresees "a happier future lying before Greece and the children whom she has been called upon to adopt."<sup>158</sup> In the comprehensive 1926 report of the League of Nations in which the work of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission (RSC), the main body that undertook the scheme of internal settlement in Greece, was surveyed up to that year, it is possible to see the same—almost imaginary—sanguineness regarding the contribution and the future of the Greek refugees. Even though the study reports the problems of the settlement process, in the conclusion it overemphasized the positive economic effects of the refugee influx and exaggerates the moral

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<sup>157</sup> Violet Rosa Markham, "Greece and the Refugees from Asia Minor," *The Fortnightly Review* 117 (New series), no. 1 (June 1925): 177–84. Maxwell H. H. Macartney, "The New Opposition in Turkey," *The Fortnightly Review* 117 (New Series), no. 1 (June 1925): 781–793.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 184

effect of the new element of the Greek social structure. The picture painted by the League is diametrically opposed to the refugee experiences:

The work of settlement has also been of great moral effect. It has restored confidence in the country, it has re-established faith in the heart of a people where dismay and demoralisation once reigned. The economic restoration has quite naturally brought about the moral regeneration of the whole country, a fact which proves that the defeat, if borne with courage and dignity, can be a greater stimulus towards the progress than victory. Two proofs out of many might be quoted in support of what has been said, namely, the absence of begging and of crime in Greece...<sup>159</sup>

With the 1926 report and other data-rich materials published by the League of Nations, together with the RSC, contributed to the formation of the canon on this subject. In July of the same year, Charles P. Howland, who served as the chairperson of the Greek Refugee Settlement from February 7, 1925 to September 1926, published an article on the refugees in Greece in *Foreign Affairs* and commented on the distinctive characteristics of the population exchange.<sup>160</sup> According to the chairperson, the population exchange, which he calls “‘swarming’ of two human hives” was unique for its four features. First, the exchange resulted from military actions and was compulsory. Second, the motives behind it were purely nationalistic and not economic. Third, the uprooted populations were indigenous. Finally, the scale of the operation was unprecedented. Howland’s article, like almost all pieces on this subject in this period, adopted a one-sided perspective, meaning that the entire article focused solely on Greece.

While elaborating on the performance of the RSC in 1929, Sir John Hope Simpson argued that with the population exchange Greece could not fail to be improved from an economic

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<sup>159</sup> League of Nations, *Greek Refugee Settlement: With 67 Illustrations, a Map of the Settlement of Rural and Urban Refugees and an Ethnographic Map of Macedonia* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1926), 206. In addition to this report, between 1924 and 1931 the League of Nations published 30 other works, 27 of which are the quarterly reports of the RSC. For a list of these works see League of Nations, *Publications Issued by the League of Nations*. (Geneva: Publications Dept., League of Nations, 1935), 65-66.

<sup>160</sup> Charles P. Howland, “Greece and Her Refugees,” *Foreign Affairs* 4, no. 4 (July 1, 1926): 613–23.



point of view, and the country became more stable politically.<sup>161</sup> However, it is worth noting that all those buoyant lines were written only a few years before the Greek default in 1932, the never-ending political turmoil of the 1930s; and Ioannis Metaxas' crown-sponsored quasi-fascist dictatorship. Henry Morgenthau in his memoir *I was sent to Athens* (1929) picturesquely captures the misery of the Greek refugees scattered throughout Greece; yet in the last chapter of the book titled "Looking ahead," he claims that, in the realm of international relations, the source of perpetual discord with the Turks was removed.<sup>162</sup> In a like vein, Eliot G. Mears, a professor at the Stanford University, makes a similar discussion in the last chapter of his 1929 book titled "The Future" and expresses his admiration for "the wisdom of decision on the population exchange" for the same reasons.<sup>163</sup> In 1931, after the dissolution of the RSC, Charles Eddy, the last chairman of the commission, published his well-documented analysis of the refugee problem in Greece. His *Greece and the Greek Refugees* somewhat deviates from this trend by revealing the ineffectiveness of the population exchange stating that the work of refugee settlement was just a detail in a larger picture and was never completed due to the fact that the indemnification of the refugees never took place did the liquidation of their abandoned properties.<sup>164</sup> He clearly concludes "[n]o exchange of populations, whether voluntary or compulsory, and no arrangement for reciprocal emigration, can ever be justified as a satisfactory method of solving a minority problem in time of peace." Eddy, as one of the closest witnesses of the exchange process, further

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<sup>161</sup> John Hope Simpson, "The Work of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission," *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* 8, no. 6 (November 1929): 601.

<sup>162</sup> Henry Morgenthau, *I Was Sent to Athens* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, Doran & Company, inc, 1929), 310.

<sup>163</sup> Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Greece Today; the Aftermath of the Refugee Impact*, (Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press, 1929), 276-277.

<sup>164</sup> Charles B. Eddy, *Greece and the Greek Refugees* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931), 227.

claims “[t]he Convention of Lausanne in itself was ineffective, the results which might have been anticipated would have been disastrous to Greece, but did not, in fact, take place.”<sup>165</sup> The author argues further that the ultimate results of the process could only be evaluated in the long run. Although many scholars utilized Eddy’s study, his apprehensive approach was shared by few. In the same year, Martin Hill, a member of the Economic, Financial and Transit Department of the League Secretariat, expressed his concerns about the repercussions of the exchange and the novelty and complexity of the Greek case in comparison to the reconstruction schemes that the League of Nations initiated previously.<sup>166</sup> The critical approaches including that of Eddy were overshadowed by the most influential study on the subject, namely, Stephen Pericles Ladas’ *The Exchange of Minorities - Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*.<sup>167</sup> Being one of, if not the, most influential texts among the students of the population exchange, Ladas’ contribution is worthy of close scrutiny.

Ladas was born in Grevena, Greece in 1898 and migrated to the States in 1923. By that time, he was already a well-known expert in international law. His areas of expertise were the philosophy of law and international property rights.<sup>168</sup> Why he undertook his research on the

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 228-229.

<sup>166</sup> Martin Hill, “The League of Nations and the Work of Refugee Settlement and Financial Reconstruction in Greece, 1922—1930,” *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* 34 (January 1, 1931): 265–83.

<sup>167</sup> Stephan P Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: Macmillan, 1932). For the construction of the master narrative on the population exchange and Ladas’ role in this see Onur Yıldırım, “Stephen Pericles Ladas and the 1923 Greco-Turkish Exchange of Populations: The Making and Unmaking of a Narrative,” *Middle Eastern Studies* (August 5, 2021): 1–20, DOI: 10.1080/00263206.2021.1958204.

<sup>168</sup> Stephen P. Ladas, *Μία φιλοσοφική θεωρία δικαίου* (New York, 1926). Stephen Pericles Ladas, *The International Protection of Trade Marks by the American Republics*, Harvard Studies in International Law, no. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard university press, 1929). Stephen P. Ladas, *The International Protection of Industrial Property*, Harvard Studies in International Law, no. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930).

exchange is not clear but what is known is that his *Exchange of Minorities* was prepared under the supervision of the Bureau of International Research of Harvard University and Radcliffe College. According to the author's introductory note, the book went to press in September 1931 and was published in March 1932, but he did not take full account of the events after the end of 1930 while the Exchange was still in progress. As understood from the title of his volume, Ladas, like Pallis, tried to examine the subject in a broader context by historicizing it and comparing and contrasting two population exchange practices.

*The Exchange of Minorities* deals with the Greco-Bulgarian and Greco-Turkish population exchanges separately and then concentrates on the settlement of the refugees in those three countries, paying the least attention to the Muslim refugees transferred to Turkey. Unlike many of those interested in the population exchange practices, while writing on this subject, Ladas does not limit himself to the diplomatic or legal aspects of these multifaceted actions taken by the respective nation-states and more importantly by the international community. He also puts special emphasis on refugee resettlement and underlines the human cost of the exchange. It is not possible to claim that he provides a refugee-oriented perspective as he reproduces the state-centric view that dominated the existing literature. Ladas, unlike Pallis, approached the subject not only quantitatively but also qualitatively, and he goes beyond simple statistics and takes into consideration alternative ways by which the then-existing or possible ethnic cleavages in the region could have been avoided; thus, tries to develop an analytical, holistic and relatively more objective approach to these practices. He questioned the inevitability of a Greco-Turkish population exchange yet praised the results of the exchange particularly for Greece. Ladas considers the exchange as a considerable success notched up thanks to the wise statesmanship

and providence of the leaderships in Greece and Turkey.<sup>169</sup> According to Ladas, the population exchange solved the problem of the protection of minorities<sup>170</sup> which promised peace and stability in the region. He obviously reached this conclusion on the basis of the dramatic change in Greco-Turkish diplomatic relations due to the rapprochement that they started going through after the signature of the 1930 “friendship agreement.” Moreover, he evokes the twin myths of national unity and ethnic homogeneity and sees the exchange as a means to internal strength and stability in both countries. In terms of economics, Greece was better off as a result of the exchange. The exchange also helped her repopulate and/or urbanize the so-called New Lands that Greece acquired from the Ottoman Empire after 1912. Hence Ladas’ *Exchange of Minorities* successfully captures, reproduces and presents a comprehensive analysis that was widely influential--- even now, although Ladas occasionally adopts a critical view toward his subject matter, for the most part, he sticks to emphasizing the accomplishments of the population exchange.

Especially after Nazism gained power in Germany in 1933, eliminating minorities either through border adjustments or brutal repression became more widespread and this resulted in flows of refugees throughout Europe.<sup>171</sup> As the prestige of the League of Nations faded away in

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<sup>169</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 730.

<sup>170</sup> Even though Ladas underlines the power of the population exchange in terms of solving the minority problem, he mentions the problematic situation in which the Greek minority retained in Constantinople found themselves. He also adds that the same problem is *not* valid for the Muslim minority in Greece. *Ibid.*, 726.

<sup>171</sup> A comprehensive account of the population transfers in Europe and in Asia between 1939-1955 can be found in Joseph Schechtman’s three-volume series on this issue. The first book of the series, as previously mentioned above, covers the European demographic engineering practices between 1939 and 1945, the second book concentrates on the Asian population transfers, such as the Hindu - Muslim exchange of populations, “repatriation” of Armenians to Soviet Armenia, transfer of the Assyrians and he also discusses the case for Arab-Jewish transfer of populations. The final volume of the series is on the transfers in Europe during the restructuring of the continent after World War II (WWII). He also published another volume on the Arab Refugee problem in 1952 in between the second and third volumes of the series. Joseph B. Schechtman, *European Population Transfers, 1939-1945* (New York: Cornell

the 1930s, particularly the East European states started caring less and less about their obligations toward their minorities. As Mark Mazower states, by 1937 Europe was confronted by an unprecedented refugee crisis.<sup>172</sup> Furthermore, the Jewish question had already been at the heart of European thinking. That explains the increasing interest in exchanging populations as a viable method for resolving.

In 1937 the Palestine Royal Commission, aka the Peel Commission, which was appointed to investigate the causes of unrest in Palestine and to offer a solution to the Arab-Jewish deadlock in the British mandate. Their report concluded that the British mandate had become unworkable and the situation in Europe and in Palestine is so complicated that there could be no easy way out. According to the commission, “[t]he disease is so deep-rooted that in the Commissioners' firm conviction the only hope of a cure lies in a surgical operation.”<sup>173</sup> That’s why the commission proposed a partition plan for Palestine to solve the Jewish question. The partition was to be followed by a population exchange between Arabs and Jews. “If Partition is to be effective in promoting a final settlement” says the commission “it must mean more than drawing a frontier and establishing two States. Sooner or later there should be a transfer of land and, as far as possible, an exchange of population.” In the report the Greco-Turkish population is

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University Press, 1946); *Population Transfers in Asia* (New York: Hallsby Press, 1949); *The Arab Refugee Problem* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952); *Postwar Population Transfers in Europe 1945-1955* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962). In all of these volumes he refers to the Greco-Turkish population exchange as the blueprint of these forced migration practices.

<sup>172</sup> Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 108.

<sup>173</sup> Palestine Royal Commission, *Palestine Royal Commission Report* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1937), 368.

explicitly referred as a successful example and presented to the international community as one.<sup>174</sup>

An instructive precedent is afforded, as it happens, by the exchange effected between the Greek and Turkish populations on the morrow of the Greco-Turkish War of 1922. On the initiative of Dr. Nansen a convention was signed by the Greek and Turkish Governments at the beginning of 1923; providing that Greek nationals of the Orthodox religion living in Turkey should be compulsorily removed to Greece, and Turkish nationals of the Moslem religion living in Greece to Turkey. To control the operation a Mixed Commission and a group of sub-commissions were established, consisting of representatives of the Greek and Turkish Governments and of the League of Nations. The numbers involved were high —no less than some 1,300,000 Greeks and some 400,000 Turks. *But so vigorously and effectively was the task accomplished that within about eighteen months from the spring of 1923 the whole exchange was completed.* Dr. Nansen was sharply criticized at the time for the inhumanity of his proposal, and the operation manifestly imposed the gravest hardships on multitudes of people. *But the courage of the Greek and Turkish statesmen concerned has been justified by the result. Before the operation the Greek and Turkish minorities had been a constant irritant. Now the ulcer has been cleaned cut out, and Greco-Turkish relations, we understand, are friendlier than they have ever been before.*

Regardless of Britain's withdrawal of her favorable stance, it is important to note that the commission sanctioned the population exchange for its potential to serve as a model for different cases and geographies, in this case for Palestine. A similar stance was adopted by the Zionist leadership, namely the Jewish Agency. On the heels of the Royal Commission's report, the same organization set up a secret committee for transferring Jewish population to Palestine.

This widely-held perception of the population exchange was fed to the international community through the canon which initially came into existence by blending and synthesis of

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 390. (My emphasis)

The report continues to speak highly of the Greek and Turkish statesmen for daring taking the necessary measures for the sake of peace and stability. "In view of the present antagonism between the races and of the manifest advantage to both of them of reducing the opportunities of future friction to the utmost, it is to be hoped that the Arab and the Jewish leaders might show the same high statesmanship as that of the Turks and the Greeks and make the same bold decision for the sake of peace." Ibid., 391. See also Schechtman, *Population Transfers in Asia*, 84-142.

Pallis's and Ladas's works and the reports of the League of Nations. These texts offered a readymade mental map for further studies and constrained future research agendas through creating categories and concepts, determining their questions and methodology and finally through hierarchizing the refugee experience. Considering this fact, I argue that the canonical works on the population exchange have four features that directly affected future studies:

First, the canonical texts were written by people I refer to as "bureacademics." They were not academics in the strict sense of the word. These works did not only produce a state-funded and directed history written by bureaucrats for bureaucrats. On the contrary, they attracted a vast lay audience and, over time, their primary readership shifted to academics. The major shortcomings or biases of the future literature on the population exchange can be traced back to this characteristic of the pioneering works. Next two features of the canonical works and how the refugee experience was bureaucratized is broadly related to this characteristic of these early writings and why the literature on the population exchange was trapped in a lifeless framework.

Second, it can be said that from a diplomatic point of view the canonical works condoned exchanging populations as a method of, what we call today, conflict resolution. The Greco-Turkish case and the Indian summer of the relations between the two states after the exchange went to prove this point. Although there were some early critical studies, such as that of Eddy, they either fell on deaf ears or were treated as "fact-books" and could not extend their influence over how the event would be seen in future studies. They also replaced the state-centric focus of the much of the literature in favor of a refugee-oriented one.

Third, the nation-state and its potency as the putative center of social analysis produced a triumphalist discourse, particularly in Greece. The emphasis on how successfully the Hellenic state handled the refugee question and its economic, social and political repercussions and how it

managed to incorporate the “unredeemed” Greeks not through irredentism but diplomacy overshadowed how the refugees, the actual objects of the process, experienced the displacement. It also rendered the refugees’ subjectivity totally invisible. They were pushed into the darkness by the dominant discourse, or in the best-case scenario, they were recalled only when and as much as their subjectivity was needed in order to reinforce the mainstream narrative. This emphasis, redressing the military and ideological debacle that the collapse of the Greek front in Anatolia led to, was one of the ontological wherewithals of the nation building practice in Greece as I shall suggest below.

Finally, the emphasis on the Greek experience resulted in further silencing of the Muslims who were settled in Turkey. As Ladas writes, the population exchange literature saw the settlement problem of the Muslim “emigrants” as a much simpler task.<sup>175</sup> Why the Muslim refugees’ experience was not incorporated into the canonical narrative was partly due to the Turkish state’s approach to the installation and settlement of the refugees. Why the story, or rather stories, of the Muslim refugees were disregarded is also related to the fact that the canonical texts adopt a Greek perspective.

The effect of the canonical works is best seen through an examination of the early academic response. In the next section, I will examine four theses written in the US about the exchange.

### **2.3 Early academic reaction**

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<sup>175</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 706.



The four MA theses were written in the 1930s and 1940s and submitted to different US universities. An examination of these early academic assessments of the population exchange help us understand the formation of the academic perspective. To give a chronological list of these studies, the earliest one is Richard Edwards Hibbard's "International Settlement of Greek Refugees, 1922-1932" submitted to the Northwestern University in 1933. In 1934 Orestes John Iatrides defended his MA thesis "Social and Economic Import of the Refugee Immigration into Greece" at Boston University. Mihri Belli received his Master's degree in economics from the University of Missouri with his thesis titled "The Economic Aspects of the Compulsory Minority Exchange between Turkey and Greece" in 1940. Finally, Safiye Bilge Temel's "Greek-Turkish Population Exchange; an Analysis of the Conflict Leading to the Exchange" was done at Stanford University and finished in 1949.<sup>176</sup> Since Belli's thesis has a radically different approach, I will speak about it last.

Richard Edwards Hibbard's study concentrates on the relief activities that began before the evacuation of Smyrna and continued in Greece with a special emphasis on the work of US philanthropic institutions. He starts his discussion on the relief organization with the first non-Greek relief organization, namely the Athens American Relief Committee, which according to the author, inaugurated the program carried out by the American Red Cross. Then he investigates the emergency settlement activities by private agencies, namely, the American Red Cross, Near

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<sup>176</sup> Richard Edwards Hibbard, "International Settlement of Greek Refugees, 1922-1932." (MA, Northwestern University, 1933);

Orestes John Iatrides, "Social and Economic Import of the Refugee Immigration into Greece." (MA, Boston University, 1934);

Mehmet Mihri Belli, "The Economic Aspects of the Compulsory Minority Exchange between Turkey and Greece." (MA, University of Missouri, 1940);

Safiye Bilge Temel, "Greek-Turkish Population Exchange; an Analysis of the Conflict Leading to the Exchange." (MA, Stanford University, 1949).

East Relief, American Women's Hospital and some other European and British agencies as well as the High Commission for Refugees of the League of Nations (HCRLN). He underlines that at a certain point the American Red Cross and HCRLN terminated their relief programs in order not to intervene with the permanent settlement of the refugees. From this point on he investigates the activities of the Refugee Settlement Commission and the other private institutions' efforts that were also involved. He points out the deficiencies in the settlement process of the urban refugees in comparison to the program carried out in the rural regions. He repeatedly draws attention to the fact that the refugee settlement program of the RSC and other organizations was directly dependent upon funding. His conclusion about the relief activities is that neither the Hellenic state nor individual private organizations could have handled the resettlement or relief activities on their own. Therefore, without international cooperation and national solidarity none of the achievements would have taken place. He sees the refugee influx into Greece as the concentration of the Hellenic resourcefulness in Greece proper. His argument is based on the refugees' performing a definite service to the country in the immediate aftermath of their settlement.<sup>177</sup>

Orestes John Iatrides<sup>178</sup> begins his analysis with a historical introduction that emphasizes that Greece lacked of an integrated upper social class, when compared to western European countries, and due to this peculiar social structure Greece followed a different path of

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<sup>177</sup> Hibbard, "International Settlement," 303.

<sup>178</sup> Orestes John Iatrides was an educator and one of the founders of the Evangelical Church in Greece. He was a graduate of the International College in Smyrna. After completing his studies in the States, he returned to Greece and became a faculty at the Anatolia College. While the college was closed down during World War II, he started the Korais Primary School which carried on the spirit of the Anatolia College. He was Professor John O. Iatrides' father. See Carl C. Compton, *The Morning Cometh: 45 Years with Anatolia College* (Athens: Anatolia College, 2008), 244; Manos G. Tselikas, "Απ' όσα θυμάμαι - Αυτοβιογραφία" (Athens, 2010), 18, 183.

development. In the formation of this path, the “Turkish race’s nomadic nature” was also effective as a hindering factor. With the elimination of the unbalanced social structure, in Iatrides’ words, the society and the state gained self-confidence which was coupled with the military successes in the Balkan Wars and the geographical expansion of the Hellenic state which resulted in further ethnic heterogeneity. According to the author this self-confidence gave way to the irredentist policies of Greece to save the “Unredeemed Hellenism” particularly in Asia Minor, Eastern Thrace and Pontus. Yet due to a mixture of internal and external elements, the Greek adventure in Asia Minor turned into a complete military rout with deep political and ideological consequences, one of which was that a Greater Greece could not be established and this left no other choice for the Greeks living in there but to migrate to Greece. According to the author, for Greece, given the refugee influx into the country after 1922, the undertaking of the population exchange had meant only the ratification of a *fait accompli*. Despite this fact, “the little Greek nation, of five million souls,” says Iatrides, “met their brothers in distress with unshaken courage and with open arms.”<sup>179</sup> This argument leads to the following conclusion: “Greece has manifested an unusual vitality in handling such a tremendous problem, the solution of which was beyond the means and the capacity of an exhausted small nation. The settlement of the refugees will be recorded in the history of Greece as one of her most important achievements in the entire career of the Nation.”<sup>180</sup>

Iatrides' triumphalist emphases on the way of Greece's dealing with the humanitarian crisis it faced in the 1920s perfectly fit the canonical narrative of the population exchange, and that affected Greek historiography deeply. The author continues following the footprints of the

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<sup>179</sup> Iatrides, “Social and Economic Import of the Refugee Immigration.”, 21.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 128.

mainstream approach and analyzes and interprets the consequences of the “social and economic import” of the exchange. He starts with the impact of the exchange upon the composition of the population. One of the most important consequences of the exchange was the elimination of the ethnic heterogeneity of the population, which was one of the great weaknesses of post-war Europe. Thanks to achieving ethnic and demographic homogeneity as the result of the population exchange Greece had internal peace and security became “a natural state of affairs.”<sup>181</sup>

In addition to these emphases, Iatrides underlines another point which would become one of the most principal leitmotifs of modern Greek historiography. According to the author, *if the costly price of the Asia Minor Catastrophe is perceived as a strong incentive*, then this price can be compensated through achieving the highest and richest values by means of peace and international cooperation.<sup>182</sup> That is why the Asia Minor Catastrophe should be included in modern Greek historiography and into the collective memory of the nation, a topic that I discuss in the next chapters.

For the sources of this study, it can be said that Iatrides does not give a full bibliography or provide detailed footnotes. More than one third of his citations are to Eddy’s *Greece and the Greek Refugees*. Although Iatrides does not refer to Ladas’s or Pallis’s studies in the body of his thesis, they are cited in his “selected bibliography.” And even a cursory glance is enough to show that Iatrides’s main approach is woven out of these canonical texts. Other than these studies, another frequently cited study in his thesis is Aristoklis Eghidis’ *Greece without refugees*, another work that will analyzed later on.

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 45.

Safiye Bilge Temel, in her Master's thesis, approaches to the population exchange from a sociological point of view. In the beginning of the study Temel argues that it tries to answer if the Greco-Turkish conflict can be understood with R. E. Park's "race relations cycle." Temel claims that from a sociological perspective both Greek and Turkish communities living in Anatolia can be considered as two distinct races and the means of exchanging populations a solution to race conflicts. In her four substantive chapters, Temel offers a general socio-historical background and explains how these two social/ethnic groups came to a point where one rigorously excluded the other and hence they became two distinct races. In Temel's analysis, the conflict between Greek and Turkish communities seems to be doomed to worsen and turn into racial issue.

After this concise socio-historical analysis, the author reviews the population exchange and the settlement of refugees in both countries. It is worth noting that she starts his analysis by introducing Ladas to her readers. "Stephan P. Ladas" writes Temel "has written the most complete book on the Greek-Turkish population exchange" and for the author "as a Greek he is aware of the many complications, advantages, and disadvantages of such an action."<sup>183</sup> After this very first sentence of the book, it is not surprising that the analysis is almost exclusively based on Ladas. In rest of the chapter titled "The Exchange", Temel critically appraises the convention text and how the convention was initially carried into effect.

The chapter on the settlement of the refugees starts with a subjective judgment. Temel states the sweeping presumption that "the refugee settlement in both countries was difficult. But in both it may have been said to have been successful."<sup>184</sup> Such a "jubilant" supposition leads to an analysis that overlooks the refugee experience and the human suffering and concentrates on

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<sup>183</sup> Temel, "Greek-Turkish Population Exchange.", 81. In 2014 Temel's thesis was translated into Turkish and published by the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 108.

the performance of the states. Consequently, within a narrative of how the states successfully carried out the settlement scheme, the refugees, as in the bulk of the existing literature, are reduced to some numbers in statistical tables. Temel's approach exhibits another parallelism with the studies that overdetermined the development of later literature.

In Temel's approach, too, the experience of the Muslim refugees looks like an addendum to her main analysis on Greece. Not surprisingly after such socio-historical reading based on ever-increasing ethnic/racial cleavage and outstanding state performances in successfully splitting those communities apart, the inevitability of the population exchange becomes the overall conclusion that the author reached. She is so much convinced of the necessity of this operation that she even defends the reasoning behind the choice of religion as the criterion of the exchange. Temel, just like the politicians who in the last instance engineered the population exchange to create ethnically homogenous administrative units, claims that practically religion was the most suitable criterion to effectively determine the members of a community and to maximize the number of souls that would subject to the population exchange. After discussing if language was a proper distinctive communal feature and ruling it out for its incapacity to include Turkish-speaking Anatolian Greeks and Greek-speaking Cretan Muslims, for example, she concludes:

Thus, it seemed inevitable that in the first place an exchange of populations be made, and in the second that religion be the sole criterion of exchangeability. Under the peculiar conditions of the period nothing else seemed workable. It is true that the exchange was compulsory is regrettable, but it is to be remembered that it was not the people but the governments of the two countries that were in conflict.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 125.

Temel's thesis was written in 1949, that is, after the partition of India in 1947. Following the partition, there occurred massive population transfers between India and Pakistan which resulted in intense and widespread human suffering including the displacement of more than 12 million people. The partition and the exchange were accompanied by killings, riots, abductions and rapes and cost approximately one million lives. Given the aforementioned timeframe, it is reasonable to assume that she was aware of the streams of refugees and the human suffering that the Partition produced. Yet, this does not hold her back from writing: "The Greek-Turkish situation with its definite finale has therefore been thought worth analysis. The same means of exchange of populations has recently been used in India. And in other areas such arbitrary solutions to race may be followed. The case of Jews in all parts of the Arab world, and the Arabs in Palestine is well worth considering."<sup>186</sup>

It is important to note that by writing those lines she not only follows the tracks of the canonical works but also that of the political opportunism of decision-makers who aims at "purifying" their nation by intellectually leaning on the literature praising the Greco-Turkish population exchange as the first and more importantly successful means of conflict resolution and offers the exchange as a blueprint even after the Partition.

As far as Mihri Belli's thesis is considered, his study was submitted to the University of Missouri in 1940. Belli's thesis differs in terms of its radical criticism and his balanced approach to the population exchange. His approach to the topic was shaped by the fact that Miri Belli was one of the founders of the communist movement in Turkey. Therefore, he had already had a critical stance regarding the "bourgeois" governments' policies in both countries and did not feel bound by the formal framework of the sovereign nation-states. This, I think, helps him develop a

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<sup>186</sup> Temel, "Greek-Turkish Population Exchange.", 11.

critical and remarkably “humane” point of view while evaluating the consequences of the population exchange.

In the foreword he wrote for the Turkish edition of his thesis published 64 years after his defense, Belli explains his motivation for his study was his eagerness to understand the differences between the Ottoman Empire/Turkey and western Europe in terms of their class structures and the change in this structure in Turkey especially in the transition period from the Ottoman Empire to Turkey. According to Belli, this problematic is strongly related with the strategy of the revolutionary forces in Turkey.<sup>187</sup> Belli explains the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of competing nationalisms from a Marxist perspective, that is, with the rise of market economy, expansion of European imperialism, disintegration of archaic, feudal social structures and class alliances.<sup>188</sup> Based on this, Belli, unlike other writers, is critical not only of the population exchange as a method, but also of Ladas. Belli describes Ladas's as a "wonderful book" but he adds that the book reeks of a chauvinism.<sup>189</sup> As for the population exchange, Belli claims that the reason for it was not religious intolerance or fanaticism but the national, chauvinistic irreconcilable conflicts in both countries. Belli, as opposed to the existing literature, underlines the hardships that the Muslim refugees encountered after their transfer to Turkey. "The sufferings that the Muslim refugees experienced" says Belli, "were similar to those of the Greek refugees in terms of their nature and extent." He accepts, however, that Turkey's capacity

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<sup>187</sup> Mihri Belli, *Türkiye-Yunanistan Nüfus Mübadelesi: Ekonomik Açıdan Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2004), 8-10.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 17-21.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 29.



to absorb the refugees was higher in comparison to Greece.<sup>190</sup> Belli closes his discussion with the following conclusions.<sup>191</sup>

First of all, the population exchange was unsuccessful because the Greco-Turkish population exchange proved that it was impossible to conduct such an operation without violating the property rights of the exchanged populations. The liquification of their abandoned properties completely vanished, and so they never received the compensation they were promised for them.

Second, the exchange not only affected the lives of the refugee, but also it had a considerable effect on the majority in both societies. For example, the financial burden of the exchange was shouldered collectively (but unevenly of course) by the entire society. Moreover, the displacement resulted in economic financial problems, which had severe impact on both Greece and Turkey.

At this point, Belli straightforwardly asks if the exchange yielded any favorable results and in the same straightforward manner he answers “according to the conclusion reached by the author of this thesis, even if the population exchange had some favorable consequences, they are negligible and the suffering and misery that the millions of people have endured have completely overshadowed these favorable results.”

After this assertive answer to one of the most important questions, Belli attacks the arguments that are extensively utilized in the literature and that uncritically justify the population exchange. As to the issue of “minority protection,” he rightfully claims that minority protection was not a local problem but a national one and by rectifying the exclusion of the

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 99-101.

Constantinopolitan Greeks and the Muslims living in Western Thrace the population exchange had just changed the scale of the problem and not solved. Actually, the author is one of the first scholars who pointed out the conditions that create “minoritization.” Moreover, Belli asserted that uprooting minority population from their ancestral homelands does not solve the problem either. It only escalates the problem. Belli continues with the “elimination of the ethnic heterogeneity” argument. As was discussed above, this argument is based on the presumption that ethnic homogeneity is positively correlated with national power and stability. He confutes this reasoning by turning to the example of the United States of America, which was then one of the most powerful states yet lacked of ethnic and religious homogeneity. Lastly, Belli argues against the argument regarding the economic recovery and boom in certain sectors, especially in Greece. For the author, such an argument unrealistically assumes that if the refugee influx into Greece had not taken place, the production methods, for example, in agriculture would not have been improved.

Belli finally asks if there could have been another solution to the problem and admits that he could not offer a quick answer to this question. “But,” he says, “even if the exchange was inevitable, then what is to be done is to demand the determination of the major social forces that created this inevitability for the sake of human dignity.” Belli, as his very last point, underlines that, the interests of the Greek minority are parallel to those of the progressive powers of Turkey.

While drawing these conclusions, Belli exclusively relies on the same sources that the previously discussed studies in this section. Hence Belli proves that by using precisely the same sources it is possible to take up a critical stance *vis-à-vis* the Greco-Turkish population exchange in particular and, in general, the idea of exchanging populations as a means of peace and stability.

**Table 2-1:** A summary of the early academic reaction

<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Main argument</b>
Hibbard	1933	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National solidarity and international cooperation</li> <li>- Contribution of the western philanthropic institutions</li> <li>- Refugees' high level of adaptability</li> <li>- Inevitability of the population exchange</li> <li>- The exchange will have long term effects</li> </ul>
Iatrides	1934	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive impact of the refugees upon Greek economy and social life</li> <li>- The Asia Minor Catastrophe has to be carved into the collective memory of the nation as an incentive to take off.</li> <li>- Settlement scheme as the success of the Greek state</li> </ul>
Belli	1940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not bound by the framework of the nation-state</li> <li>- The Greco-Turkish population exchange due the national, chauvinistic irreconcilable conflicts in both countries</li> <li>- Unsuccessful</li> <li>- No meaningful positive result in terms of economy, minority protection, stability and</li> </ul>
Temel	1949	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ever increasing, unavoidable racial cleavage between Turks and Greeks</li> <li>- Inevitability of the population exchange</li> <li>- The Greco-Turkish population exchange as blueprint for international conflicts</li> </ul>

Table 2.1 summarizes the discussions presented in works from the 1930s and 1940s, which show that there was an early interest from academic community regarding the practice of exchanging populations. The studies scrutinized in this section, except for Belli's thesis, accept the population exchange as a legitimate method of minority protection and they present a triumphalist understanding of episode. The refugees in these studies either go missing or become visible only when they support the statist reasoning. Only Mihri Belli criticizes the canonical literature and rails against the population exchange and its engineers for causing great human misery and not really proposing any viable solution to the existing problems. Yet Belli's approach constitutes a strong outlier in the then existing literature, which I turn to now.

## 2.4 Greek national historiography

Greece's entanglement in Asia Minor turned to be disastrous. With its manifold consequences the collapse of the Greek front in Anatolia surpassed an ordinary military defeat and became one of the most important turning points, if not the most important, in the history of modern Greece. According to several scholars<sup>192</sup>, the *Megali Idea* (*Μεγάλη Ιδέα*), the vision of a “Greece of two continents and five seas,” not only as an irredentist policy but also as the chief ideological code having imbued Greek political and public life for almost a century, collapsed alongside with the Greek front in Asia Minor. That is why Greeks popularly refer to this historical event as the Asia Minor *Catastrophe* (*Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*). As Paschalis Kitromilides suggests the Catastrophe “dominates the consciousness of modern Hellenism as the fundamental event that changed the nature and flow of history of the nation in modern times.”<sup>193</sup> On the other hand, Alexander Kitroeff, who does not disagree with the landmark character of the defeat, argues that the conventional wisdom in Greek historiography was not seriously affected by the Asia Minor Catastrophe.<sup>194</sup> This is mostly due to the fact that Greek historiography of the period was overtly polarized and politicized under the pressure of the National Schism<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> For example see Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge, England ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 46, Alexander Kitroeff, “Συνέχεια και αλλαγή στη σύγχρονη ελληνική ιστοριογραφία,” in *Εθνική Ταυτότητα και Εθνικισμός στη Νεότερη Ελλάδα*, ed. Thanos Veremis (Athens: MIET, 1999), 292; Giorgis Katsoulis, “Οι οικονομικές και σημοσιονομικές συνέπειες της Μικρασιατικής Καταστροφής,” in *Η Μικρασιατική εκστρατεία και Καταστροφή*, ed. Center for Marxist Research (Athens: Synchroni Epohi, 1983), 79.

<sup>193</sup> Paschalis M. Kitromilides, “Συμβολή στη Μελέτη της Μικρασιατικής Τραγωδίας. Τεκμήρια της Καταστροφής του Ελληνισμού της Βιθυνίας,” *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* 15 (1972): 372.

<sup>194</sup> Kitroeff, “Συνέχεια και αλλαγή”, 272.

<sup>195</sup> According to George Mavrogordatos, the interwar polarization of Greek political life which was rooted in the Revolution of 1909 and in the polarization between the Liberal Party and the old parties that had governed the country until 1909 and consolidated after Greece's entry into World War I (WWI). George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936*

(*Εθνικός Διχασμός*), that is, the polarization between Venizelism and Antivenizelism. The nationalist imagery was completely restructured by the Asia Minor Catastrophe and its repercussions, and the Catastrophe became an integrated part of the biography of the Greek nation. The focus of the imagery shifted from the incorporation of “any land associated with [the] Greek race”<sup>196</sup> towards the nostalgic slogan “A small but honorable Greece” (*Η μικρά ἀλλ’ ἐντιμος Ελλάς*) with a slight adaptation: a small Greece, honorable but still able to absorb the Asia Minor refugees.<sup>197</sup> Therefore, the Catastrophe did not only mean the end of Hellenism in Asia Minor, but it also posed a sudden and bitter dilemma for Greek society. As a re-defined phenomenon the refugee problem (*προσφυγικό ζήτημα*) became a central object of scholarship. Yet how and how much the refugees were represented in the literature depended on another question: How and how fast would the Greek state assimilate almost one and a half million refugees? This was *the* question that motivated much of the scholarship. Therefore, this task and its execution obscured its consequences and the overall refugee experience. This constitutes one of the problematic aspects of Greek historiography. In Giorgos Giannakopoulos’ words, in Greek historiography “the issue of settlement and its consequences are treated by the authors as a single [theme], independent of the specific aspect on which each [author] concentrates. So, the

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(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 26-7. See also, by the same aut, *Εθνικός Διχασμός και μαζική οργάνωση, νεότερη και σύγχρονη ιστορία* (Alexandria, 1996).

<sup>196</sup> During a parliamentary speech in 1844 Ioannis Kolettis formulated the Megali Idea by emphasizing the discrepancy between the national borders of the Greek Kingdom and the boundaries of the Greek nation. For Kolettis’ speech see Konstantinos Th. Dimaras, *Ελληνικός Ρωμαντισμός* (Athens: Ermis, 1982), 405-6.

<sup>197</sup> Eleftherios Venizelos, as the prime minister of Greece, sent a New Year’s message to the Greek diaspora in the United States on the last day of 1929. The *Εθνικός Κήρυξ* (National Herald) reports this message on Jan 1, 1930. In his message, Venizelos says “However poor and small your motherland might be don’t forget it. It is your mother.” Just under this message the newspaper publishes an extract from Henry Morgenthau’s book and the title of the passage is “Greece is a small country but the Greeks are a great nation.” *Εθνικός Κήρυξ*, 01/01/1930.

distribution of the publications in thematic categories is extremely difficult, and certainly not definite.”<sup>198</sup>

Even before the massive influx of people from Asia Minor began, a growing literature and documentation about them and their settlement in Greece emerged due to the previous population movements that had begun even before the Balkan Wars.<sup>199</sup> This momentum was coupled with the signing of the Lausanne convention, which retroactively conferred legitimacy on the refugees who had arrived in Greece or Turkey after 1912 and formed, what I term, the first wave of scholarship. One of the earliest studies on the refugee issue was Ténékidès’s “Le Statut des Minorités et l’échange obligatoire des populations Gréco-Turques” and was written in 1924. Ténékidès, as mentioned above, was sharply critical about the population exchange from the perspective of international law.<sup>200</sup>

Almost simultaneously Apostolos Doxiades’s speech delivered in Paris at the hall of Société de Géographie on April 22, 1924 was published as a pamphlet under the title of *La question des réfugiés en Grèce*. In his speech Doxiades, as the former Minister of Welfare in Greece, underlines that the refugee problem was not a simple philanthropic issue but a broad social one, results of which would affect not only Greece or Hellenism but go beyond the borders of the Greek state. According to the author, this is why the international community and the

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<sup>198</sup> Giannis Giannakopoulos, “Οι Μικρασιάτες Πρόσφυγες Στην Ελλάδα. Βιβλιογραφικό Δοκίμιο,” *Δελτίο ΚΜΣ* 9 (1992): 285. I should also add that Kitromilides in his historiographical essay mentioned above analyzes the population exchange and the ensuing refugee problem in the category of political history and as an addendum to the Asia Minor Catastrophe.

<sup>199</sup> For example, see *Οι Διωγμοί Των Ελλήνων Εν Θράκη Και Μικρασία* (Athens: Committee of the Asia Minor Refugees in Mytilene, 1915); *Έκθεσις Περί Των Εν Μακεδονία Προσφύγων* (Athens: Ministry of Finance, 1916); *Η Περίθαλψις Των Προσφύγων 1917-1920* (Athens: Ministry of Welfare, 1920); Konstantinos G. Lameris, *Η Περί Του Χαρακτήρος Των Εν Τουρκία Διωγμών Διάλεξις* (Athens: G. I. Kalerges, 1921).

<sup>200</sup> Ténékidès, “Le Statut des Minorités”.

League of Nations had to consider this problem carefully and actively intervene with effective means.<sup>201</sup>

Theodoros Kiosséoglou, cousin of the famous Constantinopolitan entrepreneur Alexander Kiosséoglou<sup>202</sup>, was another scholar who penned a serious critique of the idea of forcible population exchange.<sup>203</sup> In his book published in 1926, even though the settlement process was at an early stage, he warned about the impossibility of the refugees' receiving full compensation for the properties they abandoned in their ancestral homelands. Like Ténékidès, Kiosséoglou too attacked the compulsory character of the exchange and described it as the triumph of brute force over the law. For the author, the exchange was not only a diplomatic aberration but it was also devoid of any legal basis.<sup>204</sup>

In 1927 Angelos Hadzopoulos' University of Berlin dissertation *Die Flüchtlingsfrage in Griechenland* was published in Athens.<sup>205</sup> Hadzopoulos deals with many aspects of the exchange and the refugee problem, including the diplomatic one, but the core of his study concentrates on the sociological and economic impact of the refugee problem on Greece. He argues that in spite of the burden on Greece, if the government would take the necessary measures, the newcomers had the potential to become a source of wealth and unexpected economic development, and soon thereafter the desperate refugees would stop being a problem.

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<sup>201</sup> Apostolos Doxiades, *La Question Des Réfugiés En Grèce* (Paris : Société Générale d'imprimerie et d'édition, 1924), 10 and passim.

<sup>202</sup> For Alexander Kiosseoglou see Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974* (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1983), 107-8, 119.

<sup>203</sup> Theodoros P. Kiosséoglou, *L'Echange forcé des minorités d'après le traité de Lausanne*. (Nancy: Impr. Nancéienne, 1926).

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>205</sup> Angelos Hadzopoulos, *Die Flüchtlingsfrage in Griechenland; eine wissenschaftliche Behandlung des grossen historisch-wirtschaftlichen Siedlungsproblemes*. (Athens: P.D. Sakellarios, 1927).

In the same year another thesis on the population exchange was defended at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. In his thesis, Alex Deimezis elaborates on the social situation in Greece after the population exchange.<sup>206</sup> Deimezis repeated the same schema, made a simple cost-benefit analysis on behalf of the Hellenic state and applauded the positive aspects of the population exchange, such as the Hellenization of Macedonia and Thrace, the increase in the agricultural production, and the development of new industries such as carpet weaving. While drawing attention to the economic burden of the population exchange and the friction between the indigenous and refugee populations, Deimezis claims that the population exchange was unavoidable and self-imposed. Deimezis explains the problems of the exchange process by referring to the infirmity of the Greek state and the immaturity of the international system regarding minority protections.

At around the same time, Emmanouil Tsouderos, who was one of the founders and the first vice-president of the Central Bank of Greece then, published *Η Αποζημίωσις των Ανταλλαξιμίων* (Compensation of the Exchangees), which is still the most in-depth analysis of the issue of compensation for the properties abandoned by refugees subject to the exchange.<sup>207</sup> This problem was, by far, the weightiest problem between Greece and Turkey and creating a diplomatic impasse. A couple of years later, Stelio Séfériadès, dean of the Law School of Athens, published a comprehensive legal analysis of the exchange.<sup>208</sup> Séfériadès provides insides

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<sup>206</sup> Alex Deimezis, *Situation sociale créée en Grèce à la suite de l'échange des populations*. (Paris: Jean Budry, 1927).

<sup>207</sup> Emmanouil I. Tsouderos, *Η Αποζημίωσις των Ανταλλαξιμίων* (Athens: n.d., 1927). A summary of this text was published in French the following year. See *L'indemnisation des réfugiés grecs*. (Paris: Librairie du Recueil Sirey, 1928).

<sup>208</sup> Stelios Séfériadès, "L'Échange des populations," *Recueil Des Cours - Académie de Droit International de La Haye* IV, no. 24 (1928). The offprint of the article was published in 1929. See Stelios Séfériadès, *L'Échange des Populations* (Paris: Hachette, 1929). For Séfériadès' intellectual and political position in interwar Greece see Thomas Skouteris, "The Vocabulary of Progress in Interwar International



about the question, highlighting what was unique about the exchange. According to him, in diplomatic history there were exchange-like practices, but the usage of the term “exchange” for humans gave this case its unique character.<sup>209</sup>

As the negotiations between Greece and Turkey remained in a state of complete deadlock over the future of Constantinopolitan Greeks and, as mentioned above, the compensation for abandoned properties, in 1929 a number of new publications appeared: Alexandre Devedji’s *L’échange obligatoire des minorités grecques et turques en vertu de la convention de Lausanne du 30 janvier 1923*, Georgios S. Streit’s *Der Lausanner Vertrag und der Griechisch-Türkische Bevölkerungsaustausch* and Athanasios Protonotarios’ *Το Προσφυγικόν Πρόβλημα από Ιστορικής, Νομικής και Κρατικής Απόψεως*.<sup>210</sup> All three studies shed light on the multiple aspects of the exchange and the refugee problem. The former two tried to set the problem within an international framework and they put great emphasis on international law.

1930 was a turning point both for the refugee problem and the literature on it. On June 10, the last agreement regarding the population exchange was finally signed. The Ankara Agreement wrote off the demands for compensation for abandoned properties. This agreement

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Law: An Intellectual Portrait of Stelios Seferiades,” *European Journal of International Law* 16, no. 5 (2005): 823–56.

<sup>209</sup> Séfériadès, “L’Échange des populations,” 335. According to Georgios K. Tenekides, even only for this reason the exchange deserves criticism: “The concept ‘exchange of populations’ was considered outrageous: things are to be exchanges, not people.” Georgios K. Tenekides, “Πρόλογος,” in *Η Εξοδος*, ed. P. D. Apostolopoulos and G. Mourellos, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1980), κ’.

<sup>210</sup> Alexandre Devedji, *L’échange obligatoire des minorités grecques et turques en vertu de la Convention de Lausanne du 30 Janvier 1923* (Paris: Pierre Bossuet, 1929); Georgios S. Streit, *Der Lausanner Vertrag Und Der Griechisch-Türkische Bevölkerungsaustausch* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1929); Athanasios B. Protonotarios, *Το Προσφυγικόν Πρόβλημα Από Ιστορικής, Νομικής Και Κρατικής Απόψεως* (Athens: Pirsou, 1929).

shattered the refugees' hope that one day they would return to their homeland, a point I will return to below.

As for the literature, the studies approaching to the refugee issue from an international law perspective were replaced by the works examining the progress made in the settlement task, its consequences, and the ongoing problems of the refugees. Thanasis Petsalis, in his *H δημοσιονομική αντιμετώπιση του προσφυγικού ζητήματος*, for example, focused on the economic impact of the population exchange and he provides us with the most detailed picture of how the settlement and relief activities were financed by the Greek state. He attached special importance to the refugee loans issued by the Greek government in 1924 and 1928. Second, as a reflection of the disappointment of the refugees, Basileios Artemiades, a refugee from Isparta, published a piece on the demands of the refugees and their historical justification. He bitterly criticized the Greek government and particularly Venizelos for not recognizing the demands and rights of the refugees arising from international and national law while listing the contribution of the refugees.<sup>211</sup> The same trend continued throughout the 1930s, but especially after the bankruptcy of 1932, the economic aspect of the settlement started to attract more attention.

In 1933, in a book compiling the reviews of the national agricultural programs of the states in "Middle Europe," Georges Servakis, the chief of the section of Ministry of Agriculture in Greece, and Dr. C. Pertountzi present a rich summary of the agricultural policy. This piece summarizes the economic measures taken by the Greek government and then in a hopeful manner foresees an increase in the agricultural incomes and productivity.<sup>212</sup> In the following

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<sup>211</sup> Vasileios Artemiadis, *Ta ιστορικά ερείσματα των αξιώσεων των ανταλλαζήμων - Έχει δίκαιον ο κ. Βενιζέλος* (Athens: Kalergis, 1930), *passim* but especially 31-2.

<sup>212</sup> Georges Servakis and C. Pertountzi, "The Agricultural Policy of Greece," in *Agricultural Systems of Middle Europe; a Symposium*, ed. Ora Sherman Morgan (New York: Macmillan, 1933), 150-152.

year, Michael Notaras offered profound insights into the rural settlement program and provides us with the full image of the major stages of the settlement scheme.<sup>213</sup> The book has a prologue written by the former Prime Minister Papanastasiou that is at least as important as the book itself. While introducing the work, Papanastasiou clearly states that the success of the settlement was conditional on the autonomous endeavors of the RSC and the foreign funds because “the refugee problem is the biggest problem that the Greek state faces is the settlement of the refugees after the Asia Minor Catastrophe.”<sup>214</sup> Moreover, Papanastasiou makes comparison between refugee and indigenous populations and praises their political, ideological, intellectual and economic contribution to Greece. For Papanastasiou even the harmonious relations between Greece and Turkey was thanks to the levelheaded reaction of the refugees after the Ankara Agreement. Therefore, the economic burden created by this problem could be brooked by Greece.

Aristokles Aegides published his seminal work, *Η Ελλάδα χωρίς τους Πρόσφυγας* at around the same time. As the title of his book suggests, Aegides tries to answer the counterfactual question if Greece would be better off without refugees.<sup>215</sup> He gave a negative answer to this question for various reasons. First, the refugee influx was for the benefit of

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<sup>213</sup> Michael I. Notaras, *Η Αγροτική Αποκατάσταση Των Προσφύγων* (Athens: Chronika, 1934). In 1934 André Rodocanachi defended and published his dissertation on the financial aspect of the resettlement of the refugees in Greece. This book is one of the most detailed accounts of the economic aspect of the refugee settlement. He analyzes the land reform attempts of the Greek government. Rodocanachi, similar to the current crisis, explains the bankruptcy with the over-indebtedness of Greece due to the loans used for the resettlement. Rodocanachi particularly criticizes the unbearably high interest rates charged to Greece. André Rodocanachi, *Les Finances de la Grèce et l'établissement des réfugiés*. (Paris: Dalloz, 1934).

<sup>214</sup> Alexandros Papanastasiou, “Πρόλογος,” in *Η Αγροτική Αποκατάσταση Των Προσφύγων*, by Michael I. Notaras (Athens: Chronika, 1934), 3.

<sup>215</sup> Aristokles I. Aegides, *Η Ελλάδα Χωρίς Τούς Πρόσφυγας Ιστορική, Δημοσιονομική, Οικονομική Και Κοινωνική Μελέτη Τοῦ Προσφυγικοῦ Ζητήματος* (Athens: Sakellarios, 1934), 8-9.

Hellenism because it would have been impossible for Greeks to keep living within the borders of postwar Turkey, which became even more nationalist and even started putting pressure on Muslim non-Turkish elements such as Kurds or Arabs.<sup>216</sup> According the author, the infrastructural improvements, increasing potential of the country in the economic sphere, internal security, ethnic homogeneity, and regional stability stemmed from the refugee influx and the collaborative work of the Greek state and the international community. In 1935 Leontiades published his study on the population exchange that was reviewed above.<sup>217</sup>

There are also reports and collections of official documents published in this period by the Greek government or the RSC. For example, in the 1928, the RSC published an extremely useful document: a catalog giving the old as well as new toponyms of the refugee settlements in Macedonia together with the information regarding the number of refugee families in each settlement and if the settlement is “mixed” or “purely refugee” (*αμυγής*).<sup>218</sup>

In a nutshell, regarding the first wave of scholarship we can draw three key, interrelated conclusions:

i. Almost all the authors can be considered “bureacademics”. Dioxides was the Minister of Health in the first Venizelos administration. Tsouderos was the founder of the Greek National Bank and its vice-president when the book was published. Τένέκιδès was one of Venizelos’

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>217</sup> See footnote 88.

<sup>218</sup> RSC, *Κατάλογος των προσφυγικών συνοικισμών Μακεδονίας με τας νέας ονομασίας* (Θεσσαλονίκη: χ.ο, 1928). There are numerous other titles that can be counted here. For example, Konstantinos Kargiates, ed., *Διατάξεις Αφορώσαι Την Πρόνοιαν Και Αστικήν Εγκατάστασιν Των Προσφύγων* (Athens: Ministry of Hygiene and Welfare, 1926); RSC, *Σύλλογη Νόμων, Διαταγμάτων Κτλ Αφορώντων Την ΕΑΠ* (Athens, 1926); Mihalis Karalis, ed., *Νομοθεσία Αστικής Αποκατα-στάσεως Προσφύγων* (Athens: National Printhouse, 1934). For more examples see Giannakopoulos “Οι Μικρασιάτες Πρόσφυγες Στην Ελλάδα,” 288.

advisors. Protonotarios was a lawyer and was serving as an inspector of the population exchange at the time of his book's publication. Notaras was a high-ranking bureaucrat. Séfériadès was the dean of the Athens Law School. Professor Streit was the legal advisor to Constantine I and served as the Foreign Minister on the eve of WWI. Papanastasiou was one of the leading characters of the Liberal Party.<sup>219</sup>

ii. Before the 1930 Ankara Agreement, almost all of the major works on the population exchange and the refugee question were published either in French or in German, indicating that the authors wrote primarily for foreign audiences. So, these works also contributed to the emerging scholarship on the Refugee Question, taking their place alongside those by the scholars of the Diaspora, such as Ladas and Pallis. Yet after 1930 we see a shift in that almost all the new works were written in Greek and basically concentrated on the state's effort to assimilate the refugees and to make them economically productive. The refugees are visible only as the objects of the settlement process and the unintentional contributors of some gargantuan goals. In like vein, interwar Greek historiography saw —almost metaphysically— economic miracles in carpet-weaving (*το θαύμα της ταπητουργίας*) and in agriculture (*το “αγροτικό θαύμα” του μεσοπολέμου*).

iii. These works “historicized” and “normalized” the population exchange and the refugee experience in three distinct ways: First, almost all of them start with a historical narrative that tracks the rise of Turkish nationalism and its radicalization and the continuous decline of Hellenism since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The Asia Minor Catastrophe is the intersection of these two elements of the narrative and the expulsion of the people, refugeehood

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<sup>219</sup> For some of these names see Onur Yildirim, “The 1923 Population Exchange: Refugees and National Historiographies in Greece and Turkey,” *East European Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (2006): 49-50; Giannakopoulos “Οι Μικρασιάτες Πρόσφυγες Στην Ελλάδα,” 287.

and the population exchange become the final chapter in this narrative. In tandem with this historical background, they also emphasized that even though the compulsory exchange was not a desirable way of dealing with minorities or displaced people, in the case of Greece it was necessary because without the expulsion of the Muslim population the settlement task of the displaced Asia Minor Greeks could never have taken place and the return of this displaced population to Anatolia was impossible. Second, this literature assumes that the refugees were a homogenous social group possessing infinite adaptability and this view underplayed the diversity of the Ottoman Greeks. Nonetheless, their incompatibility with the new social framework was but a temporary setback that was being overcome through assimilation. Finally, the refugees are seen as the key factor in a Greek success story that would not have been attained without the refugee influx. In several ways this reasoning served the twin myths of national unity and social homogeneity on which the entire canon relies.

Starting from the immediate aftermath of the arrival of the refugees, a refugee press emerged in Greece, which was also engaged in writing history. But in the 1930s, viz., after losing all their hopes for return, the refugees began founding associations and other organizations to participate in political, public and intellectual circles and defend their rights. These organizations, by publishing scholarly journals and establishing cultural centers, added powerful impetus to this endeavor. Since the refugee organizations and press will be discussed at length below, suffice it to note here that the refugees' effort at writing history in most cases reproduced the main features of the existing metanarrative instead of fundamentally challenging it.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> One of the most important and recurrent themes in these journals is the contributions of the refugees in different fields of social and economic life. This seems to be a strategy to integrate themselves into the existing social structure. For an example see Nikos Milioris, "Η Πνευματική Εισφορά Των Μικρασιατών," *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά ΙΑ'* (1964): 19–142.

A new wave of scholarship emerged in the 1950s and especially in the 1960s, particularly due to the re-emergence of the Cyprus Question. This second wave scholarship gave a more detailed and systematized picture of the Refugee Question in the 1920s.

In their comprehensive study published in 1955, Maximos I. Maravelakis and Apostolos E. Vakalopoulos offer a very detailed and exhaustive view of how Thessaloniki was re-colonized after the refugees' arrival. The book examines almost each and every refugee settlement separately and reveals a wealth of information by answering the questions how many refugee families were settled in each settlement, where these families originated from and how they got to those settlements.<sup>221</sup> One of the most important historians of Greece and the most prominent Marxist historian, Giannis Kordatos, published his 13-volume encyclopedic *Ιστορία της Νεώτερης Ελλάδας* [History of Modern Greece] in 1958, the last volume of which covers the period of 1900-1924 and the final chapters examine the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the Lausanne Agreement, the population exchange and the early political results. Kordatos, as a historian who was known for his Marxist scholarship and had been associated with the Communist Party of Greece [*Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας*, KKE hereinafter], not surprisingly approached the subject from a Marxist point of view. It is hard to maintain that Kordatos's voluminous study deeply affected Greek historiography immediately after its publication. Due to the rise of anticommunism in the 1930s, the defeat of the Greek communists in the Civil War and the ideological atmosphere in the post-Civil War period Marxism was, however, ostracised from the academic establishment. Kordatos' rich history, however, is one of the earliest titles that emphasized the political impact of the refugees on Greek politics by bringing their role in the

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<sup>221</sup> Maximos I. Maravelakis and Apostolos E. Vakalopoulos, *Αι Προσφυγικαί Εγκαταστάσεις εν τη Περιοχή Θεσσαλονίκης* (Thessaloniki: Εταιρεία Μακεδονικών Σπουδών, 1955).

“trial and execution of the Six”,<sup>222</sup> the proclamation of the Second Hellenic Republic into view as well as the increasing social conflicts in Greece after the arrival of the refugees. Kordatos also influenced Marxist historiography with his emphasis on the role of the foreign powers in the Asia Minor Catastrophe and afterwards in shaping the fate of the country and the people, which is in fact always a part of the Marxist interpretation.<sup>223</sup>

The 1960s witnessed the publication of two studies which are considered among the seminal works in this field. They were written by the scholars of diaspora origin: Dimitris Pentzopoulos and Harry Psomiades. Pentzopoulos’ *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact on Greece* came out in 1962.<sup>224</sup> Contrary to the promise of the title, the scope of the book is almost limited to the Greco-Turkish case and even though the study is systematic, rich in content and the author disagrees with Ladas here and there, the book perfectly fits the definition of the word “successor.” Pentzopoulos extensively utilizes the existing literature on the exchange yet the main premises of his discussion on the population exchange and his mode of reasoning are borrowed from Ladas and Pallis. Michael Llewellyn Smith in his preface to the second edition of Pentzopoulos’ book says “the literature on the question of the refugees will always be

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<sup>222</sup> The Trial of the Six was the trial for treason, in late 1922, of the anti-venizelists commanders held responsible for the Greek military defeat in Asia Minor. The trial culminated in the death sentence.

<sup>223</sup> See for example Pantelis Pouliopoulos, “Τι Ζητουν Οι Παλαιοί Πολεμιστές Και Τα Θύματα Στρατού - Γενικές Προγραμματικές Θέσεις Ψηφισμένες Από Το Συνέδριο Την 6 Μαΐου 1924,” *Παλιός Πολεμιστής*, May 1924, <https://www.marxists.org/ellinika/archive/pouliop/works/war/index.htm>. For an analytical analysis of the KKE’s policy during WWI see Philip Carabott, “The Greek ‘Communists’ and the Asia Minor Campaign,” *Δελτίο ΚΜΣ* 9 (1992): 99–118 and Foti Benlisoy, *Kahramanlar, Kurbanlar, Direnişçiler (Trakya ve Anadolu’daki Yunan Ordusunda Propaganda, Grev ve İsyân)* (İstanbul: İstos, 2014). See also Angelos Elefantis, *Η Επαγγελία Της Αδύνατης Επανάστασης - Κ.Κ.Ε. Και Αστισμός Στον Μεσοπόλεμο*, 3rd ed. (Athens: Themelio, 1999).

<sup>224</sup> Dimitris Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece* (Mouton, 1962). In this study I will use the second edition of the book which appeared forty years after the first edition, in 2002.



indebted to the early works of writers such as A. A. Pallis, Stephan Ladas and Dimitri Pentzopoulos.”<sup>225</sup>

Pentzopoulos naturalizes the population exchange with the impossibility of coexistence due to the ethnic rivalry and of repatriation of the refugees that had left Asia Minor before the exchange. After making this argument he focused the rest of the analysis on a cost-benefit evaluation under the same assumptions and doing some extrapolations based on the premises borrowed from the canon. For example, he reproduces the long-held assertion that national unity was one of the most important achievements of the exchange. “The beneficial effect of national homogeneity,” writes Pentzopoulos, “were demonstrated once more during the guerrilla warfare of 1946-49. Had there existed a sizable Slav minority in northern provinces of Greece, the task of quelling the communist uprising would have been far more complicated and exacting.”<sup>226</sup> Here the author not only praises nationalism but he also takes a clear political stance, which obscures his analysis, particularly when it comes to the political impact of the exchange. As for the increasing popularity of communism among the refugees in the 1930s, Pentzopoulos answers the question of why growing number of refugees did opt for the KKE with deception.

In 1968 Harry (Haralampos) Psomiades’ *The Eastern Question: the Last Phase - A Study in Greek-Turkish Diplomacy* was released.<sup>227</sup> Arguably this book, which tried to develop a historical approach towards the Greco-Turkish relations and diplomacy, attracted great attention due to the increasing tension over Cyprus after 1963. Psomiades, whose family, the

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<sup>225</sup> Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece* (Hurst, 2002), 13.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>227</sup> Harry J. Psomiades, *The Eastern Question: The Last Phase - A Study in Greek-Turkish Diplomacy* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1968).

Ekmektzoglou,<sup>228</sup> was of Pontic descent, starts his analysis with a background discussion of the history of the Greco-Turkish conflict starting from the thirteenth century. According to him, the nature of the conflict cannot be understood without examining the sociopolitical structure of the Ottoman Empire, its diplomacy, and most importantly the Eastern Question and the rise of nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire. In Psomiades' narrative, the Lausanne Agreement holds a historically significant place because it put an end to this age-old problem and laid the foundations of a Greco-Turkish détente in the interwar period. The population exchange, in Psomiades' view, was an extremely practical means for the formation of the suitable conditions and enabled these countries in three respects: First, the exchange helped both Greece and Turkey to homogenize their populations. Next, it eliminated the age-old minorities problem. Finally, it stabilized the geographical boundaries between the two countries. Although the book suffers from some methodological shortcomings and minor factual errors, its timely publication, brief but in-depth analysis of the Lausanne, its revisionist approach in some previously neglected subjects<sup>229</sup> and drawing historical conclusions regarding the relapsing diplomatic relations between two countries and particularly the Cyprus Question placed this work among the canonical works.

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<sup>228</sup> Alexander Kitroeff, "The Legacy of Harry J. Psomiades: Identity and Scholarship" (The First Harry S. Psomiades Memorial Lecture, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies Center at Queens College, May 24, 2012), <http://www.greeknewsonline.com/the-legacy-of-harry-j-psomiades-identity-and-scholarship/>; For the documentary where Psomiades appears as a contributor and talks about his family history see Maria Pliou, *Από τις δύο πλευρές του Αιγαίου: Διωγμός και Ανταλλαγή πληθυσμών, Τουρκία – Ελλάδα, 1922-1924*, (Proteas and Proteus NY Inc., 2012).

<sup>229</sup> It should be underlined that Psomiades' study supplies researchers with new subjects to look into. For example, in the ninth chapter, the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, includes the analysis of the Turkish authorities attempt to create an Autocephalous Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate under Papa Eftim, which was, until Psomiades, treated as a ridiculous fifth column by Greek historiography.

The last item that can be included in the second wave is Efstratios Zampathas' dissertation *Οι εκ Μικράς Ασίας Ελληνορθόδοξοι Πρόσφυγες*, which was published in Athens in 1969. Zampathas heavily relies on the works of Ladas, Pallis, and Pentzopoulos. He also utilizes documents from Pallis' archive located in what was then the Royal Research Foundation (now the National Research Foundation) in Athens. Although the author presents his data in a systematic way, he says almost nothing new and original. For example, while he discusses the exchange of the Turkish speaking Greeks, he refers to *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* by Bernard Lewis, who considers the population exchange as an exchange of Christian Turks and Muslim Greeks.<sup>230</sup> Giving credit to this reductionist approach can be interpreted as both the lack of research and the indifference of scholarship to the “subcultures” within the refugee communities. By the way, before closing this discussion, I should add that in these years a “peculiar” element in historiography started to blossom. Although it was not directly on the study of the population exchange or refugees, in time it would trigger new studies of the subcultures among the refugees. In the 1950s Sévérien Salaville and Eugène Dalleggio started compiling a bibliography of the Karamanlidika (Turkish written with Greek scripts) publications and the first volume of *Karamanlidika* came out in 1958, which was followed by the publications of the second and third volumes in 1966 and 1974.<sup>231</sup> Meanwhile Richard Clogg started

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<sup>230</sup> Efstratios Ch. Zampathas, *Οι εκ Μικράς Ασίας Ελληνορθόδοξοι Πρόσφυγες* (Athens: Iolkos, 1969), 74.

<sup>231</sup> Sévérien Salaville and Eugène Dalleggio, *Karamanlidika; bibliographie analytique d'ouvrages en langue turque imprimés en caractères grecs (1584-1850)*, vol. 1 (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1958); *Karamanlidika; bibliographie analytique d'ouvrages en langue turque imprimés en caractères grecs (1851-1865)*, vol. 2 (Athens: L'Institut Français d'Athènes, 1966); *Karamanlidika; bibliographie analytique d'ouvrages en langue turque imprimés en caractères grecs (1866-1900)*, vol. 3 (Athens: Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος «Παρνασσός», 1974).

publishing articles on the activities of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the nineteenth century, which include production of religious texts in Karamanlidika.<sup>232</sup>

To sum up, the second wave scholarship, like the first, continued following in Pallis's and Ladas's wake. They collected and systematized the data that became available after the publication of the first canonical studies but they also stayed within the same state-centric, monolingual, and triumphalist methodological and analytical framework. These studies did not challenge the ruling consensus on the population exchange and the Refugee Question, on the contrary they reproduced it so faithfully that two works that I categorize under this label can now be counted among the canonical studies, namely those of Pentzopoulos and Psomiades. The second wave, too, strove to prove that the results of the exchange—in the last instance—were for the benefit of the region and Greece. Hence the population exchange continued to be evaluated as one of many “statecrafting” activities. This wave kept on embracing the lasting assumptions regarding national homogeneity and neglected the diversity that the refugees presented. Due to the monolingual approach of these studies a full picture of the history of the population exchange that included the experience of the Muslim refugees as well could not be done and so the story of the Muslim refugees in Turkey remained a parallel but incomplete story and it is to that story that we turn now.

## **2.5 Turkish national historiography**

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<sup>232</sup> Richard Clogg, “The Publication and Distribution of Karamanli Texts by the British and Foreign Bible Society Before 1850, I,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 19, no. 01 (April 1968): 57–81; “The Publication and Distribution of Karamanli Texts by the British and Foreign Bible Society Before 1850, II,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 19, no. 02 (October 1968): 171–93. Clogg later kept on publishing on this issue.

A review of Turkish historiography of the population exchange is, as suggested above, is not as well-developed as the Greek one and one could go so far as to speak of a purposeful, self-imposed silence about the topic. Yıldırım explains this long silence with the politics of memory of the early Turkish Republic.<sup>233</sup> While crafting the biography of the nascent nation-state, forgetting became the key strategy regarding the population exchange. This strategy created an obliviousness imposed by forceful state intervention in history writing and that policy would last decades. The first scholarly work on this subject matter was published in 1995. Since the politics of memory will be discussed below at length, I would like to here point out some of the features of Turkish historiography that led to this self-imposed silence about the exchange.

Turkish historiography in the early republican era was obsessed with three pivotal and imbricated assumptions in the grand narrative of Turkish national history: 1) Turkish exceptionalism; 2) Turkish national unity and social homogeneity; 3) the continuity of “Turkism.”

As far as Turkish exceptionalism is concerned, nothing less than Recep Peker’s inaugural lecture delivered on the “Turkish revolution” at the University of Istanbul on December 22, 1934 lays bear the “locavore” nature of national historiography in Turkey. The newspapers of the following day extolled the lecture and reported it with the title: “We resemble ourselves” (*Biz bize benzeriz*).<sup>234</sup> After putting Turkey’s experience in contradistinction to the other similar experiences “our revolution” says Peker, “is not copy at any level, but it is original. The lead founder of the regime and the leader of the Republican People’s Party expressed this very briefly.

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<sup>233</sup> Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922-1934* (New York: Routledge, 2006b), 18-19. See also by the same author, “The 1923 Population Exchange: Refugees and National Historiographies in Greece and Turkey,” *East European Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (2006): 46.

<sup>234</sup> For example, see *Cumhuriyet*, 23.12.1934, 1 and 5.

While discussing a key issue regarding a state institution someone asked the following question: ‘... this is just like that but to whom do we resemble?’ Atatürk gave that answer: ‘We resemble ourselves.’<sup>235</sup>

Turkish exceptionalism enabled the regime to have a free hand at both practical and ideological levels. Corporatism, or more specifically, solidarist corporatism sees society as an organic and coherent unity formed out of “parts” that are reciprocally dependent and functionally complement to each other.<sup>236</sup> Corporatism implies unity, social peace and harmony that led to the double myth of national unity and social homogeneity. In the same speech Peker waxed enthusiastically about national unity as well.

“The country, under the leadership of this regime that it has been entrusted to, is heading towards the future within a steam that affectionately and warmly cuddles it, a steam that we call “national unity.” [...] [F]or the preservation of the distance that has been covered towards the future, national unity is the biggest survival imperative.”

In the Kemalist vision, the nation was a classless solidaristic society, where distinctions in status and wealth were sublimated to national unity. In Peker’s words, “We are populist. Being populist means to repudiate any privilege and superiority within the nation.” In the Procrustean logic of nationalism there was no room for subcultures, let alone minority populations. These resulted in the adoption of essentialist and simplistic pseudo-theoretical (non-)historical

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<sup>235</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılâp Dersleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1984), 34. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, one of the most prominent intellectuals of the period and the regime, claims this phrase was formulated in a speech on December 1, 1924. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam 1922-1938* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1999), 433-34.

<sup>236</sup> Taha Parla, ““Kemalizm, Türk Aydınlanması mı?,”” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, ed. Ahmet İnsel, vol. 2 - *Kemalizm* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 93.

frameworks on the origins of the Turks, including one claiming that it was the Turkic people who founded the most ancient civilization of the world in Central Asia, which was the cradle of all civilizations. The so-called “Sun-Language Theory” was a kind of coda to this line of reasoning. According to this “theory”, Turkish was the *Ursprache* of all languages; more precisely, all human languages were the descendants of a proto-Turkic primal language.<sup>237</sup>

I should add two other distinct characteristics of this historical narrative. To begin with, in spite of its being self-contradictory, these assumptions also emphasized that Anatolia was the “hearth of the Turks” since the beginning of the time. To solve this obvious logical fallacy, Turkish nationalism tried to embrace the legacy of the ancient Anatolian civilizations, such as the Hittites and Sumerians. Next, these interconnected assumptions found a place within the triumphalist metanarrative of national emancipation and revolutionary rupture from the Ottoman past. In such an atmosphere where ethnic nationalism held sway, the acceptance of the multiethnic and multi-lingual historical structure of Anatolia was a real burden for this ideology. Although these pseudo-theories shortly lost their influence over history writing, the assumptions upon which they stood prevailed.

Therefore, it can be assumed that had the population exchange been included within the national biography of the nascent republic, it would have challenged the very premises of the dominant ideology in Turkey in two ways: First, this would have contradicted the essentialist foundation of Turkish exceptionalism, such as “we resemble ourselves.” The more demographic engineering practices are included in the historical narrative of a nation, the more fictitious the historicity of the “we” that the entire narrative is constructed upon becomes and the more

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<sup>237</sup> Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 48-74.

speculative becomes the “we” the more implausible the national imagery which should not be questioned by its intended population looks. Second, the inclusion of the population exchange in the historical narrative was avoided because it would highlight the long-standing multiethnic character of the “eternally Turkish land.” This was one reminiscence to had to be erased for the national collective memory together with its implications. That is why in his *Nutuk* (Speech), Mustafa Kemal referred the population exchange and refugee problem *en passant* while “unveiling” a conspiracy against himself. Being the master saga of the nascent Turkish republic, *Nutuk* determined the trajectory of Turkish historiography for decades with its emphases and de-emphases, with the personae it included and excluded, with the told and untold episodes of history.

Forceful state intervention in history writing in the 1920s and 1930s hindered the formation of a systematic literature on the population exchange. Yet this does not mean the absence of any documentation or any reference to this issue--- even if they were fragmentary and scattered. Particularly in the 1930s we observe an increase in the number of state-sponsored publications on refugee settlement. This numerical increase was not only due to the on-going inflow of the Muslims from different Balkan or Eastern European countries or for properly expanding welfare provisions for those immigrants but also related to the aspiration of the state towards regulating the national public space and controlling labor mobility. Moreover, the settlement policies of the late 1920s and 1930s were closely associated with recurring Kurdish uprisings (1925, 1927-1930, 1938) in Eastern Anatolia. Vis-à-vis “insurgent groups” the Turkish state, like its predecessor, utilized settlement policies as means of prevention, suppression and/or



punishment.<sup>238</sup> Among these sources published in the 1930s, *İskân Tarihçesi* [Concise History of Settlement], which was published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1932 is of special importance of its direct relevance to the population exchange. In addition to a brief historical outline of the conditions under which the exchange convention was signed, it provided an apt summary of the entire settlement process including the synopses of the relevant legislations, remarks on the factors that made some of these legislations obsolete, succinct notes on the obstacles in the settlement process.<sup>239</sup>

In addition to the legal documentation and compilation of laws, there are limited number of studies that are relevant to the exchange. In 1945, Behice Boran, a Marxist sociologist associated with the Communist Party of Turkey, published one of her most significant works *Toplumsal Yapı Araştırmaları: İki köy çeşidinin mukayeseli tetkiki* (Research on Social Structures: Comparative Analysis of Two Village Types) based on her field research in the early 1940s in Manisa.<sup>240</sup> The two categories that Boran analyzes are mountain and lowland villages but she also categorizes the villages according to the origins of the villagers: native, tribal and immigrant villages. She underlines the fact that the immigrant villages used to be the Greek villages. She also investigates the dynamics of the relations between the native and immigrant villages and the immigrant communities that settled in the native villages. Although limited, this

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<sup>238</sup> See Fikret Babuş, *Osmanlı'dan günümüze etnik-sosyal politikalar çerçevesinde Türkiye'de göç ve iskân siyaseti uygulamaları* (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2006), 63-81. See also İsmail Beşikçi, *Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi* (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1990).

<sup>239</sup> *İskân Tarihçesi* (İstanbul: Hamit Matbaası, 1932). See also Osman Nuri Ergin, *İstanbul'da İmar ve İskân Hareketleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul-Eminönü Halkevi Dil, Tarih ve Edebiyat Şubesi, 1938). H. Nuri, *İskan ve Muhaceret: Millî Kültür - Nüfus İşleri* (İstanbul: n.d., 1934). *İskan Mevzuatı* (Ankara: Sıhhat ve İçtimai Muavenet Vekaleti İskan Umum Müdürlüğü, 1937), *İskân Kanunları ve Tefsirleri* (Ankara: Sıhhat ve İçtimai Muavenet Vekaleti İskân Umum Müdürlüğü, 1939).

<sup>240</sup> Behice Sadık Boran, *Toplumsal Yapı Araştırmaları: İki Köy Çeşidinin Mukayeseli Tetkiki* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi, 1945).

is the only fieldwork done after the exchange that represents the sociocultural characteristics of the refugees and their interaction with the natives. In 1949, one of the most prominent Ottoman economic historians, Ömer Lütfi Barkan, published an article on the need for an “internal colonization plan” to organize a proper settlement scheme for immigrants (*muhacir*) from Bulgaria and to encourage rural development throughout the country. In this article Barkan presents the lack of an “internal colonization plan” as one of the most important shortcomings of government policies since the nineteenth century. Although he underlines the haphazardness of the settlement policy that the Turkish state follows, he does not examine particularly the case of population exchange at length.<sup>241</sup>

In 1961, Bernard Lewis’ influential *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* came out.<sup>242</sup> In his book, Lewis treats the religious minorities question in Turkey in a separate subsection where he mentions the population exchange.<sup>243</sup> After introducing the subject as it had been discussed previously, Lewis offers a closer examination and brings up an aspect of the exchange that had not discussed at length by the older literature. The author calls attention to the case of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox and Greek-speaking Turkish refugees “repatriated” in Greece and Turkey respectively. For him, these groups are proof positive that religion and not nationality was the criterion of the exchange. Cevat Geray, who addressed the problem of emigration with a geopolitical concern, published two significant articles on the migratory movements that Turkey

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<sup>241</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Türkiye’de Muhacir İskanı İşleri ve Bir İç Kolonizasyon Planına Olan İhtiyaç,” *İ.Ü.İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 10, no. 1–4 (1949–1948): 204–23.

<sup>242</sup> Bernard Lewis’ book can be classified under the title of Turkish historiography due to its influence upon it. After its appearance in 1961, its Turkish translation by the Turkish History Association, a state institution founded by Mustafa Kemal. Bernard Lewis, *Modern Türkiye’nin Doğuşu*, trans. Metin Kıratlı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1970).

<sup>243</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 354–57.

had been experiencing since the proclamation of the republic.<sup>244</sup> His data are still quite valuable for research of these issues.

In Turkey the 1970s were years of protest and in this atmosphere Marxist or Marxist-inspired socioeconomic historiography gained momentum. This resulted in a track change since thanks to this shift new topics were introduced, as well as new themes and paradigms. I discuss these in the next section.

In conclusion, it can be said that the canonical narrative about the exchange was shaped and disseminated within the tight constraints that the state imposed in the 1920s and 1930s. The “semi-existence” of Turkish historiography on the population exchange continued for decades in the shape of brief notes and haphazard references to the event. Apart from a small handful of studies that approach to the subject from an internal conflict resolution aspect while examining the settlement policies of the state, we cannot talk about a literature concentrating on the population exchange in the first fifty years after this landmark event. This silence created a gap in the historiography about the exchange that persisted for decades.

## **2.6 Persistent old trends and historiographical anxiety**

In the late 1970s new historiographical trends started to emerge in Greece as well as in Turkey, which led to radical criticisms of the respective historiographies. If we refer to Nora’s concept, historiographical anxieties arose in both countries especially in the late 1970s. But why? According to Nora, a historiographical anxiety arises when history starts writing its own history

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<sup>244</sup> Cevat Geray, *Türkiyeden ve Türkiyeye göçler: (1923-1961)* (Ankara: Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, Maliye Enstitüsü, 1962); “Türkiye’de Göçmen Hareketleri ve Göçmenlerin Yerleştirilmesi,” *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* 3, no. 4 (1970): 8–36.

and this new history that emerges out of the anxiety, that is to say, the history of history does not abstain from addressing the most sacred objects of the national traditions. This was what happened in both countries. By the late 1970s the nationalist projects in Greece and Turkey had bankrupted and become unsustainable. In such atmosphere, rewriting the past, or rather problematizing and deconstructing history and the way in which it was written and most importantly respective nationalisms including their taboos, myths and dogmas was a radical means of criticism. This led to proliferation of historical or historically-informed research in Greece and in Turkey. This section is about this transformation. In the first part I try to portray Greek historiography after 1974. Second part concentrates on the Turkish scholarship in the same period. Thirdly, the joint efforts, “Greco-Turkish” historiography, so to speak, are examined; and finally, international scholarship on the population exchange is surveyed.

### **2.6-1 Greek Historiography**

As far as Greek historiography is considered, scholars continued to be productive regarding our subject matter from the 1970s onward.<sup>245</sup> After the collapse of the dictatorship in 1974, the political and intellectual climate changed fundamentally as the result of a process referred to as μεταπολίτευση (*metapolitefsi*, political changeover). Scholars turned their attention to the interwar period in order to comprehend the political turmoil and turbulence that the

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<sup>245</sup> Greece, being the most researched country of Southeastern Europe, has always been a center of scholarly attention. Especially in the Anglophone literature there are numerous introductory monographs on the history of Modern Greece, most of which are produced as textbook for undergraduate Modern Greek history courses. These studies are excluded from our discussion. However, some of these studies provide rich information on our subject. For a few examples see John Campbell, *Modern Greece*, (New York: Praeger, 1968); Giannis Koliopoulos and Thanos Veremis, *Greece: The Modern Sequel, from 1831 to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Thomas W. Gallant, *Modern Greece from Independence to the Present* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016).

country had been experiencing since then. In those years the historical discussions started to revolve around the problem of socioeconomic underdevelopment (economic backwardness) and its political and economic implications, namely clientelism and impaired industrialization respectfully. John A. Petropoulos, who applied this paradigm first to the Greek context, published an article on the exchange in 1976.<sup>246</sup> In this piece, which basically aimed to show the difference between the Greco-Turkish case and the Palestinian problem, Petropoulos does not test the validity of his theoretical approach but rather carefully examines the process that led to the exchange and the diplomatic rationale behind the decision. As opposed to the common approach, he turns the picture upside down so as to underline the real humanitarian cost of the population exchange and concludes that “the interests of the Greek refugees were subordinated to those of the Greek state. In return for hellenizing and developing northern Greece and, indirectly, transforming all of Greece, the refugees, apart from suffering the agonies of displacement, never received anywhere near adequate compensation for the property they left behind and many were reduced to permanent or long-term penury.”<sup>247</sup>

Moreover, according to Petropoulos, the so-called gains of the population exchange were bought at the expense of national sovereignty which had already been qualified by international interference. The “anadrome” and criticism of the conventional wisdom would increase its influence in the following years.<sup>248</sup> There is no doubt that in this shift the publication of the

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<sup>246</sup> John A. Petropoulos, *Politics and Statecraft in the Kingdom of Greece: 1833-1843* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968). For another study critical on how the parties at Lausanne came to the decision of a compulsory population exchange. Konstantinos Svolopoulos, *Η Απόφαση Για Την Υποχρεωτική Ανταλλαγή Των Πληθυσμών Μεταξύ Ελλάδος Και Τουρκίας* (Thessaloniki: EMS, 1981).

<sup>247</sup> John A. Petropoulos, “The Compulsory Exchange of Populations Greek-Turkish Peacemaking, 1922–1930,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 2, no. 1 (January 1, 1976): 135–60, 159.

<sup>248</sup> One of the important media for these analyses started to get published by the Center for Asia Minor Studies in 1977. As of 2022 the periodical publication of the Center, *Δέλιτο* (Bulletin), has 21 volumes.

refugee testimonies had a positive effect. In the early 1980s, the Center for Asia Minor Studies, which had started to publish a scholarly journal called *Δέλιτιο* (Bulletin) in 1977 and created an important medium for the scientific research exclusively on Eastern Hellenism, Asia Minor, and the refugees. The Center also compiled refugee testimonies from its rich oral history archive and published two volumes entitled *Η Εξοδος* (The Exodus).<sup>249</sup>

The studies addressing Greek history in this sociological-historical framework treated the refugee influx as a part of the problématique of underdevelopment. The works of Konstantinos Tsoukalas<sup>250</sup> or Nicos Mouzelis<sup>251</sup> are among those studies in which the refugees *en masse* seem to be an ambivalent yet crucial factor in the interwar conundrums. They were the main stimulant that gave a boost to industrialization, urbanization and Greece's integration into the wider world economy. Yet the refugee influx also altered the state-society relations and by deteriorating the already existing political polarizations of the prewar period created an atmosphere suitable for the emergence of Metaxas' dictatorial, quasi-fascist regime. The backwardness question called on economic historians to examine the institutional structure of the Greek economy. Banks especially received more attention.

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<sup>249</sup> For the preparation of these volume and their publication see Georgios K Tenekides, "Πρόλογος," in *Η Εξοδος*, ed. P. D. Apostolopoulos and G. Mourellos, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1980), Ιζ' – λζ'.

<sup>250</sup> Konstantinos Tsoukalas, *The Greek Tragedy* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969); *Κοινωνική Ανάπτυξη Και Κράτος: Συγκρότηση Του Δημοσίου Χώρου Στην Ελλάδα* (Athens: Themelio, 1974); *Κράτος, Κοινωνία, Εργασία Στη Μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα* (Athens: Themelio, 1986).

<sup>251</sup> Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment* (Macmillan, 1979); *Politics in the Semi-Periphery: Early Parliamentarism and Late Industrialisation in The Balkans and Latin America* (Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1986).

Margarita Dritsa's article on the National Bank's role in the settlement of the refugees was published in *Τα Ιστορικά* in 1985.<sup>252</sup> This was followed by the publication of Areti Tounta-Fergadi's book based on her dissertation, *Το Προσφυγικό Δάνειο του 1924* (The Refugee Loan of 1924), which offers that even a particular moment and policy in the entire settlement process was forged by a hammer made out of a complex amalgamation of internal and external dynamics.<sup>253</sup>

Kostas Kostis' comprehensive and informative analysis of the agricultural policies of the Greek state in the interwar period with a special emphasis on the Agricultural Bank of Greece is particularly important to contextualize the problem of the refugee settlement within the age-old agricultural problem of Greece. Since the overwhelming majority of the refugees were of rural origin, the Agricultural Bank played a crucial role in their settlement.<sup>254</sup> Similarly, in his detailed analysis of the Second Hellenic Republic, George Mavrogordatos underlines the transformative power of the pressure that the refugees firmly applied, this time, upon the political life in Greece. The author investigates each and every institutional political actor and convincingly exhibits that all of them went through major changes under the pressure of the refugees. Moreover, almost all of the crucial political developments in the interwar period, according to Mavrogordatos, took place under this pressure.<sup>255</sup>

A similar emphasis on the direct and indirect political potency of the refugees in interwar Greece can be found in Alkis Rigos' *Η Β' Ελληνική Δημοκρατία 1924-1935* (The Second Hellenic

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<sup>252</sup> Margarita Dritsa, "Εθνική Τράπεζα και Πρόσφυγες," *Τα Ιστορικά* 2, no. 4 (December 1985): 313–26. Although there are various studies on the National Bank or that utilize the sources at the archives of this bank. The National Bank's archives regarding the settlement issue are still not fully exploited.

<sup>253</sup> Areti Tounta-Fergadi, *Το προσφυγικό δάνειο του 1924* (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1986).

<sup>254</sup> Kostas Kostis, *Αγροτική Οικονομία Και Γεωργική Τράπεζα - Όψεις Της Ελληνικής Οικονομίας Στο Μεσοπόλεμο 1919- 1928* (Athens: ΜΙΕΤ, 1987).

<sup>255</sup> George Th Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

Republic 1924-1935). For Rigos, refugees constituted “a group that acts as a catalyst in the entire range of living conditions of the state, as an accelerator of the economic-social and politico-ideological crystallizations.”<sup>256</sup> Both studies supply their readers with insightful information and analyses on the tense adaptation process of the refugees which weighed heavily on Greek society, even sparking new conflicts such as the conflicts between the native and refugee populations and the increasing interaction between refugees and the KKE.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Alkis Rigos, *H Β' Ελληνική Δημοκρατία 1924-1935 Κοινωνικές Διαστάσεις Της Πολιτικής Σκιρής* (Athens: Themelio, 1988).

<sup>257</sup> At this point, I should add a small note regarding Marxist historiography on the subject. After the legalization of the KKE in 1974, the party started to produce material on its own history and on the Asia Minor Catastrophe and its consequences. The KKE published the first volume of *Το ΚΚΕ- Επίσημα Κείμενα* (KKE - Official Documents), which contains much curious and useful information on the party's relation to the refugees. In 1975, Dido Sotiriou, a novelist of refugee origin and associated with the KKE, published her *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή και η Στρατηγική του Ιμπεριαλισμού στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο* (The Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Strategy of Imperialism in the Eastern Mediterranean) where she writes “the hidden culprit stands in the background of the Asia Minor drama: The large foreign companies that destroyed the welfare of millions of Anatolian Greeks for their own crude interests.” In 1982 a national symposium on the Asia Minor Catastrophe was organized by the Center for Marxist Research, which was founded by the KKE. The main arguments of the symposium are twofold: First, imperialist powers, particularly Britain, dragged the Greek “oligarchy” into the war. Secondly, by identifying the people's interests with those of British imperialism the Greek oligarchy turned into a pawn of imperialism. It goes without saying that these arguments, regardless of their validity, are not historically substantiated and seem to be tautological. Dido Sotiriou, *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή Και Η Στρατηγική Του Ιμπεριαλισμού Στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο* (Athens: Kedros, 1975), 97; Center for Marxist Research, ed., *Η Μικρασιατική Εκστρατεία Και Καταστροφή* (Athens: Synchroni Epohi, 1983). For the KKE and its policy towards the refugees see Angelos Elefantis, *Η Επαγγελία Της Αδύνατης Επανάστασης - Κ.Κ.Ε. Και Αστισμός Στον Μεσοπόλεμο*, (Athens: Themelio, 1976). Although not associated with the Communist Party of Greece, Georgios Nakratzas, a self-proclaimed Marxist, published a book entitled *Η Μικρά Ασία και η Καταγωγή των Προσφύγων* (Asia Minor and the Origin of the Refugees), where he challenges the main arguments of Greek nationalism by trying to show that the *Megali Idea* was an imperialist policy encouraged by the Great Powers. The book is also translated in Turkish. Georgios Nakratzas, *Η Μικρά Ασία Και Η Καταγωγή Των Προσφύγων: Η Ιμπεριαλιστική Ελληνική Πολιτική Του 1922 Και Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*. (Thessaloniki: Batavia, 2000). For another study that underlines the role of “imperialism” in the Asia Minor Catastrophe see Dimitris Loizos, *Οι Μεγάλες Δυνάμεις, Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή Και Η Εγκατάσταση Των Προσφύγων Στην Ελλάδα* (Athens: n.d., 1994). In addition to these points I should also add that the obscure (or obscured) relationship between the KKE and the Asia Minor refugees has been a popular academic subject. See for example: Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*; Phillip Carabott. “The Greek "Communists" and the Asia Minor campaign”; Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*; George Kritikos, “Greek Orthodox Refugees: Integration and the Making of a New Greek National Community (1923-1930)” (Ph.D., European University Institute, 2001).



Increasing interest in this subject in the post-1974 period is undoubtedly related to the fact that in the last fifty years there had emerged a huge literature on the expulsion of the Asia Minor Greek population, the refugee problem and on the consequences of these processes; the exchange had thus become almost exclusively and object of academic researches. The refugees' literary and cultural production after their arrival in Greece furnished scholars with source materials. Thomas Doulis, for example, wrote one of the earliest works on the discourse of refugeehood in the post-Catastrophe literature in Greece. Although there were some earlier works on the Refugee Question that concentrated on how refugee literature fit in the wider literary scene.<sup>258</sup> In *Disaster and Fiction*, Doulis problematizes the subject in a broader context, that is to say how the Asia Minor Catastrophe with its short- and long-term effects transformed Modern Greek literature and its relation to the international trends. More importantly, he concludes that Greek fiction was completely transformed by the Asia Minor Catastrophe. "The Greek novel," writes the author, "can be said to exist today in a way that it did not exist half a century ago because a new way of confronting the national history came about after the ideological collapse of 1922."<sup>259</sup>

In the last decade of the twentieth century, a major shift of interest took place towards the studies of nationalisms fueled by the discourse of globalization and the demise of the multiethnic Soviet Union and other socialist countries in Eastern Europe which resulted in ethnic cleavages

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<sup>258</sup> Emiliios Hourmouziou, "Η 'προσφυγική' λογοτεχνία" [The "refugee" literature], *Νέα Εστία* 27, 314 (1940), pp. 106-109; I. Ilias Venezis, "Η Προσφυγιά Του 1922 Στην Ελληνική Λογοτεχνία," *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, January 24, 1943; Nikos Milioris, "Η Μικρασιατική τραγωδία στη λογοτεχνία και στην τέχνη" [The Asia Minor tragedy in literature and art], *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* 13 (1967), pp. 338-400.

<sup>259</sup> Thomas Doulis, *Disaster and Fiction: Modern Greek Fiction and the Asia Minor Disaster of 1922* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 289. For a more recent study see Angela Kastrinaki, "Το 1922 Και Οι Λογοτεχνικές Αναθεωρήσεις," in *Ο Ελληνικός Κόσμος Ανάμεσα Στην Ανατολή Και Τη Δύση 1453-1981*, vol. 1 (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1999), 165-74.

and border changes especially in the Balkans. In this atmosphere, the region of Macedonia, which had been a diplomatic and actual battleground for centuries, became once again a transnational site of conflict especially after the declaration of independence of the Republic of Macedonia —“Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (FYROM) as it was then called diplomatically— and this move sparked heated debates particularly in Greece.

Among these studies, Anastasia Karakasidou’s Columbia University doctoral dissertation told a special story to contributed to the mounting anxiety about the new Macedonia Question.

Karakasidou’s study was based on her fieldwork in the villages of Assiros, namely Mavrorahi, Assiros and Examili, and it investigated the interaction between “locals” and “refugees.” Karakasidou’s work meticulously analyzes how individual and local identities are formed and how they interact with discourses about national identity and it questioned whether or not these local communities were ever fully incorporated into the national narrative. By skillfully blending history and ethnography, she draws sharp conclusions regarding how the settlement of the refugee in the 1920s changed the local notions of identity, belonging, and nationhood. During her research she also realized that some of the locals consider themselves not Greek but Slavic (Slavo-Macedonian). What she infers from this observation is -not surprisingly- the linguistic and ethnological fluidity of this locality. Her research and findings ignited a huge controversy in Greece, which would shortly become international. Not only did she receive rape and death threats from ultranationalist-racist organizations, which were notoriously known to be on good terms with the state. But alongside these *ad hominem* attacks, there were serious attempts to bring her down personally and to bring her academic integrity into disrepute. She was publicly harassed by the media in which she was called “stupid,” a “cannibal,” (*Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος*, 01/08/1993) and “a member of the Anthropology Department of Zionism”

(*Τετρακτύς*, Spring 1994). On December 1, 1995 Cambridge University Press reneged on their verbal agreement with the author and decided not to publish her dissertation even though they had received two very positive blind peer reviews from leading experts in the field. CUP claimed that their decision was due to the threats they received. This fueled the debate, and this time the issue revolved around the issue of academic freedom. Two professors, Stephen Gudeman and Michael Herzfeld, resigned from the Cambridge editorial board, which was followed by the several scholars' cancellation of their contracts with the press. This extended debate reveals the tension between traditional historiography and newly emerging historiography.<sup>260</sup> The University of Chicago Press stepped in and published Karakasidou's book in 1997.

As Macedonia became an international conflict, more and more scholars turned their eyes to this region. In 1997, Eftihia Voutira's excellent chapter on the settlement of Asia Minor refugees in Macedonia and their comparison with the case of the White Russians appeared in an edited volume. Voutira harshly criticizes the binary oppositions that many used to understand the refugee experience and she questions the mechanisms/strategies of integration of these two communities. At this point she highlights the importance of the politics of memory as a strategy of integration and claims that this was one of the key elements in the case of the Asia Minor refugees.<sup>261</sup> Shortly after the appearance of this Antonis Liakos would approach this problem

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<sup>260</sup> Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002) 47-8; Mark Mazower, "Introduction to the Study of Macedonia," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 14, no. 2 (1996): 229–35.

<sup>261</sup> Eftihia Voutira, "Population Transfers and Resettlement Policies in Inter-War Europe: The Case of Asia Minor Refugees in Macedonia from an International and National Perspective," in *Ourselves and Others : The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity since 1912*, ed. Peter Mackridge and Eleni Yannakakis (Oxford, New York: Berg, 1997), 111–31. Voutira has many pieces on refugees and adaptation for some examples see: "Pontic Greeks Today: Migrants or Refugees?," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4, no. 4 (1991): 400–420; "When Greeks Meet Other Greeks: Settlement Policy Issues in the Contemporary Greek Context," in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* (New York: Berghan Books, 2003), 145–62.

with a fresh look at the problem of adaptation and brings up the concept of “the ideology of ‘lost homelands’” which I will discuss in the following chapters.<sup>262</sup>

The attacks of the revisionist historiography against the nationalist prejudices that cast a shadow over the abrupt and deep social, economic and cultural shock experienced by the refugees continued throughout the 1990s. For instance, in her article in the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Dimitra Giannuli successfully challenged the flawed assumptions on which the discourse on the refugees was based. According to Giannuli, until the 1980s scholarly works on the expulsion of the Asia Minor Greeks slightly contributed to our understanding of the actual conditions which the refugees experienced upon their arrival in Greece in terms of hardship, discrimination and cultural alienation that the refugees experienced.<sup>263</sup> In the same year, the CAMS contributed to this burgeoning literature with three important titles. First, the Centre published Alexis Alexandris’ *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations* and it represented one of the first attempts to tell the story of the populations that remained in Turkey after the population exchange. Alexandris ably shows that the fate of the Greek minority population in Istanbul was firmly dependent upon diplomatic relations between Greece and Turkey.<sup>264</sup> Next, a compilation of photographs from the archive of the institution was published in a bilingual volume, which gave way to a greater visibility and insight into the refugee

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<sup>262</sup> Antonis Liakos, “Η Ιδεολογία Των «χαμένων Πατρίδων»,” *To Vima*, September 13, 1998. The ideologies attached to the subject matter and in circulation Kitromilides adds another to the list see Paschalis M. Kitromilides, “Ιδεολογία Του Προσφυγισμού,” in *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή 1922* (Athens: Ta Nea, 2010), 167–73.

<sup>263</sup> Dimitra Giannuli, “Greeks or ‘Strangers at Home’: The Experiences of Ottoman Greek Refugees during Their Exodus to Greece, 1922–1923,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 13, no. 2 (1995): 271–87.

<sup>264</sup> Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974* (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1983). For an analysis of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace see Kevin Featherstone et al., eds., *Οι Τελευταίοι Οθωμανοί: η μουσουλμανική μειονότητα της Δυτικής Θράκης* (Athens: Αλεξάνδρεια, 2013).

experience.<sup>265</sup> And finally, the ninth volume of the *Δελτίο* dedicated to the Asia Minor Catastrophe and Greek society, which I believe deeply affected historiography and signaled the advent of new tendencies in the historiography. To illustrate, Kostas Kostis, for the first time, analyzes the ideologies attached to the “refugee question” in historiography. Kostis criticizes especially the way historiography handles the economic history of the interwar period, the discourse on “Greece without refugees” and calls this approach “ideology of economic growth.” The author stresses that the counterfactual methodology (“Greece without refugees”) does not have anything to offer to historical research.<sup>266</sup> Though moribund, the old trends did not vanish immediately.<sup>267</sup> In the same volume George Mavrogordatos returns to the theme of the “inimitable” success of the Greek state in the settlement of refugees.<sup>268</sup> In 1994, Anna Panagiotarea’s dissertation was published with the title *Όταν οι Αστοί Έγιναν Πρόσφυγες* (When Bourgeois Became Refugees). Panagiotarea examines the pre-Exodus life of the *Kydoniates* (people of Ayvalik), the modernization in this relatively big town, transformation of the lifestyle of the *Kydoniates*. The author very vividly describes the expulsion of Greeks from their ancestral homelands. Then she analyzes the social deprivation that the *Kydoniates* experienced in Greece and the strategies that they developed to tackle refugeehood.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Giannis Giannakopoulos, *Προσφυγική Ελλάδα: Φωτογραφίες Από Το Αρχείο Του Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών = Refugee Greece: Photographs from the Archive of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies*. (Athens: ΚΜΣ, 1992).

<sup>266</sup> Kostas Kostis, “Η Ιδεολογία Της Οικονομικής Ανάπτυξης: Οι Πρόσφυγες Στον Μεσοπόλεμο,” *Δελτίο ΚΜΣ* 9 (1992): 45.

<sup>267</sup> There are studies published in the nineties in line with traditional historiography. See for example Giorgos N. Lampsidis, *Οι Πρόσφυγες Του 1922 Η Προσφορά Τους Στην Ανάπτυξη Της Χώρας* (Thessaloniki: Κυριακίδης, 1992).

<sup>268</sup> George Th Mavrogordatos, “Το Ανεπανάληπτο Επίτευγμα,” *Δελτίο ΚΜΣ* 9 (1992): 9–12.

<sup>269</sup> Anna Panagiotarea, *Όταν οι Αστοί Έγιναν Πρόσφυγες* (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1994).

Throughout the 1990s Stathis Pelagidis issued a number of publications, most notably his highly informative volume, *Προσφυγική Ελλάδα* (Refugee Greece), which pays due attention to the sufferings of the refugees yet in the final analysis reproduces the dominant patriotic discourse on the success of the Hellenic state and the greatness of the nation and turns it into mythology:<sup>270</sup>

The march of our country in the twentieth century was launched with the momentous reunion of the *deçà et delà* Aegean Hellenism. THE PAIN of the period of 1914-1930 was transmuted into GLORY that led to the GREATNESS of Modern Greece.

As the publications proliferated towards and in the 2000s, one of new topics that was introduced to the field was the urbanization processes in Greece and how they were affected by the refugee influx. Although there were some early studies on this issue,<sup>271</sup> the main studies, Lila Leontidou's pioneering study on the urbanization investigates the relation between urbanization and proletarianization in Athens and places it into a Mediterranean context by comparing Athens with other Mediterranean cities including Thessaloniki. Leontidou gives further valuable information about the "refugee cities", as they are called in Greece, and the dynamics of urbanization in those cities after the settlement of the refugees.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Stathis Pelagidis, *Προσφυγική Ελλάδα (1913-1930) Ο Πόνος Και Η Δόξα* (Thessaloniki: Kyriakidis, 1997).

<sup>271</sup> For example, see Eva E Sandis, *Refugees and Economic Migrants in Greater Athens; a Social Survey*, (Athens: National Centre of Social Research, 1973).

<sup>272</sup> Lila Leontidou, *The Mediterranean City in Transition: Social Change and Urban Development* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). For a Greek edition see *Πόλεις Της Σιωπής Εργατικός Εποικισμός Της Αθήνας Και Του Πειραιά, 1909-1940* (Athens: ETBA, 1989). For the studies on the refugee settlement and its overall impact upon urbanization in different cities see Etaireia Spoudon Neoellinikou Politismou kai Genikis Paideias, ed., *Ο ξεριζωμός και η άλλη πατρίδα: Οι προσφυγοπόλεις στην Ελλάδα* (Athens: Etaireia Spoudon Neoellinikou Politismou kai Genikis Paideias, 1999); Stathis Pelagidis, "Η Ανθρωπογεωγραφία Του Προσφυγικού Ζητήματος (1913-1930)," in *Πρόσφυγες Στην*

In the second half of the 1990s the old tendencies in historiography, not individually but as a discourse, connected with an emerging discourse on the recognition of the “Greek genocide in Asia Minor, Thrace and Pontus” which will be discussed in the sixth chapter. This new discourse was translated into academic works both as an integral element or an object of criticism in the 2000s.<sup>273</sup> On the other hand, the revisionist tendencies in historiography were busy with re-problematizing the subject in a way consistent with the definition of historical anxiety. The bastion of stereotypes that had been created and perpetuated by national historiography was stormed by the studies that seriously challenge these very stereotypes. Nikos Marantzidis’ works on political and social history of the Turkophone Pontic refugees (“*Bafralis*”), who by no means fit into the image of the Pontian refugee (speaking Pontic Greek, progressive/leftist) as being Turkish-speaking refugees that supported nationalist political parties with an openly anti-refugee discourse and joined the ranks of the Nazi invasion forces and then

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*Μακεδονία*, ed. Giannis Koliopoulos and Iakovos D. Mihailidis, 2007th ed. (Athens: Society for Macedonian Studies, 2007), 72–80; Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, Eleftherios Panagiotopoulos, and Georgos Kariotis, “Αστικοί Προσφυγικοί Συνοικισμοί Στα Σέρρας Του Μεσοπολέμου,” *Σερραϊκά Ανάλεκτα* 4 (2005): 207–46; Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, “Πρόσφυγες Αρχιτέκτονες Στη Θεσσαλονίκη Του Μεσοπολέμου,” *Αρχιτέκτονες* 61, no. 2 (2007): 75–77; Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, “Προσφυγικά Σπίτια Στην Πόλη Των Σερρών,” *Μικρασιατική Σπίθα*, no. 15 (2010): 83–94; Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, “Αυτοστέγαση Αστών Προσφύγων Στην Πόλη Των Σερρών,” *Μικρασιατική Σπίθα*, no. 16 (2011): 187–99.

<sup>273</sup> George Shirinian, ed., *The Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Ottoman Greek Genocide: Essays on Asia Minor, Pontos, and Eastern Thrace, 1912-1923* (Bloomington, Ill.: Asia Minor and Pontos Hellenic Research Center, 2012); Tessa Hofmann, Matthias Bjørnlund, and Vasileios Meichanetsidis, eds., *The Genocide of the Ottoman Greeks: Studies on the State-Sponsored Campaign of Extermination of the Christians of Asia Minor, 1912-1922 and Its Aftermath: History, Law, Memory* (New York: Aristide D. Caratzas, 2011); Haris Exertzoglou, “Μνήμη Και Γενοκτονία. Η Αναγνώριση Της «Γενοκτονίας Του Ποντιακού Και Μικρασιατικού Ελληνισμού» Από Το Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο” (Ιστορική Κουλτούρα, Athens, 2001).

fought against the forces of the National Liberation Front and People's Liberation Army of Greece during the Civil War.<sup>274</sup>

The old sources and institutions that had informed and initiated the research on this topic would become the subject of scholarly inquiry. For instance, as the question of refugee memory makes its way deep into the topic, the research agenda on the refugees dramatically expanded. The monuments scattered throughout Greece and dedicated to the Asia Minor refugees became an area of interest.<sup>275</sup> Similarly, the Center for Asia Minor Studies itself has been transformed into a research topic by historians. Penelope Papailias' *Genres of Recollection* stands out as being of crucial importance not only in itself but simply for its methodological contribution for later projects.<sup>276</sup> These efforts helped to rewrite the general history of the subject. This task was taken on by the group of historians prepared the second volume of the *Ιστορία της Ελλάδας του 20ου Αιώνα* under the editorship of Christos Hatziossif of the University of Crete. The volume

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<sup>274</sup> Nikos Marantzidis, *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ: Ζήτω Το Έθνος - Προσφυγιά, Κατοχή Και Εμφύλιος: Εθνοτική Ταυτότητα Και Πολιτική Συμπεριφορά Στους Τουρκόφωνους Ελληνορθόδοξους Του Δυτικού Κόσμου* (Athens: UOC Press, 2001).

<sup>275</sup> Syrago Tsiara, *Τοπία Της Εθνικής Μνήμης Ιστορίες Της Μακεδονίας Γραμμένες Σε Μάρμαρο Συραγώ Τσιάρα* (Athens: Kleidarithmos, 2004); Michel Bruneau and Kyriakos Papoulidis, *Η Μνήμη Του Προσφυγικού Ελληνισμού Τα Ανεγερθέντα Μνημεία Στην Ελλάδα (1936-2004) Les Monuments Commémoratifs En Grèce (1936-2004)* (Κυριακίδης, 2004). For the French version you can also see Michel Bruneau and Kyriakos Papoulidis, "La Mémoire Des 'Patries Inoubliables': La Construction de Monuments Par Les Réfugiés d'Asie Mineure En Grèce," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*, no. 78 (April 1, 2003): 35–57.

<sup>276</sup> Penelope Papailias, *Genres of Recollection: Archival Poetics and Modern Greece* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and by the same author "Writing Home in the Archive: 'Refugee Memory' and the Ethnography of Documentation," in *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar*, ed. Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg (University of Michigan Press, 2006). For the center for Asia Minor Studies see also Ioanna Petropoulou, "Κέντρο Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών: Μια Επέτειος," *Τα Ιστορικά* 12, no. 23 (1995): 461–65; "Η Ιδεολογική Πορεία Της Μέλπω Μερλιέ: Το Κέντρο Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών Και Η Συγκρότηση Του Αρχείου Προφορικής Παράδοσης," in *Μαρτυρίες Σε Ηχητικές Και Κινούμενες Αποτυπώσεις Ως Πηγή Της Ιστορίας*, ed. Aleka Boutzouvi (Athens: Katarti, 1998); Evi Kapoli, "Archive of Oral Tradition of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies: Its Formation and Its Contribution to Research," *Ateliers d'anthropologie*, no. 32 (August 21, 2008).



published in 2002 gives a comprehensive analysis of the “refugee shock” and its reflections on different economic, political, social sectors.<sup>277</sup> A similar endeavor is exhibited by the Foundation of the Hellenic World in 2003. This foundation, which still supports a genealogical project among the refugees, published a volume entitled *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή* (Beyond the Catastrophe). Inter alia, the chapter written by Michalis Varlas on the formation of, what is generally called, “refugee memory” is of crucial importance.<sup>278</sup>

Research on refugee settlement, however, never completely left the scene. And as mentioned above, Macedonia never lost its interest for historians as a political boiling pot. In 2007 Elisabeth Kontogiorgi published an authoritative volume, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia*, based on her 1997 Oxford dissertation. The study, in spite of its rich and engaging content, aligns with the archaic trends in Greek historiography. Kontogiorgi shares the old nationalist prejudices. For example, she claims that the native and refugee populations “undoubtedly shared the same religion, *national consciousness*, and *national ideals*” or that the sufferings that the refugees went through are displayed as the short-term problems subsidiary to the long-term benefits of the displacement, such as avoiding “the sort of problems that (...) less homogeneous northern neighbors [of Greece] faced in the 1940s.”<sup>279</sup> I can also add George

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<sup>277</sup> Christos Hatzioissif, *Ιστορία Της Ελλάδας Του 20ου Αιώνα*, vol. 2-a, 3 vols. (Athens: Vivliorama, 2002).

<sup>278</sup> Michalis Varlas, “Η Διαμόρφωση Της Προσφυγικής Μνήμης,” in *Πέρα Από Την Καταστροφή: Μικρασιάτες Πρόσφυγες Στην Ελλάδα Του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Idyrima Meizonos Ellinismou, 2003), 148-174.

<sup>279</sup> E. Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922-1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 165 and 241. For a more analytical review of this study see Aytek Soner Alpan, “Review of the Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia the Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922-1930 by Elisabeth Kontogiorgi”, *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 19 (2015): 407-17. It should also be noted that in recent revisionist historiography, population exchange is considered as a repugnant method and as a crime. Kontogiorgi’s last argument, for instance, is torn apart by Symeon Giannakos. Giannakos claims that homogeneity does not guaranty non-violence as best seen in the Civil War in Greece. For Giannakos’ crucial criticism towards the arguments legitimizing exchange as a method of conflict resolution see Symeon A. Giannakos, “Unacceptable Solutions to Ethnic Conflict: The

Kritikos' studies here yet his prove that the examples of "history from above" need not to be categorized under the rubric of traditional. In his writings, Kritikos, as a prolific scholar concentrating on the refugees and their settlement in Greece, competently captures the complexity of the subject, brings together political, economic and even diplomatic history and presents his findings in a much broader context.<sup>280</sup>

Recent years witnessed the publication some blockbusting and critical studies. Anastasis Ghikas' *Πήξη και Ενσωμάτωση* was published in 2010. The book is based on Ghikas' dissertation "The politics of working-class communism 1918-1936" submitted to the University of York in 2004 and mainly deals with the foundation of the communist party. Ghikas, as a scholar associated with the KKE, utilizes the archives of the party, which are generally criticized for remaining shut to "outsiders." Therefore, it sheds light on the relation between the refugees and the KKE, a much debated and controversial issue, by using hitherto unexploited sources. Yet this well-researched and engaging study is a very important contribution, not only to Marxist historiography or historiography of Greek working class, but also to historiography of the refugee issue as well.<sup>281</sup> Vasilis Tzanakaris' trilogy on the Asia Minor Catastrophe, refugeehood

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1923 Calamity of Population Expulsions," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 36, no. 1 (2008): 19–35.

<sup>280</sup> For some of his studies in English see 1. George Kritikos, "State Policy and Urban Employment of Refugees: The Greek Case (1923-30)," *European Review of History* 7, no. 252:15958 (2000): 189–206; "Integration of Refugees in a Religious Context," *Balkan Studies* 42, no. 2 (2001): 2001; "The Agricultural Settlement of Refugees: A Source of Productive Work and Stability in Greece, 1923-1930," *Agricultural History* 79, no. 3 (2005): 321–46; "The Proliferation of Agricultural Schools: A Practical Education in Greece (1922-1932)," *Agricultural History* 81, no. 3 (2007): 358–80; "From Labour to National Ideals: Ending the War in Asia Minor—Controlling Communism in Greece," *Societies* 3, no. 4 (October 21, 2013): 348–82.

<sup>281</sup> Anastasis Ghikas, *Πήξη Και Ενσωμάτωση. Συμβολή Στην Ιστορία Του Εργατικού-Κομμουνιστικού Κινήματος Του Μεσοπολέμου, 1918-1936* (Athens: Sygchroni Epochi, 2010).

and the Trial of the Six served as a “popularizer” of the theme in Greek society.<sup>282</sup> In 2011, an important volume edited by Antonis Liakos came out, *To 1922 και Οι Πρόσφυγες - Μια Νέα Ματιά*. This volume, as its title suggests, is a new look at the subject. The contributions in the book, as opposed to many collected volumes, add up together and places the population exchange/refugeehood into a broader historical context. Starting from a sophisticated discussion on the transformation of multiple (but mainly religious) identities turned into one single national identity to understand why violence became a common language in the Ottoman context. Then the analysis of the Catastrophe and “Exodus” comes. This is followed by a discussion on thinly populated Turkish historiography of the war years. After this, the book returns to the Greek case and focuses on what is generally reified under the rubric of “refugee issue.” Next comes one of the unique features of the book: the story of the “uprooted” Muslims and their experience in Turkey. The book closes its discussion with a chapter on the history of “refugee memory.”<sup>283</sup> Speaking of “refugee memory,” I should also add the edited volume that carries the title of *Τραύμα και οι Πολιτικές της Μνήμης* (Trauma and the Politics of Memory). In this volume,

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<sup>282</sup> Vasilis I. Tzanakaris, *Δακρυσμένη Μικρασία, 1919-1922 Τα Χρόνια Που Συντάραξαν Την Ελλάδα* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2007); *Στο Όνομα Της Προσφυγιάς - Από Τα Δακρυσμένα Χριστούγεννα Του 1922 Στην Αβασίλευτη Δημοκρατία Του 1924* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2009); Vasilis I. Tzanakaris, *Εις Θάνατον! - Η Δίκη Και Η Εκτέλεση Των Έξι Μέσα Από Τα Πρακτικά, Τα Παραλειπόμενα Και Τα “Ψιλά” Των Εφημερίδων* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2014). Speaking of popularizers, I should mention two documentaries that have attracted public attention in Greece since 2012. Both present the historical process within a balanced narrative and includes the story of the Muslim refugees in Turkey. These two factors make them very impressive: Andreas Apostolidis and Roger Zetter, *Twice a Stranger: Forced Displacement and Population Exchange in the 20th Century* (Anemon, 2012); Maria Iliou, *Από τις δύο πλευρές του Αιγαίου: Διωγμός και Ανταλλαγή πληθυσμών, Τουρκία – Ελλάδα, 1922-1924* (Proteas and Proteus NY Inc., 2012).

<sup>283</sup> Antonis Liakos, ed., *To 1922 Και Οι Πρόσφυγες Μια Νέα Ματιά* (Athens: Nefeli, 2011).

Vlasis Agtzidis gives a detailed examination of the formation and transformation of the memory of the Pontic refugees which is written with a patriotic and anti-communist bias.<sup>284</sup>

In 2013, Kostas Kostis' book on the formation of the Hellenic state was published. In this study, Greece in the interwar period is described as “another Greece” (Μια άλλη Ελλάδα). For Kostis, one of the most important factors that created this “otherness” is the very existence of the refugees, which were, in spite of the popular wisdom of the old school, totally excluded from the state mechanism in this period and this led to ever-increasing tension, particularly in the “New Lands.”<sup>285</sup> In addition to the studies that enhance our understanding from a historical perspective, there are new anthropological studies on the long terms effects of the population exchange/refugeehood. Olga Demetriou's *Capricious Borders* is a good case in point. By focusing on the Muslim minority of Greece residing along the Greek-Turkish and Greek-Bulgarian borders, Demetriou re-conceptualizes borders as instruments of governmentality but more importantly those of minoritization, a process that was at some point implemented through the exchanges of population. Demetriou problematized this process as the source of the initial violence.<sup>286</sup> The question of “originary violence” too has been recently rethought too.

Harris Mylonas, in his award-winning book, develops an exceedingly schematic account of various nation-building policies and tries to find out what makes political elites adopt different types of nation building policies in different cases. According to the author, nationalist elites

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<sup>284</sup> Vlasis Agtzidis, “Μνήμη, Ταυτότητα Και Ιδεολογία Στον Ποντιακό Ελληνισμό,” in *Το Τραύμα Και Οι Πολιτικές Της Μνήμης - Ενδεικτικές Οψεις Των Συμβολικών Πολέμων Για Την Ιστορία Και Τη Μνήμη*, ed. Vlasis Agtzidis, Elli Lemonidou, and Giorgos Kokkinos (Athens: Taxideftis, 2010), 191–329.

<sup>285</sup> Kostas Kostis, *Τα Κακομαθημένα Παιδιά Της Ιστορίας - Η Διαμόρφωση Του Νεοελληνικού Κράτους 18ος-21ος Αιώνας* (Athens: Polis, 2013), 617. The English translation of this book was published in 2018. Kostas Kostis, *History's Spoiled Children: The Formation of the Modern Greek State* (London: Hurst, 2018).

<sup>286</sup> Olga Demetriou, *Capricious Borders: Minority, Population, and Counter-Conduct Between Greece and Turkey* (Berghahn Books, 2013).

adopt three types of policies, namely accommodation, assimilation, and exclusion—including forced migrations and population exchanges. The question of what sort of policy is to be adopted is determined by the security concerns of nation-states, or in Mylonas' terminology by the answer given to the specific question of whether a “non-core group” (minority) under the sovereignty of a “host-state” is backed by an “external power,” or not.<sup>287</sup> Given the existing and expanding literature on the population exchange, this approach, however sophisticatedly it is articulated, means a huge retreat, if not a u-turn towards the security-oriented perspective, which in one way or another gives way to different sorts of ethnic-cleansing methods.

On the other hand, Nicholas Doumanis's work on the same question offers a rigorous and historically well-grounded answer. He explores the grassroots of late Ottoman society, that is, the mostly disregarded village communities where coexistence, and then violence took place in order to understand the causes of both intercommunal and inter-communal violence. In *Before the Nation*, Doumanis confines himself to the themes he has been writing on: modern Greek history, oral history, the relationship between history and memory, and the durability of imperial structures.<sup>288</sup> As his pivotal topic, Doumanis chooses the experiences of the refugees of the Asia Minor Catastrophe that are generally reified in historiography under the rubric of “refugee issue” and challenges a number of essentialist and teleological theories and approaches that presuppose a unilinear and inevitable progression in history from imperial to national structures, mutual exclusiveness of faith-based and/or ethnic identities, and a supposed propensity to violence in mixed communities. For this purpose, Doumanis utilizes the

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<sup>287</sup> Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>288</sup> See for example Doumanis' *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean: Remembering Fascism's Empire* (New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press, 1997) and 'Durable Empire: State Virtuosity and Social Accommodation in the Ottoman Empire', *The Historical Journal*, 49 (2006), 953-66.

testimonies of the Asia Minor refugees housed at the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens. This material providing valuable information not only on the on Asia Minor Catastrophe and the expulsion of the Anatolian Greeks, but it also informs us on the daily lives of these local communities when they were in their ancestral homelands and on their cultural heritage. Based mainly on these sources and secondary literature, Doumanis emphasizes the fact that neither the demographic realities of *fin de siècle* Anatolia nor the identities of these Anatolian communities, including those of Rums, were fixed. The demographic kaleidoscope of the region kept revolving during the last century of the Ottoman Empire, which contributed to the cultural complexity of Anatolia. Identities were local and fluid, that is to say, far from the rigidity of the romantic nationalist imagination of Western intellectuals. Doumanis argues that Anatolian intercommunality was seriously disturbed by newly arriving outsiders<sup>289</sup>, for example the Cretan refugees fleeing the island due to the political turmoil and ethnic violence and structural changes (demographic and political) in the Ottoman Empire. The dissolution of the Empire created a growing spiral of violence that eventually caught the population of Anatolia as well.<sup>290</sup>

This necessarily compressed and selective survey of Greek historiography needs to be followed by review of Turkish historiography.

## 2.6-2 Turkish Historiography

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<sup>289</sup> For a similar emphasis how the the massive inflow of North Caucasian refugees fleeing Russia disturbed the social balance in the South Marmara region. See Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire 1912-1923* (Oxford University Press, 2009). For a fresh look to the demographic upheaval in the late Ottoman Empire see Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (University of Washington Press, 2009).

<sup>290</sup> Nicholas Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late-Ottoman Anatolia* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

In the early 1970s in Turkey, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Marxist -or Marxist-inspired- socioeconomic history started to develop. Yet most of these scholars lingered over the debate of pre-capitalist modes of production and the dynamics of the transition to capitalism in the Ottoman context or the class formations to understand the “peculiarities” of Turkey, particularly the question of underdevelopment<sup>291</sup>, which was once the dominant paradigm in Greece too. Yet during the endeavor of creating a grand narrative, some authors developed a new paradigm for explaining the systematic suppression and expulsion of the non-Muslim elements starting from the late nineteenth century. According to this view, the expulsion of the Greek and Armenian populations was to “Turkify” the capital and to create a national bourgeoisie and economy.<sup>292</sup>

In 1976 the third volume of Stefanos Yerasimos’ *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye*, which covers the period from WWI to 1971 came out. Yerasimos handles the subject in a similar vein, that is to say, according to him, the expulsion of the Greeks and Armenians from Anatolia stemmed from Turkish nationalists’ desire to eliminate the comprador bourgeoisie and create a national bourgeois class.<sup>293</sup> Then this becomes one of the fundamental themes in revisionist historiography in Turkey. Zafer Toprak more analytically investigated the attempts to “nationalize” the economic sphere through economic, linguistic and demographic policies in the

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<sup>291</sup> For a general assessment of Turkish historiography after the mid-1970s see Oktay Özel and Gökhan Çetinsaya, “Türkiye’de Osmanlı Tarihçiliğinin Son Çeyrek Yüzyılı: Bir Bilanço Denemesi,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 91 (2002): 8–38.

<sup>292</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi, 1838’den 1955’e*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1974), 1053-1123.

<sup>293</sup> Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik sürecinde Türkiye - I. Dünya Savaşından 1971’e*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Gözlem, 1976).

late Ottoman Empire until 1918. In the early 1980s Çağlar Keyder, one of the first proponents of the neo-Marxist, or rather neo-Smithian in Robert Brenner's words, theories of Immanuel Wallerstein, published two important monographs in which he refers to the population exchange as a landmark event in the formation of a bourgeois class dependent upon the state bureaucracy, the politically and economically dominant group in the social structure of Turkey. According to Keyder, the state was the social apparatus *par excellence* in Turkish society and due to the exchange, the bourgeois class's dependency on the state increased, which resulted in the consolidation the political power of bureaucracy before other social strata, which hindered the formation of a civil society and the development of a western-style democracy. According to Keyder, if the non-Muslim bourgeoisie had managed to reach their goals, the Young Turk experiment could have resulted in the formation of a western-style capitalist-democratic state structure, rather than the *deus ex machina* bureaucratic reformism. Therefore, for Keyder, the population exchange, not only economically but politically and culturally determined the inter-class and state-society relations in Turkey.<sup>294</sup> Yahya Sezai Tezel was another scholar who critically included the exchange into his analysis of the economic history of the early Republican era. For Tezel, the elimination of the Christian elements from the demographic structure resulted in a huge loss of "human capital" and hence deterioration of the manufacturing sector and urban society.<sup>295</sup> Although the question of underdevelopment lost its popularity over time, the

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<sup>294</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *The Definition of a Peripheral Economy: Turkey, 1923-1929*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London ; New York: Verso, 1987). For future studies I would like to underline the parallelism of Çağlar Keyder's analyses and Greek marxist economist Kostas Vergopoulos' analyses in his *To Αγροτικό Ζήτημα στην Ελλάδα* (Agricultural Question in Greece) published in 1975.

<sup>295</sup> Yahya Sezai Tezel, *Cumhuriyet döneminin iktisadi tarihi (1923-1950)* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınevi, 1986).



Turkification of the economy, as a subject, never died out and saw a great revival in the 2000s, which I will review below.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, in addition to the scholarly efforts to build an alternative to the grand narrative of the late 1970s and early 1980s, some scholars started publishing exclusively on the population exchange based on archival research. It would be fair to claim that the main impetus for a research agenda for the population exchange came from traditional historiography. Although these scholars have no intention to challenge the nationalist historiography, they did try to embed the population exchange to the official biography of the nation in a conservative manner. In 1985, a senior historian, Mahmut H. Şakiroğlu, published his “introductory” and clichéd notes about the population exchange.<sup>296</sup> In 1986, Seçil Akgün presented a paper on the population exchange based on the US sources at a seminar organized by the Department of the Chief of Staff.<sup>297</sup> Meanwhile, limited number of graduate research projects on the population exchange were undergoing at the Turkish universities.<sup>298</sup> It is important to note that those research projects were being done at the universities in the “refugee” cities like Izmir or Bursa.

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<sup>296</sup> Mahmut H. Şakiroğlu, “Lozan Konferansı Strasında Kabul Edilen Türk-Yunan Ahali Değişimine Ait Tarihi Not-lar,” in *Ord. Prof. Dr. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur’a Armağan* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1985), 227–38.

<sup>297</sup> Seçil Akgün, “Birkaç Amerikan Kaynağından Türk-Yunan Mübadelesi Sorunu,” in *III. Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri, Tarih Boyunca Türk-Yunan İlişkileri (20 Temmuz 1974’e Kadar)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, 1986), 241–66.

<sup>298</sup> Alim-Baran, “İzmir’in imar ve iskanı (1923-1958)” (Ph.D., Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 1994); Kemal Arı, “1923 Türk –Rum Mübadele Anlaşması Sonrasında İzmir’de Göçmenler” (MA, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 1988); Kemal Arı, “1923 Türk-Rum Mübadele Anlaşması Sonrasında Türkiye’de Göçmenler” (Ph.D., Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 1993); Nesim Şeker, “Türk-Yunan nüfus mübadelesi sonucu Bursa’ya gelen göçmenlerin kentin sosyal yapısı üzerindeki etkileri” (MA, Uludağ Üniversitesi, 1995).

Among these studies, Kemal Arı's doctoral dissertation is of crucial importance. It was published by the Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey, an independent organization founded by historians in 1991, under the title of *Büyük Mübadele* (The Great Exchange).<sup>299</sup> This book was the first monograph on the population exchange published in Turkey. This study relies exclusively on Turkish sources that had been underexploited in the past. The publication of this work can be considered as the introduction of the classical approach in Turkish historiography. *Büyük Mübadele* presents a detailed analysis of the population exchange yet is written solely from a statist perspective in which the refugees are almost invisible other than being numbers and the objects of the policies of the state. Moreover, Arı sees the exchange as an indispensable operation and concludes that the population exchange contributed to the formation and development of the newly-born republic, and therefore as a necessary evil. In those years one important exception is İlhan Tekeli's article that analyzes the forced population movements in *longue durée*. The article is published in 1990 and harshly criticizes the school praising the forced demographic engineering practices, including the population exchange, in the history of Turkey for their potential for ethnic homogenization.<sup>300</sup> Throughout the 1990s, after

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<sup>299</sup> Kemal Arı, *Büyük Mübadele: Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç (1923-1925)* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995). Before the publication of this study Arı published a series of articles in different academic journals in Turkey. Since these studies are mostly involved or referred in Arı's monograph I do not cite them separately. In addition to Kemal Arı's monograph İbrahim Erdal's book based on his dissertation is another example of an overall analysis of the population exchange which came out almost 20 year after Arı's book. It should be noted that Erdal's book does not add anything to our knowledge of the exchange. Although Erdal's book is a study that purports a comparative one on the national building processes in Turkey and Greece, it just gives some demographic data based on Ladas and Pentzopulos and reiterates the homogenization argument as it is in a few-page-long discussion. İbrahim Erdal, *Mübadele: Uluslaşma Sürecinde Türkiye ve Yunanistan 1923-1925* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2006).

<sup>300</sup> İlhan Tekeli, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan Günümüze Nüfusun Zorunlu Yer Değiştirmesi ve Iskan Sorunu," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 50 (1990): 49–71.

the Pandora's box was opened, various articles concentrating on the settlement and impact of the refugees upon the local social and/or economic structures appeared in academic journals.

In addition to the studies in the classical trend, there was also a powerful and fast-flowing current against conventional historiography aimed at decentering the nation-state from its privileged position in historiography. Now there is a long list of studies concentrating on the criticism of the early republican policies including the population exchange and then the settlement. Most of these studies were in the genre of economic history. Among them are Ayhan Aktar's *Varlık Vergisi ve "Türkleştirme" Politikaları*,<sup>301</sup> Murat Koraltürk's various studies on the population exchange<sup>302</sup> and Nevzat Onaran's research on the fate of the abandoned Greek and Armenian properties.<sup>303</sup> Such studies successfully proved that the demographic engineering practices in the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey are strongly attached to the agenda of creating an ethnically "purified" economic sphere and of passing the capital in the hands of the Turks. Although these studies roundly criticize the nation-state and its policies, by concentrating on the criticism of the nation-state, they developed an inverse-statist perspective that has little room for the refugees. As exceptions, the studies of Mehmet Ali Gökaçtı and Samim Akgönül can be cited. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Gökaçtı, by concentrating on the

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<sup>301</sup> Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve "Türkleştirme" Politikaları*, İletişim Yayınları (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000). See also by the same author *Türk Milliyetçiliği, Gayri Müslimler ve Ekonomik Dönüşüm* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006).

<sup>302</sup> Murat Koraltürk, "Mübadelenin İktisadi Sonuçları Üzerine Bir Rapor," *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Çağdaş Türkiye Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, no. 6–7 (1997): 183–98. See also by the same author *Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011) and "Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi ve Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesinin İktisadi Sonuçları," in *Mete Tunçay'a Armağan*, ed. M. Ö. Alkan, Murat Koraltürk, and Tanıl Bora (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007).

<sup>303</sup> Nevzat Onaran, *Emvâl-i Metruke Olayı : Osmanlı'da ve Cumhuriyet'te Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi* (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2010); *Cumhuriyet'te Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi [1920-1930]: Emval-i Metrukenin Tasfiyesi*, (İstanbul: Evrensel, 2013).

social side of the story and, specifically, refugee experience developed a different viewpoint and help the popularization of the topic.<sup>304</sup> In 2004 Samim Akgönül, on the other hand, published his *Les Grecs de Turquie* where he offers an overall picture of the Greek minority in the Republican period.<sup>305</sup> Akgönül authoritatively surveys the minoritization and then marginalization process of the Constantinopolitan Greek community, and finally their struggle for survival in the age of globalization. While doing so, Akgönül did not only focus on the exclusionist state policies, but also on the inner dynamics of the Greek community as well as Greco-Turkish diplomatic relations which, as he convincingly shows, directly affected the fate of minorities. Akgönül's study, like that of Alexandris, proves that the ramifications of the Lausanne Treaty fell far from the permanent resolution of the conflicts and somehow deepened some of them. From my point of view, this vein of studies, which had reached stalemate in the 2010s, gained a new momentum with the publication of Ellinor Morack's immaculate book in 2017, *The Dowry of the State?: The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*.<sup>306</sup> Morack carefully and methodically analyzes the archival material, particularly the *tasfiye talebnameleri*, liquidation documents required for exchangees to apply for property compensation in Turkey, and shows how the administration of the abandoned properties and the settlement policy shaped, practically and effectively, the state-building process in the early days of the Republic of Turkey. Her meticulous analysis also reveals the reflexive nature of the property management and

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<sup>304</sup> For a compilation of his studies see M. Ali Gökaçtı, *Nüfus mübadelesi: kayıp bir kuşağın hikâyesi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003).

<sup>305</sup> Samim Akgönül, *Les Grecs de Turquie: Processus d'extinction d'une minorité de l'âge de l'état-nation à l'âge de la mondialisation, 1923-2001* (Paris; Louvain-la-Neuve: Harmattan ; Bruylant-Academia, 2004). The book was translated into Turkish in 2007. Samim Akgönül, *Türkiye Rumları: Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 2007).

<sup>306</sup> Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State?: The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017).

distribution processes by highlighting the contradictions in the higher echalons of the state as well as exchangees' agency. By concentrating on the abandoned properties considered as "dowry" by the state and how the state used these properties to (re)define the relations between the state and its "native" and "exchangee" citizens, she makes a substantial contribution to the literature by exposing the actual mechanisms of the state- and nation-building processes in the early republican period.

Unveiling the experiences of the refugees or minorities was not an easy task though. In 1998 Kemal Yalçın published his novel, *Emanet Çeyiz*. The book tells the story of his family to whom a trousseau was entrusted by their Greek neighbors at the time of the population exchange and Yalçın's story of his "voyage" to Greece to find the owners of the trousseau. It includes several oral testimonies as well. Although there was almost no fiction in it, the author preferred to present it as a novel. The book was first honored with the Ministry of Culture's 1998 Novel Success Prize and then a few years later the author was prosecuted for insulting "Turkishness."<sup>307</sup> In 2001 a selection of refugee testimonies from the *H' Eζοδοç* of the Center for Asia Minor Studies was published in a single volume titled *Göç* (Migration).<sup>308</sup> The translation was made by Damla Demirözü. Immediately after the publication of the translation, the book was prosecuted by the Turkish court, the translator and the published were accused of "insulting Atatürk," and the book was pulled off the shelf by court order. As a final remark on the refugee experience and

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<sup>307</sup> For more information about the book see Asli İğsiz, "Documenting the Past and Publicizing Personal Stories: Sensescapes and the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange in Contemporary Turkey," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 26, no. 2 (2008): 451–87. For the significance Kemal Yalçın's book see Renée Hirschon, "History, Memory and Emotion: The Long-Term Significance of the 1923 Greco-Turkish Exchange of Populations", içinde *When Greeks and Turks Meet: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Relationship Since 1923*, ed. Vally Lytra (London: Routledge, 2014), 45-66.

<sup>308</sup> Küçük Asya Araştırmaları Merkezi, *Göç*, ed. Herkül Millas, trans. Damla Demirözü (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001).

its inclusion into historiography, it can be told that the void due to the absence of a refugee organization or an institutional structure similar to the Center for Asia Minor Studies that is specialized on the population exchange, its ramifications and documenting the experiences of the refugees was finally filled in 1999 with the initiative of the refugees of the population exchange and their descendants. In 2001, the *Lozan Mübadilleri Derneği* (The Association of the Lausanne Treaty Exchangees, LMV<sup>309</sup> hereinafter) was officially founded. Although it was too late for the success of such an attempt, from the start the association engaged in the organization of joint academic efforts for a new understanding of the exchange. These organizations will be reviewed below. These three developments revived the popular and scholarly interest in the population exchange.<sup>310</sup>

Since the late 1990s and early 2000s the studies of differing scholarly quality undertaken by historians and non-historians pointing to the importance of local studies to comprehend the population exchange have become another focus of the growing literature.<sup>311</sup> Except for a few of them, they are very poor in terms of methodology and have no analytical value at all. For example, Salih Özkan, in his book based on his doctoral dissertation talks about Heraklion

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<sup>309</sup> For the foundation and activities of the LMV see Paschalis M. Kitromilides, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” in *Turkey in the Twentieth Century/La Turquie Au Vingtième Siècle*, ed. Eric-Jan Zürcher, *Philologiae et Historiae Turcicae Fundamenta* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2008), 266-68.

<sup>310</sup> More than a decade later the first feature-length movie on the population exchange came to the big screen in Turkey, which certainly publicized the exchange and refugeehood. Çağan Irmak, *My Grandfather's People* (Dedemin İnsanları), 2011.

<sup>311</sup> For example see Aydın Ayhan, *Balıkesir ve Çevresinde Örukler, Çepniler ve Muhacırlar* (Balıkesir: Zağnos Kültür ve Eğitim Vakfı, 1999); Nedim İpek, *Mübadele ve Samsun* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000); Hür Kalyoncu and Ünsal Tunçözgür, *Mübadele ve Safranbolu* (Ankara: Karabük Valiliği, 2012); Raif Kaplanoğlu, *Bursa'da mübadele* (Bursa: Avrasya Etnografya Vakfı, 1999); Salih Özkan, *Milli Devlet Olma Sürecinde Mübadele ve Niğde'ye Yapılan Iskan* (Kömen Yayınları: İstanbul, 2010); Ramazan Tosun, *Türk-Rum Nüfus Mübadelesi ve Kayseri'deki Rumlar* (Niğde: Tolunay Yayıncılık, 1998).

(*Kandiye* in Turkish) as if it was not on Crete.<sup>312</sup> Yet some these studies, with the wealth of descriptive data they present, have the potential to constitute a starting point to study the respective localities.<sup>313</sup> Similarly, the publication of memoirs that are directly or indirectly relating to the population exchange is on the upswing. Very few them were produced by first generation refugees.<sup>314</sup> Since there was no systematic or widespread project undertaken in order to collect testimonies from the first generation of refugees, these books take on added importance for the documentation of the refugee experience.<sup>315</sup> In addition to local analyses and memoirs, some scholars managed to produce original studies on the settlement process. For example, Ali Cengizkan published his book on the settlement policy of the state and refugee housing from an

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<sup>312</sup> “the places where the sub-commissions were established: on two islands, Crete (Canea) [*sic*] and Kandiye (Heaclion) [*sic*]...” Özkan, *Mübadele ve Niğde*, 81.

<sup>313</sup> In this sense Kaplanoğlu and İpek’s studies are extremely useful to the researchers.

<sup>314</sup> Mehmet Esat Serezli, *Memleket Hatıraları*, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2012); İkbâl Güllalp, *Girit Mübadelesi Olmasaydı* (İstanbul: Önsöz Basım, 2005); İsmail Hakkı Kobakoğlu (Kobakizade), *Bir Mübadilin Anıları* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008); Zehra Kosova, *Ben işçiyim*, ed. Zihni T Anadolu (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996); Reşat D. Tesal, *Selanik’ten İstanbul’a: Bir Ömrün Hikayesi*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998). Kobakizade’s memoir This memoir is translated into Greek in 2010 with the title *Ισμαήλ Χακκί Κομπάκογλου: η ζωή μου* (*İsmail Hakkı Kobakoglou: My life*). Giannis Glavinias underlined the importance of this source, and that of this genre, in re-writing modern Greek history. Giannis Glavinias, “Ένας μουσουλμάνος βουλευτής από την Καβάλα,” *The Books’ Journal*, no. 11 (September 2011): 79. I would like to add another title to this list yet this one is one of its kind. A Cretan refugee called Ekmel Molla visited his hometown in Crete in 1950 and after his return, he published a small book on his experience. This book is unique not because it is the earliest memoir on a trip which can be regarded as heritage tourism, but it is written and published in Istanbul in Greek language.

<sup>315</sup> İskender Özsoy, a journalist, shouldered a project of a lifetime and started doing interviews with the first- and second-generation refugees both in Greece and in Turkey in the late 1990s. So far, he has published six books compiled out of these interviews. Again, inspite of all of its methodological shortcomings these books are of immense importance. İskender Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları : Mübadele Acısını Yaşayanlar Anlatıyor* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2003); *Mübadelelerin Öksüz Çocukları* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2007); *Ah Vre Memleket: Mübadele Öyküleri*, Bağlam Yayınları; *Mübadele Kitapları ; Mübadele Anlatıları* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2014); *Selanik’te Sela Sesi* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2014); *Mübadelelerin Yas Kardeşleri* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2014); *Özü Sözü Yanya: Bilge Mübadil Lütfü Karadağ’a Armağan* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2014).

architectural/urban planning perspective, which still continuous a non-populated area except for his study.<sup>316</sup>

In the 2000s new studies successfully challenging the conventional wisdom were produced. For example, Onur Yıldırım's *Diplomacy and Displacement*, which came out both in English and in Turkish disputes the truth of the widely accepted belief inherited from the canonical studies that since the population exchange was a diplomatic decision and conducted under the auspices of the League of Nations it was not, or rather could not be, a violent practice. Yıldırım's study is the first monograph that utilizes the Greek sources, particularly those of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This study is, therefore, noteworthy in three respects: To begin with, the scope of the book was not limited to the criticism of the Turkish nation state, or nationalism. Yıldırım attacks the purported violence-free nature of diplomacy and discourse on the *soi-disant* gains of the population exchange. Next, the book stands outside of the monologist approach of the literature and successfully deals with the issue with an "entangled" perspective. Finally, although *Diplomacy and Displacement* aimed at examining the experiences of the refugees, it also carefully analyzed the shortcomings of the existing literatures in both countries. A recent study on international law, *Formalizing Displacement* by Umut Özsu, reached a similar conclusion that the successes attributed to the population exchange and its acceptance as a blueprint for the solution of other ethnic conflicts are simply based on prejudices because the results of the exchange proved to be conjectural.<sup>317</sup> Unfortunately, Özsu's work has not been

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<sup>316</sup> Ali Cengizkan, *Mübadele Konut ve Yerleşimleri: Savaş Yıkımının, İç Göçün ve Mübadelenin Doğurduğu Konut Sorununun Çözümünde "İktisadi Hane" Programı, "Numune Köyler" Ve "Emval-i Metrüke"nin Değerlendirilmesi için Adımlar* (Ankara: Arkadaş Yayınları, 2004).

<sup>317</sup> Umut Özsu, *Formalizing Displacement: International Law and Population Transfers* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Özsu's study is an adaptation of his doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Toronto in 2011. Umut Özsu, "Fabricating Fidelity: Nation-Building, International Law, and the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange" (S.J.D., University of Toronto, 2011). For the core of his dissertation see Umut Özsu, "Fabricating Fidelity: Nation-Building, International Law, and the Greek–



translated and published in Turkey. Recent years have witnessed a resurgence of interest in the experiences of refugees as well. The presence of the refugees expanded in the literature together with the increase in the number of studies embracing ethnological or anthropological approaches. These studies generally focus on the Cretan (Greek-speaking) refugees in Turkey or the Turkish-speaking Greek refugees due to the obvious incongruity that they present in terms of the trinity of the nation-state, religion-language-ethnicity.

In the final chapters of her study, *Karamanlı Ortodoks Türkler* (Orthodox Turks of Karaman), Yonca Anzerlioğlu examines the history of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox population and their lives in Greece after the population exchange. Yet as inferred from the title, although it has a chapter based on the author's fieldwork in Greece, Anzerlioğlu sticks to the prejudices of the parochial nationalist historiography on the Turkish-speaking non-Muslim communities, takes up the cudgels to defend the "Turkishness" of the Karamanli communities and reduces all historical phenomena and discussions to the question of ethnic origin. Anzerlioğlu claims that the only reason why second and third generation Karamanli "Turks" did not call themselves Turk is because they were simply unaware of the existence of an Autocephalous Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate and the fact that Turks can also believe in Christianity.<sup>318</sup> Although the literature on the Turkish-speaking Greeks is very limited there are recent research projects which have not been published yet. For example, the master's thesis of Renk Özdemir deals with the question of the evolution of "Karamanli" identity through the generations after the population exchange by

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Turkish Population Exchange," *Leiden Journal of International Law* 24, no. 04 (December 2011): 823–47.

<sup>318</sup> Yonca Anzerlioğlu, *Karamanlı Ortodoks Türkler* (Ankara: Phoenix, 2003). For a recent study which approaches to the subject matter from a similar perspective and treats the Turcophone Greek communities as Hellenized Orthodox Turkish populations see Nilüfer Erdem, *Sorularla Karamanlılar - Anadolu Ortodoks Türkler* (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 2021).

utilizing a complex theoretical framework and instead of over emphasizing ethnic origin, she discusses different perceptions of belonging, which are, according to the author, contingent on time and place.<sup>319</sup>

As for Cretans, Tuncay Sepetçioğlu's ethnohistorical study on the Cretans living in Davutlar, a small Aegean town in Kuşadası, Turkey should be mentioned. Although the Cretan community settled in Davutlar migrated to this region before the exchange during the Cretan revolts in the last nineteenth century, the thorough analysis of the author surely enhances our understanding regarding the Cretan refugees as well.<sup>320</sup> In addition to this study Fahriye Emgili's conducted fieldwork in Mersin among the Cretan refugees. Emgili, in a very descriptive way, analyzes the culture and traditions of the refugees through generations while staying loyal to the discourse of necessary evil regarding the population exchange.<sup>321</sup> Interesting research on the Cretan refugees was conducted by Neşe Kaya at the Boğaziçi University. Based on her fieldwork

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<sup>319</sup> Elif Renk Özdemir, "Borders of Belonging in the 'Exchanged' Generations of Karamanlis," in *Land of Diverse Migrations: Challenges of Emigration and Immigration in Turkey*, ed. Ahmet İçduygu and Kemal Kirişçi, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2009). This study is based on the Master's thesis of the author at Koç University. Renk Özdemir finalized her doctoral studies at the University of Sussex in 2010. The access to her dissertation is, however, restricted to repository staff only. Dr. Özdemir did not will to share the electronic or hardcopy of her work since she was preparing it for publication. Renk Özdemir, "Redefining the Borders of Subjectivity and Belonging in the 'Near East': The 1923 Greco-Turkish Mandatory Population Exchange from 'above' and 'below'" (Ph.D., University of Sussex, 2010). Yet a chapter of her dissertation is published in a compilation on human rights. See Elif Renk Özdemir, "Population Exchanges of the Balkans and Asia Minor at the Fin de Siècle. The Imposition of Political Subjectivities in the Modern World Order", içinde *Silencing human rights: critical engagements with a contested project*, ed. Gurminder K. Bhambra ve Robbie Shilliam (New York: Palgrave, 2009), 147-65. See also Foti Benlisoy and Stefo Benlisoy, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinde Katedilmemiş Bir Yol: "Hristiyan Türkler" ve Papa Eftim* (İstanbul: İstos, 2016).

<sup>320</sup> Tuncay Ercan Sepetçioğlu, "Girit'ten Anadolu'ya Gelen Göçmen Bir Topluluğun Etnotarihsel Analizi: Davutlar Örneği" (Ph.D., Ankara Üniversitesi, 2011). For a noteworthy article written by Sepetçioğlu on the *mübadil* (exchangee) identity and its revival in Turkey see Tuncay Ercan Sepetçioğlu, "İki Tarihsel 'Eski' Kavram, Bir Sosyo-Kültürel 'Yeni' Kimlik: Mübadele Nedir? Mübadiller Kimlerdir?," *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 18, no. 1 (2014): 49–84. See also Tuncay Ercan Sepetçioğlu, *Etnotarih: Üç Köy* (Ankara: Gece, 2017), 83-134.

<sup>321</sup> Fahriye Emgili, *Yunanistan'dan Mersin'e: Köklerinden Koparılmış Hayatlar* (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2011).

on Cunda island, Turkey (*Μοσχονήσι* in Greek), almost an exclusive refugee settlement, she analyzes the evolution of the notion of belonging among the second-generation Cretans of Cunda by analyzing their linguistic analysis of their discourse that reveals, according to the author, the individual and collective identities of these people. Moreover, on the basis of the linguistic analysis, she draws conclusions regarding their relations to society.<sup>322</sup> New themes have also been introduced into the scholarship. The scholarship on the relationship between memory and history finally made its way into the literature on the population exchange. Aslı Iğsız investigates different repertoires of recollections from the rupture, i.e. the population exchange, that are produced and proliferated through cultural artifacts (i.e. Kemal Yalçın's 'novel') and tries to delineate fundamental trends of the transformation of the public and personal memory in Turkey and in Greece.<sup>323</sup>

## 2.7 Common Pasts

Here I return to the metaphor of historical distance discussed in the introduction this chapter. As the at-a-distance interaction of national(its) historiographies produced and reproduced nationalisms, the ventures to understand the common past with collaborative projects

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<sup>322</sup> Neşe Kaya, “Ambivalent Belongings: A Discourse Analysis of Second-Generation Cretan Immigrants in Cunda” (MA, Boğaziçi University, 2011).

<sup>323</sup> Aslı Iğsız, “Repertoires of Rupture: Recollecting the 1923 Greek-Turkish Compulsory Religious Minority Exchange” (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2007); for the core of the dissertation see Aslı Iğsız, “Documenting the Past and Publicizing Personal Stories: Sensescapes and the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange in Contemporary Turkey,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 26, no. 2 (2008): 451–87; see also by the same author “Polyphony and Geographic Kinship in Anatolia: Framing the Turkish-Greek Compulsory Population Exchange”, içinde *The politics of public memory in Turkey*, ed. Esra Ozyurek, 1st ed. (Syracuse N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 162-87.

have boosted the new trends in historiographies by, first, bridging them, and hopefully will continue to do so by entangling them.

As far as the joint efforts, in the first place, of the scholars from Greece and Turkey to understand the common past of the two countries, since the late 1990s<sup>324</sup> there have been such organizations. The first jointly-organized conference on the population exchange took place in 1998, that is, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the signature of the exchange convention, to give an initial stimulus to the attempts to develop a new understanding to break the boundaries of the nationalist bigotry surrounding the isolated monologues of respective historiographies through dialogue. The conference proceedings were compiled into a volume, which has become an oft-cited work, *Crossing the Aegean*.<sup>325</sup> This conference and book, undoubtedly, encouraged scholars, particularly those in Turkey to study the aspects of the population exchange novel to Turkish historiography through showing the potential of the subject and proposing a fresh research agenda. Although only few of the chapters adopt a comparative perspective, that is, most of the studies focus on the issues strictly defined within the borders of either of the national histories, there are chapters that complement each other. Five years after the first conference with a similar a second conference was held in Turkey, this time, on the eightieth anniversary and the proceedings were published under the title of *Yeniden Kurulan Yaşamlar*.<sup>326</sup> Similar to the

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<sup>324</sup> The first joint scholarly event, “Our Common Cultural Heritage”, was organized at the Boğaziçi University in 1997. It was followed by a conference, “Social and Political Sciences and History in Turkey Today” held at the Panteion University in 1998.

<sup>325</sup> Renee Hirschon, ed., *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003).

<sup>326</sup> Müfide Pekin, ed., *Yeniden kurulan yaşamlar: 80. yılında Türk-Yunan zorunlu nüfus mübadelesi* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005). This book did not come out in English; but most of the articles were published in Greek and compiled into a volume with some additional articles written by Greek scholars in 2006. Konstantinos Tsitselikis, ed., *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών - Πτυχές Μιας Εθνικής Σύγκρουση* (Athens: KEMO, 2006). A conference marking the ninetieth anniversary of the signature of the exchange convention was organized in 2013 at the Koç University, the proceedings of

previous one, adopting a critical engagement this book/conference concentrates on multiple aspects of the population exchange.<sup>327</sup> The most remarkable difference between these two volumes are that *Crossing the Aegean* addressed more general themes and the results of the population exchange whereas *Yeniden Kurulan Yaşamlar* presents a more detailed and bitterly critical historical account and understanding of the event.<sup>328</sup> Therefore, it can be said that over the past few years the dialogue that had been initiated in the late 1990s introduced new themes, such as the cultural heritage, settlement scheme carried out in Turkey, or sources as well as comparative studies. Moreover, the stereotypes prevailing in historiographies were visibly dented.

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which have not been published yet. On May 9, 2014 at the Ege University an international symposium on the population exchange was held. The author presented a paper on the refugees' political participation in Turkey. The proceedings are yet to be published.

<sup>327</sup> It should be noted that one of the organizers of both conferences was LMV.

<sup>328</sup> The efforts to develop a mutual understanding of the past are not limited to this particular historical event. The common Ottoman past became an academic object. In addition to an early attempt at the Princeton University on the *millet* system in the Ottoman Empire which yields the volume titled *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, in 1989 the Program in Hellenic Studies of the same university organized "The Social and Economic History of the Greeks in the Ottoman Empire" from which the authoritative volume *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism* was derived. In addition to these efforts in the New World, in Greece in January 1991 the Institute for Mediterranean Studies at the University of Crete organized the first "Halcyon Days" devoted to the Ottoman studies and scheduled for every three years. So far seven volumes on the history of the Ottoman Empire were published out of the papers presented in this organization. In 2004 the Department of History of the Boğaziçi University in cooperation of a series of other institutions organized a seminar entitled "Economy and Society on Both Sides" that lasted three consecutive academic years. The proceedings of these seminars were compiled into a volume with the same title in 2010. Fifteen out of sixteen chapters of the book concentrate on the Ottoman period. The only exception is Elçin Macar's chapter on the problems of the minority populations in the Single Party Era. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982); Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Philip Issawi, *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Darwin Press, 1999); Lorans Tanatar Baruh and Vangelis Kechriotis, *Economy and Society on Both Shores of the Aegean* (Athens: Alpha Bank Historical Archives, 2010).

These efforts were followed by the publication of three volumes on the comparative study of Greek and Turkish nationalisms in 2005, 2007 and 2010.<sup>329</sup> Even though none of these volumes looks into the population exchange as a separate case, which can be seen as one of their shortcomings, they are of great importance in tracing the divergent and convergent paths followed by Greece and Turkey during respective nation-building and national identity formation processes. Another joint effort, *Tormented by History* by Umut Özkırmımlı and Spyros A. Sofos was published in 2008 and showed that a comparative history of Greek and Turkish nationalisms has the potential not only to understand “our” histories but also to contribute to the broader field of theories of nationalism.<sup>330</sup> The authors disappointingly touched upon the exchange only briefly and in a very descriptive manner. Although the Greek “side” of the story is discussed in an innovative way, the reproduction of national space, the Turkish “side” is handled in a relatively brief and very descriptive discussion. This constitutes one of the major drawbacks of this study. The discussion of Özkırmımlı and Sofos does not provide an entangled historical narrative and instead perpetuates the practice of examining each case separately. In 2010 a workshop that was held with the participation of scholars from Greece and Turkey at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens yielded a volume on the state-sponsored nationalisms in Greece and Turkey particularly on the historical examination of the situation of minorities in Greece and Turkey: *State-nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and*

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<sup>329</sup> Thalia Dragona and Faruk Birtek, eds., *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005); Anna Frangoudaki and Çağlar Keyder, eds., *Ways to Modernity in Greece and Turkey: Encounters with Europe, 1850 -1950* (I.B.Tauris, 2007); Nikiforos P Diamandouros, Thalia Dragona, and Çağlar Keyder, eds., *Spatial Conceptions of the Nation Modernizing Geographies in Greece and Turkey* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010).

<sup>330</sup> Özkırmımlı & Sofos, *Tormented by history*,

*Turkey*.<sup>331</sup> Considering the fact that these minorities are legally defined by the same framework of the population exchange, that is, the Lausanne Agreement, this book is directly relevant to our subject matter and constitutes a direct challenge to the literature on the concept of minority at a theoretical level and on the historical dynamics of minoritization in the Ottoman empire and minorities in Greece and Turkey that favors nation states *vis-à-vis* these historically disadvantaged communities. More specifically, the book challenges the myth that the Lausanne Agreement was a diplomatic success and solved the protracted regional problems, particularly that of minorities.<sup>332</sup> As the scholarly encounters continues to take place, the research agenda diversifies and thrives. A final example is the edited volume by Vally Lytra: *When Greeks and Turks Meet*, a joint project of the Centre for Hellenic Studies at King's College, London and the Turkish Studies programme at SOAS. This volume proves that the joint efforts to establish cordial scholarly relations have grown mature to develop institutional cooperation.

## 2.8 Broader Contexts

The development of historiographies of the population exchange has, however, never been a purely “internal” issue for Greece and Turkey. Greece, being at the heart of the European

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<sup>331</sup> Benjamin C. Fortna et al., eds., *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, (New York: Routledge, 2013). Some of the chapters in this compilation come from a two-year research project entitled “From Religious Communities to National Minorities: Greek Orthodox Minority in Turkey and Muslim Minority in Greece, 1830s to the eve of World War II,” which ran in 2008-2009. The rest is based on the presentations in the aforementioned workshop in 2010. For another compilation on the minorities and diplomacy in two countries see Samim Akgönül, *Reciprocity: Greek and Turkish Minorities : Law, Religion and Politics* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2008). For a historical assessment of the minority and immigrant/refugee question in Greece see Konstantinos Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam in Greece: From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012).

<sup>332</sup> For a detailed review of the book see Aytek Soner Alpan, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Yunanistan ve Türkiye’de Azınlıklar,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 238 (October 2013): 52–56.

cannon, and hence the most researched country of Southeastern Europe, has always been a center of international scholarly attention. As a part of the history of Modern Greece the population exchange received due attention. With her puzzling past and present, Turkey, on the other hand, has never lost its currency in academia. I shall also add that the convergence between two historiographies on the population charmed international scholars in recent years, at least, to have a look at this subject. Here I will make mention of only a few of them.

To begin with, Mary Ruth Yeager's dissertation submitted to the University of California-Berkeley in 1979, though unpublished, is still the most detailed and well-researched study on the settlement of the refugees in Serres. She concentrates on village formation in this region after the arrival of refugees and traces the changes in villages one by one until the 1970s in a historically and anthropologically rich narrative. This is not surprising because rural anthropology in Greece has since the 1960s been a thriving field. In addition to the ones on Macedonia cited above, starting from the mid-1980s Michael Herzfeld referred to the refugees and their place within the Cretan communities he studied.<sup>333</sup> Meanwhile in the field of urban anthropology, the pioneering publications began to emerge slightly later. First and foremost, was Renée Hirschon's *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*.<sup>334</sup> The book problematizes the life of a refugee community living in Kokkinia, which like all of refugee communities including the descendants of the first

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<sup>333</sup> Michael Herzfeld, *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village* (Princeton University Press, 1988).

<sup>334</sup> Renee Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) In 1987 Stephen D. Salamone's book was published. In this book Salamone investigates a fishing "refugee" community in Ammouliani established after the Asia Minor Catastrophe. Since the book is weak because the author fails to contextualize the subject matter historically and to ethnographically problematize his observations. This is why the book has never found an echo.

Stephen D. Salamone, *In the Shadow of the Holy Mountain: The Genesis of a Rural Greek Community and Its Refugee Heritage* (East European Monographs, 1987).



generation, pigeonholed as “refugee” identity carefully crafted by the official wisdom, or else neglected. Hirschon’s ethnographic writing on the refugee community reveals how they saw the native population, how they formed and negotiated a distinctive memory and what its real significance was and what strategies they developed to sustain it.<sup>335</sup> In 1991 Herzfeld published his book on Rethymno, *A Place in History*, which skillfully combines history and anthropology and brings up the question of multiplicity of time (past and present), as well as memory. According to Herzfeld, on the one hand, there is “monumental time” which refers to the “collective experience of the nation,” and on the other, there is social time shaped by individual experiences. These two conceptualizations, or rather discourses, forms their own memories, the struggles of which shape, for example, the urban space of the town. The refugees contributed in the formation of both of these discourses after their arrival in Rethymno through their physical and discursive interaction with the city and indigenous Cretans. The publication of these studies to close one another obviously affected the historiography. What I mean is that it is not a coincidence that there is a “memory turn” in the literature following the publication of these pioneering works.<sup>336</sup>

In the field of economic history, Mark Mazower’s *Greece and the Inter-war Economic Crisis* published in 1991 is considered as a seminal work and his emphasis on the burden of the population exchange upon the war-torn Greek economy fundamentally challenged the discourse on “economic miracles” that occurred in the interwar period thanks to industriousness of the

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<sup>335</sup> For the *modus operandi* of the “refugee memory” in Kokkinia see Renee Hirschon, “Μνήμη Και Ταυτότητα: Μικρασιάτες Προσφύγες Της Κοκκινιάς,” in *Ανθρωπολογία Και Παρελθόν: Συμβολές Στην Κοινωνική Ιστορία Της Νεότερης Ελλάδας*, ed. Θεόδωρος Παραδέλλης Ευθύμιος Παπαταξιάρχης (Athens: Alexandria, 1993).

<sup>336</sup> For an example of the anthropological studies comparing the consequences of different forced migration experiences see Peter Loizos, “Ottoman Half-Lives: Long-Term Perspectives on Particular Forced Migrations,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12, no. 3 (January 1, 1999): 237–63.

refugees and analyzed the relation between the refugees' economic deprivation and their political behaviors. Even though Mazower, who now approaches to the history of the twentieth century with the priority of analyzing the international, inter-state system, does not discard population exchanges as a feasible solution to ethnic conflicts, he successfully portrays the economic and political disadvantages that the refugees experienced. It is noteworthy that there is also a burgeoning security-oriented conflict-resolutionist literature.<sup>337</sup>

Conceptualization of "refugeehood" and investigation of refugee-producing mechanisms (policies, ideologies, etc.) are among the subjects suppling the studies on the exchange with theoretical and comparative insight and how important the making of refugees is modern nation-states.<sup>338</sup> As for comparative perspectives, in recent years there is a growing interest in the demographic engineering methods employed throughout the twentieth century including different episodes of population exchanges.<sup>339</sup> And as far as comparative refugee studies is

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<sup>337</sup> See Bahar Bilgin and Başak Ince, "Ontological (in)security of 'Included' Citizens: The Case of Early Republican Turkey (1923-1946)," in *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties*, ed. Bahar Rumelili (New York: Routledge, 2014), 117–34; Stefan Wolff, "Can Forced Population Transfers Resolve Self-determination Conflicts? A European Perspective," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 12, no. 1 (2004): 11–29; Arie Marcelo Kacowicz and Pawel Lutomski, *Population Resettlement in International Conflicts: A Comparative Study* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2007)

<sup>338</sup> See for example Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Nevzat Soguk, *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* (U of Minnesota Press, 1999); for a less theoretical account see again Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*.

<sup>339</sup> For the voluntary population exchange between Bulgaria and Greece see Theodora Dragostinova, *Between Two Motherlands: Nationality and Emigration Among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900-1949* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011). For the disintegration of the Russian Empire and its demographic results see Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia During World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

For an analysis of the post-WWII demographic engineering practices see Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White, *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Postwar Europe, 1944-49* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). For the ethnic cleansing policies that the Nazi-allied Romanian government see Vladimir Solonari and Joseph J. Brinley, *Purifying the Nation: Population Exchange and Ethnic Cleansing in Nazi-Allied Romania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). For the partition of India see Anjali Gera Roy and Nandi Bhatia, *Partitioned Lives: Narratives of Home, Displacement, and Resettlement* (New Delhi: Longman, 2008), see also Haimanti Roy, *Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-1965* (New Delhi: Oxford University

concerned, lately this theme has been subject to deeper investigation and conceptualization in the Ottoman context. Without taking into account of Isa Blumi's rich narrative on the formation of, what he calls, "Ottoman refugee" would remain incomplete.<sup>340</sup> According to Blumi, the Ottoman refugee emerged as the result of the capitalist world system. The empire's encounter with the expanding capitalist system, as the causal dynamic triggered a series of multidimensional transformations, which brought new conflicts to the Ottoman soil and consequently created a new and substantial contingent "type" of person that ended up scattered throughout the world. Blumi's main argument regarding the intercommunal violence that shaped the empire's last century is twofold: First, capitalist expansion, violently time to time, disturbed the internal balance and caused imperial institutions to become obsolete; secondly, massive demographic shifts that the status quo at the local level was disturbed further by the massive demographic shifts, which resulted in competition and then fight over the scarce imperial sources. Giving examples from different parts of the empire and unifying them within a framework built upon the peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire. It is important to emphasize that the timespan that Blumi's study covers. Blumi's analysis concentrates on the "transitional period" between 1878 and 1939 and treats the refugees of the population exchange as Ottoman refugees.<sup>341</sup>

Finally, Aslı İğsiz's *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* provides a fresh social science perspective on the subject matter by placing

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Press, 2012) and Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition Violence, Nationalism, and History in India* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>340</sup> Isa Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World* (New York: A&C Black, 2013).

<sup>341</sup> This obviously reminds the argument of Featherstone et.al. who call the Muslim minority in Western Thrace the last Ottomans. See Kevin Featherstone et al., eds., *Οι Τελευταίοι Οθωμανοί: η μουσουλμανική μειονότητα της Δυτικής Θράκης*.

the history of the population exchange within the context of biopolitics and its historical evolution in Turkey and beyond.<sup>342</sup> While discussing the interdependence of liberal cultural politics and segregative biopolitics and the limits of humanitarianism through a wide variety of material and a broad theoretical framework, the author manages to reach out and combine its historical point of reference to the political and ideological debates of our times, from neo-Ottomanism to the rise of neo-fascism, through retracing the bold striding footsteps of the refugee issue in the twentieth century.

## 2.9 Conclusion

In the previous section, after discussing the formation of the canon regarding the population exchange and the traditional contours of Greek and Turkish historiographies, four elements that contribute to the cumulative historiography were investigated separately. By delineating the dynamics of the anxiety in Greek and Turkish historiographies—which still continues in my view—and bringing the contribution of the collaborative efforts of the scholars from Greece and Turkey and of the international scholars into the picture, I tried to show that there are certain new historiographical trends in Greece and Turkey. As the discussion above shows, before the 1970s Turkish historiography was thinly populated, if not deserted, the observations on old historiographies, therefore, mostly refer to Greek historiography. To sum up, the answer to the question of what the old and new trends in historiographies of the population exchange can be given as the following:

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<sup>342</sup> Aslı İĞSİZ, *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

i. Old national historiographies are propelled by respective nationalisms; yet the new trends are inspired by transnationalism. Old historiographies' relation to the nationalist projects has been problematized and challenged by new historiographies. In the same vein, old historiographies are methodologically particularist and exclusionist, which produces nothing but monologues; whereas new historiographies try to position the respective country within a broader context—the capitalist world system—and to handle the subject matter in a comparative fashion. This eventually creates dialogues between different historiographies (especially between Greek and Turkish historiographies), genres and sources. Moreover, new historiography does not take the displacement as a mere “event” but as a category of analysis (of an event).

ii. By subsuming the interests of the refugees under the national interests, official historiographies, in both countries, failed to include the refugees in the narrative they crafted. In old historiography, particularly, in Greece, the refugees are *veiled*, in other words, visible as long as they conformed to the national cause. In Turkish historiography, on the other hand, the refugees were completely *invisible*. The scholars developing the new historiographies, on the other hand, try to develop a refugee-oriented approach towards the subject.

iii. Therefore, it can be claimed that nationalist historiographies were metaphysical, in other words, based on the myths on which the nationalist edifice was constructed. The population exchange too got its share. In Greece, for example, the umbrella identity of “refugee” obscured the diversity that the refugees presented in the first place. This identity had been constructed to be at the service of the double myth of national unity and social homogeneity. On the other hand, new historiographies try to demystify the myths built around the refugees including the very rubric of “refugee”—particularly in Greece because in Turkey it is still hard to refer to a distinct

refugee/*mübadil* culture— and successfully challenge the national prejudices ingrained in official historiographies.

iv. This task was undertaken by shifting the research agenda towards how the refugees engaged with the displacement. That is why new historiography extensively utilizes anthropological methods as well as works and their findings. So, following the observation Antonis Liakos makes for the “New History,” we can say that new historiography considers itself to belong to the social sciences, whereas old historiography strictly includes itself in the humanities.<sup>343</sup> Old historiography, too, utilizes folklore as a means of research. However, in Greece it was used to prove the “Greekness” of the refugees and the “pure” Hellenic character of their culture.<sup>344</sup>

v. New historiography distinguishes “history-as-recorded” and the “history-as-lived,” in Elizabeth Tonkin’s categories,<sup>345</sup> and challenges the so-called objectivity of old historiography. While undertaking this, it also bridges these two categories with another one, namely, “history-as-remembered” in order to carry out major salvage operations to revive non-authoritative and “endangered” voices of the refugees and to challenge further the official representations of the past. This explains the memory-turn in the literature on the population exchange in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

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<sup>343</sup> Liakos, “Encounters with modernity,” 112.

<sup>344</sup> Haris Exertzoglou, “Organizing the Memory of the Last Homelands. The Asia Minor Discourse in Greece After the 1922 Catastrophe.” (Unpublished conference paper, International Population Exchange Symposium, Ege Üniversitesi, 08 2014). See also Xaris Exertzoglou, “Η Ιστορία Της Προσφυγικής Μνήμης,” in *To 1922 Kai Oi Πρόσφυγες Μια Νέα Ματιά*, ed. Antonis Liakos (Athens: Nefeli, 2011).

<sup>345</sup> Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

vi. Lastly, old historiography is based on the separation of the exchange from violence. New historiographies, on the other hand, insist that it was a violent act, and this cannot be masked by the argument that it was diplomatically approved and both of the states consented to it. In this sense, to my mind, the strongest representative of the old-school scholarship on the population exchange is the security-oriented conflict resolution school.

I believe historiographies suffer from path dependence, that is to say, the initial set of decisions of the pioneers, of those who molded the canon, have a long shadow and determine where we are today. From the categories we use to the archival materials that have survived (or collected in the case of oral history materials) and remained accessible to the researchers, many of the “pillars” of the research conducted today are affected—in one way or another—by those initial choices. The current setbacks of new historiography are to a considerable degree related to the very inception of the field. Regarding these setbacks and the suggestions to remedy them I offer the following observations:

i. New historiography is susceptible to the nostalgia surrounding the issue. We all accept that nostalgia has done its duty by creating a thirst for knowledge, a quest for identity among the third generation. And it’s done. But now some portions of the literature head to a trap of unquestioningly quenching the nostalgia. In other words, the study of the exchange should problematize nostalgia, and not reproduce it through the discourse/ideology of lost homelands.

ii. The other dimension of the nostalgia trap is about the criticism of nationalisms in the literature. A critical study of the population exchange cannot avoid challenging nationalism. Yet, in the literature the criticisms of nationalism and nation state have turned to ahistorical encomiums for empires due to their multiethnic characters. In this respect, the literature should go beyond the binary opposition between nation states and empires. In addition to this, as

Hatziiossif competently expresses, we cannot build a past in an arbitrary manner: “What we are trying to do is emancipate ourselves from the prejudices inherited from our forbearers, rather than to substitute them with new, better, progressive or politically correct prejudices.”<sup>346</sup>

This caution is timely and apt when we consider the new historiographical tendencies in Turkey and in Greece. New prejudices create their own orthodoxy, in most cases market-oriented, that makes critical studies or even decent scholarly discussions impossible. Among these new prejudices is the genocide debate. This study does not attempt to provide an assessment on this topic or make an argument for or against about the genocide issue. Based on the deadlock that the literature on the Armenian genocide has ended in, I believe that it is not the best strategy to concentrate on the g-word.

iii. The criticism of the conflict resolution school is at least as important as the criticism of nationalism. Because this mode of thinking legitimizes forced displacement practices by privileging state security over human rights.

iv. Scholarly historiography is not equivalent to academic historiography. Some of the scholars, such as Mihri Belli, that produced valuable and critical studies were not academics. Yet, to be sure, writing history needs to be conducted by the educated. This does not disqualify it as a popular action; in other words, it does not have to be an élite activity the influence of which fades away the very moment it steps outside the walls of the academia. After all, I write these lines in a country where, according to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC),<sup>347</sup> 3,763,565 refugees fled from the violent civil war in Syria to find shelter and in which they try to

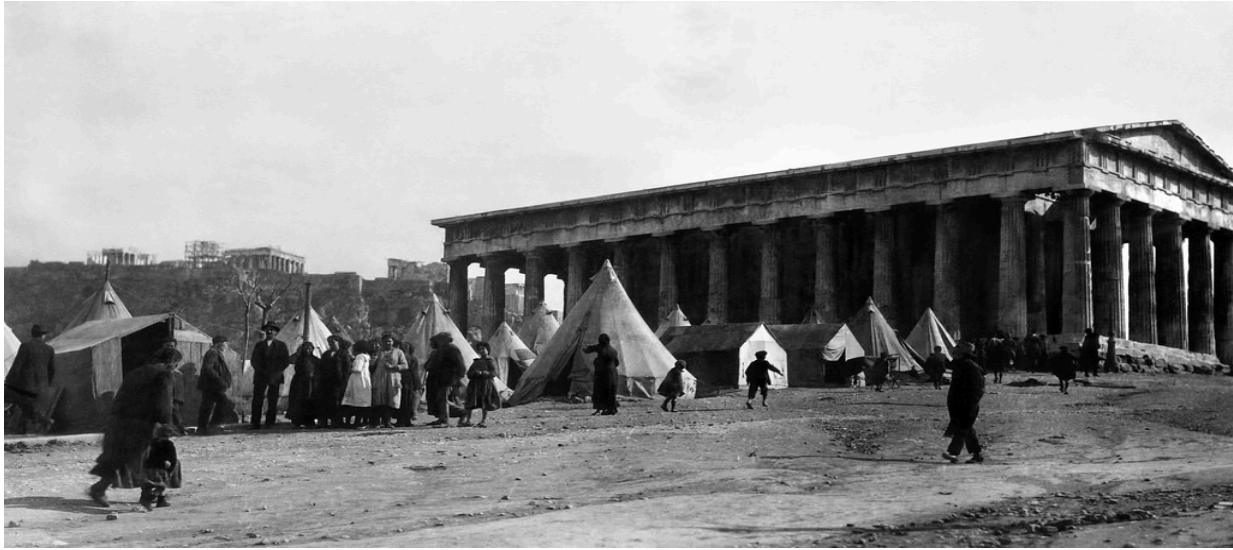
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<sup>346</sup> Christos Hatziiossif, “Epilegomena: Common Past, Comparative History and Regional Universalism in Greek and Ottoman Historiography,” in *Economy and Society on Both Shores of the Aegean*, ed. Lorans Tanatar Baruh and Vangelis Kechriotis (Athens: Alpha Bank Historical Archives, 2010), 536.

<sup>347</sup> “UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response,” accessed April 9, 2022, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/113>.



survive on the pavements, in parks, squares, train and bus stations and even in cemeteries. The photographs that depict the despair of the Greek and Turkish refugees and I thought I had got accustomed to seeing at the archives or in old newspapers of the 1920s seem to be restored to life (See Figure 2–2 and 2–3). Therefore, after reviewing a bulk of intellectual production, it is legitimate to ask what history, as a profession and a discipline, is good for. That is why new historiography has to find new ways and media to disseminate its findings to the public and should not confine itself to the academy.



**Figure 2–2:** Refugees from Asia Minor (Turkey) settling in a refugee camp in Athens in front of the Temple of Theseus, 1922

**Source:** *National Geographic Magazine* 48 (November 1925): 572.



**Figure 2–3:** Refugees from Syria in a Roman archaeological site in Ankara, 2014.

**Source:** *Hürriyet*, July 17, 2014.

## Chapter 3: The Muslim/Turkish Case

### 3.1 Historical setting: The “long” 1924

The ratification of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Assembly on August 23, 1923 marks the opening of what I will refer to as Turkey’s “Long 1924.” The period that began with this event and that ended with the passing of the Law for the Maintenance of Order on March 3, 1925 forms a coherent and interconnected unity that needs to be treated as single entity. Moreover, it is my contention that the Long 1924 constitutes a turning point in modern Turkish history. Bookended by these two seminal events were the key developments that established the Turkish Republic and that determined its fundamental nature and character. Among the major events were:

- The foundation of the [Republican] People's Party (September 9, 1923)
- The establishment of the republic<sup>348</sup> (October 29, 1923)
- The abolition of the caliphate<sup>349</sup> (March 3, 1924)
- The abolition of the ministries of Sharia, Pious Foundations and the General Staff<sup>350</sup>

(March 3, 1924)

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<sup>348</sup> “Teşkilat-ı Esasiyye Kânûnunun Ba’zı Mevaddının Ta’diline Dâir Kânûn,” *Resmî Ceride*, no. 41 (November 7, 1924): 3.

<sup>349</sup> “Hilâfetin İlgâ ve Hânedân-ı Osmâniyye’nin Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Memâliki Hâricine Çıkarılmasına Dâir Kânun,” *Resmî Ceride*, no. 63 (March 6, 1924): 6.

<sup>350</sup> “Şer’iyye ve Evkâf ve Erkân-ı Harbiyye-i Umûmiyye Vekâletlerinin İlgâsına Dâir Kânun,” *Resmî Ceride*, no. 63 (March 6, 1924): 6.

- The ratification of the Law on the Unification of Instruction<sup>351</sup> (March 3, 1924)
- The ratification of the 1924 constitution<sup>352</sup> (April 20, 1924)
- The declaration of 150 people as *personae non gratae*<sup>353</sup> (June 1, 1924)
- The foundation of the Progressive Republican Party (November 17, 1924)

The establishment of the republic and the ratification of its constitution marked the official determination of the character of the new regime. The new state would be a republic founded on the basis of national sovereignty. There were also strict measures taken by the new regime to prohibit the restoration of the monarchy. The first radical courses of action for the abolition of the theocratic state institutions and the removal of the duality between the political and spiritual foci of power provided the initial impetus for the secularization of the state, law and society.

In addition to these steps, this period is also characterized by the increasing role of the parliament as the leading constituent institution of the new state. The Long 1924 is when the foundations of those changes were laid by the national assembly. Parliament's privileged position, together with the elimination of the pressure of the war as a unifying element between possibly competing political actors, created polarizations within the political system or made the already existing but latent polarizations regarding the future of the country more visible. The relative autonomy that parliament acquired can be best observed through an analysis of the

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<sup>351</sup> "Tevhîd-i Tedrîsât Kânunu," *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 63 (March 6, 1924): 6.

<sup>352</sup> "Teşkilât-ı Esâsiye Kânûnu," *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 71 (May 24, 1924): 4-7.

<sup>353</sup> "Yüzelli Kişilik Liste - Karârname Sûreti," *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 81 (January 7, 1925): 3. The so-called List of 150 was a list of high-ranking personages of the Ottoman Empire who were labelled "traitors of the nation" by the administration of the nascent republic, stripped of their citizenship, and banished from or barred from the entry to the Republic of Turkey. Hakan Özoğlu, *From Caliphate to Secular State: Power Struggle in the Early Turkish Republic* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011), 15-78.

parliamentary debates over the constitution of 1924 with which the sovereign power of the nation was intended to be vested in the Grand National Assembly. The considerable prerogatives of the president of the republic in the original draft of the constitution were trimmed drastically by parliament as the result of those heated debates. In the original draft, the powers and the privileges of the president consisted of, for example, an 8-year period of office, a stronger veto right against the bills enacted by the parliament. In the constitution as finally adopted, the president's period of office was limited to the legislative period of the parliament. In the original draft the president's veto could only be overridden by the vote of the two-third of the deputies as opposed to a simple majority that the final text required. The strengthening of the parliament, and thus the opposition, continued until the establishment of the Law for the Maintenance of Order under the pressure of the Sheikh Said Rebellion, which became instrumental in silencing the opposition together with any social/political movement that had the potential of impinging of the power of Mustafa Kemal and his inner circle. The law was used against the opposition, the Progressive Republican Party, that had been founded on November 17, 1924 on more libertarian but not entirely different principles.

Finally, and most importantly, the Long 1924 can be described as a period of destruction of the *Ancien Régime*, a period of laying the grounds for fundamental transformations. At the end of 1924, Mehmet Zekeriya (Sertel), one of the influential, politically engaged and left-leaning intellectuals of the early republican period, meticulously described the very essence of the year as the following:<sup>354</sup>

The passing year, 1924, is the year of destruction for Turkey. In order to complete the revolution that had started two years ago with the Sakarya victory time was spent with overthrowing the institutions inherited from the *Ancien Régime*. Our constitution was demolished (*hedmedilmiştir*) too. The organizations of education, justice and

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<sup>354</sup> Mehmet Zekeriya, "Türkiye'nin Siyasi Tarihi," *Resimli Yıl 1* (1925): 11.

family, thus the entire established social order was overthrown from one end to the other. In respect to [the idea of] destruction for construction, last one year has to be written as a huge year of activity on the account of the revolutionary national assembly. Last year the National Assembly, which wants to carry the country to a new life, to a new sociological order, proceeded firmly in the road of revolution by demolishing successfully the obstacles that it encountered.

This indicates an unevenness between the destructive and constructive capability of the new state institutions, and hence the deficiency of state capacity exercised under serious, historically and economically determined limitations. State capacity here refers to the ability of the state to formulate policies, make decisions in accordance with these policies, and to carry out these decisions to pursue distinctive goals. As Theda Skocpol and Kenneth Finegold put it, state capacity is strongly related to the effectiveness of a government's administrative structures. When policies demanding increased government intervention are to be implemented, the importance of this administrative structure becomes more crucial. They also underline that governments that have, or can assemble, their own knowledgeable organizations are more capable of implementing interventionist policies.<sup>355</sup> It can also be said that state capacity refers to a multidimensional set of abilities of the state to formulate, implement and both coercively and ideologically enforce economic and social policies. Obviously, the nascent republic experienced serious hardships in pursuing distinctive political and ideological goals and in realizing them effectively. The 1923 population exchange between Greece and Turkey and the ensuing refugee problem in Turkey is one of the most revealing practices of this incapacity.

The Turkish nation-state was founded on the principle of the ethnic homogenization of the population and that the nationalist leadership saw the exchanging populations was a means to achieve this goal. As will be shown below, a population exchange between Greece and Turkey

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<sup>355</sup> Theda Skocpol and Kenneth Finegold, "State Capacity and Economic Intervention in the Early New Deal," *Political Science Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (July 1, 1982): 260-1.

had been under consideration even before the peace negotiations officially started. At Lausanne, the Turkish delegation, in accordance with their initial plan and the instructions from Ankara, insisted on the compulsory character of the population exchange proposed by Nansen.<sup>356</sup> During the course of negotiations, it was also decided that the exchanged populations would be determined by religion, rather than ethnic or linguistic criteria, since it was almost impossible to determine a persons' ethnic identity based on secular demographic records and neither could spoken language be a clear marker of ethnicity. In short, at the time of the population exchange convention the triptych of nationality (ethnicity, religion and language) had not yet overlapped with each other and formed a stable normative identity. That being said, this choice of criteria was also related to the both states' desire to maximize the number of exchangeable people. From a nationalist point of view, the newly emerging nation-state in Anatolia was successful in guaranteeing the expulsion of a significant portion of the remaining non-Muslim population within the boundaries of the land that it claimed territorial sovereignty in an internationally recognized way. This diplomatic success, however, was not followed by administrative steps to deal with, basically, the resettlement problem.

Even on the eve of the exchange, the state did not have a comprehensive plan that determined how to resettle and assist the newcomers. After their transfer, the refugees encountered serious difficulties: thousands lost their lives and many suffered psychological trauma due to the difficulties of the process. How did the refugees react to these difficulties and losses? If one tried to find an answer to this question in the existing literature, this answer would

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<sup>356</sup> During the negotiations nobody including Lord Curzon and Nansen, developed a serious opposition to the idea of a compulsory exchange. Lord Curzon just expressed his detest but underlined that it was the only viable solution to the existing problem. See *Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs 1922-1923*, 210-227.

be terribly disappointing. Because, as was shown in the discussion on the historiography, on the Turkish side, almost a complete silence characterized the representation of the population exchange and the people subject to it. Unlike the story of the Asia Minor refugees, the tragic episode of nearly half a million Turkish-Muslim refugees remained largely untold. This in turn created an impression that the implementation of the Exchange Convention was effectively handled and the problems of refugees promptly addressed by the Turkish nation-state. Recent scholarship has shown that this was actually not the case and that upon their arrival the Muslim-Turkish refugees experienced numerous hardships as did the Orthodox refugees sent to Greece. The problems faced by the refugees in their new “motherlands” has not been dealt with so far by the historiography. Therefore, it is absolutely crucial to analyze the travails they suffered and to show how refugees in several occasions attempted to publicly make their voice heard about the arbitrary implementation of the resettlement policies and by so doing to influence the decision-making processes.

This chapter shows how the refugees became a part of the national public dialogue over their fate during the Long 1924 and how unwillingly they created an appetite for further political participation within the limits of the new regime. Here I use the concept political participation beyond the conventional way, which unduly restricts it to voting and running for elections. Keeping political participation within the limits of electoral activities, however, makes it impossible to understand the processes of participation under electoral authoritarian regimes, where preciously structured sets of political institutions, including elections, are under careful regime control. Political participation here refers to some non-conventional political activities. Non-conventional and extra-parliamentary forms of political participation, as Marco Martiniello writes, presuppose the constitution of a collective actor distinguished by a collective identity and



some degree of organization through a mobilization process.<sup>357</sup> It should be added that this collective actor does not need to take the form of a political party. From the late eighteenth century on, in modernizing societies, the creation of associations was one major response to the problems caused by rapid change, uncertainty and increasing complexity.<sup>358</sup>

Charles Tilly emphasizes the importance of associations and their activities in the creation of mass national politics and claims that “the meetings, demonstrations, petition drives, public statements, and association-building of social movements became standard devices of popular politics.”<sup>359</sup> Associations, regardless of their original agenda, had the potential to become political under certain conditions. That’s why the authorities always aspired to be in control of them. As told above, this is particularly so if quasi-corporatist states with authoritarian single-party regimes —like the regime in Turkey<sup>360</sup>— are considered. Due to the power-holders’ total dominance over party politics in these regimes, associations gain both ground and importance even though they are kept under constant pressure and their development is constantly hindered. This is why in this chapter, I concentrate on associations organized around refugee identity, their attempts at getting involved in the decision-making processes, in organizing collective actions like rallies for civil rights, petitioning and pamphleteering. At this point it is also worth

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<sup>357</sup> Marco Martiniello, “Political Participation, Mobilisation and Representation of Immigrants and Their Offspring in Europe,” in *Migration and Citizenship - Legal Status, Rights and Political Participation*, ed. Rainer Bauböck, IMISCOE Reports (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 85.

<sup>358</sup> R. J. Morris, “Clubs, Societies and Associations,” in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950*, ed. F. M. L. Thompson, vol. 3, 3 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 395.

<sup>359</sup> Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), xx. E. P. Thompson also analyzes the role of associations in the formation of working-class politics and sees these organizations a crucial part of the democratic process. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 617.

<sup>360</sup> Soner Çağaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey : Who is a Turk?* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006), 65.

mentioning that in the early republican period, there was no specific legislation for political parties and their foundation was subject to the law of associations.<sup>361</sup> With an analysis of collective actors and actions of the hitherto neglected Turkish-Muslim refugees, it is possible to show that these people did not constitute a silent, passive crowd as traditionally assumed in the historiography.

I focus in this chapter on the activities of the Exchange Association, which in a short period became the most effective refugee organization. The first section concentrates on the foundation of the exchange bureaucracy and the Exchange Association, the interaction between these two, and finally on how this association reacted when the refugees were excluded from political processes directly related to their future. To understand the final point, I concentrate on the most visible collective actions of the refugees organized by the Exchange Association, namely the Sultanahmet protest rally held on August 17, 1924. Why and how refugees ended up organizing a protest meeting and what the consequences and repercussions of it were are the main questions that I try to answer. The second section is about how the refugees responded to their fundamental problems regarding the basic rights granted to them and how the Exchange Association mediated between its membership and the State. The focus of the last section is on what was arguably the most important and frequent means by which the refugees exercised political participation, and that's was by submitting petitions. By using three examples of collective petitioning/pamphleteering this section shows that, while looking for an efficient remedy through petitioning, refugees' repertoire of negotiation and contention broadened. The analysis of the Exchange Association, its maneuverings in the corridors in Ankara, and the

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<sup>361</sup> Esat Öz, *Türkiye'de tek-parti yönetimi ve siyasal katılım, 1923-1945* (Ankara: Gündoğan yayınları, 1992), 141.

refugees' repertoire allows us, first, to recover the voices of refugees showing that the refugees were not a group of people completely devoid of agency and excluded from politics and, second, to observe through the eyes of refugees the political atmosphere during the Long 1924, a period in which the power structure still had some holes through which active participation to national politics was possible.

### **3.2 Is silence golden? When the refugees protest**

The idea of exchanging populations was not pulled out of thin air during the peace negotiations in Lausanne and was certainly no surprise to the participants. Before the conference, Fridtjof Nansen, who had already gained a reputation because of his work in the field of displaced war victims during WWI, been appointed as the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees in the League of Nations in 1921; he been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 and was involved in charity works and awareness campaigns regarding the Greek refugees fleeing the Ottoman Empire. In October 1922, Dr. Nansen, going back and forth between Athens and İstanbul, was trying to formulate a reliable solution for the refugee problem in Greece as the High Commissioner of the League of Nations. In his report to the League dated November 15, 1922, Nansen describes how he started mediating between the Athens government and the Ankara government after he was appointed to this post by the League on September 19.<sup>362</sup>

Immediately after the end of the assembly I went straight to Constantinople, because I considered it of primary importance to have an interview with the Angora authorities. A few days after I had good fortune to meet several times His Excellency Hamid Bey, Diplomatic Representative at Constantinople of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. I discussed with him the various problems [...] In confirmation of my conversations I sent him in October 12th a memorandum, and October 14th a letter, in which I wished to deal particularly that of an exchange of

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<sup>362</sup> AYE, A-5 VI 11949.

populations between Greece and Turkey. On October 15th the High Commissioner of France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan, told me their reasons for giving me a formal invitation to take all possible steps to endeavor to reach an agreement with regard to an exchange of populations between Greek and Turkish governments as soon as possible, independently of peace negotiations. [...] The Greek government told me of its desire that should attempt to establish an agreement on the subject of the exchange of populations. [...] I received a telegraphic communication from His Excellency Mustapha Kemal Pasha dated Brousa October 22nd, 1922. "The exchange proposed by Dr. Nansen is acceptable in principle. Nevertheless, the matter must be considered with the government. As it is impossible for me under present conditions to wait in any one town and it is unfortunately not possible for me to fix a meeting place. Mustapha Kemal Commander in Chief

In 1922, the political situation in post-Catastrophe Greece was very complicated, if not chaotic. Just a few days before Nansen's official appointment, on September 11, 1922, the royalist government was toppled by a coup led by Nikolaos Plastiras, an ardent Venizelist. In the following days King Constantine I would be forced to abdicate and leave the country. Meanwhile Venizelos was in self-imposed exile in London. The new so-called revolutionary government asked Venizelos to represent it at the Lausanne peace talks. On October 10, while Nansen was residing at the Pera Palace Hotel in İstanbul, he sent a deeply sincere letter to Eleftherios Venizelos in London expressing his grave concerns regarding the gravity of the refugee problem in Greece and underlining the urgency of the resettlement of the refugees "either as the result of a treaty for the exchange of populations with the Turkish government, or without such a treaty."<sup>363</sup> It is also known that Greece and the Ottoman Empire had discussed exchanging populations previously.<sup>364</sup> Moreover, the newly emerging Turkish state did not frown on the idea of

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<sup>363</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 318-10.

<sup>364</sup> On May 22, 1914, the Hellenic Republic and the Ottoman Empire agreed upon exchanging the Greek peasants in the vilayet of Aydın with the Macedonian Muslims. On January 13, 1915 a mixed commission decided the terms of the population exchange which was to be voluntary. This population exchange, however, never took place due to WWI. Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi - İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği* (1913-1918) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2008), 219.

exchanging populations. Rıza Nur, who served as the envoy of the Ankara government at the Lausanne Conference, claims in his memoir that even before the negotiations, he had been planning to offer a population exchange, which had been his “most genuine ambition” (*ehass-ı emelim*), as the solution to the minorities question, which had been lasting for centuries and dragging the country to its doom.<sup>365</sup> During the years of the national resistance, in the press supporting the Ankara Government there were numerous articles presenting the population exchange as the most practical and sole solution of the minority problem. For example, on December 4, 1921 İsmail Habib Bey (Sevük), who was editor of *Açıksöz*, wrote:<sup>366</sup>

Diseases do not manifest themselves in the same way in different parts of the body. The sickness of being Rum (*Rumluk hastalığı*), for example, presents with different symptoms on the shore and in the heartland. These two types of symptoms need to be cured separately: The medication for the former is “exchanging [populations]” and that for the latter is “the foundation of an Anatolian patriarchate.”

Thus, the idea of exchanging populations had already been—implicitly or explicitly—approved in principle by the main attendees of the Lausanne negotiations. Yet neither of the states was ready to absorb the estimated number of people.

As far as the nascent Turkish state was considered, it had inherited the resettlement and relief “system” of the Ottoman Empire, which was developed after the 1768-1774 Russo-Ottoman War, when refugees started to retreat into the shrinking imperial borders. Thereafter, together with the dissolution of the Empire in the Balkans and Crimea, the number of Muslim

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<sup>365</sup> In the light of Nansen’s earlier contacts Rıza Nur’s account seems to be a deliberate distortion of the facts in order to emphasize his own role and determination. Rıza Nur, *Lozan Hatıraları*, Boğaziçi Yayınları (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları, 1992), 53, 98-99.

<sup>366</sup> İsmail Habib Sevük, *Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda Yunanlılar ve Anadolu Rumları üzerine makaleler: Açıksöz gazetesi*, ed. Mustafa Eski (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1999), 107-8.

refugees flowing into the Ottoman Empire increased gradually. In the early nineteenth century, emerging nationalist claims in the Balkans resulted in the migration of approximately 200,000 Muslims to the inner regions of the Empire. Within the decade following the Crimean War (1853-1856), two million Muslims took refuge in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>367</sup> According to Karpas, between 1860 and 1914 the number of people that migrated into the empire was between five and seven million. Official statistics show that in the Ottoman Empire the total population increased by about 40 percent in the period 1860-78 and by about another 10 percent to the end of the century. The Ottoman birth rate in this period was 1.2 percent. These facts reveal that the major source of the population growth in the Ottoman Empire was immigration.<sup>368</sup> The high rate of immigration and the increase in the number of Muslim refugees within the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century was coupled with the age-old need to settle the nomadic tribes. These two needs were so significant that the Ottoman state had to make changes in its resettlement and relief organization. In 1860, the Ottoman state established a commission, *Muhacirin Komisyonu* (Commission of Emigrants), to regulate the migration and resettlement issues, which previously had been dealt with local authorities and municipalities. In 1863, a special military unit, *Fırka-i Islahiye* (Unit of Revision), which was in charge of the forceful sedenterization process of the nomadic tribes in various parts of Anatolia, was formed. Following the 1876-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the organization for emigrants reorganized and expanded into *İdare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin Komisyonu* (General Administration of Emigrants). As the pressure of the refugee problem increased in the wake of WWI, the Ottoman Empire restructured

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<sup>367</sup> Ahmet Cevat Eren, *Türkiye’de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri Tanzimat Devri İlk Kurulan Göçmen Komisyonu, Çıkarılan Tüzükler* (İstanbul: Nurgök, 1966), 7.

<sup>368</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, “The Hijra from Russia and the Balkans: The Process of Self-Definition in the Late Ottoman State,” in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 691.

its relevant office and established *Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyet-i Umumiyesi* (General Directorate of Tribes and Emigrants). In addition to these governmental attempts, there were also some “non-governmental” or “semi-governmental” institutions, such as *İşkân ve Teavün Cemiyeti* (Association for Resettlement and Relief), *İâne-i Muhacirin Encümeni* (Society for Assistance to Emigrants), *Sermâye-i Şefkat-i Osmanîyye* (Turkish Compassionate Fund)<sup>369</sup> devoted to the question of resettlement of and assistance to emigrants and refugees. All these changes and organizations were, however, made in the face of some urgent crises rather than as parts of a comprehensive internal colonization scheme.<sup>370</sup>

The inadequacy of the resettlement and relief system became a source of anxiety for the Turkish government immediately after the signature of the exchange accord because those who were subject to the population exchange started crowding the ports of Greece and Turkey. In much the same fashion as Ottoman practices, the Ankara government first published a decree of 31 articles to put the population exchange into execution (“*kuvveden fiile çıkaracak*”).<sup>371</sup> In this decree it can be found the roots of the predicaments in which the refugees found themselves. For example, the government was determined to take stern measures to delineate the resettlement areas of the refugees. Article 19 states that those refugees who went to a destination other than the one they were officially assigned lost their refugee privileges. The next article specified that if the officers did not stop the refugees’ disappearance from their assigned resettlement regions,

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<sup>369</sup> This organization was founded by Baroness Burdett Coutts in London under the title of Turkish Compassionate Fund, which was called in the Ottoman Empire *Sermâye-i Şefkat-i Osmanîyye*. For the activities of this organization see Nedim İpek, *Rumeli’den Anadolu’ya Türk Göçleri, 1877-1890* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999), passim, especially 77-8.

<sup>370</sup> Eren, *Türkiye’de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri*, 39-40; Abdullah Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri (1856-1876)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2010), 118.

<sup>371</sup> Mübadele-i ahali ve emvâl hakkında Lozan’da teatti olunan 30 Kânunısani 1923 tarihli mukavelenâmenin sûret-i tatbikiyesini mübin talimatnâme “Ahali Mübadelesi Hakkında Mukavelenâme”, *Vatan*, August 1, 1923.

those refugees were to be held responsible.<sup>372</sup> Article 25 describes the main categories for grouping the refugees. The decree divides the refugees into three groups as per their places of origin, i.e., those from mountainous areas, those from bottomlands, those from seacoasts and into four occupational categories; farmer, vine dresser, tobacco grower, and craftsman. The government intends also to resettle the refugees in the properties abandoned by the Anatolian Greeks. Yet the most interesting measure regarding the refugee resettlement was stated in Article 29. Since language and customs were the largest obstacles confronting Turkey, says the article, they must always be taken into consideration in resettlement. This meant that the ratio of those resettled in Turkish towns and villages who belonged to “another race” could not exceed 20 percent.<sup>373</sup> These four articles that were supposed to regulate the resettlement of the refugees, arguably constituted the source of the fundamental problems in this process, namely forced “emplacement” and the ensuing adaptation problems, the lack of available properties to be used in the resettlement process, and finally the nationalist prejudices toward the refugees.

How, and more importantly by whom exactly, these measures would be implemented was a problem for the government. In the parliamentary session of August 23, 1923, İsmet Paşa as the Minister of Foreign Affairs brought the Treaty of Lausanne to the floor. While reviewing the content of the agreement, İsmet Paşa referred to the population exchange as a “necessary evil” and outlined the long-term gains for the country from a nationalist perspective. In this session,

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<sup>372</sup> “19) Muhtac muhacirlerden hükümetin kabul ettiği menâtika gitmeyenler veya ellerindeki vesikalarda muayyen mahaller hilafına gidenler hakk-ı muhacirinden sakıt olacaklardır.

“20) Muhacir ve mülteci komisyonlarının verdiği vesikalarda irâ'e edilen mahallerden gayrıya gitmek isteyen muhacirlerin seyir ve hareketine mümâne'et etmeyen muavenet-i içtimaiye ve zabitan memurları mesul tutulacaktır.”

<sup>373</sup> “29) Hangi ırk ve milliyete mensub olursa olsun lisan ve âdâtın tahallüfü medeni ve ictimai Türkiye'nin en metin mani'i bulunduğu daima nazar-ı dikkate bulundurularak herhangi bir Türk kasaba veya köyünde lisan ve âdâtı başka diğer bir ırka mensup muhacirinin miktarı yüzde yirmiye asla tecavüz etmeyecektir.”



the Turkish Grand National Assembly approved the Lausanne Agreement and it took effect on August 25. The task of resettlement was delegated to the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance (*Sihhiye ve Muavenet-i İçtimaiye Vekaleti*). During the same session, based on his observations in the Anatolia-wide tour, Tunalı Hilmi Bey, Zonguldak deputy, submitted a legislative proposal concerning the establishment of a reconstruction ministry that would be responsible for the exchange-related tasks, but it was rejected.<sup>374</sup> On September 1, this issue was brought to Parliament again. This time Mustafa Necati Bey and Receb Bey, deputies of İzmir and Kütahya, supported Tunalı Hilmi Bey's proposal in principle; but instead of his, they made another proposal for the establishment of a ministry of reconstruction and resettlement.<sup>375</sup> The arguments favoring the formation of a ministry convinced the general assembly and the proposals were sent together to the relevant committee for preliminary assessment. The situation of the emigrants and refugees continued to be a recurrent theme of the parliamentary discussions.

On September 5, Prime Minister Ali Fethi Bey in his speech at the general assembly presented the government program which identified the issue of the exchange and reconstruction as one of the government's urgent priorities and pointed out the importance of the full cooperation of all the members of the parliament. But he did not offer a concrete plan of action including reorganization of the bureaucracy.<sup>376</sup> On the same day, Ali Fethi Bey sent to *Hilâl-i Ahmer* (the Turkish Red Crescent), a decree regulating the relief work that would be undertaken by the organization.<sup>377</sup> Finally the legislative proposal came to the general assembly on October

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<sup>374</sup> TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, [Transcripts of Proceedings of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, (TBMMZC, hereinafter)], *Term I, Volume 1, Session 4*, 9th Meeting, August 23, 1923, 292. This was not the first time that Tunalı Hilmi Bey made such proposals in previous months but they were rejected too.

<sup>375</sup> TBMMZC, III/1 - 12, 335.

<sup>376</sup> TBMMZC, III/1 - 14, 427-28.

<sup>377</sup> KA, 1296/152 (September 5, 1923).

13 but before that Ali Fethi Bey insinuatingly criticized the unwieldiness of the parliamentary committees by saying he heard that the Justice Committee could not finish its assessment on the proposals concerning the exchange although “the exchange of many men is about to begin.”<sup>378</sup> The government wanted to establish of a directorate (*Mübadele ve İmar Müdürlüğü*), instead of a ministry, to deal with the exchange and resettlement issue as a subdivision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Tunalı Hilmi Bey insisted that, in addition to the refugees of the population exchange, other incoming emigrants and the “Turks” spread throughout the former imperial geography had to be transferred to Anatolia—even though they do not have the Turkish consciousness. He saw an opportunity to solve the problem of underpopulation and further the economic reconstruction of Anatolia. The same ministry, he argued could oversee settling both populations.<sup>379</sup> He was also deeply worried about the inaction of the government as well as the spontaneity and extemporaneousness of the limited number of measures taken while a huge problem was approaching: “I always told ‘the war shut the doors, the borders... Not even a bird is flying... Yet as soon as a peace is signed, as if the weirs collapsed, the floods of emigrants will hit Turkey... We have to take measures in advance concerning how to meet them, how to benefit from them.’ These days are the ones in which the bitter or sweet but surely scary facts in these unheard clamors manifest themselves. What shall we do?”<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> TBMMZC, II2/1 - 35, 618.

<sup>379</sup> Tunalı Hilmi Bey was not alone in his call. On January 9, 1924 Yahya Kemal Bey, for example, wrote in *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* that after the Greco-Turkish population exchange there remained two million Turks throughout the Balkans and the government should have considered the exchange practice as a blueprint and bring the Turks living in Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria to Turkey through voluntary population exchanges. Yahya Kemal, “Son Kafilenin Düşündürdükleri,” *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, January 9, 1924.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*, 630.

The foundation of the *Mübadele, İmar ve İskân Vekâleti* (Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement) was approved by Parliament on October 13 and Mustafa Necati Bey was elected as the minister on October 20.<sup>381</sup> 165 deputies attended the election of the minister, 158 of whom voted for Mustafa Necati Bey, who had rejected this post in the first place.<sup>382</sup> After the election, Mustafa Necati Bey thanked the members of the parliament for entrusting such an important and gigantic mission to him. It is worth mentioning that it was not an easy task for the government to find someone willing to take up this post. None of the proposed names including Mustafa Necati accepted the position. The reluctance of the nominees was evident. Muammer Bey, for example, rejected the offer and refused to talk to the press on the account of his sickness. Before the election, Mustafa Necati Bey, without answering the questions of the press, pointed at Muhtar Bey, another name offered for this position, and requested that the press to talk to Muhtar Bey first, then made a short statement and stressed his physical tiredness and claimed that this would prevent him from undertaking this responsibility thoroughly. Muhtar Bey, on the other hand, explained his unwillingness because if his qualifications were not sufficient for such an important work, which required, according to him, expert skill and knowledge.<sup>383</sup> This lack of enthusiasm shows not only the ethical and historical gravity of this responsibility but also a skepticism toward the feasibility of the resettlement

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<sup>381</sup> The foundation of the ministry did not only automatically solve the problems but also created new ones. During the organization of the new ministry a vacuum of authority emerged. The delegation of the Exchange Association visiting Ankara was refused admittance to the ministries. Rıza Nur Bey, Minister of Health and Social Assistance, refused even to receive the delegation based on the fact that his ministry was no longer responsible for the exchange affairs. This was bitterly excoriated by the press. *Vatan*, for example, announced this with the title “Now not even a single office dedicated to the Exchange matters” *Vatan*, October 21, 1923.

<sup>382</sup> TBMMZC, II2/1 - 39, 826.

<sup>383</sup> “Mübadele Vekâletine vekil bulunamamasının sebebi ne?,” *Vakit*, October 21, 1923.

scheme because of the government's general unpreparedness. Nobody seemed to want to bear the responsibility and ramifications of a highly possible failure.

There were two main fields of activity of this ministry: settlement of the incoming population and reconstruction of the war-torn superstructure of the country, and both were fraught with difficulties. On November 1, Parliament passed the ministry's budget<sup>384</sup> and almost one month after the foundation of the ministry, on November 8, a new law regulating its fields of activity was enacted.<sup>385</sup> On November 29, the governors and sub-governors (*kaymakam*) were sent a decree regarding the foundation of the reconstruction and resettlement commissions under the chairmanship of local administrators. With this early, yet belated, legislation, the ministry's basic bureaucratic and legal structure was established, at almost the same time that the refugees started to arrive. Regarding the exchange bureaucracy, it should also be noted that the exchange convention, to be more precise the article 11 of it, required the foundation of an international commission for the supervision of the exchange and the liquidation of the properties, movable and immovable, as defined in the convention. The following eight articles defined the duties and responsibilities of the "Mixed Commission" [*Muhtelit Mübadele Komisyonu* in Turkish, *Μικτή Επιτροπή της Ανταλλαγής Πληθυσμών* in Greek]. It was to consist of four members representing

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<sup>384</sup> As stated earlier, before the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and resettlement, the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance (*Sıhhiye ve Muavenet-i İçtimaiye Vekâleti*) was responsible to carry out the resettlement task. The initial funding request of the latter ministry was 10 million Turkish liras, but the government allocated only 3,050,447 Turkish liras to the General Directorate of Exchange and Reconstruction [TBMMZC, II/1 - 35, 623]. After the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and resettlement, on October 24, 1923 Mustafa Necati Bey presented a bill about the budget of the new minister and wanted the government to devote 6,125,277.50 Turkish liras. The bill was enacted on October 31, 1923. (In 1923 the value of the British pound against the Turkish lira was approximately 7.6. Hence the budget of the ministry was only about 800,000 British pounds.) "Mübâdele, İ'mâr ve İskân Vekâletinin Teşkilât ve Masrafı Hakkında Kânûn," *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 41 (November 11, 1923): 1-3.

<sup>385</sup> "Mübâdele İ'mâr ve İskân Kânunu," *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 43 (November 18, 1923): 1.

Turkey, four representing Greece, and three “neutral” members chosen by the League of Nations from among countries that had not participated in WWI.<sup>386</sup>

One of the major factors scaring off the potential ministerial candidates was the challenge of how to settle so many refugees. How this problem was to be handled would become the first major internal problem that the nascent republic faced. It should be noted that the state did not handle it well. The archival documents vividly show the various problems that the refugees encountered during their resettlement process, many because of the unorganized and even chaotic and experimentalist fashion of the government’s policies. The refugees that wanted to put a roof over their heads or to be adequately compensated for the properties they had abandoned in Greece got swamped either in the grinding officialism of the exchange bureaucracy or in the inability to solve the problem of the illicit occupation of the properties abandoned by the Greeks. Some specific examples can show how perennial those problems were.

After her arrival in Turkey, Raifa Hanım was given an apartment on the first floor of the El Irak Apartments, right across from the War School (*Harbiye Mektebi*) in İstanbul. It was compensation for the loss of her properties in Greece. On February 26, 1929, Raifa Hanım’s husband filed a formal grievance to the police station in Pangaltı against some other refugees who had illicitly occupied her property.<sup>387</sup>

In 1937, Naciye Öney, a refugee from Crete, was still sending petitions to different levels of the Turkish bureaucracy to express her disappointment about how she and her family had been unfairly treated regarding compensation for the properties that they had been forced to abandon

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<sup>386</sup> For the Mixed Commission see Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 353-76. For the reports of the meetings of the Mixed Commission between 1924 and 1928 see BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO. 246 — 7, 8, 9. The Mixed Commission stopped its activities on October 19, 1934, that is, 11 years and 11 days after its foundation. *Cumhuriyet*, October 17, 1934; October 20, 1934.

<sup>387</sup> BOA, HR.İM. 230 — 31.

in Greece. Being overwhelmed by the intransigence that she found in the corridors of the government offices, on November 29, she finally sent a petition directly to “Atatürk the Great”, the head of state.<sup>388</sup> In her petition, after describing the bureaucratic deadlock that she could not overcome, she described her family’s economic plight:

“We, as family, are in poverty and debt. The small amount of money that my spouse, the owner of legitimate and inherited properties in Crete worth hundreds and thousands of liras, earns from preceptorship is barely enough for the education of our children. We have been following our rights persistently in Ankara for the last five years, and for this purpose we mortgaged our house in which we live to Security Fund.”

Her final sentences poignantly capture her despair:

“Please do not grudge your redemptive assistance that succors all sufferers and righteous hand from us. Please give orders to provide us whatever will be given for the compensation for our properties as soon as possible. There is no other guardian and no other asylum to refuge [but you]. . . Our lives and salvation depend on your mercy and your protection, our great forefather.”

Finally, from her signature, we learn that she was the spouse of Fuat Bey, who was one of the grandchildren of Serdar Gazi Hüseyin Paşa, the conqueror of Crete.

These examples show that, in spite of the years that had passed, the refugees were still in desperate financial straits regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. These basic problems remained unsolved and their adaptation to their “motherland” kept being difficult due to the “inability” of the Turkish state to implement effective resettlement plans and complementary financial recovery policies. As it might be guessed, in the immediate aftermath of the exchange

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<sup>388</sup> BCA, 030..0.0.01 — 40.236..1.

and in the absence of rapid and well-organized responses and relief operations, the problems were more serious and complicated.

Before the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, a cursory resettlement scheme was prepared by a five-member commission led by Cemal Hüsnü Bey, the director of statistics,<sup>389</sup> the country was divided into eight resettlement districts:<sup>390</sup> Samsun district (Sinop, Canik, Ordu, Giresun, Trabzon, Gümüşhane, Amasya, Tokat, Çorum), Thrace district (Edirne, Tekfurdağı, Gelibolu, Kırkkilise, Çanakkale), Karesi district (Balıkesir), İzmir district (İzmir, Manisa, Aydın, Menteşe, Afyon), Bursa district (Bursa), İstanbul district (İstanbul, Çatalca, Zonguldak), İzmit district (İzmit, Bolu, Bilecik, Eskişehir, Kütahya), Antalya district (Antalya, Isparta, Burdur), Konya district (Niğde, Kayseri, Aksaray, Kırşehir), Adana district (Adana, Mersin, Silifke, Kozan, Ayıntap, Maraş).<sup>391</sup> In the meantime, the government also tried to centralize the information about the abandoned properties in each district<sup>392</sup> and to categorize the incoming refugees in terms of their places of origin and occupations. As seen from this document the registration of abandoned properties was far from complete. Several important cities in which the number of abandoned properties was supposed to be large such as Samsun remained largely unrecorded.

The government's initial plan was not detailed and insufficiently developed to carry out the resettlement of such a large and diverse population. In one of the earliest studies on the migration fluxes into and out of Turkey, Geray characterized the method that the government

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<sup>389</sup> BCA, 030..10.0.0 — 123.872..14 [April 17, 1923].

<sup>390</sup> For the ordeal that the government issues according to this division see BCA, 272..0.0.11 — 20.102..17 [December 31, 1924].

<sup>391</sup> For the analysis of the resettlement districts see “İmar ve İskan Mıntıkları,” *Türkiye Hilal-i Ahmer Mecmuası* 3, no. 28 (December 15, 1923): 103–4.

<sup>392</sup> BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 123.873.18 [October 8, 1923].

adopted for the resettlement as reflexive, that is to say, the state took the necessary measures only after facing emergencies or difficulties.<sup>393</sup> In a like vein, Koraltürk, in his study on the economic impact of the population exchange, underlines that the government did not take action unless the people stepped up and put pressure.<sup>394</sup> As will be shown below, the criticisms, warnings and concrete suggestions concerning the resettlement issue fell on deaf ears in Ankara.<sup>395</sup> One of most specific suggestions came from the Association for Resettlement and Relief even before the already belated official efforts had begun.

*The Official Report by the Exchange Commission of the General Congress of the Association for Resettlement and Relief [İskan ve Teavün Cemiyeti Umumi Kongre Mübadele Encümeni Mazbatası]* was an alternative scheme of resettlement written and sent to the government in September 1923.<sup>396</sup> The report was very detailed in its deliberations and adopted a historical approach to the issue of migration and refugeehood. The report started with an historical assessment of the performance of the late Ottoman Empire in terms of absorbing the population influxes. According to the report, the imperial government underwent great political and economic anguish over refugee resettlement yet did not achieve any success. After the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War and the Balkan Wars, two and a half million people migrated into the empire and, since they were not resettled in accordance with their economic, regional and social backgrounds, 80% of them perished [*“mahv ve helâk olmuştur”*]. Moreover economically, the

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<sup>393</sup> Cevat Geray, “Türkiye’de Göçmen Hareketleri ve Göçmenlerin Yerleştirilmesi” *Amme İdaresi Dergisi*, v.3, n.4, (December 1970), 22.

<sup>394</sup> Murat Koraltürk, “Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi ve Tük-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesinin İktisadi Sonuçları” *Mete Tunçay’a Armağan*, ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan, Tanıl Bora, Murat Koraltürk, (İstanbul:İletişim,2007), 631

<sup>395</sup> Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement*, 140-151.

<sup>396</sup> *İskan ve Teavün Cemiyeti Umumi Kongre Mübadele Encümeni Mazbatası* (İstanbul: İskan ve Teavün Cemiyeti, September 24, 1923).



Ottoman Empire, instead of taking serious and painstaking measures, threw money around without relying on any principles. The case of Edirne was a typical example: According to the report, although the Empire allocated 15 million liras for the resettlement between the years 1916 and 1919, only two villages were built in this city. The Association for Resettlement and Relief bluntly warned Ankara about the cost of misgovernment and offered the association's full assistance in facilitating the coordination between state and non-state institutions, which was one of the most critical elements of a successful resettlement scheme. The report also warned the government about the discrepancy between the volume and characteristics of the incoming and leaving populations. It referred not only to the cultural differences does also to the differences that could create technical difficulties. For example, the report underlined that most of the departing Orthodox population was from urban centers, and hence the properties they left were concentrated in the urban centers, while the incoming refugees were mostly rural folk. Therefore, this dissimilarity should have been taken into consideration in advance in order for the resettlement scheme to be effective.<sup>397</sup>

For the same goal, the commission concluded its report ends with 20 concrete suggestions. These concentrated on three areas: First, the persuasion of the western world, including the League of Nations, to defend the rights of the Muslims leaving Greece, to support them financially and materially in the same way that they supported the Greek refugees was indispensable. For this purpose, the Turkish government and the non-governmental organizations should have worked together to have their say in the compensation process. The report also

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<sup>397</sup> Tahsin Güler, in his *Ben Bir Mübadilim* (I am a refugee), which is based on the memories of his uncle Kota Mahmut, refers to this problem. Initially the refugees from Mayadağ (today Φανός) wanted to be resettled in the city center of Tekirdağ. After seeing the houses in the city center, the refugees did not stay there because the houses had no gardens, it was impossible for them to practice stockbreeding. Tahsin Gülen, *Ben bir mübâdilim: Mayadağ'dan Şarköy'e* (Türk Edebiyatı Vakfı Yayınları, 2010), 49.

underlined the importance of propaganda. In this sense, a declaration concerning Greek atrocities against the Muslims in Greece should have been prepared at once. Secondly, the report pointed at importance of the foundation of the Exchange Association as the merger of two associations, the Association of Macedonia and the Association of Eastern Macedonia, and asked the congress to endow the board of directors with full authority to work with the Exchange Association, the Red Crescent and other relevant organizations. The report re-emphasized the importance of the coordination of different state agencies for the transfer and the settlement of the newcomers. Finally, the report recommended that the entire state bureaucracy should have been re-organized to meet the needs of the settlement process. This also included the structural re-organization of the Association for Resettlement and Relief.

Contrasting the government's resettlement scheme and the one proposed by the Exchange Commission of the General Congress of the Association for Resettlement and Relief can shed light upon some basic problems regarding the resettlement process. First, the categorization of the refugees in these two documents is completely different. The resettlement scheme divided the refugees into three broad categories in terms of their occupation and seven groups in terms of their geographical origins. The occupational division of the refugees in this scheme is especially problematic; since the only three categories suggested were "tobacco producers", "agriculturalists" and "vine-growers and olive producers and dealers" and based on these categories a nuanced resettlement program was impossible. On the other hand, the alternative scheme categorized the incoming population into two larger groups: urban ("the ones from cities and towns") and rural ("peasants and farmers"), which were also broken down into subcategories. The former was differentiated into three categories: local notables [*eşraf*], merchants [*tüccar*], and workers [*ameleler*], whereas the latter was divided into those involved in

various types of agricultural production and animal husbandry.<sup>398</sup> Moreover, the association's report took into consideration the social and cultural milieu of the incoming population as an important factor unlike the government's scheme, which had no particular reference to this point.<sup>399</sup> As underlined by the Association for Resettlement and Relief, the government's superficial, fuzzy and transitory attitude towards the issue of refugee resettlement was genetically inherited from the Ottoman Empire. This was manifest in the testimonies of both refugees and state officials.

In his memories, Hilmi Uran, the *kaymakam* of Çeşme district in 1914, for example, referred to the flight of 40.000 Greeks from Çeşme to Chios, which is called the first exile in Greek historiography, due to the insecure and ultra-nationalist atmosphere. After the Balkan Wars and the resettlement of the Muslim refugees in Çeşme, he pointed to the deterioration of vine growing in this district owing to the fact that the incoming population was accustomed neither to the climate of the region nor to the agricultural character of the district.<sup>400</sup> The absence of a well-organized resettlement plan manifested itself cumulatively in some economic indicators as well. For instance, a closer look at the production figures of certain agricultural products, i.e. raisins, which had become a principal export item in the very beginning of the integration of Western Anatolia into the world market,<sup>401</sup> reveals this effect. İzmir produced 69 million kg in 1913, while the post-1923 maximum was 51 million kg in 1929.<sup>402</sup> Such a sharp decrease in a period of

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<sup>398</sup> İTC, *İskan ve Teaviin Cemiyeti*, 6.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid., 7-8.

<sup>400</sup> Hilmi Uran, *Hatıralarım*, (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1959), 72

<sup>401</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *The definition of a peripheral economy: Turkey, 1923-1929*. (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1981), 26

<sup>402</sup> Keyder, *The Definition*, 39. The production level in 1923 was 36 million kilograms. See Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi*, (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1994), 142

recovery can be explained by the loss of experienced vine-growers due to the population exchange and the destruction of vineyards during the war. The archival documents prove that, though limited, the government tried to resettle experienced vine-growers in the Western regions.<sup>403</sup> However, we can conclude that these efforts were not enough to increase the production of raisins, at least not during the first years of the Republic. The overall production of raisins reduced to 406.1 million kilograms in 1925 from the level of 493.5 million kilograms achieved in 1924. The resettlement of tobacco-growers was much more successful,<sup>404</sup> yet it was far from being unproblematic as well.

This problem was brought up in the parliament. Esad Efendi, a deputy for Menteşe, called attention to the administrative failures, malpractices and corruption in the resettlement process. He gave examples of the resettlement of refugees in areas unsuited to their former lifestyle. Refugees coming from areas with flat topography were settled in mountainous regions and vice versa (“*dağlıyı ovaya, ovalıyı dağa iskân etmek gibi hatalar*”). In his speech, Esad Efendi also pointed out the dreadful experience of the tobacco producers from Drama resettled in some villages of İzmit, where tobacco production was impossible due to the geographical conditions. These refugees had to disclaim their rights granted by the Treaty of Lausanne in İzmit

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<sup>403</sup> For the resettlement of the experienced vine-growers from Crete in Bozcaada see BCA: 272..0.0.11 – 16.70..16. [28/12/1923] and for the resettlement of the vine-grower refugee families from Vodine, Karaferye and Karacaova in İzmir region see BCA: 272..0.0.11 – 17.80..9 [29/3/1924]. The majority of the refugees resettled in the Samsun district were farm laborers working in tobacco cultivation.

<sup>404</sup> The refugees experienced in tobacco production was tried to be resettled in places where tobacco had been produced extensively before the exchange for the sake of a quick recovery. For instance, 528 of 931 refugees resettled in the center of Samsun were declared practicing tobacco-related occupations. As a result of this resettlement, tobacco production in Canik vilayet increased by 50.7 per cent from 1924 to 1927 (from 2.235.709 kg to 4.536.780 kg) See İpek, *Mübadele ve Samsun*, 164.

and moved to Kartal, Gekbüze and Pendik, where they started producing tobacco—only to be sent back to their former resettlement sites by the local authorities.<sup>405</sup>

As it is seen from these examples, on the practical level, even the broad categories of the resettlement scheme were not followed while the refugees were being distributed. Most of the refugees were resettled in the districts where they could not utilize their professional qualifications. Many refugees relinquished voluntarily the properties they had been given because they were incompatible with their previous lifeways. After the Greeks left, there emerged serious gaps in local economic networks. The absence of artisans was a particularly frequent theme broached by local newspapers. For example, a local newspaper repeatedly warned the government about the absence of stonemasons in Keskin, and even for repairing the properties abandoned by the local Greeks, some stonemason refugees have to be resettled there unless the government cannot send professional masons to the town.<sup>406</sup> Similarly, in Safranbolu the same problem hit the local economy. There remained no tailors, no stonemasons except for the apprentices that used to work for Orthodox masters.<sup>407</sup>

A significant factor behind the government's inability to prepare and implement a comprehensive and cohesive resettlement plan<sup>408</sup> was its lack of coordination with the local administrations. In *Ahenk*, a daily published in İzmir, on May 26, 1924, Mehmet Şevki criticized the over-centralized way the resettlement issue was being handled and that it created

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<sup>405</sup> TBMMZC, II9/2 - 49, 82-83.

<sup>406</sup> *Keskin*, August 11, 1924; September 1, 1924; September 4, 1924.

<sup>407</sup> Hür Kalyoncu and Ünsal Tunçözgür, *Mübadele ve Safranbolu* (Karabük: Karabük Valiliği, 2012), 53.

<sup>408</sup> Ömer Lütfü Barkan, one of the most prominent historians on the land system in Turkey, criticized the absence of an internal-colonization plan of the governments since the first years of the republic. Barkan, "Türkiyede Muhacir İskânı İşleri ve bir İç Kolonizasyon Planına olan İhtiyaç", 204-223

inefficiencies in the process.<sup>409</sup> In a similar fashion, several times, *Keskin*, as well as other local newspapers, criticized the government about the cumbersome bureaucracy causing lengthy delays of the transaction of the funds allotted for the refugees.<sup>410</sup> According to the same newspaper, the refugees were begging for money and food all around the market place.<sup>411</sup> These were clear signs of governmental's inability and that this failure in addressing the miserable situation of refugees had the potential of creating an atmosphere in which counter-propaganda undermining the legitimacy of the government.<sup>412</sup> The personal testimonies of the refugees also talk about similar problems caused by the regulations of the central government and their implementation in local settings. For example, a middle-class refugee, Kobakizade İsmail Hakkı, writes at length about the problems of the implementation of judicial decisions in land and property disputes between refugees and the local administration.<sup>413</sup>

The major problems regarding the implementation of the settlement scheme can be put into three main groups: First, ministry personnel were neither specialized nor trained for this particular mission. Moreover, there was competition between local civil servants and bureaucrats and regional personnel from the ministry, which is also related to the second problem. This caused a serious lack of coordination between local authorities and local ministry personnel regarding the implementation of government orders. Another dimension of the competition was the clash over abandoned properties, which is discussed below. Instability of the exchange

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<sup>409</sup> Cited by Arı, *Büyük Mücadele*, 112

<sup>410</sup> *Keskin*, August 18, 1924.

<sup>411</sup> The newspapers were overambitious to break the news about the desperate situation of the refugees, such as their becoming beggars and rising number of rough sleepers and beggars on the streets of the urban centers. In the face of such news the government made a statement to the press that there were no refugees begging on the streets. See *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, June 27, 1924.

<sup>412</sup> *Keskin*, August 18, 1924; September 1, 1924.

<sup>413</sup> Kobakizade İsmail Hakkı, *Bir Mübadilin Hatıraları*, 74-75.

bureaucracy was another factor. It was mentioned before, the government started to form a specific bureaucratic structure very late. This was coupled with the frequent changes of ministers and the organizational structure. Mustafa Necati Bey served as the Minister of Exchange, Reconstruction and resettlement between October 24, 1923 and March 6, 1924, Mahmud Celâl Bey March 7 and July 6, 1924, and Hasan Refet Bey from July 7 to November 4 and finally Ministry of Internal Affairs Receb Bey served as the alternate minister until the abolition of the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement on December 11, 1924. After each reassignment, the resettlement task went back to the drawing board. After Mahmud Celâl Bey became the minister, he told the press “for the moment I am busy with examining my duty. When I go to Ankara and check the situation and peruse my budget I will inform you exclusively about the outlines of reconstruction and resettlement.” According to Refet Bey, too, before telling anything to the press, he had to examine the details about his new responsibility in order to have a good command of the subject.<sup>414</sup> In this short span, each reassignment cost the country invaluable time especially with the clock ticking on the huge pile of other problems. Finally, the Turkish government had insufficient funds to finance a comprehensive resettlement. The government’s economic inadequacy was linked to its obsession with fiscal discipline, that is, the reluctance to accept foreign loans for a comprehensive resettlement plan. Ladas explains this by saying, “this would be contrary to the fundamental principle of the Turkish state, the complete political and economic independence of the nation”.<sup>415</sup>

One of the most formidable obstacles to the resettlement of the refugees was the illegal occupation of the properties abandoned by the Greeks (and Armenians). The number of

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<sup>414</sup> *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, July 20, 1924.

<sup>415</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 715

abandoned properties amounted to tens of thousands in major urban centers. In İzmir alone, there were 10,678 houses, 2,173 shops and stores, 79 factories, 2 bathhouses and 1 hospital abandoned by departing Greeks.<sup>416</sup> Only in one district of İstanbul, there were 12,176 abandoned properties.<sup>417</sup> How the problem of abandoned properties was resolved was not only practically but also legally complicated. The government could rent them, sell them at auctions or allocate them to refugees. Some of them could also be reserved for governmental use in case of need. However, through which institution these were to be carried out was ambiguous. Before the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, the Ministry of Finance was responsible for dealing with abandoned properties. After the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, a jurisdictional dispute arose concerning the abandoned properties. During the period under the control of the Ministry of Finance, the abandoned properties were generally sold at auctions or rented.<sup>418</sup> These properties were either sold above their values or more often at cut-rate. In the former case, the producers who bought, for example, vineyards at extortionate prices often went bankrupt.<sup>419</sup> The latter practice, on the other hand, became a strategy pursued by locals and led to a maldistribution of land. Additionally, many properties were sold off, rented or allocated to the government and they became unusable for resettlement. By August 1924, 80 per cent of the abandoned properties in Adana, for example, had already been sold or rented and, hence fell out

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<sup>416</sup> Tülay Alim-Baran, *Bir kentin yeniden yapılanması: İzmir, 1923-1938* (İzmir: Arma, 2003), 110. Kemal Arı, “Yunan İşgalinden Sonra İzmir’de ‘Emval-i Metruke’ ve ‘Fuzuli İşgal’ Sorunu,” *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 5, no. 15 (July 1989): 694.

<sup>417</sup> *Vakit*, April 1, 1924. In only 6944 of those properties refugees were resettled.

<sup>418</sup> This policy continued after the foundation of the special offices to deal with the exchange and related issues. *Vatan* fulminated against the continuation of this practice while refugees were still not resettled and left homeless due to this illogical policy that usually favored those who were pro-government or already had a privileged position in the existing local power networks. *Vatan*, August 29, 1924.

<sup>419</sup> Arı, “Yunan İşgalinden Sonra İzmir’de ‘Emval-i Metruke’”, 698.



of the control or use of the exchange bureaucracy.<sup>420</sup> For this reason, the Exchange Association sent two telegraphs to the Prime Ministry and the Mixed Commission to protest the abandoned properties policy, as it became clear that the Commission saw those properties a source of revenue instead of as a part of the resettlement scheme; this was an important motive in its demanding the expulsion of all Greeks in İstanbul and in Anatolia.<sup>421</sup> This policy, moreover, was carried out in the absence of a cadastral system.<sup>422</sup> As Terzibaşoğlu convincingly shows, in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century local property relations were based on communal memory and knowledge, which were strictly determined and manipulated by local power relations.<sup>423</sup> In the absence of a comprehensive property census or cadasters, the plundering of abandoned properties, particularly by those who enjoyed a privileged position in local power networks, became commonplace.<sup>424</sup> This was bitterly criticized by the press and the issue of

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<sup>420</sup> *İleri*, August 22, 1924.

<sup>421</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, September 7, 1924. The press of the time, particularly *Tanin* allows us to follow the cases of corruption and favoritism. According to the newspaper, a mansion on the isle of Prinkipos was first leased out extremely cheaply and then the mansion was invaded and nobody knew who invaded the mansion or how it was invaded (*Tanin*, June 14, 1924). The newspaper also called attention to the amount that should have collected as the rent revenue from the abandoned properties. According to the newspaper, the aggregate amount of rent revenue calculated over the minimum rent, which was around 20 liras should have been 4,200,000 liras but the actual amount was much lower and the collected amount was not spent for the resettlement of refugees (*Tanin*, June 19, 1924).

<sup>422</sup> In 1924, the General Directorate of Land Registry (*Tapu Umum Müdürlüğü*) was founded and one year later with passing of a new law (*Kadastro Kânunu* #658) a cadastral unit was added to this organization. This particular law reinforced the protection of private property rights. In 1926, with the promulgation of the Civil Code, private property and the right of private land ownership were institutionalized. “Kadastro Kânunu,” *Resmî Cerîde*, no. 99 (May 2, 1925): 18.

<sup>423</sup> Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics: North-Western Anatolia, 1877-1912,” in *Ethno-Nationality, Property Rights in Land and Territorial Sovereignty in Historical Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2004), 159. See also Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, “Eleni Hatun’un Zeytin Bahçeleri: 19. Yüzyılda Anadolu’da Mülkiyet Hakları Nasıl İnşa Edildi?,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 4 (Autumn 2006): 121–47.

<sup>424</sup> In *Ortaköy* (Bursa), a refugee village, İbrahim Ünal and the Tarakçıoğlu family had large lands. These two families were the members of the administrative committee of the Republican People’s Party. Raif Kaplanoğlu, *Bursa’da mübadele (1923 - 1930 Yunanistan Göçmenleri)* (Bursa: Avrasya Etnografya Vakfı, 1999), 111. It should also be added that plundering started before the Greeks left their properties.

corruption was brought up by the newspapers on daily basis. This situation did not change with the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange and the adoption of a new legal framework, even though article 8 of the Law of Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement required the allocation of all abandoned properties to the refugees.

The seriousness of the problems of invasion and intrusion of the abandoned properties and malpractice by state officials can also be traced through refugee petitions. For instance, in a petition a man named Ragıp from Kayalar, along with some other refugees, complained about local people trying to invade the land given to them.<sup>425</sup> Moreover there are many other documents that show the competition between natives and refugees. Fatma, a refugee from Lesbos, who was resettled in Çanakkale-Küçükçetmi informed the authorities that she was excluded from the provisions put in place by the government for the refugees while even the locals, who were not even entitled, enjoyed this support.<sup>426</sup> In another document, we see that lieutenant Hadi Bey occupied property in Manisa destined for two of refugees from Florina, Hanife Hanım and Fethiye Hanım.<sup>427</sup> Another example of malpractice is that after the head of register office sold the properties of two Greeks subject to the population exchange for the compensation of their debt, he failed to hand in the official title deeds to the purchasers. As a result of this, he was dismissed from his position.<sup>428</sup> There are also some other documents mentioning or indicating certain malpractices. The last two examples also confirm that the

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A refugee newspaper published in Greece, *Προσφυγική Φωνή* (Refugee Voice), reports that in Kayseri, in Sivas and in some other cases in Anatolia, there were cases of intrusion, plundering and kidnapping women. *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, February 24, 1924.

<sup>425</sup> BCA: 272..0.0.12 - 46.84..12. [24/11/1925]

<sup>426</sup> BCA: 272..0.0.12 - 46.84..11. [24/11/1925]

<sup>427</sup> BCA: 272..0.0.12 - 47.89..10. [25/02/1926]

<sup>428</sup> BCA: 30..10.0.0 - 123.877..20. [21/07/1925]



According to the cartoon, the families of Commander *Bey* and Pasha *Efendi* occupied the last abandoned properties. Actually, Kobakizade İsmail Hakkı's experience confirms what this cartoon humorously and sensibly criticized as a general problem that the refugees faced. When Kobakizade and his family first arrived to Samsun as refugees, one of the houses allocated to them was occupied by Rıza Bey, the former governor of Edirne and current director of the society for protection of children.<sup>431</sup> İsmail Hakkı and his family left this house at Rıza Bey's insistence. The second house allotted to them was the one abandoned by Moiz Naum<sup>432</sup> and it was occupied by Remzi Bey, a merchant from Bafra. In the accounts of the refugees, this theme is very persistent. Different journalistic studies on the experience of the refugees show that the lands distributed by the government were usually smaller than the area specified on the title deeds.<sup>433</sup> That was one reason why the refugees repeatedly expressed frustration with the bureaucracy and it led to them seeking compensation.<sup>434</sup> In this atmosphere, the institutional setting for the administration of the resettlement became a new dimension of the problem rather than a part of the solution by reestablishing existing power relations through manipulating

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<sup>431</sup> Kobakizade, *Bir Mübadilin Hatıraları*, 69

<sup>432</sup> The previous owner of this house, Moiz Naum, was apparently a Jew. There were also archival documents confirming that the properties left by Armenians were subject to the allocations for resettlement. In Samsun, Vezirköprü the refugees from *Kayalar* were let to resettle in Armenian abandoned properties. (BCA:272..0.0.12 – 53.123..23., [08/05/1927]). A similar situation was experienced in İzmir. The officials were let to distribute Armenian abandoned properties to the refugees when there were no Greek properties left. (BCA:272..0.0.13 – 79.8..22., [02/07/1927]). Moreover in İzmir, Ahmet Ağa, an immigrant from *Köprülü*, were let to resettle in an Armenian abandoned property in exchange for money. (BCA: 272..0.0.12 – 57.147..2.2. [09/01/1928]).

<sup>433</sup> Kemal Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz – Mübadele İnsanları* (İstanbul: Birzamanlar,2005), 187, 197.

<sup>434</sup> I have already cited Naciye Öney's petition to Mustafa Kemal on these issues. Apart from her, another refugee from Crete, Ali Onay, claimed they were entitled to a thousand olive trees and almost six decares of land, which corresponded to 40% of their properties in Crete. Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 80.

property rights. The commissions set an example for this sort of corruption either by ignoring or directly taking part in these incidents.<sup>435</sup>

Challenges to the refugees did not come only from state officials but from local residents in the resettlement sites as well, who discriminated against the refugees. Lütfü Karadağ, a settler from Yanya, explained their relatively less painful process of settlement to the fact that they were sent to an almost deserted area, Pendik, where only a very small local community, outnumbered by the incoming population, lived.<sup>436</sup> A persistent theme in refugee testimonies is that they faced considerable discrimination from the indigenous population, which referred to them as infidels or “semi-infidels”. Kemaliye Doğruer, a refugee from Heraklio, Crete settled in Kumkaya, remembers their neighbors asking if they washed their corpses with wine, consumption of which is strictly prohibited in Islam.<sup>437</sup> Intermarriages between natives and refugees did not take place for some time.<sup>438</sup> Language functioned as another factor constituting and deepening the chasm between natives and refugees. Some refugees’ usage of Greek resulted in their exclusion from social life. The common reaction against the Greek-speaking refugees among the natives was as “one Greek went, one Greek came”.<sup>439</sup> The refugees were humiliated by being called “*kahpe*” (prostitute/backstabbing), “*tango*” (woman dolled up in Western clothes), “*yaban*”

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<sup>435</sup> See Arı, *Büyük Mücadele*, 134-135 and Koraltürk, “Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi”, 635.

<sup>436</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 33.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid., 56-57, 66, 73, 93, 99, 144, 156. İsmail Yeşilyurt, a native, describes his neighborhood in Alaçam and says that in his generation there was not a single boy, neither refugee nor native, who was brained in the fights between refugee and native children. İsmail Yeşilyurt, “Muallimlerimiz”, *Kuzeyde Tütün*, May 2004, n.12, 37. Similar accounts can be found in the testimony of Saim Turan from Crete and resettled in Mudanya. See Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 73.

<sup>438</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 70, 119, 122.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid., 70, 73, 118-119. For a similar account see Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz*, 187. This will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

(wild/stranger), “*macır/muhacir/macur*” (immigrant), “*bitli macır*” (immigrant infested with lice) or “*gavur tohumu*” (seed of infidel).<sup>440</sup>

Clear-cut boundaries between natives and newcomers emerged as well. This was best observed through the strict division of the public space between the native and refugee populations. For instance, in Alaçam, Samsun, local coffeehouses where men gathered were divided between the native inhabitants of the town and newcomers.<sup>441</sup> The refugees complained that there were places where there was segregation in the schools.<sup>442</sup> The refugees, on the other hand, were condescending of the natives’ way of life. They praised their own methods of production and their own outfits as being modern as opposed to the primitiveness of the natives’.<sup>443</sup> The refugees from Kozana, who were resettled in Giresun, could not adapt to the local way of life and the humid climate of the city and migrated to the inner parts of Anatolia. Those who arrived in Şebinkarahisar observed that the houses had no windows on the sidewalls, but only a ventilation opening on the roof, which was covered in dirt rather than being tiled. The refugees dismissively remarked that even the roofs of the chicken coops they left in Greece were tiled.<sup>444</sup>

The social boundaries between refugees and natives were not only culturally-established but had a strong material base as well. The redistribution of properties abandoned by Greeks caused a cut-throat competition between (and within) these two groups. According to natives, the

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<sup>440</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 169. Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz*, 198; İhsan Tefik, *İnsan ve mekân yüzüyle Mübadele: 1923’ten bugüne zorunlu göç* (İstanbul: İnkılap, 2014), 110. Even among refugees there was discrimination on the basis of place of origin. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>441</sup> İsmail Yeşilyurt, “Alaçam’da Kahvehaneler,” *Kuzeyde Tütün*, no. 8 (June 2002): 10–11.

<sup>442</sup> İsmail Yeşilyurt, “Muallimlerimiz,” *Kuzeyde Tütün*, no. 12 (May 2004): 37.

<sup>443</sup> Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz*, 188, 198.

<sup>444</sup> Tefik, *Mübadele*, 93,

government was favoring refugees in the distribution of abandoned properties, and local inhabitants wanted “their share” as well.<sup>445</sup> Since occupation of those properties was legally problematic, especially for those who did not enjoy the protection of the government or local power networks, they preferred demolishing and plundering the abandoned properties. Plundering had started even before the newcomers’ arrival. Most of the houses had been destroyed during the war years or after the departure of the local Greeks.<sup>446</sup> The refugees repeatedly mention that the houses they received were in terrible shape (“only four walls”), while the better ones were often occupied by natives or under the control of the local authorities. Some of the houses, churches, cemeteries and other communal spaces of the Greeks were demolished either to be sold in the market as planking, rubble and ashlar or during the searches for buried or hidden “treasures.”<sup>447</sup> Churches were, by and large, destroyed in the hope of finding treasures<sup>448</sup> or the stones from the remains of churches were used in the construction of new buildings including mosques.<sup>449</sup> The plundering movement was like a metastatic disease spreading everywhere, according to the *Keskin*, and this was due to the government’s turning a deaf ear and a blind eye.<sup>450</sup> The newspaper also reported that the government was notified about the fact that more properties abandoned by the Greeks would be dismantled unless immediate protective

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<sup>445</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 156.

<sup>446</sup> The newspaper *Keskin* continuously reports on the plundering of properties of the Greek population left completely unattended by the government.

<sup>447</sup> Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz*, 196. Kobakizade, *Bir Mübadilin Hatıraları*, 71

<sup>448</sup> Treasure hunting has become a profession in Turkey. This is one of the major reasons in the destruction of the historical churches in Turkey. 1. “Rum Kilisesine 12 Yıl Sonra Gelen Koruma,” *Agos*, accessed January 6, 2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/6531/rum-kilisesine-12-yil-sonra-gelen-koruma>.

<sup>449</sup> Tefvik, *Mübadele*, 103.

<sup>450</sup> *Keskin*, May 12, 1924; May 26, 1924; August 11, 1924; August 25, 1924; September 4, 1924; December 20, 1924; January 7, 1925.

measures were taken.<sup>451</sup> I should also mention that the refugees took part in plundering and demolition as well. İsmail Ergun, a refugee from Kavala who was resettled in Ortaköy in the spring of 1924, mentions that he and others pulled down some houses to avoid new refugees be settled there and that then they burned the wood from those houses in the wintertime.<sup>452</sup> On the other hand, there were cases reported by the *Keskin* that the refugees leaving the town for Bursa, another city, started pulling down the houses they were entitled to in order to sell the wood.<sup>453</sup>

It was not only the native population that competed with refugees for property. On account of the turbulence that beset the region during the war years, there was a significant displaced Muslim population in Anatolia, which was looking for a place to settle down. Arı makes mention of different categories of people in circulation around the country. In the case of İzmir, there were people who suffered from the fires during the war time (*harikzedeler*), those displaced as a result of the Greco-Turkish War (*felaketzedeler*), and the people who had escaped from the Russian occupation (*Vilayet-i Şarkıye muhacirleri*).<sup>454</sup> There were also non-exchangeables (*gayrı-mübadiller*), who had fled from the war while the borders of the Ottoman Empire had been shrinking in the Balkans. There were thousands of these people. Many of them had already settled in the abandoned properties before the arrival of the refugees and a large number of them were waiting to be formally resettled themselves.

According to the records the Ministry of Internal Affairs, at the end of the resettlement process 499,239 refugees of the population exchange, 172,029 non-exchangeables, 14,312

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<sup>451</sup> *Keskin*, August 4, 1924.

<sup>452</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 146.

<sup>453</sup> *Keskin*, March 9, 1925.

<sup>454</sup> Arı, *Büyük Mübadele*, 8-9.



harikzedes and 2,774 refugees from the eastern provinces were resettled.<sup>455</sup> This competition among different categories of the “victims” echoed in the assembly. Deputies, especially from the eastern provinces, raised this issue repeatedly. During the parliamentary discussions on the creation of the Ministry of Exchange, Şefik Bey, deputy of Doğubeyazıt, on March 13, 1924, protested the secondary importance attached to the eastern refugees. According to Şefik Bey, the state should get its priorities straight and should pay attention first to “the interior of the mosque rather than its outside” (“*Evvel mescidin içine sonra dışına bakılır*”). He continued:<sup>456</sup>

While *the real children of the motherland* whose houses were devastated and razed to the ground have been waiting and not been supplied with dwellings, the houses will be entitled to the prospective refugees first and then they will receive... Your obedient servant believes that in the eastern provinces the people, who are not in need of help are only one or two or there is not at all.

As seen from Şefik Bey’s speech the refugees could be considered as outsiders and not as the real sons of the motherland. Unsurprisingly this atmosphere of social exclusion and economic competition led the refugees to react.

As far as the reaction of the refugees is concerned, it should be noted that this is a much-neglected area in the existing literature, in which it is generally accepted or assumed that the Muslim/Turkish refugees had infinite adaptability and that after their “repatriation” they did not react in the face of the socially, politically and economically exclusive atmosphere described above. In the absence of works that try to recover the voices of refugees, the refugees were seen

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<sup>455</sup> *İskan Tarihçesi*, 137.

<sup>456</sup> TBMMZC, II/7/1 - 11, 413. Also cited by Ayhan Aktar, “Homogenising the Nation, Turkifying the Economy: Turkish Experience of Populations Exchange Reconsidered,” in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 85. [My italics]

as enigmatically resilient people, and such presumptions have also been very effective in impeding further researches.

Discussions of refugee political participation in Turkey is almost absent from historical scholarship. Even recent studies on the political participation strategies of the refugees claim that the political structure of the period based on a mono-party system avoids researchers comprehending these strategies.<sup>457</sup> Although this emphasis points at a significant, if not the most significant, political characteristic of the period, by reducing the political sphere into party politics, it also hinders further studies examining different modes of participation into political and civic life. If we look closer to Vardağlı's study on the political participation strategies of the refugees, for example, we can see some of the deficiencies of the existing literature.

Vardağlı, first claims that the refugees were either of military-bureaucratic origin or peasants, and he emphasizes the absence of middle-class people among refugees.<sup>458</sup> Immediately after this gross generalization, he underlines the impossibility of an umbrella political organization representing refugees coming from different socio-economic origins. This argument can be refuted on several grounds. First of all, this argument is not clear whether there were disparate elements of a refugee "movement" formed based on socio-economic backgrounds of the newcomers that could not form an umbrella organization or there was no such movement at all regardless of its level of unification. Secondly, the majority of the refugees were agricultural producers; hence they did have similar socio-economic social backgrounds.<sup>459</sup> Moreover, with

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<sup>457</sup> E. Tutku Vardağlı, "Birinci Kuşak Mübadillerin Siyasal Katılım Stratejileri Üzerine Bir Deneme" *Toplumsal Tarih*, no.190, October 2009, 85.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>459</sup> "The authorities responsible for the installation of refugees, in conjunction with the Commissariat of Agriculture, have been resettled, it is reported, approximately 327.000 refugees in different localities. In some districts, the refugees have set to work with a will, especially in tobacco growing districts, the acreage under cultivation having been considerably increased, with the result that the yield for 1924 is

this argument it would be impossible to explain how the refugee organizations founded in Greece. The major refugee organizations in Greece were founded on the basic assumption that there could be defined a common refugee cause regardless of the sociopolitical origins. The refugees supported the idea that “all refugees, irrespective of place of origin, should remain united in a common cause”.<sup>460</sup> Therefore, even the opposite can be claimed regarding refugee organizations that a common cause could foster the formation of self-organizations and those organizations were (and are) functional in countervailing tensions due to regionalism or factionalism among refugees —at least during the initial steps of integration process of refugee.

The intra-refugee socio-economic differences should not be overemphasized when discussing the organization of the refugee associations that sought to resolve the acute problems that their members faced in the immediate aftermath of their arrival in Turkey.<sup>461</sup> At this juncture, the problem that impaired collective action by the refugees was not class differentiation but, a combination of the government’s cautious and conservative approach that categorically rejected collective action and the resettlement policy of the government that spatially scattered the refugees throughout the country and by so doing broke their former communal or even familial

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over double that of 1923.” Colonel H. Woods, O.B.E., *Economic and Commercial Report* (April, 1925), (London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1925), 11.

<sup>460</sup> Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia*, 185. A common cause of refugee regardless of their class origins was one of the main obstacles that the Communist Party of Greece tried to surmount while recruiting refugees. See *Μικρασιατική*, July 5, 1923. Nikolaos Chamartos, “Αι Προσφυγικαί Οργανώσεις Πολιτικών Μικρασιατικών Κέντρων,” in *Ετήσιον Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον*, ed. L. Th. Lampropoulos (Athens: Danielidis Milanos, 1926), 97-99.

<sup>461</sup> Yet it should not be overlooked that one of the major problems for the continuity of refugee organizations are factionalism developing within them. Maria Salinas, Diana Pritchard, and Apophia Kibedi, “Refugee-Based Organisations: Their Function and Importance for the Refugee in Britain,” *BRC/QEH Working Papers on Refugees* vol. 3, no. 4 (British Refugee Council, July 1987), 12; Roger Zetter, David Griffiths, and Nando Sigona, “Social Capital or Social Exclusion? The Impact of Asylum-Seeker Dispersal on UK Refugee Community Organizations,” *Community Development Journal* 40, no. 2 (April 1, 2005): 170. David J. Griffiths, “Fragmentation and Consolidation: The Contrasting Cases of Somali and Kurdish Refugees in London,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 13, no. 3 (September 1, 2000).

bonds. However, despite these obstacles, the refugees tried to have their voices heard on the issues of concern by establishing some self-organizations. That the refugees did or could not play a large and highly visible part in “high politics” does not necessarily imply political inertia or apathy on their part. This presumption is based on a too narrow understanding of the concept of political participation. In fact, even if the definition of political participation is restricted to interaction with the government, while defining it, one should always consider “acts that aim at *influencing* the government either by affecting the *choice* of government personnel or by affecting the choices made by government personnel.”<sup>462</sup> It should also be noted that participation is not defined either by the success of those acts or by their legality.<sup>463</sup> Political participation may take numerous institutional, electoral as well as non-institutional forms depending on many factors such as political regime, political action repertoire of citizens and citizens’ race, class, gender, religion and age.<sup>464</sup> Drawing upon this expanded definition of participation, it can be claimed that political participation can take place even through different means, like demonstrating, petitioning, discussing politics or even gossiping. Hence, the organizations founded by the refugees to influence the government’s political decisions about their resettlement and compensation can be considered as actions of political participation. On the other hand, from a sociological perspective, refugee organizations were crucial institutions

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<sup>462</sup> Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 2.

<sup>463</sup> Ergun Özbudun, *Türkiye’de Sosyal Değişme ve Siyasal Katılma* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi, 1975), 4.

<sup>464</sup> A classical work on political participation describes three political participation roles: apathetics, spectators and gladiators. While apathetics show no interest in participating in politics, the other two groups adopt different strategies and perform different actions. There is also another set of activities and strategies called transitional activities occasionally carried out both gladiators and spectators. Lester W. Milbrath, *Political Participation: How and Why Do People Get Involved in Politics?* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), 18.

for their integration by playing a key role in developing a sense of identity and brokering between them and mainstream society.

In the Turkish context, we can talk about a few organizations that aimed to assist both the government and the refugees during the transfer and resettlement processes. Among them, one in particular, *Mübadele Cemiyeti* (Exchange Association), can be considered as the important. The history of such associations dated to the proclamation of the second constitution in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>465</sup> Some associations were committed to helping out Muslim refugees seeking asylum within the shrinking borders of the empire. A significant example was *Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* (Philanthropic Association of the Muslim Immigrants from Rumeli). Before the association was officially founded, its founders' committee held a general meeting in March 1908, so before the proclamation of the second constitution, and it drafted the organization's regulations.<sup>466</sup> The association was officially founded towards the end of November 1908.<sup>467</sup> It was established to deal with the problem of hunger and starvation that refugees experienced upon their arrival. Moreover, the integration of refugees into the economic life of the country was its other main goal. The association also published a newspaper called *Muhacir* (Immigrant). In addition to the newspaper, with the publications of books, leaflets, commemorative maps of the Ottoman Balkans, postcards, the association intended to raise funds for the refugees and to elevate public awareness regarding the atrocities against the Muslim

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<sup>465</sup> Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler - İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1984), 367.

<sup>466</sup> During my research at the Atatürk Kitaplığı I came across an anonymous manuscript, a notebook containing all sorts of notes, poems, which also happened to give information about this association and a handwritten copy of the regulation of the Association of the Muslim Immigrants from Rumeli. "1326 Senesi Martında Birinci Defa Olarak İctima Eden Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti Nizamnamesi" Bel Yz K.000816/05, İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı, 86-92.

<sup>467</sup> Although the exact date of the foundation of the association was not known, it was reported by *Sabah* on November 29, 1908.

population in Rumeli.<sup>468</sup> The association played an important role in the development of the official discourse regarding atrocities against Muslims in the Balkans.<sup>469</sup> The organization was supported by the Committee of Union and Progress, the ruling party, and was also in good terms with the Sultan.<sup>470</sup>

Another important association was the Association for Resettlement and Relief, that has been already mentioned above. The full name of the association was *Muhacirin-i İslamiye İskan ve Teavün Cemiyeti* (Association for Resettlement and Relief of Muslim Immigrants). As understood from its name, it was formed out of the need to find housing for the refugees, as well as food and other resources. The association became the subject of parliamentary debates. For example, during the discussions on the abolition of the Exchange Ministry on October 26, 1924, Doctor Bahtiyar Bey, deputy by the director of the general assembly of the association, sent a telegram to the Dersim recounting the widespread corruption in the Ministry, as well as its inefficiency and waste in the execution of its duties. During the parliamentary session on October 30, Feridun Bey, after spelling out the corruption allegations, read out the telegram.<sup>471</sup> It should be noted that those allegations resulted in one of the most important breaking points of the early

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<sup>468</sup> For some of the publications of the association: *Âlâm-ı İslâm, Bulgar Vahşetleri: İslâmiyetin Enzâr-ı Basiretine ve Âlem-i İnsaniyet ve Medeniyetin Dikkatine*, Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti Neşriyatı 1 (İstanbul: Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslâmiye Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi, 1913); *Türk Katilleri ve Yunanlılar*, Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti Neşriyatı 3 (İstanbul: Matbaa-yı Âmedi, 1914); *Zavallı Pomaklar*, Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti Neşriyatı 4 (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye Ve Şürekâsı Yayınevi, 1914).

<sup>469</sup> Eyal Ginio, “Paving the Way for Ethnic Cleansing: Eastern Thrace during the Balkan War,” in *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*, ed. Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 291-92.

<sup>470</sup> For the telegraph sent by the association to the Sultan on the occasion of the Eid ul-Ahda and the response from the Ministry of Internal Affairs see respectively BOA, DH.KMS. 5—2 (16) [November 10, 1913]; BOA, DH.KMS. 5—2 (1) [November 20, 1913].

<sup>471</sup> TBMMZC, II9/2 - 49, 93-94.

republican period. As previously discussed, the association prepared an alternative resettlement scheme to that of the government.<sup>472</sup> In this resettlement scheme, the government was advised to cooperate with a new association exclusively established to cater to the needs of the refugees.

This was the Exchange Association.

The Exchange Association was formed through the merger of the two institutions active in Macedonia, namely, *Makedonya Cemiyeti ve Şarkî Makedonya Cemiyeti* (the Association of Macedonia and the Association of Eastern Macedonia).<sup>473</sup> A product of the merger of these two older associations, the Exchange Association turned to be the most active refugee organization. The fundamental purpose of the Exchange Association was to defend the rights of the refugees in Greece before their transfer, to protect them against persecution, and to collect contributions for them. The press took an interest in its foundation.<sup>474</sup> *Vatan* announced the establishment of the association in an article entitled “An association for the exchange affairs” and that after its foundation, Esat Efendi from Serres was temporarily appointed to the position of directorship of the association.<sup>475</sup> The members of the executive committee of the association were elected

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<sup>472</sup> İTC, *İskan Teavün Cemiyeti*, 11-14.

<sup>473</sup> The Association of Eastern Macedonia is sometimes referred as *Şarkî Makedonya Mübadele Cemiyeti* (the Exchange Association of Eastern Macedonia). The Exchange Association of Eastern Macedonia applied for the removal of the measures to avoid uncontrolled Muslim influx from Greece the envoy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in İstanbul. According to the petition of the association, those who had left their properties due to Greek atrocities were also unable to return and had to be accepted to the motherland. In this document it is also possible to see the seal of the association and its name on the seal is *Şarkî Makedonya Mübadele Cemiyeti*. BOA, HR. İM. 47— 58 [August 6, 1923]. For a reference to *Şarkî Makedonya Mübadele Cemiyeti* see also *İkdam*, August 10, 1923. On behalf of the Exchange Association of Eastern Macedonia Salih Bey and on behalf of the Association of Macedonia İhsan Bey, Nükhet Bey and Lütfü Arif Bey participated in the meeting on the division of the country into six resettlement zones. *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, September 7, 1923.

<sup>474</sup> *Vakit*, September 20, 1923.

<sup>475</sup> Esat Efendi’s memoirs was published in 2012 by the Turkish Historical Foundation. Although Esat Efendi refers to the exchange, their departure from Serres, and their arrival in Turkey he does not allude to the Exchange Association. See Serezli, *Memleket Hatıraları*. vol. 2.

based on regional representation. The executive committee was composed of İhsan Namık Bey, Hüsnü Bey and Celal Derviş Bey from Thessaloniki; Hüseyin Bey from Kavala, Salih Bey from Drama and Yusuf Ziya Bey from Pravishta from Drama; Hulusi Bey, Esad Bey and Servet Bey from Serres; Mahmud Agah Bey from Ioannina; Necip Bey from Larissa; and Sezai Bey from Mytilene. *Néa Anatólî*<sup>476</sup> (Nea Anatoli, New East/Anatolia), a Turcophone Greek newspaper published in İstanbul, reported the foundation of the association with the same title and details.<sup>477</sup> According to the newspaper, the need for such an association originated from the absence of an organization that could coordinate the exchange affairs on behalf of the exchangeable Muslims throughout Greece. The sphere of activity of those two organizations was limited to Macedonia and did not cover Epirus, Thessaly and Crete. Drawing from association's charter, the newspaper described its aims as the following: "To work for securing their legal rights of for the Muslims that have stayed out of the Thracian border and are going to return to the motherland from the places subject to the exchange, facilitating their transfer and ensure that the resettlement sites are suitable for the economic progress particularly of craftsmen and those who have an expertise."

The headquarters of the association was in İstanbul, on the second floor of the Gulbenkian Han in Sirkeci.<sup>478</sup> Although adequate documentation regarding the budget of the

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<sup>476</sup> This newspaper, as a hitherto neglected source material, is worth mentioning for its unique character. *Néa Anatólî* was published by Iordanis Limnidis in Turkish with Greek script (*Rumi-ul huruf Türki-ül ibare*), today known as Karamanlidika and inheritor of the oldest private Ottoman newspaper, *Anatólî* founded by Evangelinos Misailidis. The Karamanli press and its relevance to our subject will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>477</sup> *Néa Anatólî*, September 21, 1923.

<sup>478</sup> The Exchange Association sent petitions and letters to Ankara. Two of those petitions that I located in the archives written in letterhead papers that give this address as the address of the association's headquarters. See BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 123.877..14, BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 136.975.6. In *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devlet Salnamesi 1926 - 1927* (State Yearbook of the Republic of Turkey) gives the address of the document as "In ii over the building the Regional Directorate of Reconstruction and Exchange in Sirkeci." *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devlet Salnamesi 1926-1927* (Ankara: Matbuat Müdiriyeti Umumiyesi, 1927), 621. In the first volume of the state yearbook (1925-1926) there is no reference to the headquarters



association could not be found, it is known that in the first year of the exchange the association spent more than one million liras.<sup>479</sup> The main economic source of the Exchange Association seems to be donations. The Islamic Society of Kavala, for example, donated the *waqf* properties in its possession to the association.<sup>480</sup> The Exchange Association swiftly organized in the major refugee cities such as Bursa and Samsun. The Bursa branch of the association was founded on October 1, 1924. The foundation ceremony was attended by high-level civil servants such as the governor of Bursa, as well as the deputy of Bursa, Osman Nuri Bey, and the general secretary of the association.<sup>481</sup> Although we cannot find any information regarding the first executive committee of the local association, *Yoldaş* gives information about the general meeting and the new executive committee of the association that received a great majority of the votes:<sup>482</sup> Dürrizade Ahmet from Edessa (Vodina), Muhami Cezbi from Serres, Ahmet Şakip from Veroia (Karaferye), Derviş from Edessa, Galip from Sidirokastro (Demirhisar), Fevzi from Giannitsa (Yenicevardar), Osman the teacher from Mayadağ (Fanos) and Aziz from Kavala. The governor of Bursa and Osman Nuri, the deputy of Bursa attended the association's opening ceremony.<sup>483</sup> The Exchange Association was organized in Samsun, which received considerable number of

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of the association. Yet the yearbook lists *Mübadele Muavenet Yurdu* among the associations in İstanbul. *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devlet Salnamesi 1925-1926* (Ankara: Matbuat Müdiriyeti Umumiyesi, 1926), 467.

<sup>479</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, July 27, 1924.

<sup>480</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, September 9, 1924.

<sup>481</sup> *Yoldaş*, October 6, 1924.

<sup>482</sup> *Yoldaş*, January 4, 1925.

<sup>483</sup> Raif Kaplanoğlu cites the list of people from the same source but as the founders of the association in Bursa. The source material explicitly says this is the newly elected executive committee. *Bursa'da Mübadele* (İstanbul: Avrasya Etnografya Vakfı Yayınları, 1999), 97.

refugees, as well. Although the exact date is not clear, Kobakizade İsmail Hakkı vividly describes the foundation of the Association's Samsun branch.<sup>484</sup>

The Association's main goal was mediate between the government and the refugees. As reflected in the press, it received large numbers of verbal and written complaints, supplications and telegrams on the problems that the refugees faced. The association classified those appeals before making official applications. On October 28, 1924, *Cumhuriyet* reported that the Exchange Association was compiling and categorizing (*tasnif ve telfik*) the appeals of refugees and would publish a volume titled "the situation of refugees."<sup>485</sup> At regular intervals it prepared reports and made declarations on the same issue. Sometimes the relationship between the government and the Association deteriorated, sometimes these announcements took the form of remonstrance. On September 18, 1924 a meeting was held at the headquarters of the Exchange Association with the participation of the refugee representatives to discuss the resettlement problem in İstanbul. Although we do not have explicit evidence in the sources on how those representatives were elected, we know that at the end of the meeting they issued a declaration that gave the governor and the exchange bureaucracy 48 hours to evacuate the Orthodox population from the city, particularly from Pendik, Kartal, Maktepe, Kemerburgaz and Makriköy, and to distribute their properties to the Muslim refugees. The association warned the government about the fact that, unless necessary measures were taken in this direction, the refugees would occupy these properties by force.<sup>486</sup> When they felt it necessary, the executive committee of the

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<sup>484</sup> Kobakizade, *Bir Mübadilin Hatıraları*, 70.

<sup>485</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, October 28, 1924.

<sup>486</sup> *İleri*, September 19, 1924.

"Rum Evleri 48 saatte tahliye edilmelidir

On Beş Eylül'de katiyen sevkleri ve tahliyeleri takarrür eden Kartal kazası rumlarının haneleri hala tahliye edilmemiştir. Makriköy havalisinin henüz ikmal edilmemiştir. Kemerburgaz nahiyesinde hala

association made no bones about presenting petitions to the government, forming delegations and visiting government officials in Ankara to discuss their demands, a point that I will return to shortly.<sup>487</sup> The Exchange Association also formulated detailed proposals for the settlement of the refugee question and also took the initiative to settle disputes between refugees and local administrators.

Therefore, it can easily be claimed that the Exchange Association was organized by the refugees to obtain rights of influence over the decision-making processes in the nascent republic. The results of these attempts were not always satisfactory or conclusive. Then it can be asked what happened when these attempts at participation in decision-making processes yielded unsatisfactory results, or none, or the government viewed these steps taken by the Exchange Association as illegitimate. This question can be best answered by examining the rally organized by the Exchange Association in İstanbul on August 17, 1924.

First, this public gathering was not its first attempt to organize a public demonstration. In October 1923, the Exchange Association applied for permission to stage a rally in İstanbul to

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rumlar oturuyorlar. Bütün bu havalıye müretteb muhacirler yeis içinde müthiş bir intizar devresi geçirmektedirler.

“Mübadele Cemiyeti teessürünü her gün bir derece daha imhakar bir surette artıran bu intizarın elim bazı avakıbı intac edebileceğine ihtimal vermek mecburiyetinde kalmıştır. Yunanistan’da her türlü fecai ve taarruzlara maruz kalmış muhacir kardeşlerimiz tali komisyonun rumlara bahş eylediği müsamaha ve cemilekarane muamelattan dolayı son derece müteessir bulduklarını izhâr etmekte pek haklıdır.

“Binaenalyh muhacirlerimizi yoksuzluk ve muhtemel bir felaketten kurtarmak için Pendik, Kartal, Maltepe, Bostancı deresine kadar mevaki ile Makriköy ve Kemerburgaz havalisinin derhal ve âzamî [in the original text this word is written as a’mâ (اعمى) which does not make any sense in the context, therefore I consider this as a typo and suggest the word âzamî (اعظمى) that means “at the most” and fits better to the text.] kırk sekiz saat zarfında tahliyesini talep ederiz.”

<sup>487</sup> “Mübadele meselesi hâdd bir evreye girdi” *Vatan* October 21, 1923. “Mübadele Cemiyeti Ankara’ya bir heyet gönderiyor” *Vatan*, August 5, 1924. “Muhacirler heyeti”, *Cumhuriyet*, August 5, 1340. “Muhacirlerin murahşaları”, *Vakit*, August 6. 1340, “Mübadele Cemiyeti heyeti Ankara’da” *Vatan*, Ağustos 7 1340; “İmar Vekili muhacirinin iskanı için tahkikat istedi” *Yeni Âlem*, August 31, 1924. For an example of the petition see BCA: 30..10.0.0 - 123.877..14. This petition is going to be examined in the next section.

protest the Greek atrocities committed against the Muslims in Greece. The government, however, did not permit the rally on the grounds that the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nikolaos Politis, was about to pay a diplomatic visit to Ankara and such a rally during his visit could add another layer of tension to the existing Greco-Turkish relations and postponed it after Politis' visit.<sup>488</sup> Although it was said to be postponed, the rally did not take place following the visit of the Greek envoy. Nine months later, however, they tried again.<sup>489</sup>

The developments that led to the refugee rally on August 17, 1924 can be seen as the result of the ongoing problems regarding each and every stage of the exchange, from the transfer of the refugees to their resettlement. Yet these problems did not automatically trigger the refugees' reaction. It can be easily claimed that the refugees' backlash was triggered by the İstanbul press. *Vatan*, a leading newspaper that was to be shut down by the government on August 12, 1925 because of its critical stance and for becoming the mouthpiece of the opposition,<sup>490</sup> and for paying attention to the population exchange by constantly reporting on it. On August 1, 1924, *Vatan* announced the publication of an exclusive article series based on its reporter İsmet Bey's special investigation in İstanbul's refugee neighborhoods as well as elsewhere. The series aimed to uncover the tragic conditions in which the refugees were forced

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<sup>488</sup> BOA, HR.İM. 22—143. [October 21, 1923].

<sup>489</sup> We also know that in November 1908 the Association of Muslim immigrants of Rumeli (Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiyye Cemiyeti) organized a rally in İstanbul. This was the first meeting held by immigrants in the Ottoman Empire. *Sabah*, November 30, 1908.

<sup>490</sup> Actually, *Vatan* was more moderate and in better terms with Ankara than the newspapers like *Tanin*, *Tevhid-i Efkar* and *Son Telgraf* which were shut down by the government in March. In the report written by Mark L. Bristol, High Commissioner of the United States of America in Turkey, on the Turkish press, Ahmet Emin Bey, who was the owner and the editor of the newspaper, was presented as a not excessively pro- or anti-Kemalist. Orhan Duru, *Amerikan Gizli Belgeleriyle Türkiye'nin Kurtuluş Yılları*, 6th ed. (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011), 216-17. Also see Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Yakın tarihte gördüklerim ve geçirdiklerim: 1922-1971*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 2 vols. (İstanbul: Pera Turizm ve Ticaret, 1997), 999-1003.

to live and to underline the haphazardness of the resettlement process.<sup>491</sup> *Vatan* certainly had a sense of timing. The following day the new minister of internal affairs, Receb Bey, would be visiting İstanbul to pursue an investigation on the news about that “fugitive” Armenians were being allowed to come back to İstanbul to sell off their properties.<sup>492</sup> Moreover, in İstanbul a refugee congress (*Muhacirin Kongresi*)<sup>493</sup> was organized by the Exchange Association on the same day.<sup>494</sup> According to the press, 800 representatives of refugees elected in 20 different cities participated in the congress.<sup>495</sup> During the meeting, the refugees spoke out against the malpractices in the resettlement process, corruption and their poverty and destitution, and they issued a final declaration or a warning (*muhtıra*), as they called it. As stated in this warning, the Congress demanded an emergency plan to solve their problems. Some of the demands of the refugees concentrated particularly on İstanbul. According to the congress, to avoid a possible economic catastrophe in the city after the deportation of Constantinopolitan Greeks, the

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<sup>491</sup> “*Vatan*’ın Muhacir Mıntıklarında Tetkikatı” *Vatan*, August 1, 1924.

<sup>492</sup> *Vakit*, August 2, 1924. “Fırari Rumlar avdet edebilecekler mi?” *Cumhuriyet*, July 27, 1924. The problem regarding the return of “fugitive” Armenians emerged in the first months of 1924 as a residual of the Lausanne Conference. This was a question remained unresolved by deliberate attempts of the Ankara government. According to Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, why the Ankara government did not let Armenians return their homes can be explained with the government’s nationalist obsession to Turkify the demographic and economic structure of the country. It should also be emphasized that this is one of the recurrent themes that put the government in a difficult position throughout 1924 and it continued to trouble the government in 1925. The problem came to the fore again during the closed session of the parliament on February 15, 1925 and was discussed at length at the closed session on February 18. TBMMGCZ, II/2/4 - 4. For a detailed examination of the problem of “fugitives” see Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, *Kanunların Ruhü: Emval-i Metruke Kanunlarında Soykırımın İzini Sürmek*, İletişim Yayınları (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012). See especially chapter 4, 5 and 6 (pp. 107-218).

<sup>493</sup> In addition to this congress I came across an earlier congress organized by refugees on September 25, 1923 in İzmir. The congress was organized to discuss the problems of the exchange process. Mustafa Kemal saluted this congress with a telegram. “Muhacirin Kongresi”, *Yeniğün*, 26 September 1339. Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain no further information about this particular congress yet.

<sup>494</sup> *Son Telgraf*, August 4, 1924.

<sup>495</sup> *Vakit*, August 17, 1924.

government had to repopulate the city with refugees. The Congress also drew the government's attention to the fact that there were not only Armenians that left the country with foreign passports, even though they held Turkish citizenship and so were legally fugitives, but there were also Constantinopolitan Greeks in the same situation. The Congress, and hence the Exchange Association, demanded denaturalization of all Constantinopolitan Greeks at once regardless of their being subject to the exchange or not. The memorandum attracted attention not only in Turkey but also in Greece. One of the most influential refugee newspapers, bilingual *Προσφυγική Φωνή/Μουχατζήρ Σεδασή* (Prosfygiki Foni/Muhacir Sedasi, Refugee Voice), reported on the memorandum extensively in its "Karamanlidika" pages.<sup>496</sup> The newspaper criticized the Exchange Association and interpreted this move as another Turkish attack on Greece. It then gave a detailed analysis of this demand from a legal perspective and concluded that such an act was unlawful and the Turkish state had no right to impinge upon the right of private property.

The Exchange Association considered the minister's visit to İstanbul as an opportunity to pass in the final declaration of the congress. They were not, however, able to meet with him. Being rejected by the minister, on August 5 the Exchange Association organized an extraordinary meeting at its headquarters and formed a delegation to be sent to Ankara in order to convey the results of their deliberations and their demands in the form of a written warning.<sup>497</sup> The delegation of the Exchange Association and the Congress of Immigrants was formed of Evrenoszadeli Abdurrahman Bey, Lütfü Arif Bey, Vodinalı Hasan Bey and Dramalı Hasan

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<sup>496</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή/Μουχατζήρ Σεδασή*, August 17, 1924. In the next chapters, the refugee press in Greece is discussed in detail.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*

Bey.<sup>498</sup> *Vatan* also reported that refugees saluted the delegation with rejoicing along their way to Ankara.<sup>499</sup>

*Vatan* watched closely the visit of the Exchange Association and the Congress of Immigrants to Ankara, and published its final declaration.<sup>500</sup> The declaration described the basic problems that the refugees faced during their transfer from Greece, the immediate aftermath of their arrival in Turkey, during the resettlement process, as well as the problem of social aids and most importantly the problem of compensation. The Exchange Association was most insistent that a new commission should have formed with the participation of the association to deal with the assessment of the properties that were abandoned in Greece. The association also warned the government about the reliability of the appraisal documents brought from Greece and offered assistance in the vetting of forged documents.<sup>501</sup> The report of the association gave representative examples of the hardships experienced by refugees. The central demands of the Exchange

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<sup>498</sup> *Vatan*, August 5, 1924.

<sup>499</sup> *Vatan*, August 7, 1924.

<sup>500</sup> The declaration was published by *Vatan* between August 6 and 9 of 1924.

<sup>501</sup> Although the Exchange Association attempted to take some action, this particular problem seemed to be never resolved during the entire resettlement process. They founded commissions for checking the documents of the refugees (*Tetkik-i Vesâik Komisyonu*) after the Mixed Commission declared that it would be difficult to check property statements that refugees submitted to the commission. *Vakit*, September, 1924; *Vatan*, September 12, 1924. For this purpose, the association founded commissions. These commissions were organized according to the major refugee towns in Greece where most of the refugees came from: Drama, Kavala, Siroz, Thessaly, Vodina, Crete, Yanya, Kalkış, Naslıç, Serfiçe, Kayalar, Kozana, Florina. The members of the commission were as the following: Thessaloniki Commission: Kibar Abdurrahman, Hüsnü, İsmail, Hafız Ali, Sami, Keresteci Halil; Drama Commission: Fazıl, Hasan, Kudret, İmam Ahmet; Kavala Commission: Hacı Mehmet, İhsan, Ali Galip ve Mehmet; Serres Commission: Yusuf, Cevdet, Esat; Thessaly Commission: Resul, Abidin, Müftü Ali; Vodina Commission: Gazi Mehmet; Crete Commission: Mustafa, Arif; Ioannina Commission: Mahmut, Ağâh; Kilkis Commission: Rasim; Neopoli (Naslıç) Commission: Hilmi, Kudret; Serfiçe Komisyonu: Mehmet Seyit; Ptolemaida Commission: Abdülhalim; Kozani Commission: Ömer, Efendizâde Mehmet; Florina Commission: Hayrettin. *Cumhuriyet*, 12 September 1924.

Association were the recognition of the full citizenship rights of refugees<sup>502</sup> alongside the rights granted by the Exchange Convention, the official recognition of the Exchange Association as the representative body of refugees.

Per the press release of the Exchange Association, the representatives would pay a visit to İsmet Paşa, the prime minister, and also meet with Mustafa Kemal, the president, to pass on their demands and to convey the declaration of the congress. The delegation would, however, only be able to meet with the Minister of Exchange, Refet Bey. This was not the first time the Exchange Association was rejected by the state officials. As mentioned above, the association had been refused by the minister of health as well.

From these steps taken by the Exchange Association, we can deduce some intermediate results regarding the association's mode of operation. First, the Exchange Association as the most significant and active refugee organization was meticulous about waging its struggle within a legal framework, negotiating with the government rather than provoking confrontation. They emphasized the legal rights of the refugees stemming from domestic and international law. Yet by adopting a legalist approach, it lost much of its leverage in the political sphere. Having said that, they were well aware of their power and sought to use it. The association tried to become even more powerful by asserting itself as the only representative body refugees, as well as other immigrants, regardless of their relation to the exchange. This can also be observed in the report of *Vakit* on the delegations' visit to Hasan Refet Bey, the Minister of Exchange, with the title of "Warning of Immigrants" (*Muhacirlerin Muhtırası*).<sup>503</sup> According to *Vakit*, Hasan Refet Bey

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<sup>502</sup> *Vatan*, August 5, 1924. "Ancak bütün mevcudiyetimizle hükümetimizin arzusu dahilinde hukukumuzu müdafaaya karar vermekle tam bir vatandaş sıfatıyla muavenetin diriğ edilmemesini hükümetimizden rica ederiz."

<sup>503</sup> *Vakit*, August 10, 1924. See also *Vatan*, August 11, 1924. d



emphatically said that the delegation was accepted as the delegation of the exchanged people (*mübadil*), not as a delegation representing the entire immigrant population (*muhacirin*) in the country.<sup>504</sup> This was because of the nascent state's opposition to mass movements and its inability to grant *mübadil* rights to all immigrants. It should, however, be emphasized that in all of association's documents that I examined the association underlined the difference between *mübadil* (exchangee) and *muhacir* (immigrant) and gave priority to the problems and demands of exchangees. Finally, the relationship between the association and the state cannot be explained by a simple antagonism. On the one hand, the state did not seem to be very happy with its actions and tried to keep the association away from the decision-making processes; on the other hand, since the capacity of the state was very limited, a widely organized non-governmental body helping them out by raising funds and dealing with the overcomplicated exchange bureaucracy as well as in reaching out to refugees, was welcome.

The major development that led to the rally of the refugees, however, was *Vatan*'s special story published on August 12 that reported a new agreement between Greece and Turkey.<sup>505</sup> *Vatan* published the supposed text of the agreement, according to which, the Greeks, who were not subject to the population exchange but had fled from İstanbul, would be allowed to come back to the city and their properties would be returned to them. The agreement also proposed that, if the Turkish government accepted the Greek government's interpretation of the definition of the term *établi*, then the Greek government would allow the fifty thousand Turks who had left

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<sup>504</sup> *Vakit*, August 11, 1924 and also see *Cumhuriyet*, August 12, 1924. On August 11, the *Cumhuriyet*, the semi-official mouthpiece of the government, reported severe arguments between Tevfik Rüşti Bey, the negotiator with the Greek government on behalf of Turkey and Izmir deputy, and the representatives of the Exchange Association. However, on 12 August, this was declared to be false by the government. This shows that the Exchange Association was not enthusiastically welcomed in Ankara.

<sup>505</sup> "Yunanistan ile bir itilaf akdi için Atina'da hazırlanan ve elyevm tedkik edilmekte olan itilafnamenin metni" *Vatan*, August 12, 1924, 1.

Western Thrace without permission to come back and also that their property would be returned to them. Additionally, the agreement guaranteed the protection of Constantinopolitan Greeks.

Although there were denials from both Greek and Turkish governments, these official reactions were too weak in comparison to the explosive impact of the news in the press. *Vakit* severely protested the alleged agreement for its privileging Greeks at the expense of Turks<sup>506</sup> and claimed that with this agreement the exchange convention signed in Lausanne became obsolete.<sup>507</sup> According to *Vatan*'s editor-in-chief, Ahmet Emin, even if the Turkish government would not sign the agreement, the fact that the Greek government would put forth such a one-sided proposal showed the weakness of the Turkish diplomacy.<sup>508</sup> An editorial in *Cumhuriyet* also referred to the agreement as a biased one.<sup>509</sup> On the other hand, the Grecophone newspapers of İstanbul published articles on the possibility of a Greco-Turkish rapprochement which were cautiously restrained about the content of the so-called agreement.<sup>510</sup> Yet the sanguine tone of the Greek newspapers was enough to provoke the Turkish press. They immediately interpreted the optimistic approach of the Grecophone press as pro-Greek (synonymously anti-Turkish) propaganda and thus a sign of treason.<sup>511</sup> The Grecophone newspapers were accused of being nothing more than a mouthpiece for the Greek state and the *Megali Idea*. *To Φως* (The Light) expressed the misery and discomfort of the newspaper and the entire Constantinopolitan Greek community due to the constant treats utilizing a discourse based

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<sup>506</sup> *Vakit*, 13 August 1924, 1.

<sup>507</sup> Mehmet Asım, “Başyazı: Yunan Meclisinde Bir Alkış” *Vakit*, 13 August 1924, 1.

<sup>508</sup> Ahmet Emin, “Yunanistan’la itilaf” *Vatan*, 13 August 1924, 1.

<sup>509</sup> Zekeriya, “Bir Taraflı İtilafname” *Cumhuriyet*, August 15, 1924, 1.

<sup>510</sup> *To Φως*, August 12, 13, 14, 15 and 18, 1924. *Ημερησία Νέα*, August 13, 1924.

<sup>511</sup> *Son Telgraf*, August 14, 1924. *Vakit*, August 14, 1924; *Vakit*, August 15, 1924.

on a non-existent “Great Idea” like a sword of Damocles hanging over their heads.<sup>512</sup> After a few days’ delay, the newspapers in Greece too started publishing detailed pieces about the agreement. While they expressed their approval regarding the principles that shaped the text at issue, they were really pessimistic about the prospect of its signature.<sup>513</sup> While commenting on the possible agreement between the governments of the two countries, the bilingual refugee newspaper *Προσφυγική Φωνή/Μουχατζήρ Σεδασή*, on the other hand, wrote “if Turks did not like the agreement we have not a good word to say about it.”<sup>514</sup>

The Exchange Association delegation returned to İstanbul after their negotiations with Minister Hasan Refet Bey and announced that their proposal would be implemented thoroughly and that all their demands would be met.<sup>515</sup> The representatives of the Exchange Association had not meet with either Mustafa Kemal or İsmet Pasha but had passed on their report/memorandum to Refet Bey instead. In addition to Hasan Refet Bey’s verbal assurances, the delegation had nothing concrete in their hands when they returned to İstanbul, at the same time that the deafening noise of the rumors regarding a Greco-Turkish agreement that completely contradicted their demands and had potential to undermine refugees’ vested interests was swirling about. We may safely assume that this visit turned out to be a complete disappointment for the Exchange Association delegation as well as for the refugees.

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<sup>512</sup> *Το Φως*, August 17, 1924.

<sup>513</sup> See for example *Εμπρός* August 17, 1924. *Μακεδονία*, August 19, 1924. Both newspapers also cover the dissenting tone of the Turkish press.

<sup>514</sup> The newspaper writes “Τουρκλέρ ιτιλαφναμεϊ πεγενμεδिलерίσε πίζ χιτζ πεγένμεδικ.” (Türkler itilafnameyi beğenmedilerse biz hiç beğenmedik. [If the Turks had not liked the agreement, we did not liked it at all.] ) *Προσφυγική Φωνή/Μουχατζήρ Σεδασή*, August 24, 1924.

<sup>515</sup> *Vatan*, August 13, 1924.

A member of the delegation, Lütfü Arif Bey, made a remark on their activities in Ankara to the *Vakit*.<sup>516</sup> In his assessment, he underlined that the delegation and the minister agreed on compromises regarding a new legal framework regulating the system of property ownership in a way that assured full compensation for the properties refugees had abandoned in Greece. The members of the delegation, however, were not the only travelers to İstanbul. Receb Bey, the Minister of Internal Affairs, visited the city for an inspection regarding the corruption scandal regarding the “fugitive” non-Muslims and their “illegal” entry to the country. Both this scandal and the rumors regarding the new agreement were reported by the İstanbul press. Hence, during his visit, Receb Bey paid special attention to the press issue. Immediately after his arrival in the city he declared that *Vatan*’s news about the agreement did not reflect the reality. And then he met with the representatives of the Istanbul press for a “friendly chat” (*hasbihal*).<sup>517</sup>

The scandalous developments and the disappointment of the Exchange Association’s visit resulted in an extraordinary reaction among the refugees. On August 15, the Exchange Association declared that it would hold a rally in Sultanahmed Square (İstanbul) on August 17 at 2:00 pm to protest the “Athens Agreement”. *Cumhuriyet* reported that even though their printing house had been informed by the association, the Association did not inform the government regarding the rally. The Association had not ask for government permission yet.<sup>518</sup> *Cumhuriyet* also published the notice of the rally. In the notice, the organizing committee invited all refugees and non-exchangeable immigrants to this important protest. The committee justified their call by emphasizing the government’s inability to protect their civil rights. For *Vatan*, the rally was front

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<sup>516</sup> *Vakit*, 17 Ağustos 1924, 2.

<sup>517</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 16 August 1924, 1. *Vatan*, 17 August 1924, 1.

<sup>518</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 15 August 1924, 2.

page news. On the same day, it also published another article, titled “Miserable Immigrants,” in which it reported on the demolition of abandoned properties in Keskin and it accused the government for being negligent.<sup>519</sup> On August 16, *Tanin* reported that the organizing committee informed the office of the governor. Ekrem Bey, in the name of the organization committee, explained their motivation as a protest of the violation of their rights caused by the agreement and he emphasized the legality of the rally.<sup>520</sup> *To Φως* also published another invitation written in a very nationalist tone by the organizers of the rally. According to the call, the association invited everyone to the Sultanahmed Square because the plan of Tevfik Rüştü to annihilate the fruits of the victory which was won by the rivers of blood along the river of Sakarya and in the battleground of İnönü and would destroy their existence.<sup>521</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή* gave a short list of the speakers. According to this newspaper, first Ekrem Bey, the chairperson of the organizing committee, would deliver a speech and then a young refugee from West Thrace called Nur Baba would speak on behalf of refugees from this region.<sup>522</sup>

This unexpected rally caught the newspapers’ attention and grabbed large media coverage. Therefore, we have a detailed account of the rally.<sup>523</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> *Vatan*, 15 August 1924, 3.

<sup>520</sup> *Tanin*, 16 August 1924, 1.

<sup>521</sup> *To Φως*, August 17, 1924, 1.

“Αγαπητέ αδελφέ!

“Αύριον (σήμερα) Κυριακήν 17 Αυγούστου όλοι είς την πλατείαν του Σουλτάν Αχμέτ δια να διαμαρτυρηθήτε εναντίον του σχεδίου Τεβφήκ Ρουσδή - Παπά το οποίον εκμηδενίζει τους καρπούς της νίκης μας τους οποίους εδρέψαμεν χύσαντες ποταμούς αιμάτων κατά μήκος του Σαγγαρίου και εις τα πεδία των μαχών του Ιν Ονού και καταστρέφει την ύπαρξιν μας. Άφες κατά μέρος πάσαν εργασίαν σου και έλα χωρίς άλλο.”

<sup>522</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, August 24, 1924.

<sup>523</sup> The account of the rally is based on the news in the *Tanin*, the *Vatan* and the *Cumhuriyet* published on August 18, 1924.

The rally took place on August 17 at 2:00 pm. Before it began, in order to ensure greater participation, refugees holding small Turkish flags staged a march in the streets and boulevards accompanied by drums and horns. In the procession, some of the refugees wore their traditional local clothes with red belts and this attracted special attention. Some of the refugees brought their children with them and observers were touched by these children's dreadful appearance. At the rally, the Exchange Association put up a banner of "The Association of the Immigrants Subject to the Population Exchange" (*Mübadeleye Tabi Muhacirler Cemiyeti*) even though all immigrants regardless of their relation to the exchange had been invited. It is important to note that the refugees tried to underline their collective legal position *vis-à-vis* the Turkish state by bringing forward the fact that they were in Turkey as a result of a diplomatic decision. The rally was inaugurated with İbrahim Memduh Bey's speech on the factors that forced them to organize such an action. As in the notice of call of the rally, İbrahim Memduh, who taught French at Davutpaşa High School, emphasized the violation of civil rights of the refugees.

After İbrahim Memduh, Azize Haydar Hanım had the floor and made a speech about the malpractices in the resettlement process and the miserable situation of the refugees in the "motherland." Her speech had similar stresses to the demands expressed in the memorandum of the Exchange Association. Briefly, she foregrounded the sacrifices of the Turkish refugees. These people had been subject to persecutions and discrimination before their arrival in the motherland. Moreover, she emphasized that the Turks in Rumeli had suffered as much as the Turks in Anatolia as a result of Greek atrocities and a series of catastrophes. In addition to referring to these particular traumas and catastrophic events, she also emphasized the integrity of the Turkish nation, which, therefore, had to include refugees and immigrants as well. As a result, "these brothers and sisters" should have been treated equally and the infringement of their most basic

legal rights should have been stopped. She also thanked to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Receb Bey, for his clarification regarding the agreement and left the floor to Ekrem Bey, who was followed by Edhem Ruhi and Lütfü Arif Beys.

Both Ekrem Bey and Arif Bey emphasized how the agreement contravened their legal rights guaranteed by the Lausanne Convention. Another common theme in their speeches focused on the persecution of the Turks in Western Thrace. Edhem Ruhi Bey's speech created great excitement among the audience. He accused the Turkish government of being overindulgent towards the Greeks in Turkey (*Rum*), which avoided the government defending the rights of Turkish refugees. His speech was interrupted by the thousands of refugees' boos and shouts of "Down with *Rums*" and "treacherous Greeks." At the end of the rally, the repeated themes of the speeches were presented as the "list of demands." The four urgent demands of the EA were as such:

"1. The legal rights granted by the Lausanne Treaty to the Turkish refugees had to be assured.

"2. The *Rums* subject to the exchange had to be determined immediately and transported in accordance with the decision of the cabinet on the accelerated evacuation of the *Rums* from İstanbul.

"3. Agreements in favor of the *Rums* and against the interests of Turkish immigrants cannot be accepted.

"4. The persecutions against Muslims of Western Thrace had to be ended definitely and their legal rights should be secured."

The day after the rally of the refugees, İsmet Paşa met with the Greek commissioner, Nikolaos Politis, in Ankara to discuss the final details of the agreement.<sup>524</sup> The Turkish press reported that the agreement was to be signed at meeting<sup>525</sup> and this created a new uproar among

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<sup>524</sup> *Μακεδονία*, August 19, 1924.

<sup>525</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, August 19, 1924.

refugees. Their dissatisfaction with this agreement was coupled with the statements of one of the Turkish members of the Mixed Commission.<sup>526</sup> Haydar Bey stated to the press that the abandoned properties of Greeks in Turkey and the abandoned properties of Turks in Greece were equal in value. This statement indicated the tendency of the government to cut corners while looking for a way out of the impasse regarding the compensation for the abandoned properties in Turkey and Greece. The Exchange Association reacted to this statement severely and announced that they would organize another protest rally; they would also prepare a comprehensive report on the abandoned properties and convey it to the Ministry of Exchange to prove that Haydar Bey's statement did not reflect reality.<sup>527</sup> The problems of compensation and *établi* continued to be in the agenda of the Mixed Commission and governments till the early 1930s as the major diplomatic problem between two countries and came to fore even in Turkey in the 1940s.<sup>528</sup> Several times the negotiations ended in complete deadlock. In one of them, being depressed with public pressure particularly from refugees and the continuous diplomatic crisis, Tevfik Rüştü Bey, head of the Turkish delegation at the Mixed Commission, submitted his resignation on October 3.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> For the statement of Haydar Bey see *Yenigün*, August 18, 1924.

<sup>527</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, August 20, 1924.

<sup>528</sup> One dimension of this problem constituted a serious challenge for the Turkish and Greek governments until the Ankara Convention of 1930. With the Ankara Convention, the governments mutually annulled the compensation they had to pay for the properties left by the refugees in accordance with the exchange convention. Yet the demands of the refugees continued to be a source of complication. Although the compensations were declared null and void, the refugees insisted on indemnification for their losses due to the exchange. In the beginning of 1944, the Turkish Republic was still busy with rounding out the exchange and compensation issues. On January 26, 1944 the parliament founded a new commission to unconditionally complete the compensation issues. *Akşam*, January 27, 1944; *Cumhuriyet*, January 27, 1944

<sup>529</sup> Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, 114.



Tevfik Rüştü's resignation was the Republic's first major political crisis, and the refugees' political arm-twisting was the underlying factor. The debates on the ratification of the 1924 Constitution laid bare the political differences within parliament. The tension in parliament reached the breaking point in October 1924 during the debates on the abolition of the Ministry of Exchange due to its inadequacy and inefficiency. In his memoir Ali Fuat Bey, one of the leading figures of the opposition, claimed that the governments' stance on the exchange issue "resulted in the death of thousands of citizens by reason of negligence." He and others pushed for an official investigation to find out the reasons of the incompetence of the government in dealing with the exchange. In fact, it was the tension in the parliament due to the refugee issue that resulted in the formation of the first opposition party.<sup>530</sup> To underline the importance of the debate suffice it to say that Mustafa Kemal referred this discussion in his *Nutuk* as an unfinished plot against the government.<sup>531</sup>

On October 19, 1924 Esat Efendi, a deputy of Menteşe, tabled a parliamentary question asking the government to provide the exact number of the refugees who arrived and who were resettled, what reconstruction works were undertaken and where.<sup>532</sup> The question was directed to the Ministry of Exchange on October 20. Immediately after this parliamentary question, on October 23, two deputies submitted separately two legislative proposals for the abolition of the Ministry of Exchange and the transference of its authority to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In the meantime, the Exchange Association was increasing the pressure upon the government. On

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<sup>530</sup> Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Gl. Ali Fuat Cebesoy'un Siyasi Hatıraları*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Doğan Kardeş Yayınları, 1960), 108.

<sup>531</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 826-834.

<sup>532</sup> TBMMZC, II9/II - 46, 25-30.

the same day, Ekrem Bey the Neglected,<sup>533</sup> the general secretary of the association, held a press conference at the association's headquarter. He maintained that the resettlement offices had become "hearths of misery" (*ızdırab ocağı*) and fulminated against Refet Bey, the Minister of Exchange, by saying that instead of what he had been doing so far, the minister should have visited the cemeteries of refugees and sent up a prayer, which would have been more helpful than the performance of his ministry.<sup>534</sup> There were also articles published by the İstanbul press and written by refugees in favor of the abolition of the ministry. For example, Kavalalı Hüsametdin wrote that the "exchange world" (*mübadiller alemi*) would consider the abolition of the ministry and the entire bureaucratic structure attached to it as a reward in return for all the misery that they had experienced after the exchange and the parliament would be greeted with wild applause of the refugees.<sup>535</sup>

In addition to such personal reactions, refugees organized another congress in İstanbul on November 2, 1924 to discuss the future of the bureaucracy administering the resettlement program. At the congress, the representatives of the refugees discussed how the exchange bureaucracy would be restructured and what kind of a role that refugees would play in the new one. The refugee representatives and the board of administration of the Exchange Association decided to propose to the government a new "project," as *Cumhuriyet* called it, in which the

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<sup>533</sup> "Ekrem Mensi Bey". The general secretary's middle name is written in Arabic script as منسى which corresponds to the Persian/Ottoman word "mensi" (forgotten, buried in oblivion, neglected, omitted). Francis Joseph Steingass, "منسى," *A Comprehensive Persian-English dictionary, including the Arabic words and phrases to be met with in Persian literature* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1892); Şemseddin Sâmî, "منسى," *Kamus-ı Türkî* (Dersaadet: İkdâm Matbaası, 1317), 1415. Although this word does not make sense as a name, there seems to be no other meaningful alternative. Furthermore, since the word is written like this several times (see *Vatan*, October 23, 1924; BCA, 272..00.00.12 — 43.59..28.), I omit the possibility of a typo. That's why I decided to read the word as "mensi" and considered it as an ironic epithet utilized to emphasize the negligence of the government rather than being a middle name.

<sup>534</sup> *Vatan*, October 23, 1924.

<sup>535</sup> *İleri*, November 1, 1924.

Ministry of Exchange would be abolished and replaced with a general directorate under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In the administration of the new general directorate, the representatives of the refugees would constitute the majority instead of bureaucrats. To notify the government of the new “project” the Exchange Association sent Gazi Evrenoszade Abdurrahman Bey and Hafız Ali Bey to Ankara on November 3. The refugee representatives were supposed to meet not only with the cabinet but also to contact as many deputies as they could to lobby on behalf of their proposal.<sup>536</sup> Toward this goal they prepared a *gravamen* titled *Mübadillerin İstedikleri - Mübadillerin derdlerini dinlemek vazifenizdir* (Demands of refugees - It is your responsibility to listen to the troubles of refugees) and personally addressed the deputies.<sup>537</sup> Not only were the opposition and the refugees in favor of the abolition of the ministry, but soon thereafter Mustafa Kemal also proposed a reorganization of the exchange bureaucracy, including the closure of the ministry. This happened after his nationwide tour during which he had visited resettlement sites.<sup>538</sup>

On October 27, Esat Efendi’s questions were answered by Refet Bey. Esat Bey and several other deputies were not satisfied with his response and accused him of lying. The deputies who took to the floor criticized the government for not making preliminary preparation before the resettlement process, for haphazard distribution of refugees, for the limited budget allocated to the exchange issue, for the inefficiency of the government bureaucracy and

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<sup>536</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, November 4, 1924.

<sup>537</sup> This *gravamen* consists of the details of the project of the Exchange Association and it is the only publication of the Exchange Association that has been unearthed so far. The document itself is discussed in the final section of this chapter.

<sup>538</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 856.

legislation regarding the exchange, and for the corruption and malpractices in the resettlement process.

After the initial debates, an interpellation was addressed to the Minister of Exchange. Concurrently, a new legislative year started in Turkey which required the election of a new speaker of the assembly. Refet Bey decided or was encouraged to run for election as speaker. The vote took place on November 1. In the elections, Refet Bey was elected as the speaker of the parliament and so had to resign as minister of exchange.<sup>539</sup> This move of the government can be interpreted in two non-exclusive ways: the government either tried to protect Refet Bey, who was under attack, or wanted to replace him with a more powerful figure who could ward off the onslaught of the opposition to the ministry. After Refet Bey's resignation, Receb Bey, one of the most influential figures in the early republican era, would serve as deputy minister of exchange, and hence reply to the questions on behalf of the ministry.

On November 5, İsmet Paşa, the prime minister, stated that the government would address the questions posed not only to the ministry but to how the government had tried to handle the issue. He also made it clear that at the end of the debate the government would voluntarily seek a vote of confidence. İsmet Paşa seemed to think that some deputies questioning the legitimacy of a single minister would not dare to take the risk of openly opposing and causing the fall of the government.<sup>540</sup> The debate took days and several deputies took the floor. A number of problems regarding the exchange, as mentioned above, and a number of general issues were brought to on the agenda of the assembly. In addition to Receb Bey, the former ministers

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<sup>539</sup> TBMMZC, II10/II - 1, 7.

<sup>540</sup> Eric J. Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic*, (Leiden:Brill,1991), 49.

answered the accusations. Among those, Mustafa Necati Bey's answer represents the approach of the government towards the irritation of refugees:

Gentlemen, could you imagine a man coming to a completely foreign area from a place where he used to live for centuries leaving his father's gravestone behind and that this man flies on cloud nine? Is that even possible, gentlemen? [...] Is it easy to please those who left its homelands? [...] Without doubt these people would shout. They would complain. [...] If only five thousand people died out of four hundred thousand, this is all natural.

The government was much more organized and better prepared for the battle than the opposition.<sup>541</sup> Even the dissident press criticized the opposition for not being organized enough to counter attack.<sup>542</sup> The Kemalist deputies deliberately and successfully changed the topic of the debate and it turned into a debate on the form of the government, particularly on the concept of republic.<sup>543</sup> By giving a general and ideological turn to the debate, the government gained a tactical advantage for itself that it used to marginalize the opposition frontrunners and to intimidate moderates. At that time, the parliament contained 273 deputies. At the beginning of the debate, more than 200 deputies were in Ankara yet only 167 of them were present to vote. As Maxwell Macartney points out, more than one hundred deputies either were not in Ankara at all or deliberately refrained from voting since they were unwilling or afraid to vote against the cabinet.<sup>544</sup> Out of 167 deputies only 19 voted against the government. After the vote, the opposing deputies resigned from the ruling party, the People's Party, and started organizing a

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<sup>541</sup> Ibid. 50.

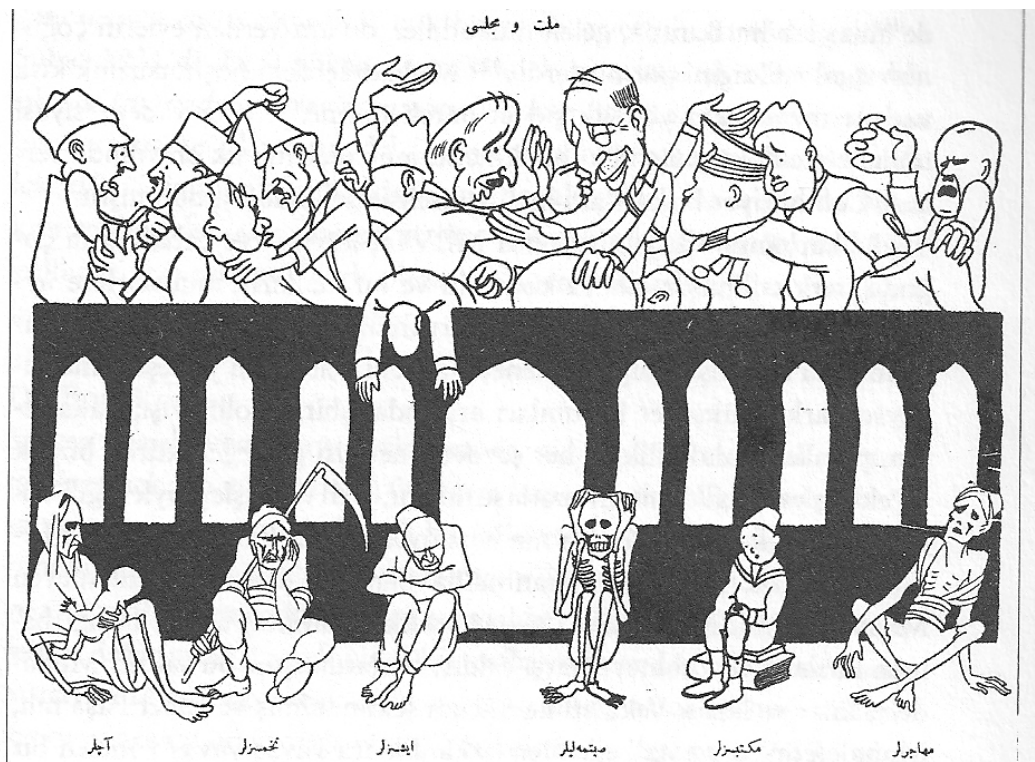
<sup>542</sup> *Vatan*, November 10, 1924; *Tanin* November 10, 1924. Also see Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 887.

<sup>543</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 867-74; Hüseyin Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni: Siyasi Hatıralarım*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 1993),

<sup>544</sup> Maxwell H. H. Macartney, "The New Opposition in Turkey," *The Fortnightly Review* 117 (New Series), no. 1 (June 1925): 786–87.

new party, which would be the first legal opposition party.<sup>545</sup> Another result of the parliamentary debate was the closure of the Ministry of Exchange on December 11, 1924.

As a matter of fact, it can be said that the split in the parliament became most visible over the refugee issue. Moreover, I think one can rightfully assume that refugees' elevated visibility might have inspired the opposition with the idea that this subject could have been a logical one to topple the government. This instrumentalization of the refugee question was criticized by the *Akbaba*.



**Figure 3–2:** The *Akbaba* criticized the debates in the assembly. The title of the cartoon is “The Nation and the assembly” (*Millet ve Meclisi*) referring to “The National Assembly” (*Millet Meclisi*). The people waiting outside the assembly are (from right to left) immigrants, those who do not have school, people who have malaria, those unemployed, those who do not have seeds to cultivate, and those starving.  
**Source:** *Akbaba*, November 10, 1924.

<sup>545</sup> Zürcher, *Political Opposition*, 51.

For our subject, one of the most crucial moments was on November 6, 1924. Receb Bey, Minister of Internal Affairs, answered the questions as the deputy Minister of Exchange. After a long speech about the difficulty of checking the reliability of the certificates of the refugees and some objective obstacles to resettlement with a special emphasis on the back-breaking tone of criticisms and its unacceptability for the government, he explained how the government thought about the self-organizations of refugees. He mentioned—without giving their names—that there were three active refugee-immigrant organizations and he added that he would propose a new law regulating their activities, especially to restrict their activities to the refugee question. He said:<sup>546</sup>

One of them, in its regulation, declares that its goal is to ensure a full-fledged solidarity among immigrants. What does this mean; gentlemen? Does it mean to construct solidarity among immigrant on the one side and among the natives on the other? This country witnessed Muslim–non-Muslim dichotomy. (...) Our mission is to eliminate this dichotomy. *The population exchange is over*. In the country of Turkey, there is a monolithic Turkish existence made up of Turkish citizens from all strata, from immigrants, from Hadjis, from Hodjas; no matter how they are called or what their title is, they all deserve equal rights and equal respect. There is no other existence, but the Turkish one and this is the only mass.

Furthermore, he added that the local administrators had shut down some of the local branches of these organizations when they became engaged in politics by criticizing the government and distributing illegal flyers.<sup>547</sup> However, within the borders of contemporary legal

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<sup>546</sup> TBMM ZC, Devre:II, İçtima Senesi: 2, Cilt: 10, 1 Teşrin-i Sani 1340 – 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1340, (Ankara: n.d., 1975), 85-86. My emphasis.

<sup>547</sup> “Being politically active” or “political involvement” seems to be one of the most frequent yet implausible excuses that the state officials applied for to shut down associations actually or potentially challenging the government. In the face of rumors about its political activity, a local refugee association in İzmir, the *Refugees and Immigrants Association (İzmir Mülteci ve Muhacirin Cemiyeti)*, was obliged to announce publicly that the association’s statute was clear about the scope of the organization and limited it to philanthropy. According to the announcement, the association never went into politics and had no such intention. *Türk Sesi*, June 10, 1923. The newspaper also published the statute of the association in

framework regarding the associations, he claimed that he was not able to do anything for an organization aiming at nothing but polarizing society. He also expressed his intention to propose a new law regulating associations. It can be easily seen that the facts and incidents mentioned in Receb Bey's speech are almost identical to those told in Kobakizade's memoir where he talks about the political rivalry within the Samsun branch of the Exchange Association and then its abolition.<sup>548</sup>

Although a new law of associations was not legislated by the parliament, in February 3, 1925, the Commission of Internal Affairs replied to the request by the prime ministry asking it to carry out an investigation to determine whether or not any refugee organizations were engaged in "separationist" activities by creating a duality between natives and immigrants.<sup>549</sup> The

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two parts to show that the organization had no intention in getting involved in politics. *Türk Sesi*, June 10 and 11, 1923.

<sup>548</sup> The local branches of the association were built upon certain local socio-political tensions. The roots of this particular tension between İsmail Hakkı and Hüseyin Fehmi laid deep in the competition over property. İsmail Hakkı Bey we see that state officials, refugees, local notables and native population were competing with each other fiercely. As a result of the reflection of this tension, the members or the would-be members of the Exchange Association in Samsun divided. İsmail Hakkı Bey and his group won this particular election and he was elected as the vice-president of the local branch and Hocazade Asım Bey became the president of the Exchange Association. The Exchange Association collected considerable amount of contribution for the refugees and followed up their works. However, the activities of the Exchange Association were also contingent upon this political and economic rivalry between different interest groups clustered around the exchange issue. Kobakizade İsmail Hakkı mentions that the balances in the Exchange Association, which had been in favor of them, were disturbed with the arrival of new provincial chairman of the Republican People's Party at the expense of Kobakizade's group. Kobakizade also moots that the local branches of the EA were invited to a "congress on the exchange." Under these new circumstances, they managed to be the representatives from Samsun. After this congress, "the other group" that included the state officers managed to abolish the local branch of the Exchange Association. This anecdote shows that the Exchange Association's local branches witnessed the reflection of political and economic rivalry in the nascent republic.

<sup>549</sup> The government was fully alert to such a schism and even the smallest cultural differences and their manifestations were under close surveillance. For example, after the publications of some newspapers on November 27, 1924 the Ministry of Exchange asked the Governor's Office in Trabzon if refugees from Thessaly wore hats. The governor answered negatively on November 30. See BCA, 272..0.0.11 — 20.99.41. Considering the fact that the acknowledgement of hat as the official headgear and the prohibition of fez took place later in 1925, it can be deduced that the wardrobe coaching in the early



commission replied that the refugee organizations under consideration aimed at creating a special form of solidarity among refugees and between them and their association at least until the completion of the resettlement process. This is most probably because of the role that the refugee organizations, most notably the Exchange Association, played in mediating between refugees and the state. In this capacity, they often clashed with the government. In the next section, I will try to show how exactly this mediation and the tensions it generated took place in the face of the urgent problems and needs of refugees in the immediate aftermath of their arrival.

### 3.3 “Tout état, et rien au plat”<sup>550</sup>: Problem of shelters

In the previous section, we saw that the exchange bureaucracy was created ten months after the signing of the Exchange Convention and just one month before the official transfer of the refugees. The time lost by this lag proved costly and led to country being ill-prepared to deal with the newcomers. This unpreparedness was also bitterly criticized by the press. After the foundation of the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and resettlement, different government agencies were reorganized around the institutional body of the ministry to take part in these three important tasks. Such reorganization, and even a full-fledged mobilization of the bureaucratic structure, was a *sin quo non* for carrying them out when the limited capacity of the Turkish state is considered. Above all, the ministry had a shoestring budget and so additional funds had to be raised.

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republican era in order to modernize and homogenize the clothing of citizens started with the surveillance of refugees.

<sup>550</sup> “All state, and nothing on the plate.” - French proverb. *A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs: Comprising French, Italian, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Danish, with English Translations and a General Index* (H. G. Bohn, 1857), 59.

One of the key institutions for the resettlement would be the Association of the Red Crescent, particularly for fund raising campaigns and relief works. As I have already noted, on the very same day as his election, Mustafa Necati as the Minister of Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement, sent a telegram to the Red Crescent about its role in the resettlement process.<sup>551</sup> According to the telegram, the government expected that the Red Crescent would be one of the central organizations in the resettlement. On November 24, Mustafa Necati sent his directive, or rather a call for action, to the Red Crescent and asked for the full participation of its local branches in the relief work.<sup>552</sup> One of the most important work assigned partly to the Red Crescent was to form and run the reception centers (refugee shelters) under the title of guesthouse (*misafirhâne*).

On November 28, the government issued an ordinance regarding these refugee shelters.<sup>553</sup> According to the ordinance, in three districts shelters were to be established at: a) departing ports, b) transfer points, c) resettlement areas. Apart from the donated buildings for this mission, derelict or rented buildings could be used as shelters. Beds, duvets and such needs were going to be supplied from abandoned properties and from the military. At the departing posts, the Red Crescent were going to establish 10-bed infirmaries. Finally, maximum three-day stays were allowed at the shelters. During their stays, the needs of the refugees such as “tea, hot meals and etc.” were going to be met by the Red Crescent and private charity, and only by the government

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<sup>551</sup> KA, 1297/115 [October 21, 1923].

<sup>552</sup> “Gelmekte olan kardeşlerimizin terfihine medar olmak üzere memurin- i mülkiye ile teşrik-i mesai ederek iane celb ve cemi hususunda azami derecede sarf-ı gayret ve mesai eylemeleri lüzumunun bilimum Hilâl-i Ahmer şubatına tebliğiyle cem edilen ianelerin yekûn-ı umumi ve nevi miktarından vekaletle her hafta muntazaman malumat verilmesini bilhassa rica ederim efendim.” KA, 161/345 (November 24, 1923). Also see “Mübadele Faaliyeti,” *Türkiye Hilal-i Ahmer Mecmuası* 3, no. 28 (December 15, 1923): 102–3.

<sup>553</sup> *İskan Tarihçesi*, 19-20. For the original ordinance see BCA, 272..0.0.12 — 40.42..3.

as a last resort. Although it is not stated in the ordinance, at the shelters the refugees were vaccinated particularly against typhoid but many were also treated for malaria.<sup>554</sup> In a relatively short time, several shelters were built at different locations throughout the country. On January 4, 1924, the semi-official government newspaper reported that in İstanbul there were two large refugee shelters, one of which was in Ahırkapı and the other in İplikhane. The capacity of the Ahırkapı shelter was 2000 people, and that in İplikhane was 1000 people. Near İstanbul, there was another shelter in Kalıgratya (today *Mimarsinan*) the capacity of which was 300. In addition to these, in Gelibolu a 500-bed shelter, in Menteşe four shelters for 1250 refugees in total, one in Çanakkale that could host 300 people, a 1500-bed shelter at the port of Erdek, in Samsun a refugee shelter with 3000 beds, one 1000-bed shelter in Edirne were founded. In Mersin an old factory building was under renovation and in a few days it would be ready to temporarily host refugees.<sup>555</sup> To avoid overcrowding at the ports there were also refugee shelters established throughout Greece that offered Muslim refugees temporary tent accommodation before their transfer.<sup>556</sup> The shelters were supposed to be important in reducing expenses during the time

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<sup>554</sup> For the vaccination against typhoid at the refugee shelter in Samsun see KA, 639/78 (August 5, 1924). On March 26, 1924 the Ministry also issued a circular letter on organizing the refugees' transfer and state of health (Mübadele ile gelecek muhacirlerin nakliye ve sıhhi durumlarının organizasyonuna dair tamim) and sent it to the local offices of immigrants. See BCA, 272..0.0.12 — 41.46..14.

<sup>555</sup> “Mübadele Vekâleti'nin gelecekler için açtığı misafirhaneler,” *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, January 4, 1924.

<sup>556</sup> For example, Dr. Ömer Lütfü Bey who was a member of the Mixed Commission representing the Red Crescent contacted the headquarters of the association for the foundation of a shelter near Thessaloniki which would be utilized not only for the refugees crowded in Thessaloniki also for the land transfer of the refugees from different parts of Macedonia, such as Kayalar and Kozana. This would also reduce the rent expenses of the refugees. The Red Crescent founded a refugee shelter at Kireçköy (today Asvestochori/Ασβεστοχώρι) near Thessaloniki for the transfer of these refugees to the port of Thessaloniki. See for his reports and petitions see KA, 1297/83, (December 27, 1923); KA, 1296/157 (January 26, 1924); KA, (January 27, 1924); KA, 1296/222 (February 26, 1924). Regarding the situation of the refugees in Selanik *Sebilürreşad* published an article describing it very vividly on the same days Ömer Lütfü Bey was contacting the headquarter of the Red Crescent. The article was based on the information acquired from a refugee, Müftizade Mehmet Mustafa Efendi, who just arrived to İstanbul and visited the office of the journal to impart his observations. “Rumeli Muhacereti - Selânik'teki Türk, Müslüman Kardeşlerimizin Ahvali,” *Sebilürreşad* 23, no. 582 (January 3, 1924): 156–58. In 1924,

interval between their abandonment of their homes and permanent resettlement.<sup>557</sup> Even though the shelters were built relatively quickly, the number that they could accommodate was not enough considering the volume of the influx.

As the refugees arrived in Turkey and flooded the cities, the limited capacity of the shelters became one of the first problems that the refugees encountered. Although the ordinance on the refugee shelters restricted the duration of their stay to three days, the refugees testified that there were cases in which they spent weeks or even months at them. Because the transfer of the refugees to their permanent resettlement areas or arranging residences for them from abandoned or vacant properties took longer than expected, many had to stay in shelters for extended periods of time. Mehmet Filiz, a refugee from Kavala, tells about his and his family's stay at the tent shelters in Sarayburnu for 15 days.<sup>558</sup> Mehmet Aydın and his family came from Kavala to İstanbul, where they spent 40 days at the refugee shelter in Beyazıt.<sup>559</sup> There were cases of even longer stays at the shelters. In some cases, the shelters were closed down while the transfer of people was still in progress and in some places, since there was neither shelter nor immediate housing available for resettlement, refugees had to take to coal mines.<sup>560</sup> *Yoldaş* reported that in Bursa fifteen refugee families were “literally” forgotten at a vacant madrasa

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*L'Illustration* also published the photographs of the refugees in Thessaloniki depicting their destitute perfectly

<sup>557</sup> This is one of the repeated themes that the Muslim refugees mention about their transfer. For example, Ali Sanı from Langaza (Λαγκαδάς/Lagkadas in Greek) says that while waiting for the steamboat in Thessaloniki for two months they used up all the money that they had been able to take when they had set out on their “journey” because they had to stay at a hotel in Thessaloniki. Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*,

<sup>558</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

<sup>560</sup> TBMMZC, II9/2 - 49, 99.

building.<sup>561</sup> Even if the refugees were lucky enough to find a place under the roof of a shelter, the shelters were far from being in ideal condition. For instance, Ramazan Eser from Sevindikli, Kılıkış (today Eptalofos/Επτάλοφος) talks with grief about his family's experience at the refugee shelter in Tuzla: "When we got to Tuzla, we went through the quarantine [station]. There used to be shelters where the lodging buildings of the present-day infantry school are located. We stayed there. My sister, Bahriye, died at this shelter. Many people died there. I remember four funerals were held there every day."<sup>562</sup>

Similar observations were mentioned at parliament too. On November 5, 1924, İzmir deputy Mahmut Celâl Efendi informed the general assembly about the refugees in Samsun and he stated that at the shelter the "refugees were packed like sardines there" and added that at the shelter there were no privies.<sup>563</sup> Soon after the problems at the shelters hit the headlines. The refugees "temporarily" staying at the shelters in Ahırkapı and İplikhane (İstanbul) called out their demands on two issues: First, the refugees from Thessaloniki did not want to leave İstanbul and to get resettled there although they were assigned to Samsun and some other towns in the environ. Secondly, until their permanent resettlement in the city, they demanded to be accommodated at the shelters. The first reaction to the refugees' demands was punitive: The government stopped their food aid. Being enraged by this reaction, on December 18, 1924, hundreds of refugees, who had been waiting for months for resettlement at the Ahırkapı Refugee Shelter —300 according to *Vatan*, more than 300 according to *Vakit* and about 500 according to

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<sup>561</sup> *Yoldaş*, January 4, 1925.

<sup>562</sup> Özsoy, *İki Vatan Yorgunları*, 98-9.

<sup>563</sup> TBMMZC, II10/2 - 2, 56.

*Tanin* and *Tevhid-i Efkâr*— first went to the Directorate of resettlement in Sirkeci.<sup>564</sup> The refugees were at the directorate at 10 o'clock and they wanted to see the director, Asım Bey, and to file an official complaint about their permanent resettlement sites. First, they were stopped by a police officer assigned to protect the directorate who told them to leave because Asım Bey was not available to see them. But the refugees were so adamant that the guard had to inform the director. Then Asım Bey came out of his room and haughtily refused to discuss any issues with them. Overwhelmed by disappointment, the refugees left the directorate and went to the Provincial Administration Building to appeal to the governor. At 12 o'clock, the refugees arrived in Bab-ı Ali and marched along the boulevard toward the Provincial Administration Building shouting slogans and stating their demands. At the entrance, they were stopped by the police marshal and the gendarmerie commander and told that the governor was having his lunch and could not see them. Then the refugees were asked to choose a few representatives to meet with Süleyman Sami Bey. Four of the Thessalonikan property holders were chosen by the refugees as their representatives: Mahmud Salih Bey, Mehmet Bey, Kadri Reşid Bey and Hürmüz Hanım. When they entered into the office of the Governor, Hürmüz Hanım, as the spokesperson of the representatives, launched a volley of complaints about their and other refugees' situation:

We have finally reached our homeland. When we were in Thessaloniki, we were told that we were going to be settled either in İstanbul<sup>565</sup> or in İzmir. Now they want to send us to the Black Sea coast or to some other places. During our stay at the shelter we were not taken care of. The department of resettlement failed to give adequate attention to our works. Moreover, they insult us as well. Two or three of us died at the shelter and were six feet under. Nobody looks after us. We were told to be settled in İstanbul even before we left Thessaloniki. We are property holders.

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<sup>564</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the narrative of the demonstration is based on reports of the following newspapers: *Akşam*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Tanin*, *Tevhid-i Efkâr*, *Vatan*, *Vakit*, December 19, 1924.

<sup>565</sup> This claim of the Thessalonikan refugees about the rumors or unofficial statements about their resettlement sites seems to be true. In August 1924, it was decided that almost five thousand refugees to be settled in İstanbul because “they are Thessalonikan” (Selanikli olduklarından mahal-i mürettepleri olan İstanbul’a iskân edilecekler). BCA, 272..00.00.11 — 19.92..23.

We serve the nation only if we are settled here. Some of the abandoned properties are illicitly occupied. Settle us in these houses and the houses of the Greeks subject to the exchange.

Then the governor invited two representatives of the crowd into his office, but even this gesture failed to appease it. Finally, he ordered the gendarmerie to evict the building. So the gendarmerie fixed their bayonets and tried to push the crowd out of the building. The newspapers reported that women in particular confronted the police, crying “shoot us, kill us; or even cannonade us if you wish. We have only our lives. Take it and save us from this misery.” During the affray, an officer struck unconscious a certain Fatma Aliye Hanım.<sup>566</sup> The situation was on the verge of getting out of control. At that point, the governor went out of his office and asked the refugees again what they wanted. Fatma Aliye Hanım, having regained consciousness, told the governor that her magnificent house had been occupied by the Greeks while she was still homeless. To conciliate the refugees, Süleyman Sami Bey promised them that they would be settled in İstanbul. After this guarantee, the refugees cheered for the governor and Mustafa Kemal Paşa. After ending their demonstration inside the Provincial Administration Building, the refugees met with reporters and gave statements. For example, one person told the *Vatan*’s reporter:<sup>567</sup>

We are not emigrants, but exchangees. We cannot live on half a loaf of bread in each meal. Nevertheless, they even stopped giving it. Where should we go? We are caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. Everyday five or six of us die. These are human beings, not kittens. Giaours live marvelously but we die. Those who are crafty find a way to settle in good houses. We want full compensation for our properties. They want us to send to Samsun. We won’t go.

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<sup>566</sup> Most probably the same person, who gave a speech at the rally of the refugees.

<sup>567</sup> *Vatan*, December 19, 1924.

Similarly, the refugees told *Vakit* that the Greek government took all legal and illegal measures to evacuate the Muslim properties in Greece. They added that in Turkey nobody cared about their problems. All their requests fell on deaf ears and the authorities slowed things down so as not to complete their applications. The refugees claimed that the authorities wanted to prevent them from making further requests and ignored the older ones by “inventing” new measures, such as levying hefty fees for telegrams to Ankara.<sup>568</sup> According to the refugees’ statement, at the resettlement directorate, civil servants had started to charge them two liras for each telegram. Considering the fact that the price of a loaf of bread in 1924 was less than 20 piasters,<sup>569</sup> the amount demanded from the refugees seemed outrageous. The governor, too, issued a press statement regarding the situation of the refugees and announced that they would be transferred to their permanent resettlement sites, and that until then food aid would continue. The newspapers referred to the refugees’ action as an “attack,” a “demonstration,” an “occupation.”

The refugees’ demands were not recognized by the authorities. On December 20, the governor received a reply from the Ministry of Internal Affairs refusing their demands and insisting on the original resettlement plan.<sup>570</sup> So, the governor sent orders to the shelters to make the necessary arrangements for the transfer of those refugees whose departure date had elapsed. Their food aid was also cut off again. This elevated the tension between the refugees and the authorities to a new level. Immediately after they had notified, the refugees announced that they

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<sup>568</sup> On July 31, 1924 *Zafer-i Millî* published a letter signed by an anonymous refugee. The refugee complains about the doctor’s fees. According to the letter the doctor, Fazıl Bey, charges refugees two liras for each examination. Aydın Ayhan, *Balıkesir ve çevresinde Yörükler, Çepniler ve Muhacırlar* (Balıkesir: Zağnos Kültür ve Eğitim Vakfı, 1999), 234.

<sup>569</sup> See for example in October the bread price in İstanbul was around 19 piasters. “Ekmek fiyatının yakında terfî edeceği anlaşılıyor,” *Cumhuriyet*, October 13, 1924.

<sup>570</sup> *İstiklâl*, December 20, 1924.



would not leave the shelters.<sup>571</sup> They reacted collectively, once again, after state officials took these measures.<sup>572</sup> This time the fundamental demand was the evacuation of the properties that belonged to the Constantinopolitan Greeks, including non-exchangeable ones. The refugees provided justification for these demands by pointing to the situation in Western Thrace and to how the Greek government was treating the Muslim population, particularly the minority excluded from the exchange.

Although the refugees' vigorous action did not lead to the recognition of their demands, their collective action captured and excited public attention to their plight. A few days after the protest, the Exchange Association proposed a comprehensive plan for a fund-raising campaign on behalf of the refugees, particularly for those in İstanbul. The newspaper *İstiklâl* reported the Exchange Association's proposal, underlining that the way with which the government handled the population exchange and the resettlement program revealed nothing but the weakness of the state's institutions:

The most wretched and miserable stratum of our country is the emigrants brought thereby the exchange. After leaving their bricks and mortars, *chiftliks*, animals, agricultural equipment and machinery alone, these pitiable refugees came to our country and started waiting for the houses, farms, animals, equipment and machinery that the state is going to give them in accordance with the exchange convention. These poor refugees, in hope of compensation, have been living in misery at the corners of the shelters. They have been losing weight due to starvation, getting sick and many of them have been dying due to this misery. In this country refugee lives are held to be worth less than animal lives. Since the exchange is handled in a way of and mired in corruption, every day we hear a new sobbing of the refugees. Finally, they lost their hopes and patience and beat the governor's door down. They shouted, cheered slogans and asked for help.

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<sup>571</sup> *İstiklâl*, December 21, 1924.

<sup>572</sup> *Akşam*, December 22, 1924.

The plan proposed by the Association aimed to remedy the deficiencies of the state's program.<sup>573</sup> The plan had three components: First of all, the Exchange Association proposed collecting donations for food aid of the refugees. Secondly, in collaboration with the Conservatory [*Dârülelhan*] and the City Theater [*Dârülbedayi*], benefit concerts and plays would be performed to raise funds for the refugee shelters in İstanbul. The day of the benefit performances would be called "Refugee Day." Finally, the Exchange Association formulated a law for the levying of a "refugee tax" [*muhacir vergisi*] on alcoholic beverages and movie and theater tickets.

According to the plan, the Exchange Association would collect the donations and hand them over to the Red Crescent for distribution. Although what the Exchange Association proposed was a comprehensive plan, it was not a lasting solution to the problems at the shelters. The immediate problem was to convince or force the government to continue giving food aid to the refugees. For this purpose, on December 23, Ekrem Bey, the general secretary of the Exchange Association, sent a telegram asking for a resumption of food aid distribution to the "destitute" refugees.<sup>574</sup> All requests kept being ignored. Nobody but wealthier refugees were helping out their more unfortunate brothers and sisters who suffered the same fate in terms of dislocation. The Red Crescent refused the Exchange Associations' application for the continuation of food aid.<sup>575</sup> An exchangee donated 100 liras to provide bread to the refugees staying at the shelters. Such unsolicited donations were vital —literally— for the refugees. Because so desperate was their condition that some people were trying to plunder bakeries and

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<sup>573</sup> *İstiklâl*, December 22, 1924.

<sup>574</sup> BCA, 272..00.00.12 — 43.59..28.

<sup>575</sup> *Akşam*, December 25, 1924.

even assaulting people in the streets, snatching loaves of bread from their hands.<sup>576</sup> According an *Akşam* reporter, who visited the Ahırkapı shelter on December 24, the situation there was heartrending. The refugees with sunken cheeks and tattered clothing had been given only a small piece of bread in the last three days. The next day, Governor Süleyman Sami Bey announced that the refugees were free to go to their assigned resettlement sites but that during their stay they would not be given any food aid. Consequently, the refugees faced the real prospect of starvation. *Akşam* presented the horns of the dilemma that the refugees faced by ironically summarizing the unacceptable options that the government offered them and then asked for a “middle ground.”<sup>577</sup> According to the newspaper, the government was simply saying to the refugees “We brought you here. You can either die of starvation here... Or you can go [to your resettlement sites] and perish there in malaria and misery.”<sup>578</sup>

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<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> *Akşam*, December 28, 1924.

<sup>578</sup> In many refugee resettlements and shelters contagious diseases, particularly malaria, were rife. For example, *Cumhuriyet* reports that the mortality rate among refugees were 10 per cent in, October 1924. *Cumhuriyet*, October 26, 1924. Malaria continued spreading among refugees settled in Söke in the following months and the situation in this region in December 1924 see BCA, 272..00.00.11 — 20.101..25.



**Figure 3–3:** “A middle ground not exist?”

**Source:** *Akşam*, December 26, 1924.

What *Akşam* emphasized was not an exaggeration. The mortality rate in the Samsun district, where the government wanted to settle these refugees, was very high because of the conditions there. On June 21, 1924, the deputy of the Red Crescent in Samsun, Haydar Bey, sent a telegram to İstanbul branch of the association, which was the intermediate station for refugees who were to be transferred to Samsun. Haydar Bey reported that the number of the refugees in

Samsun exceeded 11,500 and that even the cemeteries were crowded with the refugees waiting for resettlement.<sup>579</sup> Under these conditions, malaria was spreading fast. On September 14, 1924 *Cumhuriyet* had published a piece of exclusive news on the high mortality rate in Samsun and its environs. According to the news, in *Çinek-köy*,<sup>580</sup> 103 people out of 120 newly-settled householders died of “tropical malaria” and the rest of the refugees were living out in the cold. Meanwhile, Ankara was becoming aware of the increasing number of deaths.

On September 13, the Exchange Ministry sent an order to the Samsun Directorate of Reconstruction and Resettlement asking it to initiate a medical investigation into the cause of the deaths, to determine if the reason was the “adverse climatic conditions” and if so, to resettle the refugees in another place.<sup>581</sup> Simultaneously the Exchange Ministry requested from the Ministry of Health and Social Aid (Sihhiye ve Muavenet-i İctimaiye Vekaleti) detailed information regarding the increasing mortality rate among the refugees settled in Samsun.<sup>582</sup> Sanitation specialist (hıfzıssıhha mütehassısı) Mustafa Bey wrote a preliminary report on the condition in Samsun, in which he referred to the news published by *Cumhuriyet* and offered a more thorough examination of the situation. The examination continued in the following months. So did the deaths. Municipal medical doctor Osman Senai Bey and surgeon captain Raif Bey prepared a

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<sup>579</sup> KA, 1296 — 19.

<sup>580</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, September 14, 1924. The newspaper spells the name of the village as جنک (c,n,k). Normally in Ottoman Turkish this word is read as cenk (war). Yet there is and was no such village in Samsun. As the catalog of the Center for Asia Minor Studies offers in Samsun there was a Τσινέκ-κιοϊ (Tsinek-kioi), which seems to be the most plausible surmise regarding the name of the village. Tsinek-kioi was also known as Tsinik (Çinik). Neither the Ottoman spelling that the newspaper gives nor its alternative latinizations exists in the dictionary of the Ottoman Toponyms published by the General Directorate of State Archives of Turkey.

<sup>581</sup> BCA, 272..0.0.11 — 19.93..23. In this document the name of the village is spelled as چينک (ç, y, n, k) which validates the supposition in the previous footnote.

<sup>582</sup> BCA, 272..0.0.79 — 72.3..19.

report by carrying out an examination in Taflun, Çırakman and Çinek.<sup>583</sup> Raif Bey examined the situation in Çırakman and Çinek. The report clearly reflected how much they were deprived of humane treatment. According to Raif Bey's report, the refugees were staying in torn and broken tents or in shacks made up of oak branches that were definitely unable to protect them from rain and wind, as well as lack of hygiene. According to another report prepared by the medical inspector of the Ministry of Health, Ahmet Fikri Bey, only in 1924 671 refugees lost their lives. This corresponded to 13.5% of the total number of refugees had been resettled in Samsun by the time.<sup>584</sup>

The problem was not limited to the Samsun region, and this posed a difficult dilemma for the refugees. Over the previous months, some refugees who refused to go to Samsun were allowed to choose their resettlement sites. *Vatan* told their story in details.<sup>585</sup> The title of the story was compelling: "soul of the refugee, rest in peace" (*Muhacir kişi ruhuna Fatiha*). The refugees' request for relocation had been accepted under the condition that they would build their own houses in the new resettlement site they chose. So, they were settled in Hacı Mehmet Çiftliği in Yalova. According to the newspaper, this çiftlik was a rice paddy field and it was allocated to the refugees without any preceding inspection. These settlers were mountain people from Demirci Ören, a town with a population of 350 located at an altitude of about 600 meters ASL and known for tobacco production. Yet the new site that the government selected for the refugees was a marshy area. Expending 50,000 liras the refugees built their own village in this

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<sup>583</sup> BCA, 272..0.0.79 — 72.3..33.

<sup>584</sup> BCA, 272..0.0.12 — 43.63..15. It should also be noted that this rate was lower than the estimates for the mortality rate among the refugees. According to Mehmet Zekeriya Bey (Sertel), the mortality rate among the refugees reached 20 percent. Mehmet Zekeriya, "Türkiye'nin Siyasi Tarihi," 15.

<sup>585</sup> *Vatan*, January 14, 1341.

former paddy field. After heavy rains in December, the already marshy area turned into a fen and a malaria epidemic broke out in the community. In a very short time, twenty people were infected with this dreadful disease. Soon after a cemetery had to be built on the outskirts of the village to accommodate the newly deceased. The villagers' applications to the governor and Ankara remained unanswered, and not even a single doctor was sent to the village. In response, the refugees asked for the *kaymakam*'s permission to take the sick refugees to İstanbul for medical care. But the *kaymakam* did not let them leave their village. Finally, upon the request of a deputy, a government investigation was launched.

İzmit Governor Vehbi Bey, about whom the refugees had already made a formal complaint for leaving their appeals unanswered, was assigned as the chief inspector. This time he refused to visit the village and carry out an on-the-spot inspection claiming that there was no motor vehicle available to go to the village and instead some villagers were called to Yalova into the governor's presence. Hafız Bayram Ağa, who had been one of the members of the communal administrative council back in Drama and who had lost nine family members in the epidemic, was selected as spokesperson for the village. After they recounted their troubles to the governor, Vehbi Bey assured them that the government would send a doctor to the village and that some more land would be allocated for them. After a few days, the doctor from the İzmit Resettlement Department arrived the village, examined the villagers and prepared a report, suggesting the immediate evacuation of the village. But Vehbi Bey refused to follow the doctor's suggestion. Because, according to the governor, if the village was evacuated due to medical reasons, then nobody would consent to live there, and, therefore, it would be impossible for the state to settle additional refugees in this region. Clearly, the settlement program was more important than their lives. So, the refugees sought alternative ways to make their voices heard. That's why a group of

them contacted Lütü Arif at *Vatan* and told him their tragic story. According to the refugees, after the governor's decision, some villagers illegally fled the area to save their lives. In total, 88 people had died and their bodies remained unburied because there was not enough able-bodied to bury them. During the meeting, the refugees emphasized that they were ready to evacuate village, which they built with their own money, to give it to the government and to give up their right of compensation for their properties in Drama in exchange of government's permission to leave the village.<sup>586</sup>

Therefore, the refugees in the İstanbul shelters were justified in their resentments and reactions. The government's insistence upon sending them to Samsun was nothing short of a death sentence imposed. Under these conditions, the Exchange Association continued its self-imposed mission of mediating between the government and the refugees. On December 28, the Exchange Association proposed to the İstanbul governorship an alternative resettlement plan for the refugees living in the shelters of Ahırkapı and İplikhane. According to this new plan, 68 families would stay in İstanbul, 57 would go to İzmit, and 132 would be dispatched to various Anatolian cities where they had relatives.<sup>587</sup> Although the government was determined to ensure the execution of its previous orders regarding the resettlement of the refugees,<sup>588</sup> it also decided to take action against the Constantinopolitan Greeks because of the pressure of the increasing demands of the refugees, as well as the increasing tension due to the deadlock among the

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<sup>586</sup> Even in İstanbul, the problems of the refugees were avalanching. The refugees in Kartal sent a letter to *Vatan* saying that the government had had 1236 refugees settled in Kartal three and a half month before yet all the cultivable lands around the region were under the occupation of the native population and the refugees were facing starvation. *Vatan*, January 17, 1924.

<sup>587</sup> *Akşam*, December 28, 1924.

<sup>588</sup> İstanbul Governor Süleyman Sami Bey sent a note to Receb Bey, the Minister of Internal Affairs, saying that the food aid for those refugees refusing to leave the shelters was cut in accordance with the orders of him. BCA, 272..00.00.11 — 19.92..23.



international exchange bureaucracy over the question of exchangeable Constantinopolitan Greeks, as discussed earlier. On December 26, using as a pretext the Greek government's treatment of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace, the cabinet decided to act in the spirit of "reciprocity" (*mukabele-i bilmisil*),<sup>589</sup> which meant an urgent transfer of exchangeable Constantinopolitan Greeks to Greece. This decision created excitement among the refugees. On December 30, the general secretariat of the Exchange Association sent a message to congratulate and thank the prime minister saying:<sup>590</sup>

Despite the deep and continuous good will of our government the Lausanne Treaty, which was signed by the victorious and glorious bayonets of our great holy military, have never been implemented properly and thoroughly by the defeated Greeks since last year. Because of this, our racial brothers and sisters (*ırkdaşlarımız*), both exchangee and and non-exchangeable, have suffered tremendous losses and engulfed in misery and disasters. On behalf of hundreds and thousands of exchangee living in pain in the wounded bosom of the motherland we congratulate from the bottom of our heart and enthusiastically clap our beloved government, which met the requirement of putting an end to the intolerable situation of its compatriots.

Despite the mediation attempts and the decisions of the government, the problems at the shelters persisted. Indeed, they seemed to gotten have markedly worse. In January 1925, they

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<sup>589</sup> *Vatan*, December 27, 1924. *Cumhuriyet*, December 30, 1924. The press was also pushing the government for reciprocal treatment of the Constantinopolitan Greeks. *Resimli Ay*, a weekly pictorial, took the desperate situation of the Muslim refugees to its cover several times and compared them to the allegedly untroubled lives of the Constantinopolitan Greeks. For the concept of reciprocity in the Greco-Turkish concept see Samim Akgönül, "Sources of Reciprocity: Treaty of Lausanne," in *Reciprocity : Greek and Turkish Minorities Law, Religion and Politics*, ed. Samim Akgönül, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2008), 1–38.

<sup>590</sup> BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 123.877..14.

"Büyük mukaddes ordumuzun muzaffer ve şanlı süngüleriyle imzalanan Lozan Muahedesi'nin Mübadele-i Ahali İtilafnamesi bir seneden beri mağlub Yunanlılar tarafından hükümetimizin derin ve sürekli hüsn-i niyetlerine rağmen bir türlü dürtüst ve tam olarak tadbik edilmemiştir. Bu yüzden gerek mübadil ve gerek gayr-i mübadil ırkdaşlarımız sayısız zararlara uğramış sefalet ve felaket içerisinde kalmıştır. Artık milletdaşlarının bu tahammülfersa vaziyetlerine bir nihayet vermek lüzumunu hissederek İstanbul Rumlarına mukabele-i bil misli yapmaya karar veren sevgili hükümetimizi anavatanın yaralı bağrında muzdarip yaşayan yüz binlerce mübadil namına bu hakperest kararından dolayı tüm kalbimizle tebrik eder ve hararetle alkışlarız."

made the headlines again. According to newspaper reports, the refugees neither went to their resettlement sites nor left the shelters. After an exclusive that *Vatan* published on January 13, 1925 the debate restarted and it raged for weeks. The headline of the newspaper was “Our refugees at Ahırkapı Dying.”<sup>591</sup> According to the newspaper, the sanitary conditions at the shelter had not improved and that, among 1307 refugees who were staying at the Ahırkapı shelter, over the previous ten days, 28 had died, 15 of whom were younger than 7 years old. The main cause of death was pneumonia and it was becoming an epidemic. At the shelter, the reporter talked to many refugees, who vividly described their living conditions as well as their expectations. A male refugee, for example, told him that he had recently lost his three children. The youngest was 20 months old and the others were 4 and 10. The reporter also talked to two female refugees. One of them directly criticized the members of the parliament for not paying attention to their tragedy and for proposing legislations for promoting an increase in the country’s population instead of protecting the already existing one. She also underlined their specific situation, which had become most pertinent element of their identity by saying “Please, I am begging you, sir, do not forget to write that down: We are not immigrants asking for alms, panhandling for help. We are exchangees, exchangee, sir [*Bizler mübadiliz, mübadiliz efendim*]. We claim our rights.” As stated by the reporter, another female refugee’s plight exemplified the governments bureaucratic failures. This old woman had been staying at the shelter for two months. Although she had a son working as a clerk at the İzmir-Kasaba railway, with whom she could live, she was not granted permission to leave the shelter. Four days before the reporter arrived, she made another

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<sup>591</sup> *Vatan*, January 13, 1925. *Cumhuriyet* reported this as news with a similar title “Refugees Dying.” According to this newspaper, death toll reached to 38 and 21 of them were children. *Cumhuriyet*, January 13, 1925.

application to the governor for permission to leave, but, at the time of the interview, her application was still pending.

This detailed story re-attracted the media attention on the question of shelters. The newspaper underlined the fact that, if the problem remained unresolved, the refugees were adamant about occupying Greek, or even Muslim properties.<sup>592</sup> *Vakit*, on January 15, interviewed the director and the doctor of the Ahırkapı shelter.<sup>593</sup> Hamid Bey, the director, insisted that the accusations about his negligence were false. According to the information given by Hamid Bey, there were 1277 refugees at the shelter, 384 of whom had arrived only the day before. Most of the refugees had already been given notice of leave, and only 279 refugees had yet to receive their notices. 410 refugees refused to leave the shelter for their permanent resettlement sites, and so the director cut off their access to the food service (900 grams of bread per day for adults and 450 grams of bread per day for children). The director also mentioned that, for heating there were four stoves, and four janitors were taking care of the shelter. On the other hand, according to the medical doctor at the shelter, Halid Bey, the mortality rate was particularly high either. He said “We take care of the patients to the best of ability. Every day 40-45 patients are medically examined.” After listening to the officials, the reporter visited the dormitory. What he observed contradicted what he had heard from the director and the doctor. There were four stoves at the dormitory, as the director had told, but only two of them worked, and they were barely functional. The refugees at the dorm told him that in the last two days alone seven people had died at the shelter—and they even gave him their names. Süleyman Sami Bey, the governor,

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<sup>592</sup> As mentioned before, the Exchange Association issued a statement of an intention of refugees to occupy Greek property in İstanbul in September 1924. See *İleri*, September 19, 1924.

<sup>593</sup> *Vakit*, January 15, 1925.

responded to the questions of *Cumhuriyet*, by asking if those claims had been true, why the refugees would have refused to leave the shelters.<sup>594</sup>

The interest of the press slowly but surely turned into a campaign that questioned the ability of the local administration and the central government. Given the tense political atmosphere in Turkey, the government started acting less tolerantly towards the press and the demands of the refugees. The governor of İstanbul sent a disclaimer to the newspaper *Vatan* and denied the claims of the newspapers.<sup>595</sup> Süleyman Sami Bey repeated that it was necessary for the refugees to leave the shelters and insisted that it was acceptable to cut off their food aid to compel them to leave. Finally, he denied that at the shelters there were unsanitary with epidemics of pneumonia or any other contagious diseases, and he claimed that the reported number of the deceased were inflated. The newspaper published the governor's note, most probably because the law required them to do so, but just below it published additional results of their investigations not only supporting the claims they had published before, but also providing new information and details regarding the tragic situation of the refugees at the shelters. According to the newspaper, although the refugees had stopped being insistent about their demands to stay in İstanbul and accepted that they had to go to their assigned resettlement sites after the horrible treatment towards them at the shelters, the government was refusing to send them by saying that there were not available sites for them for the time being. The newspaper also reported that there was a serious fuel shortage at the shelters and this caused life-threatening heating problems during the winter months.<sup>596</sup> But this was one of the minor onslaughts of the newspaper on the

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<sup>594</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, January 15, 1925.

<sup>595</sup> *Vatan*, January 16, 1925.

<sup>596</sup> This was also brought up by *Cumhuriyet* on January 13, 1925.

governor. The biggest one was the publication of a table (See Table 3-1) with the names and ages of the refugees who died at the Ahırkapı shelter and whose deaths the governor denied.

**Table 3-1:** The refugees who died at the Ahırkapı shelter

Name	Age	Name	Age
Mukadder	1	Mustafa	5
Saime	3	Saliha	5
Ömür	7	Kenan	1,5
Ahmed	2,5	Saime	3
Kudret	1,5	Ali	1
Sadiye	4	Fatma	6
Safiye	11	Meryem	20
Naciye	2	Hüseyin	45
Hatice	40	Rabia	22
Tahir	2	Bahriye	1 month
Mehmet	3	İbrahim	45
Sabiha	5	Yusuf	1,5
Arife	50	Fatma	1
Ümmiye	2	İbrahim	3,5

The newspaper also reported that photographers were not allowed in the shelters any more. The visual images of the destitute refugees at the shelters was at least as effective as the facts in making the stories more “appealing” for the public. The ban on photographers

constituted a radical censorship of the press. Before they were silenced, one last piece on the shelters was the one published by *Cumhuriyet*.<sup>597</sup> According to the newspaper, the result of the inspection of the shelters at İplikhane and Ahırkapı conducted by Celal Bey, the general secretary of the Red Crescent, and İsmail Besim Paşa, the general inspector of the same association, was very positive about the conditions at the shelters. İsmail Besim Paşa said that the condition of the refugees was quite satisfactory and that they had found it very pleasing. *Karagöz*, the satirical weekly magazine, criticized the “lockdown” policy of the government on the shelters on January 21. In *Karagöz*’s cartoon, the shelter was pictured as an overcrowded hovel, out of the windows of which the half-dead refugees lean. In front of the building, underneath there is a skull and a bone representing only the dead manage to come out of the shelter. On the building there is a signboard that reads “Ahırkapı Misafirhanesi” (Ahırkapı Shelter) and just below the gate of the shelter is situated under the signboard and the gate is “secured” with a ridiculously big padlock. Before the gate there is an officer standing determined not to let anybody in or out. The correspondents piling in front of the building ask the officer “For God’s sake officer, open that door and let us see in what conditions our refugees live.” The officer replies “What would you expect to see? Praise be! They are all fighting fit. They wine and dine and then lie around.”

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<sup>597</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, January 19, 1925.



**Figure 3–4:** “Praise be! They are all fighting fit!”  
**Source:** “Maşallah hepsi turp gibi!,” *Karagöz 1758*, January 21, 1925, 4.

Although the press lost its appetite for the shelters problem, some politicians had not. A deputy from İstanbul, Hamdullah Suphi Bey, brought up the issue by putting a parliamentary question about the situation at the shelters. On January 26, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Cemil Bey, answered this question.<sup>598</sup> According to the minister, 5700 refugees needed urgent help and 1000 of them (widowed women) had already been transferred to the resettlement areas, particularly to Uşak and Kütahya, where they could earn their life after learning carpet weaving.

<sup>598</sup> TBMMZC, II12/2 - 41, 326-28.

From the minister's answer it was understood that the transfer of the refugees from İstanbul to their assigned resettlement sites had started. Cemil Bey denied the numbers regarding the mortality rates at the shelters. Cemil Bey's answer did not satisfy the other members of the parliament, particularly Tunalı Hilmi Bey and Hamdullah Suphi Bey, the poser of the initial question, were very vocal during the debate. Hamdullah Suphi Bey asked some additional question to clarify what he had meant in his original question. Hamdullah Suphi asked about the woman and her baby, who had frozen to death at the Ahırkapı shelter. He also asked the minister to answer why the questions and appeals of the refugees were ignored and what caused the state of disorder at the Ahırkapı and İplikhane shelters. Hamdullah Suphi's other question was if law enforcement officers had transferred them by force. The minister again accused the refugees at the shelters of not following the government's orders to leave for their resettlement sites and he rejected the accusations of police harassment.

As it is seen, the Exchange Association mediated between the state and refugees. While doing so, they prepared comprehensive reports, made proposals to solve the problems emerging during the settlement process and to take part in the decision-making processes. After the rally in August 1924, given the aggressive attitude of the state, Exchange Association adopted a "controlled tension" strategy — to keep the political tension on a low flame, allowing themselves to attain a freedom of movement in politics. While doing so in addition to detailed reports, proposals etc, refugees either through their self-organizations or on their own collectively sent petitions to different levels of bureaucracy. Finally, the press came to play an important role in keeping the issue of the ways that the refugees were being treated prominent in the public's eye.

### **3.4 Collective petitions**



There are two types of documents that can give insights into the refugees' experience of the exchange, the settlement process and their treatment by the Turkish government, and they are *tasfiye talepnamesi* (certificates for the liquidation of property) and petitions<sup>599</sup>. The liquidation certificates are rich in content, showing the quantity and quality of the properties abandoned by the refugees from Greece. Yet, as mentioned earlier, the authenticity of these documents remained one of the major problems during the resettlement process. Most of the refugee petitions are, again, about compensation demands, property conflicts, complaints about settlement sites, government malpractice, corrupt civil servants and permission for migration; others contain questions regarding the ambiguous points in the execution of the population exchange, such as if women recently converted to Islam were subject to the population exchange, or not. Though very few in number, there are also petitions collectively written by refugees and addressing state offices and/or officials to express their grievances, expectations and rarely their appreciation. The profusion of petitions can, of course, be easily correlated with the depth of the misery of refugees. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as a sign of refugees' strategy for outmaneuvering local bureaucracy and reaching out to higher echelons of the state institutions and, as shown above, to even to the president. In this section I investigate three examples of collective petitions written by refugees and sent to Ankara. The first example is related to where I ended the discussion in the first section of this chapter. After the failure of the government policy and its exposure in the parliament and consequently abolishment of the Ministry of Exchange under the pressure from refugees, the Exchange Association prepared a *gravamen* and sent it to

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<sup>599</sup> Here I use the word petition as an umbrella term for requests, supplications and demands. The petitions written by the exchangees were problematized and utilized as a source by Morack. She too concludes that refugee petitions can be considered as a manifestation of the collective identity among the refugees of the population exchange. Morack, *The Dowry of the State?*, 338-39.

the parliament. The second example is a petition from Cretan refugees, who, for reasons I will discuss, felt the need to express in writing their loyalty to the motherland. The third example is an *istirhamnâme* (supplication) written by a group of refugees settled in İstanbul. Although this third example falls out of our time span, it reflects the fact that refugees' problems persisted in 1927.

The first *gravamen* was published by the Exchange Association and not only was it sent to the parliament but also published and distributed. I have already discussed how refugees reacted to the idea of closing the Ministry of Exchange while the parliamentary debates on this issue were still ongoing. As I mentioned there, the Exchange Association held a congress to discuss the future of the exchange bureaucracy, at which a *gravamen* was produced. It was immediately published as a pamphlet to make public their proposal regarding how the exchange bureaucracy should be restructured. The *gravamen* was entitled *Mübadillerin İstedikleri - Mübadillerin derdlerini dinlemek vazifenizdir* (Demands of refugees - it is your responsibility to listen to the troubles of refugees).<sup>600</sup> Although it was numbered as the sixth publication of the Exchange Association (“*Mübadele Cemiyeti Neşriyatı Aded 6*”), hitherto no other publications of the association have been unearthed. The *gravamen* personally addresses deputies and starts with the salutation “honorable deputy” (*muhterem mebus*). It is four pages long. Although it does not bear any date, from other sources,<sup>601</sup> it is understood that it was produced in the congress held by the Exchange Association on November 2. In the *gravamen*, the Exchange Association insisted on the establishment of an incorporated company operated directly by refugees to manage the abandoned properties and to organize fundraising events. The Exchange Association further

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<sup>600</sup> The pamphlet was found by chance at a secondhand bookseller.

<sup>601</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, November 4, 1924.

underlined the need for comprehensive legislation for the successful completion of the resettlement process. The “project” —as *Cumhuriyet* called it— that the Exchange Association proposed to the government consisted of fourteen articles that can be summarized as the following:

After the abolition of the ministry, the exchange bureaucracy was to be reorganized around a general directorate governed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Under the presidency of the general director, a commission called *Türk Mübadilleri Merkez Komisyonu* (Central Commission of Turkish Exchanges) would be established and its membership predominantly refugees (Article 1). The total number of refugee representatives on the commission should be eight and it should be distributed as one for Thessaly and Epirus, one for the islands, two for eastern Macedonia, two for central Macedonia and two for western Macedonia (Article 2). The commission’s mission was to administer the entire resettlement scheme of the government and, in the event of disputes, the commission is to decide in favor of refugees (Article 3). It should have five sub-commissions for agriculture, health, relocation and construction (Article 4). Resettlement commissions were to be founded and they were administered by the highest civilian authority either *kaymakams* or governors and the other members were to be assigned by the central commission (Article 5). Two councilors were to be assigned to each resettlement commission (Article 6). To each resettlement site, five doctors were to be assigned. They had to be mobile to address the needs of the resettlement site (Article 7). The organization of the bureaucracy for townships were to be the same in terms of their organizations. Only one councilor was to be assigned to the related resettlement commissions (Article 8). In sub-districts a voluntary commission was to be formed (Article 9). In each locality, in order to check the authenticity of the documents submitted by refugees document examination committees were to

be established in each resettlement site (Article 10). The civilian authorities were charged with the execution of the decisions of the local commissions (Article 11). Although there was an administrative hierarchy ranging from local commissions to the central body, in the actual resettlement sites the resettlement commissions were to be fully in charge of abandoned properties (Article 12). The government was to draw the budget of the central commission up and the local commissions' budgets were allocated by the local financial offices (Article 13). When the distribution of the properties abandoned by the Greeks to the Turkish refugees was completed, the mission of the central commission was completed too (Article 14).

As can be seen, the project of the Exchange Association aims at bridging the central government and the local branches of the exchange bureaucracy through resettlement and document examination commissions and other local institutions and adjustments. Moreover, with this proposal the Exchange Association obviously tried to make refugees, in general, and itself especially more influential in the decision-making processes.

Petitions can provide insights into the minds of groups producing them. This gravamen, as a document sent to the higher ranks of bureaucracy and addressing directly to the deputies, shifts between its deferential style, aiming to avoid any confrontation or conflict with the government, and its strongly-worded and at times- denunciatory tone. In other words, on the one hand, the gravamen explicitly expresses the intend of the Exchange Association not to question the existing power structure, while on the other, it strenuously opposes the government's resettlement policy and introduces itself as a corrective body.

The demands of refugees organized by the Exchange Association were not "revolutionary" but rather directed at publicizing the immediate concerns of refugees, such as housing, distribution of the abandoned properties, bridging the gap between Ankara and

resettlement sites. Why the Exchange Association held a congress, prepared such a plan and submitted it to the government and deputies in Ankara can also be explained by their wish to show its self-confidence boosted by the public support that they had secured. Therefore, this gravamen was a snapshot of the view of not only what refugees wanted, but also how organized they were and which organization represented them. Finally, regarding this gravamen, by looking at how it was drawn up, we can say that the preparation of this document is closely related to the right to assemble in the name of an association. As mentioned earlier, the Exchange Association convoked refugees and held congresses to draw up and discuss such texts and to participate indirectly in national politics. Within the boundaries strictly set by the Ankara government, the Exchange Association tried to expand the popular politics in scope.

Besides the fact that petition drives can be initiated by groups or individuals in order to express their grievances, petitions can be solicited by state officials, thus giving people an organized avenue for doing so. Yet sometimes petitioning can be a means of manipulation. The second petition is an example of this kind and it has a particularly interesting story, which potentially sheds light on state-society relations in the early republican period, and on the relationship between the Exchange Association and refugees. The developments that led to this petition being produced started with the inauguration of the Bursa branch of the Exchange Association on October 1, 1924. The general secretary of the Association, Ekrem Bey, on his return to İstanbul, gave an interview to *Vakit* on October 3.<sup>602</sup> He summarized the situation in Bursa, saying that the refugees resettled in the center of Bursa had almost no problems at all and that, in a short span of time, they had become economically productive. But in the two districts of Bursa, there were serious malpractices, irregularities and violations committed by the state

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<sup>602</sup> *Vakit*, October 3, 1924.

officials. For example, there was an incident in which some civil servants seized approximately 3.5 million olive trees seized under their control that they were supposed to distribute among the newly settled families. In his interview, Ekrem Bey underlined the fact that not too long ago the *kaymakam* of Gemlik was demoted due to his malfeasance, yet he still remained employed in the office of resettlement. The chairperson also claimed that the former *kaymakam* exacted money from refugees. After this interview, on October 5, 115 refugees from Mudanya and 35 refugees from Dereköy sent a petition to the *Kaymakam* of Mudanya.<sup>603</sup> All signees were from Candia, as openly stated in their petition. They refuted the ungrounded allegations of the chairperson of the Exchange Association and accused him of presenting himself as a member and representative of the community of Cretan refugees in a self-proclaimed way (*kendisine paye vermek*). It is interesting that in the petition Cretan refugees underlined their loyalty to the state and declared that they were ready to sacrifice their lives as they had not hesitated to do in Crete for three centuries. A copy of this petition was immediately sent to the governor's office in Bursa with a cover letter signed by the *kaymakam* and the chairperson of the Commission of Reconstruction and Resettlement. As made clear in the cover letter, a copy of the petition had been sent to *Vakit* with the same letter as a disclaimer.<sup>604</sup> From the *kaymakam*'s letter it is easily understood that the petition was initiated by the *kaymakam* in order to deny the allegations of corruption and malpractice in Mudanya. He clearly stated that the testimony of signees made no bones about the unfounded allegations. On October 12, the governor of Bursa, Kemaleddin Bey, sent the copies of the petition and the *kaymakam*'s letter to the Ministry of Exchange with a short note.

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<sup>603</sup> BCA, 272.0.0.11 — 19.97..27.

<sup>604</sup> In the cover letter the *kaymakam* wrote that it had been said that 160 refugees had signed letter but he personally counted only 150 signatures.

This sequence of events and documents gives us clues on a number of points. First, the signees' utilization of this petition as a gesture of loyalty, conformity and devotion compels us to think about the motivation of this maneuver. To understand this, the meaning of loyalty in the political lexicon of the nation-state should be clarified. Although there can be various modes of loyalty, national loyalty can be described as the connection that one feels towards a particular nation. It fosters a sense of identity and belonging for the members of a particular nation.<sup>605</sup> As Eric Hobsbawm mentions in his *Nations and Nationalism*, the nation, as a subjective phenomenon, has a never-ending monopolistic claim over its members' loyalty.<sup>606</sup> Considering the fact that the nation-state presents itself to be the authentic representative of the nation's collective interests, this makes the nation-state a loyalty-invoking organization the power of which can be measured by an index of loyalty-instilling and -commanding capacity. Both the nation and the nation-state prioritize loyalty among the virtues of the citizen. The citizen, on the other hand, is a person who is subject to perpetual loyalty tests, in which failure results in stiff penalty. Ernst Renan's famous metaphor of "daily plebiscite"<sup>607</sup> that is used in the conceptualization of the nation can be rethought in the light of the concept of loyalty test: The loyalty tests set by the nation-state is a way of gauging the daily affirmation of the citizen's *ex vi termini* membership of the nation. Such affirmation is needed for the coherence, or congruence<sup>608</sup> that joins together all its members. Therefore, the loyalty that the nation-state demands is always an active and apparent one. Marginal groups claiming recognition with the nation and seeking

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<sup>605</sup> James Connor, *The Sociology of Loyalty* (Boston: Springer US, 2007), 57.

<sup>606</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 68.

<sup>607</sup> Ernst Renan, "Qu'est-Ce Qu'une Nation?," in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 17.

<sup>608</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008), 1.

ways of integration, like refugees in many cases, generally face the question of how they are absorbed into the common body and they do not constitute a minority and are confronted by a stronger suspicion about their loyalty. In other words, core groups —the nation— exert pressure to them to develop, encourage and validate their emergent loyalty and devotion to the nation-state before the distance from their marginal status to citizenship is covered. In her brief but important essay, Hannah Arendt underlines the fact that knowing how to prove loyalty is an obvious advantage for refugees wanting to be assimilated to a new national identity.<sup>609</sup>

The Cretan refugees' petition can be seen an answer to the loyalty demand of the nation-state and the point whether the petition was initiated by the *kaymakam* himself or not is not important after a certain point. Because it is not very likely that the *kaymakam* made the refugees signed the petition without their consent or by coercion. This consent could have already been derived from the pressure that the state exerted upon their citizen through perpetually demanding loyalty. The nation-state is not an abstraction but a functioning organization on daily basis the citizens have to deal with. This organization is represented by state officials of various rankings. In our case it seems that having lost their homes, savings, profession and privileged positions in local networks and living on the borderline of destitution, the Cretan refugees read the chairperson of the Exchange Association's intervention as a threat that could potentially deteriorate their already dismal situation. Perhaps because they felt fear and anxiety in the face of the possibility that the state could have interpreted the chairperson's comments as a challenge, and identified their community with the association. That is why they immediately distanced themselves from the association, thanked the *kaymakam* for his services and demonstrated their

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<sup>609</sup> Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees," in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston: Harcourt Brace, 1996), 117.



national loyalty and ideological agility. At the end of the day, this person, who was both the administrative chief and the director of the local resettlement office, was not only merely a representative of the nation-state but also the personification of it that the signees had to face on daily bases, and so challenging him could easily call into question their loyalty. On the other hand, it is logical to assume that the refugees saw this as an opportunity to negotiate with the local authorities for improved living conditions by simply siding with them. Therefore, the signing of such a petition was not necessarily an indication of lack of agency and their objectivization.

Secondly, why Cretans, and not any other refugee group, responded in this way is an interesting and possibly informative question that I will address at length in the next chapter, but for now suffice it to say that this was related to the issue of loyalty, and in this case to language. Most of the Cretan refugees spoke a Cretan dialect of Greek and knew no Turkish when they arrived in their new homeland. Many of the first-generation Cretan refugees, especially women, did not learn how to speak or read Turkish until the end of their lives, and when they did, they had a distinctive pronunciation. This linguistic “discrepancy” became a source of discrimination against them in matters of resettlement, daily life, employment, politics and social arrangements. As Ali Onay, an upper middle class first-generation Cretan refugee whom I interviewed told me, when they first arrived to Cunda island (Greek: *Μοσχονήσι*) from Rethymno, Crete, there were already refugees from Lesbos and that the Lesbians derogatorily called them “*yarım gavur*” (semi-infidel) and that they used their knowledge of Turkish as an advantage over the Cretans in the resettlement process.

The final example is the supplication (*istirhamname*) written and signed by 144 refugees.<sup>610</sup> It was written in 1927 and sent to the Grand National Assembly. The document was prepared after Mustafa Kemal's his famous speech on October 20, 1927, in which he *en passant* admitted the existence of some problems regarding resettlement. The petition is nine-page long and another six pages of signatures are attached to it. It is also possible to see the residential addresses of the signees.

The supplication begins with a general assessment of the refugees' current situation in İstanbul. They say that, although almost three years had passed since their migration to the city, only a proportion of them had been resettled successfully, and that a large number of them were still unable to receive adequate compensation and could not take advantage of the rights granted to them, and so they remained helpless. Prior to their migration, they had already been experiencing difficult conditions in Greece, particularly after the "Anatolian Debacle" ("*Anadolu Hezimet*") and they had come to the motherland penniless. The petitioners underlined that continuation of their misery would put an extra burden on the economy of the county and they felt particularly uncomfortable, since they continued to be mostly consumers instead of producers. Then they provide a detailed critique of the existing legal framework with regard to the resettlement and compensation, and how the status quo avoided a permanent solution to the problem. But, for them, such important matters were held in abeyance pending further planning and measures that would simplify the existing legal framework and concentrate on the most

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<sup>610</sup> *İstanbul'a Müretteb Mübadillerin Büyük Millet Meclisi'ne Takdim Eyledikleri İstirhamnamedir* (İstanbul: Hamid Matbaası, 1927). This document was presented by me at the 1st International Symposium on the Population Exchange at the Aegean University (İzmir) on May 8, 2014. I could not locate the original copy of the supplication in the Turkish archives.

urgent problems. The refugees asked the government to reform the legal and bureaucratic structure to solve those problems.<sup>611</sup>

Their suggestions for doing so were very detailed and particularized by giving the number of the laws and regulations, their precise date of enactment and underlining the specifically problematic aspect of those legislations. In addition to such detailed feedback, the language of the document had a very arcane and technical vocabulary —especially when it referred to the legal regulations and particular practices—in comparison to the other examples that we have been discussing to this point. Both the legal knowledge behind the text and the phraseology suggest that those who actually wrote the petition were well-educated and familiar with the bureaucratic practices and legal jargon. Another point is that it is much more deferential in tone in comparison to the first example, which is a similar document in terms of its content. Even a comparison between the titles of the two documents is informative. The title of the first document brings the demands and the will of the refugees as a unified, collective subject and authoritatively present their demands to the attention of the parliament. On the other hand, the second document does not directly demand but gives certain advice to parliament. While doing

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<sup>611</sup> “Mabihi’l-iftiharımız, münci-i yeganemiz Gazi namdar Mustafa Kemal Paşa hazretlerinin senelik nutuklarında kayıt ve işaret buyurmuş oldukları İskân ve muhacirin ve nüfus mesaili dilhah-ı ali-i riyasetpeahları veçhile halledilmeye çalışılmakta ve bu babde sarf-ı mesai ve mikdarat edilmekte ise de kavanin ve nizamat-ı mevcudenin şumulli ve vasi’ olması ve tatbikatında müşkilat çekilmesi bu arzu-i alinin husuluna ve mübadil ve muhacirinin refah ve saadetine mani teşkil etmektedir. İlerde nüfus, muhacerat, iskan, mesaili için hükümet-i cumhuriyet-i mübeccelimizce alınmakta olan tertibat-ı ikmal ve itmam edilmek üzere şimdilik bu mesail-i mühimmenin bir kısmını teşkil eden mübadele ve iskan işlerinin teshili maksadıyla balada arz ve izahına cür’et-yâb olduğumuz mevad ve nikatın nazar-ı dikkate alınarak bu husus için mevki-i tatbiki vaz edilmiş kavanin ve nizamat ve talimatın tadil ve tevsiyle işlerin daha sürat ve intizam ve hakkaniyetle inkişafına ve biz mübadillerin böyle memleketin bir köşesinde atıl ve müstehlek bir vaziyette uzun müddet kalarak hem şahsi mesai ve kazancımızın heder olmasına ve hem hazine-i millete daha nafi eller ve vücutlar sırasında müstahsil bir halde çalışmamıza ve bu suretle dışarı olduğumuz zaruret ve sefaletten bir an evvel tahsis buyurulduğumuz memleketin mikdaratını idare eden Büyük Millet Meclisimizle onun kuvve-i icraiyesi olan heyet-i muhterem-i vekileden talep ve istidaya ictisar eylediğimiz muhat-ı ilm-i alileri buyuruldukda ve ol babda emr-u irade efendilerimizdir.”

this, the refugees do not present themselves as a separate community but as a part of the nation, and they try to drive forward their interests as the part of the collective interest of the nation. This is due to the changes in the political climate within the three years between two documents.

In these three years, the Kemalist leadership managed to purge the dissenters and monopolized the political power in its hands. The first gravamen, as shown above, was prepared and sent to the parliament on the eve of the formation of an opposition party in the parliament. Obviously, the shakiness of the political power and the relative autonomy of the parliament *vis-à-vis* the Kemalist leadership increased the radius of action of the Exchange Association, opened a window for them to become a lobbying group and created an appetite for further political participation. In 1927, however, the Exchange Association had already been shut and there was no other alternative organization that could speak on behalf of the refugees and after the Long-1924 of the republic until 1930 the country was governed without allowing any parliamentary opposition. The non-institutionalized character of the refugees' step was so evident that, with a note at the end of the petition, they stated that the original copy of the signatures was entrusted to Bedreddin Beyzade İsmail Şefik Bey,<sup>612</sup> who lived in 7 Soğancı Street, Firuzağa. Finally, in the

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<sup>612</sup> After the dissolution of the short-lived Free Republican Party in 1930, Mustafa Kemal undertook a nationwide tour and upon his return to Ankara he decided to keep the single-party system and instead of forming an artificial opposition party to allocate a quota for the independent deputies in order to reinforce the legitimacy of the parliament by increasing its representative capacity and creating the impression that the new regime was granting to the citizens a modicum of free choice. Accordingly, the Republican People's Party did not present candidates in some cities. The quota for the independent deputies was limited to 30 candidates in 22 cities, which correspond to 9.5% of the total seats. Totally 194 people stood for the for 30 seats. Four independent seats were allocated for İstanbul and Bedreddin Beyzade İsmail Şefik Bey was one of 55 candidates that would run for those four seats. On April 23, 1931 he made a brief statement to *Cumhuriyet*. Bedreddin Beyzade İsmail Şefik Bey was introduced as "from the farmers" (*zürradan*). In his statement Bedreddin Beyzade İsmail Şefik Bey said that his ancestors had been dealing with agriculture for 500 years and they had always been engaged in fighting for the motherland, politics and agriculture and in the light of this tradition he would work for cultivators and non-exchangeable immigrants. He also emphasized that he was a republican [*Cumhuriyet*, April 23, 1931]. İsmail Şefik Bey was not elected in the elections. For the 1931 elections see Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması (1923-1931)* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1992), 304-6. Kenan Olgun, "Türkiye'de Cumhuriyetin İlanından 1950'ye Genel Seçim Uygulamaları," *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi*

petition, unlike the other examples here, the refugees refer to Mustafa Kemal Paşa in a very praising or admiring tone: his excellency Mustafa Kemal Pasha — our source of pride, our only savior who is celebrated as ghazi (“*Mabihî ’l-iftiharımız, münci-i yeganemiz Gazi namdar Mustafa Kemal Paşa hazretleri*”). Although the petitioners addressed their demands to the parliament and the cabinet, the reference to Mustafa Kemal can be interpreted as a result of his increasing role on the political scene.

To sum the discussion so far; another means of political participation that the refugees utilized was collective petitions of different sorts addressed to those in positions of political power. Through soliciting signatures, the refugees participated in local or national dialogue over the issues regarding their fates, as well as the decision-making processes. It should be noted, however, that the main decision-making was very much and remained in the control of the state-agencies. Regardless of the results of these petitions, they constitute important sources that give us a chance to hear the refugees’ voices and they can give us some clues about their signees’ priorities and state of mind. Not only did petitioning and pamphleteering contribute to refugees’ participation into politics on a national level, but also such activities were instrumental in promoting intra-communal politics and participation. To prepare, discuss and sign these documents and proposals they held congresses with the participation of representatives from localities. Although here is not much information about how these elections took place, it is obvious that such attempts at participating in public sphere on a national level required the consolidation of intra-communal dialogue as well as political channels. By doing so, refugees utilized petitions to negotiate with or bypass local elites.

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*Dergisi* 27, no. 79 (March 2001): 14-16. Fethi Çoker lists the name of Bedreddin Beyzade İsmail Şefik Bey among the independent candidates in his *Türk Parlamento Tarihi*. Fethi Çoker, *Türk Parlamento Tarihi - TBMM 4. Dönem 1931-1935*, vol. 1 (Ankara: TBMM Vakfı Yayınları, 1996), 26.

### 3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the strategies of political participation that the refugees developed. As shown above, this is a hitherto-neglected subject in the existing literature. A large part of the scholarship on this issue inwardly treats refugeehood as a form of displacement not only from a place but also from agency. This presumption is coupled with the strongly emphasized political characteristic of the nascent Turkish republic, namely, the single-party regime with stillborn attempts to create a multi-party democracy. This presumption, by reducing the political sphere into party politics, thrusts non-conventional forms of political participation to the sidelines. Therefore, the refugees, like other subordinate social groups, were not only expelled from politics but also were stripped of agency and relegated to a subordinate position as objects in the game of high politics. This has resulted in a picture in which the refugees are painted as so unreal that they appear as be people of infinite adaptability. In this chapter, by investigating different refugee organizations and their activities, I showed that the refugees were not passive and submissive objects of politics; but were politically active subjects stepping forward to defend their rights. Especially by tracing the activities of the Exchange Association, some patterns of the refugees' political participation were made visible.

The Exchange Association was an organization aimed at solving some acute problems in the exchange process, while also trying to force some structural changes that would lead to the improvement of the conditions of the refugees and immigrants. But, most importantly, in this transitory period, the Long 1924, during which the parliament enjoyed a relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Kemalist leadership, the Exchange Association utilized the antagonism between these two

foci of power and became the champion of the refugee rights with special reference to the concepts of full citizenship (*tam vatandaş*), civil rights (*mülki haklar*) and property rights (*mülkiyet hakları*) in their official documents and emphasizing that those rights were granted to the refugees by international law and ensuing national legislation.

While doing this, the Exchange Association attempted to infiltrate into the single party system and negotiated with the government on several occasions. To support their cause, the Exchange Association intended to create a power base by unifying refugees and non-exchangeable Muslims around some urgent problems, such as public aids, problems of resettlement, and, most importantly, around the compensation issue. That was quite important for the Exchange Association, since the association never wanted to engage in an open confrontation with the government, not to undermine the authority of the central government, but to harmonize the future plans of the government with their demands by protecting and expanding—if possible their legal rights. The local branches of the Exchange Association witnessed reflections of political and economic rivalry in the country; thus, not only were these branches political agents, but also they were spheres of political struggle. In short, I can say that during the exchange process the Exchange Association was the most active self-organization of the refugees; that it tried to defend their civil and economic rights within a legal framework. However, in the end, the Exchange Association administration and members found themselves confronted by the government unintentionally. Probably, the rally and other efforts of the Exchange Association as a reaction to the violations against refugee rights were one of the most significant reasons underlying this confrontation; since the actions of the association were seen as a political intervention by the Kemalist leadership, which was among the uncrossable red lines. Although I could not find any particular document showing when and on what grounds the government shut

the association, it is logical to assume that the *Takrir-i Sükun* Law put an end to its existence. Considering the other activities of the Exchange Association and the refugees' attempts to have influence on decision-making processes, one can speculate that if it had been possible to create a lasting political channel in line with the Exchange Association's discourse, an important phase of Turkish modernization might have been reinforced with the idea of citizenship and civil rights, and as a result, met with the idea of pluralism earlier than was the actual case.

The discussion of political participation here is confined to the legal-political sphere. This is mostly because of the Exchange Association's obsession with legality. This obsession, in the absence of a political asylum, made the association itself vulnerable in the face of the will of political power, for which electoral constituency was not a concern. Moreover, we can say that the weakness of a socialist/communist movement, in contrast to the Greek case<sup>613</sup>, avoided radicalization of refugee politics when the refugees became dissatisfied with the situation and the limits of legality. Yet it should be mentioned here that there were some other attempts made by refugees that surpass the boundaries of the legal politics in the early republican period. Although the communist movement was weak and very few documents regarding the foundation of the communist movement in Turkey survive, there are traces that give us some clues regarding the role of the refugees and immigrants in the formation of the communist movement in Turkey. First of all, the press of the period affiliated with the CPT, such as Şefik Hüsnü's *Vazife*<sup>614</sup> (Mission) and İbrahim Hilmi Efendi's *Yoldaş*<sup>615</sup> (Comrade), paid great attention to the problems

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<sup>613</sup> This is discussed in the next chapter. For another discussion on the relation between Asia Minor refugees and the Communist Party of Greece see Aytek Soner Alpan, "Dönüm Noktasında Hayat ve Siyaset: Orak, Çekiç ve Mübadiller", *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.112, 2008,158-181.

<sup>614</sup> For *Vazife* see Tunçay, *Türkiye'de sol akımlar*, 515-50.

<sup>615</sup> For *Yoldaş* see Bursa Gazeteciler Cemiyeti, "Bursa Basınında Bir öncü: 'Yoldaşçı' İbrahim Efendi," *Dijital Mecmua*, no. 2 (March 2008): 4-17.



of refugees, ninety percent of whom were, according to *Vazife*,<sup>616</sup> poor when they left Greece, and their number was augmented by middle class people who were pauperized during the displacement. The communist press' interest did not remain unanswered. Atilla Akar, who interviewed the “first generation” communists and compiled these interviews in an important work on the history of the Communist Party of Turkey (CPT), *Bir Kuşağın Son Temsilcileri - “Eski Tüfek” Sosyalistler* (*Last representatives of a generation - Socialist “warhorses”*) underlines that in the foundation of the communist movement in Turkey a generation of socialists that immigrated from the former Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire were quite influential.<sup>617</sup> In the same book, Hayati Tözün, a member of the Communist Party of Turkey, who was born in Kozani in 1922 and known as *Patriyot*<sup>618</sup> Hayati, mentions that another well-known communist, Cazım Aktimur, who was of Cretan origin, had made lists of other jailed communists and their hometowns and according to these lists only after the wave of crackdown on the CPT in 1951 the communist from Anatolia, not of immigrant/refugee origin, constituted the majority of the imprisoned communists.<sup>619</sup> In her autobiography, Zehra Kosova, a symbolic figure of the communist and working-class movement in Turkey, explains the role of refugees from Greek Macedonia, particularly from Kavala like herself, in the revitalization of the tobacco

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<sup>616</sup> *Vazife*, November 10, 1923.

<sup>617</sup> Atilla Akar, *Bir kuşağın son temsilcileri - “Eski tüfek” sosyalistler*, (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1989), 37.

<sup>618</sup> *Patriyot* (patriot) is a word used to call Greek-speaking Muslim population of Greek Macedonia, generally known as *Valaades* or *Vallahades*, basically of Neapoli [Nasliç] and Grevena [Grebene] in Turkey. For Valaades/Patriyots see Giannis Glavinias, “Οι Βαλαάδες του Βοίου Κοζάνης την περίοδο 1912-1924 μέσα από εκθέσεις του υποδιοικητή της επαρχίας,” *Βαλκανικά Σύμμεικτα*, no. 12–13 (2001-2002): 145–69; Athanasia-Marina Tsetlaka, “Η αντίστροφη πορεία: οι μουσουλμάνοι πρόσφυγες,” in *To 1922 και οι πρόσφυγες μια νέα ματιά*, ed. Antonis Liakos (Athens: Nefeli, 2011), 171–90; Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger : How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (London: Granta Books, 2006), 186-7.

<sup>619</sup> Akar, “*Eski tüfek” sosyalistler*, 38.

production and industry in Turkey, which for a considerable time became one of the strongholds of the CPT. According to Kosova, the refugees resettled in Tokat introduced the production of tobacco to the town. She further relates that the workers of refugee origin in Tokat organized an illegal strike against their employer, who eventually came to a refugee coffeehouse to tell the workers that he would accept their demands.<sup>620</sup> These show that refugees did not only come into the radar range of the communists but they also joined the ranks of the communist movement and played a key role in its formation.

In sum, the refugees took part in the political sphere of the nascent republic by either founding organizations or joining and supporting the major opposition parties. Surveying the impact that refugee had on politics has been a marginal theme in modern Turkish historiography due to general negligence regarding the population exchange, the single party system's absorption and silencing of different voices, and the scattered refugees' lower visibility in comparison to other social categories, along with their inability to reflect their former communal bonds as a result of their dispersion. This chapter has presented new information on the refugees' channels of political participation. My analysis revises the current literature's superficial reading that overstresses the monolithic structure of Turkish politics and reducing politics to inter-party rivalry. The refugees did participate in political sphere actively not only using political parties as their platforms but by building their means of politics outside the "party politics".

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<sup>620</sup> Kosova, *Ben İşçiyim*, 17. For a study on the Romani people that were transferred to Turkey from northern Greece with the 1923 Greco-Turkish population exchange, their employment in tobacco agriculture and industry and their relationship to the CPT see Egemen Yılıgür, "Ethnicity, class and politicisation: Immigrant Roma tobacco workers in Turkey", *Romani Studies* 25 (01 Aralık 2015): 167-96.

## Chapter 4: The Greek/Orthodox Christian Case

Έι μουχατζίρ, τούρμα αγλά ιμτάτ γιόκτιρ κίμσετεν  
Τούρκιατεν πιζ κοβουλτούκ, χιτζ καπαχάτ ίμμετεν  
Γιουρτιμιζτάν, Γιουνάν τεγιού, Τουρκλέρ πιζί κοβτιλάρ  
Πουρτακινλάρ Τουρκτέν πετέρ, τζουμλεμίζι ουζτιλέρ  
Χεμ πογτιλάρ, χεμ σοϊτιλάρ, τζόκ περουσάν ιπιτιλέρ,  
Τζαγιμιζί, οβαλαρά, άτζ μεσκιανσίζ απτιλάρ.<sup>621</sup>

I. K., *Prosfygiki Foni*, October 5, 1924

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to go beyond a mere description of the wretched conditions that the refugees confronted and to analyze the political strategies that they developed in order 1) to defend their rights, 2) to solve their pressing problems and 3) to respond the anti-refugee prejudices of the native population. Their activities helped to transform the political sphere in Greece. In the existing literature, the political response of the refugees is generally explained either through their prewar political allegiances or solely in cultural terms. Also, many historians construe them as social reactive political players, who passively responded to political

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<sup>621</sup> *Turkish transliteration:* Ey muhacir durma ağla imdat yoktur, kimseden / Türkiye'den biz kovulduk, hiç kabahat etmeden / Yurdumuzdan, Yunan deyu, Türkler bizi kovdular / Burdakinler Türkten beter cümlemizi üzdüler / Hem boğdular, hem soydular, çok perişan ettiler, / Canımızı ovalara aç meskensiz attılar.

*English translation:* O refugee, hurry shed your tears, there is no help from anyone / We were expelled from Turkey, having caused not even a single harm / Calling us Greek, from our motherland the Turks made us leave / But people here are even worse than Turks, they made us grieve / They strangled and robbed us blind, and of us they did reave / Across the plains they scattered us, without a shelter for reprieve.

developments and the actions of others. Even though prewar political loyalties constituted a base for the refugees' political response, I argue that they tailored dynamic political strategies suited to their specific needs, and that they actively participated in politics through the existing political parties and by establishing refugee parties and organizations. In other words, rather than allowing others to make decisions for them, they started, for example, their own newspapers as vehicles to shape public opinion and to exert pressure on politicians.

The organization of the chapter is topical rather than chronological and is as follows. In the first section, an overview of the refugee issue and how refugees transformed the demographic, political, ideological, economic and social landscape of the country is presented. The second section provides information on the organizations that they formed in Greece to participate in the decision-making process, with a particular emphasis on 1) the all-refugee congresses, 2) their strategies for political participation and 3) their relationship to the existing political structures. The third section concentrates on a well-known episode, the establishment of the Second Hellenic Republic, and on their role in its formation. Although numerous scholars have discussed refugee support for the republic, my analysis is different because it relies mainly on hitherto neglected sources, like the refugee newspapers, and especially *Prosfygiki Foni*, which constitutes a unique source because it was written in Turkish with Greek characters. The fourth and final section of this chapter deals with the 1925 local election in Thessaloniki, which can be viewed as an early indicator of the defection of refugees from Venizelism. This act showed that refugees adopted a dynamical political strategy to defend their political interests.

#### **4.2 An overview of the refugee issue in the interwar period**

Kostas Kostis, a well-known Greek historian, claims that the impact of Greek defeat in Greek-Turkish War was so consequential that it is arguably the most important turning point in

the country's history. Inter-war Greece bore little or no relation to the Greece of the pre-Balkan wars period and was practically "another Greece." These dramatic changes resulted in the formation of a puzzle, as Kostis calls it, in the period between the end of the war in 1922 and the outbreak of the Greek-Italian War in 1940. Indeed, Greece in this period was economically war-torn, politically destabilized and socially in turmoil. The Greek state had to overcome problems that it had not encountered since independence, such as the problem of ethnic and other minorities.<sup>622</sup>

Considering the general political instability in the Balkans, one of the best markers to show the difference between pre- and post-war Greece may be demography. A comparison between the 1920 and 1928 censuses reveals the magnitude of the change: According to the 1920 census, the population of Greece was 5,536,375; in 1928 it was 6,204,684. In other words, between 1920–1928 the population of Greece increased by 12% even though the country became territorially much smaller —by approximately 14%.<sup>623</sup> As A. A. Pallis underlines, in the natural

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<sup>622</sup> Kostas Kostis, *Τα κακομαθημένα παιδιά της Ιστορίας. Η διαμόρφωση του νεοελληνικού κράτους 18ος-21ος αιώνας* (Athens: Polis, 2013), 604-5, 617.

<sup>623</sup> A. A. Pallis, "The Greek Census of 1928," *The Geographical Journal* 73, no. 6 (June 1, 1929): 543-44. Migration and refugees were not new phenomena for Greece. During and in the immediate aftermath of the Balkan Wars, Greece, which was never stable in terms of its population, witnessed a huge demographic reshuffle. The number of Muslims that fled from Greek Macedonia alone before the march of the allied Balkan forces was estimated at 10,000 and after peace was established, more than 100,000 Muslims left the area and were resettled in Eastern Thrace or on the Western coasts of Asia Minor. Many more of them started to flee before the advancing armies of the allied Balkan States in 1912. The non-Muslim people of the region were also deeply affected by the war. As a consequence of the Second Balkan War, (1) 15,000 Bulgarians from Macedonia, (2) 10,000 Greeks from the parts of Macedonia ceded to Serbia and Bulgaria, (3) 70,000 Greeks from Western Thrace dominated by Bulgaria, and (4) 46,764 Bulgarians from Eastern Thrace were forced to leave their homes. According to A. Pallis, between 1912 and 1924 there were 17 migratory tides that occurred in Macedonia and deeply affected the social and cultural structure of the region. Yet it remains an undisputed fact that the population movements in the Balkans were unprecedented in the history of Europe and were surpassed only by the tragedies of the Second World War. For the change of the demographic structure of Greece since its independence see Gallant, *Modern Greece*, 76-80. For population movements in Greece during and after the Balkan Wars see Alexander A. Pallis, "Racial Migrations in the Balkans during the Years 1912-1924", *The Geographical Journal*, 66/ 4 (October 1925), 317- 318. See also Dimitrije Djordjević, "Migrations during the 1912–1913 Balkan Wars and World War One", *Migrations in Balkan History*, (ed.) Ivan Ninić,

courses of events, such a territorial loss should have resulted in a decrease in population. This unexpected increase resulted from immigration, mainly people from Asia Minor, Thrace, Pontos, Russia and Bulgaria. The 1928 census recorded 1,221,849 newcomers to Greece 1,104,216 from Turkey (See Table—4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).<sup>624</sup> It should also be added that, at the same time, 456,946 Muslims and Bulgarians left Greece in accordance with the bilateral agreements for exchanging populations. But as the result of the military defeat in Anatolia and the subsequent agreements, a refugee problem emerged, and this is not surprising given that refugees constituted approximately 20% of the entire population. By the same token, as Alkis Rigos pointed out, the influx of so many immigrants was a demographic *rupture* unprecedented in Greece's history; in fact, it was a country better known for emigration than immigration.<sup>625</sup> As noted by Rigos, not only was every fifth person in the country a refugee, but half of the economically active population in the urban centers was of refugee-background.<sup>626</sup> As acknowledged by many observers, the Greek government was not, actually could not be, prepared for such a huge demographic change. This state of unpreparedness was one of the major obstacles to successful refugee resettlement in Greece.<sup>627</sup>

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Belgrade, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute for Balkan Studies 1989, 115-129. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 15. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, 175.

<sup>624</sup> For a discussion of population figures see Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 96-103.

<sup>625</sup> Alkis Rigos, *H B' Ελληνική Δημοκρατία 1924-1935 - Κοινωνικές διαστάσεις της πολιτικής σκηής*, 3rd ed. (Athens: Themelio, 1999), 224-25.

<sup>626</sup> Ibid.

<sup>627</sup> See for example A. Antoniadis, "Difficultés d'organisation du Service de L' Etablissement Des Réfugiés" 1924, Folder 7.2, Archive of Konstantinos Karavidas at the Gennadius Library.

**Table 4-1:** Number of refugees and natives in Greece

	Male	Female	Children under the age of 10	Total
<b>Refugees</b>	414,562 (33.9%)	464,015 (38%)	343,272 (28.1%)	<b>1,221,849 (20%)</b>
<b>Natives</b>	2,365,578 (47.5%)	2,449,142 (49.1%)	168,115 (3.4%)	<b>4,982,835 (80%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,780,140 (44.8%)</b>	<b>2,913,157 (47%)</b>	<b>511,387 (8.2%)</b>	<b>6,204,684</b>

**Source:** Ministry of National Economy, *Μηνιαίων Στατιστικών Δελτίων* 1, no. 8 (August 1929), 4.

**Table 4-2:** Number of refugees in Greece by years

Period	Number of refugees
1918-1920	70,000 (5.7%)
1920-1922	81,892 (6.7%)
1922-1923	696,039 (57%)
1923-1928	373,918 (30,6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,221,849</b>

**Source:** A. A Pallis, *Συλλογή των κυριότερων στατιστικών των αφορωσών την ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών και προσφυγικήν αποκατάστασιν μετά αναλύσεως και επεξηγήσεως* (Athens: n.d., 1929), 4.

**Table 4-3:** Number of refugees in Greece by place of origin

Place of Origin	Number of refugees
Asia Minor	626,954 (51.3%)
Thrace	256,635 (21%)
Pontos	182,169 (14.9%)
Constantinople	38,458 (3.2%)
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,104,216 (90.3%)</i>
Bulgaria	49,027 (4%)
Russia	58,526 (4.8%)
Other Places	10,080 (0.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,221,849</b>

**Source:** A. A Pallis, *Συλλογή των κυριότερων στατιστικών των αφορωσών την ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών και προσφυγικήν αποκατάστασιν μετά αναλύσεως και επεξηγήσεως* (Athens: n.d., 1929), 4.

It should also be added that the overwhelming majority of the arrivals suffered from complete material and social deprivation. The depiction of *Nea Anatoli* captures the dimensions of the deprivation of the refugees leaving Anatolia for Greece via Constantinople. On February 15, 1923, the newspaper called for urgent action to address the initial stages of the refugee crisis and appealed particularly to the Constantinopolitan Greeks.

Refugees!

Refugees in Selimiye need first and foremost clothing as well as bread. They are in danger of purulent meningitis because they all are infested with lice and it is reasonable to assume that the contagion of this disease put all of us in danger. [...] Those living in their homes with inner peace, please consider this. Parents, think about refugee parents and their children. If you are not able to help by supplying them money or bread, then, at least, spare a piece of clothing of yours or of your children's and try to collect from your neighbors and your friends whatever you can. Even this smallest piece of aid would serve as if the soldier had given water to Jesus Christ instead of weed.

Is there a more suitable time to practice Jesus Christ's word enjoining 'those who have two pieces of clothes should give one of them to those who do not have'?

Unless we remember our saviors' words, what will our Christianity become? Is it not a shame for the Christians of Stanbul to watch Christian refugees perishing for hunger and cold before their eyes?

After their arrival in Greece, refugees continued to face hardships and obstacles.

According to the data provided by the League of Nations, the first effects of the refugee influx were dramatic. In the first ten months, 70,000 refugees died of disease or malnutrition.<sup>628</sup> In the quarantine sites, where refugees stayed temporarily, the death toll was significantly higher. For instance, Makronisi, where many Pontic refugees were quarantined, became a mass grave for thousands of refugees. As stated in a letter a survivor sent to *Rizospastis*, at an early stage in the exodus from Anatolia, 40,000 refugees lost their lives while still in quarantine.<sup>629</sup> During the last

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<sup>628</sup> Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange*, 98.

<sup>629</sup> Ριζοσπάστης, December 8, 1923. Also cited by Vlasis Agtzidis, "Μνήμη, ταυτότητα και ιδεολογία στον ποντιακό ελληνισμό," in *Το τραύμα και οι πολιτικές της μνήμης - Ενδεικτικές όψεις των συμβολικών*



months of 1923, the mortality rate among the refugee population was 45%, and 70% of the deaths were due to malaria.<sup>630</sup> In total 20% of the refugees who managed to arrive in Greece perished.<sup>631</sup> Renee Hirschon calculates 3 deaths per every birth in the refugee neighborhood of Kokkinia.<sup>632</sup>

In addition to high mortality rate, suicide was also prevalent.<sup>633</sup> After 1923, suicides increased across Greek society.<sup>634</sup> Although Greece was still among the European countries with the lowest suicide rate,<sup>635</sup> the number of self-inflicted deaths was so much higher than before that one newspaper called it a form of an epidemic.<sup>636</sup> In fact, the suicide rate more than doubled from 1923 to 1925 and steadily increased after 1926 (See Table–4.4). Although the Asia Minor Catastrophe, displacement and the ensuing multidimensional crisis in which the entire Greek society found itself were not the only factors that stimulated this increase, they were obviously

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*πολέμων για την ιστορία και τη μνήμη*, ed. Vlasis Agtzidis, Elli Lemonidou, and Giorgos Kokkinos (Athens: Taxideftis, 2010), 229.

<sup>630</sup> League of Nations, *Greek Refugee Settlement*, 93.

<sup>631</sup> Anna Karapanou, ed., *Η αττική γη υποδέχεται τους πρόσφυγες του '22* (Athens: Idryma tis Voulis ton Ellinon, 2006), 103.

<sup>632</sup> Hirschon, *Heirs of Catastrophe*, 37.

<sup>633</sup> Even in the very first moments of displacement displaced people seriously considered suicide as one of the options they have. For example, in Elias Venezis' autobiographical novel, *Number 31328*, while being taken prisoner to be enslaved in a labor battalion, Elias and Argyris decide to commit suicide with the sulfur they find at the stopover in the case they are assaulted by the Turkish officers. Elias Venezis, *Το νόμμερο 31328 (Σκλάβοι στα εργατικά τάγματα της Ανατολής)* (Mytilini: Romantso, 1931), 53-55.

<sup>634</sup> As Emile Durkheim, who, in contrary to the analyses based on genetic predisposition, treated suicide as a social phenomenon and located its causes outside the individual in a society, noted that disturbances of the collective order and of the social organism. Émile Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 206.

<sup>635</sup> Marzio Barbagli, *Farewell to the World: A History of Suicide* (Malden: Polity, 2015), 315.

<sup>636</sup> There are numerous articles published in Greek newspapers analyzing this phenomenon in a comparative perspective, discussing recent studies on suicide, the motives of victims and reasons of self-harm. See for example *Μακεδονία*, July 8, 1925; August 2, 1925; *Εμπρός*, August 2, 1925; *Ριζοσπάστης* October 28, 1930.

among the main triggers. In the second part of his article series titled “Big social issues: ‘Tragic suicide...’” Prof. Kazazis claimed that suicide became an epidemic in Greece because the Hellenic consciousness was poisoned. Furthermore, he wrote, “the Hellenic suicide of Asia Minor was forgotten by those victims as well taking part in the universal delirium.”<sup>637</sup> The state had to take measures in order to avoid a greater outbreak of suicides. For this reason, in 1925, the government passed a new law regarding suicide as a criminal offense and those who could be held responsible for the suicide as liable to prosecution.<sup>638</sup>

**Table 4–4:** Suicides in Greece 1923–1934

Year	Suicides								
	Number			Suicide rate per 1,000 deaths			Percentage		Suicide rate per 10,000 inhabitants
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
1923	69	27	96	1.31	0.55	0.94	71.88	28.12	0.17
1924	87	21	108	1.80	0.47	1.16	80.56	19.44	0.20
1925	162	62	224	3.46	1.48	2.53	72.32	27.68	0.38
1926	143	38	181	3.27	0.94	2.15	79.01	20.99	0.31
1927	173	58	231	3.34	1.20	2.31	74.89	25.11	0.38
1928	214	66	280	3.96	1.28	2.65	76.43	23.57	0.45
1929	248	73	321	4.12	1.32	2.78	77.26	22.74	0.51
1930	242	80	322	4.48	1.61	3.10	75.16	24.84	0.51
1931	242	83	325	4.09	1.50	2.84	74.46	25.54	0.50
1932	253	102	355	4.16	1.80	3.02	71.27	28.73	0.54
1933	274	127	401	4.74	2.37	3.60	68.33	31.67	0.61
1934	264	101	365	5.07	2.08	3.63	73.33	27.67	0.55

**Source:** Data retrieved from the annual reports (*Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων*) of the General Statistics Service of Greece<sup>639</sup>

<sup>637</sup> “Η ελληνική αυτοκτονία της Μικράς Ασίας ελησμονήθη και υπ’ αυτών των παθόντων, παρακολουθούντων το καθολικόν παραλήρημα.” *Εμπρός*, July 31, 1925. According to Robert Shannon Peckham, in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century suicide was transformed from “an individual act” into a “cultural institution.” In this transformation process, the nation’s healthy embodiment and the individual’s incorporation in the national body were considered inseparable. Likewise, suicide craze was seen as a threat to the nation. R. S. Peckham, “Diseased Bodies of the Nation: Suicide in Fin-de Siècle Greece,” *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 9, no. 2 (1999): 169-70.

<sup>638</sup> The law was strictly criticized by the press. For the criticisms see *Εμπρός*, July 31, 1925; *Μακεδονία*, August 2, 1925, August 5, 1925; August 23, 1925.

<sup>639</sup> *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1923* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1928); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1924* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1928); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1925* (Athens: General Statistics Service

Suicidal behavior was (and still is) under-reported mainly due to the negative attitude of the Church, which considered it as a rejection of God’s gift of physical life, and so it does not tolerate self-murder. Suicide also stigmatized the families of those who took their own lives, and consequently, survivors often did not report it, leading to a lower official suicide rate.<sup>640</sup> The underestimation of the suicide rates does not change the fact that there was a consistent trend of increasing suicides. Although there is no statistical data to substantiate if refugees were more likely to commit suicide than natives, an examination of the press coverage of suicides suggests that this was indeed the case. Even in the Turkish newspapers of this period one could easily come across reports on the suicides of the Greeks waiting for their transfer to Greece. For example, on May 16, 1925, Nikola, a young Greek man subject to the population exchange, had a hysteria attack and committed suicide by jumping off the ship on which he was to be deported to Greece. Although *Son Saat* did not link this story to the larger exchange issue and put emphasis on Nikola’s mental state, “beautiful Greek woman” (*güzel Rum kadını*) Olympia’s story reported by the same newspaper on June 24, 1925, was directly related to the exchange beyond any doubt. Olympia, who was subject to the exchange and had been hiding from the authorities for the last two months, was arrested by officers during a “stop-and-frisk” search to

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of Greece, 1929); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1926* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1930); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1927* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1930); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1928* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1931); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1930* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1932); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1931* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1933); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1932* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1934); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1933* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1935); *Στατιστική των αιτιών των θανάτων κατά το έτος 1934* (Athens: General Statistics Service of Greece, 1936).

<sup>640</sup> A. J. Botsis et al., “Suicidal Behaviour in Greece,” in *Suicidal Behaviour in Europe: Results from the Who/Euro Multicentre Study on Suicidal Behaviour*, ed. Armin Schmidtke et al. (Hogrefe Publishing, 2004), 219.

catch the fugitives refusing to leave İstanbul. Olympia tried to commit suicide by hitting herself in the head with a metal baton at the police station. The maritime police officers prepared her documents and took her directly to the ship for deportation without allowing her to leave their custody. She attempted suicide on the ship again. After her second attempt, the officers gave direct orders to the captain to lock her up on the ship and not to let her leave her cabin. To the reporter's surprise, "no one could understand why she adamantly refused to leave the city".<sup>641</sup>

The picture was much more severe in Greece. Throughout the 1920s and in the early 1930s the newspapers reported hundreds of suicides committed/attempted either by a refugee or in a refugee neighborhood.<sup>642</sup> For example, on November 15, 1925, *Prosfygiki Foni* reports the suicide of D. Konstantinidis, a 28-year-old refugee, who committed suicide in Piraeus because he had not eaten for days. Over the years, little improvement in the living conditions for refugees was carried out. *Rizospastis*, on July 25, 1930, reports that Aimilia Papadopoulou, a 28-year-old refugee from Pontos, took her own life at the factory she worked at in Athens by poisoning herself because she was unable to eat anything "not even bread" for the last three days and to feed her three children.

On December 12, 1930, *Makedonia* published the suicide note of a 28-year-old refugee from Thrace named Alexandros Oikonomidis, who in his suicide note addressed the press, his brother, his relatives and the chief of local police. He shot himself in a small village near

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<sup>641</sup> *Son Saat*, May 17, 1925; *Son Saat*, June 24, 1925. Both cases are mentioned by Rüya Kılıç in her perceptive study on the history of suicide in the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic. For the details of these particular cases I looked up to the original sources that Kılıç cites in her study. For the compilation of her studies on suicide see Rüya Kılıç, *İntiharın tarihi: geç Osmanlı ve erken cumhuriyette istemli ölüm halleri* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2018). For the reference to these cases see *ibid.*, 67-68.

<sup>642</sup> See for example *Μακεδονία*, April 11, 1923; January 16, 1924; July 6, 1924; December 31, 1924; March 22, 1925; June 5, 1925; June 14, 1925; December 11, 1930; December 11, 1930; December 12, 1930; December 30, 1930; December 31, 1930; *Ριζοσπάστης*, February 24, 1924; May 30, 1925; July 31, 1929; July 25, 1930.

Thessaloniki called Seih-sou. Although the main reason for his suicide seems to have been a troubled love affair, the story of the “tormented life” of this tobacco worker is much more complicated. In 1927, he lost Parthena with whom he had been in love since 1923. And after that, “I became alcoholic, and then tubercular, and at the end I became a worker” wrote Alexandros in his letter, adding: “What good does living a tormented life do me? I saw my past, lived a good life. But I have three years [in which] I live a tormented life, a dog’s life (μια ζωή σκυλίσια).” In his short suicide note, he vividly described the misfortunes that refugees experienced, namely the underground life-style that refugees were dragged into,<sup>643</sup> the poor sanitary conditions that they lived in and finally proletarianization. The fate of ending up in a tobacco factory in the list of the tragedies this refugee lived through also provides insight about the working conditions, particularly in the tobacco industry.

This extreme change in the social and demographic structure of Greece that occurred at unprecedented levels changed the structure of political life, which had been “issueless” and “personalistic,”<sup>644</sup> by eliminating the former and consolidating the latter. The refugee issue did not only create new political conflicts, such as the one between indigenous and refugee Greeks, but it provoked and transformed the already-existing ones. Most importantly, the National Schism (Εθνικός Διχασμός),<sup>645</sup> which had split the country during World War I, reappeared after the military defeat in Anatolia and the refugee crisis. At the same time, the “Asia Minor

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<sup>643</sup> One of the elements of this underground life-style is music. The genre of music that was specifically associated with refugees is known amanades (a word derived from the word aman [mercy] that is repeated frequently in lyrics). The life-style attached to this genre includes drug and alcohol abuse. Unlike rebetiko songs, amanades refer explicitly to suicide. Stathis Gauntlett, “Ίδανικοί αυτόχειρες, Ρεμπέτικο και αυτοκτονία,” *Αρχαιολογία και Τέχνες*, no. 100: 44.

<sup>644</sup> Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1987), 5.

<sup>645</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the emergence and development of the National Schism see George Th Mavrogordatos, *1915 - Ο εθνικός διχασμός* (Athens: Pataki, 2015).

Catastrophe,” as the defeat of the Greek army in 1922 was called, led also to the collapse of the main ideological pillar of the existing socio-political order, namely the *Megali Idea* (*Μεγάλη Ιδέα*, lit. Great Idea)—the nationalist vision of a Greater Greece. Therefore, it can be said that the gap in the ideological armory of the dominant classes after the collapse of the Great Idea was rapidly filled by some other elements such as the new form of the “national schism” and anti-Communism.<sup>646</sup>

After the Greco-Turkish war and the ensuing developments including the refugee crisis, Greece found itself in political turmoil. Through the 1920s there were thirty-four different governments. Between 1924 and 1928, there were three general elections, ten prime ministers, and eleven military coups d'état or pronunciamientos.<sup>647</sup> The Asia Minor refugees, thus, entered into an already polarized and unstable political environment, marked by the deep schism between Venizelists and royalists, and they had to choose a side.<sup>648</sup>

Soon after their arrival, refugees realized their political power: they constituted one fifth of the population and hence were too large a social group to be ignored by any of the political parties. All of the five governments that came to power between 1924 and 1928 passed measures

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<sup>646</sup> Stephen G. Xydis, “Modern Greek Nationalism,” in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1969), 244; Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1978), 27, 135; Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 100.

<sup>647</sup> Konstantinos Tsoukalas, *The Greek Tragedy* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969), 42. See also Gallant, *Modern Greece*, 150-51.

<sup>648</sup> The refugee influx from Asia Minor to Greece started before the Asia Minor Catastrophe. However, the percentage of these early refugees within the larger refugee community was smaller in comparison to that of those who arrived in Greece just before, during or after the Catastrophe (in or after 1922). According to fieldwork conducted in Athens in 1973, 82% of the participants of refugee origin arrived in Greece in or after 1922; Sandis, *Refugees and Economic Migrants*, 83.

pertaining to refugee settlement and integration as critical elements of their political platforms.<sup>649</sup> It was the despair of refugees and the realization by both the refugees and the political parties of the importance of their vote that made the refugee factor “an uncontested fact of the political life of Greece”<sup>650</sup> one way or another and thus both refugees and the problems that ensued from the influx of so many people became a dominating factor in political discourse. In 1924 some Venizelist deputies in the parliament were defining the refugee problem as a “gigantic social problem” (μέγα πρόβλημα κοινωνικών), or as “our most important social problem” (το σπουδαιότερο κοινωνικό μας πρόβλημα), or, by refusing the previous descriptions of the issue, which perceived it as a “national issue”, “the most national of (all) issues” (το εθνικότερον των ζητημάτων).<sup>651</sup> Anti-Venizelists embraced a strictly anti-refugee discourse, while the Venizelist policy gave the integration of refugees priority in order to restore the socio-political balance, as well as to re-build a tattered economy.

In the 1920s, the sociopolitical order was restructured and these years were marked and shaped by the Venizelism of refugees and their collective veneration of him.<sup>652</sup> These years also witnessed the proliferation of political parties throughout the country directly organized by

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<sup>649</sup> Stathis Pelagidis, “Προσφυγικά προβλήματα του Βορειοελλαδικού και λοιπού χώρου στο Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο (1924-1928)” *Μακεδονικά* 26 (1988), p. 65.

<sup>650</sup> Cited by Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 168 from *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, March 17, 1928.

<sup>651</sup> Tounta-Fergadi, *Το προσφυγικό δάνειο*, 23-24.

<sup>652</sup> Marantzidis gives striking examples of refugees’ sympathy towards Venizelos. This sympathy was so strong that in the villages of Kozani, Serres and Drama, they even paraded to the polls carrying before them a picture of Venizelos attached to a long stick. Marantzidis, *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ*, 101. There is an extensive body of literature on Venizelism among refugees. For some indicative studies see Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*; George Th. Mavrogordatos and Christos Chatziiossif, eds., *Βενιζελισμός και αστικός εκσυγχρονισμός* (Athens: University of Crete, 1992); Valia Varouchaki, ed., *Βενιζελισμός και πρόσφυγες στην Κρήτη* (Heraklio and Chania: National Research Foundation “Eleftherios K. Venizelos” and Municipality of Heraklio, 2008).

refugees, generally within the Venizelist network. However, the refugee crisis could not be solved in this decade. The resettlement problem, particularly for those in neighborhoods built for refugees on the outskirts of the urban centers, was serious. There were serious infrastructural issues, such as inefficient water supply and sewage systems. The inefficiency or nonexistence of infrastructural facilities in those neighborhoods resulted in serious sanitation problems that threatened the health and safety of the refugees.<sup>653</sup>

The late 1920s, but especially the early 1930s, witnessed the gradual dissolution of the large-scale refugee support for Venizelism, which became evident with the tension between ΠΟΑΔΑ (Παμπροσφυγική Οργάνωσις Αμύνης Δικαιούχων Ανταλλαξιμίων: All Refugee Defense Organization for Beneficiaries of the Exchanged [Properties]; hereinafter POADA) and Venizelos in 1929 and which was triggered in part by the Greco-Turkish Friendship Treaty signed in Ankara in 1930.<sup>654</sup> Although this treaty resulted in the Greek rapprochement with Turkey after the strain of decades of animosity and war and “achieved a workable *modus vivendi*”<sup>655</sup> in the eastern Mediterranean. This peace, however, was paid for by the refugees as the two states mutually revoked their demands for compensation for their properties that they been forced to abandon. According to the agreement, each state was held responsible for compensating the refugees within their borders. By this means, the states unburdened by

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<sup>653</sup> The urban refugees found themselves in harsher conditions in comparison to the rural refugees. This will be discussed below. For a vivid picture of the problems experienced by the urban refugees is provided by Henry Morgenthau. See Morgenthau, *I was sent to Athens*, 236-260.

<sup>654</sup> The Ankara Agreement is said to be another turning point in the history of modern Greece. For this agreement, see Ephigeneia Anastasiadou, “Ο Βενιζέλος και το ελληνοτουρκικό σύμφωνο φιλίας του 1930,” in *Μελετήματα γύρω από τον Βενιζέλο και την εποχή του*, ed. Thanos Veremis and Odysseas Dimitrakopoulo (Athens: Philippotis, 1980), 309–426; Evanthi Khatzibasileiou and Aristovoulos Manesis, *Ο Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος, η ελληνοτουρκική προσέγγιση και το πρόβλημα της ασφάλειας στα Βαλκάνια 1928-1931* (Thessaloniki: Institution for Balkan Studies, 1999).

<sup>655</sup> Gallant, *Modern Greece*, 153.



international constraints and liabilities practically could make a clean break regarding the refugee questions by not fully compensating them for their losses. The dissemination of the refugee vote throughout the political spectrum resulted in its fundamental transformation, for example, the emergence of the Communist Party as a major political player. The reconstruction of anti-Venizelism as a formidable political force happened—not by chance—during the same period.

Simultaneously, the economy was devastated by a confluence of factors. The arrival of refugees imposed onerous burdens upon the country's war-torn economy. The burdens, as many scholars point out, could be easily understood: the financial cost of immediate assistance, compensation for the losses of refugees and their temporary and permanent settlement. However, from a state-centric perspective, it was not all dark. The Greek state chose the "New Lands",<sup>656</sup> particularly Greek Macedonia, as the major resettlement site in addition to the major urban centers. Due to the population exchange, the Muslim population living in this region had been transferred from Greece to Turkey, leaving the region underpopulated and with a great deal of cultivable land that lay abandoned.

Ethnographically, the remaining population of this frontier region was either "non-Greek" or "non-Greek-speaking", which were unwelcome unless they were quickly assimilated due to the fact that they contradicted the policies of the Greek nation-state, which was continually striving for ethnic and linguistic homogeneity and could possibly threaten the territorial integrity of the state by provoking the territorial ambitions of Bulgaria.

Even though the economic cost was quite heavy for the Greek state, the resettlement task held some advantages: First, since the incoming population was supposed to be of Hellenic origin, such a resettlement policy would potentially guarantee both the ethnic homogeneity of the

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<sup>656</sup> The New Lands were the northern Greece that had incorporated into Greece after 1913.

region and the territorial unity of the state by solving the minority problem which was hitherto unknown to the Greek state. The state treated the Pontian and Caucasian refugees as nuclei that assimilated the “non-Greek” inhabitants of the region and as guardians of the northern borders.<sup>657</sup>

The data provided by Pallis exhibit the dramatic change in the composition of the regional population:

**Table 4–5:** Ethnic composition of Greek Macedonia, 1912–1924

	1912	1913	1915	1920	1924
<b>Greeks</b>	515.000	530.000	680.000	579.000	1.279.000
<b>Bulgarians</b> <sup>658</sup>	119.000	104.000	104.000	104.000	77.000
<b>Muslims</b>	473.000	463.000	348.000	348.000	200
<b>Miscellaneous (Jews, Vlachs, Albanians and other)</b>	98.000	98.000	96.000	91.000	91.000
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.205.000</i>	<i>1.195.000</i>	<i>1.228.000</i>	<i>1.222.000</i>	<i>1.447.200</i>

	1915	%	1925	%
<b>Greeks</b>	680.000	55	1.279.000	88
<b>Other ethnicities</b>	548.000	45	170.000	12
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.228.000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1.449.000</i>	<i>100</i>

**Source:** A. A Pallis, *Στατιστική μελέτη περί των φυλετικών μεταναστεύσεων Μακεδονίας και Θράκης : κατά την περίοδο 1912–1924* / (Athens, 1925), 28; id., *Η ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών :*

<sup>657</sup> For the Hellenization of the New Lands and its relevance to the territorial integrity of Greece see D. Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 132–40. For the assimilation of the “non-Greek speaking” native population of Macedonia see Anastasia N Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia, 1870–1990*, 186–89.

<sup>658</sup> The terminology of the studies of the period on the ethnographic change of Greece is seriously problematic and shows strong ideological bias. For example, Pallis here uses the word *Βουλγαρίζοντες* (Voulgarizontes) that can be translated as Bulgarophiles while referring to the slavic speaking population of the region. Similarly, the terms Greek and Muslim are equally problematic. While the term Greek obfuscates the diversity of the incoming population and is instrumentalized, the term Muslim, although it is not problematic *per se*, displays definite bias when it is used as an ethnic category. For the terminology of the ethnological studies see 1. Iakovos D. Mihailidis, “Ο αγώνας των στατιστικών υπολογισμών του πληθυσμού της Μακεδονίας,” *Ίδρυμα Μουσείου Μακεδονικού Αγώνα*, March 18, 2013, <http://www.imma.edu.gr/imma/history/12.html>.

*από άποψη νομική και ιστορική και η σημασία της για τη διεθνή θέση της Ελλάδος / (Athens: Τύποις Ι. Βάρτσου, 1933), 24.*

The same trend continued in the following years: The ratio of the Greek element in the regional population increased by 0.8%.

Secondly, the settlement of the incoming population in Macedonia would repopulate and reconstruct the region. Finally, economically speaking, the resettlement would increase the volume of economic activity in the region by creating mainly small producers and self-employed small traders. The newcomers could provide a work force for industry; by implementing land reform and settling them on farms, the agricultural problem that Greece had been experiencing since independence potentially could be solved.<sup>659</sup> The state wanted also to eliminate the risk of social unrest in rural areas.<sup>660</sup> In the urban centers, the refugee settlements were planned to be on the outskirts of the cities. As the result of this policy, the already existing political conflicts were compounded with the key position of the refugees in Greek politics and found a geographical reflection too, between urban centers and their suburbs, and between “Old Greece” and “New Lands.”

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<sup>659</sup> Greece, according to Mazower, was one of the countries that did not take the road of rapid industrialization and concentrated on agricultural policies for economic recovery and capital accumulation. This was particularly the choice of Venizelos' Liberal Party. The incoming population was effective in the formation of such an agrarian bias in the liberal policies. The Asia Minor Refugees and the abandoned properties of the Muslims leaving the country were seen as a pretext for the implementation of a land reform that the Liberal Party saw a prerequisite for the progress of agriculture. According to Servakis and Pertountzi, the land system and the resettlement of the refugees were the main problems of the country and both were tried to be resolved by means of extensive and expansive reforms. See Mark Mazower, “The Refugees, The Economic Crisis and the Collapse of Venizelist Hegemony, 1929-1932,” *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 9, no. Special Edition: Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή και Ελληνική Κοινωνία (1999): 119–20. For a brief analysis of the factors that enabled the government to push through 1917 Land Reform see Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis*, 75-79. Georges Servakis and C. Pertountzi, “The Agricultural Policy of Greece,” 146.

<sup>660</sup> Mark Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis*, 73-9.

Similar consequences, in terms of the ethnic composition, can also be observed even in the regions considered secondary in terms of refugee resettlement. For instance, in Western Thrace, the composition of the population dramatically changed as the result of the ethnic “unmixing.”

**Table 4–6:** Ethnic composition of Western Thrace, 1912–1924

	<b>1912</b>	<b>1915</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>1924</b>
<b>Greeks</b>	87.000	17.000	68.000	189.000
<b>Bulgarians</b>	35.000	35.000	35.000	23.000
<b>Muslims</b>	111.000	84.000	84.000	84.000
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	4.000	4.000	4.000	8.000
<i>Total</i>	<i>237.000</i>	<i>140.000</i>	<i>191.000</i>	<i>304.000</i>

	<b>1915</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1925</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Greeks</b>	17.000	12	173.000	62
<b>Other ethnicities</b>	123.000	88	108.000	38
<i>Total</i>	<i>140.000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>281.000</i>	<i>100</i>

**Source:** A. A. Pallis, *Στατιστική μελέτη περί των φυλετικών μεταναστεύσεων Μακεδονίας και Θράκης: κατά την περίοδο 1912–1924* / (Athens, 1925), 28; id., *Η ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών: από άποψη νομική και ιστορική και η σημασία της για τη διεθνή θέση της Ελλάδος* / (Athens: Τύποις Ι. Βάρτσου, 1933), 24.

The 1928 Census gives us the overall picture regarding how the ethnographic composition of the county was transformed as a result of the demographic engineering policies developed by the state.

**Table 4–7:** Ethnographic composition of Greece, 1928

	<b>1920</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1928</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Greeks</b>	4,458,000	80.53	5,817,000	93.75
<b>Turks</b>	770,000	13.90	103,000	1.66
<b>Bulgars</b>	139,000	2,51	82,000	1.32
<b>Albanians</b>	25,000	0,45	25,000	0.40
<b>Salonika Jews</b>	70,000	1,27	70,000	1.13
<b>Armenians</b>	1,000	0,02	35,000	0.56
<b>Foreigners</b>	73,000	1,32	73,000	1.18
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,536,000</i>	<i>100.00</i>	<i>6,205,000</i>	<i>100</i>

**Source:** A. A. Pallis, “The Greek Census of 1928,” *The Geographical Journal* 73, no. 6 (June 1, 1929): 546.

The country's cities became home to a sizable refugee population. In some major cities of Macedonia, refugees constituted the majority of the population.

**Table 4–8:** Refugee resettled in the major cities, 1928

<i>City</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Agrinio	16,735	2,863	17.1
Athens	459,211	129,380	28.1
Lavreotiki	7,921	1,754	22.1
Piraeus	251,659	101,185	40.2
Kallithea	29,656	15,516	52.3
Halkida	18,577	4,896	26.3
Larissa	25,861	4,400	17.0
Volos	47,892	13,773	28.7
Drama	32,186	22,601	70.3
Veroia	16,303	7,026	43.0
Thessaloniki	244,680	117,041	47.8
Naousa	10,438	2,080	19.9
Kavala	50,852	28,927	56.9
Gianitsa	12,270	7,162	58.3
Serres	29,640	14,950	50.4
Alexandroupoli	14,019	8,262	58.9
Komotini	31,551	10,745	34.0
Xanthi	35,912	14,867	41.3
Mytilini	31,661	14,820	46.8

**Source:** Dimitris Livieratos, *Κοινωνικοί αγώνες στην Ελλάδα (1923–27)* (Athens: Kommouna, 1985), 26.

In February 1923, Greece applied to the international community for financial and practical assistance, and it responded. The League of Nations, for example, provided funds and aid. The cooperation of the Greek government with the international community dates to before the decision to undertake the population exchange. Although private philanthropic agencies did not take a big part in the evacuation and transfer of the Asia Minor refugees, some organizations, such as the Athens American Relief Committee, the American Red Cross and the High Commission for Refugees of the League of Nations, were deeply involved in the immediate

relief effort. However, the sheer volume of refugees and the magnitude of their needs was so vast that neither the Greek government nor these individual philanthropic organizations were able to adequately address them. That is why at the request of the Greek government, the Refugee Settlement Commission (*Επιτροπή Αποκαταστάσεως Προσφύγων*, RSC) was established on September 29, 1923, in accordance with a protocol between the Greek government and the Council of the League of Nations with the purpose of overseeing the permanent settlement of the refugees.

With the foundation of the RSC, the resettlement of refugees became a joint effort between it and the state's initiative through its different agencies, including the Fund for Refugee Care<sup>661</sup> (*Ταμείο Περιθάλψεως Προσφύγων*), the Ministry of Welfare (*Υπουργείο Πρόνοιας*) and the National Bank of Greece (*Εθνική Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος*). In the urban centers, the Greek government ceded to the RSC property worth approximately 142 million drachmas and for the rural resettlement of refugees approximately 7.4 million stremmata until 1927 and 8.4 million stremmata until the dissolution of the RSC in 1930. At that point, the commission had constructed 125 new resettlements and erected 27,000 houses.<sup>662</sup> In addition to the land and real estate distributed under auspices of the RSC, on December 4, 1924 the Hellenic state signed contracts for a loan with a nominal value of £12.3 million with the National Bank of Greece, Hambros Bank, Ltd. in London and Speyer & Company's Bank of New York, which was supposed to produce a net sum of approximately £10 million. Another loan of £7.5 million face

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<sup>661</sup> For the Fund for Refugee Care see Fotini Georgakopoulou, "Πρόσφυγες και κοινωνική κατοικία: Η στέγαση των προσφύγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου.," in *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή: Μικρασιάτες πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Idyrima Meizonos Ellinismou, 2003), 76-77.

<sup>662</sup> The figures are compiled from Aristoklis I. Aigidis, *Η Ελλάς χωρίς τους πρόσφυγες: Ιστορική, δημοσιονομική, οικονομική και κοινωνική μελέτη του προσφυγικού ζητήματος* (Athens: I. L. Alevropoulos & Sia, 1934), 75-77; "Greece: Quarterly Report of the Refugee Settlement Commission" (Geneva: League of Nations, May 25, 1927), passim.

value the net yield of which would be £6.5 million was granted to Greece in 1928. This second one is also considered a stabilization loan. In addition to the international funds and the real estate allocations, over the years, the government expended considerable internally generated funds to address the refugee issue.

According to Aigidis,<sup>663</sup> the expenditures from the Greek state budget amounted to £10,794,657. As the result of these efforts, until the dissolution of the RSC in 1930, 2085 rural settlements<sup>664</sup> were built throughout Greece, 52.1% of them in Macedonia, and 145,127 families, that is to say, 560,136 people, were given homes. The urban resettlement initiative was much more problematic. One important reason for this difference was that repopulating the countryside constituted the top priority of the RSC until 1927. Even though in the Hellenic Parliament the interrelatedness of these two main components of the resettlement scheme was stressed, the situation in urban centers continued to be the seriously under-addressed.<sup>665</sup> For example, on March 20, 1926, *Prosfygiki Foni* reported that large numbers of refugees were still living in tents and in mosques in the urban centers.<sup>666</sup> A few months earlier than that, in its final declaration the All-Refugee Conference in the Prefecture of Serres had reported that by January 1926, not even 25% of the urban refugees in Macedonia were resettled.<sup>667</sup> Before the RSC took

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<sup>663</sup> Aigidis uses Petsalis' data for the period 1922-1931 and adds the data for 1931-1932. See Aigidis, *H Ελλάς χωρίς τους πρόσφυγας*, 34.

<sup>664</sup> Notaras, *H αγροτική αποκατάσταση των προσφύγων* (Athens, 1934), 12. Karamouzi gives the number of rural settlements as 2089. According to Karamouzi, in the rural areas in those 2089 settlements 129,934 houses. Anthoula Karamouzi, "Καταγραφή και χαρτογράφηση των προσφυγικών οικισμών στον ελληνικό χώρο από το 1821 έως και σήμερα," in *Ο ξεριζωμός και η άλλη πατρίδα- Οι προσφυγοπόλεις στην Ελλάδα* (Athens: ESNPTP, 1999), 25.

<sup>665</sup> This was stressed in the Greek Parliament various times. For example, on June 25, 1924, Deputy Nikolaos Manousis, in his speech on refugee settlement, underlined the inseparability of urban and rural settlements. See *Πρακτικά της Δ' Εθνικής Συνελεύσεως*, vol. 2, 1924, p. 395.

<sup>666</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, March 20, 1926.

<sup>667</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, January 31, 1926.

action, the Fund for Refugee Care and the Ministry of Welfare tried to solve the resettlement problem in the urban centers. By the time the Fund for Refugee Care was dissolved in 1925, it had built 4000 buildings with 9283 rooms and left unfinished 2500 with 5990 rooms. At the same time during the period 1922–1924, the Ministry of Welfare constructed 18,337 buildings. But after the foundation of the RSC, it became the main organization in charge of building new settlements. Until 1930, the RSC built 27,456 houses in 125 urban resettlement sites.<sup>668</sup> Yet all these efforts were not sufficient to solve the problem. The concerns of refugees, their pressing needs and the insufficiency of central initiatives triggered local initiatives and refugees started forming cooperatives for self-help housing in the late-1920s. For example, in Athens between 1925 and 1935 the refugee neighborhoods Nea Filadelfeia, Nea Smyrni, Nea Kallikrateia and Nea Erythraia were built up largely through the unregulated activities of refugee families. In the absence of state assistance, people just did it themselves.<sup>669</sup> It should also be mentioned that the only reason behind self-help housing was that, in many cases, the refugees rejected as unsuitable the apartments built by the state.<sup>670</sup>

As far as the problem of “lifestyle” is considered, the refugee influx shattered the pillars of the existing social structure, traumatized both natives and refugees and created a “traumatic

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<sup>668</sup> Karamouzi, “Καταγραφή και χαρτογράφηση”, 25.

<sup>669</sup> Ibid., 41. In a study I co-authored we discuss the resettlement of refugees in the city of Serres. In this city, for example, in the late-1920s refugees formed cooperatives for self-help housing, such as the “Popular House” (Λαϊκή Στέγη) in Bayir Mahalle (present day Kallithea), “Herakleia” (Ηράκλεια) and “House” (Στέγη). The wealthier families from the urban centers on the western coast of Asia Minor, in Thrace, Pontus and Constantinople, attained homeownership through self-help housing. See Evangelia Balta and Aytek Soner Alban, “Küçük Asya Felaketi’nden Sonra Serez’de Mülteci İskanı,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 239 (November 2013): 20–34.

<sup>670</sup> Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, “Προσφυγικά σπίτια στην πόλη των Σερρών,” *Μικρασιατική Σπίθα* 15 (2010), p. 85.



cultural shock” on both sides.<sup>671</sup> As the economic and political competition between natives and newcomers was sharpened, refugees were subjected to discrimination in what became a “war of stereotypes.”<sup>672</sup> The very term refugee became pejorative, often in a way to question refugees’ “Greekness”. Locals insulted refugees and expressed their hostility by calling them *tourkosporoi* (Turkish seed), *giaourtovaftismenoi* (those baptized in yoghurt), *anatolites* (Orientals), *ogloudes* (due to the usage of suffix -oglou (son of) instead of -poulos), *aoutides* (to ridicule how Pontic Greeks pronounced the Greek pronoun *autos*), *tourkomerites* (those from Turkish land) and etc. In return, in the lexicon of refugees the word *dopioi* (native) connoted rudeness, ignorance or lack of culture. In the same way, they call locals *Vlachoi* (Vlachs)<sup>673</sup> and *vounisioi* (mountaineers).<sup>674</sup> This war was evident in every aspect of life and in this war, refugees considered themselves superior in many respects: They were more industrious, talented and selfless; their food was better; and “genuine ouzo” could only be found in refugee settlements.<sup>675</sup>

Arguably the most visible cultural barriers followed along gender lines. In the war of stereotypes, a misogynistic discourse aimed at discrediting refugee women’s moral stature prevailed among natives. Natives called them “paliotourkaloudes” (dirty Turkish [women]) or “paliopoutanes” (dirty whores), slurs that obviously were intended to emphasize their allegedly

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<sup>671</sup> Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 193.

<sup>672</sup> The term “war of stereotypes” is coined by Kostas Katsapis. For his discussion see Katsapis “Αντιπαραθέσεις ανάμεσα γηγενείς και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου,” in *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή: Μικρασιάτες πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Idyrima Meizonos Ellinismou, 2003), 114-119.

<sup>673</sup> The word Vlach did not refer to ethnic origin but was used as a derogative term.

<sup>674</sup> “Το ‘εκ βαθέων’ ένας αδικαίωτου ‘πρόσφυγα,’” *Ο Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος*, April 26, 1973, 101. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 194; Hirschon, “The Consequences of the. Lausanne Convention”, 19; Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, 30-34.

<sup>675</sup> *Ακρόπολις*, March 14, 1929. The newspaper *Akropolis* published a serialized investigation of the refugee neighborhoods in Athens and in Piraeus between March 14 and April 9, 1929. These articles constitute an invaluable source of the social life in the refugee neighborhoods of these cities.

lax morality. Arguably it was this hate speech that contributed to the increasing number of sexual assaults on refugee women. Rape and the fear of sexual violation were just two more burdens that fell on them.<sup>676</sup> The consolidation of cultural and social barriers, then, resulted in a calamitous strengthening of social animosities.

Panagiotis Hatzitheodoridis, a Pontic refugee settled in Kozani, describes the animosity towards refugees thusly: “here in Greece, especially in the region that we came to the things were even harsher than the ones in Turkey. Here they hated us even more although we did not do anything to them. At least, the Turks hated us and fought us and we did the same to them.”<sup>677</sup> Social exclusion of refugees also took on the form of persecution. The social tensions between natives and newcomers based on cultural differences were compounded by economic competition, particularly in rural areas. Tensions were high over the land issue and occasionally confrontations turned into armed conflicts. On September 28, 1924, the refugee newspaper *Pamprosfygiki* reported the killing of a refugee by a native in Nigrita and claimed that the reason behind it was the resettlement issue, in particular, redistribution of abandoned Muslim lands and properties. The first large-scale “conflict” between natives and refugees took place in a village of Serres, Kioupkioi (*Küpköy*, now Πρώτη/Proti). In this village, the ratio of refugees to natives was 1:6.<sup>678</sup> Nearly 120 refugee families had been resettled in Nea Bafra and were given only 2,000

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<sup>676</sup> Katsapis “Αντιπαραθέσεις ανάμεσα γηγενείς και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου”, 117-119. This was most probably because the labor power participation rate of urban refugee women was higher than the national rate. According to the official records, the participation of refugee women in the industry was higher than 31% whereas the same rate on the national scale was barely higher than 23%. On the other hand, almost 72% of employed female urban refugees were absorbed in the industry. Ghikas, *Ρήξη και Ενσωμάτωση*, 284.

<sup>677</sup> Cited by Nikos Marantzidis, *Γιασσίν Μιλλέτ*, 89.

<sup>678</sup> Isaak N. Laurentidis, “Η εν Ελλάδι εγκατάστασις των εκ Πόντου Ελλήνων: Α΄. Νομός Σερρών,” *Αρχαίον Πόντου* 29 (1968): 379. It should also be noted that Kioup-Kioi was the hometown of former conservative prime minister Konstantinos Karamanlis.

stremmata to cultivate. The natives of Kioupkioi had already filed complaints about the scarcity of land there. Indeed, before the incident, the Kioupkioi residents, with the encouragement of those from Zihni, filed complaints to the officials of Serres and Drama but realized that no heed was paid to their concerns. They formed a 6-member committee that went to Thessaloniki and submitted a memorandum to the prime minister and the ministers of agriculture and internal affairs.<sup>679</sup>

In November 1924, the first major open confrontation between natives and refugees took place. On November 5, the natives from Kioupkioi tried to enter the lands of the refugees in order to occupy them but the refugees rebuffed them. The natives went back to the town and rounded up some muscle and weapons. At the end of the clash 13 refugees were injured, two or three of whom were severely wounded by heavy weapons. The injured were sent to the hospital in Drama. The refugees retreated to Rodolivos. The natives proceeded to the refugee settlement in Nea Bafra and demolished seven houses, three barns and five tents. In Drama, refugees marched in protest against the government and sent a telegram to Athens criticizing the government's policies. Deputies representing refugee districts held meetings and applied to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the dismissal of the governor of Serres.<sup>680</sup> This incident triggered a general scrimmage in Macedonia. In the days following the initial incident similar confrontations took place in the villages around Kavala and on Mytilene.<sup>681</sup> The most important refugee newspaper of the period, *Prosfygiki Foni*, was very critical. After reporting the incident

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<sup>679</sup> *Θάρρος*, March 13, 1923.

<sup>680</sup> *Σκριπ*, November 8, 1924; *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 6, 8, 9 1924. Although it was first reported that some refugees died, this was not confirmed during the following days. The newspapers report only the injured.

<sup>681</sup> *Μακεδονία*, November 14, 1924.

in the story titled “Σέρρες δζιγετινδέ κανλή μουσαδεμελέρ” [Serres cihetinde kanlı müsademeler = Bloody clashes around Serres], it slammed the government for the attacks against the refugees in Serres and compared it to the persecutions in Anatolia:<sup>682</sup>

After Kemal’s sword in Anatolia, here miserable refugees are being destroyed by the weapons of natives. As we wrote before, this is due to the administrative weakness of the government and the civil servants. The main issues to be taken care of are these ones. What will our representatives in parliament do? If they do nothing but wait, then it would be more honorable for them.

In another article with the title “Μουχατζήρ κουρπανλαρή” [Muhacir kurbanları = Refugee victims] the newspaper continued to criticize the government: “Now that they are perishing in fights with the natives it would have been better if the refugees had stayed in [the hands of] Kemal.<sup>683</sup> As mentioned above, this was the first large-scale anti-refugee attack and it had a traumatic impact. Even months later *Pamprosfygiki* was vehemently protesting the Kioupkioi incident by saying “the martyrs of Kioupkioi were not aware of that they would succumb to the knives of their brothers while escaping from the knives of the Turks.”<sup>684</sup>

This conflict soon appeared on the agenda of Parliament as well. During the parliamentary session on October 24, 1924. D. Melfos, recounting how the Kioupkioi incident exactly took place, said “the residents of Pangaion had previously offered many services both to refugees and to the nation. Consequently, it was not their intention to treat the refugees in the way they were treated.” He also pinned all blame for the incident on the Department of Resettlement, which strangely transferred the settlement site of the refugees from Koungi to another site where the private lands of the natives of Kioupkioi, who repeatedly went to the

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<sup>682</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 9, 1924.

<sup>683</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 9, 1924.

<sup>684</sup> *Παμπροσφυγική*, April 12, 1925.

settlement offices to protest, were located.<sup>685</sup> The Kioupkioi incident remained on the political agenda for a while. In 1925, the member of parliament (Kavala) Georgios Zervos, sent a letter to the Minister of Agriculture about “the issue of the establishment of the Nea Bafra settlement in the periphery of Kioupkioi that has occupied public opinion for a long time” to defend the rights of the Nea Bafra “ill-fated” refugees. The letter was published in the Drama newspaper *Tharros* on March 13, 1925. The writer questioned whether the petty interests of the Kioupkioi residents were more important than the resettlement of the 120 families that had been born in Pontos as “prisoners” within a foreign nation. Those refugees had also paid the political sins of their free brothers by being brought to Greece and resettled along the Bulgarian border, constituting a great national breakwater before the huge waves generated by Bulgarian expansionism. At the end of his letter, Zervos called on the Minister of Agriculture to resign from his position. Shortly after this incident, Nea Bafra again made the newspaper pages with the “sufferings of the refugees in Serres” when three of them died due to the cold.<sup>686</sup>

On May 18, 1926, *Prosfygiki Foni* reported another attack against refugees, this time, in a Drama village where ten refugees were critically wounded. The newspaper blamed the local resettlement officials for acting arbitrarily: “As we wrote at length in our lead article unless the officials stop acting arbitrarily and sending twice as many refugees to such villages with little land and few houses available where only 10 refugees can be resettled, we will continue hearing

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<sup>685</sup> Anna Konstantinidou, “Το προσφυγικό ζήτημα στο ελληνικό κοινοβούλιο (1922-1930),” in *Οι πρόσφυγες στη Μακεδονία από την τραγωδία, στην εποποιΐα*, ed. Ioannis Koliopoulos and Mihailidis Iakovos (Athens: Etaireia Mekedonikon Spoudon, 2009), 129-137.

<sup>686</sup> Ριζοσπάστης, December, 10, 1924. For a detailed analysis of the Kioupkioi incident see also Maria Giota, “Προβλήματα στις σχέσεις γηγενών – προσφύγων. Η περίπτωση του Κιούπκιοϊ και ο αντίκτυπός της,” *Μικρασιατική Σπίθα* 17 (2012): 139–50.

such upsetting events and I guess since in time all refugees will perish in this way, the refugee issue will be solved automatically.” Anti-refugee practices, however, did not disappear.

During the 1930s, discriminatory practices and physical assaults on refugees increased and terrorizing them became an integral element of the anti-Venizelist political parties and factions. In 1932, for example, one of the promises of the Popular Party candidates was to expel the refugees resettled in the village of Angistri (Serres) from their lands and to then distribute them to the native population of the village. Immediately after the elections a short-lived Popular Party government was formed and the natives of Angistri wanted to take advantage of this by occupying the lands of the refugee families. After the collapse of the conservative government, the deputies of the former governing party encouraged the natives to harass the refugees to force them to flee the village. Finally, due to this electoral game of the Popular Party, two refugees were killed by the locals in February 1933 and the local police swept the attack under the carpet, as the governor of Serres mentioned in his confidential report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>687</sup>

The anti-refugee fanaticism of the Popular Party escalated over next few years. In 1933, six years before the yellow badge policy of the Nazis, in the anti-Venizelist newspaper *O Typos* N. Kraniotakis defended the idea that refugees should be compelled to wear yellow armbands so that natives could identify and avoid them.<sup>688</sup> During the parliamentary session on January 24, 1934 having been inspired by the virulent antisemitism of the 1930s Conservative deputy Periklis Mpoumpoulis compared refugees to the Sephardic Jews of Thessaloniki and, addressing

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<sup>687</sup> Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 203. For the report of the governor of Serres to the Ministry of Internal Affairs see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 113-83/84.

<sup>688</sup> “Το ‘εκ βαθέων’ ένας αδικαίωτου ‘πρόσφυγα,’” *Ο Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος*, April 26, 1933, 101. Cited also by Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 195.

the refugee deputies at the parliament, told that the latter were “more Greek than you” (πιο ρωμηοί από σας).<sup>689</sup> After the unsuccessful Venizelist coup attempt in 1935 against the conservative Tsaldaris government, tensions escalated and almost took on the form of a civil war in Macedonia. Refugees volunteered to join the ranks of the rebels and the conservative government solely relied on the military forces originating from the Old Greece, that is to say, predominantly native. How the coup attempt and the ensuing disorder was quelled symbolically meant the temporary dominance of the old lands over the new ones, which were associated with natives and refugees respectively.

In this hostile and highly charged atmosphere, refugees tried to enter the political sphere to protect their rights, achieve political and economic gains, articulate their political preferences and to organize with others with similar policy perspectives in order to exert pressure on the mainstream political parties.

In the remainder of this chapter, the political participation of refugees is investigated. In the next section, one of the distinctive political institutions founded by refugees, namely the All-refugee Congress, is analyzed. By examining the first two refugee congresses, this section sheds light on how refugees tried to participate in politics through the establishment of their own organizations. The following section concentrates on one of the most significant turning points in the history of interwar Greece: the declaration of the Second Hellenic Republic in 1924. Considering the fact that unless refugees had stood by the republican front, the republic would never have been founded; this section analyzes refugee republicanism as expressed on the pages of *Prosfygiki Foni* (Refugee Voice). Despite its importance, this unique and important bilingual

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<sup>689</sup> George Th. Mavrogordatos, “Ο Διχασμός ως κρίση εθνικής ολοκλήρωσης,” in *Μελέτες και κείμενα για την περίοδο 1909-1940*, ed. Dimitris G. Tsoulos (Athens: Sakkoulas, 1982), 49.

publication has not to-date been subjected to scholarly analysis. The third and final section of this chapter begins with an inquiry into the mayoral elections of 1925 in Thessaloniki, which was won by a candidate of refugee origin and supported by the Communist Party, and then studies the relationship between the Communist Party and refugees during the interwar period.

### 4.3 Pan-refugee congresses

As I have mentioned above, as soon as the refugees arrived in Greece, they found themselves in a very polarized political scene. They tried to overcome the barriers that impaired their engagement in politics, which they considered indispensable for the solution of their urgent problems. Instead of unquestioningly participating in the organizations within the framework of the existing political parties, particularly the Venizelist socio-political factions, they started organizing their own political groups. Some of them were amenable to forming alliances with the existing parties. Toward this end, they founded organizations to defend their rights and to protect their cultural heritage. In the immediate aftermath of their arrival refugee organizations proliferated throughout the country. In Athens alone, 273 such organizations were founded between 1923 and 1931. Their enthusiasm for founding their own organizations took the form of a near frenzy. On August 28, 1927, the refugee newspaper *Prosfygikos Kosmos* criticized the fragmentation of the refugee political voice caused by the ever-increasing number of organizations by calling it a “politico-mania” (*πολιτικομανία*). According to the newspaper, there were 4104 different refugee organizations throughout the country in 1927.<sup>690</sup>

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<sup>690</sup> *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, August 28, 1927. For the role of the refugee associations in the integration process of the refugees see Alki Kyriakidou-Nestoros, *Λαογραφικά μελετήματα*, vol. II, Athens: Poria, 1993. For a general evaluation of the refugee organizations see Dimitris Gousidis, D. Kaisi, and T. Adamis, “Προσφυγικά σωματεία,” *Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος*, no. 992 (April 26, 1973): 98–99.



In a like vein, the refugees held local and nation-wide congresses to develop a collective strategy and to impose self-discipline so that they could address the state with a single voice. In June, representatives of Pontian refugees residing in Athens and Piraeus held a congress and founded the Central Union of Pontian Refugees.<sup>691</sup> In September 1923 three important local congresses were held in Thessaloniki– the capital city of refugees, as Giorgos Ioannou called it.<sup>692</sup> The Pan-Asia Minor, Pan-Pontian and Pan-Thracian Congresses took place in coordination with each other on September 11.<sup>693</sup> The Pan-Asia Minor Congress (*Παμμικρασιατικό Συνέδριο*) discussed the resettlement scheme in the urban and rural areas. The congress sent a fraternal message to the Pan-Pontian Congress stressing the common ground of their collective struggle. In the Pan-Asia Minor Congress, the foundation of a federation of Asia Minor refugee bodies of Thrace and Macedonia was decided and the refugee representatives at the congress discussed the charter of the new federation. The refugees also expressed their support for the 11 September 1922<sup>694</sup> “revolutionary” (*Η Επανάσταση της 11ης Σεπτεμβρίου 1922*) government that was formed by the pro-Venizelist coup d’état on that date. Therefore, the refugee congresses were held on the anniversary of the so-called “revolution.”<sup>695</sup> The Pan-Thracian congress was much

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<sup>691</sup> This information is based on a letter sent to the newspaper *Rizospastis* for the column called Free Opinions. The letter is titled “The Congress of Pontoon Refugees” and signed as “a refugee” (ένας πρόσφυξ). The letter discusses if this congress could adequately represent the refugee community in Athens and Piraeus. According to the letter, only 240 out of 20,000 refugees voted for the election of 48 delegates to represent Athens and Piraeus for this particular conference. The nominees had been chosen arbitrarily and some neighborhoods were represented by the friends of the organizing committee, not by the actual neighborhood residents and several of them were not represented at all. *Ριζοσπάστης*, July 13, 1923.

<sup>692</sup> Giorgos Ioannou, *Η πρωτεύουσα των προσφύγων* (Athens: Kedros, 1984).

<sup>693</sup> *Μακεδονία*, September 8, 1923; *Μακεδονία*, September 11, 1923. *Ριζοσπάστης*, September 25, 1923.

<sup>694</sup> Greece officially adopted the Gregorian calendar on 16 February 1923 (which became 1 March). Therefore, the date of the coup was given in old style whereas the dates of the congresses are according to the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>695</sup> *Μακεδονία*, September 11, 1923; *Πρακτικά των συνεδριάσεων της Δ' εν Αθήναις συντακτικής των Ελλήνων συνελεύσεως*, vol. 1 (Athens: Ethniko Typografeio, 1924), 387. For the faithfulness of refugees

more straightforward in expressing its support for Venizelism. The representatives of the refugees declared that they had an explicit mandate to vote for Venizelos and only Venizelos.<sup>696</sup> Regional refugee congresses continued throughout the 1920s and even the 1930s. In Crete, for example, in 1932 a Pan-Cretan refugee conference was organized and after that, three local congresses were held by agrarian refugees in every major cities of the island (Chania 1933, Rethymno 1934, Heraklio, 1936).<sup>697</sup>

Such refugee initiatives did not remain limited to the regional or local levels and all-refugee congresses (*Παμπροσφυγικό Συνέδριο*) were also organized in the major cities of Greece. With the participation of 280 representatives the First All-Refugee Congress was held at the Academy of Athens<sup>698</sup> during October 1–6, 1923.<sup>699</sup> The official date of foundation of this

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to the 1922 coup and its leadership see “Επανάστασις 1922.” in *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον*. Athens: Koukoutsakis - Parthenis - Koutouvalis, 1925, 23-6. Here an analysis of the historical conditions of the 1922 coup easily turns to an encomium for the leadership of the coup, particularly for Nikolaos Plastiras: “Let the former leader of the revolution of 1922 be sure that the refugee world will never forget the services that he offered to it and that his name will always be on refugees’ lips while expressing their eternal gratitude...”

<sup>696</sup> *Πρακτικά των συνεδριάσεων της Δ’ εν Αθήναις συντακτικής των Ελλήνων συνελεύσεως*, vol. 1 (Athens: Ethniko Typografeio, 1924), 387. Also cited in Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 176. *Rizospastis*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece, strictly criticizes this decision of the Pan-Thracian Congress and expresses its reproachful disappointment over the fact that the refugees still did not abandon hope for a “bourgeois salvation.” According to *Rizospastis*, although the Pan-Asia Minor congress did not take a decision about supporting Venizelist parties, this was not because they were under less influence of bourgeois parties, but due to Ioannis Metaxas’ sway. *Ριζοσπάστης*, September 25, 1923.

<sup>697</sup> Evgenia Lagoudaki-Sasli, “Η αγροτική εγκατάσταση των Μικρασιατών προσφύγων στο νομό Ηρακλείου - Δ’ Μέρος τελευταίο,” *Πατρίς*, January 2, 2007. See also idem. *Πρόσφυγες στο Ηράκλειο του Μεσοπολέμου*. Heraklio: Dokimakis, 2009.

<sup>698</sup> The hall of the Academy of Athens was then called “Sinaia Akadimia” (Σιναιά Ακαδημία) after the benefactor and diplomat of Greek-Vlach origin, Simon Sinas, who was the donator and the founder of the Academy of Athens.

<sup>699</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the information on the First All-Refugee Congress is based on the coverage of the newspaper *Eleftheron Vima* between October 2 and October 7, 1923. *Amaltheia Smyrnis* is also another newspaper that covered the sessions in details and published the minutes of the congress in the same time period. *Amaltheia* published the list of the entire delegation. See *Αμάθεια Σμύρνης*, October 2, 1923.

congress is September 30, 1923 as seen on its stamp (See Figure 4–1). The symbol of the congress was the mythical Phoenix rising from the flames. This symbol was by no means a coincidence. In Greek mythology, the Phoenix is the bird that dies amidst the flames of its own nest and is reborn from the pyre,<sup>700</sup> which had already become a symbol for Greek nationalism;<sup>701</sup> and in this context obviously refers to the lost —and destroyed— homelands, particularly to Smyrna burnt to the ground by a fire in September 1922, and to the reborn of the Eastern Hellenism in the lost homelands.<sup>702</sup>



**Figure 4–1:** The stamp of the All-Refugee Conference  
**Source:** Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 42–27.

<sup>700</sup> Pierre Grimal and Stephen Kershaw, “Phoenix (Φοίνιξ),” *A Concise Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford, England; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1990), 351-52.

<sup>701</sup> “This is the vision expressed by one of the principal symbols of Greek nationalism, the Phoenix, a mythical bird that rises from its ashes. This symbol was used by the founder of the modern Greek state and its first governor, Kapodistria, as the emblem of the new state.” Georges Prévélakis, “The Hellenic Diaspora and the Greek State: A Spatial Approach,” *Geopolitics* 5, no. 2 (September 1, 2000): 171. For the significance of the symbol of Phoenix for Greek nationalism see also Skopetea, *Το “πρότυπο βασίλειο”*, 207-8; Antonis Liakos, “Προς επισκευήν ολομέλειας και ενότητος: η δόμηση του εθνικού χρόνου”, in *Επιστημονική συνάντηση στη μνήμη του Κ. Θ. Δημαρά* (Athens: KNE-EIE, 1994), 175-6.

<sup>702</sup> This symbol was —and is still— used heavily by the refugee community in Greece. For example, in the first international trade fair, the refugee pavilion had as its emblem the phoenix rising from the ashes. *Messenger d’Athènes*, November 23, 1926. See also Figure 4–2.



**Figure 4–2:** A ticket for the lottery organized by the Soup-Kitchen “Refugee Phoenix” in Thessaloniki in 1928 to raise funds for refugees.

**Source:** Sotiria Vasileiou, “Το προσφυγικό ζήτημα μέσα από την εφημερίδα *Φως* (1922–1930),” in *Οι Πρόσφυγες στη Μακεδονία*, ed. Ioannis Koliopoulos and Iakovos Michailidis (2009: Militos, 2009), 174.

Another symbolic gesture was made at the inauguration ceremony of the congress. Themistoklis Hacistavrou (later Chrysostomos II), who was the former metropolitan bishop of Ephesus and hence a very important symbolic figure for Asia Minor Hellenism, officiated at the opening ceremony together with other metropolitan bishops from Asia Minor.<sup>703</sup> Immediately after the inauguration ceremony, Prime Minister Stylianos Gonatas expressed the cordial greetings of the “revolution,” and this was followed by a speech of Apostolos Doxiadis, who was then the Minister of Social Welfare.<sup>704</sup> The congress was disrupted, however, by an acrimonious dispute over the question of who would chair the congress.

<sup>703</sup> *Εμπρός*, October 2, 1923. For Hacistavrou’s role in the Asia Minor Campaign and his significance for the refugee community see Aytek Soner Alpan, “Hafiza saati ne zaman çalar? İzmir Metropoliti Hrisostomos ve Atina’daki Abidesinin Hafiza Maceraları”, *Kebikeç*, no. 52 (November 2021): 343-45.

<sup>704</sup> For the speeches of Gonatas and Doxiadis see *Αμάλθεια Σύμρνης*, October 2, 1923.



επίτροπος) and having participated in the “trials of the Six”, Grigoriadis, who was of Pontic origin, was known to be a devoted Venizelist and a prestigious name among refugees.<sup>708</sup> On the other hand Emmanuil Emmanouilidis,<sup>709</sup> who was of Cappadocian origin and the deputy of İzmir and Aydın at the Ottoman Parliament, was elected as the vice chairperson of the congress together with D. Eleftheriadis and N. Orphanidis. Emmanouilidis would be one of founders of the Political Asia Minor Center (*Πολιτικό Μικρασιατικό Κέντρο*).<sup>710</sup> Both Grigoriadis and Emmanouilidis were not only the members of Venizelos’ Liberal Party but also candidates for seats in Pella and Athens respectively, and in 1928 Emmanouilidis would be minister of welfare. The congress was held just before the elections of December 16, 1923 and in the pre-election period this determined the political stance of the congress.

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<sup>708</sup> For Neokosmos Grigoriadis’ role in the trial of the Six see “Επανάστασις 1922,” in *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον* (Athens: Koukoutsakis - Parthenis - Koutouvalis, 1925), 23-6. Tzanakaris cites Konstantinos Karamouzis —alias Kostas Athanatos—: “Professionally Colonel Mr. Neokosmos Grigoriadis is neither rhetorician nor jurist. In his uniform, he sat in the seat of the revolutionary commissioner. He must have girt his sword as well. While interpreting the necessity of war-torn Greece in front of its destroyers he spoke as a revolutionary soldier (...) But he proved to have a rare gift of a rhetorician and a profound judgment of a jurist. Because his belief in the sacred necessity moved his tongue and the criminal injustice that was done to the country informed his thought.” Vasilis I. Tzanakaris, *Εις θάνατον! - Η δίκη και η εκτέλεση των έξι μέσα από τα πρακτικά, τα παραλειπόμενα και τα “ψιλά” των εφημερίδων* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2014), 479.

<sup>709</sup> For the biography of Emmanouilidis see *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον* (Athens: Koukoutsakis - Parthenis - Koutouvalis, 1925), 51-2.

<sup>710</sup> The Political Asia Minor Center was founded in July 1924. According to the minute book of the center, which is kept at the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (ELIA) in Athens and involves the proceedings of the meetings that took place between 1925 and 1955 as well as the lists of participants in these meetings, the first meeting of the founders’ committee was held on July 12, 1924. The Center was one refugee organization that was an intrinsic part of the Venizelist political web. Three of the founders of this organization, namely Apostolos Orphanidis, Anastasios Misiroglou and Emmanuil Emmanouilidis became the minister of welfare in different Venizelist governments in 1924, 1925 and 1928 respectively. “Πολιτικό Μικρασιατικό Κέντρο,” ΠΜΚ, Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive.

For the foundation, goals and actions of the Political Asia Minor Center see “Το Πολιτικόν Μικρασιατικόν Κέντρον - Η Ίδρυσις του - ο σκόπος του - η δράσις του,” in *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον* (Athens: Koukoutsakis - Parthenis - Koutouvalis, 1925), 82–84.

The best way to examine this important election is through the coverage of the mouthpiece of the Liberal Party, *Eleftheron Vima* (*Ελεύθερον Βήμα* / Free Forum), which reported the summary of the sessions of the refugee conference day by day. The inaugural speech of the congress was made by Stylianos Gonatas. Colonel Gonatas was a die-hard Venizelist who initiated the first move of the military coup by dispatching the demands of the Revolutionary Committee to Athens. On November 27, 1922, he was appointed prime minister of the government formed by the Revolutionary Committee. In his speech, he saluted the congress and the entire refugee world, and he offered them the cordial greetings of the Revolution and the government. He also gave them his assurances that the government was working on a solution to the refugee issue. In response, the First All-Refugee Congress on the first day of the congress, it passed a proposal that condemned the expulsion of Greeks from Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. On the second day, Antonios Athinogenis, a blue-blooded Smyrnian who would become the minister of public health in the short-lived Kondylis government in 1935 and then the vice-president of the Hellenic Parliament,<sup>711</sup> took up where the debate was left off on the first day.

The main topic of the session on the second day was the expulsion of Greeks in Asia Minor, Pontos and Eastern Thrace. The reports on how the Greek population of these regions were uprooted from their ancestral homelands and the destruction of these was destroyed was discussed at length. One of the subjects of this discussion was the destruction of Smyrna. General secretary of the congress Savvas Papagrigroriadis presented his research on the destruction of Smyrna and underlined the responsibility of the government headed by Dimitrios Gounaris, a leading figure of the anti-Venizelist camp, in the humanitarian crisis during the

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<sup>711</sup> “Αθηνογένης Αντώνιος,” *Εκπαιδευτική Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια. Παγκόσμιο Βιογραφικό λεξικό*, vol. 1 (Thessaloniki: Ekdotiki Athinon, 1983), 81.

evacuation of the city by Greeks. In this way, the Venizelist orientation of the Congress was made clear once again. In addition to the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the refugee problem was discussed. In this context, the activities of the US-based philanthropic organizations, particularly those of the Near Eastern Relief (NER) were reviewed. According to the report presented at the conference, at this early stage of the refugee crisis, the NER had already helped 250,000 refugees and 100,000 orphans. In return, the Congress decided to send a message to the US government that expressed their gratitude to “Atlantic Christianity.” The anxiety about the future of the Patriarchate in Constantinople was also brought up together with the issue of the question of Papa Efthim and his status *vis-à-vis* the population exchange.

The Venizelist bias of the first two days drew reaction from other political camps. KKE’s official newspaper *Rizospastis* published a letter by a refugee that harshly criticized the political bias of the congress.<sup>712</sup> The letter-writer protested the Congress’s partisanship and elitism and questioned whether the First All-Refugee Congress was capable of representing refugees living in desperate conditions. He described the first two days of the congress as being filled with the speeches of “windbags from several parties and politicking bishops” and claimed that the congress was working hand in glove with the government and of representing only the interest of the “fat cats” and not the majority of refugees, who were suffering. He also underlined the need for “real” organizations that would defend the interests of the poor and destitute refugees in the class struggle or else the *kodjabashis* and despots would continue to exploit their poverty and sponge them off.<sup>713</sup> The letter also underlined the fact that many of the refugee neighborhoods

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<sup>712</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, October 4, 1923.

<sup>713</sup> The Communist Party published an election manifesto after the congress which had a specific part about the problems of refugees. The part addressing refugees reads: “Refugees! You will not only come to the arms of the working class, only which can truly feel your pain and struggle for your relief; but at the same time you will fight against the common enemy -capitalism- when it gets up to topple the regime of



were not represented at the congress, at least not with the representatives they voted for. Instead of elected representatives, some important neighborhoods were deputized by some “foreigners” that were assigned by the arbiter group. Clearly, then, the Congress got off to a rocky start.<sup>714</sup>

The sessions on the third, fourth and fifth days concentrated on delineating all the problems that refugee communities faced. The representatives of different refugee organizations from different regions of the country took to the floor and talked about their activities and the problems in their regions. They all underlined the urgency of the situation in their areas, and that they were still in the early stages of addressing them. The main problems cited were jobs and housing. One of the major propositions was the construction of refugee settlements. The metropolitan bishop of Kozani emphasized the need for separate refugee churches and schools in addition to the construction of refugee settlements.<sup>715</sup> As well as the plight of Greek refugees, Emmanuilidis brought forward the situation of Armenian refugees in Greece. He proposed that they shared a common fate with their Greek brothers and sisters because they also had had to leave their homelands for Greece as a result of the oppressions against non-Muslim populations of Anatolia. In response to this, Miran Sévasly,<sup>716</sup> who was the chairperson of the Armenian

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imperialist greed and demented nationalism that led you to your current plight.” *Ριζοσπάστης*, October 22, 1923.

<sup>714</sup> In December 1924, a “1.5th” All-Refugee Congress was held in Athens at the hall of the Parnassos Literary Society. As interesting as it may be, criticisms similar to the ones published in *Rizospastis*, even more trenchant ones, were voiced by the refugee press of the time for the new refugee congress. *Prosfygiki Foni* lambasted the organizers of the congress for not including the refugee press in the congress and questioned its representative power based on the fact that “any representatives for the big refugee neighborhoods of Athens and Piraeus were not elected” and the newspaper asked if “it was possible for the congress to represent the refugee world and to have an in-depth and free discussion.” The newspaper further claimed that by excluding large refugee masses the congress became the congress of “certain goals and certain people.” *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, December 14, 1924.

<sup>715</sup> *Αμάλθεια Σμόρνης*, October 4, 1923; October 6, 1923.

<sup>716</sup> Milan Sévasly signed this letter with his Hellenized name as Milan Sevaslis (*Μιλάν Σεβασλής*). According to his obituary published in *New York Times*, he passed away on June 21, 1935, at the age of 72. Since 1921, he had been a lawyer best known for his fighting for the Armenian cause on many

National Union of America and representative in the United States of the Armenian national delegation, sent a letter to the newspaper *Eleftheros Logos* (*Ελεύθερος Λόγος* / Free Speech) to emphasize the importance of comprehending why the Greek and Armenian refugees shared a common fate, an outlook which the congress did not address adequately. According to Sevasly, both Armenians and Greeks were victims of the abolition of the Treaty of Sèvres, and while undertaking activities for the benefit of refugees, particularly in the US, the situation of the Armenian refugees too should have been brought forward. The introduction of issues, such as the Armenia question, deflected the Congress from the task of forming a united front with a clear set of grievances common to them all. Things did go better at the rest of the meeting.<sup>717</sup>

One of several subjects covered during the final sessions of the Congress was the issue of the population exchange between Greece and Turkey and its controversial outcomes, including the abandoned estates of the Muslim population who left in accordance with the treaty and “other” Muslims, such as Albanian-speaking population who had been compelled to leave. To put these proposals into practice, the participants of the Congress emphasized the need for financing. The suggestions of the Congress were later submitted to the government in the form of a memorandum. This missive covered almost all these subjects with special emphasis on the abandoned Muslim and Greek properties, the exchange of Albanian-speaking Muslims, urban settlement and economic integration of refugees, and it underlined the importance of the

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occasions. Sévasly was a native of Smyrna. For three years he published articles in the bilingual Armenian monthly *Le Haiasdan: Organe de l'Association patriotique arménienne*. In 1922, King George II of Greece made him a Knight of the Golden Cross for his aid to the refugees of the Smyrna Fire. *New York Times*, June 22, 1935. Sévasly's activities in France and London had been closely monitored by the Ottoman Empire. For a report on Sévasly and his newspaper *Haiastan* sent to Constantinople from the Ottoman Embassy in London see BOA, Y. A. HUS, 224/44.

<sup>717</sup> *Ελεύθερος Λόγος*, October 7, 1923.

assistance of the League of Nations.<sup>718</sup> As in the first day of conference, on its last one messages were conveyed regarding the ideology of the refugees.

Pandelis Kapsis was the representative of the refugees from Karaburun Peninsula (Χερσόνησος της Ερυθραίας), and an extreme nationalist; later in his life he became a member of the fascist “Organization of Greek Nationalists” (*Οργάνωσις Ελλήνων Εθνικιστών*) established in 1933.<sup>719</sup> So, he was one of the few Congress participants who was not a Venizelist. He pointed up that although the refugee population went through many hardships, they never suffered from a lapse of memory regarding their ideologies. Emmaoulidis and Grigoriadis responded vigorously to Kapsis’ intervention that insinuated that refugees might have had different ideological and political positions. Their exchange ignited the conference floor. Emmanuilidis, as the vice-chairperson of the congress, told that it was indisputable that the refugees sided with the revolution. Grigoriadis delivered a brief, impromptu but nonetheless stirring speech in which he focused attention on the importance of the unity of the refugee world when it came to the question of support for the ideals of the revolution and asserted that the contrary claims were fabricated by the parties which caused the Catastrophe. The chairperson underlined the political consciousness of the refugee world and the representativeness of the Congress. This consciousness, he asserted, led refugee communities and their representatives at the Congress to participate in the electoral struggle as committed Venizelists (“μια φωνή προσηλωμένη εις τον Βενιζέλον”). He also stated that for the final and fundamental solution of the refugee issue the

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<sup>718</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 17, 1923.

<sup>719</sup> According to the founding declaration of the organization, the organization was founded as the merger of some organizations, two of which were refugee organizations, namely the National Asia Minor Youth, the Smyrnian Youth. See Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 429-009 and Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 436-01.

refugees would take part in the (Venizelist) government that would be formed after the elections. Grigoriadis' speech was frequently interrupted by applause.<sup>720</sup>

The government and the Greek state were not the only addressee of the Congress. As numerous documents indicate, Eleftherios Venizelos, who was then in Paris, was in close contact with the administration of the congress. All its declarations were sent to Venizelos as well. In addition to the other proposals, on October 6, 1923, the Congress approved Skevos Zervos' proposition asking Venizelos to support activities in the United States that could potentially generate an additional \$60 million dollars for the resettlement of refugees.<sup>721</sup> On October 20, Grigoriadis sent a personal letter to Venizelos in which he addressed the liberal leader "our father" ("πατέρα μας"). The pro-Venizelos stance of the Congress could not be any clearer. In response, Venizelos wrote a letter to Grigoriadis from Paris on November 16, 1923, saying that he could not accede to this request because it was impossible for him to go to the US and conduct fundraising activities for refugees due to the upcoming elections in December.<sup>722</sup> He also said that he would be happy to go to the US after the elections to discuss the issue of the outstanding \$33 million in loans that were agreed upon by Greece and the US government in the Paris Economic Agreement of February 10, 1918.<sup>723</sup> In addition to the general tone of the congress and the Venizelist bias of the leading figures, this parallel channel of communication and the chairperson's political proximity to Venizelos prove that the supposedly representative

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<sup>720</sup> *Ελεύθερος Λόγος*, October 7, 1923.

<sup>721</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 42-23.

<sup>722</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 42-28.

<sup>723</sup> For the entire text of the Paris Economic Agreement between the Government of Greece and the governments of Great Britain, France and the US see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 15-5. For the war loans promised to Greece see the report of J. Simon and J Wylie (Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 51-38). For the amount and the conditions of the loan promised by the US: Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 40-84.

body of the refugees favored Venizelism and that the refugees were audacious enough to fight for their interests within the framework of the on-going power struggle between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists. The refugees did not have to wait long to demonstrate their loyalty.

On October 22, a military coup was launched against the so-called “1922 Revolution” and the growing Venizelist “peril.” The attempted coup was led by royalist officers Georgios Leonardopoulos, Panagiotis Gargalidis and Georgios Ziras, but its mastermind was General Ioannis Metaxas. Not only was the putsch quickly suppressed but it also gave Venizelism fresh momentum and substantially contributed to the political turmoil in Greece as a result of the introduction of martial law and the imposition of censorship aimed at limiting anti-Venizelist propaganda. At this point, it is worth pointing out that the program of the Leonardopoulos-Gargalidis-Ziras group was clearly anti-refugee and the coup leaders openly expressed their intent to persecute refugees.<sup>724</sup>

The refugees instantly and aggressively reacted to the threat. In cities such as Kavala, Drama, Kozani rallies were organized to support the elected government and the ideals of 1922 Revolution against the royalist faction.<sup>725</sup> Moreover, refugee reservists declared that they were ready to fight the “rebels.”<sup>726</sup> Several refugee organizations, including the Common Committee of Unredeemed Greeks, proclaimed that they stood with the elected government.<sup>727</sup>

The general election of December 16, 1923, took place in this polarized atmosphere. The royalist parties abstained from the elections and so the parliament was composed almost entirely of Venizelist deputies and the Liberal Party which gained an absolute majority by a large margin

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<sup>724</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 28, 1923.

<sup>725</sup> *Μακεδονία*, October 26, 1923; *Εμπρός*, October 26, 1923.

<sup>726</sup> *Μακεδονία*, October 25, 1923.

<sup>727</sup> *Εμπρός*, October 23, 1923.

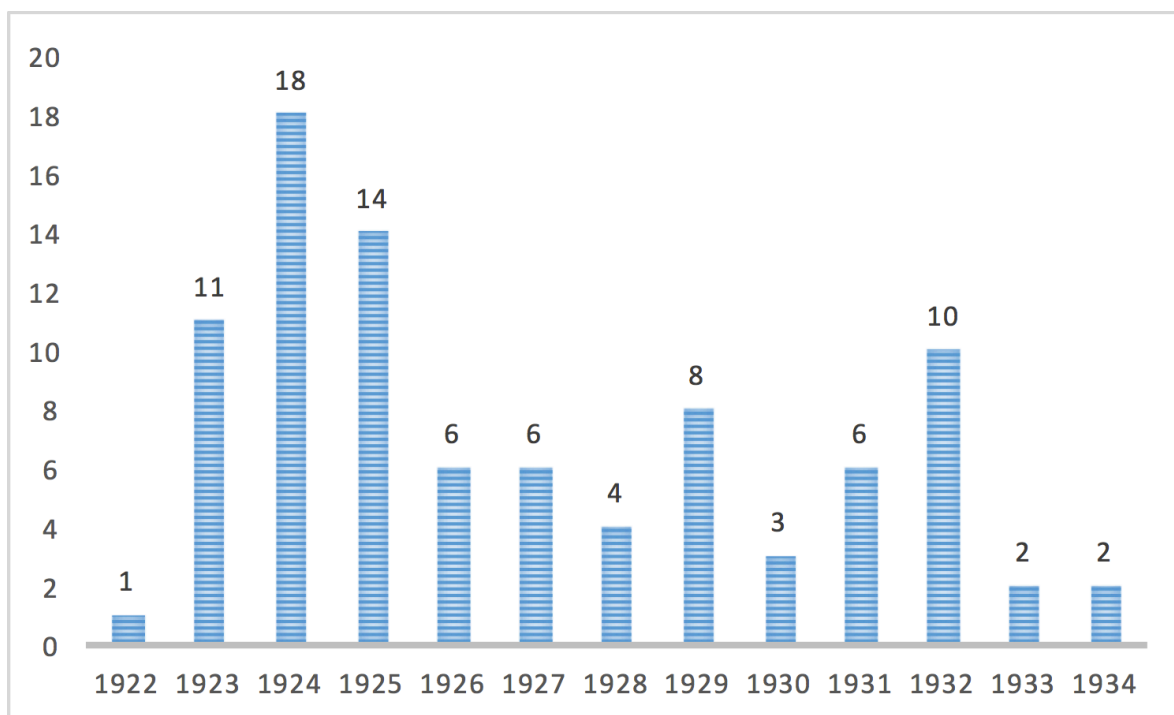
(250 out of 398 seats). The elections in 1923 marked the geographical, political and sociological division of the country and the refugees proved to be the game-changer in a Greece being reshaped after the Catastrophe.<sup>728</sup> But one of the earliest and most effective developments that proved the political power of the refugees was, as mentioned before and discussed below, the proclamation of the Second Hellenic Republic in March 1924 with the indispensable support of refugees. Though a turning point, neither this seemingly pro-refugee political government nor the policies it implemented by these governments effectively addressed the refugee question.<sup>729</sup> This was coupled with the fact that anti-refugee hysteria in some areas was reaching a new level as evidenced by the attack on the refugee population in Kioupkoi, discussed earlier. This led refugees to become increasingly active in the political sphere simply to protect their lives and guarantee their future. Throughout 1924, refugee organizations proliferated in order to “centralize the mental and physical power of refugees.”<sup>730</sup> In Thessaloniki, for example, 18 refugee organizations were founded in 1924 and the same trend continued in 1925 with the establishment of 14 more (See Chart 4.1). Similarly, in Athens, more than forty refugee organizations were founded in that year. Only in Piraeus, this number was 10.

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<sup>728</sup> Nikos Oikonomou, “Εκλογές-Δημοψηφίσματα Α.Πολιτικές συμπεριφορές στην περίοδο 1923-1936,” *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού 1770-2000* (Athens: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2003), 34.

<sup>729</sup> The dissatisfaction and disappointment of the refugees can be easily seen in the refugee press of the period. *Prosfygiki Foni* continuously made publication on this issue. For example, on July 6, 1924, it accused the Papanastasiou government of implementing anti-refugee policies. Similarly, on July 13, it published another heavy criticism in its *Karamanlidika* pages. The title of this article was “Χουκουμέτ ιλέ μουχαδζηρλέρ - Ισιμίζ Αλλαχά καλδή” [Hükümet ile muhacirler - İsimiz Allah’a kaldı = Government and refugees - Only God can help us].

<sup>730</sup> Christos Vasilakakis, “Οι πρόσφυγες και η εκλογή βουλευτών και δημάρχων,” in *Ετήσιον προσφυγικών ημερολόγιον*, ed. Thanasis Danieliadis and Dimitrios Milanos (Athens: Lambropoulos, 1926), 45–47.



**Graph 4–1:** Number of refugee unions (*σωματεία*) founded in Thessaloniki, 1922–1934.

**Source:** Paraskevi Roumeli, “Οργάνωση και δράση προσφυγικών σωματείων στη Θεσσαλονίκη 1922–1936” (MA, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2015), 107.

In this social and political atmosphere, the refugee initiative was not limited to the foundation of associations, unions, etc. With the foundation of the Party for Refugee Resettlement (*Κόμμα Αποκατάστασως Προσφύγων*) in November 1924 refugees tried to enter Greek politics more directly.<sup>731</sup> Although they had certain reservations and criticisms regarding Venizelist policies, they stayed within the larger Venizelist web, but they also tried to adopt a more pragmatic stance to protect themselves in the polarized political atmosphere of the country. On August 23, 1925, two regional refugee congresses started simultaneously, one in Athens and

<sup>731</sup> For the program of this party see *Σκριπ*, November 9, 1924; for the statement of the head of the party on the political priorities and goals of the party see *Καθημερινή*, November 12, 1924. For another speech of Anastasios Anastasiadis see *Παμπροσφυγική*, October 22 and 23, 1925. For the foundation of refugee parties see also Kostas Katsaris, “Η πολιτική συμπεριφορά των προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου,” in *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή: Μικρασιάτες πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Idyrima Meizonos Ellinismou, 2003), 135-36.

the other in Thessaloniki. The one in Athens was organized by the Confederation of Old Greece and Islands and the one in Thessaloniki by an executive committee led by Minas Patrikios, a leftist refugee who would be elected mayor of Thessaloniki in collaboration with the Communist Party in the upcoming local elections of 1925. One of the main themes that the congress concentrated on was the need for an independent political line.<sup>732</sup> The congress in Athens discussed at length the foundation of “purely” refugee-focused political organizations yet instead of creating an alternative refugee party, it decided to form a commission that would investigate and report on the most urgent problems that the refugees faced throughout the country.<sup>733</sup>

The lack of action on the refugee question led to the rapid proliferation of new political organizations, but they could not transcend the limits of their small size. On October 14, 1926, *Eleftheron Vima* announced that 62 political parties and groups would participate in the upcoming elections.<sup>734</sup> The Venizelists won a landslide victory by collectively taking 65% of the vote. The political refugee organizations were an intrinsic element of the “republican front” that emerged around the Liberal Party.<sup>735</sup> *Eleftheron Vima* and *Messenger d’Athènes* list the “solely” refugee organizations that participated in the election and the latter also reports the number of voters each organization received.<sup>736</sup>

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<sup>732</sup> For the details of the congresses see *Μακεδονία, Καθημερινή* and *Σκριπ*, August 24, 1925.

<sup>733</sup> *Καθημερινή*, August 27, 1925. This particular congress was held under the military dictatorship of Theodoros Pangalos. In its final declaration, the congress demanded the normalization of the regime, the dissolution of the parliament and free elections. The Pangalos regime is to be discussed below.

<sup>734</sup> Only 50 of them appeared on the ballot. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 14, 1926.

<sup>735</sup> *Messenger d’Athènes*, November 9, 1926.

<sup>736</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 14, 1926; *Messenger d’Athènes*, November 14, 1926. See also Ministry of National Economy. General Statistical Service of Greece, *Στατιστική των βουλευτικών εκλογών της 7ης Νοεμβρίου 1926* (Athens: National Printing House, 1928). It should also be noted that in 1924 the Communist Party of Greece established a unified front of workers, peasants and refugees (*Ενιαίο Μέτωπο Εργατών-Αγροτών-Προσφύγων*) and participated in the elections under this name. In the 1925 local election, the front notched up a considerable success by winning the mayorship of Thessaloniki. This



**Table 4–9:** Refugee organizations in the 1926 parliamentary elections

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Seats</i>
List of Refugee Peasants	4,684	0.49	1 <sup>737</sup>
Party of Independents and Refugees	14,373	1.50	2 <sup>738</sup>
List of Reservists and Refugees	2,101	0.22	-
Party for Refugee Settlement	1,797	0.19	-
Liberal Refugee Party	10,235	1.07	4 <sup>739</sup>
Socialist Refugee Workers	1,004	0.10	-
Refugee Solidarity	1,106	0.12	-
Refugee Workers	1,782	0.19	-
Group of Independent Refugees	53	0.01	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>37,135</i>	<i>3.87</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Voter turnout</i>	<i>958,392</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>

**Source:** *Messenger d’Athènes*, November 14, 1926; National Economy. General Statistical Service of Greece, *Στατιστική των βουλευτικών εκλογών της 7ης Νοεμβρίου 1926* (Athens: National Printing House, 1928).

Even though the refugee parties continued to stay within the Liberal camp, the foundation of so many parties and their criticisms of government policies created anxiety in the Venizelist ranks because these developments had the potential to generate a breakdown of the coalition within the Liberal Party. Christos Vasilakakis, a refugee from Smyrna and the Liberal deputy for Lesbos, wrote to the *Yearly Refugee Almanac 1926* about the organizational problems of the refugees and how they should act in the upcoming elections. According to Vasilakakis, the refugee population was no different than the native one. They shared the same religion; they

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victory of the Communist Party resulted in the cancellation of the elections. In 1926, the front received the support of 41,982 voters corresponding to 4.38% of the total votes in the general elections and was represented in the parliament with 10 seats.

<sup>737</sup> Lazaros Andreadis

<sup>738</sup> Aristeidis Mitsotakis and Georgios Sifakas.

<sup>739</sup> Themistoklis Xrysovergis, Konstantinos Simos, Themistoklis Sofoulis and Stylianos Mantaounis

spoke the same language; and from a historical point of view, their roots were in Ancient Greece. That was why the refugee world too should have voted as “genuine Greeks and nothing else” and should not have contributed to the fragmentation of the nation and the refugee world.<sup>740</sup> At this point, it should also be mentioned that the foundation of separate, *identity-based* political parties and organizations was generally associated with the minorities, particularly the Jews. Vasilakakis’ emphasis on the genuineness of refugees’ Hellenic character in reference to the triptych of national identity namely ancestry, religion and language.

The fragmentation of the nation and the refugee world that Vasilakakis referred to was visible even in 1925 at the time of the Second All-Refugee Congress. The congress was held in Thessaloniki during April 12 and 15, 1925. The refugee Confederation of Macedonia and Thrace was in charge of organizing the congress and the members of the organizing committee were Kyriakos Mitakos, Konstantinos Giavasoglou<sup>741</sup> and Kyriakos Mouzenidis,<sup>742</sup> who was the chairperson of the organizing committee. 300 delegates participated in the congress. In addition to the delegates, 12 members of the constitutive assembly (*πληρεξούσιοι*), some of who were of refugee origin, were also present at the opening ceremony, and they included Anastasios Mpakalmpasis, Michael Kyrkos, Panagiotis Diamantopoulos, Konstantinos Vagiannos and Efstratios Gonatas.<sup>743</sup>

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<sup>740</sup> Christos Vasilakakis, “Οι πρόσφυγες και η εκλογή βουλευτών και δημάρχων,” in *Ετήσιον προσφυγικών ημερολόγιον*, ed. Thanasis Danieliadis and Dimitrios Milanos (Athens: Lambropoulos, 1926), 46–47.

<sup>741</sup> Giavasoglou was born in 1888 at Kion, Asia Minor. After the Asia Minor Catastrophe, he was resettled in Thessaloniki where he engaged in trade and industry by establishing “K. Giavasoglou & Son” Weaving Company. *Who’s Who in Greece* (Athens News, 1958), 102.

<sup>742</sup> *Μακεδονία*, April 9, 1925. For the program of the congress see the same issue of *Μακεδονία*.

<sup>743</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 13, 1925. These names were closely related to the Confederation that organized the congress. In the 1923 election, the Confederation made an announcement addressing refugees in order to avoid any confusions regarding the candidates that were officially supported by the confederation in



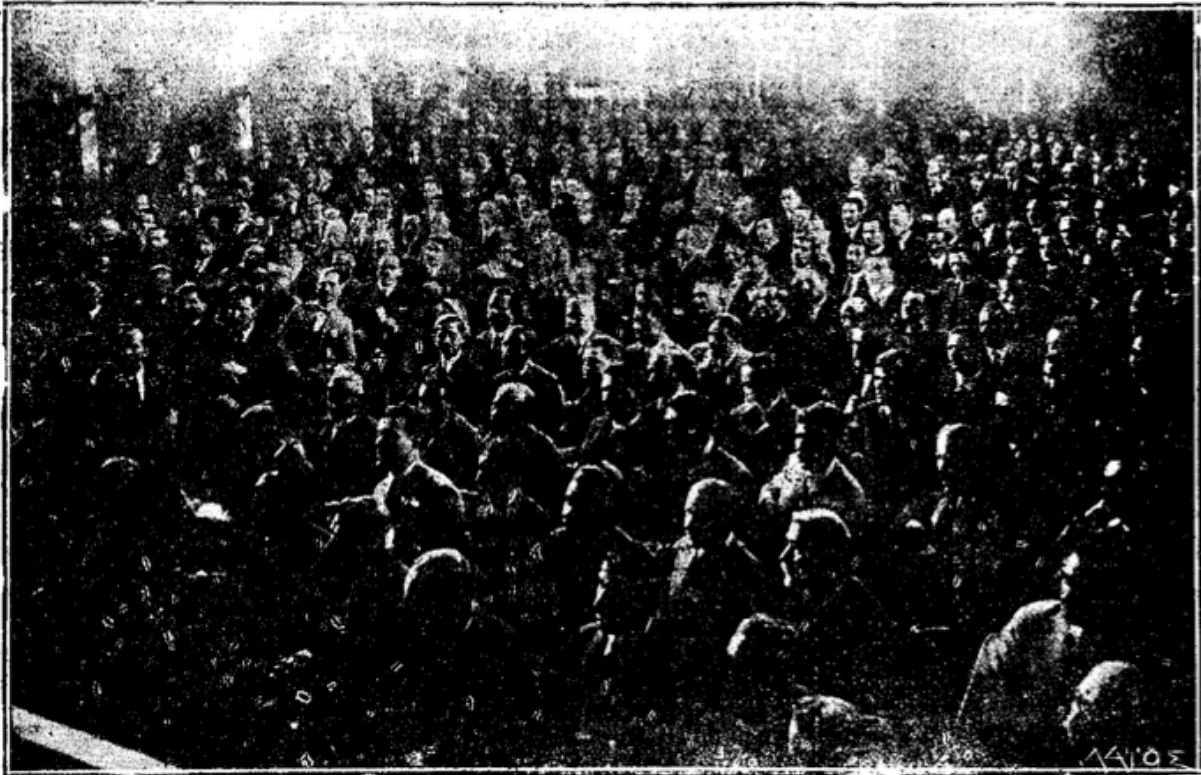
**Figure 4–3:** The Second All-Refugee Congress. The first row from left to right: Konstantinidis (deputy of Thessaloniki), Leon. Iasonidis (deputy of Thessaloniki), P. Diamantopoulos (deputy of Thessaloniki), Th. Andreadis (deputy of Thessaloniki), M. Kyrkos (deputy of Thessaloniki), Karapanagiotis (delegate of Thrace), Eleftheriadis (delegate of Adrianopolis), E. Gonatas (deputy of Thessaloniki), Kosmidis (deputy of Thessaloniki).

**Source:** *Eleftheros Typos*, April 15, 1925; *Makedonia*, April 15, 1925. [The same photograph was published in these two newspapers. The latter gives the names of the noticeable participants yet the quality of the photograph published in the former newspaper is much better.]

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Thessaloniki. All of these names were counted among the candidates that received the blessing of the confederation. See *Εφημερίς των Βαλκανίων*, November 26, 1923.

## ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΣΦΥΓΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ



Τὸ παμπροσφυγικὸν συνέδριον, τοῦ ὁποῦ αἱ ἐργασίαι ἤρξαντο καὶ συνεχίζονται εἰς τὴν Θεσσαλονικίαν.  
(Φωτογραφία τοῦ Ἐλευθέρου Ἡμερησίου)

**Figure 4-4:** “The All-Refugee congress, the sessions of which have taken place and continue in Thessaloniki”

**Source:** *Eleftheron Vima*, April 15, 1925.

In terms of its representative authority, the delegation at the congress was more politically and geographically diverse in comparison to the first congress. The only problem seemed to be that there was another all-refugee congress taking place around the same time. The All-Refugee Congress of Beneficiaries of the Exchanged [Properties] (*Το Α΄ Παμπροσφυγικὸν Συνέδριον τῶν Δικαιούχων Ανταλλαξιμῶν*)<sup>744</sup> was organized by the POADA and it raised the

<sup>744</sup> This congress decided on the publication of a newspaper to defend the property rights of the refugees. On behalf of the congress, P. Kourtidis (Chairperson of the Congress), G. Skoursos (General Secretary of the Congress), N. Orphanidis (Deputy of Pontos), I. Tastsoglou (Deputy of Asia Minor), S. Sarantidis (Chairperson of the POADA) sent a letter to Venizelos, who was in Paris, to ask for the material help of him particularly for the newspaper project of the POADA. The congress also asked Venizelos’ ideological

question of who represented the refugees. Fragmentation continued to impair the ability of the refugee community to speak with one voice.<sup>745</sup>

Since the basic problems of the refugees persisted during the period between the two refugee congresses, the main themes of the Second All-Refugee Congress were not substantially different from the first one. It concentrated on the questions of abandoned Muslim properties, urban/rural resettlement, and financial support for resettlement and business purposes.<sup>746</sup> In addition to these recurrent themes, the question of the establishment of a refugee bank was one of the hot topics. Although the themes did not change much, the Second All-Refugee Congress was much more diverse in terms of the political orientations that the various representatives presented. This was obviously an indication of the political heterogeneity of the refugee world.

Starting from the inaugural speech delivered by Mouzenidis, the government became one of the main targets of the congress. But the government was not alone. The tone of Mouzenidis' speech created a controversy and, in addition to the government, the Confederation became another target of criticism, as many accused it of improprieties and irregularities. After Mouzenidis' inaugural address, the divisiveness became even more pointed as some of the representatives questioned the legitimacy of the Congress and the organizing committee, and, in particular, its chairperson. During the protests against the organizing committee of the congress, the members of the constitutive assembly of refugee origin were also targeted. Mpakalmpasis, on

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support for easing the social tensions and the reconciliation of the people. Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 189-28. The Second All-Refugee Congress of Beneficiaries of the Exchanged [Properties] was organized in 1926. For this congress see *Β' παμπροσφυγικόν συνέδριον των δικαιούχων ανταλλαζίμων* (Athens: Κορωνάιος, Δεναξιάς και Σια, 1926).

<sup>745</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, June 11, 1925. *Prosfygiki Foni* reported that the congress was organized by the Common Committee of Unredeemed Greeks.

<sup>746</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 13, 1925.

behalf of those deputies, gave a speech to explain their own position and to clear the air. In his speech, Mpakalmpasis underlined that it was not only the responsibility of the deputies of refugee origin to defend refugees' rights and to overcome the impasse in dealing with the refugee issue. Mpakalmpasis' speech that aimed at defusing the tense atmosphere simply backfired and some of the refugee representatives threatened to walk out of the congress.<sup>747</sup> Emphasizing the uselessness of scapegoating or shifting blame to the Confederation, Michael Kyrkos, another refugee deputy, suggested putting the question of the Congress's administration to a vote. His proposal to support its current leaders was accepted and the administration of the Congress was re-elected.

The sessions of the second day started at ten o'clock in the morning with the contributions from regional representatives.<sup>748</sup> Mr. Spyridis, the delegate of Kozani, described the situation in his city and underlined that urban refugees were in an especially desperate plight. 1500 families had not been resettled proper houses and so were forced to live in mosques and hovels (*τρώγλη*). After the speeches by the regional delegates, the representatives of the Confederation shared their findings and conclusions on the current state of the refugee issue. Yet, according to *Eleftheron Vima*, during their speeches, the refugee delegates expressed their annoyance by interrupting them and shouting "Enough with talks. We want action!" ["Εβραθήκαμε από λόγια. Θέλουμε έργα!"].<sup>749</sup>

After silence and peace were restored, the Congress discussed how to obtain loans to support refugee businesses and the possibility of founding a separate refugee bank to fund and

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<sup>747</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 13, 1925; *Μακεδονία*, April 13, 1925.

<sup>748</sup> *Μακεδονία*, April 14, 1925. Yet, according to *Eleftheron Vima*, the congress started at 9:30.

<sup>749</sup> Literally "we are fed up with words. We want works." *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 14, 1925.

monitor the financial aspects of the government's resettlement scheme. The Congress appointed a commission to work on the issue of loans with the goal of preparing a proposal that could be presented to the government. Mpakalmpasis took the floor again and underlined the importance of a realistic land reform program to distribute the abandoned Muslim properties. Yet his speech was protested by the refugee delegates, who reminded him that he served as the minister of agriculture in the government of Alexandros Papanastasiou (March 3 - July 24, 1924). In a similar vein, Filkaris, who was the president of the Confederation of Old Greece and Islands, openly accused the refugee deputies, blaming their inability to unite around the refugee cause for the persistence of the problems. Filkaris proposed that the refugee deputies should have united under the umbrella of a single party and the congress should have made such a decision and forced the deputies to do so; otherwise, the congress collectively should have denounced them and refused to call them "refugee deputies." In addition to this, he insisted on giving the government a deadline of one month to meet the urgent demands of refugees. If not, all the deputies of refugee origin should resign. Throughout the second day, the atmosphere remained so tense that the chairperson of the congress had to pause the session repeatedly to calm the atmosphere.

The third day's session started at 10 o'clock with a discussion about rural resettlement.<sup>750</sup> Grigoris Tilikidis, who was a refugee of Caucasus origin and then the deputy of Edessa,<sup>751</sup> presented four concrete proposals that the congress should demand from the government: 1. Expropriation of all large estates (*tsifliks*), 2. Draining of the marshes, 3. Reformation of the resettlement services, 4. Formation of joint commissions including both refugee and native

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<sup>750</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 15, 1925; *Μακεδονία*, April 15, 1925.

<sup>751</sup> Βουλή των Ελλήνων - Διεύθυνσις Διοικητικού - Τμήμα Μητρώου Βουλευτών, *Μητρώο Πληρεξουσίων, Γερουσιαστών και Βουλευτών 1822-1935* (Athens: Hellenic Parliament, 1986), 284.

representatives. Similarly, the delegate of Western Thrace underlined the necessity of expropriation of the large estates. But a debate on the Kioupkioi incident dominated the third day of the Congress. Sokrates Anthrakopoulos,<sup>752</sup> the chairperson of the All-Refugee Union of the Prefecture of Serres (*Παμπροσφυγική Ένωσις Νομού Σερρών*), took to the floor and accused the head of the resettlement commission in Serres of the Kioupkioi incident and claimed that state officials sided with the natives and tried to cover up the attacks. According to Anthrakopoulos, the relocation of the refugee settlement Nea Bafra was an existential issue for refugees and he called on the Congress to protest the government's favoring the natives. He also supported the call for the expropriation of large estates and distributing them fairly to the refugees in order to make them economically active and self-sufficient. The deputies for Thessaloniki and Drama refused to accept the proposal regarding relocation. Anthrakopoulos claimed that the expropriations had moved forward and that there had to be a fair distribution of the land between refugees and natives without discrimination. He mentioned a number of abuses in allotment of land in Serres and he blamed the government for the deplorable situation of the refugees there.

As on the third day on which Anthrakopoulos left his mark, on the fourth and the final day of the congress Minas Patrikios, who is discussed at length below, had made a significant contribution to the discussions. Patrikios asked for the analysis of the concrete conditions that created the refugee issue and that led to its persistence; moreover, he emphasized that the term refugee should be abandoned because of its pejorative connotations. These people were laboring

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<sup>752</sup> Anthrakopoulos was to be elected the deputy of Serres from the Liberal Party in 1928 and from the Agricultural Party in 1935. He was best known for the memoranda of the All Refugee Union of the Prefecture of Serres on the solution of the problems of the urban and rural refugees in this prefecture. Both memoranda were submitted to Eleftherios Venizelos in 1925 and 1928. For the 1925 memorandum see Lila Theodoridou-Sotiriou, "Προσφυγικά σπίτια στην πόλη των Σερρών," *Μικρασιατική Σπίθα*, no. 15 (2010): 85. For the 1928 memorandum of the Union see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 375-20. Both were signed by Anthrakopoulos.



people, either workers or peasants, that is why they should be united in a single party that defended their class interests. Patrikios said, “we are proletarians.”<sup>753</sup> Patrikos’ speech was supported and applauded by Georgios Ioannis Pasalidis, who was a deputy of the KKE for Thessaloniki, according to whom the refugee issue could not be seen as a single problem but one that was related to class. It had a different meaning for petty-bourgeoisie, which was distinctive different from the meaning it had for agrarian and working classes. So the refugees who had been struggling to make a living should be differentiated from the ones that had been getting rich. Pasalidis too defended a radical land reform initiative, rejecting the payment of any compensations for the *tsifliks*.

In the afternoon session, Michael Kyrkos strictly opposed Pasalidis’ proposal that included a radical land reform because such a proposal would disturb the social structure and eventually cause social uprisings. Kyrkos attacked Pasalidis’ worldview too by referring to the Russian Revolution and to the Soviets, claiming that the capitalist system was better than the communist system. During the third day, the government was continuously criticized by various representatives. Anti-government expression peaked when Efstratios Gonatas accused Prime Minister Andreas Michalakopoulos<sup>754</sup> of being a mendacious and morally deprived person.<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>753</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 16, 1925.

<sup>754</sup> Andreas Michalakopoulos (1876–1938) was one of the founders of the Liberal Party. He became one of the most important political figures in the inter-war period. Michalakopoulos served as Prime Minister of Greece from October 7, 1924 to June 26, 1925. In addition to his prime ministry, he held posts in the liberal governments such as Foreign Ministry (1928–33), Ministry of Economy (1912–916), Ministry of Agriculture (1917–1918, 1920), Ministry of Military Affairs (1918). With Venizelos, he participated in the negotiations for the international treaties of Sèvres and Lausanne and co-signed as the Foreign Minister the Treaty of Ankara on October 30, 1930. He was exiled by Ioannis Metaxas and died in 1936.

<sup>755</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, April 16, 1925.

The last day of the Congress was dominated by discussions over the tone and content of its final declaration. At the end of these discussions, the declaration was drafted and read as follows:<sup>756</sup>

The All-Refugee Congress, representing one and a half million people, took into consideration the pitiful situation in which the refugee world is found, as well as the complete indifference that the current government shows toward the refugee issue and accepts the following: [The congress] 1) protests in a vehement manner against the refugee policy implemented since the emergence of the problem until today and that of the current government, 2) demands the unification of the refugee deputies under a single flag for the management and the solution of the refugee issues and urges them to vote unanimously against any government that does not have a well-established policy to satisfactorily meet the rights of the refugees, 3) demands the organization and unification of the refugee organizations under a confederation, 4) delegates the administrative commission of the current confederation with the addition of five representatives of the congress in order to complete the organization of this confederation and the associations under it, 5) authorizes the confederation to hold and achieve a dialogue among the refugee and native organizations in order to discuss the differences and to clarify the rights of the aggrieved and to build the joint front of the aggrieved against the exploiters of their interests, and 6) salutes the Greek people which [it] calls with feelings of sorrow and brotherly affection for mutual cooperation.

Although the final declaration of the congress called for unity within the refugee world, as well as in Greek society, the atmosphere of the congress hardly reflected the unity expressed in this text. The refugee congress constituted a clear sign that what was then called the refugee world was not a unified, undifferentiated social phenomenon but was highly differentiated along political, social and economic lines. As seen in the first and final sessions of the congress, there was a discernible backlash against the refugee deputies. Some of the refugees believed that the deputies were not able to represent and defend their interests in the Parliament as well as within the government. Some believed that the main problem regarding their representation in the parliament was the factionalism. The inability of the representatives to transcend their

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<sup>756</sup> *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 17, 1925.

differences prevented them from presenting a united front. Finally, there were people claiming the current political system was unable to solve their problems and hence that they should have fought the system rather than cooperating with it. Some of the refugees, of course, supported the elected deputies mainly from the Venizelist alliance.

In addition to the two liberal newspapers, *Eleftheron Vima* and *Makedonia*, which reported extensively on the congress, two other newspapers warrant discussion because they present a very different perspective, and they are *Rizospastis* and *Prosfygiki Foni*.

Although communist representatives were present at the congress, *Rizospastis* paid little attention while it was taking place. Still it drew attention to another point, which makes its coverage important. On April 15, an article by Alexandros Amarandos appeared in the communist newspaper.<sup>757</sup> The article's title was simply "The Refugee Issue." The article described it as one of the most important problems facing Greece after the war. Amarantos foresaw no immediate solution to the problem since the refugees were still under the ideological hegemony of the political factions of the plutocracy, particularly the Venizelist faction. The article claimed that the plutocracy had no intention to take any positive steps to solve the refugee issue or to look after the interests of the refugees. Because the plutocracy benefited from the miserable situation of the refugees, which was considered by the plutocracy as an instrument for profit maximization through the oppression of the proletariat. The author also emphasized that the refugees did not have to be trapped by the political system based on the old political parties and divisions (*παλαιοκομματισμός*), but instead they could take part in the ranks of the Communist movement. Therefore, the Communist Party did not see the All-Refugee Congress as

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<sup>757</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, April 15, 1925.

the sole representative body of the refugees and he considered it to be one of the tools of the plutocracy and its political system.

The Congress found a place in the pages of *Rizospastis* again on the occasion of the government ban on the rally that the refugees had planned to protest its policies. *Rizospastis* strongly protested against the government ban on the refugee rally. On April 16, the newspaper published the proclamation of the Executive Committee of the KKE and an anonymous article on the ban. The Executive Committee's proclamation, which addressed workers, peasants and refugees, underlined that the repressive regime of Michalakopoulos would shortly fall and that that would begin the slow but sure liberation of the peasant and refugee masses from its oppressive ideological influence.<sup>758</sup> The anonymous article following the proclamation focused on the refugee issue and was titled as "the ban on the refugee rally." The article is almost an adjunct to the proclamation. Throughout the text, *Rizospastis* emphasized that the reactions at the All-Refugee Congress and the rally banned by the government were the first indication of, or rather a milestone for the liberation of refugees from the ideological and political influence of the political representatives of the Greek bourgeoisie. The ban, on the other hand, was proof of the bourgeoisie's fear of losing the support of the refugees and of their becoming a revolutionary element that could potentially disturb the social order.<sup>759</sup> The Executive Committee of the Party also protested the bans on rallies, including this one, and called on the refugees to join the rally on May Day.<sup>760</sup> The KKE, which was on the verge of a strategic shift not only regarding its refugee policy but in general, intensified its efforts in the refugee neighborhoods and called on its

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<sup>758</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, April 16, 1925.

<sup>759</sup> See also *Ριζοσπάστης*, April 17, 1925.

<sup>760</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, April 24, 1925.

members to join in the task of accelerating the refugees' liberation from the influence of Venizelism. The Party's Propaganda Bureau particularly asked its members of refugee origins to become workers and peasants, and to take an active part in the refugee movement.<sup>761</sup>

On May 3, Alexandros Amarandos published another piece on the refugee question and emphasized again the importance of gaining the support of the refugees to the struggle for socialist power. Amarandos described the refugee issue as "one of the most paramount problems of the party" but he admitted that the refugee masses were almost entirely indifferent to the KKE's position.<sup>762</sup> The party's pressure on the refugees and on its own members to insinuate the party into refugee communities started to bear its first fruits in 1925. The United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees, which was founded in 1924 with the KKE's support, constituted the one of the clearest signs of the KKE's shaking off its residual skepticism towards refugees.<sup>763</sup> Its

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<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

<sup>762</sup> *Ριζοσπάστης*, May 3, 1925.

<sup>763</sup> I should add that the initial skepticism of the KKE towards refugees is overemphasized in the literature even though the Communist Party in its analyses did refer to the influence of Venizelism upon the refugees and their role in the electoral successes of the Liberal Party. For example, on December 18, 1923, the KKE's evaluation on the 1923 general elections was published by *Rizospastis*. In its evaluation, the KKE underlines the impact of the refugees and multiple voting by saying "Although the workers, the peasants, the breadwinners, the veterans and the victims of war did not vote for them, they were *elected*. Although the workers, the peasants, the breadwinners, the veterans and the victims of war did not vote for them, they were elected. They were elected by the refugees, the women of the refugees, the children of the refugees, the informers, the sinecure appointees. With these votes, and against the will of the working people of Greece, they will govern the country once again..." This passage is generally cited as a proof of the KKE's skepticism towards the refugees. See for example Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 218-19. Yet this emphasis in *Rizospastis* seems to be an objective description of what happened during the elections rather than the KKE's alleged anti-refugee stance. This becomes more apparent if the KKE's approach towards this particular issue is investigated thoroughly. For example, only a few days earlier than the frequently cited and criticized passage published in *Rizospastis*, in the same newspaper the Central Electoral Committee of the KKE issued a proclamation specifically addressing refugees and underlined that refugees and the working class had a common enemy, namely the plutocracy. See *Ριζοσπάστης*, December 8, 1923. Starting from 1924 in almost all declarations the Communist Party addressed distinctly three social groups: workers, peasants and refugees. For a similar criticism I made for Kontogiorgi's book see AYTEK SONER ALPAN, "Review of the Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia the Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922-1930 by Elisabeth Kontogiorgi," *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 19 (2015): 414.

revised and its subsequent political initiatives started to attract refugee supporters. A refugee, I. H. Iordanidis, expressed this shift in political orientation in his poem, written in Karamanlidika published in *Prosfygiki Foni* on January 11, 1925. According to Iordanidis, unless the politicians kept their promises and were solicitous about the problems of the refugees, the communists were ready to “deceive” the poor, particularly the refugees.<sup>764</sup>

Those who are the members of the communist parties  
look for you, who are left breadless.  
One day the said lies will come to pass  
if nobody else cares about the penniless.

As it can be seen in this poem, the unrest of the refugees was reflected by *Prosfygiki Foni* as well. This and the internal contradictions of the refugee world determined how *Prosfygiki Foni* approached to the All-Refugee Congress. The refugee newspaper was highly critical of the fragmentation within the refugee community. One of the clearest signs of this fragmentation, it argued, was the “all-refugee” congresses. As discussed above, after the second All-Refugee Congress, POADA organized another one. The refugee newspaper underlined that it was necessary that the all-refugee congresses should have included all refugee organizations if they wanted their decisions to be recognized and respected by the government as the representative of the genuine “all-refugee” opinion.<sup>765</sup> On April 19, *Prosfygiki Foni* published another piece

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<sup>764</sup> Original: Κουμμουνιστ φερκαλαρινά μενσουπ όλανλάρ / άραρλάρ σηζλερι εκμεκσηζ καλανλάρ. / Έσαζ όλαδζάκ πιρκουόν σιογλενέν γιαλανλάρ / έγερ φακιρλαρι άραγιπ σοράν όλμάσα.

Turkish transliteration: Komünist fırkalarına mensup olanlar / Ararlar sizleri ekmeksiz kalanlar / Esas olacak bir gün söylenen yalanlar / Eğer fakirleri arayıp soran olmasa

<sup>765</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, June 11, 1925.

criticizing factionalism among the refugees. The newspaper underlined that they had to work altogether or else the refugees would definitely perish in poverty. On April 26, *Prosfygiki Foni*, on the occasion of the meeting of the Asia Minor Political Center, restated the same point claiming that the refugee community including their representatives divided into “seventy million parties” and the governments were stumped by everybody’s talking at once.<sup>766</sup>

As in the Second All-Refugee Congress, *Prosfygiki Foni* remained within the Venizelist political alliance but criticized the misconducts, wrongdoings and lack of policy of the governments including the Venizelist ones. *Vis-à-vis* the anti-refugee stance of the anti-Venizelist parties *Prosfygiki Foni* defended its conditional support for Venizelism, in other words, a unified refugee political existence within the Venizelist alliance in return for the solution of the refugee issue as soon as possible and for having a say in their own future. This approach can be best viewed in the process that led to the declaration of the Second Hellenic Republic, which is to be investigated in the next section.

#### **4.4 “Μουκαδδερρατημηζά χακίμ ολαλήμ”<sup>767</sup>**

As discussed earlier, the population exchange was compulsory and based on not any other criteria, such as language or ethnicity, but religion. That is to say, independent of their will, the Orthodox living in Turkey and the Muslims in Greece would be subject to the exchange and the *de facto* situation of those who migrated, respectively, to Greece and to Turkey after 1912 would be granted formal recognition. Some groups (the Greeks of Constantinople, Imbros and

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<sup>766</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, April 19; April 26, 1925.

<sup>767</sup> [Mukadderamıza hakim olalım = Let’s control our own destiny]

Tenedos, the Muslims of Eastern Thrace) were exempted from the exchange process. Although, in the first place, it had been agreed upon the exclusion of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox population, today known as *Karamanlides*, who primarily lived in the heart of Anatolia, they found themselves in the middle of a controversy between Greece and Turkey, became subject to the population exchange and did end up in Greece. The Turkish-speaking refugees, together with others speaking Greek dialects unintelligible to the natives, faced a double challenge, while their strongest social tie to the social structure, i.e. religion, came under question. Being deprived of access to the existing social and political networks, the refugees utilized different means to take part in the social life of their new homeland, to participate in politics for defending their interests and rights, but most importantly for banishing the aphonia being imposed upon them. One of the means that the refugees used was newspapers. In this section, I elaborate on the political participation of the refugees through the lenses of one of these newspapers, namely *Προσφυγική Φωνή* [Refugee Voice].

#### **4.4-1 Refugee newspapers and Προσφυγική Φωνή / Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί**

Greeks were poor but the refugees were poorer. Upon arriving from Asia Minor, refugees found themselves in a completely foreign and war-torn country, where prewar prosperity and optimism had come to a crashing end. Greece was desperate, but the “refugee world” was more desperate. Yet the refugees were well aware of the fact that nobody but themselves would protect them from a second catastrophe. That’s why they proactively took steps to integrate themselves into mainstream society by founding associations, commissions and centers such as *Κοινή Δημογεροντία Επαρχίας Ικονίου* [Common Council of Elders of the Province of Ikonio, 1924], *Επιτροπή Ποντιακών Μελετών* [Commission of Pontic Studies, 1927], *Θρακικό Κέντρο* [Thracian



Center, 1927] and *Ένωσις Σμυρναίων* [Union of Smyrniots, 1936] and in addition to these larger organizations they founded hundreds of local ones. Different forms of organizations were not the only means that the refugees utilized for their integration into the Greek society.

As Eliot G. Mears observes and vividly describes, in Greece, newspapers were very influential.<sup>768</sup> Some upper-middle class refugees seemed to be well aware of or quickly realized this fact. That's why immediately after their arrival a new press genre was born, namely the refugee newspapers. Especially through the first decade after the Catastrophe, numerous refugee newspapers and periodicals started to be published and circulated across the country as a means for refugees to make themselves seen and heard. Some of the newspapers issued by the refugees were *Παμπροσφυγική* [Pan-refugee; 1920], *Εφημερίς των Προσφύγων* [Newspaper of Refugees; 1923], *Μικρασιατική* ([Newspaper] of Asia Minor, 1923), *Εφημερίς της Ανατολής* [Newspapers of the East, 1925], *Προσφυγική Φωνή* [Refugee Voice; 1924],<sup>769</sup> *Προσφυγικός Αγών* [Refugee

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<sup>768</sup> Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Greece Today; the Aftermath of the Refugee Impact* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 45-46.

<sup>769</sup> *Prosfygiki Foni* was founded by Hariton Polatoglou and started circulating in 1924. We do not know exactly when and why the publication of *Prosfygiki Foni* stopped. Although Evangelia Balta claims that the newspaper was short-lived and circulated only two years until 1926 and this was unquestionably accepted by some scholars, this is not true. The National Library of Greece has the copies of the issues published in 1927. In addition to this, according to a letter sent by Polatoglou to Venizelos (Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 396-001), the newspaper was in circulation in 1933. According to Charis Sapountzakis, a senior local historian that specializes in the history of Nea Ionia, the newspaper ceased to exist in 1934. Ch. Sapountzakis, "Καραμανλίδικα, Καραμανλήδες: Μύθοι και πραγματικότητα" *Λυχνάρι*, September 2010, no.40, 11. In another study, Sapountzakis shares the front-page of an issue of the newspaper published in 1934 before the local election in Nea Ionia in which Polatoglou ran for mayor. Charis Sapountzakis, "Η ιστορία των δημοτικών εκλογών από το 1934 έως σήμερα," *Ionianet*, 2002, <http://www.ionianet.gr/sports/ekloges/sapountzakis.htm>. For the 1934 elections see Charis Sapountzakis, "Προλεγόμενα," in *Νέα Ιωνία 1923-2003, 80 χρόνια*, ed. Giannis Koridis (Athens: ΚΕΜΙΡΟ, 2004), 22-23 and Charis Sapountzakis and Loukas Christodoulou, *Η Νέα Ιωνία στο Μεσοπόλεμο 1922 - 1941* (Nea Ionia: Enosi Spartis Mikras Asias, 2013), 219-37. Probably after his unsuccessful campaign, Polatoglou stopped publishing *Prosfygiki Foni*. For another study claiming the publication of *Prosfygiki Foni* stopped in 1926 see Iryna M. Dryga, "Καραμανλίτσι та караманлідіка: дефініції та жанри", *Сходознавство*, sy 52 (2010): 22. I would like to offer my special thanks to Andriy Kovalenko, who brought this article to my attention and provided me with the translation of its relevant part.

Struggle, 1925],<sup>770</sup> Π.Ο.Α.Δ.Α [1926], *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος* [Refugee World; 1927], *Προσφυγικόν Φως* [Refugee Light, 1933] and *Προσφυγική Ένωσις* [Refugee Union, 1935]. Along with these national newspapers, there were numerous local ones as well; there were also some scholarly journals published by the refugees such as *Θρακικά* [Thracian; 1928], *Αρχείον Πόντου* [Archive of Pontus; 1928], *Αρχείον Θρακικού Λαογραφικού και Γλωσσικού Θησαυρού* [Archive of Thracian Folkloric and Linguistic Treasure, 1934], *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* [Asia Minor Chronicles; 1936], *Μικρασιατική Εστία* [Hearth of Asia Minor; 1946] and *Ποντιακή Εστία* [Hearth of Pontus; 1950].<sup>771</sup>

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<sup>770</sup> *Prosfygikos Agon* was a left-wing refugee newspaper and published by Asimakis Theodoridis, who would be one of the candidates of the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees in the general election of 1926. Immediately after the publication of the first issue of this newspaper, the Communist Party's daily *Rizospastis* celebrated its publication and appreciated the approach of the *Prosfygikos Agon* to the problems of the refugees. According to *Rizospastis*, *Prosfygikos Agon* stressed in all the articles appeared in its first issue that the solution of the refugee issue should have been based on the communication and collaboration among the refugees and the native workers and peasants. *Rizospastis* also added that this approach of the newspaper disturbed the existing refugee press, such as *Pamprosfygiki. Ριζοσπάστης*, June 20, 1925. For *Prosfygikos Agon* see also Manolis Kandylakis, *Εφημεριδογραφία της Θεσσαλονίκης. Συμβολή στην ιστορία του Τύπου*, vol. 3 (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2005), 455.

<sup>771</sup> It is important to observe that in the first years of the arrival of refugees their publications were basically newspapers (and some pamphlets as investigated below) yet starting from the late 1920s and 1930s the refugee organizations started to publish scholarly journals, which particularly concentrated on ethnography and the Hellenic roots of Anatolian Hellenism. This is a part of the refugees' endeavor in establishing themselves within the Greek intellectual circles, especially in Athens, and in placing the distinct refugee identities (of Asia Minor, of Thracian, of Pontus, or of Cappadocia) within the national identity that was being reconstructed after the Asia Minor Catastrophe in order to reinforce this project in a way that the refugees were included as a part of the nation and to challenge the anti-refugee arguments that questions the Greekness of the refugees.



**Figure 4–5:** The refugee press  
**Source:** Photographs are taken by me at the National Library of Greece, the ELIA, the Library of Enosi Smyrnaion.

In its first issues, the nameplate of the newspaper reads “Weekly political and social newspaper / the organ of the refugee population across Greece”. Although it was a weekly newspaper, Polatoglou occasionally published it less frequently, while at certain times it was published daily. But if we take into consideration the available issues (1924–1927) we can say that in this period the newspaper was generally published twice a week.



**Figure 4–6:** “The director and publisher of our newspaper: Hariton S. Polatoglou”

**Source:** *Prosfygiki Foni*, January 1, 1925.

Polatoglou was a lawyer, who was born in 1881 in Nevşehir. As one of the exchanged population, he was settled in Athens and died in Nea Ionia, a refugee settlement located on the

northern outskirts of the capital, in 1948 at the age of 68.<sup>772</sup> In the first *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον* [Commemorative Refugee Almanac] published in 1925, Polatoglou's name was counted among the board members of the Common Council of Elders of the Province of Ikonio, which was introduced as one of the strongest refugee organizations by the *Almanac*.<sup>773</sup> In addition, in the general assembly of all the provinces within the archdiocese of Kaisereia-Kappadokia, he was elected to the council of elders as well.<sup>774</sup> As a supporter of liberalism/Venizelism, Hariton Polatoglou was the Liberal party candidate from Kozani in 1926 and in 1928.<sup>775</sup> He was an MP in the early 1930s and then he declared his candidacy for the mayorship of Nea Ionia, Athens, in the 1934 municipal elections but he lost.<sup>776</sup> He seems to have been a loyal Venizelist/liberal throughout his life in Greece.<sup>777</sup>

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<sup>772</sup> For Polatoglou's short obituary see the newspaper *Εμπρός*, October 19, 1948.

<sup>773</sup> *Αναμνηστικόν Προσφυγικόν Ημερολόγιον* 1925, 114.

<sup>774</sup> “Οι εκ Καισαρείας-Καππαδοκίας”. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 27, 1924.

<sup>775</sup> Polatoglou entered into the elections of 1926 as the candidate of the Independent Refugee Rural Alliance and received 1903 votes. In the 1928 elections, Polatoglou was a candidate from the Independent Venizelists and got votes of 3987 of the 14948 voters in Kozani. *Μακεδονία*, November 16, 1926, and August 21, 1928. Refugees' integration to the Venizelist political web can be seen at the electoral level. In the 1926 elections, out of 286 MPs, 36 refugees were elected deputies 31 of whom declared a party affiliation and 28 out of these 31 deputies belonged to the Venizelist camp and only three of them were anti-Venizelists. In 1928 elections, out of the 30 refugee deputies in the parliament with 250 seats, 28 belonged to Venizelos' Liberal Party. See Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 185-86.


<sup>776</sup> The elections took place on February 11, 1934. 3300 Nea Ionians cast their votes and only 188 of them voted for Polatoglou. He came seventh out of eight candidates. Loukas Christodoulou, *Οι Εκλογές Στη Ν. Ιωνία 1923-1975 (Βουλευτικές-Δημοτικές-Γερουσιαστικές)* (Nea Ionia: ΚΕΜΙΡΟ, 2016), 226-30; see also Sapountzakis and Christodoulou, *Η Νέα Ιωνία στο Μεσοπόλεμο*, 227. For the campaign speech delivered by Polatoglou see Christodoulou, *Οι Εκλογές*, 349-50.

<sup>777</sup> In February 1931, Polatoglou went to Katerini to meet the Turcophone refugees and to explain them Venizelos' program regarding the refugee issue. *Μακεδονία*, February 8, 1931.

**ΟΙ ΣΥΝΔΥΑΣΜΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΛΟΥ ΚΟΖΑΝΗΣ**

**1) ΣΥΝΔΥΑΣΜΟΙ ΦΙΛΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΩΝ**

<p><b>ΚΟΖΑΝΗΣ</b></p> <p>Ν. Κοτταροβίος</p> <p>Α. Ανδρεάδης</p> <p>Μετ. Παπαδόπουλος</p> <p>Κ. Κωνσταντίνος</p>	<p><b>ΓΡΕΒΕΝΩΝ</b></p> <p>Η. Ζαχαρίας</p> <p>Γ. Παντίνας</p>
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**ΤΟ ΣΗΜΑ**

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**ΣΥΝΔΥΑΣΜΟΙ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΥ ΚΟΜΜΑΤΟΣ**

<p><b>ΚΟΖΑΝΗΣ</b></p> <p>Ίωαν. Αντωνιάδης</p> <p>Στέφ. Γαλαριώτης</p> <p>Θεόδ. Καλαριός</p> <p>Ελευθέρ. Χριστοδουλάκης</p>	<p><b>ΓΡΕΒΕΝΩΝ</b></p> <p>Γεώργ. Μουρούσης</p> <p>Κων. Μανωλάκης</p>
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**ΣΗΜΑ ΔΑΦΝΗ**

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**ΣΥΝΔΥΑΣΜΟΙ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΦΡΟΝΩΝ**

<p><b>ΚΟΖΑΝΗΣ</b></p> <p>Γ. Βαχβόλιος</p> <p>Β. Βίλης</p> <p>Γ. Πλάτος</p> <p>Ν. Γαλαριώτης</p>	<p><b>ΓΡΕΒΕΝΩΝ</b></p> <p>Γ. Βαχβόλιος</p> <p>Γ. Αδαμάς</p>
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**ΣΗΜΑ ΣΤΑΧΥΣ**

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**ΣΥΝΔΥΑΣΜΟΣ ΑΥΤΕΑΡΤΟΥ ΦΙΛΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΩΝ**

<p><b>ΚΟΖΑΝΗΣ</b></p> <p><span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Χαρ. Πολατογλου</span></p> <p>Κ. Παπαδόπουλος</p> <p>Χρυσ. Παπαδόπουλος</p> <p>Θεόδ. Κωνσταντίνος</p>	<p><b>ΓΡΕΒΕΝΩΝ</b></p> <p>Κων. Βασιλακοπούλης</p> <p>Δημ. Καλαριώτης</p>
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**Figure 4-7:** “Polatoglou’s name among the independent liberal candidates for the province of Kozani for the 1928 Elections.”

**Source:** *Voreios Ellas*, August 12, 1928.



*Prosfygiki Foni* had a distinct feature: it was partly written in *Karamanlidika* so as to reach the Turkish-speaking refugees. The *Karamanlidika* pages were published under the title of Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί<sup>778</sup> [Muhacir Sedasi, literally Immigrant Voice]. Unlike its Greek pages, in the *Karamanlidika* pages fiction, like “Αλέκο Φαβίνη (Μυθιστορήμαση) Τεμασαΐ Δουνγιά βε Τζεφακιάρ-ου Τζεφακές,”<sup>779</sup> and poems written by refugees in *Karamanlidika* were published. In

<sup>778</sup> The title of the *Karamanlidika* pages has a variety of spellings such as Μουχατζήρ Σεδάση and Μουχατζήρ Σεδασί etc. For the newspaper see E. Kontogiorgi. “Προσφυγική Φωνή”. *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια του ελληνικού Τύπου 1784 - 1974*, vol.3 (Athens: EIE, 2008), 559-560.

<sup>779</sup> [Aleko Favini (Romani) *Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakar-u Cefakeş* = Aleko Favini's (Novel) *The Spectacle of the World and the Suffering of the Sufferer*]. *Temaşa-i Dünya* was first published in İstanbul in 1871-1872 (4 volumes) in Turkish with Greek letters by Evangelinos Misailidis. Since it predated *Taaşşuk-ı Talat ve Fitnat*, which is generally regarded as the first Turkish novel and was published in Turkish, some scholars controversially claim that *Temaşa-i Dünya* is the first novel published in Turkish. *Temaşa-i Dünya* constitutes one of the most vivid sources regarding the Greek community in the nineteenth century and can be regarded as a criticism of the Ottoman administration. In 1995 Penelope Stathi showed *Temaşa-i Dünya* is an adaptation of Grigorios Palaiologos' novel, *Ο Πολυπαθής* and made a textual analysis of the two texts. Penelope Stathi, “Οι περιπέτειες του Πολυπαθούς του Γρηγορίου Παλαιολόγου,” *Μνήμων* 17 (1995): 131–45. See also Giorgos Kehagioglou, “Η σπασμωδική συγκριτική γραμματολογία του νέου ελληνισμού και η ‘Γραικοτουρκική’ διασκευή του πολυπαθούς του Γρ. Παλαιολόγου,” *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 11 (1995): 125–36. For a similar and earlier yet less detailed assessment see Sula Boz, “Paleologos/Misailidis/Favini - Üç İsim Bir Akralalık,” *Milliyet Sanat*, no. 242 (June 15, 1990): 36–37. For more recent studies on the comparison of these two novels see Giorgos Kehagioglou, “Οθωμανικά συμφραζόμενα της ελληνικής έντυπης πεζογραφίας. Από τον Γρηγόριο Παλαιολόγο ως τον Ευαγγελινό Μισαηλίδη,” in *Από τον Λέανδρο στον Λουκή Λάρα: Μελέτες για την πεζογραφία της περιόδου 1830-1880*, ed. Nasos Vagenas (Heraklio: University of Crete Press, 1997), 79–91; Dimitris Tziouvas, *The Other Self: Selfhood and Society in Modern Greek Fiction* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 55-82. For *Temaşa-i Dünya* see Robert Anhegger, “Hurufumuz Yunanca: ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Karamanisch-Türkischen Literatur,” *Anatolica* 7 (1980 1979): 157–202; idem. “Nachtrage zu Hurufumuz Yunanca: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Karamanisch-Türkischen Literatur,” *Anatolica* 10 (1983): 149–64; idem. “Giriş,” in *Seyreyle Dünyayı (Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakâr-u Cefâkeş)*, by Evangelinos Misailidis, ed. Robert Anhegger and Vedat Günyol (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1986), xiii – xxxii. Turgut Kut, “Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakâr u Cefâkeş’in Yazarı Evangelinos Misailidis Efendi,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 48 (1987): 22–26; Penelope Stathi, “Πίστη στη γνώση,” *Το Βήμα*, October 26, 1986, 43-4; Vedat Günyol, “Önsöz,” in *Seyreyle Dünyayı (Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakâr-u Cefâkeş)*, by Evangelinos Misailidis, ed. Robert Anhegger and Vedat Günyol (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1986), viii – xii. The literature on this particular novel has been growing. Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu Şimşek's works stand out among these increasing number of studies. See bilig Türk Dünyası Sosyal Bilimler Şişmanoğlu Şimşek, “Karamanlıca Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakâr u Cefakeş'te Zaman, Mekân ve Kapanış: Polipathis'i Yeniden Yazmak,” *Bilig/Türk Dünyası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, no. 84 (2018): 69–93; Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu Şimşek, “Evangelinos Misailidis'in Karamanlıca Başyapıtı: Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakar u Cefakeş Ya Da “İki Kelise Arasında Bınamaz” Olmak,” in *Tanzimat ve Edebiyat*, ed. Mehmet Fatih Uslu and Fatih Altuğ (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2014), 193–230; “Temaşa-i Dünya ve Cefakâr u Cefakeş'te Geleneksel Folklor Biçimleri,” *Millî Folklor*, no. 110 (2016): 86–99. Recently Peri

his letter to Eleftherios Venizelos dated May 1, 1933, Polatoglou describes his newspaper as the following: “As it is known to you, Mr. President, my newspaper is published in two languages, in Greek and in Turkish with Greek characters, which is the only one of its kind. I made it popular among the Turcophone refugees -thousands [of them] as it’s known- and the guide and the only comrade of these people.”<sup>780</sup>

As Polatoglou stated, the newspaper was one of a kind. Although we do not have the circulation figures for *Prosfygiki Foni*, it can be deduced from its publications that the newspaper was influential among refugees and became the major refugee newspaper, probably until the foundation of *Prosfygikos Kosmos* by Sokratis Sinanidis in 1927 (See Figure 4–8).

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Efe re-edited and annotated the transcribed edition of the novel. See Evangelinos Misailidis, *Tamaşa-yi Dünyâ ve Cefakâr u Cefakeş*, ed. Peri Efe, Robert Anhegger, and Vedat Günyol (İstanbul: YKY, 2021).

<sup>780</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 396-001.





**Figure 4–8:** Prominent figures of the refugee press

(1) Hariton Polatoglou: lawyer, director of *Prosfygiki Foni*, member of the Common Committee of the Unredeemed Greeks (2) Makarios Sinanidis: editor-in-chief of *Pamprosfygiki* (3) Georgios Violakis: director of *Pamprosfygiki* (4) Kostas Misailidis: Journalist (5) Pandelis Kapsis: Journalist (6) Sokratis Sinanidis: manager of *Pamprosfygiki*

**Source:** *Prosfygiki Foni*, December 7, 1924.

In the same letter, Polatoglou wrote to Venizelos that *Prosfygiki Foni* sold thousands of copies in the neighborhoods of Athens, Piraeus, Macedonia and in the province of Kozani.

Regarding the extent of its circulation, what Polatoglou claims seems to be true, because, although the newspaper was published in Athens, it received letters from people in different Macedonian cities (Thessaloniki, Serres, and Kozani etc.), refugees' settlements on different islands, or even from Constantinople. Polatoglou was right while claiming that his newspaper had been an important political platform since the very early days of the newspaper. This was particularly evident in the energetic and enthusiastic campaign of the *Prosfygiki Foni* for the establishment of the Second Hellenic Republic in 1924.

#### 4.4-2 “Τζουμγουριέτ ιτσούν ΝΑΙ αταράκ...”<sup>781</sup>

Greece was in turmoil after the Asia Minor Catastrophe. As the political schism intensified between liberals/Venizelists and royalists, so did the political instability of the country. In September 1922, a military coup under the leadership of Nikolaos Plastiras deposed the anti-Venizelist (royalist) regime and under the pressure of the coup, King Constantine I abdicated in favor of his son, George II and was forced to flee the country. Another immediate action of the coup was to call upon Eleftherios Venizelos, who had been exiled, to lead the negotiations at Lausanne where the unredeemed Greeks would be “saved” not by means of irredentism but this time by means of diplomacy. Meanwhile, anti-Venizelist officers and politicians were held responsible for the Asia Minor debacle and put on trial for treason. The trial resulted in the execution of six anti-Venizelist officers in November 1922. According to George Mavrogordatos, the trial and Venizelist restoration was necessary to defuse popular unrest among the incoming refugees.<sup>782</sup> Together with the triumph of Venizelism, republicanism as well gathered momentum. Finally, the Second Hellenic Republic was proclaimed on March 25, 1924, by the parliament and was ratified by a referendum held on April 13, 1924, which resulted in the abolition of the crown for 11 years until the return of King George II to the country after the Anti-Venizelist/anti-republican military coup in 1935. The Trial of the Six and the proclamation of the republic was the first two momentous historical events that proved the importance of the

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<sup>781</sup> [Cumhuriyet için NAI (Evet) atarak = Voting YES for the Republic]

<sup>782</sup> George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 29.

refugee support/vote in schismatic interwar Greek politics in which the refugees held the balance between the two poles.<sup>783</sup>

Many things contributed to the increasing momentum for the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic, and one of them was the mass support of the Asia Minor refugees for Venizelism. Actually, scholars writing on this period heavily underline the fact that without refugee support the Second Republic would have never been established.<sup>784</sup> The importance of the “fanaticism of the refugee masses in favor of the republic” was expressed by Alexandros Papanastasiou, who was the Prime Minister at the time of the referendum.<sup>785</sup> This was so for various reasons. First, the Asia Minor refugees blamed the King and anti-Venizelism for the Catastrophe, and hence for their exodus. Another reason was the opportunity that the Venizelist sociopolitical movement offered the refugees the only available avenue for integration. The hostility towards refugees among the native Greek society and the anti-Venizelist political parties which they supported alienated the newcomers. We can not neglect another important factor, and that was Venizelos’ charismatic leadership.<sup>786</sup> In addition to these widely accepted reasons, based on the evidence from *Prosfygiki Foni* I argue that the refugees were not only against the kingdom in Greece but, as the former subjects of the Ottoman sultan, they instinctually opposed to monarchy as a form of government, and thus, they strongly favored

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<sup>783</sup> Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange*, 177-181.

<sup>784</sup> Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 185. Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange*, 181.

<sup>785</sup> A. Papanastasiou, “Πρόλογος” in M. I. Notaras, *Η αγροτική αποκατάσταση των προσφύγων* (Athens: Chronika, 1934), xii.

<sup>786</sup> Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 198. Michael Kyrkos in the House of Parliament stressed the link between Venizelos’ persona and refugees’ anti-dynastic and republican stance. See Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange*, 176.

republicanism.<sup>787</sup> A refugee MP Michael Kyrkos explains the devotion of refugees to the concept of republic as the following: “The republic for the refugees was related to their fathers’ hearths and to their graves and to everything most valuable and sacred that a person can could have.”<sup>788</sup> One can rightfully add that everything evil was equated with the monarchy.

From its very first issues,<sup>789</sup> *Prosfygiki Foni* published news and articles about the proclamation of the Second Republic. But the publications in *Karamanlidika* started towards the end of March with an article titled “Τζουμχουριέτ” [Cumhuriyet: Republic].<sup>790</sup> The article, almost with an academic language, explained the difference between these two forms of governments based on a linear progression from monarchy to republic. This article is important because it shows that the opposition of the refugees was not only to the monarchy in Greece but to monarchy anywhere.

[...] and as the result of progress and civilization while cities and countries were formed, their leaders were called sultan, king or ruler. [...] Abuses offer the kings, their reactionary stance and incapacity started to awake the people and instead of accepting a dynast, the method of electing the most skilled as leaders was accepted among the European peoples. [...] Both Greeks and Latins [*Romans*] seemed to make progress only during the republican times. [...] Republic means progress while Kingdom means about-turn. [...] Kings base everything on sects and religion. Republican leaders, on the other hand, act according to the needs of the people.

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<sup>787</sup> Although Pentzopoulos mentions the importance of refugees’ imperial past while explaining their republicanism, he formulates his explanation in a diametrically opposite way and claims that it was the autonomy that the Ottoman Empire granted to its non-Muslim subjects and the past self-administration practice of the Asia Minor refugees as imperial subjects through which they were channeled towards republicanism in Greece. (Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange*, 175.) I believe that this is far from explaining the situation in the case of the Asia Minor refugees considering the evidence from *Prosfygiki Foni*.

<sup>788</sup> Cited by Anastasis Ghikas, *Ρήξη και ενσωμάτωση. Συμβολή στην ιστορία του εργατικού-κομμουνιστικού κινήματος του μεσοπολέμου, 1918-1936* (Athens: Syghroni Epohi, 2010), 297.

<sup>789</sup> “Βασιλεία ή δημοκρατία” [Monarchy or Republic], *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, March 2, 1924, no.4

<sup>790</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, March 30, 1924.

On April 6, this time in the Greek pages of the newspaper, a new article “Our Duty” was published. This article was much more political and direct in comparison to the Turkish article published in the previous issue. The article emphasized the importance of “unhesitatingly and enthusiastically” voting for the republic in the referendum. According to it, why the ratification of the republic had to be supported was not related to the problems of the refugees but to the national interest. *Prosfygiki Foni* emphasized that the integrity of the country was threatened by the ongoing strife and state of disorder and this situation could be exploited by Greece’s treacherous neighbors—clearly a reference to Bulgaria. Only the ratification of the republic with the support of the refugee world could bring an end to this chaos.<sup>791</sup> In the footer areas of the Greek and Turkish pages of the same issue, the newspaper called refugees to vote for the republic with the slogans written in bold capital letters: “Refugees! Vote for the Republic” [ΠΡΟΣΦΥΓΕΣ! ΨΗΦΙΣΑΤΕ ΤΗΝ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΝ = ΜΟΥΧΑΤΖΗΡΛΕΡ! ΤΣΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΠΙΕΤΕ ΡΕΪ ΒΕΡΙΝΙΖ]. In addition to this, in the footer of the other pages, the newspaper emphasized the importance of the referendum by saying: “Your security is (dependent on) the permanence of the republic” [ΣΕΛΑΜΕΤΙΝΙΖ ΤΖΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΠΙΕΤΙΝ ΠΑΚΑΣΙΔΙΡ]. Actually, this was just a quote from the article titled as “Refugee Issues - Our Security” published on the same page. The article claimed that the administrations of kings and sultans had long been characterized by prodigality, misconducts and arbitrariness. The corrupt system of the Hellenic Kingdom was not an exception to this rule and so, it was on the verge of collapse. Since it would have cost too much to repair it after it collapsed, the parliament took a right step and timely proclaimed the republic.

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<sup>791</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, April 6, 1924.

On April 9, in another unsigned article with the title “Μουχατζήρ μεσελελερί - Σελαμετιμίζ” [Muhacir meseleleri - Selametimiz = Refugee issues - Our salvation], *Prosfygiki Foni* warns its readers about the betrayals of the monarchs and underlines the political message that the proclamation of the republic and its ratification by the people was a prerequisite for civilization and the salvation of the refugees. That’s why the majority of the refugees were told to support the republic in the referendum.<sup>792</sup> In this article, *Prosfygiki Foni* choice of words is intriguing, especially as it relates to the monarchy. Throughout the article the newspaper prefers to use the couple “κιραλλάρ βε πατισαχλάρ” [kings and sultans] which, I think, supports the argument that *Prosfygiki Foni* tried to equate the Greek King to the Ottoman Sultan and used history in order to revive the bitter pre-Catastrophe memories of the refugees and to unify them against the Greek King through their anti-Turkish/Ottoman sentiments.

In the same article, another point regarding the language of *Prosfygiki Foni* can be observed. While talking about the referendum, the newspaper uses the Greek word δημοψήφισμα instead of any Turkish equivalent of the word. This was partly because the word referendum (referendum) was also new to Turkish<sup>793</sup> and partly because this word and particularly this practice was something that they first came across in Greece. In *Prosfygiki Foni* the usage of Greek words that were new to the refugees or did not have any Turkish equivalent was very common. It is also worth pointing out that in the same issue of the newspaper there was a small piece of news about the support of the Communist Party for the republic [“Κομμουνιστλερδέ τζουμχουριέτ λεχινδέ”]. This was one rare piece of news published by *Prosfygiki Foni* that was

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<sup>792</sup> “Βε πουνού τασδήκ ιτμέκ μιλλετέ αϊδ πουλουνδουγινδάν κελετζέκ Κυριακή κιουνού ‘δημοψήφισμα’ ιτζρά ιδιλιμεσινί ταχδι कारारा अलινदी.”

<sup>793</sup> According to Sevan Nisanyan, the word “referandum” first appeared in Mehmet Bahaettin’s *Yeni Türkçe Lügat* in 1924. Nişanyan, *Sözlerin Soyağacı-Çağdaş Türkçe’nin Etimolojik Sözlüğü*, <http://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=referandum>

favorable to the communists. In this issue, there were slogans on the bottom side of the pages saying: “Μουχατζιρλέρ! Τζουμχουριετέ ρεϊ βέρινιζ” [Muhacirler! Cumhuriyete rey veriniz = Refugees! Vote for the republic] and “Σελαμετινιζ τζουμχουριετιν πακασιδιρ” [Selametiniz cumhuriyetin bekadısır = Your salvation is the survival of the republic].

The next three issues of *Prosfygiki Foni* (10, 11 and 12) were almost exclusively on the referendum issue, and their back pages were prepared like leaflets with headlines larger than the usual style of the newspaper and with a single, long leading article. The issue no.11 was the reprint of no.10 and was printed the following day, that is to say, it lies outside the publication period of the newspaper. As we said before, the pages in Greek and in Karamanlidika, even if they were similar in terms of their contents, were not mere translations of each other. The leading articles of the issues no.10 and no.11 are, however, almost exact translations. On the final page the title of the article was composed of some slogans:

ΜΟΥΧΑΤΖΗΡΛΑΡ!  
ΜΟΥΧΑΤΖΗΡ ΙΣΤΙΚΡΑΖΙΝΙΝ ΤΕΕΜΕΝΙ  
ΟΥΜΟΥΜ ΓΙΟΝΑΝ ΕΧΑΛΙΣΙΝΙΝ ΜΟΥΧΑΠΕΤΙ  
ΕΥΡΩΠΙΑΝΙΝ ΕΜΝΙΕΤΙΝΙΝ ΤΖΕΛΠΙ  
ΜΕΜΛΕΚΕΤΙΝ ΣΙΚΙΟΥΝΕΤ ΒΕ ΙΝΖΙΠΑΤΙΝ ΤΕΕΜΙΝΙ ΙΤΖΟΥΝ  
ΤΖΟΥΜΛΕΝΙΖ ΤΖΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΠΙΕΤΕ ΡΕΪ ΒΕΡΙΝΙΖ  
ΓΙΑΣΑΣΙΝ ΤΖΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΠΙΕΤ!  
ΚΑΧΡ ΟΛΣΟΥΝ ΤΖΑΝΙ ΚΙΡΑΛΙΕΤ!

MUHACİRLAR!  
MUHACİR İSTİKRAZİNİN TEEMİNİ  
UMUM YUNAN EHALİSİNİN MUHABBETİ  
EVROPA’NIN EMNİYETİNİN CELBİ  
MEMLEKETİN SIKÛNET VE İNZİBATININ TEEMİNİ İÇÜN  
CÜMLENİZ CUMHURİYETE REY VERİNİZ  
YAŞASIN CUMHURİYET!  
KAHR OLSUN CANI KIRALİYET!

REFUGEES!  
FOR OBTAINING THE REFUGEE LOAN

FOR THE HAPPINESS OF ENTIRE GREEK SOCIETY  
FOR ENSURING THE SECURITY OF EUROPE  
FOR MAINTAINING PEACE AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY  
ALL OF YOU VOTE FOR THE REPUBLIC  
LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC!  
DOWN WITH THE CRIMINAL KINGDOM!

The entire article is also very interesting. After describing the desperate situation in which many refugees had lived in the Ottoman Empire and were living in Greece, the author says sharply “Waiting for any help from the anthropomorphous of Greece [“Γιονανιστανήν ινσανά πενζεγιενλερινδέν”] for the improvement of their living conditions is stupidity” and continues “Those who made us refugees, who separate us from our 3000-year-old homelands, who set us apart from the graves of our beloved ones and turned our sanctuaries into barns, who devastated two and a half million people and made half of them perish are not the Turks.” Instead of the Turks, the author lays the blame on King Konstantinos, “his blood-thirsty dynasty” and the parties supporting him. *Prosfygiki Foni* cleared Venizelos of any responsibility for the Asia Minor Catastrophe. But it also underlined that, although it used to be Venizelists in Asia Minor, now in Greece *Prosfygiki Foni* was independent from Venizelism and royalism, and it claimed that, if Venizelism is a Packham pear, then royalism is a wild pear [“Βενιζελικοσλαρί παγ αρμουδή αρζ ιδέρσεκ, Κωνσταντινικοσλάρδα δαγ αρμουδήδηρ”]. This stems from the desire of *Prosfygiki Foni* to emphasize its refugeehood as its primary characteristic and to classify Venizelism, republicanism/anti-royalism as secondary. Finally, the newspaper portrays the schism in Greece as a polarization between the honorable and patriotic people and the corrupt ones. On the bottom side of the page there is a slogan reading “ΝΑΙ! Βιτζδανί ολάν τζουμχουριετέ ρεϊ βερσούν” [Yes! Those who have a conscience should vote for the Republic]. In the last paragraph of the text the author leaves aside the words “τζουμχουριέτ” and “κιραλίετ”



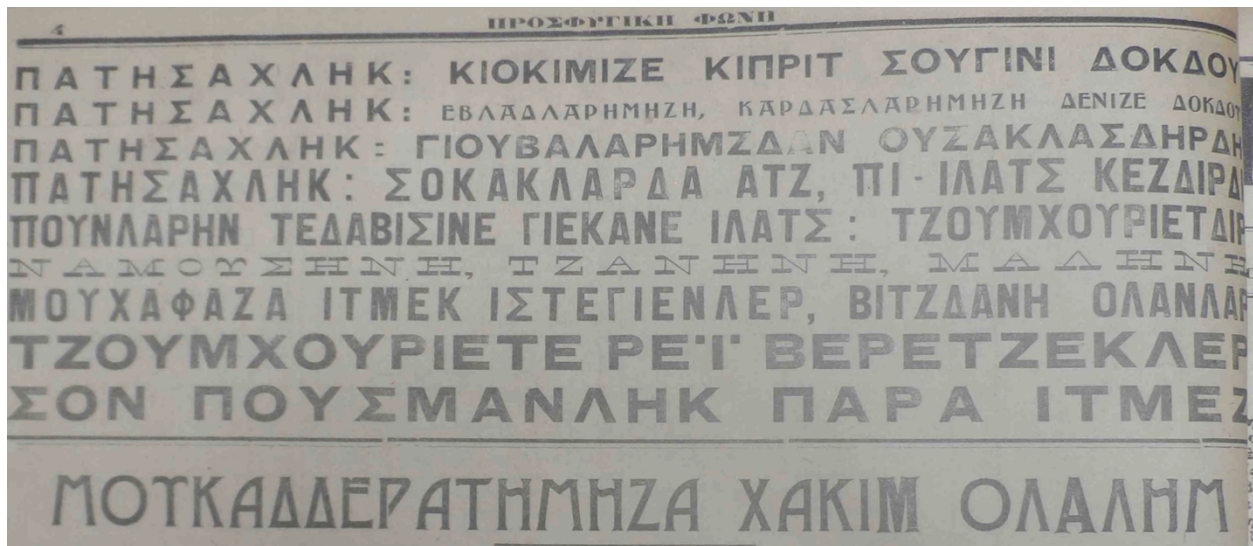
and starts using the Greek words “δημοκρατία” [republic] and “βασιλεία” [kingdom] and writes repeatedly “yes” in Greek [ΝΑΙ] with capital letters. I think these are related to the newspaper’s endeavor to visually and verbally familiarize the refugees with the referendum ballot.

The day before the referendum, the newspaper appeared with the headline: “Tomorrow All Refugees Vote YES for the Hellenic Republic.”<sup>794</sup> The title was designed to give the message that voting “yes” for the republic also meant to “yes” to “the urban and rural rehabilitation [of the refugees],” to “the salvation of the country and consolidation of the peace,” to “the recovery of the economy and prosperity of the country,” to “the reconciliation of the people and conciliation of the country,” to “the political and economic renaissance of the country,” and finally to “the permanent eradication of the criminal kingdom.” The article “Double Joy - Double Victory” signed by M. S. Was written in a very propagandistic and passionate language, aimed at flaming its readers with sentiments of vengeance against the kingdom and the political figures attached to it. It is also an intellectually dense considering that it was an article calling for strong political action. It is doubtful that references to Ernst Renan for the concept of republic, to *Faust* or to Greek mythology had much resonance with its refugee readers of the lower classes. The article simply spoke to the refugees and to an entire nation baying for blood over their losses in Asia Minor. In the final Turkish page in the same issue, there were slogans as the headlines of the page and an article on the importance of referendum with the title of “Let’s Control Our Own Destiny” (See Figure 4–9).<sup>795</sup>

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<sup>794</sup> Προσφυγική Φωνή, April 12, 1924

<sup>795</sup> The article is signed by A. Destoglou [Α. Δέστογλου] about whom I could not find any further information.



**Figure 4–9:** The headline of the final Turcophone page of the newspaper *Prosfygiki Foni* published one day before the 1924 referendum  
**Source:** *Prosfygiki Foni*, April 12, 1924.

ΠΑΤΗΣΑΧΛΗΚ: ΚΙΟΚΙΜΙΖΕ ΚΙΠΡΙΤ ΣΟΥΓΙΝΙ ΔΟΚΔΟΥ  
ΠΑΤΗΣΑΧΛΗΚ: ΕΒΛΑΔΔΑΡΗΜΗΖΗ, ΚΑΡΔΑΣΛΑΡΗΜΗΖΗ ΔΕΝΙΖΕ ΔΟΚΔΟΥ  
ΠΑΤΗΣΑΧΛΗΚ: ΓΟΥΒΑΛΑΡΗΜΖΔΑΝ, ΟΥΖΑΚΛΑΣΔΗΡΔΗ  
ΠΑΤΗΣΑΧΛΗΚ: ΣΟΚΑΚΛΑΡΔΑ ΑΤΖ, ΠΙ-ΙΛΑΤΣ ΚΕΖΔΙΡΔΗ  
ΠΟΥΝΛΑΡΗΝ ΤΕΔΑΒΙΣΙΝΕ ΓΙΕΚΑΝΕ ΙΛΑΤΣ: ΤΖΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΙΕΤΔΙΡ  
ΝΑΜΟΥΣΗΝΗ, ΤΖΑΝΗΝΗ, ΜΑΛΗΝΗ, ΜΟΥΧΑΦΑΖΑ ΙΤΜΕΚ ΙΣΤΕΓΙΕΝΛΕΡ,  
ΒΙΤΖΑΝΗ ΟΛΑΝΛΑΡ, ΤΖΟΥΜΧΟΥΡΙΕΤΕ ΡΕΪ ΒΕΡΕΤΖΕΚΛΕΡ  
ΣΟΝ ΠΟΥΣΜΑΝΛΗΚ ΠΑΡΑ ΙΤΜΕΖ  
ΜΟΥΚΑΔΔΕΡΑΤΗΜΗΖΑ ΧΑΚΙΜ ΟΛΑΛΗΜ

PADIŞAHLIK: KÖKÜMÜZE KİBRİT SUYUNU DÖKTÜ  
PADIŞAHLIK: EVLADLARIMIZI, KARDAŞLARIMIZI DENİZE DÖKDÜ  
PADIŞAHLIK: YUVALARIMIZDAN, UZAKLAŞTIRDI  
PADIŞAHLIK: SOKAKLARDA AÇ, Bİ-İLAÇ GEZDİRDİ  
BUNLARIN TEDAVİSİNE YEGANE İLAÇ: CUMHURİYETTİR  
NAMUSUNU, CANINI, MALINI, MUHAFAZA ETMEK İSTEYENLER, VİCDANI  
OLANLAR, CUMHURİYETE REY VERECEKLER  
SON PİŞMANLIK PARA ETMEZ  
MUKADDERATIMIZA HAKİM OLALIM

SULTANATE: WIPED US OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH  
SULTANATE: DROVE OUR CHILDREN, OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS INTO  
THE SEA  
SULTANATE: TOOK US AWAY FROM OUR HOMES  
SULTANATE: LEFT US STARVING AND DESPERATE ON THE STREETS  
SULTANATE: LEFT US STARVING AND DESPERATE ON THE STREETS

THE ONLY MEDICATION TO CURE THOSE IS THE REPUBLIC  
THOSE WHO WANT TO PROTECT THEIR HONOR, LIFE, PROPERTY AND  
THOSE WHO HAVE CONSCIENCE WILL VOTE FOR THE REPUBLIC  
THERE'S NO POINT CRYING OVER SPILT MILK  
LET'S CONTROL OUR OWN DESTINY

This article too describes the republic as a progressive mode of administration and depicts the difference between a form of government based on the people's will and one with a monarch. Destoglou gives examples from republican regimes to prove the point. Although *Prosfygiki Foni* had a clear anti-communist stance, Destoglou refers to the Soviet system as a republican model that created dynamism in Russia in comparison to tsardom. Similarly, for the author, imperial France and French Republic are two countries not comparable in any meaningful way. In the light of these examples, the refugees were invited to vote in favor of the republic: "Whatever happened to us happened and today we fell into the real motherland's arms. Protecting these arms is only possible if we can control our own destiny. [...] The monarchical nightmare should be brought to an end."<sup>796</sup>

This emphasis constitutes an important difference between Destoglou's article and the article published in Greek in the first page of the newspaper. While Destoglou calls for the support of the refugees for the republic with an emphasis on the future, the article of M. S. emphasizes the historical reasons and sees the support for the republic as a way of demanding vengeance for the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the losses of the refugees.

After the ratification of the republic with a remarkable level of support (70% of valid votes), the newspaper celebrated this historical turning point and underlined the importance of the refugee support.<sup>797</sup> In the Greek pages of the newspaper, a didactic article on "the new

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<sup>796</sup> Ibid.

<sup>797</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, April 20, 1924.

condition” in Greece signed by “Theodoros S. Kotsios (headmaster)”<sup>798</sup> was published. In this article, Kotsios celebrated the victory of the “republican idea” which influenced important figures of the ancient and recent world. According to the author, sooner or later the pessimists, ignoramuses and the uncivilized people would feel the fervor of the republican idea. The article in the Karamanlidika pages celebrated the establishment of the Second Hellenic Republic and highlighted a similar point made by Kotsios.

The article begins with congratulating the refugees for the level of consciousness and enthusiasm they had shown during the pre-referendum campaign as well as for their resounding vote. The disrespect for the level and nature of the twentieth century civilization, which could have been developed easily due to the great miseries inflicted upon both the refugees and the natives, according to the author, was not compatible with the ability of any nation to live under the flag of a state. The author also implied that this was a clear sign of the essentialness of achieving a unity between the refugees and the natives around their common political and economic interests. But he particularly emphasized that if the refugees had not shown such a readiness and selflessness, they would have lowered themselves to the level of the most wretched and pathetic people in the world and “God forbid (*Ma-az-Allah* as the author wrote) this possibility was as close as a mosquito buzzing above our heads.” Yet this would have been unfilial of the children of a nation that had passed through uprisings and had had to surmount many obstacles. The author attached cardinal importance on how the European states (*Ευρώπη δοβλετλερί = Evropa dövletleri*) perceived the referendum results. The landslide victory of the

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<sup>798</sup> Theodoros S. Kotsios was a teacher and had taught at the Evangelical School in Smyrna. He was also the author or co-author of several textbooks such as *Νέα αναγνωστικά* (Constantinople: Bookstore Depasta-Sfyra-Gerardou, 1907) and *Ιερά ιστορία προς χρήσιν των αστικών σχολών αμφοτέρων των φύλων* (Smyrna: Stylianopoulos, 1894).

republic won the approval of states, but, if otherwise, the same states would have come to the conclusion that Greece was “unable to control its own destiny, to draw lessons from the past, to cure its remedies” and hence “incapable” of fulfilling the basic requirements of nationhood. The final paragraph too reflected how critical the author assessed the foreign opinion regarding Greece: “Thus, if a nation fulfills the requirements of its existence, this means that it is civilized enough. May the Deity (*Cenab-ı Hak* = *Τζεναπ χακ*) not deprive us of the appreciation of the entire world.”<sup>799</sup>

Language-wise the article is quite intriguing. First, the wording of the article is quite rich and elaborate, considering the general linguistic preferences of the newspaper.<sup>800</sup> Although the language of the article was relatively high-flown, it also contains local dialectal elements. For example, the author writes “göğlümüzüm” (*κιογλιουμιουζήν*) instead of “gönlümüzün” as this word is still pronounced in certain parts of Central Anatolia. Moreover, the author uses some phrases that echoed with Islamic culture such as *inşallah* (lit. if Allah wills it), *maazallah* (Allah forbid), *Cenab-ı Hakk* (the Deity).

In the other Turcophone page of the newspaper, there was another article written by A. Dedeoglou and its title was “We should boost our morale” [*Μανεβιατημηζή Γιουκσελδελίμ* = *Maneviyatımızı Yükseltelim*].<sup>801</sup> In this article Dedeoglou particularly addressed the refugees

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<sup>799</sup> “Şu halde bir milletki, yaşamasının icabatını takdir iderse, o millet seviyeye dahi malik demektirki, Cenap hak daha yüksek seviyelerle bütün cihanın nazarı tebrikinden bizi geri bırakmasın.”

<sup>800</sup> The simplification of the Ottoman Turkish was a constant problem of Karamanlidika publications, particularly that of newspapers. In the first and the longest-lived Karamanlidika newspaper, *Anatoli*, this theme appeared repeatedly starting from its very first days. See for example *Anatoli*, August 4, 1853. Similarly, in 1902, in the preface written for the Karamanlidika book *Ιερουσαλήμ* (Yerusalem, Jerusalem) Limnidis emphasizes that the book was consciously written in a simplified Turkish so that everybody would be able to understand it. He also says “sometimes to achieve this goal we have not used even stylistic language.” Iordanis I. Limnidis, *Ιερουσαλήμ* (Dersaadet: Limnidis and Kioseoglou, 1902), η’.

<sup>801</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, April 20, 1924. The article is signed by Ach. Dedeoglou [*Αχ. Δεδεόγλου*] about whom I could not find any further information.

and emphasized that with the referendum Greece had finally become a nation capable of controlling its own future.

We, the refugees, should think about the following: We have left the material side [of our lives] that had been inherited from our mothers and fathers as the product of the progress and evolved throughout thousands of years. We left [them] in a complete destruction. But who cares? All these are the products of life. It is the life which has a spiritual site. And that is capable of winning and losing all these things.

Let's think about it: We used to work as the slaves of Turkey for six hundred years or so. We used to have no word over our lives, our honor, our possessions and our sovereignty. But today and from now on we have become a part of the nations that can control and protect their own lives, possessions, honor, and in short everything, and above all of these, their sovereignty and one cannot think of something more vital, more important and that makes somebody prouder than this. Imagining someone thinking that the wealth, and the bricks and mortar that we left and don't have anymore should be held high above the national sovereignty that we have today is simply madness.

[...] Today we need more than ever to focus on the needs of the future and boost our morale rather than get stuck in the disasters of the past and sink into despair.

Dedeoglou, parallel to the editorial policy of the newspaper, assessed the results of the referendum and the new page that opened in the history of Greece with the ratification of the republic, arguing that it was an opportunity for the integration of the refugees into the Greek society, one of the obstacles to which was the fact that the refugees felt great nostalgia for their lives before they ended up in Greece.

At this point, a small parenthesis can be inserted to explain how the refugees approached developments in Turkey, particularly the declaration of the republic and the Kemalist reforms. Although the declaration of the republic preceded the first issue of *Prosfygiki Foni*, another source can supply us with some information that indirectly answers this question. Iordanis Limnidis, who was the inheritor of the tradition of publishing Karamanlidika newspapers in the Ottoman Empire mainly created by Evangelinos Misailidis and continued to be in close contact with those maintaining the tradition in Greece after the population exchange, primarily Violakis,

the Sinanidis brothers and Polatoglou (See Figure 4–8). Immediately after the declaration of the republic in Turkey, on November 1, 1923, *Nea Anatoli* of Limnidis and Violakis published an anonymous article on this development. The article titled as “Τουρκίαδα Δζουμχουριέτ” [Türkiye’de Cumhuriyet = Republic in Turkey] reads as follows:<sup>802</sup>

Turkey, as the youngest of the republics, has become the thirty-third country adopting this form of government. The total number of independent states are 84. [...] It can be understood from the yearly increasing number of countries with this form of government that the world is going to espouse the republican administrative style. Even though this administrative style is usually considered as democratic, the reality does not always follow this. Whether a state is democratic or not depends not on the form of the government but on the frame of mind of the people constituting that state. For example, the government of England is not republican but pretty democratic. On the other hand, many of the South American republics are more despotic than kingdoms. Especially the republics like Mexico and China are in continuous chaos.

As expressed in this passage, the newspaper’s hopes were not very high when the democratization of Turkey was considered. *Nea Anatoli*, which shared the anti-Greek publications of the Turkish press with its readers almost on daily basis, was almost certain about the impossibility of this with an administrative decision. Although *Prosfygiki Foni* was a strong proponent of the republican regime as it has been shown above, like *Nea Anatoli* it was critical and sometimes sarcastic regarding the Kemalist reforms in Turkey and their emphasis on the change of outward symbols —such as the adoption of Western-looking clothes— rather than on the fundamental change of the social and political structure as well as their authoritarian, top-to-down bureaucratic practice. For example, the newspaper published two sarcastic Karamanlidika

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<sup>802</sup> *Νέα Ανατολή*, November 1, 1923.

poems of Sophoclis Triandafyllidis<sup>803</sup> on the Kemalist reforms on February 10 and February 21.

The first two verses of the first poem, “We are messed up”, are extremely telling.<sup>804</sup>

Hey, buddy, Mehmet, what have you done?  
Why you are wearing a hat tell me one by one  
You look just like the infidel, o poor Memetcik  
Let’s hit the tavern, hang a few on and speak.

After turning forty, you set out to play an instrument  
With those wearing hat you’ve become close and intimate  
Hey buddy, for God’s sake keep your lips sealed  
We are messed up if by the police or gendarmerie those are revealed

Triandafyllidis continued his poem by warning Mehmet, his former compatriot, about the dark dungeons of Ankara and advised him to respect the new dress code just as he had respected the fez in the past.

“Present-day Turkey” is the title of the second poem in which the “poet” grudgingly appreciates the rapid steps of westernization, which changed the image of and outlook for the

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<sup>803</sup> Sophoclis Triandafyllidis was born in Trabzon in 1862. After he graduated from the Phanar Greek Orthodox College in Constantinople he studied law at the University of Athens. As a liberal politician, he defended the rights of the crofters against the large landowners and became one of the leading figures of the peasants’ movement in Thessaly. He was the editor of the newspaper *Panthessaliki*, which was published in Volos between 1900 and 1912. Among other publication he also published the book *Οι κολλήγοι της Θεσσαλίας* [The crofters of Thessaly]. In the 1910 election, he was elected the deputy of Larissa from the Liberal Party. In 1913, he moved to Thessaloniki and became active in the resettlement of the Caucasian refugees and later in the rehabilitation of refugees from Asia Minor. He contributed to *Προσφυγική Φωνή* in this period. He died in Thessaloniki in 1929. Lazaros Arseniou, *Το έπος των Θεσσαλών αγροτών και οι εξεγέρσεις τους 1881-1993* (Thessaloniki: Kyriakidi Afoi, 2005), 180-83.

<sup>804</sup> Ulan Mehmet bu ne hal böyle? / Sen de mi şapka giydin söyle bakayım söyle / Tıpkı gavura döndün ulan Memetcik / Gel gidelim meyhaneye atalım bir ikicik.

Kırkından sonra sen de saz çalmaya kalkıştın / Bunca şapkalılara sen de mi karıştın. / Sus ulan sus sesini kes aman / Polis jandarma duyarsa halimiz yaman

*Προσφυγική Φωνή*, February 10, 1923.



country; yet again he emphasized the role of the force and repression in this modernization process:

How the Turks are doing let's we have a look at  
In this way, we may draw a lesson from that  
Fifteen-ell-long turbans vanished into thin air  
Lodges perished, hodjas cannot mutter prayer

For the days of ignorance tolled the death knell  
As if on them Kemal had cast a magical spell  
Those deceitful hodjas have found the true way  
From superstitions and fallacies, they've stepped away

...  
Collared are those against the government's actions  
They end up in the deepest bowels of Ankara's dungeons  
Wake up and look at the Turks, o Sultan Hamid  
Had you told such a progress, could you have believed it?

As it is seen from these poems although they were highly critical of the Kemalist regime in Turkey, based on their observations, they were aware of the dynamism of the early republican era. Not only were they aware of the relatively fast consolidation of the regime in Turkey, but the refugees also closely followed the most recent developments in Turkey, which seems to be directly related to their hope of returning to their homeland one day. This can be clearly seen in the publications of the newspaper during the Sheikh Said Rebellion in February and March of 1925.

To summarize, *Prosfygiki Foni* supported the republican front strongly and Venizelism as well, albeit rather conditionally. Practically, however, it sought to increase the newspaper's circulation by emphasizing that its primary identity and focus was as a venue for refugees first and then as a supporter of Venizelism and/or republicanism. Polatoglou saw the newspaper as a means of enlightening the Turkish-speaking refugees. From this perspective the newspaper did its work by historically and politically explaining the importance of the republic and the

necessity of such a form of government, and by disseminating special propaganda material for the Turcophone refugees. It is interesting to observe *Prosfygiki Foni*'s categorical opposition to the monarchy as a form of government and its equating it to the sultanate and its usage of the word “πατισαχλήκ” (*padişahlık*) to mobilize the memory of the refugees against the Greek Kingdom. Not surprisingly, the political stance of Polatoglou and his newspaper soon became the target of the anti-Venizelist camp. The protagonist of anti-Venizelism among newspapers, *Σκριπ* published a series of articles in October 1924 on the refugee problem. The series was titled “Refugees, hear the Voice of the Truth” [“Πρόσφυγες ακούσατε την φωνήν της αλήθειας”] implying that the “Refugee Voice” did not represent the “voice of the truth” and it directly referred to and criticized the publications of *Prosfygiki Foni*.<sup>805</sup> The influence of and the controversy around the newspaper continued to exist well into the 1930s. *Prosfygiki Foni* was so controversial and influential that, on December 12, 1930, the newspaper *Makedonia* reported that a fake *Prosfygiki Foni* has been published in Thessaloniki. The fake newspaper created great confusion and disturbance among politicians and this action was protested by Polatoglou. As a final observation, after *Prosfygiki Foni* ceased to publish in 1934, *Karamanlidika* was never used to this extent in the sphere of politics<sup>806</sup> and the history of *Karamanlidika* publications, which dates back to the sixteenth century, and that of *Karamanlidika* newspapers, which started in 1850 with the publication of *Anatoli* by Evangelinos Misailidis came to an end.

#### **4.5 The 1925 local election in Thessaloniki**

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<sup>805</sup> See for example *Σκριπ*, October 2, 1924, and October 6, 1924.

<sup>806</sup> One exception can be the leaflet prepared by the parties of Tsaldaris, Kondylis, Metaxas and Xatzikyriakos on their program regarding the refugee issue. See Balta, *Karamanlidika. Nouvelles Additions*, 159-162 (no.104).

“While Turkish houses were distributed, they did not give me any since I was not married. I worked for 15 – 16 hours in brick factories. Eight-hour work was lacking at the time. I became a member of the Communist Party in 1935. [...] I read Lenin, I know Mao, Enver Hodja. In 1940 war with the Italians started. I went to war leaving behind my three children and my wife. The Italians left, the Germans came. I stayed in the army for three years. There was hunger, misery. I ate meat even from a horse carcass during the war. [...] Germans left. We started shooting each other. From ‘46 to ‘49. My son took to the mountain against the Germans. When the Germans left, gendarmes started torturing and killing communists.”

Thanasis Mpakirtzoglou , a refugee from Burdur<sup>807</sup>

An optimistic political atmosphere emerged with the republic, but it did not last long, until it was shattered by the country’s increasing economic instability. Not only did the disquieting refugee issue remain prominent and unresolved, but in order to suppress any possible reaction to this situation, the political atmosphere became increasingly repressive.<sup>808</sup>

In particular the government of Michalakopoulos, who was the leader of the most conservative faction in the Venizelist coalition, frequently took measures inhibiting or restraining the freedom of individuals and social groups, by, for example, prohibiting public demonstrations in Thessaloniki. The refugee organizations, including the Second All-Refugee Congress, were quite vocal regarding their detestation of the Michalakopoulos government. As mentioned earlier, both the refugee issue and its solution were closely tied to the land issue, a problem that had remained unresolved since the foundation of the independent Greek state. The land issue, in other words, the problem of the expropriation of large estates, when coupled with the refugee

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<sup>807</sup> Kemal Yalçın, *Emanet Çeyiz*, 113-119.

<sup>808</sup> The price of bread, which can be seen as a basic indicator of the living standards of lower classes, was 4.40 drachma/oka in the beginning of 1924 whereas it rose to 8 drachma/oka in the end of the same year. History Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE History Department), *Δοκίμιο ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ 1918-1949*, 7th ed., vol. 1 (Athens: Sygchroni Epochi, 2011), 162.

problem, resulted in social unrest of unprecedented scale. 1925, for example, began with a series of peasant uprisings. The demonstrations started in Larissa with the demand for the expropriation of the *tsifliks*. On January 21, peasants occupied the *tsifliks* and monastic lands in the villages like Kazaklar, Karatzoli, Steveniko and Boiotias. The uprising reached its apogee on February 2 with the occupation of the monastic lands in Kastraki and a huge demonstration in Trikala, which was mainly initiated by the Federation of Veterans and Army Victims (*Ομοσπονδία Παλαιών Πολεμιστών και Θυμάτων Στρατού*)<sup>809</sup> and it was the largest demonstration after the end of WWI. As the result of the brutal intervention of the gendarmerie, eight demonstrators were killed and many wounded.<sup>810</sup> Afterward, numerous participants were prosecuted and exiled. Livieratos attributes major importance to the Trikala events as an indicator of the upcoming escalation of the social and economic crisis:<sup>811</sup>

The Trikala events came as a manifestation of the general economic and social crisis. Dearness slashes the incomes of the poor classes that cannot easily react because of high

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<sup>809</sup> The federation was founded by the Communist Party in 1924. But its history dates back to September 1922. Elefantis, *Η Επαγγελία της Αδύνατης Επανάστασης*, 57. The founder and the president of the federation, Pantelis Pouliopoulos (alias F. Orphanos), who would be elected the general secretary of the KKE in November 1924, described how the class antagonism revealed itself in Greece in his report to the congress of the federation held on May 6, 1924: “On the one hand in the whole country and especially in the cities, the sharks of bank capital, the big industrialists and big merchants, speculators and the *nouveau-riche* upstarts of the wars; on the other hand, out in the rural areas, the big landlords (*tsiflik*-owners) and money lenders hold the lives of the people in their hands, and with more or less “legal” methods they usurp, they steal, the labor of the vast majority of the people, which consists of workers, poor peasants or absolutely landless ones, civil servants, small breadwinners and underprivileged refugees.” Pantelis Pouliopoulos, “Τι ζητουν οι παλαιοί πολεμιστές και τα θύματα στρατού - Γενικές προγραμματικές θέσεις ψηφισμένες από το συνέδριο την 6 Μαΐου 1924,” *Παλιός Πολεμιστής*, May 1924, <https://www.marxists.org/ellinika/archive/pouliop/works/war/index.htm>.

<sup>810</sup> KKE History Department, *Δοκίμιο ιστορία*, 163-64; Dimitris Livieratos, *Κοινωνικοί αγώνες*, 123-24; Hristos Vrachniaris, *Ανάμεσα σε δύο εξεγέρσεις-Κιλελέρ 1910-Τρίκαλα 1925* (Athens: Alfeios, 1985), 92-93. *idem*, *Η αγροτική λαϊκή εξέγερση του 1925 στα Τρίκαλα σελίδες από τους αγώνες της θεσσαλικής αγροτιάς* (Athens: Panaroma, 1978); Panos Vasilis, *Η “Κόκκινη Δευτέρα” Τρίκαλα 1925* (Trikala: Agapōtin polin, 2011).

<sup>811</sup> Livieratos, *Κοινωνικοί αγώνες*, 124.

unemployment. The refugees and villagers see that the promises regarding their rehabilitation are not met. The monasteries, the church, the landlords continue to hold large pieces of land that they deprive the landless of. Since the government does not provide them [the landless] with land, they are going to get their own.

The urban centers were not all that different from the rural areas. In March 1925, railway workers and printers went on a nationwide strike, which was followed by the Athens-wide strike by postmen, electricians and shopkeepers. At the same time, the problems in the resettlement process brought the Greek government into conflict with the RSC. The main cause of the problem, according to the press, was the encroachments and invasions of the refugee settlements under construction in the major cities by refugees.<sup>812</sup> Some of the constructions were halted by these invasions and the government was not willing to intervene so as not to incite a wave of mass militancy among refugees.<sup>813</sup>

The political instability coupled with increasing pressure on the economy created a political vacuum that gave General Theodoros Pangalos the pretext for usurping political power. After Pangalos' coup, former prime minister Michalakopoulos complained about the conditions in which he assumed the office of prime ministry and how he lost popular support in an interview to the Belgrade newspaper *Politics*: “When I formed the government in the last

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<sup>812</sup> For the statement of Anastasios Misirloglou, who was the Ministry of Health of the Michalakopoulos government, on resettlement invasions see *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, June 18, 1925. For the invasion of the refugee settlements in Vyronas and other neighborhoods under construction in Athens and how they interrupted the construction process for six months see *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 24, 1925. *Προσφυγική Φωνή* also raised criticisms regarding how the government treated this issue as a matter of philanthropy initiated either by the state or some individuals or institutions rather a civil right. In another article of the same issue, the newspaper protested the police's forceful evacuation of the refugee settlements occupied by refugees. *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, July 5, 1925. In the refugee testimonies, it is possible to come across this theme. Marianthi Karamousa, a refugee from Sokia (Söke), says “Do you know how you were picking up houses at the settlement sites back then? You were going there, hanging a sack or whatever you had in a room and the house was yours. They were unfinished. They didn't have tiles, they didn't have doors or windows. And at nights the others were going to the ones that had doors or windows (...)” *Η Έξοδος*, vol. 1, 195.

<sup>813</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, July 30, 1925.

October, I did not have the support of the majority in the Parliament. But the government, which faced serious challenges, succeeded on the issue of refugee loan and gained majority support later. But the refugees that were dissuaded by the fuss made by my opponents started to come out against my government.”<sup>814</sup>

Pangalos, who benefited from the unpopularity of the prime minister and staged a coup, was a committed republican, as well as a military and political leader after the Asia Minor Campaign.<sup>815</sup> From the Greek army’s entrance (May 1919) into Smyrna until Venizelos’ fall from power (November 1920), he was the Chief of Staff of the Greek army in Asia Minor. After his removal by the royalists, he became more and more politically active and one of the people who constantly challenged civilian control of state policy through military intervention. Pangalos had first the office of Minister of Public Safety and then that of Minister of War after the proclamation of the Republic, in which he had played a significant role. Pangalos was one of the main critics of the Michalakopoulos administration. He blisteringly attacked Michalakopoulos with a discourse heavily imbued with exaggerated nationalism and uncompromising republicanism, accusing the government of collaborating with Turkey, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and with the royalists in internal politics. Understanding that he would not be able to gain power at the ballot box, Pangalos seized it in a military coup on June 25, 1925, and installed himself as prime minister. On January 3, 1926, by presenting the weakness of successive governments as a pretext he proclaimed himself dictator and postponed the election *sine die*. In an interview with the *Daily Express*, he said “The weak government is the cause of all our troubles. I am at the end of my patience with it.” Pangalos announced that, henceforth, he was assuming full

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<sup>814</sup> Reported by *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, June 14, 1925.

<sup>815</sup> William Jourdan Rapp, “General Pangalos, Dictator of Greece,” *Current History* (New York) 23, no. 5 (February 1, 1926): 678–80.

responsibility for the governing the country and that he would rely solely on the power of the army and the national conscience to save Greece.<sup>816</sup>

Although in the beginning Pangalos was popular among the refugees,<sup>817</sup> his government, too, would shortly lose their support. Their opposition to the Pangalos government was triggered by the arrest of the Executive Director of the Resettlement Office in Thessaloniki along with two colleagues in July 1925 during their visit to Athens.<sup>818</sup> Executive Director Ioannis Karamanos was known as a very respectable and reputable agronomist and he was well-liked by the refugees. Not only did this move spark an immediate and huge reaction, it also strained to the breaking point the relationship between the RSC and the government. The accusation that Karamanos faced was official graft and bureaucratic rent seeking. According to the government, Karamanos and his associates, by signing a construction contract, violated the public interest by squandering 13 million drachmas. The RSC found the government's accusations dubious and it unconditionally supported Karamanos.<sup>819</sup> The RSC emphasized the fact that the government, or any other Greek authority, had no right to inspect the work of the Commission and its staff according to the terms of the agreement between Greece and the League of Nations that stipulated the foundation of the RSC. According to the Commission, such governmental steps violated the autonomy of the Commission and put the standing of Greece in the League of

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<sup>816</sup> *Northern Star*, January 5, 1926.

<sup>817</sup> Having just started extending its influence over the refugee masses, *Rizospastis*, and hence, the Communist Party was irritated by this initial sympathy towards Pangalos. The communist daily issued a statement addressing refugees regarding the “real nature” of the coup and it emphasized that although the “monarchofascist” Michalakopoulos government was toppled by Pangalos’ military intervention, the refugees had no reason to get satisfied with this initiative of the bourgeois class seeking political and economic stability. *Ριζοσπάστης*, June 26, 1925.

<sup>818</sup> *Μακεδονία*, July 10, 1925.

<sup>819</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, July 26, 1925; *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, July 28, 1925.

Nation in jeopardy. The problem remained unresolved until December. In the meantime, the construction of the settlements in Macedonia stopped too. On December 2, 1925, the negotiations between the government and the RSC ended. According to the new agreement, the RSC personnel could be inspected only after a joint decision of the RSC and the Ministry of Justice.

Another confrontation between Pangalos and the refugees arose during the municipal elections on October 25, 1925. As for Macedonia, this was the first election held after the integration of the new lands. Until then, the mayors were appointed by the General Governor of Macedonia.<sup>820</sup> The election evoked great popular and political excitement. Initially, an exceptionally high number of candidates (13)<sup>821</sup> announced their candidacy in the Thessaloniki mayoral election.

Given the changing demographic and social structure of the city and the acknowledged support of the refugees for Venizelism, among the thirteen candidates was Konstantinos Angelakis, and he was generally accepted as the strongest candidate during the pre-election period. Angelakis had already been mayor between 1916 and 1920, and he was not only a loyal follower of Venizelos but also a backer of Pangalos. In fact, the dictator attempted to sway the election by openly expressing his support for him. Angelakis also enjoyed the support of the major refugee organizations, such as the Refugee Confederation of Macedonia and Thrace

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<sup>820</sup> Anna Maxaira, “Η Θεσσαλονίκη του Μεσοπολέμου,” in *Ιστορία της Ελλάδας του 20ου αιώνα Ο Μεσοπόλεμος, 1922 – 1940*, ed. Christos Chatziiosif, vol. B1 (Athens: Vivliorama, 2002), 109.

<sup>821</sup> The candidates were L. Almyras, K. Angelakis, N. Germanos, D. Ghetsko, G. Hatzikyriakou, A. Kallidopoulos, G. Karvonidis, G. Kosmidis, I. Liakopoulos, P. Oikonomou, M. Patrikios, P. Syndikas, K. Zisis (in alphabetical order).



together with other republican candidates Petros Syndikas<sup>822</sup> and Georgios Karvonidis.<sup>823</sup>

Neither of these candidates was as strong as Angelopoulos. In his program, Angelakis emphasized that Greece was the common homeland of the natives and refugees alike.<sup>824</sup> Another strong candidate was Panagiotis Oikonomou. Oikonomou was a politician best known for his anti-Venizelist stance, but, instead of being the candidate of the Popular Party, Oikonomou was one of the two candidates from Metaxas' fascist Freethinkers' Party. The other candidate of the party was Athanasios Kallidopoulos, who had briefly served as mayor in 1922.

There was also Minas Patrikios (Figure 4–10), the candidate of the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees<sup>825</sup> formed by the Communist Party. He was the head of the High Commission of Refugees<sup>826</sup> and was supported by the Labor Center, the Federation of Popular

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<sup>822</sup> Syndikas was also a former mayor of Thessaloniki who served between 1922 and 1926.

<sup>823</sup> This was not an easy decision and cast doubt on the leadership abilities of the confederation. Because it could not reach a decision on which candidate the refugees had to support and declared that the refugees could vote any of the proposed republican candidates. The newspaper *Makedonia*, which supported Syndikas, aggressively protested the attitude of the confederation and wrote that now that the confederation could not have decided on a single candidate it was also proved that the confederation was not capable of leading the refugee world. *Μακεδονία*, October 21, 1925. An article written by a Thracian refugee —signed by “Θραξ”— asked refugees not to vote based on their ideological or political preferences and called for drafting of an election program for refugees. *Το Φως*, October 20, 1925.

<sup>824</sup> For Angelakis' program see *Νέα Αλήθεια*, October 21, 1925.

<sup>825</sup> The KKE, as mentioned previously, treated refugeehood as an ephemeral category that horizontally cut class lines and would eventually melt into main social classes. That is why in its official discourse the party always tried to emphasize that its addressee was refugees from lower classes in particular. Hence, the electoral strategy based on the unity of workers, peasants and refugees also changed in time. After the elections in 1926 and 1928 in which the KKE took place by organizing the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees in the following elections the KKE dropped the word “refugee” from the name of its front, and finally with the change of the policy of the Communist International against fascism all class these categories left its place to a more general category “people” to indicate an alliance strategy against the rise of fascism based on collaboration of different classes.

<sup>826</sup> The High Commission of Refugees (*Ανώτατη Επιτροπή Προσφύγων*) was a political organization founded in Thessaloniki by some leftist refugees that had distanced themselves from Venizelism and major Venizelist refugee organizations. For a declaration of the commission that scolded the government. *Πρωία*, April 14, 1929. For a report of the High Commission of Refugees that was sent to Venizelos in 1930 see Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 171-67.

Jewish Neighborhoods and the Union of Veterans.<sup>827</sup> Patrikios was the leader of the High Commission of Refugees and he was best known for his performance at the All-Refugee Congress in 1924 as discussed earlier.



**Figure 4–10:** Minas Patrikios in the 1950s  
**Source:** *Εθνος*, September 24, 2006.

At the time of the election, *Rizospastis* and other publications of the KKE were closed and the party was outlawed by the Pangalos regime. Hence, the only local newspaper that openly supported Patrikios was *Avanti!* (*Αβάντι!*),<sup>828</sup> which in the absence of *Rizospastis* served as the

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<sup>827</sup> Alkis Rigos, *Τα κρίσιμα χρόνια 1922-1935*, vol. 1 (Athens: Papazisis, 1995), 174.

<sup>828</sup> *Avanti!* was a socialist newspaper, which was the publication of the *Socialist Workers' Federation* and launched in 1911 under the editorship of Avraam Benaroya. Later with the foundation of the Communist Party of Greece and Benaroya's becoming one of the key figures of the party *Avanti!* became associated with the KKE. In 1923, Benaroya was expelled from the Communist Party of Greece and was obliged to quit the chief editorship of *Avanti!*. The publication of the newspaper continued until 1935. Kentro Marxistikon Spoudon, *Η σοσιαλιστική οργάνωση Φεντερασιόν Θεσσαλονίκης 1909 - 1918*. (Athens: Synchroni Epohi, 1989), 102; Raphael Frezis, *Ο Εβραϊκός Τύπος στην Ελλάδα* (Volos: Ekdosi Israilitikis Koinotitas Volou, 1999), 152; Rena Molho and Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis, "El Camino de La Lengua Castellana Y Su Expansión En El Mediterráneo: Las Rutas de Sefarad," in *Salónica, La Jerusalén de Los Balcanes*, ed. José Maria Ballester (Logroño: Calle Mayor, 2008), 145-46. The publication of *Avanti!* was halted temporarily on January 9, 1926 by the Greek state. *Σκριπ*, January 10, 1926. In the same year, the

primary publication of the Communist Party. Even though Patrikios lacked the support of major newspapers, his candidacy was a game changer. Patrikios was, according to the city's press, one of the strongest candidates because he had the backing an alliance of smaller factions and groups. Even though there were other candidates, these were the ones representing the major political groups.

The election result was a surprise: the candidate of the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees was elected.<sup>829</sup> For example *Makedonika Nea*, the mouthpiece of Venizelism, described the election results as “a bomb that fell in the city.”<sup>830</sup> For the newspaper, it was nothing less than a humiliation for the city's bourgeois and professional classes. Thessaloniki, it opined, would become a “capitve of the Bolsheviks” (*μπολσεβικοκρατουμένη*). It claimed further that Patrikios' closest advisors were “brutal and boorish Bolsheviks.” Minas Patrikios won more than 30% of the vote while his closest rival got only 26%.<sup>831</sup> But voter turnout was very low, 37.5%.<sup>832</sup> The support for Patrikios' was particularly high in the worker and refugee neighborhoods of the city.<sup>833</sup> *Makedonika Nea* published a cartoon showing an old communist

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newspaper was attacked by the municipal guards and this stopped its publication again. *Ριζοσπάστης*, December 4, 1926.

<sup>829</sup> Thessaloniki was not alone in this respect. The ballot of the alliance won the majority in Xanthi and Larissa too where existed strong refugee and peasant movements. ΚΚΕ, *Δοκίμιο ιστορίας*, 163.

<sup>830</sup> *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, October 28, 1925.

<sup>831</sup> According to *Makedonika Nea*, Patrikios took 5409 votes whereas his closest rival Venizelist candidate Angelakis took 4737 votes. Anti-Venizelist candidate of the fascist Freethinkers party Oikonomou, on the other hand, took 3332 votes which corresponded nearly to 20% of the total voters (17937). *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, October 29, 1925. *Eleftheron Vima* gives slightly different numbers: Patrikios (5279), Angelakis (4536), Oikonomou (3327) and Sydikas (2640). According to the same newspaper, the total number of the valid votes were 17460. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 28, 1925.

<sup>832</sup> The number of eligible voters was almost 48000 whereas, according to all sources, the number of eligible voters who cast a ballot in the election was less than 18000. Evangelos Hekimoglou, *Ο Νικόλαος Μάνος και ο Μεσοπόλεμος στη Θεσσαλονίκη* (2010: University Studio Press, 2010), 223.

<sup>833</sup> *Μακεδονία*, October 26, 1925.

under arms —probably a veteran— heading towards Thessaloniki and saying “something can happen over there” (See Figure 4–11).



**Figure 4–11:** An old communist under arms heads towards Thessaloniki to meet “comrade Patrikios”

**Source:** *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, October 29, 1925.

Patrikios received a higher percentage of votes than expected. The reason, most likely, was the political and economic instability and the ensuing anxiety among different sectors of the electorate. This resulted in the support of some Venizelists and also anti-Venizelists votes going to him rather than their main opposition. The surprise and dejection among the mainstream political parties gave way to paranoia, as shown in the cartoon above, and in a strong feeling of dismay. Immediately after the initial shock had faded, Pangalos issued a special decree declaring

the election null and void. An action he based on a law that required that, in order to be considered valid, the elected candidate must have received at least 15% of registered voters. This decision deeply troubled the refugees everywhere. Everybody knew this was just a pretext, and that the real reason behind Pangalos' action was Patrikios's politics. Yet Patrikios used this situation to his advantage in the subsequent snap election that Pangalos ordered. Patrikios rejected the accusations and calumnies pronounced by the government. He proclaimed that the reason his election was declared null and void was not because he was communist, but because he was a refugee. Nothing he could have said did more to mobilize the refugee vote.<sup>834</sup>

Refugee newspapers, even though they had not supported Patrikios in the first election, backed him unreservedly now. For example, *Pamprosfygiki* considered this issue as a matter of honor (*ζήτημα τιμής*) for the refugees and advised the refugee world to treat the issue as such.<sup>835</sup> According to the newspaper, Patrikios was not a communist but a vocal refugee defending the rights of the other refugees and that was the reason why he was branded as a communist. For this reason, every refugee should support Patrikios in the second election. *Pamprosfygiki* interpreted the decision as "the government's desire to keep them as refugees forever" and sharply demanded the government to rethink its decision to void the first election.

Similarly, Polatoglou's *Prosfygiki Foni* declared its support for Patrikios and closely followed and extensively reported on the developments regarding Patrikios and his possible election. The newspaper particularly highlighted Patrikios' statements on his refugee identity

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<sup>834</sup> The newspapers supporting other candidates, particularly *Makedonika Nea*, which supported Angelakis repeatedly tried to prove that Patrikios was a communist. To do so the newspaper even published the minutes of the All-Refugee Congress in 1924, where Patrikios defended the idea that the refugees should have left the Venizelist web and supported the unity of poor refugees with the working class and peasantry. *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, October 29, 1925.

<sup>835</sup> *Παμπροσφυγική*, November 6, 1925.

while denying the accusations of his being a communist. For example, on November 5 Patrikios talked to the press and said “I am not a communist but even if I were, I would not shy away from declaring it. I have won the mayoral election in Thessaloniki as the representative of the refugees. I have not been backed by the communists but favored by independent workers.”<sup>836</sup> Then Patrikios visited the office of *Prosfygiki Foni* when he was in Athens to meet with Pangalos and gave a special interview. In the interview, Patrikios underscored that he was positive that the election was declared null and void, not because he was a communist but because he was a refugee.<sup>837</sup> The government’s actions also supported his claims. On November 15, during his visit to Thessaloniki, Pangalos met with the refugee representatives and in his speech, according to *Prosfygiki Foni*, he said “the mayor of Thessaloniki cannot be a refugee. It should have been understood by now that a native’s becoming the very first mayor of the capital of Macedonia is a matter of courtesy.”

After his meeting, Pangalos visited the Asia Minor Club where he declared that his government was going to support Angelakis in the upcoming election. Both statements were greeted with outrage by the refugee community. While reporting Pangalos’ visit to Thessaloniki on November 16, *Prosfygiki Foni* added a special note to the story in order to express their point of view on the subject. The title of the story, “Reportedly refugees cannot become mayor” gave a clue about the tone of the newspaper’s comment cited below:<sup>838</sup>

We can by no means imagine that Mr. Pangalos gave such an inappropriate speech. What does ‘matter of courtesy’ mean? We can understand the matter of courtesy in Athens. Because Athens is mainly populated by the natives. But in the case of a city like

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<sup>836</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 6, 1925.

<sup>837</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 7, 1925.

<sup>838</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 16, 1925. (My emphasis)

Thessaloniki that had mostly been populated by other elements before the refugees poured in and became Greek only after the refugees' arrival what does 'matter of courtesy' mean? [...] **It is not a matter of courtesy but a matter of refugeehood.** It should have been clear by now that the refugees are not slaves in this country. In the twentieth century, at the time of the disappearance of slavery, depriving the refugees of a right granted by the constitution does not only meet today's civilizational standards but also is not true from a rational and logical point of view. The refugees, just like the natives, are the children of this country and have the same rights as citizens. When the time is ripe, they can be prime minister let alone mayor as long as the power, justice and equality are respected.

*Pamprosfygiki* also protested the government's openly supporting for one of the candidates. The newspaper interpreted this as an insult and wrote that the government treated the people of Thessaloniki as if they were sheep following a shepherd.<sup>839</sup>

The government did not reconsider its decision, and on November 16, the governor-general of Macedonia declared that the elections were to take place on the second Sunday of December;<sup>840</sup> after some delays, they were held on December 20. Yet the discussions about the legal aspect of the election, except for the newspapers supporting Angelakis, namely *Makedonika Nea* and *Nea Alitheia*, a general consensus emerged as whether or not if Patrikios had passed the legal threshold for election. Even *Fos*, which had supported the anti-Venizelist candidate, Konstantinos Zisis, confirmed that Patrikios had won 15% of the votes.<sup>841</sup>

The refugee support for Patrikios did not appear just on the pages of newspapers. Daily support for Patrikios among them increased. The newspapers reported that during his visit to Athens, Patrikios was welcomed and then bid farewell by the refugees in the capital.<sup>842</sup> Similarly

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<sup>839</sup> *Παμπροσφυγική*, November 17, 1925.

<sup>840</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, November 17, 1925.

<sup>841</sup> The newspaper overemphasized the support of the Jewish community for Patrikios. *Φως*, November 19, 1925. *Makedonika Nea* also underscored the support of the Jewish community in Thessaloniki for Patrikios in a very antisemitic way implying a sort of conspiracy. *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, November 28, 1925.

<sup>842</sup> *Παμπροσφυγική*, November 9, 1925.

in the refugee neighborhoods of Patrikios' polling district, particularly in Kalamaria and Toumba the refugees protested the government and organized demonstrations in favor of Patrikios.<sup>843</sup> The Venizelist candidates based their campaigns on an anti-Patrikios discourse.<sup>844</sup> On the day of the elections, *Makedonia*, which supported Karvonidis, published a joint statement signed anonymously as "the refugee organizations" without explicitly listed which organizations issued this statement. The "refugee organizations" described Angelakis' political style as fanaticism and warned firmly and repeatedly the refugees that Patrikios was a communist and that he would endanger Macedonia.<sup>845</sup>

The election result attested to the discontent of the refugees. Patrikios was re-elected in a landslide, winning more than 50% of the vote. His closest rival, Angelakis, came in second with 31%.<sup>846</sup>

After the announcement of the election results, Pangalos, who was himself in Thessaloniki, issued a public statement and expressed his regret that the urban population did not understand the importance of the mayoral elections. The issue was, according to the general, of extreme seriousness and deeply concerned the government. In his statement, he did not recognize the elections result and said that he would think about it. But Pangalos was only stalling for time. A second election annulment would be a clear humiliation for his government, which would undermine further his already-declining popularity. Immediately after the elections,

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<sup>843</sup> *Μακεδονία*, November 17, 1925.

<sup>844</sup> Venizelist candidate Syndikas, who had come fourth in the October election, withdrew his candidature in order to ease the victory of Angelakis.

<sup>845</sup> *Μακεδονία*, November 20, 1925.

<sup>846</sup> Oikonomou received 1750 and Karvonidis 900 votes. *Μακεδονικά Νέα*, December 21, 1925.



demonstrations were organized, particularly by the refugees, in support of Patrikios.<sup>847</sup> In addition to Patrikios and his alliance, the Venizelists, who disliked Pangalos regime more than they did Patrikios, also demanded that his victory stood. The Liberal deputy for Thessaloniki, Andreas Mpirakis, wrote an article for *Makedonia* calling the election results “the victory,” which was also the title of his article.<sup>848</sup> Mpirakis emphasized that Patrikios’ “overwhelming majority” could not be considered as the victory for Communism but as a rebuke of the Pangalos government.

Under these circumstances, Pangalos tried to find a way-out of the impasse by isolating Patrikios and attacking the institutional and organizational bases of the communist party across the country. There were many cadres of the KKE who had already been imprisoned or exiled. To this long list of undesirables were added many of Patrikios’ advisors. In March 1926, at the general congress of the General Confederation of Greek Workers Pangalos laid his plan to undermine the communists’ power in the confederation, which was until then a sub-organization of the KKE.

Although Pangalos’ rise to power was received positively by some sections of the refugee world,<sup>849</sup> as Kostas Katsapis rightfully points out, Patrikios’ election and the ensuing developments, particularly Pangalos’ approach to the issue, constituted a turning point that led to refugees’ first public discontent with the representatives of the Venizelist camp.<sup>850</sup> As well as

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<sup>847</sup> *Εμπρός*, December 28, 1925.

<sup>848</sup> *Μακεδονία*, December 22, 1925.

<sup>849</sup> Both *Pamprosfygiki* and *Prosfygiki Foni* supported Pangalos’ coup and his toppling down Michalakopoulos government.

<sup>850</sup> Katsapis, “Η πολιτική συμπεριφορά των προσφύγων”, 135.

that, it was one of the first signs that the Pangalos regime lacked popular support and was ready to fall.

The 1925 mayoral elections contributed to the political terminology of the period with the words such as *προσφυγοκομμουνιστής* (*prosfygokommounistis*, refugee-communist). This was also one of the earliest signs of the relationship developing between the refugees and the communist party. Although the elections did not change the relationship between the refugees and the party, which had until then seemed unable to capitalize on the refugees' despair.<sup>851</sup> This constituted a clear sign that the party that was experiencing a crisis,<sup>852</sup> the KKE declared "the only significant alternative political movement to the Liberal Party of Venizelos was the Greek Communist Party."<sup>853</sup> Despite the crisis that the party was going through at the time of the 1926 elections, the KKE participated in the election as the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees and had managed to send 10 deputies to the parliament, despite getting only 41,982 votes (4.38 %).<sup>854</sup> Even before the elections, the advent of Communism in Greece was visible to external observers. In March 1926, when the prosecutions and persecutions against the communists and trade-unionists hit their peak, *Le Journal de l'Est* published an article titled "En Grèce - En marge du Communisme" on the ineffectiveness of the Pangalos's strategy to fight

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<sup>851</sup> Tsoucalas, *The Greek tragedy*, 45-6.

<sup>852</sup> Elefantis, *Η επαγγελία της αδύνατης επανάστασης*, 66-74. For a detailed analysis of the internal crisis of the KKE that lasted till 1931 see Ghikas, *Ρήξη και Ενσωμάτωση*, 154-173.

<sup>853</sup> Yildirim, *Diplomacy and Displacement*, 184.

<sup>854</sup> Anastasios Hainoglou (Evros), Konstantinos Konstantinidis (Drama), Nikolaos V. Kyriakopoulos (Florina), Serafeim Maximos (Larissa), Grigorios Papanikolaou (Thessaloniki), Athanasios Sinokas (Rhodope), David Bohor Soulam (Thessaloniki), Eleftherios A. Stavriadis (Kavala), Konstantinos Theos (Larissa), Jacques Ventura (Thessaloniki). Βουλή των Ελλήνων, *Μητρώο Βουλευτών*, *passim*. On May 20, 1927, while writing about Maximos, *Rizospastis* called deputy of Piraeus. Here it should be underlined that 8 out of these 10 deputies were elected from the refugee-dominated electoral regions and 2 of them were of refugee origin. Before the 1928 elections, the state took special measures to prevent the KKE from sending representatives to the Parliament.

Communism. The article found that this strategy was one-dimensional, and based only on the brute power and suppression. Moreover, Pangalos' simultaneous attack on the Venizelists, based on the misguided advice of his staff, also resulted in the royalists' gathering strength. The article emphasized, "this will eventually lead to the dilemma of the restoration of the monarchy or the communist anarchy, two eventualities are also harmful."<sup>855</sup>

After the elections in 1925 and 1926, the convergence process became more evident. The refugee settlements first encouraged communist propaganda and then became infected with the "microbe of communism," and were the major source of it in the Greek sociopolitical order, as Adamantios Deimezis claimed in 1927.<sup>856</sup> Although the Communist Party would not send any representatives to the parliament in the general election in 1928 due to the strict anticommunist measures taken by the state, they remained obsolete in the medium run. The measures were the chief, but not the only, reason behind the decrease of the KKE's votes. Just before the elections, the political atmosphere became highly polarized over Venizelism, and one of the themes that fed this polarization was the refugee issue. On July 16, 1928, that is a month before the election, *Kathimerini*, the mouthpiece of the anti-Venizelists, wrote that the victory of Venizelism would not only mean a "political dictatorship of refugees" but also after the election properties of natives in the urban centers would be confiscated by the Venizelist government in favor of refugees.<sup>857</sup> This polarization contributed greatly to the victory of the Liberal Party. Even the most dissident and loose refugee elements of the Venizelist network, such as the POADA, came

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<sup>855</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, Marika Venizelou folder 2-80.

<sup>856</sup> Alex Deimezis, *Situation Sociale Créée en Grèce à la Suite de l'échange des Populations* (Paris: J. Budry, 1927), 62-63.

<sup>857</sup> *Καθημερινή*, July 16, 1928. Also cited by Rigos, *Η Β' Ελληνική Δημοκρατία*, 229.

together around the personality of Venizelos, who personally participated in the elections and this led to the victory of the Liberal Party.<sup>858</sup>

Venizelos' return to Greece as prime minister was paradoxically conducive to the collapse of the Venizelist hegemony, as Venizelos personally faced the difficult demands of *realpolitik*. Venizelos' diplomatic rapprochement with Turkey upset the Asia Minor refugees. Particularly the economic agreement signed on June 10, 1930, and the Greco-Turkish Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of October 30, 1930, scandalized refugees by shattering their hopes of a return to their ancestral homelands. The rapprochement of the two countries affected the future of refugees in another way, probably more profoundly from a realist perspective, as well: With this convention, both states were released from any obligation to pay compensation for the properties abandoned by the Greek and Muslim refugees in their original homelands.<sup>859</sup> This disastrous development was compounded by the impact of the Great Depression, which eventually led Greece to declare bankruptcy in 1932. Particularly after this turning point, one of the most frequent problems that Venizelos had to deal with was the "Bolshevik menace".

In response to the emergence of a radical Communist movement, in 1929, the Venizelos government enacted law no. 4229, also known as the *Idionymio* (*Ιδιώνυμο*) Law, which limited the right of free speech and made it illegal for anyone to agitate or promote the overthrow of the existing socio-political order. The intentionally ambiguous wording of the law gave the

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<sup>858</sup> For the POADA's election policy see *ΠΟΑΔΑ*, August 12, 1928. The POADA emphasizes the need for a strong government to solve the refugee issue and the compensation problem for the exchangees, which could be solved by a Venizelos government in which the POADA representatives took part as members of the parliament. The following issue of the newspaper has big photographs of Michail Tsigdemoglou, the chairperson of the POADA, and Stavros Hoursoglou as the representatives of the POADA among the candidates of the Liberal Party.

<sup>859</sup> Hulusi Kılıç, *Türkiye ile Yunanistan Arasında İmzalanan İkili Anlaşmalar, Önemli Belgeler ve Bildiriler* (Ankara: Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 1992), 56-61.

government wide latitude to arrest, imprison and deport trade unionists, leaders of the agricultural movements and communists.<sup>860</sup> After the law was adopted, the early results were ambiguous. In his report on “the situation of Communism in Thessaloniki in 1930,” Police Chief G. Kalochristianakis wrote that the communist movement in his city was weaker in comparison to 1929 and that this was partly due to workers’ growing indifference towards communist propaganda and partly because of the execution of the Law 4229.<sup>861</sup> Whereas, as Pentzopoulos writes, in the by-election of 1931 in Thessaloniki, where refugees consisted almost half of the population, the Liberal Party received only 37.5% of the vote, whereas as recently as the election of it had garnered more than 68% of the ballots cast. Clearly, support for the Liberal Party had plummeted dramatically in just three years. Meanwhile, the KKE more than doubled its vote.<sup>862</sup>

The regional reports sent to Venizelos in 1932 also substantiate that Communism was quickly becoming a real threat, especially in refugee-dominated areas like Macedonia and Thessaly.<sup>863</sup> A key observation in the report from Kavala was that KKE members in rural regions (*αγροτοκομμουνισταί*) capitalized on the suffering of villagers and so could indoctrinate them by exploiting their misery. The report underlined that the number of actual communists had not

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<sup>860</sup> Many scholars underline the role of this law in the authoritarian turn of Greece in the 1930s. Gallant, for example, evaluates the law as the following: “The law also placed very tight restrictions on the activities of trade unions, especially on their legal rights to strike. Under the new law, thousands of labor leaders, trade unionists, and Communists were arrested or deported to remote Greek islands. A new fissure, Left versus Right, emerged in inter-war Greece, and the mechanisms of order designed to combat the 'Bolshevik' menace greased the slippery slide to authoritarianism.” Gallant, *Modern Greece*, 155.

<sup>861</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 107-102. The report carries the date of November 29, 1932.

<sup>862</sup> Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 192. Pentzopoulos also shares the results of the by-election in Lesbos. In Lesbos, where the share of refugees reached almost to 47%, the popular support of the Liberal Party decreased to 47.2% from 52.92% while the Communist Party tripled their votes in Lesvos.

<sup>863</sup> Eleftherios Venizelos received many reports on the growing communist menace in the Macedonian or Thessalian cities such as Kavala and Larissa. There are numerous reports sent from different cities in 1932 (from Zakynthos, Heraklio, Lasithiou, Ioannina, Kavala and etc.) emphasizing the danger created by the activities of the KKE. See Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, folder 111.

increased substantially and that they did not pose a threat yet, but that the rural masses were becoming increasingly receptive to communist propaganda.<sup>864</sup>

As this report pointed out, the Communist Party had its strongest support in the tobacco producing areas, such as Kavala, where 100 out of 137 refugee settlements were engaged in tobacco cultivation. This was not unique to Kavala. Refugees were producing two-thirds of the entire tobacco crop, and production had tripled in a very short time because tobacco production was labor-intensive and suitable for refugees' smallholdings. By the middle of the 1920s, "tobacco constituted almost one-fifth of the total gross crop output, despite being grown on less than one-tenth of the cultivated area, and was responsible for half the total of Greek export earnings."<sup>865</sup> Although the labor supply increased with the integration of the refugees into the labor market, the wages for tobacco workers remained extremely high due to the power of the unions and the increasing communist activities among the workers.<sup>866</sup> Starting from the early 1920s *Rizospastis* published many pieces on the problems and the actions of the tobacco-workers and tobacco-producing peasants and their local organizations.<sup>867</sup> As discussed elsewhere,<sup>868</sup> communist activities were apparent particularly in the tobacco producing settlements, such as Serres and Kavala, which became basically working class towns after the refugee resettlement process. The electoral and organizational strength of the KKE in the tobacco producing regions

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<sup>864</sup> Benaki Museum/Venizelos Archive, 111-6. This report is partly cited by Mazower, "The Refugees, The Economic Crisis and the Collapse of Venizelist Hegemony", 126.

<sup>865</sup> Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 156. Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-war Economic Crisis*. 87.

<sup>866</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 663. Ladas also points out that refugees constituted about half of the labor force in tobacco production in the whole of Greece in 1928.

<sup>867</sup> See different issues of the newspaper *Ριζοσπάστης* such as April 4, 1924; May 18, 1924; July 21, 1924, September 25, 1924; November 15, 1924.

<sup>868</sup> Evangelia Balta and AYTEK SONER ALPAN, "Küçük Asya Felaketi'nden Sonra Serez'de Mülteci İskanı," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 239 (November 2013): 20–34.

did not increase immediately, but the KKE was becoming increasingly active in them. As early as 1924, the newspaper *Makedonia* was describing communist activities as one of the major problems in the region.<sup>869</sup> Over the following years, the tobacco producing centers of Eastern Macedonia would witness very aggressive strikes among tobacco workers.<sup>870</sup> Although in this region, the electoral strength of the KKE was limited in the early 1920s, it increased rapidly and the “red candidate,” Dionysus Menychtas, was elected mayor of Serres in March 1934. A few days later, another “red mayor”, Dimitris Partsalidis, who was a refugee from Pontos, took office in Kavala. In the local elections of 1934, in addition to these two municipalities, the KKE won a majority in almost 60 townships.

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<sup>869</sup> *Μακεδονία*, April 29, 1924.

<sup>870</sup> Evangelia Balta, “History of, and Historiography on, Greek Tobacco” *Peuple et Production. Pour une interprétation des sources ottomans*, Istanbul, Les Editions Isis, 1999, p. 253.



Ο ΧΑΡΤΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΚΟΚΚΙΝΩΝ ΔΗΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΩΝ  
 ΔΗΜΟΙ: 2  
 ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΕΣ: 57



Figure 4-12: The map of the “red” municipalities and townships  
 Source: Rizospastis, March 20, 1934.

In a few months, however, both ‘red’ mayors in Eastern Macedonia were relieved of their duties. In the 1936 elections, the Communist Party sent 15 representatives to the Parliament with



the All People Front (*Παλλαϊκό Μέτωπο*). In Serres, the Communist Party took 11.8% and the former mayor of the city, Menychtas, was elected as its deputy.<sup>871</sup> It is important that these successes were achieved under the party's new leadership, which was basically appointed by the Communist International to restore order in the highly factionalized KKE and to put an end to the intra-party crisis, the so-called "factional fight without principles" (*φραξιονιστική πάλη χωρίς αρχές*). Both Nikos Zachariadis, the General Secretary of the party, and Vasilis Nefeloudis, the General Secretary of the Central Committee, were of refugee-origin. Zachariadis was born in Adrianople and worked as a dockworker in Constantinople and became a member of the newly founded Communist Party of Turkey.<sup>872</sup> In addition to these two leading figures, nine of the 16 Central Committee members in 1934, and ten of the 22 Central Committee members in 1935 were refugees. As far as the political bureau is considered, five of the even members in 1931, seven of the eight members in 1934, and five of the seven members in 1935 were refugees.<sup>873</sup> Burks and other scholars call the weight of refugees an anomaly in contrast to the social structure of the country, where the refugees consisted only one-fifth of the population.<sup>874</sup> The increasing dominance of refugees in the KKE's leadership made it difficult for the party to attract indigenous peasants and workers, many of whom still felt deep antipathy to the immigrants.<sup>875</sup>

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<sup>871</sup> Ριζοσπάστης, March 20, 1934. For the electoral strength of the KKE in the 1930s see Elefantis, *Η επαγγελία της αδύνατης επανάσταση*, 305-306.

<sup>872</sup> Branko M. Lazić, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, Hoover Press Publication (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 523-24. See also, Elefantis, *Η επαγγελία της αδύνατης επανάσταση*, 162-64.

<sup>873</sup> For the new leadership of the party see Elefantis, *Η επαγγελία της αδύνατης επανάσταση*, 137-166. Especially for the role of refugees in the party leadership see *op. cit.*, 146-49.

<sup>874</sup> Richard Voyles Burks, *Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 57-59. See also Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 223.

<sup>875</sup> One of the most controversial subjects that precluded the KKE from enjoying a larger popular support was its policy of "national question." In the early 1920s, the Balkan policy of the Comintern was mainly formulated by the Bulgarian Communist Party and based on the autonomy or even independence of

According to Mavrogordatos' calculations, refugees accounted for a higher percentage of the KKE's vote than natives in every parliamentary election from 1928 onward, Table 4–10 shows.

**Table 4–10:** Refugee and Native Vote Nationwide, 1928–1936 (each group estimated in percentage)

Election	Venizelism		Communism		Antivenizelism		Agrarianism	
	Refugee	Native	Refugee	Native	Refugee	Native	Refugee	Native
1928	91	60	5	1	1	37	3	2
1932	71	52	14	3	2	39	14	5
1933	67	47	16	3	16	49	3	2
1936	70	42	16	3	11	53	3	0

**Source:** Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 185.

Karavas' study on the refugee vote in the Greater Athens Area presents the results of the Parliamentary elections during the interwar period in the main refugee settlements, as well as in the country as a whole. The data presented in Table 4–11 also substantiates the argument that, particularly in the 1930s, the percentage of ballots cast for the Communist Party was much higher in the refugee areas compared to the rest of the country.

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Macedonia, including the Greek portion of it, and the foundation of a Balkan federative soviet republic. The KKE rejected to accept this policy based on the argument that the population exchanges and refugee influx resulted in the Hellenization of the region. In 1924 in the fifth world congress of the Communist International, Serafeim Maximos, who was from Eastern Thrace, underlined that the ethnological structure of Greek Macedonia changed dramatically with the influx of refugees and the population exchange. In his words “after the Treaty of Lausanne, all Turkish inhabitants of Macedonia were obliged to leave, and the Greek bourgeoisie installed 700,000 refugees in their place. The Greek Communist Party opposed, and will continue to oppose this violence and the Treaty of Lausanne... But the fact remains that there are 700,000 Greek refugees in Macedonia. The workers and peasants of Greece were, therefore, not prepared to accept the slogan of the autonomy of Macedonia.” Yet, in the end, the KKE complied with the directive of the Communist International and adopted the policy of autonomy as a solution to the Macedonian Question. This policy changed only a decade later, in 1935. The idea of autonomy and the possibility of demarcation of new borders in the region intimidated both refugees and natives whose trauma after the Asia Minor Catastrophe was still not over. Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities*, 137. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 219, Zapantis, *Greek - Soviet Relations*, 31-41, 1. D. George Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat the Story of the Greek Communist Party* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 51-71.

**Table 4–11:** Vote distribution among major political forces in Greater Athens and nationwide

		Vyronas	Kaisariani	Nea Ionia	Nea Kokkinia	Nationwide
<b>1926</b>	Venizelism	93.0	95.2	93.7	94.8	46.6
	Antivenizelism	2.6	1.5	1.8	1.7	41.7
	Communism	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.5	4.4
<b>1928</b>	Venizelism	97.4	98.5	98.1	98.0	63.5
	Antivenizelism	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.1	33.0
	Communism	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.7	2.4
<b>1932</b>	Venizelism	83.9	88.0	86.3	86.7	52.7
	Antivenizelism	8.8	5.4	6.8	4.7	35.4
	Communism	6.1	5.5	6.1	6.8	5.0
<b>1933</b>	Venizelism	73.2	79.0	76.0	74.4	45.1
	Antivenizelism	15.8	8.5	11.3	14.3	45.9
	Communism	10.5	12.0	12.4	11.2	6.1
<b>1936</b>	Venizelism	76.9	83.0	83.6	79.5	44.3
	Antivenizelism	14.1	8.5	9.7	8.3	47.8
	Communism	7.9	7.6	6.2	10.7	5.9

**Source:** Sypiros Karavas, “Η προσφυγική ψήφος στο πολεοδομικό συγκρότημα της Αθήνας την περίοδο του μεσοπολέμου,” *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 9 (1992): 153.

As a final observation, it is important to note a recent objection to the existing literature on the relationship between the refugees and the KKE. Mavrogordatos, in one of his recent studies, calls the overemphasis on the “revolutionary” character or role of refugees in the interwar period as simply one of the myths regarding the consequences of the population exchange. He rightfully underlines the fact that it is impossible to attribute an intrinsic revolutionary character to refugees and to claim that refugees supported Communism in general.<sup>876</sup> Although it is true that the refugee support carried the Communist Party barely above 6%, Mavrogordatos overlooks the importance of the refugee defection to Communism from Venizelism. This proportional defection was so important that, together with the ensuing

<sup>876</sup> George Th Mavrogordatos, “Enduring Myths” (Symposium “Turkish-Greek Compulsory Population Exchange in its 90th Year: New Approaches, New Findings”, İstanbul, 2013).

developments, the KKE, which had faced complete “liquidation” in the late 1920s and reached ideological and strategic homogeneity in its higher echelons, a characteristic of Communist parties, only after the appointment of the new leadership became one of the permanent actors in Greek political life. The majority of the communist cadres that formed the new leadership of the party had refugee background. The “new” KKE under Zachariadis, who shortly became “the Leader” of the communist movement in Greece, tripled its membership, increased its influence over the labor and peasant movements, re-established hegemony over some of the labor unions and achieved electoral success. In this transformation of the KKE, and hence the political structure of the country, the support of refugees for played a key role. Without their endorsement, the KKE could never have overcome the intra-party crisis that marked the late 1920s and turned into an important political actor during the 1930s.

To sum up, the results of the 1925 election in Thessaloniki, almost half of the population of which was constituted by refugees, was a signal flare for a crisis in Greek political life. The refugee resentment over the never-ending problems that had beset them since their arrival was reaching a boiling point as neither of the mainstream parties seemed capable of addressing them. This led to a significant portion of refugees turning away from Venizelism. The state’s initial reaction to Patrikios’ victory in Thessaloniki, for example, shows how badly the government at the time misread the situation. Its strategy to counter the “Bolshevik menace” using solely coercive force led to a backlash. Pangalos’s strategy of canceling the mayoral election, for example, badly backfired, as we saw. Refugees interpreted his action as a clear affront to them rather than as an anti-Communism measure. This led refugee organizations and newspapers to support Patrikios in the 1925 election. In the second election in December, Patrikios achieved an even bigger victory. Patrikios’ two electoral successes transcended the city walls of Thessaloniki.

First, the favorite candidate of the Venizelists, Angelakis, was unsuccessful in gaining the support of refugees in the elections. In the first election, there were two strong Venizelist candidates, who split the Venizelist vote. In the second election, however, Syndikas, who had come fourth in the October election, withdrew his candidacy and supported Angelakis. This did not contribute to the Venizelist vote; on the contrary, Pangalos' open support for Angelakis repulsed refugees and paved the way for Patrikios' victory.

The big loser in this test of wills was Pangalos. The 1925 election proved his lack of popular support, particularly among refugees, and support for Angelakis repelled many refugees. The discourse among those who supported Patrikios clearly shows that they supported him not because they were sympathetic to the Communism but that their support for Venizelism was conditional upon implementation of policies that addressed the refugee issue. This was evident particularly during Venizelos' prime ministry between 1928 and 1932. The policies that he adopted, voluntarily or under the weight of international political and economic pressures, resulted in refugees defecting from Venizelism. The economic crises that Greece had been experiencing after the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the refugee influx became even more daunting. Because of Venizelos' pacifist foreign policy, in 1930, Turkey and Greece signed the Ankara Convention, in which both countries mutually waived all property claims originating from the population exchange. This provoked fierce reactions among refugees and exacerbated the situation for the larger Venizelist alliance and, together with other factors, such as the economic depression, accelerated the erosion of refugee support. This was coupled with the slow trend that was first seen in the 1925 elections in Thessaloniki and the refugee support for the Communist Party increased rapidly especially after 1930. This support not only helped the party to overcome its internal crisis and also led to its becoming an influential, national party.

Venizelist officers' unsuccessful coup and the disastrous defeat of Venizelism in 1935 provided advantageous to the KKE and helped it to extend its influence over refugees by leaving the KKE the only political force capable of challenging the anti-refugee fanaticism and practices a decade after the election of the first "prosfygokommounistis" mayor.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

The refugee issue was the central problem of Greece in the interwar period. The war-torn country received more than 1.2 million people who were in need of immediate aid and long-term rehabilitation. Greece was weighed down by the burden of this task that was to transform the ideological, economic and political landscape of the country. From an ideological point of view, a new understanding of nationalism based on the re-construction of the country, and of saving "unredeemed" Greeks not through irredentism but by incorporating those who had already come to Greece into the existing social, political and economic order.

The refugee issue changed the economic policy of the country as well. Even though the economic burden of the immigration problem was onerous, the state wanted to turn it into an opportunity. Refugees could constitute the labor power necessary to increase agricultural production and could even provide an opportunity to resolve the enduring land issue. Urban refugees could potentially stimulate industrial growth. Refugees introduced new agricultural crops and industrial practices to Greece. The political impact of the refugee influx went even deeper: The country had already been going through a deep schism and this was coupled with refugees' bloc support for one side of the schism. Refugees' support for Venizelism and later for different political parties transformed the political landscape fundamentally by deepening the chasm between the political forces, and this changed the political trajectory of the country. The

immigration of refugees amplified the political tensions and added new ones to the already existing socio-political conflicts, and under the catalysis of the economic crisis, reproduced them in some novel ways, such as refugee-native strife that in some occasions turned into local uprisings.

In this atmosphere, refugees tried to establish themselves through different means as collective subjects in order to defend their rights, to solve their pressing problems and to countervail the anti-refugee atmosphere. One of the means was the local and national refugee conferences. In the all-refugee conferences, the refugees discussed thoroughly different aspects of the refugee issue and particularly their most urgent problems. The all-refugee congresses produced reports, lobbied politicians and political parties, organized rallies and the participants, as the representatives of the so-called refugee world, tried to influence the crowd they represented. Although the First All-Refugee Congress in 1923 was questioned as to its representativeness and its almost unanimously Venizelist and anti-royalist political stance, it created a platform to debate possible solutions to their plight and to express their opposition to policies that they considered deleterious to their communities. It also gave a clear sense of the political choices that they had before them, at least for the high-profile heavy hitters of refugee communities such as deputies, ecclesiastics and opinion leaders. The congresses made clear that the established parties had to treat refugees, whether they liked it or not, as political actors with an explicit agenda that could not be ignored.

The second All-Refugee Congress was, on the other hand, more diverse and thus more representative of the entire refugee world. In spite of the problems that refugees faced in 1924, they were able to forge a collective sense of themselves as political actors. One of the strategies they debated and then opted to pursue was to remain within the Venizelist political network but

also to create their more own autonomous organizations, including even political parties. Accordingly, the newly founded refugee parties started playing a subordinate role in the large political alliances that emerged within the framework of the national schism. Once they managed to get representation in Parliament, they sent a clear message to the Venizelist leadership that they could not take refugee support for granted. Refugee support was contingent on Liberal leadership taking concrete and substantive measure that could address the refugees' issues.

In addition to this aspect, there were also “dissident” voices that harshly criticized the mainstream political camps. In their view, there was no common “refugee cause” because the refugee world was diverse and differentiated, especially along class lines. The interests and problems of the old Ottoman Greek bourgeoisie were very different from those of refugee workers and peasants. One of the most vocal defenders of this position was Minas Patrikios. In the all-refugee congresses, refugees tried to find a way out of the political maze of interwar Greek politics and, as time passed and the refugee issue remained unresolved, the political choices open to them multiplied. The congresses, apart from their impact on mainstream politics, served as a strong platform to express refugee priorities and to articulate the contours of refugee identity.

One crucial turning point was the establishment of the Republic. In this chapter, we explored how and why refugees supported the ratification of the Republic through an examination of the bilingual newspaper *Prosfygiki Foni*. The paper strongly supported the Republic but also saw itself as a vehicle for propagating a refugee identity. It underscored that the key element of their identity was refugeehood and that this took precedence over Venizelism or Republicanism. Polatoglou was the inheritor of the tradition of publication of Turkish-speaking newspapers in the Ottoman Empire that had seen the newspaper as a means to enlighten



the masses. Accordingly, the support of the newspaper transcended simple propaganda and the newspaper analyzed the pros and cons of the republican regime from a historical and political point of view, and it explained why a republic was a superior form of government. It also published stories aimed specifically at Turcophone refugees. It is interesting to observe how *Prosfygiki Foni*'s cast its categorical opposition to the monarchy as a form of government. In opposing the restoration of the monarchy, the newspaper equated it to the sultanate, frequently using the word “πατισαχλήκ” (*padişahlık – sultanate*). Its goal was to equate the Greek monarchy of King George II with the Ottoman sultanate that had inflicted upon so many horrors upon them during the 1910s. The newspaper emerged as one of the most outspoken defenders of the Republic. And since refugees constituted a constituency that could determine the outcome of the referendum, the paper's influence cannot be underestimated. Because of its role in helping to pass the referendum, Polatoglou and his newspaper soon became the target of the royalist/anti-Venizelist camp.

The political stances adopted at the refugee conferences and during the referendum period also proved that their sympathy to or even their fanaticism for Venizelism was not simply blind faith but based on self-interest and rational choice. For them, Venizelism could provide the vehicle most likely to make possible their integration to mainstream Greek society and to protect them from the royalist/anti-Venizelist political forces, which, as we have seen, were hostile to the newcomers and which played to the prejudices of the native population. Refugee support for the Liberal coalition changed as Venizelism failed to address their problems. Resentment grew as the years passed and the discrimination that refugees confronted did not abate. This led to defections from Venizelism to the Communist Party.

An early sign of this development appeared in the 1925 mayoral elections in Thessaloniki. The election of the United Front of Workers-Peasants-Refugees candidate with the support of the KKE sent a political shockwave through the Greek body politic. Pangalos's dictatorial government canceled the elections by invoking an obscure electoral law and then tried to sway the subsequent poll by declaring its support for the Venizelist candidate. Pangalos's refusal to allow a refugee to become Thessaloniki's mayor was a slap in the face, and proof positive that even Venizelists harbored deep-seated prejudice against them. Even though Pangalos said his opposition to Patrikios based on his Communist politics and not his refugee background, as seen the writings in their newspapers, few believed him. The impact of the election results in the second round of voting transcended the limits of a local election and created consequences on a national scale. Most importantly it was first and foremost a political development that proved that the Pangalos administration manifestly lacked popular support. Pangalos's pre-dictatorship ties to Venizelism reflected poorly on the movement as a whole. Although Patrikios, as a refugee, was backed by the KKE and gained huge support from refugees in a city rightfully called the capital of refugees, this did not signify an immediate and permanent refugee defection from Venizelism to Communism, but it foreshadowed what was to come.

A considerable number of refugees only began to shift their allegiance to the KKE in the late 1920s, and particularly after 1930. The critically important turning point was Venizelos's acceptance of the Greek-Turkish Friendship Pact that put paid to any chance of the former Ottoman Greeks returning to Asia Minor or of their receiving full compensation for their abandoned properties. From this point on refugee defections from Venizelism to other political forces became even more common. Moreover, a large portion of them pledged their support to the Communist Party. Not only did this give the party a larger base, but it also changed the

political dynamic within it. The refugees' agenda had to be accommodated within a party platform that had hitherto focused overwhelmingly on class issues. As public order became an issue and as the "Bolshevik menace" seemed large, the Venizelos government passed anti-subversion legislation known as the Law of Idionymo, which paved the way for the authoritarian turn in Greek politics in the second half of the 1930s. The increasing influence of the KKE in the country's political life made possible by the support of refugees changed the ideological landscape of the country as well. The ideological vacuum caused by the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the consequent disappearance of the Megali Idea was also filled by new ones that spun off of the National Schism that had begun in 1915. Now joining the Venizelist-royalist split were new ones that were directly related to the influx of Ottoman Greeks into Greece. The most important of these polarities, as we have seen, were natives versus refugees, republicans versus monarchists, and then finally Communists versus non-Communists, all of which were interconnected and affected the fate of the country in WWII as well as the post-war period, in which the social contradictions culminated in a civil war.

## Chapter 5: From the Marginal Margins: “Karamanlides,” “Tourkokritikoi” and “hostage minorities”

### 5.1 Introduction

Over the last few decades, the concepts of “margins” and “marginality” have attracted serious scholarly attention from a broad range of disciplines and fields. To some extent, the increasing interest in these concepts can be regarded as symptomatic of diversification of research agendas from cultural and political supposed “homogeneity,” “purity,” “visibility,” and “predictability” of a “fixed” and “bounded” center towards a perceived “heterogeneity,” “indecent,” “invisibility” and “ambivalence and waywardness” of a “volatile” and “porous” periphery.

What do the concepts of margin and marginality designate? Like *marginalia* in literary theory, margins as populations and spaces are considered domains of multivocality and ex-centricity. Anna L. Tsing aptly describes margins as “zones of unpredictability at the edges of discursive stability, where contradictory discourses overlap” and “sites from which we see the instability of social categories.”<sup>877</sup> While discussing the mutual marginality of Greece and anthropology (and ethnography) and that of Greece in relation to Europe, Michael Herzfeld develops a similar understanding of marginality and underlines that marginalization of Greece is due to the inability of locating Greece and the Greeks in the binary opposition between the East

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<sup>877</sup> Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, “From the Margins,” *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (August 1, 1994): 279. For a similar approach see C. Nadia Seremetakis, *The Last Word: Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1.

and the West, which is the constitutive ideological element of European identity. The Greeks are not exotic enough to be labeled as oriental, nor are they unambiguously European.<sup>878</sup> Therefore, marginality can be described as unclarity of where you are or where you are from, which results in partial visibility and/or partial connectedness. Therefore, margins can be conceptualized as a periphery containing the disregarded and/or the misrepresented.<sup>879</sup>

Studying marginal communities used to be considered an isolationist methodology, that is to say, isolating this community from its regional and national contexts.<sup>880</sup> However, recent studies assume that margins are critical for understanding the center. Das and Poole, for example, underline the significance of margins in the understanding of the state because they are necessary entailments of the state.<sup>881</sup> This is not only because of a simple interdependence between margins and the center, which can be described, in Arjun Appadurai's words, as "the worry of the marginals [...] is a worry to the elites."<sup>882</sup> In addition to this interdependence, margins determine what lies inside and what lies outside or what runs through the political body of the state<sup>883</sup> and the nation. The very existence of these regions/societies makes all their "non-European" counterparts submissive to Europe.<sup>884</sup> Likewise, it can be claimed that within a nation-state,

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<sup>878</sup> Michael Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 20.

<sup>879</sup> Sarah F. Green, *Notes from the Balkans: Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian Border* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1.

<sup>880</sup> For Herzfeld's criticism see Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-Glass*, 6, 131.

<sup>881</sup> Veena Das and Deborah Poole, "State and Its Margins: Comparative Ethnographies," in *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, ed. Veena Das and Deborah Poole (Oxford: School of American Research Press, 2004), 4.

<sup>882</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (Duke University Press, 2006), 35.

<sup>883</sup> Das and Poole, "State and its Margins," 19.

<sup>884</sup> "At the margins of Western society, all the non-European regions, whose inhabitants, societies, histories, and beings represented a non-European essence, were made subservient to Europe, which in

peripheral regions and segments of society function in a similar fashion. Through the margins, the so-called center determines the self and the other, and on the other hand, a marginal position can mean looking through it at other margins and the center.<sup>885</sup> We need to guard against thinking that margins are inert spaces or populations to be administered by a center.

On the contrary, their political and social counter-hegemonic potential is highlighted by several scholars. Mark C. Elliott, for instance, asserts that ethnic identities arise on the margins due to the disenchantment with or alienation from the national/imperial center.<sup>886</sup> With their cultural differences, margins can also function as a tool for a destabilizing center.<sup>887</sup>

Each exclusionary nation-building process marginalizes cultural or ethnic groups to define the markers of their state-sponsored official nationalism to create their other(s). Marginalization covers a spectrum from suppressing or outlawing to eliminating its subject from public life or hindering their participation in policymaking. It should be added that marginalization is a progressive and relative process. Within the margins there are certain regions/societies are marginalized even further either by the center or by the marginal. Then they are described as not only marginal but marginal within the marginal, as Green calls them.<sup>888</sup>

It can be deduced from this preliminary and brief discussion on the concepts of margin and marginality that these concepts apply to refugees. Refugee is a category designated to be

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turn demonstrably continued to control what was not Europe, and represented the non-European in such a way as to sustain control.” Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 106.

<sup>885</sup> Seremetakis, *The Last Word*, 1.

<sup>886</sup> Mark C. Elliott, "Ethnicity in the Qing Eight Banners," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, ve Donald S. Sutton (University of California Press, 2006), 32. See also

<sup>887</sup> Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen: Marginality in an Out-of-the-Way Place* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>888</sup> Green, *Notes from the Balkans*, 6

marginal, a technology of international law to address a marginal social problem subordinated to the interests of the nation-state. Moreover, as Arendt describes, refugees, as status-less people and the universal unwanted, are never considered proper elements of the nation, and "they represent disruptions in the conditions of normality in life imagined regarding the hierarchy of the citizen/nation/state ensemble. They must be regimented, even during those times when they deserve compassion and pity."<sup>889</sup>

In a similar vein, nation-statehood can be conceptualized as the creation and continued marginalization of ethnic and linguistic minority groups in the "people-making"<sup>890</sup> process for the nation-state. Externalization and marginalization of minorities and refugees and the inclusion/exclusion game played by the government define the values and capacities of the subjects. Hence, refugee and minority as constructed categories help sovereigns narrow or confine the definition of citizenship and establish, define or reinforce the boundaries of the imagined national entity. Refugees and minorities are, as a "problem," marginal to the sovereign state; and, as social groups, marginalized in a power relationship, therefore, marginal to the nation-proper and citizens.

That was the case regarding the refugees of the Greco-Turkish war and the population exchange, which, as a demographic engineering method, can be seen as a marginal margin.<sup>891</sup> Being subordinated to the interests of the nation- and state-building processes in Greece and

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<sup>889</sup> Soğuk, *States and Strangers*, 19.

<sup>890</sup> Arjun Appadurai, "Sovereignty Without Territoriality: Notes for a Postnational Geography," in *The Geography of Identity*, ed. Patricia Yeager (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1996), 43.

<sup>891</sup> Nathaniel Berman underlines that even in the interwar period voluntary reciprocal emigration was a "relatively marginal solution." Nathaniel Berman, "But the Alternative is Despair": European Nationalism and the Modernist Renewal of International Law," *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1845. Özsu also describes exchanging populations as a departure from intra-European practices of nation-building and underlines its marginality by calling it an enterprise neither European nor non-European. Özsu, *Formalizing Displacement*, 83.

Turkey, refugees' position in the social hierarchy of their "new homelands" where their national loyalties were supposed to lie was somewhat ambiguous; but, having suffered from economic and social dislocation, deteriorated significantly in comparison to their previous lives.

Furthermore, they were forced to acquiesce to lower social status and to give up their adherence to a particular way of life. As victims of displacement and dispossession, their marginalization continued after the population exchange completed. They were marginalized more and more owing to the cultural, linguistic and other differences presented by them. Redefining citizenship and nationhood around the refugee issue as shown in the previous chapters, as well as dehumanizing and stereotyping refugees, contributed to the coalescence to respective national identities in Turkey and Greece in the 1920s and 1930s and to support the sovereign nation-state. This was facilitated through the manipulation of public opinion. The borderlines between sympathy, pathos, apathy and repulsion were —and still are— so thin that the public opinion was quickly dragged over those borderlines per the interests of the state. While undertaking this, some of the subgroups among the refugees with more visible differentiating cultural/ethnic/racial markers, first and foremost language, were subject to marginalization even further and became seriously endangered.

In addition to the refugees of the population exchange, there were other unwanted demographic categories brought into being —legally— such as those who were exempted from this forced displacement practice. Minority protection was one of the principal axes of the Greco-Turkish population exchange. While stripping some people off their former legal attachments to state structures and displacing them, with the settlement in Lausanne Greece and Turkey decided on the legal creation of minorities by exempting some of the population segments. The Greek-Orthodox population of Constantinople and the Imbros and Tenedos



islands were excepted from the exchange as well as the Muslim population of Thrace. Not only were these communities treated as outsiders whose identity was to be disregarded or assimilated, or whose members were to be driven out of their respective national territories by the Turkish and Greek states, they were held as security for the fulfillment of the states' domestic or diplomatic goals. Their already-marginal position within the national sociopolitical landscape was deteriorated even more as a result of the diplomatic crises between Turkey and Greece.

In this chapter, the study focuses on some of the vulnerable and ignored communities in Greece and Turkey created by the population exchange; particularly some of the segments which were marginalized more, or even ostracized and stood at the marginal margins. The three groups under consideration in this chapter are the largest refugee groups that did not speak the national language of their "new homelands." The situation has been particularly difficult for the Greek-speaking refugees in Turkey and the Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece. Language was one of the clearest markers for the refugees and an essential skill for participating in social life. While the lack of communication skills built a barrier on various levels, from the individual to the communal, the Greek language in Turkey and Turkish in Greece quickly isolated and stigmatized the refugee speakers of these languages. In the increasingly nationalist atmosphere of the 1920s and 1930s, they were easily identified with the enemy, became more and more vulnerable. The first two sections of this chapter deal with how the Greek-speaking Cretan-Muslims and the Turkish-speaking Christians were treated in Turkey and Greece after they were displaced, how they reacted to their marginalization and reconstructed their identities. The last section of the chapter concentrates on the experiences of the minority communities which were *de jure* defined by the exchange convention through investigating an event, which has not hitherto attracted scholarly attention and contextualized as a part of the population exchange process, namely the

fire that devastated Tatavla, one of the major Greek neighborhoods of Constantinople. The fire, with its suspicious break-out and consequences, exacerbated the crisis between Greece and Turkey and increased tremendously the vulnerability of the Greeks living in Constantinople and revealed the fact that the minorities created by the settlement in Lausanne were seen as hostages by the contracting countries.

## 5.2 Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece: “Τουρκίαδα κιαβούρ, Γιονανιστάνδα μουχαδζίρ”<sup>892</sup>

Μουχατζήρ γαζέταμιζα δεστανινή γιαζάσιν  
Κιϊμετήν πιλίνμεζ Αθήνατα πασασίν<sup>893</sup>

A refugee resident of the village of Karağaç in Kaylarya  
*Prosfygiki Foni*, March 11, 1926

Maritsa Isaioglou-Paschalidou was a refugee born into a Turkish-speaking family in Mavrolofos, Serres immediately after her family’s resettlement to this town from Barla, Isparta.

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<sup>892</sup> Türkiye'de gâvur, Yonanistan'da muhacir = Infidel in Turkey, refugee in Greece

<sup>893</sup> Turkish transliteration:

Muhacir gazetamıza destanımı yazasın

Kıymetin bilinmez Atina'da basasın

English translation:

Write your saga to our refugee gazette

Publish it in Athens where nobody shows you respect

The discrimination that she was subject to due to the language she spoke was her “biggest complaint” in life:<sup>894</sup>

We came to this village from Barla. The first thing that I will tell you was our discontent, we, the children, did not know the language. Our grandfathers and our grandmothers talked to us in Turkish. We did not know even a single word. We were ashamed to go out of our village because they made fun of us. After a teacher was appointed to our school, I went to the school until the second grade, and in the third grade, we stopped because the Albanian war broke out. And when we went (to school) and talked in Turkish the teacher used to give us punishment – We didn't know Greek, and we weren't talking. The teacher was asking us questions, and we weren't answering in order not to say something wrong, were we? And once he heard us playing and speaking Turkish as if we were in a Turkish village, then he told that ‘whoever talks in Turkish will bring us an egg as a punishment.’ And the teacher collected baskets of eggs.

We did so, what could we do? We couldn't speak Greek, and we couldn't communicate in Greek. Anyways, there was a kid from Old Greece, and this ‘*palaiοelladitis*’ (παλαιοελλαδίτης, the inhabitant of Old Greece) was called Thanasis, and he was very mean. He used to call us *Tourkofonoi* (Turkish-speaking). Whenever they called us *Tourkofonoi*, we revolted. Even we quit going to school because of that. (...) There was another classmate who spoke Turkish all the time. They could not forbid him to speak Turkish. We didn't speak if we didn't know that word. We didn't speak because we were afraid of telling our mom every day ‘give me an egg.’ (...) And that kid, what did he do? One day he brought a chicken and gave it to the teacher and [he told him] ‘feed the chicken and take the eggs because I cannot speak Greek and I don't want to get a thrashing from my mom every day for asking for eggs.’

(...)

And we were even worse than [today's Albanians] when we came. When we were refugees and came from Asia Minor, [we were] *Tourkofonoi*, Turks-Turks-Turks. Turks-*Tourkofoni*. And until today. We were deeply ashamed. When we became 20 years old and went outside like [other] girls and so, other young boys didn't prefer us. They looked at us beautifully but when they talked to us ‘not the Turkish women.’ That's to say *Tourkofonoi*. Turkish women meant *Tourkofonoi*. Turkish women.

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<sup>894</sup> Maritsa Isaioglou-Paschalidou, interview by Mikhail Varlas, March 18, 2006 (Serres, Mavrolofos), Foundation of the Hellenic World Archives of Testimonies of the Genealogy Project (Central Macedonia).

Maritsa Isaioglou-Paschalidou was one of many Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece. According to the 1928 census, the size of the Turkish-speaking population was almost 200,000, and the religious breakdown of this population is as the following:

**Table 5–1:** Turkish-speaking population in Greece, 1928

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Turkish-speaking population</b>	<b>Percentage in the Turkish-speaking population</b>	<b>Percentage in the general population</b>
<i>Orthodox</i>	103,642	54.19	1.67
<i>Muslim</i>	86,506	45.23	1.39
<i>Protestant</i>	760	0.40	0.01
<i>Catholic</i>	327	0.17	0.01
<i>Jew</i>	17	0.01	0.00
<i>Other</i>	1	0.001	0.00
<i>Atheist</i>	1	0.001	0.00
<i>Total</i>	191,254	100	3.08

**Source:** Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15-16 Μαΐου 1928 (Athens: Ministry of National Economy, 1935), 246.

The percentage of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox population within the Greek society was not more than 1.7 percent which corresponded to 8.5 percent of the refugee community.<sup>895</sup> Since these numbers reflect the number of people population that declared Turkish as their primary language or mother tongue, the actual number of the Turkish-speaking population can be assumed to be higher than the official statistics. This "small number" created a severe disturbance, and this idiosyncratic community was subject to predatory responses from the

<sup>895</sup> For an analysis of the 1928 census data on the religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities in Macedonia see Dimitris Lithoxoou, "Η μητρική γλώσσα των κατοίκων του ελληνικού τμήματος της Μακεδονίας πριν και μετά την ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών," *Θέσεις* 38 (January 1992): 39–63.

public representatives of proper Greek nationals, the intellectual vanguards of Greek nationalism, who could ideally fulfill all the pieces of the triptych picture of national identity composed of citizenship, religion, and language. The press was the primary medium of expressing the anxiety of incompleteness. In this atmosphere, the visibility of Turkish-speaking refugees was considered disturbing by nationalist circles. It is not hard to guess that *Prosfygiki Foni* was eye-catching not only for the Turkish-speaking refugees but for a larger circle of people that wrote on the refugee issue, which indeed dominated the political sphere of that period. The newspaper's pages printed in Turkish with Greek characters became a controversial issue shortly after its first issue and became the subject of criticisms and polemics as we will see in the next chapter. In a period when the Turkish-speaking refugees were "accused" of being Turks<sup>896</sup> and anti-Turkish sentiments were quite high; this was entirely predictable. What was not predictable that the first stone came from the mouthpiece of the Venizelist camp, *Eleftheron Vima*. The unexpected attack in the pages of *Eleftheron Vima* in 1925 set a typical example of the anxiety mentioned above.

A reader's letter published in *Eleftheron Vima*, on June 1, 1925, set the fire for the first polemic. This short letter's title was "A...Greek newspaper, " and it was signed by "Ghagharis" (Γκάγκαρης).<sup>897</sup> The reader expresses his uneasiness with the Turkish-speaking refugees across Athens and claims that even though almost all refugees know Greek better than the natives, they refuse to talk it and prefer Turkish. He also stresses "a weekly newspaper 'nicely' titled *Προσφυγική Φωνή/Μουχαδζήρ Σεδασή* has been published since last year." The owner of the

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<sup>896</sup> For example, in Kastoria, it was decided to organize a rally against insults hurled at the Turcophone refugees by calling them "Turk." See *Μακεδονία*, February 24, 1925.

<sup>897</sup> Obviously, this was a pen name derived from the Greek word γκάγκαρος which means unmixed, pure and is only used within the phrase «γκάγκαρος Αθηναίος» (pure Athenian). See Georgios Babiniotis, *Ετυμολογικό λεξικό της νέας Ελληνικής γλώσσας: Ιστορία των λέξεων* (Athens: Κέντρο Λεξικολογίας, 2010), 418.

letter also questions in a provocative way why they use Greek letters while writing in Turkish and asks if they are afraid of using it straight out. At the end of the letter, Ghagharis shares a sample from the publications of *Prosfygiki Foni*, a piece of news with the title “Τσαλδάρης Σελανγιέ” [*Çaldaris Selaniğe=Tsaldaris to Thessaloniki*]. On July 4, the reply of *Prosfygiki Foni* to *Eleftheron Vima* appears on the Greek front-page as the editorial signed by “H. S. Polatoglou, the Director”. In his article Polatoglou criticizes the letter starting from its title by calling it a “rotten” one, (*υπό τον σιπτικόν [sic] τίτλον*). Against the skepticism of Ghagharis regarding the Hellenic character of his newspaper Polatoglou argues that even in Constantinople, “the greatest capital of Hellenism”, there used to be such publications like *Ανατολή* or *Ασία* and adds that for publishing such a newspaper he was motivated by patriotic ideas and he thought “the world of Asia Minor [Μικρασιατικός κόσμος] should not indulge in darkness but rather get enlightened with the publication of a Turkish-speaking newspaper [informing the refugees] on the general situation and more specifically refugee-related issues” and stresses that *Prosfygiki Foni*, the biggest newspaper published in Greece in a non-Greek language, is “the organ of the refugees all across the country”, as its nameplate reads, which means almost 1.5 million refugees. Just below Polatoglou’s editorial, a bitter letter written in Greek and signed by “the refugees from Cappadocia” was published to condemn publicly the comments of “an unknown Mr. Ghagharis who regards such a serious issue in a very light-hearted manner.” In the letter, the writers claim that as the Anatolians, by experience they know the importance of publications addressing to all the classes in the society for their development and progress and they refer to *Ανατολή* “published for 60 years” as the proof of their argument’s validity. “The refugees from Cappadocia” also reminds the fact that *Prosfygiki Foni* is bilingual and ironically ask “if this Mr. Ghagharis is as ignorant as the refugee world and cannot read the substantial news” and closes

the letter to parade their command of Greek language with a Homeric verse: “I will keep you in mind along with the rest of the song”.<sup>898</sup>

Shortly after the answer of *Prosfygiki Foni*, on June 15 *Eleftheron Vima* published a longer piece titled "The Language of Karamanlides" which was signed by “N.M.”. Considering the tone of the article, one can rightfully say that this article was nothing but a defamation attempt. Similar to the first letter, the author of this article, who obviously knew Turkish, opens the discussion with his observations about the streets of Athens where hearing people speaking Turkish was not something unusual, and to the author's surprise, there was even a newspaper published in Athens in Turkish with Greek letters under the Greek title *Prosfygiki Foni*. After informing the reader about the history of the polemic, N.M. starts to fuel counter-arguments against Polatoglou’s response. First of all, N.M. claims that throughout the years of his survey of the Karamanlidika press circulating in Constantinople, i.e. *Ανατολή* and *Ασία*, contrary to Polatoglou’s claims, he could not come across with any article that corroborated the patriotic ideals of Cappadocians and, parallel to the very first letter, asserts that the Greeks from Cappadocia living in Constantinople, although the unifying language in the city was Greek and they had excelled in this language over the years, preferred Turkish to Greek without any excuses. For N.M. this was obviously the case when *Prosfygiki Foni* was considered too. By abusively calling the other side of the discussion “εφένδηλερ” [efendiler, Turkish word for “gentlemen”] N.M. tries to challenge the authenticity of their Greekness (Hellenicity); moreover, by skewing Polatoglou’s argument on the ability and desire of *Prosfygiki Foni* to represent and to address to the entire refugee world in Greece, he asks in a demagogical manner if all the refugees are Turkish-speaking by just ignoring the fact that *Prosfygiki Foni* was a bilingual newspaper

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<sup>898</sup> From the Homeric Hymns "To the Dioscuri": "Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ὕμέων τε καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' αἰοιδῆς."

from the very beginning. The author also criticizes the language that *Prosfygiki Foni* uses. For him, the language of the paper was an overcomplicated Turkish that is incomprehensible for the refugees and by using Greek words with Turkish suffixes, such as συνοικισμὸς-λὰρ (plural) or συνοικισμὸς-οὐνδὰ (dative), the newspaper bastardizes the Greek language. Finally, N.M asks the editorial board of *Prosfygiki Foni* to stop the paper's publication in this nonexistent language (*εἰς τὴν ἀνύπαρκτον αὐτὴν γλώσσαν*) and to stop polluting Greek-speaking refugees. "Although there is freedom of the press in Greece and there are newspapers published in foreign languages, none of these languages is nonexistent." For the author, "The Karamanli language with Greek characters was the fabrication of the Bible societies and there is no point to its existence in Greece."

On June 18, *Prosfygiki Foni* embroiled in this polemic once more with its leading article in Greek titled "Once and for all." After summarizing the history of the contention, *Prosfygiki Foni* attacks furiously to N.M and says "We are not prepared to answer N.M.'s insults. Because neither does the tradition of *Prosfygiki Foni* allow us —since we were not raised in the famous dives of Stamboul— nor do we know the language of them, which N.M. admires that much." *Prosfygiki Foni*, then, claims that N.M. does not know about "the ethnic services offered by the Turcophone Greek newspapers the national and cultural activities of which took an exceptional place in the history of Hellenism of Anatolia." After an explanation on the importance of the publications of the Turcophone Greeks in Constantinople and Anatolia, the article returns to the importance of the publications addressing to the Turcophone refugees in Greece, whose existence was a "reality." The newspaper explains the refugee influx to Greece with a historical narrative based on the captivity of the Anatolian Greeks under the tyrannic Turkish rule over the centuries. According to *Prosfygiki Foni*, although the young refugees have a good command of



Greek, i.e. "their national language," the majority of the Turkish-speaking refugees did not have the chance to learn it. At this point, according to *Prosfygiki Foni*, the newspaper's existence becomes meaningful as a national duty to inform the unfortunate refugees about significant national issues and while performing this task, *Prosfygiki Foni* does not "seek for the recognition of neither Mr. N.M. nor *Eleftheron Vima*". On June 21, *Prosfygiki Foni* published two mails from its readers written in Greek that protest N.M. and *Eleftheron Vima* for their libels about *Prosfygiki Foni*. On June 23, *Eleftheron Vima* published a small piece of news ("The Turkish...Greek") informing its readers that "*Prosfygiki Foni*, which used to get published four pages in Turkish (with Greek characters), restricts this language now into its last two pages. The first two pages will be printed in Greek characters and language". Considering the fact that *Prosfygiki Foni* was a bilingual newspaper from its very first issue, and its Turkish pages had almost always been published in the last two pages exactly like *Eleftheron Vima*'s description, this was a fabrication of this newspaper to halt the polemic which continued for almost a month.

It is worth noting that on July 2, *Prosfygiki Foni* published a letter in Karamanlidika sent to the Directorate of the newspaper, which was signed by a refugee called Giannis X. Thanasoglou from Findiklı (Δραμαδά μουκίμ Φιντικλελί Γιάννης Χ. Θανάς ογλού = Drama'da mukim Findiklılı Yannis X. Thanas oglou), resident of Drama. The letter characterized the publications of *Eleftheron Vima* a sign of animosity towards the Anatolian Hellenism (Ανατόλ ρουμληγή = Anatol Rumluğu), which were scattered to the far corners of Greece as victims of politics and strongly emphasized that this newspaper was born out of a necessity that could be comprehended by considering the fact that only a portion of 1.5 million Asia Minor refugees could read Greek. According to Thanasoglou, unless this newspaper had been published, Turkish-speaking refugees would have never been aware of the developments regarding their

abandoned properties as well as domestic and foreign news and asked the directorate of the newspaper, on behalf of refugees, if it was possible to publish the newspaper on a daily basis. He finalized his letter with a couplet:<sup>899</sup>

*Προσφυγική Φωνή* σαγεσιντέ μουχατσιρλάρ ολδί σατ,  
Εἴλεσούν μεβλάμ σενί μακανιντά περχαγιάτ.

*Prosfygiki Foni* sayesinde muhacirlar oldu şâd  
Eylesun mevlam seni makamında berhayât

Thanks to *Prosfygiki Foni* so happy became refugees  
In His presence may God grant you eternal peace

On September 13, 1928, again with the abbreviated signature N.M., the same author wrote another article, "Ἐκτουρκισμός," on a phenomenon of the "Turkification of the Greek language" where he offers the purification of the language by simply removing words originating from Turkish. In this article he opens the discussion with the subject of "Karamanlides" and "their language" by referring them as if they had been infected by a disease which had not been able to get cured until then and without mentioning the name of *Prosfygiki Foni*, he points at a newspaper "still getting published in Athens in Turkish with Greek characters". Unfortunately, we do not know if *Prosfygiki Foni* responded to this second wave of attacks by N.M. since the issues published later than 1927 are not available in any collections. Although his name was not revealed in the course of these polemics, "N.M." stood for Nikiforos Moschopoulos.

Moschopoulos (1871-1964) was of Constantinopolitan origin and had a good command of Turkish language and linguistic background. He was to become the Director of Press at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April 1930<sup>900</sup> and served in this position for many years. At the

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<sup>899</sup> *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, July 2, 1925.

<sup>900</sup> *Σκριπ*, April 20, 1930.

time of this polemic, Moschopoulos was a contributor of *Eleftheron Vima* and published op-ed pieces particularly on the developments in Turkey.<sup>901</sup> For example in the same newspaper on April 8, 1926, he wrote a long article on the adoption of the Latin script in Turkey where he mentioned the Turkish-speaking Greeks of Karaman and Cappadocia as a population using Turkish but writing it with Greek characters while writing about different alphabets and languages having been employed in Turkey. Moschopoulos published many books in French and Greek on a variety of historical subjects, but basically on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.<sup>902</sup> In harmony with the spirit of the crown-sponsored quasi-fascist dictatorship of Metaxas during which for Turcophone population attendance in night schools was made compulsory and the usage of any language other than Greek was banned.<sup>903</sup> In the newspaper *Kathimerini*, he published a serialized research titled "A Huge Campaign: Towards the Hellenization of the Greek

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<sup>901</sup> "...ο εκλεκτός συνεργάτης μας κ. Νικηφόρος Μοσχόπουλος..." see *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, April 23, 1924.

<sup>902</sup> Some of Moschopoulos' publications: *La Presse Dans La Renaissance Balkanique: Etude Historique* (Athens: Reimpression du 'Messenger d' Athenes', 1931), *La Question de l' Epire Du Nord: Bref Aperçu Historique* (Athènes: Imprimerie 'Patris', 1946), *La Question de Palestine et Le Patriarcat de Jerusalem, Ses Droits, Ses Privilèges: Aperçu Historique* (Athens: Reimprime du 'Messenger d' Athens', 1948), *La Question de Thrace: Ou Le Mensonge Bulgare* (Athens: Imprimerie 'Typos': Kimon J. Theodoropoulos & Cie, 1922), *La Terre Sainte: Essai Sur L'histoire Politique et Diplomatique Des Lieux Saints de La Chrétienté* (Athens: s.n., 1956), *Les Turcs Jugés Par Leur Histoire: Une Reponse a Damad Ferid Pacha* (Paris: P. Thevoz, 1920), *Αι Νέαι Τουρκικαί, Ιστορικαί Και Εθνολογικαί Θεωρίαι* (Athens: Εκ του Εθνικού Τυπογραφείου, 1935), *Η Αρμενία Και Το Αρμενικόν Ζήτημα* (Athens: Τύπος "Πυρσού" Α.Ε, 1928), *Ιστορία Της Βουλγαρίας: Εθνογραφία Της Σημερινής Βουλγαρίας - Διπλωματική Ιστορία* (Athens: Πυρσός, 1929), *Ιστορία Της Ελληνικής Επανάστασεως Κατά Τους Τούρκους Ιστοριογράφους Εν Αντιπαραβολή Και Προς Τους Έλληνας Ιστορικούς* (Athens: Εκτύπωσις Χ. Λεοντιάδης & Υιός, 1960), *Νοτιοσλαβία: Γεωγραφία.-Εθνογραφία.-Οικονομική Γεωγραφία.-Εθνική Οικονομία.* (Athens: "Πυρσός", 1931), *Το Αρμενικόν Ζήτημα: Συμβολή Εις Την Διπλωματικήν Ιστορίαν* (Athens: Αλεξ. Βιτσικουνάκη, 1924).

<sup>903</sup> For the language policies during the Metaxist period see Dimitris Lithoxoou, "Η πολιτική του εξελληνισμού της μακεδονικής μειονότητας στο μεσοπόλεμο – δύο ανέκδοτες εκθέσεις από το αρχείο Ι. Μεταξά," *Politis* 124 (January 1992): 32–63; Philip Carabott, "The Politics of Integration and Assimilation Vis-à-Vis the Slavo-Macedonian Minority of Inter-War Greece: From Parliamentary Inertia to Metaxist Repression," in *Ourselves and Others : The Development of a Greek Macedonian Identity since 1912*, ed. Peter Mackridge and Eleni Yannakakis (Oxford, New York: Berg, 1997), 59–78; Christina Alexopoulos, "La question macédonienne pendant la guerre civile grecque," *Cahiers Balkaniques*, no. 38–39 (March 30, 2011), URL : <http://ceb.revues.org/2185>.

Language" ("Μια μεγάλη εκστρατεία: Προς εξελληνισμόν της ελληνικής γλώσσης"), the publication of which intermittently continued between 1936 and 1939. On June 28, 1937, in one of these serialized articles standing on the verge of hate speech with alarming and insulting remarks he once again brought up the issue of Turkish-speaking refugees in Athens and their unwillingness to use the Greek language in their daily lives.<sup>904</sup> One of the articles in this search focused on the rebetiko music (*amanedes*) that was primarily identified with refugees as mentioned in the previous chapter. Moschopoulos' article is titled as "Don't sing in Turkish - *Amanes* should stop" and a part of it reads:

[T]hose who have no hope, the condemned, those who beg for forgiveness and salvation, more and more intensely chanted for "mercy" (*aman*) and from that they made even the word "amane." While some cried for and listened to it and it swept off their feet, this *amanes* proved to be a genuine torment for Athenians and the police had to take action against it.

For God's sake stop it, brothers! Don't bring this barbaric music that originates from Turkey along with many other things of this monstrously barbaric land to the begetter of arts, Attica. Leave it as a privilege of homosexuals and abnormals living around from the Nile.

A few months after this polemic between *Eleftheron Vima* and *Prosfygiki Foni*, the language problem aroused again. On August 4, 1925, another Athens newspaper, *Ethnos* [Nation], published a "vignette" titled "We should speak Greek" signed by "ΕΙΣ." The author, yet again, at the beginning of his article, expresses his uneasiness with the refugees speaking Turkish on the streets of Athens. Like the previous articles and letter, this author too exhibits this situation as an arbitrary choice of the refugees. According to the author, although their mother tongue is not Turkish, the refugees insist on talking this "foreign language" instead of Greek.

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<sup>904</sup> *Καθημερινή*, June 28, 1937.

Now that the Albanian-speaking population learns and speaks Greek, even in the villages around Athens villagers speak simple Katharevousa, the Turkish-speaking refugees have to start using Greek in their daily lives. This is also necessary for the education of their children. That is why at their homes the refugees should speak Greek as well. If their children get accustomed to the Greek language from an early age and on a regular basis, it is impossible for them not to learn and speak this language. But the primary solution to this problem that is proposed is the foundation of kindergartens to teach the refugees' children Greek. For *Ethnos* this is crucial for the ethnic homogeneity of the frontiers, i.e. Macedonia.

Although its name was not explicitly cited by *Ethnos*, two days later on August 6, *Prosfygiki Foni* as the representative of the Turkish-speaking refugees gives an answer to *Ethnos* this time from its Karamanlidika pages with the article “Yes, we should speak Greek. But...” [Εβέτ Ρουμδζά κονισμαλιγίζ. Φακάτ...] The newspaper underlines the fact that speaking Turkish is not a choice of the refugees, nor is an indication of their inferiority regarding the national identity, but a situation resulting from the lives and history of the Rums living in Anatolia, which is apparently not known to *Ethnos*. According to *Prosfygiki Foni*, those who have no idea about the history and the living conditions in Anatolia under the 600-year-long Turkish yoke ought not to write on these matters.<sup>905</sup> Then in order to illustrate the cramped living conditions of the Anatolian Rums the author portrays those of the crypto-Christians of Pontus, Stavriotes [Σταυριλιλέρ]<sup>906</sup> and then asks if it is fair to expect that they could learn and teach Greek in such

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<sup>905</sup> “Εββέλ βε αχίρ γιαζδιγίμίζ ουζερέ Ανατολδά γιασιαγιέν ρουμλαρίν, χαγιατινί βε ταριχινί πιλμεγιενλέρ ποϊλέ μακαλελέρ γιαζμαλαρινί ριδζά εδεδζέγιζ. (Τζούνκι κιετσινί γεγεμεδιγί στού πασινά βουρούρ δερλέρ) Ανατολδά γιασιαγιάν ρουμλάρ τουρκίν ζουλιμί ταχτινδά 600 σινέ γιασαδιλάρ βε πουνλαρίν λισανλαρί τούρκδζε ολδιγί κιπί ρουμδζαγί τουρκλέρ χέρ βακίτ λαγβ ετμέκ ιστεδί ιδί.” *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, August 6, 1925.

<sup>906</sup> For Stavriotes/Ístavris see Yorgos Tzedopoulos, “Public Secrets: Crypto-Christianity in the Pontos,” *Δέλτιο ΚΜΣ* 16 (2009): 165–210; Zeynep Turkyilmaz, ‘Anxieties of Conversion: Missionaries, State and Heterodox Communities in the Late Ottoman Empire’ (unpublished Ph.D., Los Angeles: University of

an atmosphere by establishing schools and the refugee newspaper underlines that the claims of *Ethnos* that presents the refugees' speaking Turkish simply as a matter of preference are contrary to the reality. All of the refugees can learn and speak Greek, according to *Prosfygiki Foni*, under one condition, if the state establishes "excellent night schools."

The attacks on Turkish-speaking refugees continued for years after Moschopoulos' fierce attacks. Mitsos Deilinos was another journalist apparently preoccupied with Turkish-speaking refugees.

On December 9, 1928, six years after the Catastrophe and five years after the signature of the Convention concerning the population exchange, *Empros* published the observations of Mitsos Deilinos, who visited the schools at the refugee neighborhoods in Athens to see the progress of the resettlement process. The title of the article was "They learn Greek but speak Turkish." Trying to locate the school in Podarades (Nea Ionia), he asked a small girl where he could find the school. The girl, without any verbal description, showed him where to go. He,

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California, Los Angeles, 2009); Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 124-140. Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 223-230. For cryptoChristianity in Anatolia before and after the population exchange see also Konstantinos G. Lameris, *Πόσοι και ποιοί οι κάτοικοι της Μικράς Ασίας μετά την Ανταλλαγήν* (Athens: Mikrasiatikos Syllogos "Anatoli," 1929), 75-83; Maurus Reinkowski, "Hidden Believers, Hidden Apostates: The Phenomenon of Crypto-Jews and Crypto-Christians in the Middle-East," in *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology, and Transformations of Modernity*, ed. Dennis Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 409-33; Stavro Skendi, "Crypto-Christianity in the Balkan Area under the Ottomans," *Slavic Review* 26, no. 2 (1967): 227-46.

According to *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, the Stavriotes performed their Christian rituals in complete secrecy, while the practice of Islamic rituals was done publicly. Their churches were hidden and the priest performing secret rituals was the same person that conducted the open Islamic ceremonies. In addition to their daily religious practices, the religious services, such as the ones on the occasion of birth, death, and marriage, were performed twice generally first in accordance with Islamic, and then with Christian traditions. While commenting on the phenomenon of Crypto-Christianity and the "Istavris movement" in the late Ottoman Empire, Turkyilmaz describes the situation in the same way: "In all awareness, the Istavris re-configured a new matrix of religion in which the performance of all the socially unacceptable Christian rites was done in complete secrecy, whereas the practice of Muslim rites including marriage and burial ceremonies were done to their fullest extend outwardly." *ibid.*, 137.

then, asked refugee children playing on the street and speaking Turkish. By using a few Turkish words he knew he tried to communicate with them:

- Burda? (Here?) I ask them showing the opposite side,
- Evet, efendim. (Yes, sir)
- Aferim! (Well done!)

At the school he visited what Deilinos witnessed was not very different. He cited the dialogue between a child and her teacher:

- Why didn't you come to the school yesterday, my kid?
- *Gözüm* was hurting, ma'am.
- What does it mean, "gözüm"? Your leg? Say it in Greek.
- My eye *ağrıyor* (is hurting)!

Having immensely dissatisfied with his experience at the refugee neighborhood, Deilinos underlined the importance of saving refugees children from the shame of speaking the Turkish language in the capital of Hellenism. A few years after these observations, the same author likened the capital of Hellenism, Athens, to Babylon due to the linguistic diversity that one could come across in the streets of this city.<sup>907</sup> Deilinos did not only complain about the usage of Turkish in daily affairs but also made fun of broken Greek of Turcophone refugees such as a Turkish-speaking Armenian refugee, Karabet Ipecian, by satirically citing his dialogue with a judge at the courthouse in Athens:

- What is your name?
- Karabet Ipecian.
- Armenian?
- Evet (Yes).
- What is your age?
- !... Silence [He does not understand the question.]
- How old are you? asks the judge angrily.
- Hov olt? Thirty touw, *efendim* (sir).
- Put your hand on the Gospel. I swear, to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth without fear and anger.

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<sup>907</sup> *Εμπρός*, April 30, 1930.

- Enger? I don't have anything like that, *kadi efendi*. I was discharged from hospital yesterday.<sup>908</sup>

Deleinos then underlined that Turkish-speaking Asia Minor refugees continue speaking Turkish at their homes which prevented their children learning Greek.

These attacks, particularly the polemics have three interrelated aspects of these controversies raged around *Prosfygiki Foni* need to be analyzed.

First of all, the idiosyncrasy of Turkish-speaking refugees' identity that brings together two discordant elements (Turkish language and Orthodox Christianity) and constitutes an unstable unity from the perspective of nationalism did not gain recognition and caused eyebrows to raise in their "new homeland." It can be claimed that the Turcophone refugees fell out of the margins of the nationalist framework into which the Greek nation-state tried to squeeze the entire

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<sup>908</sup> “- Πως σε λένε;

- Καραμπέτ Ιπεκιάν.

- Αρμένιος;

- Έβρετ.

- Πόσων ετών;

!... Κόκκαλο.

- Πόσων χρόνων; ερωτά ο πρόεδρος νευρικά.

- Κρόνια. Τριάντα ντυό, εφέντημ.

- Βάλε το χέρι σου στο Ευαγγέλιο. Ορκίζομαι να είπω την αλήθειαν και μόνην την αλήθειαν χωρίς φόβον και χωρίς πάθος.

- Πάτος; Ντεν έκει τέτοια πράμμα καντή εφέντη. Σπιτάλια χτες έφονγα.”

Mitsos Deilinos' -most probably- fictive dialogue sounded very much like Dimitrios Vyzantios' (Dimitrios Konstantinou Haci-Aslanis) *H Βαβυλωνία* (Babylonia, 1836), in which the author satirically portrays the linguistic and vernacular diversity in Greece in the nineteenth century and calls this difference as "corruption" (διαφθορά) of the Greek language. Exactly like Vyzantios, Deilinos likens Greece (Athens) to Babylonia, while doing this, he mocks Turkish-speaking Greeks, their cultural characteristics, and most importantly their use of Turkish and Greek. For a dialogue remarkably similar to the one in Deilinos' story see the conversation between the Anatolitis, the chief of police and the military officer in Babylonia (Act 2, Scene 3). Dimitrios K. Vyzantios, *H Βαβυλωνία: Η η κατά τόπους διαφθορά της ελληνικής γλώσσης - Κωμωδία εις πέντε πράξεις*, 11th ed. (Athens: P. B. Moraitinis Publications, 1876), 30-3. Babylonia is arguably the most influential literary text in the cultural and literal representation of Turkish-speaking Anatolian Greeks. For the significance of this play see Evangelia Balta, "Turkish-Speaking Anatolian Christian Types (Karamanlidhes) in Modern Greek Comedies (19th Century)," in *Miscellaneous Studies on the Karamanlidika Literary Tradition* (İstanbul: İSİS, 2013), 71.



post-World War I social structure including the newcomers. It is reasonable to deduce that such a reaction, or rather a kind of semio-violence,<sup>909</sup> intensified their marginalization, insecurity and a lingering feeling of loss. On August 2, 1925, just before the second polemic that is mentioned above *Prosfygiki Foni* publishes an article on the cruel injustices to the refugees with the title “They were infidel in Turkey, have become refugee in Greece” [*Τουρκίαδα κιαβούρ Γιονανιστάνδα μουχαδζίρ ολδού*] where it is told:<sup>910</sup>

“... [w]e ask and plead, please do not make us say ‘better the devil you know than the devil you don't.’ These innocent people that were called “infidel” over the centuries live here with the stigmatized title, as refugees. The native Greeks see refugeehood as disgusting as the Turks regard infidels.”

Considering the fact that our reasoning and our cognitive patterns are overdetermined and, at the final stage, classified by the reciprocal influence of linguistic, conceptual and emotive parameters in a given space-time, we can say that the ontological narrative<sup>911</sup> of Turcophone Greeks, perforce, took a new form after their exodus and in this new kind of conscience, refugeehood (*muhacirlik*) gained a central place. “Refugeehood” together with Orthodoxy linked

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<sup>909</sup> Jennifer Hyndman defines “semio-violence” as a representational practice that purports to speak for others but at the same time effaces their voices. Jennifer Hyndman, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*, Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 2000, xxii.

<sup>910</sup> “...ριδζά βε ιστιρχάμ ιδέριζ κελέν κιδενί αρατδίρμασιν. Τουρκίγιαδα ασηρλάρδζα (κιαβούρ) γιασαγιάν που μασούμ μιλλέτ πουραδάδα μουχαδζίρ ισμίλε γιασάγιρ. Τουρκκλερέ καρσού κιαβουρλίκ νε καδάρ μενφούρ ισέ γερλή Γιονανληλαράδα μουχαδζηρλήκ ο δερέδζε μενφούρ κιορουνηγιόρ.” Such emphases can also be found in the Karamanlidika poems published by *Prosfygiki Foni*.

<sup>911</sup> Ontological narratives are “the stories that social actors use to make sense of - indeed, to act in - their lives. Ontological narratives are used to define who we are; this, in turn, can be a precondition for knowing what to do.” Margaret R. Somers, “The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach,” *Theory and Society* 23, no. 5 (1994): 618.

their past to their present in the domain of the "abject" and vice versa, in other words, reciprocally their origin and lost home to their subaltern situation in Greece and determined their very being throughout decades. Although its content and social meaning changed through time, still refugeehood, being members and inheritors of the uprooted Eastern Hellenism and the exclusion that their progenitors faced with in Greece constitute the principal elements that their identity is based on.<sup>912</sup> And one can rightfully claim that the last link in the Turcophone Greeks' chain of self-definition became "Anatolian refugees" [*Ανατοληδέν κελέν/Ανατοληλή μουχαδζηγλέρ* = *Anadolu'dan gelen/Anadolulu muhacirler*] and "Our Anatolian compatriots" [*Ανατοληλή βατανδασλαριμίζ* = *Anadolulu vatandaşlarımız*].<sup>913</sup>

Secondly, it can be deduced from the discourse of *Prosfygiki Foni* throughout these discussions that in order to work through channels the norms of the Greek nation-state were widely accepted by the organic intellectuals of the Turkish-speaking refugee community and by them the identity of these refugees were also presented as a sort of historical defect or a transitory situation. Under these conditions, while defending its very existence, *Prosfygiki Foni*, as a Turcophone newspaper, represented itself as an agent in charge of an assignment carried out for national purposes. The assignment was the integration of the Turkish-speaking refugees into the existing nationalist framework and the propagation of the imagined community to refugees unable to read or speak Greek.<sup>914</sup> Undertaking such a mission and legitimizing his publishing

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<sup>912</sup> Vasso Stelaku, 'Space, Place, and Identity: Memory and Religion in Two Cappadocian Greek Settlements,' in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. by R Hirschon (New York: Iteso, 2003), 189, 192.

<sup>913</sup> It should also be underlined that although one of the offensive terms that native Greeks used to call the refugees was *ανατολίτες* (orientals) and the word refugee (*πρόσφυγας*) had already become a term to retort the incoming population and to express the cultural and national superiority of natives.

<sup>914</sup> While discussing the role of intellectuals and populism in the development of nationalism in Europe, "The new middle-class intelligentsia of nationalism" says Tom Nairn, "had to invite the masses into history; and the invitation card had to be written in a language they understood." Polatoglou's self-

activity, Polatoglou put emphasis on the importance of enlightenment of the Anatolian refugees through such a flexible means, like a newspaper, and a reform program that the state would adopt. This discourse with a particular emphasis on the educational role of *Prosfygiki Foni* apparently resembles the discourse of the past Karamanli printed works or even to that of Athenocentric educational missions but differs from them regarding its thoroughly secularized content.<sup>915</sup> That is to say, the publications in Karamanlidika used to legitimize their existence with the Turcophone Orthodox population's inability to comprehend religious texts and rituals and on the "coexistence" of different denominational groups in the Ottoman Empire. Now that "coexistence," another argument that was instrumental in justifying the presence of this genre in the Ottoman Empire, was no more on the agenda, Polatoglou emphasized the need of the full comprehension of daily national and refugee-related developments by the refugees and presented this as a civilizing mission.

Moreover, it is kind of interesting to observe that the names of *Ανατολή* and *Ασία*,<sup>916</sup> two newspapers published in Constantinople in the Ottoman Empire popped up during the first polemic. This shows that these newspapers had a remarkable place in the collective memory of the Turcophone population and for their identity. The names of these newspapers were also cited in the oral testimonies deposited by the refugees and housed at the Center for Asia Minor Studies

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proclaimed mission seems to be Nairn's interpretation of the role of intellectuals in its literal sense. Tom Nairn, "The Modern Janus," *New Left Review*, no. 1/94 (November 1975): 12.

<sup>915</sup> For this discourse see Balta "“Gerçi Rum isek de...””, 57.

<sup>916</sup> *Ασία* may refer to either *Μικρά Ασία* published by Dimitrios Thomaidis (for the license of publication given to Dimitrios Thomaidis see BOA, ZB., 24/54 [31 Temmuz 1324]; ZB. 325/24 [1 Ağustos 1324]; ZB. 328/114 [24 Teşrinisani 1324]) or *Μικρά Ασία γιάνι Ανατολή* of Evangelinos Misailidis (for the archival documents referring Misailidis as the owner of Mikra Asia see BOA, MF.MKT. 31/126 [16 Şaban 1292], BOA, MF.MKT. 31/167 [22 Şaban 1292]).

in Athens.<sup>917</sup> Another important sign that demonstrates the importance of the name of *Ανατολή* for the collective memory and identity of the Turcophone Orthodox population not only in Asia Minor but also in Greece can be followed through the publication of the newspaper called *Νέα Ανατολή* [New Anatoli] in “Karamanlidika” first in Istanbul by Limnidis,<sup>918</sup> and then Violakis and Polatoglu’s attempts to revive it in Athens in 1924<sup>919</sup> and the publication of a new newspaper

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<sup>917</sup> In the accounts of many refugees Anatoli and other newspapers published in Karamanlidika had a special place. Ioannis Tsourouktis' speech delivered in the Syllogos Zappidon (November 28, 1966) and preserved in the manuscripts collection of the Center for Asia Minor (no. ΚΑΠΠ.7/344) gives a detailed account about so-called Karamanlides. In his depiction of the historical development of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox community in Anatolia he emphasizes the role of the newspapers, particularly that of Anatoli. Ioannis Tsourouktis, "Από τα χρονικά των ψευτοκαραμανλίδων (Ομιλία στον Σύλλογο Ζαππιδών)" (Athens, November 28, 1966), ΚΑΠΠ. 7/344, Manuscript Collection at the Center for Asia Minor Studies, 8-10.

Iordanis Fitsopoulos and Lykourgos Michailidis, two Turkish-speaking refugees from Azatli (Gkiaourkioi) resettled in Thessaloniki and Nea Zichni respectively, mention Anatoli and books in Karamanlidika while talking about their lives in Asia Minor. Similarly, Theodoros Archolopoulos, who was from Elmali and resettled in Volos, says "at home, there were religious books in Karamanlidika and from Constantinople, the newspaper in Karamanlidika, Anatoli, was regularly sent." Iordanis Fitsopoulos, interview by Eleni Gazi, July 2, 1971, B41 (Azatli - Gkiaourkioi), Oral Tradition Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies; Lykourgos Michailidis, interview by Ermolaos Andreadis, October 1971, B41 (Azatli - Gkiaourkioi), Oral Tradition Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies; Theodoros Archolopoulos, interview by Babis Nikiforidis, May 9, 1964, B65 (Elmali), Oral Tradition Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies. Efstathios Efthymiadis from Prokopi (Ürgüp) gives a list of newspapers published in Constantinople and sent to his hometown explicitly makes mention of Anatoli and Koukourikos and their publisher, Evangelinos Misailidis. Efstathios Efthymiadis, interview by Thaleia Papadopoulou, 1950, ΚΠ313 (Prokopi), Oral Tradition Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies, also cited by Evangelia Balta "Karamanlidika Press (Smyrna 1845 - Athens 1926)" in *Beyond the language frontier: studies on the Karamanlis and the Karamanlidika printing*. (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 116.

<sup>918</sup> Balta, “Catalogue”, 127.

<sup>919</sup> “Γιακινδά ‘Νέα Ανατολή’ γέβμι γαζέταση ιντισιάρ ιδεδζέκτιρ” (Yakında “Nea Anatoli” yevmi gazetesi intişar edecektir = The ‘Nea Anatoli’ daily newspaper will begin publication soon) *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, 1 June 1924 no.19.

“Σεπτέμβριοσίν 14 Ταριχινδέν ιτιπαρέν Νέα Ανατολή γαζετασί, Σιασί, ικτισαδή, βε μαλουμάτ-ι μουτενεβιεγί χαβή γεβμί τούρκτζε βε ρούμτζα Μικρασία βε Πόντος μουχατζηγλαρά μαχσούς ολαράκ ιντισιάρ ιδετζέκτιρ. Σαχίπ βε μουδιρλερί Γ.Κ. Βιολάκης - Χ. Σ. Πολάτογλου” [Septemvrios’in (Eylül) 14 tarihinden itibaren Nea Anatoli gazetesi siyasi, iktisadi ve malumat-ı müteneviyeyi havi yevmi Türkçe ve Rumca Mikrasia (Küçük Asya) ve Pontos muhacirlere mahsus olarak intişar edecektir - Sahip Müdürleri G.K. Violakis - X. S. Polatoglou = Starting from September 14, the newspaper Nea Anatoli, featuring political, economic and various other kinds of news is to be published in Turkish and in Greek specifically for the refugees from Asia Minor and Pontus. Owners and directors: G.K. Violakis - X. S. Polatoglou]. *Προσφυγική Φωνή*, 13 August 1924 no.30.

called *Ανατολή* by Limnidis again in 1926<sup>920</sup> and in 1929<sup>921</sup> in Thessaloniki. In addition to the relics of their home that they brought with them during the exodus, the Anatolian refugees also brought the idea of a Turcophone newspaper that inherited the tradition created in Constantinople and through which they could communicate in their mother-tongue. By these means, Turcophone refugees tried to revive and reclaim their past, reconstitute continuity in time through replicating/reproducing their past in an environment where their hopes of return were irrevocably shattered.

Lastly, these polemics can be considered as struggles over narratives regarding the origin and history of Turcophone Greeks and their presence in Greece. As Somers asserts, all struggles over narrations are struggles over identity.<sup>922</sup> Turcophone refugees, in addition to the remarks mentioned earlier, tried to locate their ontological narratives in the context of surrounding metanarratives and public narratives while reshaping them. The most prominent and shared of these surrounding narratives about Turcophone Greeks was related to the very foundation of Greek nationalism and the Greek nation-state. After the independence, as Kitromilides aptly

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See also *Νέα Ανατολή* βε προγραμμαμίζ [Nea Anatoli ve programımız = New Anatoli and our schedule] Prosfygiki Foni, 21 September 1924 no.35.

<sup>920</sup> According to the news and advertisements in the paper *Μακεδονία*, at the beginning of October, Limnidis arrived in Thessaloniki from Athens [*Μακεδονία*, 03/01/1923] started to publish "*Η Ανατολή*" on October 14, 1926 [*Μακεδονία*, 11, 12, 15, 16 October 1926].

“Την Τετάρτην 14 Οκτωβρίου εκδίδεται ενταύθα υπό την διεύθυνσιν του κ. Ιορδ. Ι. Λημνίδου Η ‘ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ’ δι’ Ελληνικόν χαρακτήρων εις Τουρκικήν γλώσσαν χάριν των Τουρκοφώνων Μικρασιατών.” [*Μακεδονία*, 11, 12 October 1926]

“‘ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ’ Την Κυριακήν, 17 τρέχοντος επαναλαμβάνει την έκδοσιν της η ‘ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ’ υπό την διεύθυνσιν του κ. Ιορδ. Ι. Λημνίδου Η ‘ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ’ υπό την διεύθυνσιν του κ. Ιορδ. Ι. Λημνίδου.” [*Μακεδονία*, 15, 16 October 1926]

<sup>921</sup> Tsourouktsis claims that Anatoli circulated until 1928. But it seems that Limnidis published the newspaper again in 1929. For the front page of the first issue of Anatoli published in Thessaloniki in 1929 see Evangelia Balta "Karamanli Press (Smyrna 1845 - Athens 1926)" in *İzzet Gündoğdu Kayaoğlu Hatıra Kitabı-Makaleler*, ed. by M. Sinan Genim et. al. (İstanbul: Taç Vakfı Yayınları, 2005), 33.

<sup>922</sup> Margaret R. Somers, “The Narrative Constitution of Identity,” 631.

expresses, the Greek Kingdom took on the role of a "national center" disseminating the essential foundational characteristics of Greek national identity towards its *irredenta*, standardizing these features and transforming them into nationalist exigencies while producing ethnic loyalties.<sup>923</sup> The nationalist model based on a diffusionist center created further dualities, such as inside/insiders and outside/outside, which in this context correspond to interior (*αυτόχθονες/μέσα Έλληνες, Ελλαδίτες*) and exterior Greeks (*ετερόχθονες/έξω Έλληνες, Έλληνες*).<sup>924</sup> The Greek nation-state adopted a *mission civilisatrice* towards exterior Greeks and launched a cultural crusade by establishing an educational network beyond its national borders.<sup>925</sup> Even the foundation of the University of Athens was integrally related to this mission and network. According to Konstantinos Dimaras, the major ideological impetus behind the foundation of the University of Athens in 1837 was the Greek cultural expansion into the depths of Anatolia.<sup>926</sup> Therefore, the expansion of the cultural and symbolic frontiers through the "Hellenization" of Anatolian Greeks, particularly the Turcophones, in harmony with the standards set by the "national center" was among the primary national goals of the Greek nation

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<sup>923</sup> Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "‘Imagined Communities’ and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans," *European History Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (April 1, 1989): 168.

<sup>924</sup> Sia Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία 19ος αι.-1919 - Οι Ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες: Από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμίων στο ελληνικό έθνος* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1998), 298. For different uses and interpretations of these terms in the formation of Greek nationalism see Yanna Delivoria, "The Notion of Nation: The Emergence of a National Ideal in the Narratives of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ Greeks in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism, and the Uses of the Past (1797–1896)*, ed. Roderick Beaton and David Ricks (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 109–21.

<sup>925</sup> Kitromilides, "‘Imagined Communities’ and," 170. According to Anagnostopoulou, education was the weapon of Hellenism. Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία*, 299.

<sup>926</sup> Konstantinos Th. Dimaras, "Ιδεολογήματα στην αφετηρία του ελληνικού Πανεπιστημίου," in *Πανεπιστήμιο: Ιδεολογία και Παιδεία - Ιστορική διάσταση και προοπτικές*, ed. Spyros I. Asdrachas et al., vol. 1 (Athens: IAEN, 1989), 46. See also Stefo Benlisoy, "Education in the Orthodox Community of Nevşehir during the Nineteenth Century" (Boğaziçi University, 2002), 36-42 Another major institution was the Hellenic Philological Society of Constantinople which was established in 1861. For a comprehensive analysis of this society see Haris Exertzoglou, *Εθνική ταυτότητα στην Κωνσταντινούπολη τον 19ο αιώνα - Ελληνικός φιλολογικός σύλλογος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως 1861-1912* (Athens: Nefeli, 1996).

state.<sup>927</sup> The motivation of the Greek nation-state in this civilizing mission can be best understood by clarifying the role of the language in how the nation was described.

One of the most significant yardsticks through which the Greek nation-state wanted to affirm the nation was language that had already been considered as “a means of transition to the status of a civilized man”<sup>928</sup> even before the establishment of the Greek nation-state. In 1853 in his *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους* (*History of the Greek Nation*), in which one of an essential narratives of the Greek national ideology, that is, the continuity of the Greek nation from the Classical to the modern age, was proposed in its most well-known formulation and the fundamentals of the Greek national identity were laid,<sup>929</sup> Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, the founder of Greek national historiography, defined the Greek nation as “all the people that speak the Greek language as their language.”<sup>930</sup> The Greek language was the most tangible token of the

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<sup>927</sup> According to Roumen Daskalov, “Greek nationalism (that of Megali Idea) was not just state-based irredentism and expansionism but was driven by a sense of cultural mission, namely the Hellenization of peoples south of the Balkan range and on both sides of the Aegean.” Roumen Daskalov, “Bulgarian-Greek Dis/Entanglements,” in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans - National Ideologies and Language Policies*, ed. Roumen Daskalov and Tchavdar Marinov, vol. 1, Balkan Studies Library 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 216.

<sup>928</sup> Antonis Liakos, “Hellenism and the Making of Modern Greece: Time, Language, Space,” in *Hellenisms: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. Katerina Zacharia (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008), 220.

<sup>929</sup> Alexis Politis, *Ρομαντικά χρόνια - Ιδεολογίες και νοοτροπίες στην Ελλάδα του 1830-1880* (Athens: EMNE, 2003), 39. For a comprehensive analysis of Paparrigopoulos' work and era see Konstantinos Th. Dimaras, *Κωνσταντίνος Παπαρρηγόπουλος - Η εποχή του, η ζωή του, το έργο του* (Athens: MIET, 1986) and idem., *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός* (Athens: Ermis, 1989), 391-410. The cultural continuity thesis was first proposed by Spyridon Zambelios. For Zambelios see Michael Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* (New York: Pella, 1986), 39-49. For the birth and development of the continuity see Giorgos Veloudis, *O Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer και η γένεση του ελληνικού ιστορισμού* (Athens: EMNE, 1982).

<sup>930</sup> Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους [Η πρώτη μορφή: 1853]*, ed. Konstantinos Th. Dimaras (Athens: Estia, 1999), 33. Dimaras mentions a similar anecdote regarding Paparrigopoulos' emphasis on the role of language: While giving a speech during a funeral, Paparrigopoulos rhetorically asked what Hellenism was. His answer was short and clear: The Greek language. Dimaras, *Κωνσταντίνος Παπαρρηγόπουλος*, 260.

continuity of the Greek nation since the ancient periods. Given this central role of the tongue in the construction of the Greek national identity, in the nation-building process the Greek language became the "matrix of the history of the nation" and "regulating language became a metonym of how to craft the nation."<sup>931</sup> As the "lingua centric" character of Greek nationalism was consolidated,<sup>932</sup> elucidates Exertzoglou, the inclusion of non-Greek speaking Greeks (αλλόγλωσσοι Έλληνες) into the national imagination became conditional on their adoption of Greek as the natural language.<sup>933</sup> This made language politically relevant, and power linguistically attached to specific characteristics. Before the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the territories claimed by the Megali Idea but populated with non-Greek speakers were the target of a cultural-educational crusade waged by the Greek nation-state in order to spread the Greek language.<sup>934</sup> After the Asia Minor Catastrophe, this turned out to be an internal mission towards "non-national" elements. In other words, to have a place in the national history of Greece, in the

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<sup>931</sup> Liakos, "Hellenism and the Making of Modern Greece," 223. Although the central role of the language was out of the question in the nation-building process, if the official national language should be the demotic Greek or a cultivated imitation of Ancient Greek was one of the most significant and controversial issues in the course of nation-building. This is also known as the language issue (γλωσσικό ζήτημα), which could be resolved only in the final quarter of the 20th century. For the Greek language, its role in the nation-building process and the language issue see Anna Frangoudaki, *Η γλώσσα και το έθνος 1880-1980* (Athens: Alexandria, 2001), Georgios Repousis and Andreas Leutzsch, "Greek Identity: Between Hellenism and Europeanism," in *European National Identities: Elements, Transitions, Conflicts*, ed. Roland Vogt, Wayne Cristaudo, and Andreas Leutzsch (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2014), 102-105.

<sup>932</sup> Simultaneously there were also more "Rennanian" interpretations of Greek nationalism regarding the importance of language for the national identity. For example, Konstantinos D. Karavidas, a well-known bureaucrat, and journalist wrote in his article titled "The Reality of Minorities" that language had no effect on national consciousness and it was overdetermined by the political and economic conditions. He also underlined that the non-Greek speaking minorities in Macedonia deserved more respect and the policies and tactics based on their exclusion had been proved to be wrong and ineffective. See *Δημοκρατία*, December 7, 1924. For Karavidas' other studies on the minority question in Macedonia and on the language issue written 1925 see Folder 7.11, AKK at the Gennadius Library.

<sup>933</sup> Haris Exertzoglou, *Εθνική ταυτότητα στην Κωνσταντινούπολη*, 159-161.

<sup>934</sup> Daskalov, "Bulgarian-Greek Dis/Entanglements," 206, 215.



national imagination, in the nationalist metanarrative of these elements first and foremost adopted Greek as their spoken language. Nationalist intellectuals assumed the role of the custodian as well as artisans of this particular narrative.<sup>935</sup>

On the other hand, Turcophone refugees, through *Prosfygiki Foni*, tried to articulate their own ontological narrative, to make sense of themselves, their tragedy, but more importantly to feel as national subjects. The ontological narrative of Turkish-speaking refugees emulated the nationalist metanarrative: During the 600-year-long Turkish yoke (“Ανατολδά γιασιαγιάν ρουμλάρ τουρκίν ζουλμί ταχτινδά 600 σινέ γιασαδιλάρ”),<sup>936</sup> which was also considered in national historiography as a passive and submissive period of slavery and, at best, an extended period of preparation for "national awakening" and liberation, these communities—somehow scattered throughout Anatolia—gave up their language in favor of protecting their faith as mentioned in one of the well-known folk songs of the Turkish-speaking Pontian Greeks: "Χριστιάν μιλλετί ντινιντέν ντονμέζ"<sup>937</sup> (*Hristiyan milleti dininden dönmez*) meaning "the Christian *millet* does not renege their religion." Being the main pillar of their identity, their ontological narrative is always adjusted so that faith remains central.<sup>938</sup>

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<sup>935</sup> Edward Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers, and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

<sup>936</sup> A similar narrative regarding Turkish-speaking Greeks published by the British newspaper *Oriental News* in 1920. The same article was translated by the New York-based newspaper *Εθνικός Κήρυξ* (Ethnikos Kiryx/National Herald) on April 15, 1920. *Εθνικός Κήρυξ*, April 15, 1920.

<sup>937</sup> Marantzidis, *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ*, 39.

<sup>938</sup> Although the term Karamanli was widely used with derogatory connotations and the community did not usually use this term to refer to themselves, sometimes they even tried to incorporate this term into their narrative by reinventing and adjusting the meaning of the term in a way that it referred to their devoutly religious character. In the autobiographical manuscript of Ioannis Anasthasiadis from Ferteke, for example, the term Karaman is told to have been derived from the Turkish expression "kara iman" that means "black faith" and interpreted by Anasthasiadis in a far-fetched way that "kara iman" means intensely pious. Ioannis Anasthasiadis, "Αναμνήσεις και περιγραφή από την Ελληνική κοινότητα της Φερτεκαίας της Καππαδοκίας του Νόμου Ικονίου της Μικράς Ασίας από την εποχή του έτους 1924 και η

Just like the nomothetic nationalist metanarrative, Turkish-speaking refugees also invented ancient roots for themselves to embody themselves into the organic category of nation, to facilitate their internalization into this category. Therefore, it can be told that they did not want to fundamentally challenge the nationalist narrative by their ontological narratives; but by working for a reconciliation, they tried to stretch out the nationalist metanarrative to fit theirs into the latter. By asking for night schools, they conveyed that they shared their enthusiasm for a politico-cultural campaign of the Greek nation-state which was to be launched to compel the parts of the Greek nation that were unable to meet national standards, particularly in terms of language. In the course of the polemics the responses in *Prosfygiki Foni* made it clear that Turcophone refugees had already selflessly sacrificed to protect their Hellenic roots and Eastern Hellenism, and were ready to prove their national allegiance and overcompensate for their idiosyncrasy without getting beaten in the political and cultural competition of “who is more Greek” or “whose Hellenicity is authentic.”<sup>939</sup> As articulating the ontological narratives of

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μετανάστευση του Ελλήνων προς την Πατρίδα" February 26, 1995, ΚΑΠΠ. 136/505, Manuscript Collection at the Center for Asia Minor Studies, 45.

<sup>939</sup> Numerous studies reveal that the idiosyncratic identity of Turkish-speaking refugees from whom demanded loyalty to a specific political perspective and metanarrative central to the progress-oriented modernist nation-building progress made Turcophone refugees adopt certain political and social attitudes. For example, the question of why Turkish-speaking Pontic refugees chose to take a collaborationist and reactionary stance and sided with the Nazi occupation forces is answered with Turkish-speaking Pontic refugees' need for "overcompensate(ing) to prove their Greekness by clinging on to religion/royalism as the definiens of their identity and 'authenticity', a belief that was incompatible with any susceptibility to Slav, atheist, communist propaganda." Eftihia Voutira, "Population Transfers and Resettlement Policies in Inter-War Europe," 123. See also Giorgos Margaritis, "Εμφύλιες διαμάχες στην Κατοχή (1941-1944): Αναλογίες και διαφορές," in *Η Ελλάδα 1936-1944, Δικτατορία Κατοχή, Αντίσταση, Πρακτικά του Διεθνούς Ιστορικού Συνεδρίου*, ed. Hagen Fleischer and Nikos Svoronos (Athens: MIATE, 1989), 508; John S. Koliopoulos, *Plundered Loyalties: World War II and Civil War in GreekWest Macedonia* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 72-3; Nikos Marantzidis, "Ethnic Identity, Memory and Political Behaviour: The Case of Turkish-Speaking Pontian Greeks," *South European Society & Politics* 5, no. 3 (2000): 69–71; idem., *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ*, 100-207, idem., "Οι τουρόφωνοι Πόντιοι πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα: Προβλήματα ενσωμάτωσης," in *Η ελληνοτουρκική ανταλλαγή πληθυσμών - Πτυχές μιας εθνικής σύγκρουσης*, ed. Konstantinos Tsitselikis (Athens: Kritiki, 2006), 225-37.

Turkish-speaking refugees, *Prosfygiki Foni* and the Turcophone refugees that replied the accusations leveled against their community through the pages of this newspaper "lodging" a claim to the cultural capital by using Homeric verses, responding in Greek and even in their responses in Turkish by managing to reach a certain level of sophistication. This was necessary to demonstrate that contrary to the facile evocations of Turkish-speaking refugees and their oversimplified and caricatural representations,<sup>940</sup> there were "organic" representatives of this community, and that they were not submissive subjects of the political and cultural campaign of homogenization waged by the state.

### 5.3 Greek-speaking Cretan refugees in Turkey: Dispossession and Exclusion

“Κρητικά ‘ναι και μένα τα σκότια μου!’”<sup>941</sup>

"Now I have no other option but accepting myself as an entirely new person. Who would believe me if I said "I am from Konya"? What if I would say "I am Ottoman"? Nonsense... That very notion lost in the mists of time. Could I say "I am Cretan"? That window too has already closed. Sorrow cuts no ice. I am taking refuge in the Creator. I attach to the nascent Turkish republic for dear life and seek happiness within the boundaries of the new system."<sup>942</sup>

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<sup>940</sup> Caricatural representation of "Karamanlides" was not an invention of the Greek nationalism of the post-Catastrophe period. As some examples mentioned above, these representations were inherited from the representation of this community in the Greek literature and the Constantinopolitan (Greek) press of the nineteenth century. Turkish-speaking Anatolian Greeks were usually stereotyped as uneducated and unsophisticated yet canny. Although in some occasions, the term Karamanli indicated low socioeconomic status, they were represented as the nouveau riche strata of Constantinople. For the satirical representation of Turkish-speaking Greeks in the nineteenth century, Greek literature see Evangelia Balta, "Turkish-Speaking Anatolian Christian Types (Karamanlidhes) in Modern Greek Comedies (19th Century)," in *Miscellaneous Studies on the Karamanlidika Literary Tradition* (İstanbul: ISIS, 2013), 71–90. For how the Turcophone Greek community of Constantinople was represented by the Greek press of the city see Foti Benlisoy and Stefo Benlisoy, "Karamanlılar," 'Anadolu Ahalisi' ve 'aşağı Tabakalar': Türkdilli Anadolu Ortodokslarında Kimlik Algısı," *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 11 (Autumn 2010): 7–22.

<sup>941</sup> A proverb of Cretan Muslims: "Even my guts are Cretan."

<sup>942</sup> Ertuğrul Erol Ergir, *Giritli Mustafa* (İzmir: n.d., 2000), 80. This book is written by Ergir, who was a second-generation Cretan refugee born in Crete. In his prologue, the author underlines the fact that this

### 5.3-1 An example of dispossession: *Rethymniotes*

The last step of Cretan Muslims' (Τουρκοκρητικοί, *Tourkokritikoi*, lit. Turkish Cretans) process of dispossession is the signature of the exchange convention between Greece and Turkey on January 30, 1923. Similar to Turkish-speaking Orthodox population in Anatolia, Cretan Muslims, who spoke a dialect of the Greek language called *Kritika* (Κρητικά),<sup>943</sup> were subject to the exchange and displaced due to the drive of the Turkish and Greek nation-states for ethnic homogenization.

The separation of Crete from the Ottoman Empire was the result of ethnic cleavages and long and bloody struggles uprisings, which also changed the demography of the island fundamentally. The Muslim population decreased substantially in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century. In 1897 approximately 90,000 Muslims were living on the island, which constituted 25 percent of the total population. This number rapidly decreased to 28,000 corresponding to 8.3 percent in 1911, and in 1920 to 23,000 and 6.5 percent.<sup>944</sup> Although a

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book is based on the memoir and notes of another Cretan refugee called Mustafa that he found some years ago. *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>943</sup> Due to the geographical distance of Crete to mainland Greece and long periods in its history under the Venetian and Ottoman rules the inhabitants of the island developed a distinct linguistic character. For the Cretan dialect see Nikolaos G. Kontosopoulos, *Διάλεκτοι και ιδιώματα της νέας ελληνικής* (Athens: Grigori, 2001), 28-41.

<sup>944</sup> For the demographic transformation of the island see Ayşe Nükhet Adıyeke, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Girit Bunalımı (1896-1908)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000); Nikos Andriotis, “Τα Τελευταία Χρόνια Παραμονής Των Μουσουλμάνων Στην Κρήτη Και η Αναχώρησή Τους Για Την Τουρκία,” in *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών Πτωχές Μιας Εθνικής Σύγκρουσης*, ed. Konstantinos Tsitselikis (Athens: Kritiki, 2006), 207–24; Giannis Glavinias, “Οι Μουσουλμανικοί Πληθυσμοί Στην Ελλάδα (1912-1923): Αντιλήψεις Και Πρακτικές Της Ελληνικής Διοίκησης, Σχέσεις Με Χριστιανούς Γηγενείς Και Πρόσφυγες” (Ph.D., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2008); Manos Perakis, *Το Τέλος Της*

severe ethnic violence dominated the island that eventually led to a major outflux of refugees, even in the 1920s no one expected a radical "solution" such as a population exchange that would result in the forced displacement and dispossession of the entire Muslim population of the island to end the ethnic conflict. As a matter of fact, the remaining Muslim community was unwilling to leave the island. Even the attempts to terrorize the Muslim to compel them to leave Crete as Greek refugees started to flow into the island after the Asia Minor Catastrophe did not attain their goal. For example, the murder of Pervanaki Ali Mehmet in Rethymno in November 1922 did not intimidate the Muslim community of the city.<sup>945</sup> The Muslim community of the island was looking for ways to compromise in order to continue their lives in the island. Without presuming that they too would experience refugeehood shortly the prominent figures of the Cretan Muslim community under the leadership of the mufti of Rethymno organized successful fundraising activities for incoming Christian refugees from Anatolia.<sup>946</sup> After the signature of the population exchange convention, Muslim Cretans attempted to develop strategies not to be subject to the population exchange. For example, one of the leading figures of the Muslim community of Chania, Sürurzade Hasan Bey wrote letters to Ippokratis Ampatzis, who was a wealthy merchant too, asking for a reference letter to mediate between the Sürurzades and the Greek state for the

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*Οθωμανικής Κρήτης - Οι Όροι Κατάρρευσης Του Καθεστώτος Της Χαλέπας (1878-89)* (Athens: Vivliorama, 2008).

<sup>945</sup> Panagiotis Mich. Paraskevas, *Οι πρόσφυγες του ανατολικού Ρεθύμνου - Προσφυγική Ομάς Μαρουλά: Μια καταγραφή του 1923* (Rethymno: Public Central Library of Rethymnon, 2008), 17.

<sup>946</sup> In his award-winning autobiographical novel, *Οι Βουκέφαλοι* Andreas Nenedakis writes about this fundraising activity. According to Nenedakis, the native Christians of the city were unwilling to help refugees and participate in these fundraising activities. Moreover, they interpreted the Muslims' willingness as a strategy of compromise. A. N. Nenedakis, *Büyükbaşlar-1922* (İstanbul: Epsilon, 2005), 217-18.

exclusion of his uncle, Nesimi Bey, from the exchange.<sup>947</sup> Fatime, who was a bath attendant and prostitute living in Rethymno (Crete), is another example. Once the population exchange was decided, Fatime claimed to be a French woman, who was called Adelina Gitar and known also as Hortense (Ορτάνς) (See Figure 5-1). According to her story, Madame Hortense was born in Provence, France. In 1897, she was kidnapped from her village and sold in the port of Marseille and ended up in Chania, Crete. For years she pretended to be Muslim, and she thought it was a good time to reveal the truth while the transportation of refugees was taking place to prove that she was not eligible for the exchange.<sup>948</sup> In addition to Madame Hortense, Prevelakis mentions Hazım Bey and his three daughters somehow managed to escape the population exchange and remained in Rethymno.<sup>949</sup> Although they behaved just like Greeks, Greek officials wanted to expel Hazım and his family. They did stay in Crete since the Bishop intervened and arranged for him to take his family to the monastery at Varadi. Then they converted to Christianity. Another example was Mehmet, an orphan kid that nobody acted as his guardian while the Muslims were leaving. He too was christened and renamed Rethymnios.<sup>950</sup> Herzfeld also mentions an itinerant

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<sup>947</sup> “Letter from Hasan Sürurzade (Chania) to Ippokratis Ampatzis (Piraeus),” December 27, 1924, φ. 1.1, ΕΛΙΑ - Αρχείο Ιπποκράτη Αμπατζή; “Letter from Hasan Sürurzade (Chania) to Ippokratis Ampatzis (Piraeus),” December 30, 1924, φ. 1.1, ΕΛΙΑ - Αρχείο Ιπποκράτη Αμπατζή.

<sup>948</sup> Pandelis Prevelakis, *Το χρονικό μιας πολιτείας* (Athens: Estia, 2009), 90-91. Nikos G. Tzortzis, *Τα οδωνυμικά της Ιεράπετρας*, (Ierapetra: OTA, 2002), 100-101. See also Michael Herzfeld, *A Place in History: Social and Monumental Time in a Cretan Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 62. For more information about Madam Hortense see also Giorgios Manousakis, *Η μαντάμ Ορτάνς και τα τέσσερα λογοτεχνικά πορträίτα της* (Chania: Ereisma, 1996).

<sup>949</sup> Prevelakis, *Το χρονικό μιας πολιτείας*, 86-87.

<sup>950</sup> Ibid., 87-88. For the opposition of Turks and Greeks to the population, exchange see Winthrop Lane, "Why Greeks and Turks Oppose Being 'Exchanged,'" *Current History* 18, no. 1 (April 1923): 86–90. Anatolian and Thracian Greeks' reactions were not different. Lane gives examples of the reactions of both Greeks and Turks to the population exchange agreement signed in Lausanne. Lane cites a Greek refugee's response: "An American relief worker asked a group of Greek refugees whether they desired to remain in Greece, and the reply of one was typical: 'We would swim back to Anatolia tomorrow if Turks would permit us.'" New York Times reports anti-exchange demonstrations in Athens. See *New York Times*, January 22, 1923. The archival documents also confirm that in Greece not only refugees from Anatolia

vendor known as Tourkoyorgis (“Turkish George”), who changed his faith in order to be excluded from the population exchange. I was told a similar proselytization story that took place in Rethymno during my interview with the Kritikaki family in Rethymno.<sup>951</sup> Similar to Tourkoyorgis, Tuncay Sepetcioğlu also narrates the story of “Tourkolefteris,” who had not leave Crete together with his family that had migrated to Anatolia and later stayed there after the population exchange and was found by his nephews in the 1980s.<sup>952</sup>

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and Thrace but also Muslims in Greece protested the idea and decision of the population exchange. For these protests see AYE, 1923/17.5.1. For the protests of Muslims in Veria against the population, exchange see AYE, 1923/18.2.1.

<sup>951</sup> Kritikaki family, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, May 21, 2011, Rethymno.

<sup>952</sup> Tuncay Sepetcioğlu, “Cumhuriyetin İlk Yıllarında Girit’ten Söke’ye Mübadele Öyküleri” (M.A., Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi, 2007), 115-18.



**Figure 5–1:** Madame Hortense

**Source:** Theodoros Louloudakis, *Cretan Photography* (Athens: n.d., 1985), 18.

In addition to those who managed to remain in Crete, Prevelakis in his famous work *To Χρονικό μιας Πολιτείας* (The Tale of a Town), describes vividly and at length, the deep sorrow the Muslims felt during their departure from Rethymno, Crete:<sup>953</sup>

During the destruction of Smyrna, the hearts of the Turks filled with joy, but they did not express it openly. When the refugees suddenly appeared, in order to shelter these down-and-outers we commandeered most of the mosques. The Turks took it lying down and did not even complain about it. Some time went by, we all started to think that we had turned

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<sup>953</sup> Ibid., 81-83. For the translation of this work Pandelis Prevelakis, *The Tale of a Town*, trans. Kenneth Johnstone (London: Doric Publications, 1976).



that corner, when the poisonous news came that Venizelos and Kemalis (sic) had agreed to exchange the Turkish crowd of Crete for the refugees pouring from Asia Minor so that the two races might both live at peace once and for all. Everyone became tongue-tied once they heard this, Muslims and Christians alike, and each asked the other whether they had heard the news and whether it was true. (...) The Turks were given a few months' delay in which to make their preparations and were ordered to board on a given day the steamers that were to take them. In the whole of Crete, one may reckon, there were living more than fifty thousand Turks and of these you would hardly have found two hundred who welcomed expatriation. The rest were heartbroken at being torn from the land of their birth, from their homes and possessions, and each poor soul was in a whirl of indecision as to what he should take with him. You found some Turks whose houses had only just been built and who were told to leave with the keys in the doors and hand the place over, just as the last plasterer was quitting. Others in that year of ill omen were expecting the first crop from their olive-trees, which need five or more years' tending before they fruit. There were shopkeepers who had just stocked up at the shop for the year and now had to sell out whatever price they could get. And so on and so on. Some had planted vineyards and now others would drink the wine.

Similarly, Michael Nicholas Elliadi too captures how reluctant the Muslims of Chania were while they were departing from the island with the population exchange.<sup>954</sup>

If the arrival of these thousands of unfortunate refugees, who had, at a moment's notice, to abandon their homes and property in Asia Minor, was a pitiful spectacle, that of the departure of the Mussulman population from Crete was not less so that these had time, and were permitted to sell or carry with them their movable property. These people, through no fault of their own, were obliged to leave the land of their birth to settle in a country which, though ethnically their own, was really quite strange to them. (...) I was deeply impressed on the eve of their departure at seeing many Mussulman families visiting the extensive cemeteries on the outskirts of the town, taking leave, and kneeling down, offering prayers to their dead. I noted also their farewell looks at their monasteries (tekés), founded by their forefathers as an asylum for the hungry, and the freshwater fountains scattered here and there, with their inscriptions in Turkish, cut in the stone, inviting the thirsty to drink. (...) With the departure of the Mussulman population, the pulling down of minarets, and the disappearance of the extensive cemeteries, hardly any trace remains to indicate that this Island was once under Turkish rule.

As understood from these observations, the unwillingness of the Muslim community to leave their homeland was not only due to an emotional attachment but had a material base too.

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<sup>954</sup> Michael Nicholas Elliadi, *Crete: Past and Present* (London: Heath, Cranton Limited, 1933), 38-9.

The problems and uncertainties accompanying the exchange process provoked anxiety among them such as the vagueness about who was to be subject to the exchange, and the scope of political and civil rights of exchangees. In addition to these risks, the issue of property rights was cloudy, in other words, which properties could be liquidated or transferred to Turkey by exchangees. The sources of this issue can be summarized in three points:

1. The convention concerning the Greco-Turkish population exchange was retrospective. To be more specific, those who left Crete for Anatolia after October 18, 1912, was to be counted as "exchangeable." Those who were transferred after the signature of the convention had the chance to certificate their property holdings more correctly, yet those who had left the island in panic did not have the proper documentation for the properties they had abandoned.
2. The provisions of the convention regarding the formulation of movable and immovable properties were unclear, and it strengthened the hands of the states vis-à-vis refugees before and after the exchange.<sup>955</sup>
3. Even for those, who managed to leave their homelands with proper documentation, the problems did not end. Muslim refugees had to fill out their titles (*tasarruf senedi*) on their own at the main arrival points. Although these documents were checked by civil servants, it was almost impossible to authenticate these documents or to verify the information provided by refugees. Not only did this practice cause lengthy processes, owing to this procedure the resettlement process became wide open to initiative and abuses of local

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<sup>955</sup> For the ownership issue according to the provisions of the exchange convention see Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, 443-466.

officials. For example, İkbal (Kulinakizade) Gülalp, whose family was from Heraklio depicts the experience of her family: "a resettlement officer had a free hand to ruin someone's life, and with their unfair and relentless behaviors and decisions they could cause disasters. While leaving their lands that they lived as their homelands and belonged to an ancient civilization, my family suffered a lot, hurt so bad in their heart; yet they did not know about the bitter life in the future waiting for reopening old wounds and making them bleed. The first disaster started with the answer of the resettlement officer to my father. After settling down in a house, they were shown, my dad went to the resettlement office to learn what they were to be given in exchange for their abandoned properties that the Greeks had undervalued by estimating their value as 200,000 golds. He [the resettlement officer] replied 'Hulki Bey, we would give you entire Mersin. It is impossible. That's why I have given you a bagel bakery and a garden of only eight decars.' My father said 'I'm not a baker nor have I ever run a bakery. Together with my wife, we left, God knows, how many farms, oil groves, vineyards, and gardens. We are a family of eight. I have six children. You are throwing us in the street.'"<sup>956</sup> This situation was coupled with the never-ending process of valuation made by the states and the Mixed Commission, which eventually got nowhere and created not only local but also diplomatic problems.

4. In addition to this, many of the abandoned properties were under the occupation of the local population or more importantly local bureaucrats. Although at first overlooking

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<sup>956</sup> İkbal Gülalp, *Girit Mübadelesi Olmasaydı* (İstanbul: Önsöz Basım, 2005), 26. For the similar experience of Hakkı Bilgehan's family after they came to Smyrna from Chania see Hakkı Bilgehan, *Öyküm* (İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi Basımevi, 2001), 10-15. İkbal Gülalp is the mother of the renown emeritus professor of political science Haldun Gülalp.

occupations was preferred by the state as a strategy of avoiding damage due to plundering, this made refugee resettlement impractical.

5. There were also serious problems regarding the compensation process. Refugees were eligible for a compensation payment worth 17.5 percent of the value of their abandoned immovable properties. Property distribution to compensate refugees was handled by commissions formed by local administrators. First, these commissions determined the borders of lands to be distributed and classified them in terms of their fertility, and after the authentication of documents provided by refugees, lands were distributed based on the value of refugees' abandoned properties and the needs of refugee families. Yet this liability of the Turkish state was almost never adequately met. Refugees were undercompensated or not compensated at all. For example, the son of Haydar Hacibekiraki (or Hacibekirzade later Balın) from Rethymno, who was a deputy of the Cretan community at the local parliament, Celal Hacibekiraki mentions that there were gross corruption cases at registration and distribution of properties.<sup>957</sup> To the Hacibekirakis, one of the wealthiest families of Rethymno,<sup>958</sup> only a small vineyard of 20 stremmata, a small shop at the Otur (sic) Bazaar and a house at the Karantina Beach were given. They were also legally entitled to receive a compensation of 600 gold liras, which the Hacibekirakis never received.<sup>959</sup> As in the case of the Hacibekirakis, most of the time the conventions and other legal regulations protecting the property rights of refugees

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<sup>957</sup> For Haydar Bekiraki's testimony Maria Tsirimonaki, *Αυτοί που έφυγαν, αυτοί που ήρθαν - Από την αυτονομία ως την ανταλλαγή* (Rethymno: Mitos, 2002), 62-66.

<sup>958</sup> Glavinias, "Οι μουσουλμανικοί πληθυσμοί στην Ελλάδα," 521.

<sup>959</sup> Tsirimonaki, *Αυτοί που έφυγαν*, 66.

remained a dead letter. As a refugee from Kozani aptly summarized their properties turned into papers ("Orada mallarımızı aldılar, bol bol kağıt verdiler.").<sup>960</sup>

6. One final reason of the dispossession of refugees is the bulky bureaucratic machine of the Turkish state. The claims for property compensations generally led to bureaucratic deadlocks. I have already mentioned Naciye Öney, who was the grandchild of the conqueror of Crete, Hüseyin Pasha, in the second chapter. In 1937, fourteen years after the exchange, she was still seeking fair treatment regarding the compensation for the properties they had been forced to abandon in Greece. In her plea, which directly addressed Mustafa Kemal Atatürk –another indication of how unbreakable the logjam that her family had come across was--, she underlined her and her family's desperateness.<sup>961</sup>

One of the most important historical sources that can help us understand the dispossession process of refugees, as well as some other aspects of the displacement, was the property reports of the Refugee Settlement Commission (RSC) in the Prefecture of Rethymno (Δελτία της Επιτροπής Αποκατάστασης Προσφύγων του νομού Ρεθύμνου).<sup>962</sup>

In this context, the bulletins prepared between 1925 and 1932 by the RSC for the 1614 property estates that belonged to the Muslim community of the prefecture. These documents contain detailed information, for example, the names and characteristics of new owners (native,

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<sup>960</sup> "There they took our properties and gave an abundance of papers in return." Şevket Çoğumlu, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, August 7, 2010.

<sup>961</sup> BCA, 030.01.0.0/40..236.1

<sup>962</sup> These records were digitized by the Institute for Mediterranean Studies (IMS) in Rethymno. The records are in Greek and accessible at the online database available at the website of the IMS [http://digitalcrete.ims.forth.gr/neo\\_exchange\\_search.php?l=2](http://digitalcrete.ims.forth.gr/neo_exchange_search.php?l=2).

refugee, Armenian, etc.), information on how these properties passed into other hands (selling, eviction, etc.), their exact location and –if available—address, neighboring properties as well as the valuation of properties by the RSC. In addition to private properties, it is possible to trace the common properties of the Muslim community of the prefecture (mosques, dervish lodges, foundations, etc.).

Some general statistics that are derived from the RSC documents can be summarized as the following:

Among more than 1600 properties that were abandoned by the Muslims of Rethymno and registered by the RSC, only 301 properties were temporarily or permanently utilized in the resettlement of refugees or allocated for refugees. This corresponds to only 18% of the total number of the abandoned properties that were registered by the RSC. Considering the fact that the number of refugee families that arrived in Rethymno was 1175, which was approximately equivalent to 4500, it is easy to grasp how inadequate this figure was.<sup>963</sup> The records of the RSC also show that more than 40% of the abandoned properties (714) were again temporarily or permanently taken by the natives of the city. 27 Armenian families were among the refugees that were resettled in abandoned Muslim properties. Additionally, 30 communal properties were confiscated by the state. For example, one of them was the Bektashi lodge “Hasan Baba” in Rethymno, which is today used as a school of music.<sup>964</sup> The information gathered from the

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<sup>963</sup> Paraskevas Syrianoglou, “Εγκατάσταση Μικρασιατών προσφύγων στο Ρέθυμνο,” in *Βενιζελισμός και πρόσφυγες στην Κρήτη*, ed. Valia Varouchaki (Heraklio and Chania: National Research Foundation “Eleftherios K. Venizelos” and Municipality of Heraklio, 2008), 91.

<sup>964</sup> For this particular lodge see F. Köprülü, “Usta-Zade Yunus Bey’in Meçhul Kalmış Bir Makalesi Bektaşiliğin Girit’de İntişarı,” *Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* no. 8–9 (1980), 61-3, 69, 82-84; Frederick William Hasluck, *Christianity, and Islam under the Sultans*, vol. 2, two vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Pr., 1929), 534-35. Selâmi Şimşek, *Dünden Bugüne Girit’te Türk Tasavvuf Kültürü* (İstanbul: Doğu Kitabevi, 2014), 67-74. After the death of Hasan Baba, the founder of the lodge, in 1904, Birecikli Hüseyin Baba was assigned to the lodge by the Pîr-evi (House of the Masters, sacred headquarters of the Bektashi order) and the population exchange took place at Birecikli Hüseyin Baba's period. After the

documentation of the RSC about the Bektashi lodge in Rethymno can exemplify how detailed these records are: The premises were nationalized on January 1, 1925, based on the decision of the local council dated August 3, 1924. The premises were taken over as an orphanage.

According to the calculations of the RSC, the living area of the main building was 843 square meters. In 1925, the value of the premises was estimated as 350,000 drachmas, and their value was re-estimated to be 525,000 drachmas. The main building is also described in details: On the ground floor, there were a praying room, six rooms, nine large rooms used as storage or cellar, kitchen and bakery. On the first floor, there were ten rooms, corridors, and a terrace. The main building had a forecourt of 795 square meters and was surrounded by a yard of 813 square meters. In the yard, there were a slaughter house, an arbor of 37 square meters and a shed of 10 square meters as well as thirty lemon, six orange, three tangerine, four pomegranate, eleven plum, three almond, four citrus, one banana, one walnut and two quince trees and two grapevines. The premises were on the Kountouriotou street, which was on the north side of the building. The premises were surrounded by the farms that belonged to the lodge.

As far as personal private properties are concerned, a name that cannot escape attention is Selianaki Ali Vafi, who was one of the wealthiest merchants of Rethymno, if not the entire

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signature of the exchange convention, Birecikli Hüseyin Baba left the island, and the lodge faced closure. Köprülü dramatically describes the closure of the lodge: "Mübadele kıyâmeti bu zâtn [Birecikli Hüseyin Baba] mürşidliğinde kopmuş olmakla, o dahi emânetlerini alıp oradan savuştu ve Hacı Hasan Baba'nın o nâmdar dergâhı, cennet-misâl letâfeti ve azameti ile orada terk edildi." Similarly, Mevlevi lodge was also closed with the population exchange. See İsmail Kara, *Hanya/Girit Mevlevîhânesi: Şeyh Ailesi, Müştemilâtı, Vakfiyesi, Mübadelesi* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2006), 39-43, 176-89. The premises of the lodge in Rethymno were transformed into a boys' orphanage with a royal edict on October 17, 1923. See *Eφημερίδα της Κυβερνήσεως του Βασιλείου της Ελλάδος*, October 31, 1923. After the abolition of the monarchy, the premises were re-nationalized and continued to be used as an orphanage until the 1980s, and then the same building became the Musical High School.

island. Ali Vafi's wealth in Greece exceeded 70 million drachmas.<sup>965</sup> The immovable properties in Rethymno that belonged to Selianaki Ali Vafi are listed in the table below:

**Table 5–2:** Real estate that belonged to Selianaki Ali Vafi according to the property bulletins of the Refugee Settlement Commission

Property	Location	Share	Value (Drachmas)
Garden	Mastabas		400,000
Garden	Mastabas		359,000
House with garden	Mastabas		40,000
Vineyard	Maroulas		26,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		18,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		20,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		30,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		5,000
Farm	Maroulas		2,000
Land	Maroulas		60,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		4,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		35,000
Farm	Maroulas		2,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		15,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		20,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		7,000
Land	Maroulas		6,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		20,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		6,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		20,000
Olive grove	Maroulas		50,000
Land (Reconstruction)	Tabakaria	1/2	30,000
Shop	Arkadiou		180,000
House	Souliou		220,000
Shop	Palaiologou		60,000

<sup>965</sup> For more information about Selianaki Ali Vafi see Tsirimonaki, *Αυτοί που έφυγαν, αυτοί που ήρθαν*, 85; Μακεδονία, August 21, 1922; Giannis E. Tsouderos, *Αφιέρωμα στην ιστορία της Κρήτης κ'ειδικότερα του Ρεθύμνου 1536 ως 1924* (Rethymno: n.d., 1995), 117.



**Table 5–2:** Real estate that belonged to Selianaki Ali Vafi according to the property bulletins of the Refugee Settlement Commission (**Continued**)

Property	Location	Share	Value (Drachmas)
Shop	Palaiologou		60,000
House	Limenos		200,000
Land (Reconstruction)	Ydras	13/16	150,000
House	Spetson		250,000
Storehouse	Spetson		50,000
Storehouse	Spetson		40,000
Storehouse	Spetson		40,000
Storehouse	Dagli		60,000
House	Dagli		30,000
House	Dagli		30,000
Storehouse	Dagli & Vosporou		40,000
House	Dagli & Vosporou		70,000
Shop	Dagli		25,000
Shop	Dagli		50,000
Shop	Dagli		90,000
Storehouse	Aleksandrou		40,000
Storehouse	Aleksandrou		40,000
House	Aleksandrou		50,000
Storehouse	Aleksandrou		50,000
Shop	Aleksandrou		60,000
House	Aleksandrou		250,000
Shop	Aleksandrou		50,000
Olive oil mill	Dagli	2/5	150,000
Farm	Maroulas		1,400
Farm	Maroulas		1,000
Farm	Maroulas		600
Olive grove	Maroulas		200
Olive grove	Maroulas		1,300
Shop	Arkadiou	1/2	130,000
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,644,500</b>

**Source:** Δελτία της Επιτροπής Αποκατάστασης Προσφύγων του νομού Ρεθύμνου

According to the RSC documents, the value of the immovable properties of the Muslim community only in Rethymno amounted to 48.739.725 drachmas. In his *Τουρκοκρήτες*, Konstantinos Fournakis estimates the value of the Muslim properties in the city center of Rethymno as 75,218,280 drachmas and the value of trees as 56,873,434 drachmas, which is approximately 3.4 million Turkish liras. He also underlines the fact that there were only 3500 Muslims in Rethymno to be exchanged in 1923.<sup>966</sup> How massive this amount was can be best understood by a simple comparison with the amount spent by the Turkish state for the resettlement of refugees. Between 1923 and 1929 the Turkish state spent 17 million Turkish liras, which included the properties and trees distributed to refugees. Moreover, the value of the property holdings of the Muslim community of a relatively small city like Rethymno corresponded to the 20 percent of this entire expenditure of the state for resettlement. This is a clear sign that refugees were not adequately provided with compensation for their abandoned properties. The findings of this research and refugee testimonies exhibit the dimensions of the dispossession that refugees of the population exchange were subject to. Unfortunately, the old and newly-imposed restrictions upon the archives in Turkey make it impossible to further this research on the property issue and to compare the value of the abandoned properties and that of the distributed ones analytically. The archives of land registers are still closed in Turkey in order to avoid potential property claims, particularly by Armenians.<sup>967</sup> Likewise, previously accessible documents that could potentially shed light on the transformation of property relations in

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<sup>966</sup> Konstantinos G. Fournarakis, *Τουρκοκρήτες* (Chania: I. Giannakoudaki, 1923), 45.

<sup>967</sup> The Republic of Turkey considers these documents as a matter of national security. In 2006, the Council of National Security expressed its opinion on the digitization project of the archives of the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadaster and underlined the importance of keeping these archives untapped and at the General Directorate by saying "these materials can be abused for the purpose of groundless claims of genocide and properties of Ottoman waqfs. "Tapu Arşivlerini 'Sınırlı' Kullanın," *Hürriyet*, September 19, 2006, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/tapu-arsivlerini-sinirli-kullanin-5109117>.

Anatolia such as *tevzi defterleri* (volumes of granted property) and *tefviz karar defterleri* (registers of allotment decisions), which had been formerly housed at the provincial bureaus of village affairs, were centralized in the Prime Ministry Republican Archives in the early 2000s, and then a few years ago public access were severely restricted for these documents. Today only family members having the same surname have right to information through petitioning, without having access to the actual documents. Yet there are some scholars, who managed to utilize these sources in the 1990s and early 2000s. For example, Tülay Alim Baran, in her doctoral dissertation, extensively uses the documents that were available at the the İzmir Provincial Bureau of Village Affairs and gives a detailed account of the resettlement of refugees and reconstruction of İzmir.<sup>968</sup> Nedim İpek notably presented the *defters* available at the Samsun Provincial Bureau of Village Affairs as sources for the historiography of the population exchange.<sup>969</sup> Similarly, in the early 2000s, Emine Aslı Çomu used the same genre of sources to investigate the resettlement process in Adana.<sup>970</sup> Finally, Fahriye Emgili's dissertation on the resettlement of refugees in Mersin after the population exchange partly relies on these sources.<sup>971</sup> No matter how apologetic these studies were, they clearly show that there were grave injustices, malpractices, and chaos in the allotment process.

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<sup>968</sup> Tülay Alim-Baran, "İzmir'in imar ve iskanı (1923-1958)" (Ph.D., Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 1994); For the published version of this study see Tülay Alim-Baran, *Bir kentin yeniden yapılanması: İzmir, 1923-1938* (İzmir: Arma, 2003).

<sup>969</sup> Nedim İpek, "Köy Hizmetleri İl Müdürlüğü Arşivlerinden Mübadil Göçmenlerle İlgili Defterler," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 144 (December 1995): 15–18.

<sup>970</sup> Emine Aslı Çomu, "The Impact of the Exchange of Populations on the Social and Economic Life of the City of Adana" (M.A., Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2005); idem., *The Exchange of Populations and Adana 1830-1927* (İstanbul: Libra Kitap, 2011).

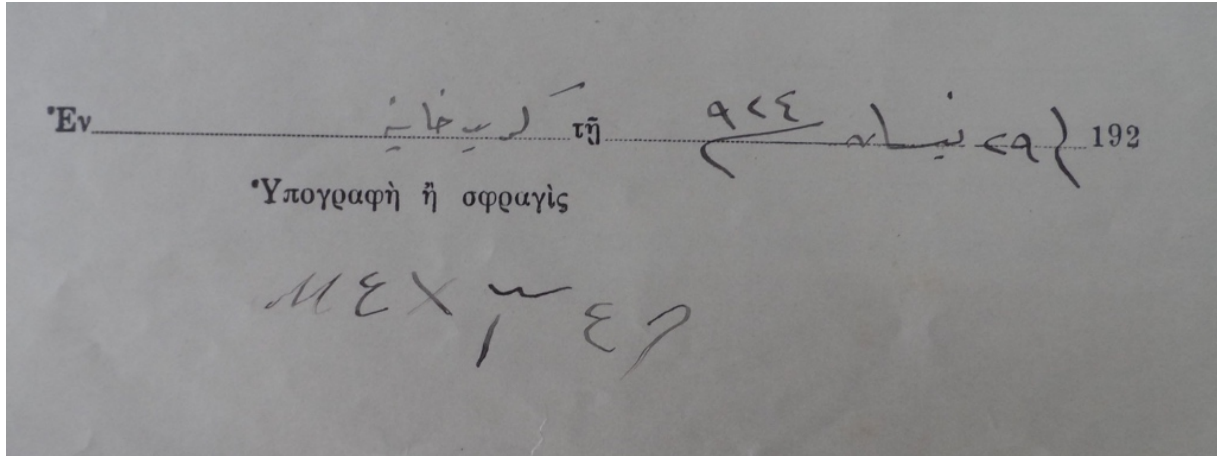
<sup>971</sup> Fahriye Emgili, "Mersin Mübadilleri" (M.A., Mersin Üniversitesi, 2004). For the published version of the same study see Fahriye Emgili, *Yunanistan'dan Mersin'e: Köklerinden Koparılmış Hayatlar* (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2011).

On the one hand, the dispossession of Cretan refugees was not different from what other refugees went through; on the other hand, Cretan refugees had a clear disadvantage considering the majority of refugees, and the native population. Many Cretan refugees, who were unable to speak Turkish, believed that they were unfairly treated due to their Turkish language skills. Kaptanoğlu expounds that in Bursa, Cretans, as well as other non-Turkish speaking refugees (from Ioannina and Preveza), were given fewer properties in comparison to Turkish-speaking majority of refugees.<sup>972</sup> Kaptanoğlu underlines that in the initial stages of his research he disregarded such claims because he thought they were “emotionally” biased. However, he then understood that the same accusation was widely made by Cretan refugees. Hasan Pulad confirms that those Cretan refugees that were able to speak Turkish like his father received more compensation than those who were unable to speak Turkish. Emine Özenç, a refugee from Ierpetra, Crete, underlines that when they were first arrived in Turkey, her family could not get any food allowance for days because her father did not know how to say “I am hungry” in Turkish.<sup>973</sup> Some Cretans signed their liquidation documents in Greek letters (See Figure 5-2).

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<sup>972</sup> Raif Kaplanoğlu, *Bursa'da mübadele* (Bursa: Avrasya Etnografya Vakfı, 1999), 111.

<sup>973</sup> İskender Özsoy, *Mübadelenin öksüz çocukları* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2007), 56.



**Figure 5–2:** The signature of Mehmet Kürdaki, a sailor from Chania, on his liquidation certificate dated 29 April 1924 in Greek letters (*Μεχμετ*).

**Source:** BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.68.214..8

The discrimination that non-Turkish-speaking Cretan refugees were subject to after the population exchange due to their lingual differences is investigated in the next section.

### 5.3-2 Cretan refugees: "Greek-speaking semi-infidels."

As mentioned earlier, the primary motive of the Greek and Turkish nation-states in exchanging populations was to ethnically homogenize the populations within the borders of the nation-states. In the existing literature, as discussed in Chapter 2, this is seen as one of the positive consequences of the population exchange. This was based on some background assumptions, one of which was the ethnic and linguistic homogeneity of refugees. As in Greece, in Turkey, too, this was hardly the case and the state, and the society did not only turn a blind eye to the linguistic diversity of refugees and their multiple ethnic-local identities, but they discriminated against refugees on the grounds of ethnic, local and linguistic identities. Although Mehmet Kürdaki, whose liquidation certificate can be seen in Figure 5-2, used Greek letters to sign, Grecophone Cretan Muslims used Arabic/Ottoman script while writing. In 2012 when I

interviewed Ali Onay, a refugee of the population exchange, at his museum-like home, he showed me some examples of his grandmother's mandinades written in the Cretan dialect with Arabic script.<sup>974</sup> The boundary between Christian and Muslim islanders was, therefore, not drawn by language, but, as Bernard Lewis claims, by the script they used.<sup>975</sup> It should be added that this was a boundary that did not reveal itself on a daily basis since such *Aljamiado* texts were rare products. After their arrival to Anatolia with the population exchange, the linguistic boundary between the Cretan refugees and the native population and Turkish-speaking refugees became much more rigid and visible and was constantly reproduced whenever these communities interacted. Before and after the population exchange, while cogitating on the definition of the Turkish nation, Grecophone Cretan Muslim community —no matter how limited their number was—<sup>976</sup> was seen as the paragon of idiosyncratic identities to be assimilated into and superseded by the Turkish nation forged by linguistic, religious and cultural unity. Whether Grecophone Muslims were to be included within the notion of nation or not, in other words, the role of linguistic unity for the nation was one of the main discussions in the nationalist circles.

While discussing the differences between the notions of *ummah* and nation (*millet*), Ziya Gökalp, one of the founders and most influential figures of Turkish nationalism, writes “although

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<sup>974</sup> Ali Onay, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, October 30, 2012. The genre of mandinades will be briefly touched upon below. Ali Onay's grandmother's notebook with her mandinades are currently studied by Dr. Yorgos Dedes of SOAS. For a talk, he gave on this topic see Yorgos Dedes, "'Τα τετράδια της γιαγιάς'. Τα αραβογράμματα χειρόγραφα των Τουρκογιαννιωτών και των Τουρκοκρητικών. Η ελληνόφωνη Aljamiado γραμματεία" (Γλώσσες και αλφάβητα μουσουλμάνων και μη μουσουλμάνων υπηκόων στην οθωμανική αυτοκρατορία, Sismanoglio Megaro, İstanbul, March 26, 2014), <http://www.blod.gr/lectures/Pages/viewlecture.aspx?LectureID=1357>.

<sup>975</sup> Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 426.

<sup>976</sup> According to Fournarakis there were 23,000 exchangeable Muslims in Crete (5000 in Chania, 3500 in Rethymno, 11,500 in Heraklio and 3000 in Lasithi). Fournarakis, *Τουρκοκρήτες*, 45.

today Pomaks speak Bulgarian and Cretan Muslims speak Greek, they are going to learn Turkish under the influence of Islam and leave their current languages.”<sup>977</sup>

In a similar manner, Moise Cohen (alias Munis Tekinalp), who was of Jewish origin and one of the main proponents of Turkism, emphasizes in 1928 the importance of linguistic unity for the desired national unity in Turkey and writes:<sup>978</sup>

Like you I too think those elements in the desire of becoming real Turks should embrace Turkish not only as an official language but as their mother tongue. I feel confident about the fact that this can be achieved in time through certain methods. The existence of those who do not know any Turkish among Muslim Turkish immigrants coming from the places that are out of our current borders and that even today one can come across elderly members of Armenian and Greek families of Anatolia that do not know any Greek or Armenian are the clearest proof of this. The linguistic unity, which is to be achieved in time, is going to be the most vital factor of national unity.

Regarding Cretans, Tekinalp shares Gökalp's stance and explicitly refers to Cretan Muslims' usage of the Greek language as a transient element of their identity and claims that their absolute "Turkification" is just a matter of time:<sup>979</sup>

There are thousands of Cretans that came to our country through immigration. If we exclude those Cretans who had education in our child, the overwhelming majority of these immigrants do not speak any other language but Greek. Even those who know Turkish prefer Greek to Turkish among themselves. A part of them continues to use Greek as their mother tongue although they came to Turkey and were resettled in the Turkish villages around the vicinity of Tarsus. (...) In the streets of İzmir, one can come across many Cretan Turks openly speaking Greek. Those who hear these conversations in Greek unintentionally lose their temper, they are obliged to tolerate it. Because everybody knows and understands that this is a temporary and compulsory period and the conditions of this period will disappear in a few years.

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<sup>977</sup> Ziya Gökalp, "Millet ve Vatan," *Türk Yurdu* 6, no. 6 (May 28, 1914): 165.

<sup>978</sup> Munis Tekinalp, *Türkleşdirme* (İstanbul: Resimli Ay Matbaası, 1928), 93.

<sup>979</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.

Even though Cretan Muslims' linguistic identity was considered as impermanent by some Turkish nationalists and they were included in the Turkish nation, there were more sceptical or even hostile approaches towards Cretans due to their linguistic identity.

While delivering a speech titled "Principles of Nationality" in 1923, Hamdullah Subhi Bey [Tanrıöver], for instance, said:<sup>980</sup>

In the West, language is a more important element of nationality than religion. In the East, however, religion is more important. For example, as the result of the Cretan revolutions Muslims under the pressure of native Greeks took refuge to the Anatolian shores. If they had been categorized in accordance with their language, Greece could have been their only place of refuge since their mother tongue is Greek. But they came to us. Due to this, I came across refugee Muslim women who were singing [lullabies] in Greek to their children on the shores of Antalya.

But this doesn't mean that the common language plays an insignificant role in the formation of Turkish national identity. For Hamdullah Subhi Bey, only those who spoke Turkish, believed in Islam and carried a love for Turkishness could be called Turk. In another speech he delivered in the parliament in 1924 after the population exchange Hamdullah Subhi Bey characterized Greek-speaking Muslim refugees as a potential danger to the national and territorial unity of the Turkish nation-state and criticized the resettlement policy of the government as a potential obstacle to the cultural integration of the refugees of the population exchange.<sup>981</sup>

Around İstanbul they resettled the Greek-speaking population. This is a ghastly mistake. To and around Gebze (Gekbuze) refugees from Ioannina were resettled,<sup>982</sup> a portion of

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<sup>980</sup> Hamdullah Subhi [Tanrıöver], *Dağ Yolu* (Ankara: Türk Ocakları, 1928), 193.

<sup>981</sup> *Ibid.*, 112. For another transcription of the same speech see *TBMMZC*, II/9/2 - 49, 92.

<sup>982</sup> Although Hamdullah Subhi Bey did not mention, most non-Turkish-speaking refugees from Ioannina were Albanian-speaking, and in a sense, he asked for the continuation of the resettlement policy regarding Albanians and Albanian-speaking refugees adopted by the Ottoman Empire after the Balkan Wars. According to this policy, the Ottoman Empire did not consider the regions that were relatively close to the



them was settled in Çatalca and its environs. But we are obliged to remove any language other than the Turkish language in the areas vastly populated by Turks (Applause). On the shores across the Mediterranean islands, they let Greek-speaking masses dwell. This was too a big mistake. If a contact is established between those islands and our shores, that is to say between the Greek-speaking [refugees] and the masses of the Greek islands when the things calm down shortly; it will be impossible to eradicate this foreign language.

In response to such criticisms, Mahmut Celâl Bey [Bayar] told that they had done their best to exclude non-Turkish Muslims of Greece from the population exchange and they succeeded in the case of Cham Albanians but he refused to consider Cretans as a potential threat to the unity of the country because although Cretans spoke Greek and did not know a single Turkish word, they bore intense animosity (more intense than native Turks, according to him) towards Greeks. That was why Hamdullah Subhi Bey's concerns were unreasonable. He also emphasized that he never hesitated to locate refugees not speaking Turkish but not denying their national identity as Turk either in such areas.<sup>983</sup>

Similar to other nationalist thinkers, Nihal Atsız, a fervent supporter of racism and Turanism, questioned the Turkishness of Cretans and claimed that they are ethnically “Turkish-like” (or “Turkish-ish” – *Türkümsü*) and their ethnic roots were the main reason why some

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Balkans as resettlement sites for non-Turkish speaking populace. First İstanbul and then Çatalca, where the share of Albanians in the population was already high was closed to the settlement of Albanians in 1914. This was followed by other regions such as Edirne, İzmir, Karesi, Kale-i Sultaniye, etc. for Albanian/Albanian-speaking refugees. Fuat Dündar, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskân Politikası, 1913-1918* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), 114.

<sup>983</sup> TBMMZC, II10/2 - 2, 53-4. There were some other parliamentary discussions on the settlement of non-Turkish speaking refugees. For example, after the population exchange, Halid Bey, the deputy of Zonguldak, strongly opposed to the settlement of Grecophone refugees of gypsy origin (“Kıptî”) to Zonguldak. TBMMZC, II10/2 - 2, 34. For the settlement of refugees of gypsy origin see Nurşen Gürboğa, “1923 Nüfus Mübadelesi ve Mübadil Romanlara Yönelik İskan ve Denetim Politikaları,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 263 (November 2015): 36–43; Nurşen Gürboğa, “Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi ve Devletin Mübadil Romanlara Yönelik Söylem ve Politikaları,” *Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 9, no. 1 (April 2016): 109–40; Suat Kolukırık, “Geçmişin Aynasında Lozan Çingeneleri: Göç, Hatıra ve Deneyimler,” *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyolojik Araştırmalar E-Dergisi*, May 20, 2006, <http://www.sdergi.hacettepe.edu.tr/makaleler/suatk.pdf>.

Cretans adopted anti-Turkish ideologies such as communism.<sup>984</sup> He also underlines that it was a time sink to try to "Turkify" the Cretans much like the gypsies. Their linguistic character was the proof of the fact that they were Greeks converted to Islam by the force of the sword.<sup>985</sup>

In short, it can be said that the elite reaction to non-Turkish speaking refugees oscillated between *mission civilisatrice* and skepticism/hostility. These responses were translated into politics too. An intensified alertness of political authorities was noticeable in very early days of the refugee influx. Even the health authorities were sometimes less concerned with the well-being of refugees and more with their linguistic diversity. On May 3, 1923, Tevfik Rüştü Bey, as the acting minister of health, sent a cipher telegram to the office of governor of İzmir and asked the governor to take necessary measures to teach the Turkish language to Cretan refugees that started arriving at İzmir.<sup>986</sup> It can be said that one of the primary aims of the political and bureaucratic institutions was to imbue the refugees with "proper Turkishness," which was defined through the unity of language, culture, and ideal. Throughout the late 1920s and particularly in the 1930s, a militant and overtly racist form of nationalism became more and more prominent in politics and, together with secularism, played a constitutive role in the *modus operandi* of the regime. Especially after the Sheikh Said Rebellion in 1925, the state showed decreasing aggressiveness and tolerance towards the ethnic and linguistic minorities decreased,

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<sup>984</sup> Nihal Atsız, "Yirminci Asırda Türk Meselesi II: Türk Irkı = Türk Milleti," *Orhun*, no. 9 (July 16, 1934): 158–59.

<sup>985</sup> Hüseyin Nihal Atsız, *Çanakkale'ye Yürüyüş* (İstanbul: Arkadaş Matbaası, 1933), 7-8.

<sup>986</sup> The first group of refugees from Crete left the port of Chania at the end of November and arrived at the port of İzmir on December 3, 1923. Ahenk, November 28, 1923, and December 4, 1923. But as understood from this document, some refugees started to leave Crete individually before the collective transfer of refugees. "Acting Minister of Health Dr. Tevfik Rüştü's Chipher Message to the Office of Governor of İzmir," May 2, 1923, personal archive of the author.

and the nationalizing character of the state became more apparent and the state devised broader policies of national homogenization, repression, and social control.

This period witnessed one of the most influential and controversial political campaigns of the modern Turkish history, namely "*Vatandaş, Türkçe Konuş!*" (Citizen, Speak Turkish!). Throughout this campaign, in addition to non-Muslims citizens or non-citizens, non-Turkish speaking Muslims were targeted too. The campaign was officially initiated by the Law School students in January 1928. Before the official start of the campaign, there had already been increasing pressure on non-Turkish speaking elements of the society. On April 26, 1927, Prime Minister İsmet Pasha gave a speech at the annual convention of the Turkish Hearth and emphasized the necessity of the need for everybody in Turkey to speak Turkish and that the government was going to Turkify all those who lived in Turkey, at any cost.<sup>987</sup> After this speech, sporadic reactions to the public usage of languages other than Turkish gradually became systematic and culminated into a campaign. The turning point in this process was the murder of Elza Niyego. On August 17, Elza Niyego, a Jewish girl, was killed by an elderly Muslim man, Osman Ragıp, who was in love with but was not loved back by Niyego. Apart from the ethnic identities of the victim and the killer that they happened to have, the incident was a crime of passion and had nothing to do with ethnicity. The killer was immediately arrested by the police. This ordinary incident somehow created a suitable atmosphere for the press to attack the Jewish minority, and the killing of this poor young woman went down in history as the case of Elza Niyego.<sup>988</sup> Immediately after Niyego's funeral, the major newspapers such as *Cumhuriyet*, *Son*

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<sup>987</sup> Soner Çağaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?* (London: Routledge, 2006), 25.

<sup>988</sup> For the Elza Niyego Affair see Rıfat N. Bali, *Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri - Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni (1923-1945)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2010), 109–130; Avner Levi, "Elza Niyego Olayı ve Türk Yahudi İlişkilerine Yeni Bir Bakış," *Tarih ve Toplum* 25, no. 145 (Ocak 1996): 23–27; idem.,

*Saat*, and *Vakit*, started an antisemitic campaign claiming the funeral had turned into a protest against Turks and Turkishness. Some even claimed that the protest was premeditated and the part of a Jewish uprising. Although the Jewish newspapers (*Journal d'Orient*, *El Tyempo*, *El Telegrafo*), leading figures of the Jewish community, such as Munis Tekinalp, and the participants of the funeral including the Niyego family rejected the allegations, several Jews, some of who had not even been at the funeral, were arrested. Jak Pardo, who was a senior faculty member of the Artillery School, wrote a letter to İsmet Pasha, who was a former student of his and requested from him to take necessary measures to stop the ongoing antisemitic campaign. His letter to the Prime Minister was considered as an insult to the administration of justice, and he too got arrested. In his trial, the prosecutor accused not only Pardo but the entire Jewish community of insulting Turkishness by not speaking Turkish. The antisemitic press campaign continued for months. On September 1, *Güneş* published an editorial titled "Insult to Turkishness," which reflects the essence of the offensive. The article, like the prosecutor of the Pardo trial, described the usage of "foreign" languages in Turkey as an insult to Turkishness.

To claim that a Jew that does not speak, read or know Turkish respects, Turkishness is an incomparable blindness [...] If a Jew does not speak Turkish, this is a direct insult. To suppose that we will tolerate this insult would be a grave mistake. [...] As long as the spiritual relation of Jews to us continue to be limited to reading the French editions of *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet*, we could expect that such ugly incidents would continue. [...] Turkey is not the Tower of Babel. In Turkey, only Turkish is spoken.

The anti-Semitic protests spread to İzmir, where Jews constituted the largest minority after Greeks left the city. In the following months, various institutions, public or "civil,"

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*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Yahudiler* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1996), 75-85; Çağaptay, *Who is a Turk?*, 27; M. Çağatay Okutan, *Tek parti döneminde azınlık politikaları* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2004), 239-242.

organized campaigns against Jews. The crux of the campaigns was again the usage of Turkish and only Turkish in public. With the start of the "Citizen, speak Turkish" campaign the measures against the usage of "foreign languages and dialects" were pushed to the extremes because it was strongly believed that this was the most critical component of the ongoing nation-building process. In 1930 the Ministry of the Interior issued a secret circular on the assimilation of Turks speaking foreign "dialects," which particularly concentrated on the Turkification of immigrants and refugees that were settled in different parts of Anatolia during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and onwards. In this circular, the resettlement policy that was adopted by the Ottoman Empire was criticized severely and it was claimed that it was this policy that did not break communal bonds and let refugees keep their identities, particularly their languages and this was shown as the most significant obstacle in front of the linguistic unification of the nation. For this goal, the circular suggested, local authorities was to avoid the formation of new villages or neighborhoods population of which was formed solely or dominantly by speakers of foreign dialects and to mix such old settlements with nearby Turkish speaking settlements.<sup>989</sup> This circular can be seen as a preliminary step towards the Resettlement Law of 1934. In his visit to Adana in 1931, Mustafa Kemal was so disappointed with 20,000 non-Turkish speaking people in a city of 70,000 that in his speech he felt the necessity of emphasizing the importance of language for the Turkish national identity by saying "One of the most significant characteristics of nationality is language. A person that calls himself a member of the Turkish nation should, first of all, and in any case, speak Turkish."<sup>990</sup> For our subject, it is important to note that in

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<sup>989</sup> Mehmet Bayrak, *Kürtler ve ulusal-demokratik mücadeleleri üstüne: Gizli belgeler, araştırmalar, notlar* (Ankara: Özge, 1993), 506-509.

<sup>990</sup> "1931 senesinde Atatürk'ün Adana'daki konuşması", 1931, File name: Taha Toros, Taha Toros Arşivi, <http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/9139>.

addition to Arabic-speaking population, there were a substantial number of the Grecophone Cretan refugees residing in this city.

The campaign moved quickly from handing out warning cards to those speaking non-Turkish languages in public places to repeated violent attacks.<sup>991</sup> These attacks disturbed the foreign missions, particularly in İstanbul and İzmir.<sup>992</sup> Leonidas Koumakis, a Constantinopolitan Greek, described the oppression of the minorities:<sup>993</sup>

Ever since my father had left in such a hurry, she had made herself hoarse warning my sister and me, over and over again, that when we were out in the street or any other public place, we should keep our mouths shut -out of necessity, because our lives were in danger. To speak Greek in the street or other public place in Turkey was more or less the equivalent of committing suicide. It was akin to crossing a national highway on foot with your eyes closed, because of a special law which had come into effect in Turkey in 1932 on the "vilification of Turkism". The law had been introduced to terrorise and oppress the country's non-Turkish population. It was sufficient for two Turks to give false testimony and make vague claims that you had insulted Turkey or the Turks, for you to be sent to prison without bail. So, we were afraid to utter a single word in Greek in the street, lest we were accused of insulting Turkey.

As Koumakis emphasized, the usage of Greek was found particularly offensive by the Turks and this was not only affected non-Muslims but also Muslim linguistic minorities as well. By issuing a secret circular on the Turkification of the Turks using foreign “vernacular,” the

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<sup>991</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, “Nationalist Mobilization and State–Society Relations: The People’s Houses’ Campaign for Turkish in Izmir, June–July 1934,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 5 (September 1, 2013): 824–39; Ahmet Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*” - *Türk Ulusal Kimliğinin Etno-Seküler Sınırları (1919-1938)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 286-90; Rıfat N. Bali, *Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri - Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni (1923-1945)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2010), 102-48; Rıfat N. Bali, “Önsöz,” in *Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş*, by Avram Galanti (Ankara: Kebikeç, 2000), v–viii; Çağaptay, *Who is a Turk?*, 25-7; Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi Ve “Türkleştirme” Politikaları*, 4. baskı, İletişim Yayınları 599 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000), 49-60.

<sup>992</sup> Çağaptay, *Who is a Turk?*, 59.

<sup>993</sup> Leonidas Koumakis, *Το θαύμα: Μια πραγματική ιστορία* (Athens: sn, 1993), 13. For the translation see Leonidas Koumakis, *The Miracle: A True Story* (Athens: sn, 1995), 13.

Ministry of the Interior tried to systematize local efforts in this direction. Cretans too quickly became the sufferer of “the war of spreading the Turkish language” (*Türk dilini yayma savaşı*) as called in the official documents of the period. This “war” in each city was supposed to be mainly organized by the *Halkevi* (People’s house) -local community centers acting together with, if not as an extension of, the Republican People’s Party. In August 1931, in the newspaper *Hizmet* Hüseyin Hulki (Cura) published a series of articles titled “National Unity” (*Milli Vahdet*) on the language issue in İzmir. Whereas the first three sections of the series -and the fifth one- concentrated on the non-Turkish-speaking Jewish minority of the city, the fourth article was on the Cretan refugees that "partly spoke Greek" (*“Milli Vahdet: Giritli Türklerin Kısmen Rumca Konuşmaları”*).<sup>994</sup> In this article, Hüseyin Hulki argued that although the usage of Greek by Cretan Turks was a bizarre situation, this situation was historically conditioned and could be justified to a certain extent yet this did not change the fact that they had to abandon their mother tongue and adopt the Turkish language as soon as possible. The coercion that the Cretans were subject to took the shape of a full-fledged policy in the following years. In 1934 the mobilization of the İzmir Halkevi, particularly the youth, resulted in physical attacks on non-Turkish speaking people. The official correspondence between the İzmir Halkevi and the general secretary of the Republican People's Party confirms that the Cretans living in the city, together with Jews, were one of the primary targets of these attacks. One of the reports of the Halkevi presents the

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<sup>994</sup> [Cura,] Hüseyin Hüsni. “Millî Vahdet: Giritli Türklerin Kısmen Rumca Konuşmaları Esaslı Bir Dava - 4.” *Hizmet*, August 21, 1931. For the the articles of the series on the Jewish community of İzmir see Hüseyin Hüsni Cura, “Millî Vahdet: Yahudilerin Dil ve Hars Meselesi Ne Olacak? Esaslı Bir Dava - 1,” *Hizmet*, August 18, 1931; idem., “Millî Vahdet: Yahudilerin Dil ve Hars Meselesi Ne Olacak? Esaslı Bir Dava - 2,” *Hizmet*, August 19, 1931; idem., “Millî Vahdet: Yahudilerin Dil ve Hars Meselesi Ne Olacak? Esaslı Bir Dava - 3,” *Hizmet*, August 20, 1931; idem., “Millî Vahdet: Yahudilere Soruyoruz (Kuvadiz=Nereye Gidiyorsunuz) Esaslı Bir Dava - 5,” *Hizmet*, August 23, 1931.

reactions to the interventions to Cretans and foreigners.<sup>995</sup> On July 14, 1934, Cevdet Akömer, the Halkevi chairperson, clearly and at length reported the animosity against Cretans in addition to the Jewish community of the city, to the general secretary of the party. Akömer describes the atmosphere in which these attacks took place: “On the other hand, among the entire İzmir community a smoldering venom, hatred against languages other than Turkish was being felt. Insomuch that a common man used to describe two Cretans' speaking Greek as ‘you see, two Cretans came and started pattering.’”

The chairperson apologetically gives justification to this atmosphere and the attacks:

I regretfully report and confess regarding language İzmir appears like an international city. In many parts (of the city) it was seen that Turkish was the least spoken language. It was also heard that a Greek journalist, who visited the city and stayed here for ten or fifteen days, wrote an article in his newspaper ‘for 15 days I did not understand whether I was in İzmir or Piraeus’ after returning to Greece. There are solely Jewish coffeehouses in Karataş, Keçeciler, and Namazgah; Cretan coffeehouses in Eşrefpaşa, Dolaplıkuyu, Karantina and in many other districts that even subscribe to Greek newspapers and where only Greek is spoken; solely Bosnian and Albanian coffeehouses in Tepecik, Bornova, Buca, Karşıyaka, and Alaybey. Furthermore, that workers employed in factories, companies and at the port speak Greek can be considered as a source of confusion for foreigners visiting Turkey, especially the seafaring, whether he is in Turkey.

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<sup>995</sup> For the reports of İzmir Halkevi Chairperson and the responses of the General Secretary of the Republican People’s Party see BCA, 490..1.0.0 — 836.303..1. The reports in this folder are pages numbered as 54-7 (July 14, 1934) and 48-51 (July 25, 1934). Here it is important to note that this folder was available for the researchers until 2012. While I had been preparing my Master’s thesis in 2008, I had gone through the documents in this folder and had the box and folder numbers and taken notes regarding the content of the folder. When I tried to request the same folder in 2013, I could not locate the folder under the same number in the electronic catalog. The archivists told me that the documents in this folder could have been distributed to other relevant folders. Although I checked every possible folder that could contain the documents and I located some of the contents of the initial folder (particularly some antisemitic articles published by the press), it was impossible to find these reports and responses of the party center that clearly suggested an antisemitic action in İzmir organized by the state authorities. Dr. Alekos Lamprou, who utilized these documents in his works, shared them with me.



In the same report, the Halkevi chairperson also mentioned the demand of the Cretan community of the city:

Entire İzmir embraced the war of spreading the Turkish language. According to a report submitted from Karantina, a person called Giritli (Cretan) Mehmet Efendi reacted to the insistence and offers toward him for the use of the Turkish language and hurled some insults such as “Yesterday we held a meeting and fundraised 20 thousand liras. We are going to send an envoy to Ankara in order to ask for permission for Cretans’ use of the Greek language and. if not, we, seventy-two thousand Cretans, would leave the country.”

He also noted that the intervention against Mehmet Efendi had turned to a physical confrontation between him and the young people that had initially warned Mehmet Efendi. As seen in the report, any reaction to the interventions, or even public usage of non-Turkish languages was considered as an insult to Turkishness.

The archival evidence clearly shows that between 1927 and 1937 trials were launched against several Cretans for insulting Turkishness, the government, the army or the law. The accusations were based on the penal code adopted in 1926. With this adoption of this code, the government was intended to abolish the Ottoman law system based on Islamic principles and substitute it with a secular one.<sup>996</sup> The spirit of this new penal code was also consistent with the Kemalist nation-building process. The article 159 of the penal code was incepted to suppress insults to Turkishness, the republic or the Grand National Assembly, the Turkish government and the judicial organs or military and security agencies. Offenses were punishable by sentences ranging from fifteen days to three years of imprisonment. As mentioned above, in the same time period, similar lawsuits against non-Muslims were very widespread. Cemil Koçak determines

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<sup>996</sup> M. Yasin Aslan, “Transformation of Turkish Criminal Law From the Ottoman-Islamic Law to the Civil Law Tradition,” *Ankara Bar Review* 2, no. 2 (2009): 92, 94.

554 lawsuits launched against non-Muslims between 1926 and 1942 for opposing the article 159 of the Turkish Penal Code.<sup>997</sup> There were lawsuits against Muslim involving accusations of insulting Turkishness but in almost all cases the Muslims were described as their place of origin or ethnic identity, such as, Arabian (*Arab*), Albanian (*Arnavud*), Kurdish (*Kürd*), Daghestani (*Dağistanlı*), Afghan (*Afgani*), from Baghdad (*Bağdatlı*) or Persian (*Acem*), Romanian immigrant (*Romanya göçmeni*), Bulgar (*Bulgarian*), convert (*Dönme*). Cretans were among the Muslims accused of insulting Turkishness. As Koçak states for the lawsuits against non-Muslim minorities, the content of the files housed at the aforementioned archive is very limited and did not contain any details that could clarify the vague nature of accusations, that is to say, in what way these accused people insulted Turkishness, the Turkish law or the government was not described in details.<sup>998</sup> Yet, as discussed above, we know that public usage of non-Turkish languages and resisting to interventions were considered as insulting Turkishness. Table 5-3 shows the list of Cretans, who were sued for insulting Turkishness, the Turkish laws, government, and army.

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<sup>997</sup> Cemil Koçak, “Ayın Karanlık Yüzü: Tek-Parti Döneminde Gayri Müslim Azınlıklar Hakkında Açılan Türklüğü Tahkir Davaları,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 1 (2005): 147–208.

<sup>998</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

**Table 5–3:** Lawsuits launched against Cretans under the article 159 of the Turkish Penal Code

Name	Date	Accusation	Place	Archive Catalog Number (BCA)
Giritli Hasan	January 15, 1927	Insulting the laws	İzmir, Çeşme, Ovacık	30..10.0.0 32.182..19
Giritli Abdurrahman oğlu Hüseyin Hüsnü	September 25, 1927	Insulting Turkishness	İzmir, Yapıcıoğlu	30..10.0.0 34.194..20
Giritli Hüseyin oğlu Şaban	November 6, 1927	Insulting Turkishness	İzmir, Urla, Yeraltı	30..10.0.0 34.197..6
Giritli Halil oğlu Gazalaki	November 19, 1927	Insulting the government	İzmir	30..10.0.0 34.200..3
Giritli Ali Çavuş	January 1, 1930	Insulting the government and the army	Manisa, Alaybey	30..10.0.0 36.215..3
Giritli Nuri oğlu Mustafa	December 12, 1930	Insulting the government and Turkishness	İzmir	30..10.0.0 38.229..2
Giritli Fatma	August 27, 1935	Insulting Turkishness	İzmir	30..10.0.0 41.255..11
Giritli Hüseyin Çelik	February 16, 1937	Insulting Turkishness	Muğla	30..10.0.0 43.272..11

Unfortunately, the results of these cases are not traceable from the archival documents available to the researchers, so we do not know if some of the accused Cretans were convicted or not.<sup>999</sup> The testimonies of Cretan refugees are consistent with the archival evidence. Yüksel Hançerli, a second generation refugee, reports that there are even jokes that Cretans started telling over time about legal actions against Cretans with implausible excuses.<sup>1000</sup> During the

<sup>999</sup> Local court records are not accessible. My attempts have yielded no results.

<sup>1000</sup> One of these jokes is about a Cretan refugee slapping his donkey and being sued for this. H. Yüksel Hançerli, *Giritli Mübadillerin Son Durağı Çukurova: Parçalanmış Ailelerin öyküsü* (Adana: Hançerli Fotoğrafçılık, 2007), 36.

interview with the Akdal family originating from Chania, Crete and settled in Alaybey, İzmir, the oldest member of the family told that by the local population Cretans were treated as if they were Jews because they did not speak Turkish at the time of the "Citizen, Speak Turkish!" campaign. His younger sisters also told that they felt ashamed when the elderly members of their family talk Cretan while shopping —particularly when they did not want sellers to understand them. All members of the family remembered that they were regarded as “semi-infidel” (*yarım gâvur*)<sup>1001</sup> by the locals. Yet, the most striking story regarding the language issue brought up by this family was about the experience of their late mother. Like most of the female Cretan refugees, their mother too had grown up speaking the Cretan dialect from early childhood and she continued to use it in her daily life in Turkey. In İzmir she was hospitalized due to a chronic disease and was unconsciously talking in Greek on her sickbed, and because of that, she was rumored to be an "infidel" (*gâvur*) by the hospital staff. Not only did these rumors disturb the family members, but also one day she overheard the insulting remarks of the staff, and in order to protest against them and prove that she was not an "infidel" she started reciting the *Koran*.<sup>1002</sup> The family members also remember that the elderly members of the family used to carry copies of the *Koran* to prove

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<sup>1001</sup> Ergir, *Giritli Mustafa*, 82. In the testimonies collected by Kostas Kefalakis, the Turco-Cretan refugees frequently mention that they were called “infidel” by the locals. Kostas Kefalakis, *Μικρασία: Αγκαλιά Και Ξενιτιά Τουρκοκρητικοί – Μικρασιάτες – Ιστορία* (Heraklio: Τυποκρέτα, 2010, 297, 338, 433. See also Müfide Pekin, ed., *Belleklerdeki Güzellik Girit Maniler, Atasözleri, Deyimler, Tekerlemeler* (İstanbul: Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı, 2007), 80. Yarım Gavur E. Zeynep Suda Güler, “Şu Gemide Ah Ben de Olsaydım...” : *Çanakkale’den Savaş Dışı Anılar* (İstanbul: Turkuaz, 2007), 42; idem., “Sözlü tarih anlatılarında Çanakkale merkeze Girit’ten göçler: ‘Giritli, başı bitli...’” *Çanakkale Araştırmaları* 10, no. 13 (Autumn 2012): 50-5.

<sup>1002</sup> The Akdals, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 3, 2013. Many other first generation Cretan refugees tell that in addition to mainstream educational institutions they used to attend unofficial local schools in which they study Koran. "Military doctor Salim Çalık's mother knew little Turkish. She was a polite lady, who had left a considerable amount of wealth in Crete. After the Adapazarı earthquake in 1939, she went to her son's house there to personally convey her get well wishes. During her stay, she had to recite verses from Koran in front of the neighbors for they suspected if she was a Muslim or not." Gülalp, *Girit Mübadelesi Olmasaydı*, 28.

that they were Muslims in the years of the “Citizen, speak Turkish” campaign.<sup>1003</sup> The pressure upon Cretans for using Turkish among themselves and at their homes was no limited to the urban centers. Cevher Karahan, a refugee from Heraklio, tells that in the village they were settled in İzmir, namely Şirince (Kirkintzes), the Cretan refugees were warned about speaking Turkish by the locals. She also adds that she had difficulty at the primary school since she had not known Turkish beforehand.<sup>1004</sup> Similarly, another first generation Cretan refugee from Larani, Heraklio, Mehmet Cebeci, who settled in Paşalimanı Island but then moved to Şirince in 1934, also confirmed during our interview that he and his family did not speak Turkish in Crete, and even though the majority of the population of Şirince was made up of Cretans the elder members of their family experienced difficulties due to their lack of knowledge of Turkish and their accent as latecomers to the language.<sup>1005</sup> On the other hand, in some cases elderly members of the family taught the Cretan dialect to the younger generations as much as they understood what was told but tried to prevent them from communicating in Greek and having a Cretan accent while speaking Turkish. Not only locals but the Turkish-speaking refugees discriminated against the Cretans. Ali Onay, a first generation refugee from Rethymno, Crete, told me that the refugees from Lesbos in the Cunda island called the Cretans “semi-infidel” and “Greek seed” due to their inability to speak Turkish.<sup>1006</sup> Kostas Kefalakis, who explored almost entire Turkey in search for the Cretan refugees and interviewed numerous Cretans, mentions that many refugees complained about the hardships they had experienced after the population exchange due to the language barrier between them and the native population and state officials. Muhtar-Ahmet, a refugee

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<sup>1003</sup> The Akdals, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 3, 2013.

<sup>1004</sup> İskender Özsoy, *Mübadelenin Öksüz Çocukları*, 59.

<sup>1005</sup> Mehmet Cebeci, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 4, 2013.

<sup>1006</sup> Ali Onay, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, October 30, 2012.

from Heraklio, stated that the “Turks” had frequently told them “Here is Turkey! Don’t talk in Romaic (*Ρωμέικα*)... Or else go to Crete!”<sup>1007</sup> Some other refugees alluded briefly that due to the language issue scuffles had broken out between Cretans and Turks.<sup>1008</sup> Some refugees also underlined the fact that their parents and grandparents experienced severe difficulties in learning Turkish due to their age and hence in socializing too. Even some refused to learn Turkish until the end of their lives.<sup>1009</sup>

The situation of Cretans continued to be fragile over time. Neither in the press nor in daily life did the reactions cease to exist.<sup>1010</sup> In 1936, for instance, Abidin Daver, a columnist who was to be an İstanbul deputy in 1939, wrote an article titled “Again the issue of Turkish” for the daily *Cumhuriyet* and claimed that Cretans continued to separate themselves and refused to respect the language spoken in Turkey even in İstanbul by using the Greek language in public offices, market places, etc.<sup>1011</sup> He also underlined that the usage of foreign languages such as Greek or Bulgarian by “immigrants we brought to the country as cognates and brothers” deeply disturbed him and the community even more than Jews’ persistence on French, and Greeks’ on Greek. He then told a story which he personally experienced. In August 1936, he wrote, he went to Pendik for a summer camp where he visited a barbershop the nameplate of which was in Turkish. Despite the nameplate of the shop, the barber was continuously speaking in Greek with the man sitting next to the columnist. Abidin Daver continued:

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<sup>1007</sup> Kefalakis, *Μικρασία*, 72.

<sup>1008</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>1009</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

<sup>1010</sup> Yüksel Hañerli, whose father came to Adana from Heraklio, writes that even in the 1990s he encountered with people asking him if he was Greek or not due to his knowledge of the Cretan dialect. Hañerli, *Giritli Mübadillerin Son Durađı Çukurova*, 5, 34.

<sup>1011</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, November 18, 1936. Only a week before this article, Daver, in his column, published another article with the title “In Turkey we want Turkish” where he condemned the usage

I could barely control the storm inside me always sparked by cosmopolitan people that, in public spaces, use languages other than our lovely Turkish. Finally, I asked him with a catch in my voice ‘Why don't you speak Turkish although you know it?’ He answered this question in a calm manner as if he had been waiting for my question and said ‘because this is my mother tongue.’ When I heard that this guy was a Cretan immigrant, my sorrow intensified even more. If this were specific to this particular barber, who came to our country more than ten years ago, it wouldn't bother me at all. But everywhere I came across the same thing. Cretans that arrived in Adana before the World War still speak Greek.

He concluded his article with the remark that "if we were unable to teach Turkish to our brothers, we would have to tolerate minorities' speaking foreign languages in public places and we would continue to preserve Beyoğlu-style cosmopolitanism for ages." Daver's reaction was amplified by the fact that his coreligionists' rejecting to fully embrace the national identity and its requirements such as language, which made them as alien and dangerous as the non-Muslim minorities and other foreign elements to national uniformity and unity. This machinery of repression was still active in the 1950s. Civan Argönül, a second-generation refugee from Heraklio, says the following:<sup>1012</sup>

I wanted to learn alphabet or so from my [maternal] grandfather but we were pretty much assimilated together with the 6-7 September events [anti-Greek pogroms in 1955]. At that time we used to live in Fatih [Bursa]... There had already been some complaints like "Here they speak Greek". They had been filed to the police. Some people tried to even invade our home at midnight, but they were surprised when they saw Atatürk's portrait next to that of İnönü's and Fevzi Çakmak's etc. As may be expected, my mother was extremely scared. That's why my father forbade us to speak Greek at home.

Not only their language but the Cretan refugees' culinary culture that they brought together with them from Crete was met with suspicion by the native communities of the regions

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<sup>1012</sup> Müfide Pekin, ed., *Belleklerdeki Güzellik Girit*, 39.

the Cretans were resettled. Not only in Turkey but also in Greece I was constantly told the same “joke” when the subject came to the Cretans’ fondness for edible wild greens and herbs: One day a Turkish (or Greek — depending on the narrator) peasant and his son are working on the field. The son hurriedly comes to his father and says “Dad! I have just seen a Cretan and a cow entering the field. Which one should I chase out first?” The farmer responds in panic “The Cretan! The Cretan! He won’t leave anything for the cow let alone us.” Although today this “joke” is lightheartedly told by the Cretans as well mostly to dissimilate themselves through making fun of their cultural differences, in the early days of their displacement these stories were casual insults and calumnies tossed at them starting from the very first day they set foot in Turkey. On February 24, 1924, the refugees refused to get off the ship that carried them from Crete to Mersin on the grounds that their family members were forced to travel with different ships and hence scattered throughout the country. Sparking a protest at the port by refugees these outcries intensely annoyed the harbormaster and “They are Cretans. Put a sack of grass in front of them and then they will behave themselves,” he shouted.<sup>1013</sup> This insult aggravated the situation. Gündüz Artan, a local historian from Mersin, too reports a similar incident that took place after the arrival of refugees to the city. In the immediate aftermath of the population exchange in order to tease Cretan refugees the native population of Mersin “petitioned” the governor by tying a donkey in front of the city hall. They hung the “petition” around the neck of the donkey, which read “since the arrival of Cretans I have gone hungry.”<sup>1014</sup>

Greens and herbs were not the most controversial elements of the Cretan cuisine. The principal place of land snails (*χοχλινός*, *chochlios*; called *hohlos/hohlus/hohlüs* by Cretan

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<sup>1013</sup> Hançerli, *Giritli Mübadillerin Son Durağı*, 37.

<sup>1014</sup> Gündüz Artan, “Yüzüncü Yıldönümünde Giritliler’in (sic) Mersin’e İlk Muhacereti,” *İçel Sanat Kulübü Aylık Bülteni*, no. 82 (June 1999): 18.



refugees) in the kitchens of Cretans regardless of their faith. However, cooking and eating land snails was historically and firmly associated with the eating habits of Armenians and Greeks, as the maxim in Turkish says "snails cannot be sold in a Muslim neighborhood."<sup>1015</sup> Snail consumption had a strong semiotic aspect in Anatolia, and this consolidated the religious prejudices towards Cretans. Saadet Keskin, a refugee from Heraklio, testifies that while they were cooking snails at home, a native guest visiting them saw this, accused them of being infidels (*gâvurlar*) and said she would never eat at their home again.<sup>1016</sup> According to her, they had already been called "Greek seed" by the locals.<sup>1017</sup> Similarly, Ali İnceyaylar, another Cretan refugee living in Adana, says that they clandestinely collected, cooked and ate snails; then broke snail shells into small pieces and covertly chuck them out.<sup>1018</sup> The very same method of disposing of shells was used by the Cretans in Selçuk, İzmir.<sup>1019</sup> Hürriyet Moray, who was born in 1926 in a family of Cretan origin resettled in Adana, remembers that they were under the constant surveillance of their neighbors and their waste was continuously monitored by them in order to figure out if Cretans were hiding something regarding their ethnoreligious identity.

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<sup>1015</sup> In the 14th-century Turkish-Islamic saga *Dânişmendnâme* while the feast of the "infidel" chieftains is described, snails ("kabuklu böcek") are mentioned as one of their characteristic dishes, and it is underlined that these are eaten by nonbelievers ("Yeyenler anı hep batıl can idi"). Irène Mélikoff, *Dânişmendnâme: La Geste de Melik Dânişmend (Tome II Édition critique avec Glossaire et Index)*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Paris: Bibliothèque archéologique et historique de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie d'Istanbul, 1960), 91-2. Throughout the nineteenth century, the travelers and foreign diplomats refer to snails as a "non-Muslim" delicacy. See for example Lady [Emilia Bithynia] Hornby, *Constantinople During the Crimean War* (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), 116; Guillaume Antoine Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Persia*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (London: T.N. Longman & O. Rees, 1801), 8-9; Charles White, *Three Years in Constantinople: Or, Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1844*, vol. 1, 3 vols. (H. Colburn, 1846), 80-1; Samuel Sullivan Cox, *Diversions of a Diplomat in Turkey* (New York: C. L. Webster & co., 1893), 435, 446.

<sup>1016</sup> Hançerli, *Giritli Mübadillerin Son Durağı*, 20.

<sup>1017</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>1018</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>1019</sup> Özsoy, *Mübadelenin Öksüz Çocukları*, 62.

Some of their Cretan compatriots, who disposed of snail shells together with their daily waste, were quickly branded as infidel. Since they were afraid of such bad reputation, they used to secretly dig a hole in their backyard and bury the shells whenever they ate snails.<sup>1020</sup> In the first feature-length Turkish movie on the population exchange, *My Grandfather's People (Dedemin İnsanları)*, which is directed and written by Çağan Irmak, based on his and his grandfather's life story, Cretans' Grecophone identity and their snail consumption pop up in the very first minutes of the movie. In the summer of 1980 — more than five decades after the signature of the exchange convention, Ozan, a ten-year-old boy (the director) living with his family in a coastal town of İzmir, overhears a shopkeeper using insulting language about his grandfather, Mehmet Bey, who is a refugee from Crete. Mehmet Bey has a distinct accent, sporadically uses Greek words and phrases while talking and always wears Western garb. The shopkeeper says "Damned infidel is what he is. [...] He's forgotten the days when he was eating snails on his island."<sup>1021</sup> Again in one of the first documentaries on the population exchange produced in Turkey, *Benim Giritli Limon Ağacım - Κρητικιά Μου Λεμονιά* (My Cretan Lemon Tree), Yurdanur Turgut, a second-generation Cretan refugee, also testifies that the snails were collected, sold and consumed by Cretans secretly. She also explains that Cretan refugees developed a strategy to sell/buy snails without arousing suspicion from curious neighbors and hence to avoid local conflicts that would potentially further marginalize them. Those who had left Crete before the population exchange used to collect snails because they had had time to learn the region and built up a reputation to peddle in the countryside. Hawkers<sup>1022</sup> used to pack snails in gunny sacks and when one came to

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<sup>1020</sup> Hançerli, *Giritli Mübadillerin Son Durağı*, 30.

<sup>1021</sup> Çağan Irmak, *Dedemin İnsanları* (Tiglon, 2011).

<sup>1022</sup> It is worth mentioning that in the early 1920s Turcoman Alevi nomads called Tahtacıs collected and sold snails to the Levantine families in İzmir. Pelin Böke, *İzmir, 1919-1922: Tanıklıklar* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2006), 147-48. Tahtacıs did not eat snails themselves. They only used snail shells

a mixed neighborhood, he shook the sacks on the back of his donkey to rattle snail shells and shouted "karidyia" [Greek word for walnuts (*καρύδια*)] in order to let Cretans know that he brought snails.<sup>1023</sup> By using this code, Cretans try to avoid religious/ethnic discrimination and being targeted with religious slurs.

The religious slurs occasionally cast against the Cretan refugees show the fact that on the popular level the link between nationalism and religion is more sophisticated than the simplistic binary opposition that this relationship is usually portrayed in the literature. On the other hand, religious bigotry and prejudice against Cretans was running deeper than linguistic and cultural differences and had an "actual" religious base and could be mobilized quickly in particular social contexts. The Cretan refugees were even exposed to discrimination in terms of their religious faith for belonging to a heterodox Sufi order called *Bektashi tariqa*, which had generally been set side by side with the Janissary corps, civil unrest and revolts in Anatolia and Alevism, derogatorily called *Qizilbash*. After the forceful abolition of the Janissaries in 1826, Bektashism had been regarded as heretic<sup>1024</sup> moreover, the *Bektashi* order was banned in tandem with the military reorganization in the late Ottoman Empire and the *Bektashis* "were enabled to maintain their worship only by preserving the strictest secrecy."<sup>1025</sup> Although the *Bektashis* supported the

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for the treatment of boils on the human skin. Abdurrahman Yılmaz, *Tahtacılar da gelenekler* (Ankara: CHP Halkevleri Yayınları, 1948), 111. It is logical to assume that the Tahtacı's Alevi identity and this particular business activity of theirs resonated with the Cretans' snail consumption and the prevalence of Bektashism among Cretans in the popular mind.

<sup>1023</sup> Tahsin İşbilen, *Benim Girtili Limon Ağacım*, Documentary (Paradoks Yapım, 2006).

<sup>1024</sup> In his famous manuscript on the abolition of the Janissary corps, Üss-i Zâfer, Şeyhizade Mehmed Esad refers to the Janissaries as "güruh-ı Alevi ve revâfız" (a mob of Alevis and heretics). Şeyhizâde Mehmed Esad, *Üss-i Zafer* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1828), 216. See also Jacob, Georg. *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Derwisch-Ordens der Bektaschis*. Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1908, 8.

<sup>1025</sup> John Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London: Luzac & co., 1937), 78.

national independence struggle<sup>1026</sup> and the leading republican ideologists praised Bektashism for being a national(ist) sect,<sup>1027</sup> in the last instance, they were marginalized for being a religious group and Shiite left outside of the appreciated, tightly-regulated, nominal interpretation of Sunni Islam, which gradually became a marker of the Turkish nation during the secularization process of the nascent Turkish republic.<sup>1028</sup> On the popular level, there were deeply rooted, social and cultural prejudices against *Alevis* in general and *Bektashis* in particular. In addition to the mere delegitimization of Bektashism, *Bektashi* Cretans were marginalized in a more serious way; since they practiced their rituals in their mother tongue, that is, the Cretan dialect of Greek. The *Bektashis*, one of the largest orders on the island,<sup>1029</sup> were famous for their hymns called *nefes* (breath [of spirit]) written in the Cretan dialect in contradistinction with the linguistic convention of this genre. The *Bektashis* were and are known for their commitment to the Turkish language in their praying sessions. That is why this unorthodox approach to Islam had maintained even more unorthodox attitudes in Crete, like composing and singing religious hymns in Greek.<sup>1030</sup> After the population exchange, Salih [Akdemir] Baba from Heraklion founded a *dergâh* in Turgutlu,

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<sup>1026</sup> Baki Öz, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Alevi-Bektaşiler* (İstanbul: Can yayınları, 1989), 23-58.

<sup>1027</sup> For example, see David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of a Secular Islamic Tradition* (London; New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2007), 130-31, 199.

<sup>1028</sup> For the relationship between Bektashism and the nation-building process in Turkey see Markus Dressler, *Writing Religion: The Making of Turkish Alevi İslam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 78-112, 153-185; David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey*, 13-32.

<sup>1029</sup> According to Ali Ekrem Erkal one-fifth of the Muslim population in Crete belonged to the Bektashi order. For Ayşe Nükhet Adıyeke, the Bektashis constituted only 12 percent of the Muslim community of the island at the end of the twentieth century. Ali Ekrem Erkal, *Geleneksel Kültürü ile Türk Girit (Toplum)*, vol. 3, 3 vols. (İzmir: Nurdaş, 2008), 16; Ayşe Nükhet Adıyeke, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Girit Bunalımı (1896-1908)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 86.

<sup>1030</sup> For the usage of the Cretan dialect in Bektashi, rituals see Tuncay Ercan Sepetcioğlu, "Girit'ten Anadolu'ya Gelen Göçmen Bir Topluluğun Etnotarihsel Analizi: Davutlar örneği" (Ph.D., Ankara Üniversitesi, 2011), 253-77.

Manisa, the congregation of which was almost exclusively constituted by the Cretan refugees for the rituals were performed in Greek.<sup>1031</sup> Those who belonged to different Sufi orders such as *Mawlawiyya*, *Khalwatiyya*, *Jelvetiyye*, and *Naqshbandiyyah*, etc. were treated not quite differently even though they were *Sunnis*. This was mainly because almost all Sufi orders in Crete were strongly influenced by Alevism/Bektashism.<sup>1032</sup> When I asked Mehmet Cebeci if they were *Bektashis*, he told me that his family was “*Naqshi*,” but they “had nothing to do with *Naqshbandiyya* in Anatolia” and “had a deep love and respect for Ali unlike those blindly-attached zealots (*kör yobazlar*).”<sup>1033</sup> Similarly, Salih Dinçer, who is a second generation refugee from Heraklio and still considers himself as a follower of the *Khalwatiyya* order, underlined that their interpretation of Islam was “much more liberal and modern than those in Turkey and much close to Bektashism due to their strong belief in the unity of essence (*vahded-i vücud*).”<sup>1034</sup> The close association of the Cretan identity and Alevism/Bektashism contributed to the marginalization of this identity. The Cretan refugees, who were under immense pressure to

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<sup>1031</sup> In Turgutlu the descendants of the Cretan refugees still remember Salih Baba and his singing nefes in the Cretan dialect. There were also other people well known and respected for their ability to sing Cretan hymns. Mediha Demirdal, a second-generation refugee from Chania, for example, told that there was a lady called Pembe, who was very skilled at reciting nefeses in the Cretan dialect. Mediha Demirdal, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, March 3, 2012. For Salih Baba, see Erdal Selâmi Şimşek, *Dünden Bugüne Girit'te Türk Tasavvuf Kültürü* (İstanbul: Doğu Kitabevi, 2014), 47.

<sup>1032</sup> According to the historical accounts, the boundaries between these were highly permeable. Erdal Selâmi Şimşek, *Dünden Bugüne Girit'te Türk Tasavvuf Kültürü* (İstanbul: Doğu Kitabevi, 2014), passim. The relative looseness of the Islamic understanding of these orders resulted in collective conversions to Christianity. Bahaeddin Şakir Bey in his notes mentions that the son of the Naqshbandiyya sheikh of Rethymno converted to Christianity together with some men and women in the early twentieth century. Bahaeddin Şakir. *Bahaeddin Şakir Bey'in Biraktığı Vesikalara Göre İttihat ve Terakki*. Edited by Erdal Aydoğan and İsmail Eyyüpoğlu. Ankara: Alternatif, 2004, 378-79. For the relationship between Christianity and Bektashism in Crete and other Sufi orders see F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity And Islam Under The Sultans*, ed. Margaret M. Hasluck, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press., 1929), 568-70.

<sup>1033</sup> Mehmet Cebeci, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 4, 2013.

<sup>1034</sup> He also showed me a photograph of the Khalwati-Muslihi sheikh, Muhammed Hilâli Baba wearing a western-style suit instead of a cassock. Salih Dinçer, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 6, 2013.

continually validate their national credentials through abandoning their mother tongue in favor of Turkish, were forced to veil or renounce their religious affiliations too, which were appreciated neither by the state nor by the existing social structure. Recent field studies show that an important part of the Cretan immigrants and refugees preferred assimilation to the "acceptable" interpretations of Islam as a survival strategy and the Bektashism lost its power among Cretans. Those who still observe Bektashism mainly preferred disguise or dissimulation as effective strategies to protect their religious identity.

It can be said that different sorts of enforcement such as discriminatory policies, random violence against linguistic and ethnic minorities, forced assimilation as well as persecution and forced resettlement through language policy became *de rigueur* in the first two decades of the Turkish republic. Given their idiosyncratic identities, the Grecophone Muslim refugees of Crete were affected as severely as the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey that were the primary target of these interventionist and transformative policies to forge a homogenous nation. Occasionally the representatives of the nation, in other words, the guardians of the national values were more cantankerous towards their coreligionists resisting nationalization and institutionalization of ethnic differences via the definition of Turkish citizenship. Due to the immediate "unassimilability" of the Greek language within the rubric of Turkishness, the Cretan Muslim refugees remained not only to be the object of nationalization, but also to constitute the portent of the unattainability of the goals of the same project for which the state mobilized gargantuan means and took draconian measures such as the population exchange. The Cretan refugee community developed methods of self-preservation and resistance. As discussed in the third chapter, the Cretan refugees sent petitions to state authorities to express their loyalty to the state and their determination to be a part of the Turkish nation. Considering the fact that the Cretans

were sued for insulting Turkishness or government most probably with the accusation of speaking Greek in public spaces, such a perturbation and alertness seem to be entirely comprehensible and even natural to protect themselves in the face of potential allegations. The Cretan refugees, as expressed in the refugee testimonies, constituted semi-isolated local communities in which they kept alive their cultural heritage, i.e. their traditional knowledge, linguistic skills, religious practices and culinary codes. These communities and especially home both as a place and a unit played a significant role for inter- and transgenerational transmission of this heritage, especially its linguistic aspect up through the second and third generations. Female refugees, in particular, usually socialized in these communities or mainly in their extended families and never needed or even wanted to learn the Turkish language. So they became the main conveyor of the linguistic heritage inside the walls of the home, which can be regarded as a cultural and linguistic enclave.<sup>1035</sup> Several refugees and their descendants testified that it was the female members of their families that through different forms of folk literature constituted a living memory and heritage. With their easiness to be memorized and pass into general circulation among the Cretan community *mandinades* (*μαντινάδες*, sing. *Mandinadha*),<sup>1036</sup> Improvised 15-syllable rhyming or assonant couplets, were eminently practical in the protection and transmission of this heritage and helped to inculcate the Cretan identity in the new generations.<sup>1037</sup> Even today people of Cretan origin, regardless of their ability to speak the Cretan

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<sup>1035</sup> While summarizing his impressions on the Cretan refugees that he interviewed in Turkey, local historian Kostas Kefalakis calls home “school of mother tongue and history” (“Το σπίτι! Σχολείο της μητρικής γλώσσας... και της ιστορίας...”). Kefalakis, *Μικρασία*, 77.

<sup>1036</sup> Euangelia Phrankaki describes mandinades as the culmination of the soul of Crete. Euangelia K. Phrankaki, *Συμβολή στα Λαογραφικά της Κρήτης* (Athens: Gkoupfa, 1949), 167.

<sup>1037</sup> Although men too verbalize mandinades, the refugees that I interviewed particularly emphasize the role of elderly female members of their families in their learning of Cretan dialect through mandinades. Ali Onay stressed that her mother was very skilled at composing mandinades. In fact, she wrote them

dialect, remember and recite mandinades on heroism, love, fate, death, female beauty, pastoral life, etc. and they continue to exist within the Cretan oral culture in Turkey. Needless to say, the poetic horizon of mandinades expanded after the population exchange in a way that they accommodated longing, homesickness, grief, and dissatisfaction hence refugeehood was too inscribed into the collective memory of the Cretans through this form of folk literature.

This *mandinadha* was told for the loved ones left behind in Crete:<sup>1038</sup>

Πώς θα το πω το έχε γεια, τζαι πώς θα μπω στην βάρκα;  
Τζαι πώς θ' αφήσω πίσω μου, δυο ζαχαρωμένα (sic) μάτια;

How will I say farewell and how will I get into that boat?  
Moreover, how will I leave two honeyed eyes behind me?

Through mandinades the Cretan refugees also expressed their discontent with the living conditions after the population exchange:

Ανέ ρωτάς Κεμάλ πασά στην Κρήτη πώς περνούσαμε  
Μάραθα εκαθαρίζαμε τζαι τσι βρούβες πουλούσαμε  
Τζ' αν ερωτάς Κεμάλ πασά τζ' εδά πώς περνάμε  
Μάραθα καθαρίζουμε τζαι τσι βρούβες πουλάμε

If you wonder Kemal Paşa how we survived in Crete  
We used to clean greens (lit. fennel) and sell potherbs (lit. mustard greens)  
And if you wonder Kemal Paşa how we survive now  
We clean greens and sell potherbs

Mandinades, as mentioned above, regardless of the linguistic abilities of reciters, have become a sort of identity card for younger generations to publicly validate their Cretan origin, to

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down in the Cretan dialect yet in Arabic script as mentioned before. Ali Onay, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, October 30, 2012.

<sup>1038</sup> Müfide Pekin, ed., *Belleklerdeki Güzellik Girit Maniler, Atasözleri, Deyimler, Tekerlemeler* (İstanbul: Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı, 2007), 115. This book was translated by Thanassis Tsimpis into Greek and published in Greece in 2014: Müfide Pekin, ed., *Κρήτη & Τουρκοκρητικοί - Η ομορφιά της μνήμης*, trans. Thanasis Tsimpis (Chania: Ereisma, 2014).



express their individual and collective identities as well as demonstrate their concern, anxiety, adaptation problems, and dissatisfaction.<sup>1039</sup> Before closing this discussion, it is important to discuss the role of another source that the Cretan mandinades tradition was significantly affected and had a central role in maintaining and preserving the Cretan identity after the displacement. This source is *Erotokritos*, which is a long romantic-epic poem and frequently referred as the best known and most admirable work of the Cretan Renaissance literature and its author, Vitsentzos Kornaros, ironically called "the Homer of the demotic [lit. vulgar] literature" ["*Ομηρος της χυδαϊκής φιλολογίας*"] by Adamantios Korais, who was one of the leading figures of the Greek Enlightenment and conceptualized the intellectual rudiments of Greek nationalism.<sup>1040</sup> The prominent place of the *Erotokritos* in the Cretan popular culture and its significant impact upon the modern Greek literature have received serious scholarly attention. The popularity of the *Erotokritos* may be best depicted by Patrick Leigh Fermor:<sup>1041</sup>

In Crete, this great metrical saga plays the part of the Homeric cycle in Dorian times. Everyone knows it, all can quote vast tracts, and, astonishingly, some of the old men in the mountains, though unable to read and write, could, and still can, recite the whole poem by heart; when one remembers that it is nearly a thousand lines longer than the *Odyssey*, this feat makes one scratch one's head with wonder or disbelief. They intone rather than recite it; the voice rises at the caesura and the end of the first line of a couplet, and drops at the end of the second; now and then to break the monotony, the key shifts. During our winter vigils, it continued for hours; every so often another old man would take over; listening, I occasionally dropped off for an hour or two, and woke to find

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<sup>1039</sup> These feelings and Cretan mandinades can also be viewed in the documentaries on the population exchange, refugeehood. See for example Maria Mavrikou, *Το Ταξίδι*, Documentary (Ίδρυμα Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, 1997); Kaitatzis Ploutarchos, *Παιδιά Είμαστε Τότε... οι Μικρασιάτες Θυμούνται*, Documentary (Ίδρυμα Μείζονος Ελληνισμού, 1999).

<sup>1040</sup> Adamantios Korais, *Απάνθισμα δεύτερον επιστολών* (Athens: Koromilas, 1841), 220. Almost two decades after this analogy of the defender of the purification of the Greek language through complete removal of the "demotic" language corrupted by vernacular and foreign elements, the Katharevousa version of the *Erotokritos* was published by Dionysios Photeinos in 1818 under the title *Neos Erotokritos*.

<sup>1041</sup> Patrick Leigh Fermor, *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece* (New York: NYRB Classics, 2006), 144-45.

*Erotókritos* in the thick of yet another encounter with the Black Knight of Karamania. [...] The rhythmic intoning might sway on till daybreak, with some of the listeners rapt, others nodding off or snoring; or until a runner broke in from the dark like a snowman in a gyre of flakes [...].”

This was also confirmed by James A. Notopoulos claiming *Erotokritos* is "so well known by Cretans that its text, if lost, can be completely restored orally."<sup>1042</sup> Similarly, Ekmel Molla, who was a Candiot refugee, visited Crete in August 1950 and then published a short travelogue after his return to İstanbul, in Greek, wrote about people improvising mandinades in Crete and added “I regret deeply that I could not write the other [couplets] from the great collection that they kept in their minds and their mouths were saying, the real *Erotokritos*.”<sup>1043</sup> These observations made in the 1940s and 1950s were valid for the early twentieth century and the Muslim community of the island as well. Fournarakis underlines the fact that the *Erotokritos* was the favorite literary work of Muslim Cretans, who were Grecophone yet mostly illiterate. Despite this, they read the *Erotokritos* by heart and usually treated its verses as philosophical maxims.<sup>1044</sup> Ali Ekrem Erkal devotes a whole chapter on the *Erotokritos* in his book and discusses the significance of this saga for the Muslim Cretans. According to the author, recitation from memory of passages of the *Erotokritos* and their dramatisation were an indispensable part of Cretan weddings. He also writes that one could find two books in all Muslim houses: One was the *Koran* and the other the *Erotokritos*. He also states further that sometimes *hafizes* changed the verses and added some

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<sup>1042</sup> James A. Notopoulos, “Homer and Cretan Heroic Poetry: A Study in Comparative Oral Poetry,” *The American Journal of Philology* 73, no. 3 (1952): 228.

<sup>1043</sup> Molla, *Τι είδα στην Ελλάδα το 1950*, 88.

<sup>1044</sup> Fournarakis, *Τουρκοκρήτες*, 5. Mark Mazower highlights the same point: “the Muslim peasants of Crete spoke Greek and enjoyed the *Erotokritos*, the island’s epic poem, as much as the Christians, from whom, after all, most of them were descended.” Mazower, *The Balkans*, 47.

Turkish words into the original text.<sup>1045</sup> In similar fashion, Ahmet Cevat Emre, a politician and prominent philologist of Cretan origin, bestows a short chapter to the *Erotokritos* in his autobiography, *İki Neslin Tarihi* [A History of Two Generations]. Ahmet Cevat describes the nights his illiterate mother had him read to her from the *Erotokritos* and listened to this “heart-rending, romantic epic written in the vernacular language” in tears. He also adds that the young girls living next door joined them too.<sup>1046</sup> Hakkı Bilgehan, who is, as mentioned before, a second-generation Cretan refugee from Heraklio and the translator of the *Erotokritos* into the present-day Turkish language,<sup>1047</sup> reaffirms the significance of this saga for the Muslim Cretans.

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<sup>1045</sup> Erkal, *Geleneksel kültürü ile Türk Girit* v.3, 128.

<sup>1046</sup> Ahmet Cevat Emre, *İki Neslin Tarihi - Mustafa Kemal Neler Yaptı?* (İstanbul: Hilmi Kitabevi, 1960), 12-13

<sup>1047</sup> For the Turkish translation and transcription of the text see Vitzentzos Kornaros, *Erotokritos*, trans. Hakkı Bilgehan (İstanbul: Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı, 2011). This translation was presented or referred as the first translation of the *Erotokritos* into Turkish. See for instance Stella Tsolakidou, “Professor Hakkı Bilgehan Translates ‘Erotokritos’ Into Turkish,” *News Portal, Greek Reporter Europe*, (January 16, 2012), <http://eu.greekreporter.com/2012/01/16/professor-hakki-bilgehan-translates-erotokritos-into-turkish/>. However, Bilgehan’s translation is not the first Turkish translation. The *Erotokritos* was translated into (Ottoman) Turkish in 1873 by Ali Refik from Heraklio and Rıfat from Asitane, two students of the Imperial War Academy [Mekteb-i Fünûn-i Harbiye-i Şahâne şakirdanından Asitaneli Rıfat ve Girid Kandiyeli Ali Refik]. The title of the translation reads اره توس – یعنی سودا [Aretos — yani Sevdâ; Aretos — i.e. Love] and the translators added a short introduction to their translation. Johann Strauss published a major and detailed article on this translation in 1992. For this article see Johann Strauss, "Aretos ya 'ni sevdâ: The Nineteenth Century Ottoman Translation of the ‘Erotokritos,'" *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 16, no. 1 (January 1, 1992): 189–202. In this article, while discussing the very limited reception of this translation among an Ottoman readership, Strauss says that there is no known reprint of this translation. I have located two copies of the Ottoman translation of the *Erotokritos* at the Seyfettin Özege Collection of the Atatürk University in Erzurum (loc. 616/SÖ). Unfortunately, I have not had the chance of comparing these copies in depth, because Strauss does not give any details about the location of the copy he reviews. However, from the other details that Strauss mentions in the article and the image of the first page he provides, the Özege copies seem different from the copy that is referred by Strauss.

As far as the translators of the *Erotokritos* into the Ottoman Turkish are concerned, they are still as shadowy as the author of the saga. So far, I have found some crumbs of information about them. Before his graduation from the Imperial War School, Candiot Ali Refik was one of the authors and translators of the *Çocuklara Mahsus Gazete* (The Children's Own Gazette). In the *Mir'ât-ı Mekteb-i Harbiye* (Mirror of the War Academy) there is some unfortunate information about him: Ali Refik, who graduated from the War Academy in h. 1292 (1875-1876), lost his life in 1295. At the time of his untimely death he was a teacher at the Mühendishane-i Berr-i Hümayûn (Imperial School of Military Engineering). In this short

One of his distant relatives, Mercan Ağa, who was a shepherd and resettled in Urla, İzmir after the population exchange, was able to sing most of the *Erotokritos* with its melody.<sup>1048</sup> Regarding the affection of displaced Cretans for the *Erotokritos*, Mercan Ağa was no exception. Mehmet Cebeci during my interview a short excerpt from the *Erotokritos* and when this 96-year-old refugee was interrupted by his memory, he apologized and told he had been able to read this epic poem by heart for hours.<sup>1049</sup> Some Cretans wanted to keep their connection to their lost homeland and culture through a physical copy of the *Erotokritos*. Stylianos Alexiou, who prepared a critical, philological edition of the *Erotokritos* with an extended introduction, commentaries and a glossary in 1980, writes in this edition that an old Cretan living in İzmir requested to send him a copy of the *Erotokritos*.<sup>1050</sup> During the fieldwork conducted by the Foundation of the Exchangees of the Population Exchange in Söke, they came across a Candiot refugee, Ali Uğurel, who was able to recite the entire *Erotokritos* from memory. Uğurel also had a copy of the book (See Figure 5-3).<sup>1051</sup>

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biography, it is mentioned that he also translated some pieces for another children's journal called Hazine-i Etfal. In his bio, in the *Mir'ât-ı Mekteb-i Harbiye*, the *Erotokritos* is also mentioned as "(Sevdâ) [Love] which he translated from Greek." For the *Çocuklara Mahsus Gazete* and Ali Refik see Cüneyd Okay, *Eski harfli çocuk dergileri: inceleme* (Kitabevi, İstanbul: 1999), 36-37. For Ali Refik's short bio see Mehmed Esad, *Mir'ât-ı Mekteb-i Harbiye: Mekteb-i Fünûn-i Harbiye-yi Şahâne'nin İbtidâ-yi Teessüsünden Bu Ana Kadar Neşet Eden Zabitanın İsim ve Teliflerini Havi ve Mektebin Altmış Senelik Terakkiyatını Muhtevi Bir Eser-i Askerîdir* (İstanbul: Artin Asaduryan Şirket-i Mürettibiye Matbaası, 1310), 505. From the same source, we learn that Rifat from Asitane was a major in the Central Battalion of the Fourth Imperial Army and the author of the *Tarih-i Fenn-i Harb* (History of the Science of War). His bio does not refer to the translation of the *Erotokritos*. *Ibid.*, 493.

<sup>1048</sup> Hakkı Bilgehan, *Girit - Her Yönü ile* (İzmir: Barış Yayınları, 2011), 54-55.

<sup>1049</sup> Mehmet Cebeci, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 4, 2013.

<sup>1050</sup> Vitzentzos Kornaros, *Ερωτόκριτος: Κριτική Έκδοση / Εισαγωγή, Σημειώσεις, Γλωσσάριο*, ed. Stylianos Alexiou (Athens: Ermis, 1980), 108.

<sup>1051</sup> Müfide Pekin, ed., *Belleklerdeki Güzellik Girit*, 14-33.

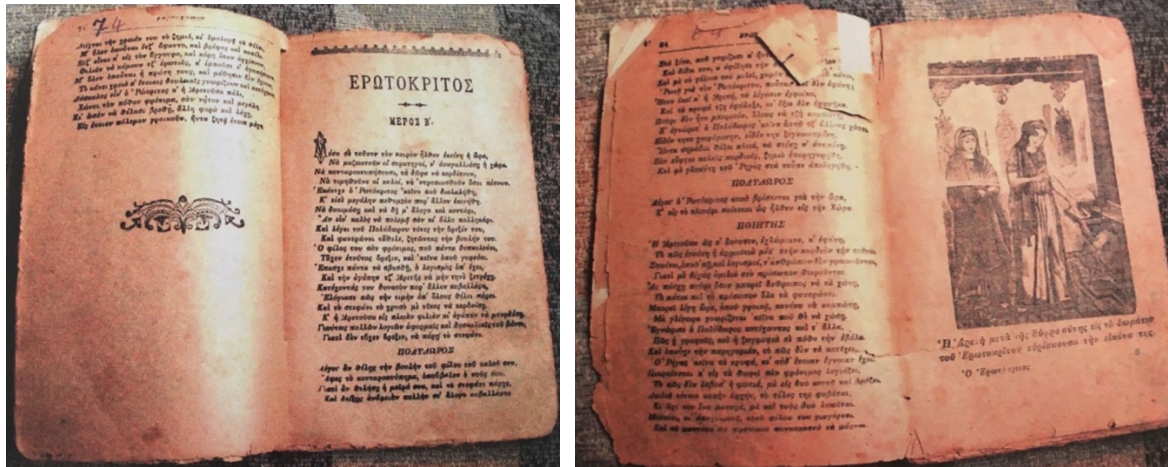


Figure 5–3: Ali Uğurel’s copy of the *Erotokritos*

Source: Vitzentzos Kornaros, *Erotokritos*, trans. Hakkı Bilgehan (İstanbul: Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı, 2011), n.d.

Feyza Hepçilingirler, a renowned author and dramatist who was born in Ayvalık in 1946 to a family of refugees from Crete and Lesbos, says that her paternal grandmother used to “read the *Erotokritos* from its Greek original.”<sup>1052</sup> Second generation Cretan Cafer Ural, who lives in Dikili, İzmir, expressed in detail his father's enthusiasm for the *Erotokritos*.<sup>1053</sup> He told me that in

<sup>1052</sup> Her observations on the sharp difference between her maternal and paternal sides of her family, who were from Lesbos and Crete respectively, are quite compelling. She says that two houses belonged to two, unlike cultures. Her maternal grandmother knew the Turkish sagas like the sagas of Aşık Garip and Battal Gazi, by heart whereas her paternal grandmother used to read the *Erotokritos* from her Greek copy. "Somehow my paternal grandmother brought Greek culture from Crete and my maternal grandmother Anatolian oral culture from Lesbos" she adds. Ömer Lekeziz, *Yeni Türk Edebiyatında Öykü*, vol. 5, 5 vols. (İstanbul: Kaknüs, 2001), 48. Ahmet Yorulmaz, who was the author of many novels and stories on the population exchange and life of the Cretan refugees in Ayvalık, in one of his most well-known novels about this issue, *Kuşaklar ya da Ayvalık Yaşantısı* (Generations or Life in Ayvalık), refers to the sentimental importance of the *Erotokritos* in the life of the Cretan Muslims before the population exchange. But it is also worth mentioning that this reference to the *Erotokritos* was removed by the author in the later editions of the same novel. I did not have the chance of asking the reason of this “retouch” to the author when we met in the summer of 2013 a few months before he passed away (2014) because I comperatively read the different editions of the book in 2015 when I realized some minor changes in the fifth edition. For the *Erotokritos* reference see Ahmet Yorulmaz, *Kuşaklar ya da Ayvalık yaşantısı*, 1st ed. (Balıkesir: Geylan Kitabevi, 1999), 103 and for the same part in the fifth edition of the book see Ahmet Yorulmaz, *Kuşaklar ya da Ayvalık Yaşantısı*, 5th ed. (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2006),87-8.

<sup>1053</sup> Cafer Ural, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, January 28, 2013.

the early 1960s (1962-63) his father met a Greek tourist visiting their town. Since he was fluent in Greek, he was able to communicate with him directly and asked him to send a copy of the *Erotokritos*. Ural remembered the arrival of the book from Greece and his father's thrill. The more interesting point in his testimony was that at nights his father's Cretan friends got together in his barbershop and read the *Erotokritos* aloud like a preacher. All the participants of these "rituals" brought their kids with them to the "poetry nights" for the transmission of "cultural genetics" of Cretan culture to the younger generations. Therefore, it can be said that the *Erotokritos* served and still serves as a complex tool for the Cretan refugees and their descendants. It was first and foremost an excellent repository for Cretan cultural heritage. The *Erotokritos* also enables the Cretans to transmit and communicate their cultural knowledge through oral tradition and performance. Cretans' affection for this saga also provided them new spaces of sociability in which they could reproduce their identity and cultural heritage.

The discussion here shows that for the Cretan refugees, integration meant compulsory assimilation at different levels to avoid the formation of a new linguistic-cultural minority within the borders of the emerging Turkish nation-state, especially after and as the result of a prodigious ethnic "unmixing" operation. In the aftermath of the population exchange, the inclusion of the Cretan refugees became a form of subordination and subjugation through multi-layered social control. They were included within the nation through various technologies of exclusion. The ire for the non-Muslim minorities came in handy in the assimilation of Cretans. The simultaneous presence of Jews and Cretans in the official discourse as the two communities "insisting on using languages other than Turkish in public" helped the incrimination and condemnation of the Cretan identity especially in the pervasive anti-Semitic atmosphere of the period. By continuously evoking the analogy between Jews and Cretans it was made clear that the Cretans did not belong

properly to the nation. Within the nation, they constituted an outcast group and an irritant to the unyielding, rigid standards of the nation-state and the nation itself. Considering their religious and other cultural characteristics, the Greek-speaking Cretan refugees' presence in Turkey served as an effective instrument for creating a hierarchy among the Muslim members of the nation and privileging an ideal form of citizen, i.e. "the real Turkish citizen," which was described at the Parliament as early as 1924 as "a person who is Muslim, belongs to the Hanefi sect and speaks Turkish,"<sup>1054</sup> particularly in the Western cities of the country. The Cretan identity was the *reductio ad impossibile* ("A Greek-speaking Qizilbash with various other bizarre customs associated with infidelity") of "proper Turkishness," a counter proof of "proper Turkishness". Until their "voluntary" assimilation, the Cretan refugees were treated as undesirable foreigners that had been "accidentally" brought to replace the former ones, but also as strangers (defined by their culture and customs) living next door, the intimation of the stubborn and vexing existence of the alien elements within the homogenized (or rather to-be-homogenized) Turkish society. This was no different at the social level and when the daily social routine is considered. For the average person, it was easier to characterize all Cretans as such than to register the differences between them and to reduce them into a stereotype in a dismissive and dehumanizing manner. The inclusion of the Cretan refugees through exclusion took time, at least two generations and was a complex social process including policing and legal procedures, gastro-politics,<sup>1055</sup>

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<sup>1054</sup> "...bizim öz vatandaşımız, Müslüman, Hanefiyül mezhep, Türkçe konuşur, bir zat..." For Gelibolu deputy Celal Nuri Bey's speech and the discussion on how the issue of citizenship had to be handled in the 1924 Constitution on April 20, 1924, see *TBMMZC*, II/8/1 - 42, 910.

<sup>1055</sup> This concept is coined by Arjun Appadurai in order to describe the substantive content of food as well as its social function, moral meaning, semiotic and mnemonic power. According to Appadurai, food as simulacrum symbolizes locality and identity and has a considerable classificatory capability within everyday social life that can generate cultural and moral contention. Arjun Appadurai, "Gastro-Politics in Hindu South Asia," *American Ethnologist* 8, no. 3 (1981): 494–511.

moreover, "discursive weapons," as Michael Herzfeld calls,<sup>1056</sup> like stereotyping and ethnic humor, through which the existing social hierarchy and power structure were reproduced.

The displaced Cretans, on the other hand, passively resisted to these policies and procedures. They lived in semi-closed communities the bonds of which were maintained through endogamy. To patrol the boundaries of these communities they created cultural enclaves out of their homes. These enclaves, as mentioned above, were far from inviolable. First, the displacement and then the compulsory retreat of the Cretan culture from public domain into these enclaves resulted in a major interruption to the natural transmission of Cretan heritage down to the next generations. Yet the transmission of the Cretan identity did not halt, and this identity did not cease to exist. Elder female members of Cretan families, who were forced to socialize with their extended families due to language barriers in front of them, assumed the role of bearers of this heritage. At a slow pace and in a fragmentary manner the transmission continued, particularly with the oral folk history. In this process, mandinades and the Cretan saga called *Erotokritos* was particularly important. These literary elements created a sense of belonging among young Cretans regardless of their proficiency in *Kritika*.

There were also "other" Cretans, whose histories were utterly disregarded and not included in the nationalist historiography. Finally, those virtually invisible Cretan refugees are to be discussed.

### **5.3-3 "Other" Cretan refugees: Outcasts of the nation**

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<sup>1056</sup> Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 202.



Among the refugees from Crete, the largest non-Turkish speaking refugee group, were even more "marginal" —from the perspective of the state— elements in terms of social norms and that have not yet attracted enough scholarly attention. One such sub-group of Cretan refugees was lepers. Leprosy was very widespread in Crete. In several travelogues, the sufferings of lepers in Crete are narrated.<sup>1057</sup> In his *Travels and Researches in Crete* (1865), Thomas Abel Brimage Spratt gives particular attention to this disease and the population infected with it. Spratt notes that each region in Crete had a separate locality for the lepers of its district and there were about 1000 lepers living on the island.<sup>1058</sup> Spratt also cites from the 1853 report of Dr. Hjorth, the head of the Health Department in Crete, on leprosy and the sanitary condition of the island the following passage about the lepers:<sup>1059</sup>

Whoever walks out of the gate of one of the large towns, especially if it be on a Saturday, is distressed by the hideous sight of many of these unhappy beings sitting by the road side imploring charity. It is impossible to behold with indifference the condition of these unfortunate people, or to meditate that as soon as they are branded with the name of leper they are driven away from parents, children, relatives, and friends, like criminals, deprived of the power of earning their livelihood in an honest manner by labour, and reduced to the degrading state of begging.

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<sup>1057</sup> Papadakis quotes 26 different travelogues in his book on the history of leprosy in Crete. Charidimos A. Papadakis, *Οι λεπροί στην Κρήτη - Μεσκίνηδες* (Rethymno: C. A. Papadakis, 2011), 82-119.

<sup>1058</sup> T. A. B. Spratt, *Travels and Researches in Crete*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: J. van Voorst, 1865), 266, 270, 273. For the places of isolation in each region of the island see Papadakis, *Μεσκίνηδες*, 132-63.

<sup>1059</sup> *Ibid.*, 273. Franz W. Sieber too talks about lepers that he saw in Crete. "I saw the Lepers, who occupy a separate suburb, before the fortress of Candia, and are never permitted to enter the town. I shuddered at the sight of so much misery; most of them had lost their hands and feet, and showed their crippled stumps, soliciting compassion and aims, in a squeaking voice, or in almost unintelligible words spoken through the nose." Franz Wilhelm Sieber, *Travels in the Island of Crete, in the Year 1817* (London: Sir R. Phillips and co., 1823), 13. Sieber also writes about huts occupied by lepers outside the walls of Chania and between Rethymno and Heraklio. *Ibid.*, 41-2, 49.

Dr. Hjorth suggested a hospital exclusively for the lepers and appealed to the Ottoman government, which had already been taking some measures upon the requests of Muslim and Christian lepers, totally 104, living on the outskirts of the Castle of Heraklio from Sultan Albdülmecid I during his visit to the island in 1850. The Sultan ordered to distribute bread of 200 dirhams to each leper on a daily basis and only to Muslim lepers olive oil and rice in the month of Ramadan.<sup>1060</sup> Being unable to support themselves with this food allowance, healthier lepers continue to glean charity from their native or neighboring villages during harvest-time.<sup>1061</sup> In the following years, the local Ottoman officials continued to help lepers by, i.e., constructing fountains. In Rethymno, the inscription of the fountain built in 1863/4 by Ethem Bey known as *Cüzzamlılar Çeşmesi* (Μεσκινόβρυση), is extant.<sup>1062</sup> The Ottoman state also attempted to found a leprosarium in Chania and charitable institutions around the island for lepers during the final years of its rule in Crete.<sup>1063</sup> After the detachment of the island from the Ottoman Empire on December 9, 1898, the islet of Spinalonga, which is located in the Gulf of Elounda in Crete, a popular tourist attraction today, turned into a leper colony in 1903.

Not only Christians but also Muslims were infected with this disease, and the exchange convention did not specify any exceptions regarding those infected with contagious and epidemic diseases including leprosy. However, the legal framework provided by Regulation of Contagious

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<sup>1060</sup> BOA, C.SH. 6 — 253 [June 8, 1852].

<sup>1061</sup> Spratt, *Travels and Researches in Crete*, 267, 309.

<sup>1062</sup> “Κρήνη του Ετχέμ Μπέι γιου του Κλαψάρ-ζαντέ Γιουνούς Αγά (Μεσκινόβρυση).” Accessed July 14, 2015. [http://digitalcrete.ims.forth.gr/tourkology\\_monuments\\_display.php?id=72&l=2](http://digitalcrete.ims.forth.gr/tourkology_monuments_display.php?id=72&l=2).

<sup>1063</sup> For the measures against leprosy and foundation of various institutions for the treatment of this disease and assistance of lepers in the final years of the Ottoman rule in Crete see BOA, MV. 10 — 91 [July 14, 1886]; BOA, MV. 12 — 78 [October 3, 1886]; BOA, MV. 41 — 47 [March 23, 1889]; BOA, A.MTZ.GR. 1 — 23 [March 27, 1889]; BOA, ŞD. 2376 — 10 [December 29, 1897].

and Epidemic Diseases (*Emraz-ı Sâriye ve İstilâiye Nizamnamesi*)<sup>1064</sup> strictly restricted the entrance of people suffering from leprosy to the country. That is why on March 6, 1924, Tevfik Rüştü Bey sent a telegram, written in French, from Athens to Ankara. In the telegram Tevfik Rüştü Bey as the head of the Turkish envoy in the Mixed Commission informed the Ministry of Exchange about the existence of three exchangeable people living somewhere “near Candia [Heraklio] in Crete” and suffering from leprosy and asked the Minister to decide urgently on where to send these people.<sup>1065</sup> On March 8, the Ministry of Exchange, Mahmud Celal Bey, informed the Ministry of Health about the situation and to which institution these three people were to be sent following their arrival to Turkey.<sup>1066</sup> The following day Celal Bey sent a circular to towards the exchange bureaucracy saying that the lepers that would arrive in Turkey were to be sent to the *Emraz-ı Sâriye Hastanesi* (Hospital of Contagious Diseases) in İstanbul.<sup>1067</sup> On March 18, 1925 the council of ministers issued a decree on the compulsory resettlement of lepers to an abandoned Armenian monastery called the Meryem Ana (Virgin Mary) monastery which was located one hour away from the Pasinler, Erzurum in order to avoid the spread of disease by contacting the other people. The decree states that the monastery had enough land (“1000

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<sup>1064</sup> For the management see BOA, MV. 234 — 76 [April 28, 1914]. On February 12, 1923, Tevfik Rüştü Bey discussed the issue of contagious and epidemic diseases at the parliamentary section and claimed that the existing legal framework was effective enough to protect the people from such diseases. See *TBMMZC*, I27/3 - 191, 309, February 12, 1923. The discussions on this issue continued. One of the concerns of the deputies discussing the issue of border security, particularly the security of the border with Georgia, and emphasizing the importance of securing borders was the leprosy cases seen abroad. See Ardahan deputy Talat Bey's speech at the parliament on February 2, 1924, *TBMMZC*, II2/1 - 113, 427.

<sup>1065</sup> *BCA*, 272..0.0.79 — 72.2..6, 2. In Chios, there was also another leprosy, yet no archival information is available on other exchangeable lepers or those with any other contagious diseases.

<sup>1066</sup> *BCA*, 272..0.0.79 — 72.2..6, 3.

<sup>1067</sup> *BCA*, 272..0.0.79 — 72.2..29. According to the records of the Bureau of Village Affairs in Samsun, the order on the transfer of lepers to the *Emraz-ı Sâriye Hastanesi* of the Ministry of Exchange was sent to the all provincial bureaus. Nedim İpek, *Selanik'ten Samsun'a Mübadiller* (Samsun: Samsun Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2010), 94.

*dönüm*”) to make their living from agriculture.<sup>1068</sup> It should be noted that when the earthquake hit Ardahan in January 1925, Pasinler was almost razed to the ground and the entire population of the town was already in need of help.<sup>1069</sup> Although the decree of the government seems to be limited to Erzurum and the cities around it, local Cretan historian Charidimos Papadakis claims based on the testimony of a Cretan refugee in Ayvalik that these three exchangeable lepers that came to Turkey from Crete were too sent to this monastery.<sup>1070</sup> In 2006, Kemal Tunçmen,<sup>1071</sup> an Afro-Cretan, told Papadakis that in 1950 another person of color like himself came to Ayvalık. He was selling carpets and able to speak *Kritika*. He said that he was born in a monastery in eastern Anatolia, where his parents were resettled after the population exchange due to they had the "disease of God," i.e., leprosy. According to his story, the carpet sellers somehow managed to send him back to Crete, and he stayed in Spinalonga. Although Tunçmen emphasized that he had not believed this story, based on the list of patients at the Spinalonga leprosarium sent to the journal *Myson* in 1933 by Grammatakis, there was indeed a leper called Dimitrios, who had been born in Erzurum and were sent to Spinalonga after the Exchange. The admission of immigrants with leper into the country was strictly forbidden during the contagious period of the disease with the resettlement law adopted on May 31, 1926, i.e. after the refugee transfer was completed.<sup>1072</sup> My research has not yielded any further information on the fate of those lepers.

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<sup>1068</sup> BCA, 030..18.1.1 — 13.17..12.

<sup>1069</sup> *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, January 12, 1925.

<sup>1070</sup> Papadakis too refers to the aforementioned documents. Charidimos A. Papadakis, *Μεσκίνηδες*, 190-2. For the testimony mentioned here see *ibid.*, 198.

<sup>1071</sup> Although in Papadakis' book the surname of this person reads Tunçman (Τούντσμαν), he refers to the Tunçmen family, one of the members of which still carries out the duty of chairperson of the Association of Cretans in Ayvalık.

<sup>1072</sup> “İkinci Madde — Türk harsına dahil olmayanlarla sirayet devrindeki firengililer, cüzzama mübtela eşhas ve aileleri, ceraimi siyasiye ve askeriye müstesna olmak üzere cinayetle mahkûm olanlar, anarşistler, casuslar, çingeneler ve memleket haricine çıkarılmış olanlar kabul edilmezler.”

As mentioned above, there was another subgroup the history of which has been escaped from scholarly attention, namely the Afro-Cretans.<sup>1073</sup> The history of this community is still almost entirely unknown. This is mostly because of the fact dark-colored people of African ancestry are not visible in the official demographic records or reference sources of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. In the nineteenth century, Crete was one of the most important ports along the route of the Trans-Saharan slave traffic in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>1074</sup> According to Wright, every year about 700 slaves were shipped from Benghazi, predominantly to Ottoman Crete and Constantinople. Crete was not only a hub but an important center for slave trade where demand for slaves was brisk even among Ottoman state officials.<sup>1075</sup> Even though he cannot substantiate his argument with archival documentation, based on secondary sources and oral tradition, Papadakis, in parallel with Pashley's observations, claims that the majority of African slaves were brought to Crete during the period in which the

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“Second Article — Those who do not belong to Turkish culture, who are infected with syphilis, who are subject to leprosy during the contagious period and their families, who are imprisoned because of committing murder except political and military reasons, anarchists, spies, gypsies, and who are previously banished to abroad cannot be admitted.” “İşkân Kanunu,” *Resmi Cerîde*, no. 409 (July 1, 1926): 1–2.

<sup>1073</sup> In order to refer to this community, I prefer to utilize the term “Afro-Cretan” rather than use the terms “Afro-Turkish,” “Afro-Ottoman” or “chalikoutis” (χαλικούτης) as they were called in Crete.

<sup>1074</sup> Ehud R. Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression: 1840-1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 21, 39.

<sup>1075</sup> John Wright, *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade, History and Society in the Islamic World* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 111, 128. According to Spratt, even at the time of the siege of Heraklio, Rumeli Beylerbeyi Hasan Paşa was killed together with his slave and his slave was buried next to him with a black tombstone indicating that he was dark-skinned. Spratt, *Travels and researches in Crete*, 43. For Hasan Paşa's death see Ayşe Pul, “Girit Savaşı ile İlgili Bir Türk Kaynağının Tahlili (TTK Kütüphanesi'nde Bulunan Girid Fethi Tarihi Başlıklı Yazma)” (Ph.D., Ankara Üniversitesi, 2004), 20, 153. On page 20, Pul reads Hasan Paşa's name correctly yet, on page 153, she misreads this name as Hüseyin (حسين) instead of Hasan (حسن) while referring to the same sentence of the same text.

island remained under Egyptian control (*Egyptokratia*).<sup>1076</sup> Similarly, George Parrot, in his travelogue, notes that most of the people of African descent were brought to Crete via Egypt by İbrahim.<sup>1077</sup>



کریموه عرب قیزلری

**Figure 5–4:** “Arab girls in Crete”  
**Source:** *Şehbal*, July 14, 1913, 115.

English traveller, as many other observers maintain, Robert Pashley provides information on how extensive slavery was in Crete in 1834:<sup>1078</sup>

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<sup>1076</sup> Charidimos A. Papadakis, *Οι Αφρικανοί στην Κρήτη - Χαλικούτες* (Rethymno: C. A. Papadakis, 2008), 67-70. Georges Perrot makes the same point in his memoir. Georges Perrot, *L'île de Crète: souvenirs de voyage* (Paris: L. Hachette et Cie., 1867), 36.

<sup>1077</sup> Perrot, *L'île de Crète*, 36.

<sup>1078</sup> Robert Pashley, *Travels in Crete*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (J. Murray, 1837), 104.

There are but few negros in the villages of Crete, although in the principal towns there are slaves in the families of almost every Mohammedan gentleman. The price of labour is every-where very high, the difficulty of obtaining labourers in many cases amounting to an absolute impossibility, and the markets of Khania and Megalo-Kastron are as regularly furnished with human flesh as they are with bullocks, the supply of both being chiefly drawn from the same place, Bengazi. One may therefore wonder, that of the small proprietors, who form the rural population of the island, so few should have slaves to assist them in the cultivation of their lands.

Frequently female slaves were employed to care children of wealthy families. İkbal Gülalp, for instance, in her autobiography talks about her mother's "Arab" ("black" in this context) nanny and servants.<sup>1079</sup> In a similar vein, Şengül Alacaklı presents her mother's photograph to the oral history project of the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants (*Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfi*), in which she was standing by a black nanny who was most probably younger than her (See Figure 5-5).

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<sup>1079</sup> Gülalp, *Girit Mübadelesi Olmasaydı*, 12.



**Figure 5–5:** “My dear mother with her nanny - Crete” - From Şengül Alacaklı’s family album  
**Source:** Müfide Pekin, ed., *Belleklerdeki Güzellik Girit Maniler, Atasözleri, Deyimler, Tekerlemeler* (İstanbul: Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı, 2007), 161.

In spite of the official bans on the slave trade in the Ottoman Empire, the influx continued in various forms and Crete was an important hub and, that is why there was a relatively large black community on the island. Since slaves did not have the freedom of choosing their religion or carry on their previous religious beliefs, those owned by Muslim masters were regarded as Muslim.<sup>1080</sup> Therefore, they were subject to the population exchange too. Some Afro-Cretans managed to bypass the officials and stay in Crete. Salis (Σαλής), a Sudanese-Egyptian who was

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<sup>1080</sup> For the first religious beliefs of those slaves see Michael Ferguson, "Enslaved and Emancipated Africans on Crete," in *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean*, ed. Terence Walz and Kenneth M Cuno (Cairo, New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 177-85.



also known among the locals as the black sailor of Chania, or Chelidonis/Chelidonakis (Χελιδόνης/Χελιδονάκης, a word coming from swallow[bird]), was arguably the most well-known figure of this community. The name of the Kumkapi neighborhood of Chania, was associated with Salis, and other black-skinned Muslim Cretans who stayed on the island after the population exchange such as Nuriye Marmaraki, (known as *Abla [elder sister]*), Ali Gogo (also known as Ali Günku or Kongo [*Congo*]). According to the testimonies, there were also other black Muslims that stayed after the population exchange. Papadakis claims that most of those people had had or acquired Italian or British passport after the cession of Crete from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1081</sup> These people were well-received and embraced by the community as relics of a ravaged past. In this respect, Salis' name, who died in 1967, was given to a street in his hometown in 2013 as a nostalgic gesture (See Figure 5-6), which runs counter to the controversy aroused after Salis' death. Salis died on February 28, 1967, and his body was found on March 2. The church did not let him get buried in a Christian cemetery, and initially, Salis get buried in a field that had been formerly used as Muslim cemetery and known as Mezarlikia (from the Turkish word *mezarlık* for cemetery). Merchants T. Naxakis, M. Vlonndakis and journalist K. Klonos requested the Patriarchate in Constantinople to grant a special burial permission for the transfer of Salis' body to the Christian cemetery. Only after this permission was granted, Salis' remains were moved to the Agios Loukas Cemetery in Chania and buried next to the graves of Russians that had fallen during the independence struggle of Crete. His friends raised funds for a tomb in his memory.<sup>1082</sup> On the tomb the verses of his friend, poet Georgios Georvasakis are inscribed (Figure 5-7):

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<sup>1081</sup> Papadakis, *Οι Αφρικανοί στην Κρήτη*, 269-70.

<sup>1082</sup> *Ibid.*, 263-68.

Ας ήσουν μαύρος  
Ας μην ήσουν Χριστιανός  
Ας ήταν μαύρη η μορφή σου  
Από το χιόνι πιο λευκή ήτανε η ψυχή σου

Let it be that you were black  
Let it be that you were not Christian  
Let it be that your outer man was black  
But your soul was whiter than snow



**Figure 5–6:** A street in the old town of Chania was named after Salis Chelidonakis in 2013.  
**Source:** Giorgos Konstas, “Στην Παλαιά Πόλη Οδός Σαλή Χελιδωνάκη,” *Haniotika Nea*, March 31, 2016, <http://www.haniotika-nea.gr/odos-sali-chelidonaki/>.



**Figure 5–7:** Salis' tomb in the Agios Loukas cemetery in Chania.  
**Source:** Iakovos Daskalakis, “Σαλής ο μαύρος βαρκάρης των Χανίων,” April 15, 2012, [http://iakovos-xania.blogspot.com/2012/04/blog-post\\_15.html](http://iakovos-xania.blogspot.com/2012/04/blog-post_15.html).

Even though these lines are supposed to eulogize Salis, they are tainted with colonial prejudices and sound white supremacist in the sense that it assumes being white and Christian is

better, and Salis was "whiter than white" and pure in heart even though he did not embrace the Christian faith. This "cordial racism"<sup>1083</sup> and symbolic whitening clearly shows that although discrimination against the black Muslims, who somehow did not leave Crete with the population exchange, was not institutionalized and glossed over in daily experiences through a process of conditional acceptance by which intertwined white and Christian dominance in the social hierarchy of the island was reproduced. What about those who were sent to Turkey with the population exchange?

Although in the official records there were no "racial" categorization regarding exchangees, there are liquidation certificates of refugees housed at the Turkish archives that indicate that the refugees were dark-skinned with epithets such as "zenci" or feminine "zenciye" (black),<sup>1084</sup> which was (or is still) used as a racial slur. Being Cretan, non-Turkish speaking, and black, Afro-Cretans experienced racial discrimination throughout generations.

The hitherto invisible African community in Turkey started to get organized only in recent years around the Africans Culture and Solidarity Society, known as Afro-Turk, which was

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<sup>1083</sup> Brian Owensby, "Toward a History of Brazil's "Cordial Racism": Race Beyond Liberalism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47, no. 02 (April 2005): 318–47.

<sup>1084</sup> So far I have located the following refugees whose racial origins were indicated with the epithets of zenci or zenciye in their official documentations:

Meryem, Zenci Mehmed's wife from Heraklio (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.69.396..6.)

Zenciye Hamide, Seyyit Mehmed's daughter from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.69.218..12.)

Zenciye Hatice, Abdullah's daughter from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.69.218..11.)

Ahmet of Zenci (Zenci's son) from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.65.194..3.)

Zenciye Emine, Abdi's daughter from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.59.151..14.)

Zenciye Makbule, Hüseyin's daughter from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.49.81..5.)

Saliha, Zenci İdris's daughter from Chania (BCA, 130..16.13 — 02.40.13..5.)

founded by Mustafa Olpak in 2006.<sup>1085</sup> Mustafa Olpak was a marble worker and a descendant of enslaved Africans brought to Rethymno, Crete in the late nineteenth century from Kenya. Olpak published a book on his family's experience of slavery, displacement and discrimination (*Kenya-Crete-İstanbul: Human Biographies from the Slave Coast*) in 2005 and, as Eve Troutt Powell, his memory offers a fresh insight “from the inside” into such experiences of African slaves.<sup>1086</sup>

Olpak, both in his book and in the interview he gave to me, shed light on an unknown aspect of the population exchange. The Muslim family that owned Olpak's grandparents had acquired Italian citizenship and managed to get exemption from the population exchange, yet his grandparents' fate was still uncertain due to the fact that there was no specific article of the Convention regulating the case of "slaves." Then this uncertainty was finally resolved with their manumission, which did not mean freedom but displacement, insecurity and life- and generations-long discrimination in their “new homeland”. He told me that his family was never fully incorporated into the social structure after their resettlement in Ayvalik. They were not only subject to the widespread discrimination and distrust against the Greek-speaking Cretan refugees, but they were also targeted with racial hatred and harassment. Almost all family members were called with the sobriquet of *Arab* for being dark-skinned throughout their entire lives, Olpak, himself, was forced to end his marriage due to such harassments. Among such memories Şehriban *Teyze*'s story stands out:

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<sup>1085</sup> For the association and the political connotations of the word *zenci* see Michael Ferguson, “White Turks, Black Turks and Negroes: The Politics of Polarization,” in *The Making of a Protest Movement in Turkey: #occupygezi*, ed. Umut Özkırmı (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 77–88. Mustafa Olpak, *Kenya-Girit-İstanbul: Köle Kıyısında İnsan Biyografileri*, Ozan Yayıncılık (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2005).

<sup>1086</sup> Eve Troutt Powell, *Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 143.

Şehriban *Teyze* (Aunt Şehriban) was slave, who had sold to a family living in Athens from Crete. She is African, from Kenya like our family. She was sent to Turkey with the population exchange. She was black and did not speak any Turkish. These two handicaps cost her very dear. She could not get out of quarantine for years. She spent three years there and could not get out. Seeing that she was a black slave and could not speak Turkish, nobody helped her. Nobody! Neither officials nor refugees! Finally, she was kicked out of there. Since then she lives in a neighborhood called Yukarı Karakuyu in Torbalı (İzmir). She is 90 something, around 100 [years old] and still collects garbages and sells them to earn her life. The poor woman lives in a shanty house. That is what it means to be a branded slave. No matter where you are, no matter how old you are, no matter when you were manumitted you are always a slave and the displacement only made it worse.

Displacement in the wake of manumission did not change their social status but only intensified discrimination and harassment they had been experiencing for decades. Olpak's grandfather had to give one of his daughters up for "adoption" (*evlatlık*) to a family living in İstanbul (in exchange for money) because he was not able to feed his entire family. In this context, adoptee meant "domestic servant" raised as member of the household.<sup>1087</sup> According to Olpak, by giving his eldest daughter (See Figure 5-8) as an adoptee/slave, he did what he knew best as an emancipated slave and after the displacement, enslavement of their family members continued in different forms.<sup>1088</sup>

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<sup>1087</sup> Mustafa Olpak, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 2, 2013. For the "adoption" of domestic servants see Ferhunde Özbay, *Türkiye'de Evlatlık Kurumu: Köle Mi, Evlat Mı?* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1999). For the legal regulation on the abolition of slavery and similar practices see "Kanun No: 361 Kölelik, Köle Ticareti, Köleliğe Benzer Uygulama ve Geleneklerin Ortadan Kaldırılmasına Dair Ek Sözleşmenin Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulunduğu Hakkında Kanun," *Resmi Gazete*, no. 11599 (January 6, 1964): 1–3.

<sup>1088</sup> Mustafa Olpak, *Köle Kiyısı*, 35 and Mustafa Olpak, interview by Aytek Soner Alpan, February 2, 2013.



**Figure 5–8:** Zeynep was taken on as a domestic servant by an urban middle-class family in İstanbul after the population exchange. The photo was taken after the adoption and as it is read from the raised trademark of the studio on the lower left corner by famous Cretan photographer Hamza Rüstem in İzmir.

**Source:** Mustafa Olpak

These two groups of people, i.e. lepers and Afro-Cretans, seem to be unique within the larger population of refugees of the population exchange. Their stories were excluded from the already-marginalized history of the Cretan refugees and their descendants and, as a matter of course, from the sanitized national history, which made them completely invisible. The three lepers from Spinalonga, still nameless, were sent, literally, to the remotest point possible in Anatolia, to a monastery abandoned by an Armenian community which had been subject to genocide and

devastated by an earthquake. By sending them to the farthest possible distance, their stories were completely submerged.

The other forgotten community, the Afro-Cretan refugees, who were, together with other people of African origin, were already absent in the official demographic records of the Ottoman Empire as well as the Republic of Turkey. Their official invisibility was coupled with the enslaved heritage of the Afro-Cretan refugees which created particular political sensitivity and suspicion around the subject due to the fact that although slavery is condoned by Islam, it was existent in different forms in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to this, as Toledano points out, there were no active self-conscious descendant communities of African slaves to publicly bring this subject up and create a community of interest.<sup>1089</sup> On the other hand, Troutt Powell emphasizes the fact that the historians should not surrender to the virtual lack of documentation or African consciousness among the descendants of slaves.<sup>1090</sup> The silence was broken with the publication of a book by Mustafa Olpak, a third-generation refugee, in which he does not only give a straightforward narrative of his family history but also examines his “third-hand subjectivity” to slave and refugee identities.

#### **5.4 “This calamitous fire was indeed the dawn of a blessed morning” How was Tatavla ‘liberated’?**

"πυρός τε ἀνταμοιβή τὰ πάντα καὶ πῦρ ἀπάντων..."<sup>1091</sup>  
Heraclitus, *Fragments* (90)

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<sup>1089</sup> Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East*, 1998, 158.

<sup>1090</sup> Eve Troutt Powell, “Will That Subaltern Ever Speak? Finding African Slaves in the Historiography of the Middle East,” in *Middle East Historiographies: Narrating the Twentieth Century*, ed. I. Gershoni, Amy Singer, and Y. Hakan Erdem (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 242–61.

<sup>1091</sup> “All things are exchanged for Fire, and Fire for all things...”

“We’ll set fires going... We’ll set legends going...”  
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Demons*

Γεντί Κουλέ και Θεραπειά, Ταταύλα και Νιχώρι,  
αυτά τα τέσσερα χωριά μορφαίνουνε την Πόλη.<sup>1092</sup>  
Traditional folk song of Constantinople

#### 5.4-1 Trapped minorities as mutual hostages

As mentioned earlier and repeated in the existing literature, the 1923 Population Exchange was a demographic "cleansing" operation carried out by Turkey and Greece along ethnoreligious lines in accordance with the interests of the aforementioned nation-states. Demographic engineering methods including population exchange became a part of the modern diplomatic parlance with the paradigmatic shift that occurred in the international system in the aftermath of World War I, i.e. the move from the Vienna system to the Paris system, which created a new mode of diplomacy between states sovereignty of which was rooted in national homogeneity.<sup>1093</sup> The focus of this new mode was on populations. This characteristic feature of the new international system, among other consequences, brought the “minority question” to the diplomatic foreground in various ways. Ethnic minorities were not only seen as a destabilizing class of citizens but also as a diplomatic leverage especially when an ethnic minority whose national loyalty was, due to their ethnic identities, assumed to lay with another nation-state. On the other hand, nation-states considered their alleged loyalists outside their borders as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of other nation-states in which those people happened to reside.

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<sup>1092</sup> Yedikule and Therapeia (Tarabya), Tatavla and Nihori (Yeniköy)

They are the four villages that form the City.

<sup>1093</sup> Weitz, “From the Vienna to the Paris System,” 1314.



“Where national cohesion was absent,” as asserted by István I. Mócsy, “direct physical force had to compensate;”<sup>1094</sup> moreover, when brute force was not enough, or it was not possible to use it due to some reasons, diplomatic tools were always ready to get utilized. These people were brought to the tables of negotiation as potential enemies of the nation, the fifth column within a tolerant society or subversives of the nation-state as they were seen through the filtered windscreen of the nationalist politicians/diplomats. For example, it was presumed by the new Turkish nation-state that the Greek Orthodox population living in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace was loyal to Greece rather than Turkey. Likewise, a similar reasoning applied to the Muslim inhabitants of Greece. Yet the Lausanne Convention stipulated certain exceptions, that is to say, some minority groups that was not to be subject to the population exchange. According to the Article 2 of the Convention, the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople and the "Moslem inhabitants of Western Thrace" were exempted from the population exchange. The Lausanne Agreement (Article 14) added to this list the inhabitants of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, remaining under Turkish sovereignty. In the last instance, both nation-states tried to maximize the number of the deportable populations while leaving out particular groups within the borders of the other nation-state in accordance with some strategic plans and expectations, or in order to keep the international dimension of the problem vivid in case the bilateral relations ended in deadlock.<sup>1095</sup> These exempt communities were trapped in a “host” yet “hostile” nation-state and

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<sup>1094</sup> István I. Mócsy, *The Uprooted: Hungarian Refugees and Their Impact on Hungary's Domestic Politics, 1918-1921* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1983), 9.

<sup>1095</sup> In addition to the communities discussed here, there are two population segments, which, I believe, constitute a convincing proof that both Greece and Turkey tried to exploit the loopholes of the Convention, particularly, the acceptance of religion as the criterion of the exchange. The Greek government attempted several times to include the Albanian-speaking Muslims called Chams (Albanian: Çamë, Greek: Τσάμηδες) living in Chameria, the western lowlands of Epirus, today known as Thesprotia in the population exchange. The Greek state forced Chams to leave the country by various means of discrimination and administrative harassment until 1926 despite the various intervention of the Mixed Commission, which had directed a final decision in December 1924. Despite such attempts continued and

kept as a card up in the sleeve of this state's politicians and diplomats. George Mavrogordatos describes this situation as a "state of mutual hostageship" (μια κατάσταση 'αμοιβαίας ομηρίας')<sup>1096</sup> due to the fact that the fate and well-being of these communities strictly depend on the tides of international politics. Another fitting concept can be the one developed by Dan Rabinowitz to describe the Palestinian citizens of Israel, that is, trapped minority.<sup>1097</sup> These

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the Greek state managed to send 15 percent of the total Cham population to Turkey. The Greek state officially recognized the decision of the Mixed Commission regarding the exemption of Chams from the population exchange in 1926. The "Cham problem" of the Greek state continued to exist till the end of the Second World War. The state policies and communal violence resulted in the disappearance of this minority. Similarly, in 1927 through hiding behind the Exchange Convention, the Turkish state tried to expel the Arab-speaking Orthodox Christians living in Mersin. The Chairperson of the Mixed Commission, General Manuel Manrique de Lara, talked to the Turkish newspapers and told that although the exchange is based solely on religion without regard to race, they had to take into account the feelings of the exchanged people too while applying this criterion. According to de Lara, Orthodox Arabs had no attachment to Hellenism, and it would be unjust to move them away from their home just considering their religious identity. He also said, referring to the case of Chams, that he had opposed to the expulsion of Muslims in Greece that had no connection to the Turkish world with the same principle. Lena Divani, *Ελλάδα Και Μειονότητες. Το Σύστημα Διεθνούς Προστασίας Της Κοινωνίας Των Εθνών* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 1999) 218-46; Dimitris Michalopoulos, "The Moslems of Chamuria and the Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey," *Balkan Studies* 27, no. 2 (January 1, 1986): 303-13; Eleftheria Manta, *Οι Μουσουλμάνοι Τσάμηδες Της Ηπείρου (1923-2000)* (Thessaloniki: IMXA, 2004), 25-43; Stefanos Katsikas, "Hostage Minority: The Muslims of Greece (1923-41)," in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna et al., SOAS/Routledge Studies on the Middle East 17 (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2013), 153-75; Lambros Baltiotis, "The Muslim Chams of Northwestern Greece," *European Journal of Turkish Studies. Social Sciences on Contemporary Turkey*, no. 12 (November 13, 2011), <https://ejts.revues.org/4444>; Bejtullah Destani and Rudina Jasini, eds., *The Cham Albanians in Greece: A Documentary History* (London ; New York: I.B.Tauris, 2013); George Mavrogordatos, "Οι Εθνικές Μειονότητες," in *Ιστορία Της Ελλάδας Του 20ού Αιώνα - Ο Μεσοπόλεμος 1922-1940*, ed. Christos Chatziosif, vol. 2-2 (Athens: Vivliorama, 2003), 12-3, Giorgos Margaritis, *Ανεπιθύμητοι Συμπατριώτες - Στοιχεία Για Την Καταστροφή Των Μειονοτήτων Της Ελλάδας: Εβραίοι, Τσάμηδες* (Athens: Vivliorama, 2005), 133-36. For de Lara's assessments on the expulsion of Arab Orthodox population of Mersin see *Vakit*, December 28, 1927; *Stamboul*, December 30, 1927.

<sup>1096</sup> Mavrogordatos, "Οι Εθνικές Μειονότητες," 22. He also uses this reference to the other ethnic minorities in Greece, such as Chams, and their captivity in international politics. *Ibid.*, 12, 24. The term "mutual hostage" first used by Jack L. Granatstein to define Japanese in Canada and Canadians in Japan during WWII. See Patricia Roy et al., eds., *Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), x.

<sup>1097</sup> Dan Rabinowitz, "National Identity on the Frontiers: Palestinians in the Israeli Education System," in *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers*, ed. Thomas M Wilson and Hastings Donnan (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 156.

minorities found themselves trapped by means of diplomacy between the state they lived and the one they were supposed to feel loyalty.

This section aims to analyze one of these hostage communities, namely Constantinopolitan Greeks, and their situation after the population exchange in the light of an episode of nationalist outburst. The 1929 fire that broke out in Tatavla, a neighborhood associated with Greek identity, and destroyed the entire neighborhood. This suspicious fire that took place when the diplomatic relations were almost entirely frozen due to the problems regarding the future of the Constantinopolitan Greeks and the polemics this fire fueled arguably constitute the best example of these exempted communities' being trapped and held hostages. For this goal, I briefly discuss the history of fires in Constantinople, then discuss the Tatavla fire and its implication regarding the destiny of the Constantinopolitan Greeks.

#### **5.4-2 Fires in Constantinople: A brief history**

The big village has two horrors: Fire and robber! It can be said that in the last 60 years the old İstanbul entirely burnt down. The bitter shouts of the fire lookouts rushing out of the fire towers in Beyazıt or Galata and spreading the news still ring in the ears of the people of my age. Especially when it is blustery, the houses that are a few blocks away from the fire take whatever they can save in the basement floors and stockpile them. Even though the city has a horse-drawn fire engine, the real work is done by *tulumbacis* (local fire brigade units)

In the article entitled “Horror” in his *Batış Yılları (Years of Downfall)* Falih Rıfki Atay calls Constantinople “big village” and describes the fear of a fire disaster with which the city trembles every night in the 1960s as cited above.<sup>1098</sup> Ahmet Cemalettin Saraçoğlu, too,

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<sup>1098</sup> Falih Rıfki Atay, *Batış Yılları* (İstanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2013), 27-29.

describes fire as the source of the constant fear that the Constantinopolitans filled with.<sup>1099</sup>

According to Mustafa Cezar, Constantinople suffered from fires “that constantly ate up buildings” rather than natural disasters.<sup>1100</sup> The fear of fire that paralyzed the city had so great that fires were called “dragon” and considered as scourge of God.<sup>1101</sup> This fear was not unfounded at all. Because the *fin de siècle* Constantinople had inherited an urban texture made out of wood and handed it down to the twentieth century as any other Ottoman city. This was mainly a safety measure taken against earthquakes, yet it was also this security measure that left the entire city —apart from the great structures and buildings— vulnerable to flames. Being “a wooden city on a wavy peninsula established on hills,”<sup>1102</sup> Constantinople had constantly been threatened by fires since 1633.<sup>1103</sup> Since fires were considered as divine retributions, one of the most popular measures taken by the Muslim inhabitants of the city was to hang inscriptions on the outside of their houses that beseeched God to preserve the household, such as “*Ya Hafız,*” “*İsm-i Celâl*” or “*Hilye-i Muhammedi.*”

Constantinople is a city which is a textbook example of proneness to fire. In *Principles of Fire Protection* by Cote and Bugbee it is stated the following: “Constantinople (now Istanbul) was the greatest sufferer from conflagrations of any city on record, having experienced major fire

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<sup>1099</sup> Ahmet Cemaleddin Saraçoğlu, *Eski İstanbul'dan hatıralar* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2005), 138.

<sup>1100</sup> Mustafa Cezar, “Osmanlı Devrinde İstanbul Yapılarında Tahribat Yapan Yangınlar ve Tabii Âfetler,” in *Türk San'atı Tarihi Araştırma ve İncelemeleri*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Berksoy matbaası, 1963), 327.

<sup>1101</sup> Niyazi Ahmet Banoğlu, *İstanbul cehennemi: tarihte büyük yangınlar* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2008), 3.

<sup>1102</sup> Reşat Ekrem Koçu, *Yangın var!* (Ana Yayınevi, 1981), 11.

<sup>1103</sup> Cezar gives detailed information on the chronology of fires that Constantinople before 1633. According to Cezar, the documents on the earliest fire that are located at the Turkish archives date it to 1489/1490. The lightning-blasted Güngörmez Church, which was used as an arsenal, exploded and this explosion caused the fire. According to Alfons Maria Schneider, this was the first fire after the city was captured by the Ottomans. Alfons Maria Schneider, “Brände in Konstantinopel,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 41 (1941): 382.

disasters in 1729, 1745, 1750, 1756, 1782, 1791, 1798, 1816, and 1870. In more recent times, Constantinople suffered further major fires in 1908, 1911, 1915, and 1918.”<sup>1104</sup>

According to Zeynep Çelik, from the Cibali<sup>1105</sup> fire that broke out on September 2, 1633 (Safer 27, 1043) to 1839 there are 109 extensive fires. Between 1859 and 1906 with a considerable increase, the number of fires raised to 229.<sup>1106</sup> Reşat Ekrem Koçu, whose data are based on *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye*, on the other hand, determines 308 fires between 1854 and 1921.<sup>1107</sup> According to him, in these 308 fires, 44,555 buildings were burnt down. Out of those 44,555 buildings, 24,340 were destroyed by fire before the declaration of the Second Constitution and 20,215 after 1908. Fire as an ever-present danger created its reflections in popular culture as seen in the expression "epidemics of Anatolia, fires of Constantinople" [Anadolu'nun salgını, İstanbul'un yangını].<sup>1108</sup> Similarly, an eighteenth-century mock poem that

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<sup>1104</sup> Arthur Cote and Percy Bugbee, *Principles of Fire Protection* (Quincy: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 1988), 3.

<sup>1105</sup> Banoğlu frequently refers to Cibali as the accursed neighborhood. Actually, the susceptibility of this district to fire had nothing to do with curses but there was a material basis. As Halil İnalçık explains "Djibali is especially prone to the risk of fire because of the trades—such as caulking—carried out there, the exposure of the Djibali-Unkapani valley to the north-east wind and the density of the housing on the slopes up to Fatih (see the views in Lorichs and Le Bruyn)." Halil İnalçık, "İstanbul," ed. B. Bearman et al., *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Brill Online, 2012),

[http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/istanbul-COM\\_0393?s.num=1&s.f.s2\\_parent=s.f.book.encyclopaedia-of-islam-2&s.q=%C4%B0stanbul](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/istanbul-COM_0393?s.num=1&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopaedia-of-islam-2&s.q=%C4%B0stanbul).

<sup>1106</sup> Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 52-53. For other studies that list the fires in Constantinople see Cornel Zwielerlein, "Burning of a Modern City? İstanbul as Perceived by the Agents of the Sun Fire Office, 1865-1870," in *Flammable Cities: Urban Conflagration and the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Greg Bankoff, Uwe Lübken, and Jordan Sand (University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 82-102; Koçu, *Yangın var!*, 488.

<sup>1107</sup> Koçu, *Yangın var!*, 488.

<sup>1108</sup> There are some other strange intersections between epidemics and fires. The district of Hocapaşa, which had been destroyed in 1826, burnt again in 1865 but this fire put an end to the cholera epidemic sweeping the city in the fire-stricken areas. For the 1826 fire see Kevork Pamukciyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarından Tarihe Katkılar - Ermeni Hafli Türkçe Metinler*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Aras, 2002a), 1-8. For

circulated the Mediterranean basin says “A Pera ci sono tre malanni: peste, fuoco e dragomanni” [Pera holds three troubles: the plague, the fire, and the dragomans].<sup>1109</sup> The travelogues of Western travelers visiting Constantinople and the memoirs of the diplomatic envoys in Constantinople almost always mentioned the gong sounds, the rapid roll of drums from the barracks, and the sinister cries of “*Yangın var!*” [There is fire!] rising from the fire towers.<sup>1110</sup> Not only in the memories of travelers fires were imprinted on the memories of the city-dwellers. After the fire that broke out in Balıkesir in 1950 and destroyed more than five hundred shops Ali Naci Karacan from the daily *Milliyet*, wrote an article on the fires and said "Our childhood passed with spectating the İstanbul fires each one of which was a disaster on its own." The main reason behind those fires was the same, but the measures were not efficient enough to protect the city so, according to the author, "it was not unnatural at all that there were successive fires and a city which was made out of timber and did not have a decent fire department was burnt to the ground piece by piece."<sup>1111</sup> But not only wooden but also stonework structures too were prone to fires. In the 1870 Pera Fire, several buildings made of stone were burnt down, and a lot of dead bodies were removed from the ruins of those buildings. In 1910 flames entirely destroyed the Çırağan Palace, which housed the Imperial Senate and Chamber of Deputies and only the outer of the palace walls remained intact. A year later the city suffered from conflagration again. About

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the 1865 fire and the cholera epidemic see Selim Nüzhet Gerçek, "İstanbul Yangınları," *7 Gün* 9, no. 442 (April 7, 1941): 10–11.

<sup>1109</sup> Vesna Miović, “Diplomatic Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Dubrovnik,” in *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 194.

<sup>1110</sup> See for example Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople* (New York: GPPutnam’s Sons, 1878), 238-46; Théophile Gautier, *Constantinople*, vol. 10, 24 vols., *The Works of Théophile Gautier* (Cambridge, USA: University Press - John Wilson and Son, 1905), 192-203.

<sup>1111</sup> *Milliyet*, January 5, 1950.

the fire known as the fire of July 10 [July 10, 1327, in Rumi calendar, July 23, 1911, in Gregorian calendar] 2500 dwellings Refik Halid's observations in 1914 are as follows:<sup>1112</sup>

İstanbul is not a civilized city but a huge jungle in the sense of the word. When a single spark flies, it goes adrift in the wind and continues to burn for days... For the last three years, we have seen that some significant buildings of the country turned into ashes. After every fire, all we get is the government's ridiculous cock-and-bull stories promising that the reconstruction of the destroyed sites will be undertaken —moreover in two months—. However, the government has not put even board fences around the ruins yet. Moreover, still the ashes of the Çırağan Palace and Babiali are scattering in the wind.

According to Karay, the ruins of the Çırağan Palace, which had been burnt down in 1910, and those of Bâbiâli, which had been damaged by the fire in February 1911, were still intact and there was no sign of reconstruction when the fire of July 10 broke out.

In the light of this brief summary it can be said that the concept of “fire gap” developed by economic historians Lionel Frost and Eric Jones<sup>1113</sup> to describe the negative correlation

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<sup>1112</sup> Refik Halid Karay, *Kirpinin Dedikleri*, (İstanbul: İnkılap, 2009), 143. For the same conflagration, the *Spectator* reports that a charitable fund called Stamboul Fire Fund was founded. The extent of the damage is described as "One can walk for several miles over nothing but ruins and smoldering cinders stretching from the Sea of Marmara almost to the shore of the Golden Horn. 2,500 dwellings, shops, and other buildings have been destroyed. Many thousands are destitute. Tents have been pitched in every available spot, and families are camping out in the courtyards of mosques, squares, and even on the sites of disused cemeteries. As during the last ten weeks there have been 126 deaths from cholera, it is feared that the rate of mortality will greatly increase. The defective municipal arrangements for the prevention of fires and the lack of efficient organization contributed to widening the extent of the disaster, and it has to be recorded that the fortunate presence of the gunboats stationed in Turkish waters for the service of the Ambassadors has been of the utmost value. All are unanimous in praising the bravery, and activity, and resourcefulness of the foreign naval officers and sailors, through whose courage, and skill, and knowledge in grappling with an emergency the flames were overcome before destroying the entire city." "The Constantinopolitan Fires," *The Spectator*, no. 4337 (August 12, 1911): 13. Even in recent works city fires are mentioned as an important factor changing the landscape of the city. In her autobiographical work, Io Tsokona dedicates an entire chapter to the fire that destroyed the house of her family in Fener in the late-1960s and their leaving the neighborhood for Pera. Io Tsokona, *To Péra των Ελλήνων: Στην Κωνσταντινούπολη του χθες και του σήμερα* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2014), 11-14.

<sup>1113</sup> L. E. Frost and E. L. Jones, "The Fire Gap and the Greater Durability of Nineteenth Century Cities," *Planning Perspectives* 4, no. 3 (September 1989): 333–47.

between urban centers' proneness to fire and urban modernization in the nineteenth century despite the fact that the rapid increase in population is not applicable to the case of Constantinople. As Suraiya Faroqhi states, notwithstanding the modernization of urban structure, together with the rise of population density in the nineteenth century Constantinople, the city became more liable to suffer from conflagrations.<sup>1114</sup> A fire gap started to form only after the foundation of a modern fire department in the city after the establishment of the republic.

Tarık Özavcı, the Chief of Fire Department of İstanbul, studies dozens of fires that took place between 1923 and 1965 and underlines the fact that the city continued to be a sufferer of fires in the republican era due to the lack of adequate fire protection regulations, organizations, and equipment.<sup>1115</sup> Atay emphasizes the role of fires in the changing landscape of the city between 1900 and the 1960s: “As the people fell and mansions were demolished, new petty hovels were constructed. More than half of these houses are shanties![...] That Constantinople, in the last sixty years, was burnt to the ground. Now I would almost say if only it had not.”<sup>1116</sup>

### **5.4-3 Fire as a political means**

At this point, it should be noted that fires were a nightmare for not only İstanbul, but for all cities. During the First World War and subsequent national independence struggle, already terrorized atmosphere has been intensified, and the fear of fire has become more widespread by the actions of the regular armies of the parties and militia who set the cities on fire. During the

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<sup>1114</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (I.B.Tauris, 2007), 255.

<sup>1115</sup> Tarık Özavcı, *İstanbul yangınları, 1923-1965* (İstanbul, Ekin Basımevi, 1965).

<sup>1116</sup> Atay, *Batış Yılları*, 22.



years of war, fires resulted in adding another mobile population division to the demographic mobility of the last years of the Ottoman Empire: people who suffered from fires. According to the *İskan Tarihçesi*, the number of individuals who suffered from fire and had been subject to temporary resettlement policy was 14,312.<sup>1117</sup> It can be presumed that the number of people who suffered from the fire but did not receive support nor resettled by the government, i.e. not included in the official statistics, was much higher. This can also be inferred from the parliament debates of the date. The existence of people who suffered from fires as a social category and the poverty they plunged into has relapsed the fear of fire among people.

Being a widespread phenomenon, fires and the fear of fire was instrumentalized and/or used as an element of threat. On other occasions, the destruction caused by fires has been considered and exploited as an opportunity. All practices such as forced migration and occupation have been accompanied by fires. If war, as stated by Carl von Clausewitz in his famous quote, is nothing but a continuation of politics with the admixture of other means, then it is safe to say that flames and urban fires have been appreciated as one of such other means. Fires observed in various Anatolian cities during the last years of the Ottoman Empire, including the years of war, fall into this category. Most infamous one of these fires is the Great Fire of Smyrna of 1922, which remains an unresolved "mystery."<sup>1118</sup>

The Fire of Smyrna was not, however, the only fire that broke out in the period of war. The newspapers published during the war frequently reported news about fires. For example, a

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<sup>1117</sup> *İskan Tarihçesi*, 137.

<sup>1118</sup> However, we do not have the opportunity to discuss the Fire of İzmir here since its treatise both in Turkish and Greek historiography constitutes an entirely separate topic. Instead, I shall be contented with only reciting the following recollection regarding the instrumentalization of history in a political context. For the mnemonic significance of the Fire of İzmir see Alpan, "Metropolitani Hrisostomos ve Atina'daki Abidesi".

Greek church in Kastamonu deliberately set fire was reported by *Nea Anatoli* on November 2, 1922.<sup>1119</sup>

Today at 6 1/2 suddenly a black cloud of smoke raised from a Greek Church and immediately after that, a fire infested the surrounding. Thank God, those who made this obvious arson attempt were caught red-handedly. These monstrous arsonists, who acted with the aim of burning down our city too like İzmir and the whole western Anatolia, were captured with the zeal of Soldier Mehmet Efendi from Küre and Yunus from Rize.

Fires that broke out or were set during WWI and the ensuing Greco-Turkish War are not covered in this study, yet it suffices to note that there is a growing scholarly interest in this subject.<sup>1120</sup> In this subject, I confine myself to the instrumentalization of fires in the name of power politics in a state of peace.

The instrumentalization of fires and their destruction and consideration of them as a political opportunity are as old as the history of urban fires. For example, by the existing literature the fire that broke out at Odun Kapisı, Eminönü (Constantinople) on July 24, 1660, is considered as an example of utilization of fires as political means.<sup>1121</sup> Although there are

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<sup>1119</sup> “Bu gün saat 6 1/2(’ta) birden bire Rum ekklisiasından kara bir duman tabakası yükselmiştir ve derhal de ateş etrafı sardı. Kasten yakıldığı gün gibi aşikâr olan bu yangının kundakçıları Allah’a şükür ki cürmü meşhud halinde yakalanmıştı(r). İzmir ve bütün garbi Anatoliyi yaktıkları gibi mazallah memleketimizi de yakarak yerinde küller ve harabeler bırakmak kastı ile hareket eden bu canavar kundakçılar Küreli asker Mehmet Efendi ile Rizeli Yunus’un himmetleri ile yakalanmıştır.” *Néa Avatolî*, November 2, 1922.

<sup>1120</sup> For example, on the 1916 Ankara Fire see Taylan Esin and Zeliha Etöz, *1916 Ankara Yangını - Felaketin Mantığı* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015); Zeliha Etöz and Taylan Esin, “Osmanlı Şehir Yangınları, 1914-1918,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 14 (2012): 1–44. On the 1923 Şile Fire see Natalia Adamantidou and Yeoryios E. Papastratos, *Mübadele Öncesinde Şile’de Yaşam*, trans. Elisavet Haritonidis Kovi, Kitap Yayınevi 224 (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2010), 105.

<sup>1121</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the information on the 1660 fire is based on Marc David Baer’s studies. Marc David Baer, “The Great Fire of 1660 and the Islamization of Christian and Jewish Space in Istanbul,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no. 2 (2004): 159–181; idem., *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 81-104.

contradictory claims about the damage created by this conflagration, one point was certain: it was disastrous. For example, Abdi Pasha, who was the chronicler of Mehmed IV, writes about the destruction of 280,000 dwellings and death of 40,000 people. Another point that the sources agree upon is that as the result of the 1660 fire almost two-third of the city was completely burnt.<sup>1122</sup> The fire started in Eminönü and flames quickly extended to Unkapanı, Aġakapısı, Süleymaniye, Bayezid, Fatih, Davudpaşa Samatya, Tahtakale, Mahmudpaşa, At Meydanı, Kadirga and Kumkapı. After the fire, the city experienced a great scarcity of bread.

In this period, Hadice Turhan Sultan, who was the Valide Sultan as the mother of Mehmed IV, was the most powerful figure of the Ottoman Palace. According to the sources, she skillfully used the consequences of the fire. Almost a year after the fire, Hadice Turhan Sultan in order to reinstate the symbolic power of the Ottoman dynasty, which was in crisis and shaken by a number of internal and external factors, ordered to complete the construction of Valide Sultan Mosque in Eminönü, which was ordered by another valide sultan, Safiye Sultan, in 1597 but later abandoned due to financial obstacles. The Eminönü district, which was the base of the fire and almost destroyed by it, was *the* major Jewish neighborhood of the city hosting two-thirds of the city's Jewish population. The construction of the mosque and the other elements of the rebuilding measures that the Ottoman Empire took meant nothing but the Islamization of the Jewish space. Not only the Palace ordered the construction of a mosque in this district, the Ottoman authorities strictly followed the Islamic law prohibiting reconstruction of non-Muslim temples, which was unprecedented according to Baer. In addition to this, Jews were ordained to leave the area from

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<sup>1122</sup> A folk poet called Aznavuroġlu wrote in one of his poems written in Armeno-Turkish that in the 1660 fire half of the city was burnt to the ground. Kevork Pamukciyan, who for the first time published and transcribed this poem in 1957, supplies us with rich information acquired from Armenian sources. Kevork Pamukciyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarından Tarihe Katkılar - İstanbul Yazıları*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Aras, 2002), 87-106.

Hocapaşa in the East to Zeyrek in the West. They were either forced to sell their property, or personal and communal properties of the Jewish population were confiscated. In Galata, a similar course of action was taken by the state in order to oust Christians from this district. Both Yaron Ben-Naeh and Minna Rozen claim that the fire was used as a pretext to expel Jews from the historical center of the city to Balat and particularly Hasköy.<sup>1123</sup> While Baer explains this with the political and ideological crisis that the Ottoman Empire was then going through, according to Rozen, the post-fire Islamization policy of the Empire was related more to the ongoing Jewish immigration from Europe. Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, who has a monograph on Hadice Turhan Sultan, considers the construction of Valide Sultan Mosque as the Islamization of Jewish space but she also heavily underlines the importance of some economic factors such as Eminönü's being a wealthy and powerful trading center.<sup>1124</sup>

The instrumentalization of fires was not peculiar to the early modern period. Frequently governments take advantage of fires and their devastating power. The conflagration that broke out in Tatavla in January 1929 constituted one of such cases.

#### **5.4-4 The Tatavla fire: “While we have the opportunity at present...”**

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<sup>1123</sup> Yaron Ben-Naeh, *Jews in the Realm of the Sultans: Ottoman Jewish Society in the Seventeenth Century* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 68; Minna Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul: The Formative Years, 1453-1566* (Brill, 2010), 59; idem., “Public Space and Private Space among the Jews of Istanbul in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” *Turcica* 30 (1998): 336–37.

<sup>1124</sup> Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan, Women and Gender in the Early Modern World* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 198-99. For the criticism of the Islamization theses developed by Baer, Rozen and Thys-Şenocak from an Islamist/nationalist perspective see Kenan Yıldız, “1660 İstanbul Yangınının Sosyo-Ekonomik Tahlili” (Yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2012).

Tatavla used to be one of the prominent Greek neighborhoods of Constantinople until recently. According to some authors, it was a ghetto of Greek proletariat.<sup>1125</sup> Due to both its proximity to Pera and the migration it received, this ghetto became a ground for various educational and charity institutions, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1126</sup> Even though there are different approaches regarding the origins of the name Tatavla, two of them are more plausible and widely accepted among the others. According to a famous study of titled *Konstantinoupolis* by Skarlatos Vyzantios, a Greek statesman, linguist and writer,<sup>1127</sup> and *Tatavla, that is the History of Tatavla* by Melissinos Christodoulou, the Bishop of Pamphilius,<sup>1128</sup> the name of the district was derived from the word *stabulum*, meaning stable in Latin [stavlos (σταύλος) in Greek], since there used to be Genoese stables in this area. Another approach is that the name Tatavla was derived from the Turkish word "tavla," meaning stable. Over time, by merging with the Greek neuter article "ta" (τα) with the word "tavla," it has taken the form of Tatavla. The usage of this toponym can be traced back to the beginning of the seventeenth

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<sup>1125</sup> Robert Neumann, *Zaharoff, the Armaments King*, trans. R. T. Clark (London: G. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1935), 23.

<sup>1126</sup> George A. Vassiadis, *The Syllogos Movement of Constantinople and Ottoman Greek Education 1861-1923* (Athens: KMS, 2007), 30 and 74. For information on these institutions that still exist in Tatavla, see Meropi Anastasiadou and Paul Dumont, *Οι Ρωμηοί Της Πόλης Τραύματα Και Προσδοκίες* (Atina: Estia, 2007). For charity activities of Constantinopolitan Greeks, see Efi Kanner, *Φτώχεια Και Φιλανθρωπία Στην Ορθόδοξη Κοινότητα Της Κωνσταντινούπολης (1753-1912)* (Athens: Katarti, 2004); Haris Exertzoglou, *Οι "χαμένες Πατρίδες" πέρα Από Τη Νοσταλγία: Μια Κοινωνική-Πολιτισμική Ιστορία Των Ρωμιών Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας (Μέσα 19ου - Αρχές 20ού Αιώνα)* (Athens: Nefeli, 2010).

<sup>1127</sup> Skarlatos D. Vyzantios, *Η Κωνσταντινούπολις: ή Περιγραφή Τοπογραφική, Αρχαιολογική Και Ιστορική Της Περιωνόμου Ταύτης Μεγαλόπολεως Και Των Εκατέρωθεν Του Κόλπου Και Του Βοσπόρου Προαστείων Αυτής*, vol. 2 (Atina: Andreos Koromilas Matbaasi, 1862), 29-30.

<sup>1128</sup> Melissinos Christodoulou, *Τα Ταταύλα Ήτοι Ιστορία Των Ταταούλων* (İstanbul: A. A. Koromilas Matbaasi, 1913), 10-12.

century,<sup>1129</sup> while the history of the settlement can be extended until 1525.<sup>1130</sup> In addition to this, Tatavla is occasionally referred as Agios Dimitrios in some European sources.

Tatavla, a poor and small settlement until the nineteenth century, became home to a population that originated from various regions, especially from the Aegean (especially Chios)<sup>1131</sup> and Ionian islands and Morea. By a decree dated March 27, 1793, the residents of Tatavla gained privileges similar to those which had been granted to Ayvalık in 1773, and the condition of belonging to Greek Orthodox nationality was required to be able to reside in Tatavla.<sup>1132</sup> Due to this character of the neighborhood, it was called infidel (*gâvur*)<sup>1133</sup> alternatively, Little Athens.<sup>1134</sup> Tatavla preserved its character as a Greek neighborhood until the fire of 1929.

The district started burning on the night of January 21, 1929. Fire rapidly spread and in a short while almost the entire neighborhood was burnt to ashes.<sup>1135</sup> As mentioned above, fires were not entirely unexpected for Constantinople. In fact, Tatavla had already experienced several

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<sup>1129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1130</sup> Giorgos Kamarados-Vyzantios, *Τά Έλληνικά Ταταῶλα Μιά Μικρή Χαμένη Πολιτεία Πού Πέρασε Στην Ιστορία 1535-1929* (Atina: n.d., 1981).

<sup>1131</sup> People of Chios Island origin, who had been brought to İstanbul to be employed at Kasımpaşa Shipyard after Chios Island had come under Ottoman rule in 1566, have not returned to their homeland but instead settled in this area. Vyzantios, *Η Κωνσταντινούπολις*, 30.

<sup>1132</sup> Christodoulou, *Τα Ταταῶλα*, 17-18.

<sup>1133</sup> Kamarados-Vyzantios, *Τά Έλληνικά Ταταῶλα*, 20.

<sup>1134</sup> Nikos G. Isteklis, *Ιστορία Των Ταταούλων Από Αρχαιοτάτων Χρόνων Μέχρι Σήμερα: Μια Μικρή Αθήνα Μέσα Στην Πόλη* (Atina: Eptalophos, 2011).

<sup>1135</sup> According to some sources in Turkish, including Özavcı, based on official fire department reports, date of the fire was January 22. This is because the fire started on the night of January 21 and continued all night until the early hours of January 22. Some newspapers could not manage to report the event in their morning issues of January 22 and hence, by being able to give reports on the news only on January 23 based on the accounts of reporters and the state official agency (Anadolu Ajansı) dated January 22 without updating phrases such as "yesterday's fire", caused a confusion regarding the starting date of the fire. Özavcı, *İstanbul Yangınları*, 22.

fires throughout its history, and it was even renowned for its fire brigades (*tulumbacıs*), the bravery and thuggishness of them (See Figure 5-9).<sup>1136</sup> Having said that, the historical conditions in which the Tatavla fire broke out and the events that occurred afterward makes it exceptional in comparison to other "routine" fires the neighborhood suffered.



**Figure 5–9:** *Tulumbacıs* of Tatavla

**Source:** Melissinos Hristodulu, *Τα Ταταύλα Ήτοι Ιστορία Των Ταταούλων* (İstanbul: A. A. Koromilas Matbaası, 1913), n.d.

<sup>1136</sup> Tatavla suffered from fires of various scales in 1770, 1771, 1833, 1847, 1905, 1907, 1909 and 1912. Christodoulou, *Τα Ταταύλα*, 31. For the firefighters of Tatavla, see Christodoulou, *Τα Ταταύλα*; Niyazi Ahmet Banoğlu, *İstanbul cehennemi*; Nikos K. Engonopoulos, *Αί Πυρκαϊαί Καί Τά Άτακτα Πυροσβεστικά Σώματα Τής Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (Οί Τουλουμπατζήδες) Ιστορική Μελέτη Κίμωνα Νικ. Έγγονόπουλου* (Athens: Iolkos, 1980); Orhan Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbulu'ndan Bir Köşe: Tatavla* (İstanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2009); Burhan Yentürk, *Ne lazım Tatavla'da bakkal dükkani: Kurtuluş, Dolapdere, Feriköy, Bomonti* (İstanbul: Zvi-Geyik Yayınları, 2002).

The Tatabla fire had so destructive that it hit the headlines of almost all of the newspapers on January 22 and 23. The *Cumhuriyet* could only give a short report on the fire on January 21, but it later hit the headline of the newspaper and stated: "the number of houses burnt in Tatabla is around 500." The headline on the *Akşam* reported "Great fire in Tatabla - More than 500 dwellings burnt in the fire that lasted 9 hours - Fire started at 10 o'clock at night and entirely burnt down the houses of 12 streets." It was the *Vakit*, which gave a complete account of the fire on January 22. It reported water shortage during the fire, narrow streets and northeast wind as the primary causes for the rapid spread of the fire. The *Milliyet* pointed out other criminal events happened during the fire and gave a report on the robbery incidents with the title "About 15 Greek people who took the fire as an opportunity to plunder arrested".<sup>1137</sup> Two prominent Greek newspapers of the time, the *Απογευματινή* [Mid-afternoon, hereinafter *Apoyevmatini*] and *Το Φως* [The Light, hereinafter *Fos*], gave an extensive coverage of the fire on their issues published on January 22. Both newspapers informed their readers of the fire under the title "yesterday's great Tatabla fire."<sup>1138</sup>

Initial information on the fire reported by the newspapers was almost the same: The fire started at around 10:00 p.m.<sup>1139</sup> at number 42 of Kahya Bey Street, formerly known as Ayatanaş

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<sup>1137</sup> *Milliyet*, January 23, 1929. *Milliyet* reported that the ten people arrested were previously convicted Greeks". It is not clear why the newspaper preferred the word "Greek" instead of "Rum (Greek of Turkey)": Was the word "Greek" preferred based on the nationality of the people who claimed to be arrested or was there a suggestive nationalist implication regarding Greeks of Turkey? According to *Vakit*, eleven were arrested. No information can be obtained from İstanbul based Greek press regarding the nationality or ethnic origins of the arrested. However Greek media were going to bring up the matter and show based on police bulletin that the arrested were of Turkish nationality.

<sup>1138</sup> One of the papers that gave a limited coverage of the event was *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, which could be considered as the semi-official mouthpiece of the government.

<sup>1139</sup> *Fos* reported that the fire started around eight o'clock at night. However, all witnesses and information agree that the fire started at 9:30 at night. *Φως*, January 22, 1929.



(Αθηανάση) street, where Alekos the Hammersmith<sup>1140</sup> and his son in law Yanni the grocer resided. When the fire broke out, the Beyoğlu Fire Department had already been busy with another fire incident on Arkadi Street.<sup>1141</sup> According to the reports, while producing bootleg liquor there, Yanni's raki distiller exploded and caused the fire. Flames rushed forward and spread throughout the neighborhood, where most of the houses were made of wood. Responding to the fire was impeded by snowy weather and icy roads. Another reason that rendered the response of the firefighters ineffective was the water shortage.<sup>1142</sup> Hence it was immediately announced that the Terkos Water Company had the principal responsibility for the fire. These were coupled with a strong wind that resulted in the rapid expansion of the fire. The fire initially spread across the street due to a strong northeast wind, it then advanced along the Kahya Street. Arriving half an hour late to the scene, firefighters' attempts to prevent the spread of fire by demolishing several houses were in vain, and by 11:30 p.m. flames had already wrecked the building of Greek Charitable Society's (Φιλόπρωχος Αδελφότης) and surrounded the community school. The Kavurma, Direkçibaşı, Sarı Aleksi, Araba Meydanı, Yeni Mahalle, Çerkeş Çeşme Meydanı and Fırın streets were entirely burnt down to ashes. The Rize street was also partly burnt down. The Greek school, police station, two churches as well as the priests' houses were

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<sup>1140</sup> Apoyevmatini reported that the full name of the house's owner was Alekos Bahçevanoğlu (Αλέκος Βαξεβάνογλου), while according to Fos, it was Alekos Kasımpaşalı (Αλέκος Κασήμπασαλη). When the reports of later days examined, it can be concluded that the surname of Alekos was Bahçevanoğlu, while his nickname was Kasımpaşalı. See *Απογευματινή*, January 22, 1929, *Φως*, January 22, 1929.

<sup>1141</sup> The fire on Arkadi Street started at Dimitri's raki distillery. *Akşam*, January 23, 1929.

<sup>1142</sup> *Fos* reported that firefighters had performed their duties, severely harmed during firefighting, but failed to suppress the fire. *Φως*, January 23, 1929. Also, *Vakit* reported the following on the very next day: "At some point, our reporter came across the fire marshal İhsan Bey. İhsan Bey said: You can see. What can I say at this moment... We use every means possible. However, this water shortage is terrible." A writer of *Cumhuriyet* who witnessed Deputy Governor Fazıl Bey's telephone conversations reported that the initial information given to Fazıl Bey also pointed out the water shortage. *Cumhuriyet*, January 23, 1929. According to *Akşam*'s report, there had been no water supplied to Terkos hydrants/network until 1:30 am. *Akşam*, January 24, 1929.

fully burnt down. The fire reached such an extensive scale that a branch of it reached Karadere while another branch was at Yenişehir. Despite the attempts to take the fire under control, it grew stronger. Even though it was reported that the fire was taken under control at 4:30 a.m., it later blazed up again and spread to Direkçibaşı Street by the embers carried by the wind. At the end of a long struggle, it could finally be put out at 8 a.m. on Papazoğlu Street. The conflagration was a great tragedy. Due to the fire, two women suffered a mental breakdown and were hospitalized. The figures on the scale of the damage reported by the newspapers varied. On January 21 *Vakit* reported that the number of houses burnt down was two hundred, but the number increased to four hundred on the next day's issue, while according to *Akşam*, the number was more than five hundred and to *Cumhuriyet*, it was about five hundred. *Fos* reported that five hundred thirty houses, which used to shelter more than seven hundred and fifty families, were burnt down.<sup>1143</sup> According to *Apoyevmatini*, the number of houses burnt down was around 400-500, while the number of people who lost their houses was around seven hundred.<sup>1144</sup> Only fifty of the houses were insured. There were no fatalities during the fire. Even though most of the houses burnt down belonged to Greeks, a limited number of Armenian and Turkish houses also suffered damage. According to *Cumhuriyet*, the Deputy Governor Fazlı Bey had received initial information regarding the fire from a reporter of that same newspaper on the morning of January 22, and only after that, he was able to carry out formal interviews and inform the Internal Affairs Office.<sup>1145</sup> According to a report on *Apoyevmatini*, Police Chief Şerif Bey and Provincial Garrison Commander took special care in the incident. Protosingelos Germanos expressed the

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<sup>1143</sup> *Φως*, January 23, 1929.

<sup>1144</sup> *Απογευματινή*, January 23, 1929.

<sup>1145</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, January 23, 1929.

Patriarchate's sympathies towards the people who suffered from fire and towards the entire community of Tatavla. The Red Crescent took immediate initiative to collect charity for those who suffered from fire and to redistribute it. Moreover, British Ambassador Sir George Clerk visited Tatavla in person and shared his sympathy with the victims.<sup>1146</sup> the Patriarchate started fundraising activities and asked help from the Greek diaspora and from Vasilios Zaharanof, who was originally from Tatavla and then among the richest people in the world.<sup>1147</sup> The fire was accompanied by a bread shortage as usual, and the Tramway Company and the Patriarchate distributed food to the Tatavla community. Similar activities to collect aid for the people who suffered from the Tatavla fire were organized in Greece too. The interest of “foreigners” in the matter, particularly the charity campaigns organized abroad including Greece seriously disturbed the Turkish officials and caused discomfort in the press.

The Residents of the house where the fire has started, “Aleku the blacksmith, his wife Eleni, his sister Evduksiya, his son in law Yani and his wife Todora”<sup>1148</sup> were taken custody at the Dolapdere Police Station on suspicion of starting the fire and immediately an investigation into the fire was launched. On the first days of the investigation, the members of Greek board of trustees<sup>1149</sup> (*εφοροεπιτροπή*) and manager of the Terkos Water Company "Mösyö (Monsieur)

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<sup>1146</sup> *Απογευματινή*, January 22, 1929. *Akşam* published a news report on January 24 on the visit of the Ambassador of Great Britain and paid special attention to the matter. Fos also mentioned the interest of the British and American Ambassadors in the matter along with Foreign Red Cross organizations under the subtitle “Foreign interest” in the news report about the fire. *Φως*, January 24, 1929.

<sup>1147</sup> “In addition to those, Patriarchate appealed to wealthy Greeks in foreign countries, especially to billionaire Zaharof to request help.” *Cumhuriyet*, January 24, 1929. Zaharof was born in Muğla in 1849. His family moved to Tatavla in 1852 and had lived there for about ten years. Robert Neumann, *Zaharoff, the Armaments King*, trans. R. T. Clark (London: G. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1935), 22-3. Also see *Μακεδονία*, January 20, 1970.

<sup>1148</sup> *Milliyet*, January 23, 1929. The spelling of names is based on the newspaper's report.

<sup>1149</sup> According to *Απογευματινή*, the names of the arrested members of the board of trustees are: K. Poliyenidis, A. Nikolaydis, P. Hadzakis, A. Lagudakis, Anagnostidis, K. Molokotos, A. Papadopoulos, Çolyas, Leondaridis, Parthenis, T. Plimiridis ve Georgiadis. *Απογευματινή*, January 26, 1929. Even

Kastelno" (See Figure 5-10) were arrested by order of the Ministry of Interior but shortly after they were released.



**Figure 5-10:** Mr. Kastelno, manager of the Terkos Water Company  
**Source:** *Cumhuriyet*, January 26, 1929.

Even though there were claims regarding that the fire department was not informed on time by the community, particularly the board of trustees or that the fire department responded late, everybody agreed upon the negligence of the Terkos Water Company. The columns of the Turkish and Greek newspapers of the city harshly attacked the Terkos Water Company. By the

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though the Greeks had been recognized as a minority by the Treaty of Lausanne, the institutions and the legal framework through which the rights were going to be realized caused controversy. After Lausanne, Permanent National Mixed Council (Διαρκές Εθνικό Μικτό Συμβούλιο) was liquidated, and the administrative authority of the Patriarchate was dissolved entirely. Therefore a de facto uncertainty regarding the management of community properties had emerged. State of the Republic of Turkey controversially acknowledged Greeks – as in the case of other minorities – as a party only in the form of local communities organized around individual associations, not in the shape of a community represented by a single administrative authority in the legal area. "Members of the board of trustees" mentioned in this news report are the members of the board of trustees of the relevant church association (kilise vakfı). For the administrative structure and problems of the Greek community after the Treaty of Lausanne, see Dimitris Kamouzis, "A Minority in a State of Flux - Greek Self-Administration and Education in Post-Lausanne Istanbul (ca.1923–30)," in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna et al., SOAS/Routledge Studies on the Middle East 17 (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2013); Samim Akgönül, *Türkiye Rumları: Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 2007), 61-93; Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, 131-143.

press, it was implied that the water company had intentionally "withheld help" to let Tatavla burn. On January 27, this allegation was openly expressed the newspaper *Vakit* one shareholder of which was Hakkı Tarık (Us), the Giresun deputy at the parliament. Without any doubt, one of the harshest articles about the Terkos Water Company appeared on *Cumhuriyet* on January 31. This article was written by one of the most influential journalist/politician Yunus Nadi. He was the editor of *Cumhuriyet*, as well as the Muğla deputy of the parliament and wrote in this article titled "The Terkos Issue" that:

It is some great memory flaw to assume that they were faulty in the Tatavla fire! Wasn't it Terkos Company which let the half of İstanbul burn down, and would have burnt the remaining part if it had been left alone? How could one expect water from Terkos Company, as if we saw such a thing in past fires? [...] A real betrayer and disrespectful of a company we are talking about. It would not be unfair to say that there are no other companies as disrespectful and disgusting on earth. We ensure and announce this fact with certainty.



ΜΙΑ ΑΠΟΨΙΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΑΦΕΙΣΑΝ ΩΡΑΙΑΝ ΚΩΜΟΠΟΛΙΝ

**Figure 5-11:** “A scene from the once beautiful demolished neighborhood”

**Source:** *Απογευματινή*, January 25, 1929.

After having the investigation completed, the board of trustees and the managers of the Terkos Water company were found faulty, and it was decided to bring these people to the court.



**Figure 5-12:** A cartoon placing the responsibility of the destruction on the Terkos Water Company

**Source:** *Cumhuriyet*, January 30, 1929.

After the following few days of the fire, especially starting from January 24, reports on the fire and rather outspoken commentaries started taking place in Greek newspapers. Reactions and question marks were concentrated on the fact that the fire broke out in a neighborhood characterized by its exclusive Greek identity, and about the failure to extinguish it until having almost the entire neighborhood burnt down to ashes, at a point where the negotiations regarding Greco-Turkish population exchange were about to enter a complete deadlock. Before proceeding into the news reports on the Greek press, it is to be explained why the Greco-Turkish relations were once again on the verge of war.

Even though the transfer stage of the exchange had already been completed by the time of this incident, aftershocks of this demographic engineering practice were still in progress. It is possible to say that there were three intermingled dimensions underneath of these aftershocks. The first dimension was the issue of determining the compensations to be paid to the population subject to the exchange, which was yet to be resolved. A disagreement on the amount and value

of the properties abandoned by the population subject to the exchange had brought the negotiations into a deadlock. The second factor was the communities who were held hostage in both countries according to the Exchange Agreement. According to the agreement, the Greek-Orthodox population residing in İstanbul, the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, and Western Thracian Muslims were exempted from the Exchange. This situation and the attitudes of the states towards the issue generated new and lasting problems.<sup>1150</sup> A leading one among these was the *établi* problem, that is to say, the issue of determining whom among İstanbul Greeks to be exempted from the Exchange. As discussed earlier, this issue stayed unresolved until 1928 and again in 1928 it brought the negotiations almost into termination by putting the negotiations into a deadlock. According to a resolution of Mixed Exchange Commission dated March 19, 1927, it was decided to identify all Greeks who had been residing in İstanbul before October 30, 1918, as *établi*, within the scope of article two of the Exchange Convention. After General Don Manuel Manrique, Chairman of the Mixed Exchange Commission, opened the decision of 1927 to interpretation, the Turkish Government intensified their efforts to minimize the *établi* number, which could be interpreted as only 35 thousand Greeks were allowed to stay in İstanbul.<sup>1151</sup> Considering the fact that a Greek population of 100,214 were residing in İstanbul according to 1927 census, it can be easily inferred that properties of Greeks in İstanbul who are not subject to the Exchange were another matter in question. The government did not lose time to The number of immovable properties seized by the beginning of August 1928 was more than two hundred,

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<sup>1150</sup> Similar problems have been encountered by the Muslim population within the borders of Greece who were not subject to the exchange. One of the reasons that escalated the tension of the negotiations in 1928 was that the Mixed Exchange Commission were going to be moved from İstanbul. The Turkish demanded the Mixed Exchange Commission, whose base of operations had been İstanbul since the early stages of the Exchange, to be moved to Gümülcine, while the Greeks demanded it to be moved to Athens.

<sup>1151</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, August 19, 1928.



and it reached three hundred by the end of September. There were also more than fifty houses, land plots and shops around Tatavla and Yenişehir which were planned to be transferred to the Treasury on the grounds of being abandoned.<sup>1152</sup>

The third reason was the issue of "Papa Efthim" or, if we consider it in a broader context, the issue of Patriarchate.<sup>1153</sup> Even though we are going to avoid the details, it is possible to summarize the issue as follows: Establishment of an Orthodox church by Ankara Government under the spiritual leadership of a Turkophone Greek, Efthymios Karahissaridis, was to be named Papa Efthim, as an alternative to the Patriarchate, and in this way and by other means constantly attempting to interfere with the internal affairs of the religious institutions of the Greek Orthodox community, moreover, oppressive policies towards the Patriarchate (such as the expulsion of Constantine VI) put a great deal of pressure on the Greek people who were exempted from the exchange. In addition to these, having Civil Code enter into effect in 1926, the obligations of the Civil Code were forced upon the non-Muslim minorities and in this regard, Article 42 of the Treaty of Lausanne, which regulated personal legal statuses of non-Muslims regarding the matters such as family and community life particularly, have been rendered obsolete. It is safe to say that legal interferences with the Greek minority and in particular the

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<sup>1152</sup> Türker, *Tatavla*, 108.

<sup>1153</sup> For the matter of Papa Efthim and the other patriarchate related issues, see Elçin Macar, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003); idem. "The Politics of Turkey Towards the Ecumenical Patriarchate: The Single-Party Era (1923-45)," in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna et al. (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2013); O. Cengiz Aktar, *Tarihî, Siyasî, Dinî ve Hukukî Açıdan Ekümenik Patrikhane* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2011); Foti Benlisoy, "Papa Eftim and the Foundation of the Turkish Orthodox Church" (Unpublished MA Thesis, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2002), Foti Benlisoy and Stefo Benlisoy, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinde Katedilmemiş Bir Yol: "Hıristiyan Türkler" ve Papa Eftim* (İstanbul: İstos, 2016).

policies against the Patriarchate created profound traumatic effects among the community. In his memoirs İsmet İnönü summarizes the problems as follows:<sup>1154</sup>

There are Greeks in İstanbul. They are not native, have come from outside of the city and started a life there. How are they to be separated? Which articles of the exchange convention are to or not to make them eligible for the exchange even though they live in İstanbul? There (in Greece) only those who live in Western Thrace are not subject to the exchange. There is no such dispute over the Turks in Greece. However, if the dispute (over İstanbul) persisted, it could also be told that they have to leave because they are not Western Thracian. The *etabli* issue is not as severe a problem for the Turks living in Greece. What was important was the Constantinopolitan Greeks. As a matter of fact, the exchange as an issue did not cease to exist until 1930 owing to the controversies stirred up by this subject. What does “*etabli*,” i.e. resident, mean? That was the origin of the problem. The issue was taken to the Court of Arbitration at the Hague, and they gave their opinion. New disputes were sparked off while executing the exchange in the direction of their view.

While the problems remained unresolved, in Greece the Turks in Western Thrace began to be treated badly. A lot of Turks were forcefully expelled. Even at some point, the Greek government started seizing Turkish properties in Greece. We too retaliated. From time to time, the relations between two governments became tense. As we were settling one issue, another one was popping up. The most important one that I recall is the issue of Patriarchate issue. The issue of Patriarchate caused a great deal of discussion. A Greek called Konstantin Araboğlu was designated as patriarch. Yet this new patriarch was subject to the population exchange. He was not one of Greeks who had resided in İstanbul and hence was not subject to the exchange. He was from a region the residents of which were to be exchanged. That is why we claimed that the new patriarch was too subject to the exchange. Greece, on the other hand, said that he was not. This issue was taken to the Hague Court to get an opinion. We challenged the venue and stopped this process. The Mixed Commission was in favor of our view, but the members of the commission that were other than ours claimed that only the Patriarch constituted an exception to this clause.

Although the patriarch issue seemed to be solved in 1925 in favor of Turkey, in order to enfeeble the Greek community the pressure on the Patriarchate increased through the Efthim's divisive and antagonizing tactics in the communal elections of the richest Greek Orthodox

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<sup>1154</sup> İsmet İnönü, *İsmet İnönü'nün Hatıraları - Cumhuriyetin İlk Yılları I: (1923-1938)*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet, 1998), 126-27.

parishes with the help of local police forces. Eftim tried to occupy some churches in Constantinople in the second half of the 1920s as the seat of the Autocephalous Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate, and he managed to control a few churches. In the 1930s, Eftim's associates were appointed as trustees to some important Greek properties, such as İstamat Zihni Özdamar's illegal appointment to the Balikli Rum Hospital in 1935 as the only trustee. Meanwhile, the intercommunity relations kept tense by means of constantly reminding the traitorous and collaborationist activities that the local Greek communities had allegedly involved in. These years, as Alexis Alexandris describes, were the years of the Patriarchate's moral and financial deterioration.<sup>1155</sup>

Turkification was a multilayered project, and demographic engineering was a part of it. Demographic engineering methods were put into practice in tandem with linguistic, economic and social policies. The government had been taking serious measures to form a recall economic sphere since the establishment of the republic. For example, in 1926, the requirement to speak Turkish have been imposed upon the personnel of all companies carrying on business in Turkey, and again "being Turkish" was imposed as a requirement to be employed in government service based on a law established in the same year. As discussed in the previous section, such linguistic policies were extended into daily life, and it took the form of a nation-wide campaign titled "Citizen, Speak Turkish!" targeting the population whose mother tongue was different than Turkish.

In 1929, the issues between Turkey and Greece stemming from the exchange were tenser than ever. Constantinopolitan Greeks, as a hostage community, were under severe economic, political and cultural pressure at the same time. These were the conditions in which a

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<sup>1155</sup> Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of İstanbul*, 172.

neighborhood the name of which was used as the synonym of the phrase "Greek neighborhood" burnt down to ashes. The Tatavla fire quickly became a matter of politics. The dominant ideological strains of the period were imbued with "national independence" discourse and anti-minority motives and even charities for the fire-stricken neighborhood were considered as a threat to national security.

The reports about British Ambassador Sir George Clerk's visit to Tatavla appeared first in the Greek press of the city, and then the Turkish newspapers too reported the subject. The *Akşam*, which was the first to report this in Turkish on January 24, had a neutral tone at the beginning: "It was reported that British Ambassador met the bishop of Tatavla in his visit to the scene of the fire." This situation began to attract severe criticism of the Turkish press. *Cumhuriyet's* report on January 26 asked again if the British Ambassador intended to cause a conflict between the elements of the Turkish society, a question posed by Necmettin Sadık (Sadak) Bey, founder and writer of *Akşam* and Sivas deputy, and reported that "the British Ambassador could not hide his astonishment when they found him at the *Cercle d'Orient* and asked him this question.<sup>1156</sup> Soon after Clerk personally sent a letter to *Akşam* to refute these claims, while at the same time informing the other newspapers about the refutation letter he had sent to *Akşam* regarding the reports of this newspaper. According to the statement of the Ambassador, which appeared on all of the newspapers, it was Lady Clerk, his wife, not him, who had visited the scene of the fire and this visit took place without his knowledge. The Turkish press did not take this as a plausible argument. On the same day with the ambassador's statement a rather harsh article under the nom de plume *Seyyah* appeared on *Akşam*:

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<sup>1156</sup> Necmettin Sadık Bey's Statement mentioned in *Cumhuriyet* did not appear on *Akşam's* issues dated January 24 and 25. What was implied may also be the French issue of the newspaper *Akşam, l'Akcham*.

[...] As one can see, most of the companies that had fattened with Turkish money decided to help the Tatabla Greeks. Was that the first disaster that the Turkish soil had encountered? [...] We may not be able to protest the fact that the embassy felt residents of Tatabla, among all the people of this land, closest to itself and its mercy, but we shall put a mark on it. On the other hand [...] an embassy ex officio is rather suggestive, unbearably vastly and deeply suggestive. Alternatively, does the British embassy believe that there are communities on whom they can still freely claim safeguarding?.. In this action, I see the taint of malice in disguise of affection and humanity.

On January 27, in a news report titled “Don’t trouble yourselves!”, *Akşam* stated that there was no need for such “generosity of the foreigners”, that there was an official institution for this, and asserted that if that money had been given to the Red Crescent, those charities would have been distributed to “the firefighters too who had lost their eyes trying to save the Greeks.”<sup>1157</sup>

Rumors and discussions on the fire on the press started to diversify after this point. Without any doubt, the new information about the fire reported by *Akşam* on January 28 was the most provoking one. The report was titled "Bomb and ammunition explosions in some houses during the Tatabla fire, " and it stated "several explosions occurred during the fire. Firefighters heard several bomb and shell explosions at the worst moments of the fire, and it was understood that bombs and ammunition had been hidden in the burning houses." The same day *Milliyet* also reported the news of bomb explosions in some houses. The reports on alleged bomb explosions were precursor of the extent of the possible conspiracies that could be staged based on the state of the negotiations which, at that time, had once again reached a deadlock due to the fate of

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<sup>1157</sup> The Tatabla fire disturbed Anglo-Turkish relations which were in an interim stage in 1929. According to Clerk, "the disparity between protestations of Turkish friendship and outbursts of Turkish xenophobia were difficult to reconcile" despite encouraging diplomatic signals. Gerald J Protheroe, *Searching for Security in a New Europe: The Diplomatic Career of Sir George Russell Clerk* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006, 117.

Constantinopolitan Greeks and Greece's refusal to accept the use of Latin alphabet in the education at the minority schools of Western Thrace. Despite not being able to directly refute the bomb claims *Fos*, on the same day, reported the news with the title "Και... περί βομβών" [And... about the bombs], as it was implied that "and finally we have reached this point." The debate ignited by the charitable activities organized by the Clerks kept escalating by *Stamboul*, *l'Akcham*, *Fos* and *Vakit*. Influence of the nationalism on treating the matter became so determinant that the people of Tatavla started being the subject of cruel jokes and ethnic humor and reactions quickly took the form of xenophobic assaults.



**Figure 5-13:** Joking about the Tatavla Fire

**Source:** *Akşam*, January 29, 1929.

On January 29 *Akşam* published a cartoon depicting two well-dressed women with skirts flying up in the breeze. While one of the women tells the other one that "The man behind us keeps grousing 'I am on fire.'" and the other, indicating that she is not sure whether this is a

verbal harassment or not, states "He might be from Tatavla." (See Figure 5-13). Right next to this cartoon there was an article signed by Necmettin Sadık on the Tatavla fire, where charitable relief for the victims by foreigners for this neighborhood was interpreted as "political extravaganza," and how the Greek press presented the British Ambassador's philanthropic activities were described as "abusing the feelings of mercy for political purposes" and "devilry".

The extent of the issue was most clearly exhibited by an article titled "They are getting out of hand" published on the issue of *Akşam* dated January 30. This article, again with the byline Seyyah, dealt together with the issues of the use of Latin alphabet in minority schools refused and the Exchange negotiations: "The name Tatavla has frequently been appearing on newspaper columns due to a disaster. I do not know why there isn't even a single fond memory of this neighborhood in my mind!"

Furious with the appeals by the Greek press asking no interference with the charity activities, *Seyyah* continues:

In the face of the Tatavla fire, what an arrogance it is to preach mercy and dignity to a nation who even tolerated these cries that remind the darkest days, the most painful memories of that neighborhood! Mercy, if there is any left in this world, can only echo in Turkish hearts. In no corner of the world will this fact be challenged. While this insolence thrives within our borders like a snake, we are witnessing a rather meaningful deed of the Greek government by an extraordinary coincidence. The Greek government prohibited Thracian Turks from using the Latin alphabet. At first glance, the motive of the snake, which nested deep within the matter, is not apparent, however reflecting on the matter a little deeper blights the heart. The behavior of those who spends sweet words gives assurances on not only the status but even on dark futures while sitting around the gambling tables may not be surprising, but it is certainly loathsome. We do not promote interfering every government's right to take measures and make decisions. However, Borderlands are similar to joined vessels in a way. Agitation of an action in one of the vessels immediately causes a tide in the other one. Now that Greeks seek to wipe out the language of the Turks there, then we should deprive the Greeks here of Greek language. When we have the opportunity at present, and they have given this opportunity to us themselves.

Meanwhile, the Tatavla fire started to be reported by the major newspaper in Greece. One of the points particularly emphasized while reporting the fire was that Tatavla was a Greek neighborhood based on its population characteristics. *Eleftheron Vima*, which was the mouthpiece of the Venizelos government, was the first to report the fire. On January 23 *Eleftheron Vima*: "Greek community of Constantinople were shocked by the devastating fire which broke out last night in Tatavla, an entirely Greek neighborhood." On January 24 *Eleftheron Vima* published an article by V. Iliadis titled Tatavla in which the significance of Tatavla for the Greeks, by depicting a romantic portrayal of the neighborhood. In the article, Tatavla was depicted as: "A neighborhood who preserved its colors against the course of time and despite various adventures it encountered. There is not a single minaret or a fountain, nothing that could remind you of the Orient." On January 25 *Eleftheron Vima* reported that Turkish officials had not permitted charitable acts for the people who had suffered from the Tatavla fire. Same day's issue of *Ethnos* gives a very detailed account of the fire based on the accounts of the witnesses who were present at the scene of the fire, even including details such as the cries of a woman whose poultry house was on fire.

On January 25, *Patris* published an article with quite a strong language:

A new and a big one was added to the disasters of Constantinopolitan Hellenism: Tatavla, which was always a pristine center of social and intellectual activities with educational and charity foundations of Hellenism, the Greek Tatavla, became a victim of the fire. [...] Tatavla preserved its colors, and have been a target of constant attacks by Turkish press who saw a pure Greek corner whenever they cast over, even after Constantinopolitan Hellenism have left the city. Previous day's fire has wiped out this corner, and this event became an integral part of the disaster which started with the catastrophe of Asia Minor.

*Elliniki* reported the fire on January 25 with the title "Greek Properties completely destroyed" by N. Eugenios and gave a detailed account of the fire on January 26. It can be



observed that the rhetoric of the newspaper closely resembles that of the Greek press before the Asia Minor Campaign:<sup>1158</sup>

The Beautiful Seven Hills, the dream city of Hellenism took a major strike. Flames consumed the breeding ground of Hellenism. Celebrated Tattavla exists no more. Greek families are hopelessly and vainly waiting for government assistance on roads. They are homeless, without food and care. They are the unredeemed Greeks, and their masters will not be grieved for their condition. This is a neighborhood which is called "Little Greece" by the Turks. Tattavla exists no more. Now the uprooted Hellenism of the queen of cities is now groveling on the streets of devils."

*Eleftheron Vima*, on its January 26 issue, indicated that the Tattavla fire particularly concerned the fate of the Greeks which had been left in Turkey. On the next day, the newspaper gave an account of the debates on charities which had been appearing on Turkish press under the title "Turkish War against the British Ambassador and the Patriarchate for their Concerns." On January 29 *Eleftheron Vima* gave an account on the matter of thieving "Greeks" which we were also discussed above. The newspaper, quoting from the police bulletin, stated that all of the people who got caught were Turkish and this attitude of the İstanbul press threatened the possibility of signing a Turkish-Greek friendship agreement which had been planned. It is especially interesting that the newspaper used the word İstanbul, which had rarely been employed by the press or in the daily life, instead of Constantinople.

On January 30 with the title "Poetic Tattavla is in ruins" *Skrip*, underlining "The sorrow and fear that burden the hearts of Constantinople Greeks due to Tattavla's depressing condition today is indescribable," states that:

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<sup>1158</sup> The phrase "Tattavla which raised the best members of Hellenism" which were going to be referred to frequently by the Turkish press was again stated by *Elliniki*.

The fear depicted above may be considered too exaggerated and implausible by those who do not have an idea about the conditions of the last years under which the Greek presence in Constantinople has been struggling. However, for those who had the opportunity, or rather the misfortune, of getting acquainted with the Turkish mania (τουρκική μανία) and hatred, the Tavatla fire seems quite natural.

The article continued by stating that Tavatla had been encountering the harassment of some unknown groups for a while and pointed out the suspicions raised by the spread of the fire despite the adequacy of fire brigades.

On February 1, *Eleftheron Vima* reported from the headline that the attacks of the Turkish press were continuing and criticized the publications of *Vakit*, *Akşam*, and *Milliyet*, and particularly underlined *Akşam*'s call for shutting down the Greek schools in Constantinople.

The attention of Greek press on the fire irritated more the authorities and press in Turkey. *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, which was the semi-official newspaper of the Turkish government, published a report titled "Greek Newspapers and the Tavatla fire" on February 1. Until then only bits and pieces from the Greek press were reported in Turkey. The report of *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* clearly expressed the discomfort of the government regarding the interest of the Greek press and their discourse competing in nationalism with the Turkish press. On the same day *Akşam* too gave an overview of Greek press's way of treating the matter with examples from *Eleftheron Vima*, *Patris*, and *Elliniki*. The newspaper underlined that there was a political motive behind Greece's focusing the attention on the Tavatla fire, which was, as they stated, about "the destruction of only 200 shacks." The newspaper also added, "We would definitely be glad that the Tavatla fire happened for it gave us an opportunity to see the genuine feelings of our neighbor Greece towards us if, of course, we were not aware of the fact that it left hundreds of İstanbul residents of Turkish nationality homeless." The newspaper did not stop at this point and continued publishing on the same matter. On February 2, an article titled "Again the same issue –

They have issued the fatwa for themselves" of *Seyyah*. The passage below captures the tone of the article:

As reading the newspapers I start feeling as if I was living in the captive and enslaved Ottoman Empire of the years of armistice, which was crawling with its chains clanking, instead of heroic Turkey, which was triumphant at Lausanne, rose up in Sakarya and covered the coast of İzmir with the dead bodies of Greeks. An unmeasured vitality in my heart and hatred that distracts my mind gets ignited like an **arson attempt**. There were some people, who found our ever wake suspicions concerning Greekness (*Rumluk*) excessive and considered those suspicions as an obstacle to peace and safety. If only they had been right. If only we had been mistaken and we had not felt something burning deep inside us in the face of these clear pieces of evidence. If only the events had proven those questioning our caution right. The voices, once tuned to justness and humanity, has now finally turned to be hissing of serpents. It has been expressed in their own language Tatavla is the cradle of Hellenism, not a Turkish neighborhood. So why linger on more complex aspects of the matter? Here the matter lays bare. They tell that the Greeks of our motherland still have dreams of a greater Greece. Since they have issued the fatwa themselves, wouldn't be the remaining works easier? They shall transport their nurseries and plant on their own soil. Tatavla, which raised thousand faced scoundrels such as Hristanos, would be such a fertile farm of national heroes. There would be no other farmer on the world living in such a harmony with his farm!.. This disaster of fire was, in fact, the dawn of a blessed morning. It tore down the last remaining trap of Greece. We comply with it. We can hand over Tatavla together with its tunnels that sheltered bandits and with the betrayal as the result of which they dug those tunnels. We can hand it over even with the other ones... We comply with all of these. However, we cannot tolerate the existence of a little Greece in Turkey. This dream cannot mature in our land. Because none of us is asleep, each of us is holding a noose, and we shall suffocate it again without even let it take its first breath.

This article was published side by side with the news of a Greek priest having intentionally killed two through injecting something. The tone of this article and having such news, which would otherwise have been expected to be on the inner pages as a minor report, hit the front page right next to the lead article were an indicator of the extent of how prevailing the anti-Greek sentiments were in the press.

Another popular newspaper of Greece, the Thessaloniki-based *Makedonia* started reporting news on Tatavla on January 29. All the reports of *Makedonia* on the Tatavla fire were

signed by Vosporitis. The newspaper gave a special coverage of the reflections in the Turkish press. On February 7, *Makedonia* quoted long passages from the Turkish press. Vosporitis stated that the Turks were looking for ostensible reasons to prevent the progress of the Turkish-Greek negotiations and that Tatabla was just the latest of these excuses. Similarly, on the same day *Eleftheron Vima* depicted the attitude of the Turkish press through the lead article (“New Campaign of the Turkish Press against the Constantinopolitan Greeks”), and criticized the way that the Turkish press covered the Tatabla fire and brought up the history of the neighborhood rather than the on-going negotiations and the future.

In February polemics continued with ups and downs in intensity. On February 4, *Vakit* printed a letter signed by Mustafa Mestan on behalf of disaster victims of the town of Torbalı and its environs. After expressing the difficulties encountered by the people of Torbalı and its environs in the past year after the earthquake that hit the town on March 31, 1928. Mustafa Mestan wrote that they were still in urgent need of aid and by bringing up the aids collected by foreigners after the Tatabla fire, he requested the charities to be fairly distributed. As the polemics were calmed down in the Greek press, the issue was reignited with the article of *Le Progrès* that criticized nationalist fanaticism prevailing in Turkey and claimed on this basis that Turkey had lost its prestige before European countries. Harshest response to *Le Progrès* came from *Akşam*. Necmettin Sadık Bey criticized *Le Progrès* in his article titled “A Mindset” by stating “even in the silence of the Greek press we sometimes hear some cries as hideous as those of jackals.” and continued:

We know that there is something in Turkey and among the Turkish dignitaries that concerns some foreign offices. The current picture, which is completely unlike the former Ottoman Empire's political style, is something much disliked. The state of mind they see in our country and call "nationalist fanaticism" is the sentiment which is the origin of the power that saved Turkey from foreign invasion, foreign captivity, and capitulations. The

reason for us having these sentiments stronger than other countries is the historical events which keep the instinct to preserve our existence livelier in our minds.

Meanwhile, in the background, the Turkish newspapers were criticizing the Turkish government for the Greco-Turkish negotiations that proceeded at a snail's pace. As the negotiation process had come to a standstill and none of the major issues could be resolved, the entire society was subject to the daily doses of outrage, bigotry and anti-Greek sentiment in the press.

On February 19, with another article titled "Deplorable Guys" *Akşam* was writing as if to prove how strong the "sentiments" mentioned the previous day were. Regarding the claims that the Tatabla fire was intentionally started or failed to be extinguished and halted humanitarian activities to aid the victims of the fire, *Akşam's* reply was as follows:

We knew lying, slander, morals meant nothing to the descendants of 'Hellade'" However, we were not able to imagine the degree of slander that the arsonists of 'İzmir' could commit against the Turks based on an ordinary urban fire. [...] Since we do not know about the secret recipe of fire and raiding unlike 'Trikupis's' soldiers that set Anatolian villages on fire, we were not able to conduct these methods in Tatabla. [...] I wonder if the citizens of 'Hacı Anesti,' who sank into such a meanness that they accuse our entire government organization to set a few shacks on fire in Tatabla, think that we are like them. Is it our job to answer this question? Are the (Constantinopolitan) Greeks at a loss for words when it comes to this matter?

The Constantinopolitan Greeks answered the question in this tense atmosphere. On the same day's issue, *Apoyevmatini*<sup>1159</sup> printed a translation of *Akşam's* aforementioned article, and at the same time felt the necessity to publish on the front page the announcement on the aid which was going to be provided to Tatabla by the "respectable government of the Republic."

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<sup>1159</sup> There is an error in the dates of the newspaper issues published in those days. An issue which could be inferred to was released on February 19 based on its contents, carries the date of February 18.

Furthermore, *Cumhuriyet* and *Akşam* started publishing serialized articles on “the conquest of İstanbul” in February 1929.

At the end of February, when the polemics on Tatabla were calmer, the Turkish press was once again agitated with another matter which closely concerned the Constantinopolitan Greeks. On March 3, 1929, Eleni Michailidou became the subject of a protest by a group of youth on the claims of defamation of the Turkish Nation, based on his article published by *Ta Hronika*, a newspaper whose managing director was also the writer in question.<sup>1160</sup> The manager's office of the newspaper, which were located at the Suma Inn, Galata Yenikapı, was occupied by a young crowd. On the same day, the publication of the paper was halted according to the article 23 of the Press Law.<sup>1161</sup> They could not find the editor of the newspaper, Pananos Kesisoglou,<sup>1162</sup> and looted and vandalized the manager’s office. It was reported by *Akşam* on March 4 as follows:

Publications of the paper ‘Hronika,’ a newspaper published in our city, the insolence of derision of the Turkish victory and that of presenting it as a return to barbaric ages, asked for the rightful hatred and indignation of the Turkish public and the youth and caused some of our young people to perform certain actions to condemn these publications.

An investigation regarding the newspaper quickly put into action, publication of the paper was stopped, and its owner and editor were arrested. The *Cumhuriyet* reported the detention and interrogation of "Eleni Hacopulu" and "Panasos Keşişoğlu" with the headline "trial of the insolent Greek journalists started." There were also false claims brought up regarding the

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<sup>1160</sup> For a brief review of the campaign against *Hronika*, see also Nevzat Onaran, *Cumhuriyette Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi (1920-1930)*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2013), 223-4 and Okutan, *Tek Parti Döneminde Azınlık Politikaları*, 243-245.

<sup>1161</sup> The closure of *Hronika* was justified with the publications threatening the security of the state. BCA, 030..18.1.2 — 2.16..39.

<sup>1162</sup> Here I follow the Turkish transliteration of the names and surnames that the Turkish newspapers used.

newspaper. For example, despite Eleni Hacıopulu being the owner and director of the newspaper, *Cumhuriyet* wrote on March 5 that the proprietor of the newspaper was "Stamat Hacıopulos,"<sup>1163</sup> who was the consultant of the Patriarchate and who had been tried and sentenced by the Independence Tribunal after the foundation of the republic. *Cumhuriyet* went one step further and on March 6 published a short piece that combines the Tatabla fire and the *Chronika* issue:

We are not one of those who is not aware of the fact that they gnaw at the bosom nursing them. That is why we were not surprised by the smears about the Tatabla fire cast on us by foreigners. We were not astonished at all by delusional accusations of a newspaper publishing in Greek, which actually tried to respond to the interest of those foreigners. Moreover, we do not bother ourselves to comment on the true nature of the issue even if it enraged the youth of a dignified and tolerant nation with its bold and repulsive actions: Because, in the immediate past, the course of history revealed their true color with all their loathsomeness that we do not need to learn anything new. At this moment we would like to say only that: We do not want! There is no place for two-faced citizens in the Turkish homeland. Our bosom is not a homeland for those who still scream in agony due to the Greek debacle in Asia Minor.

Other Greek newspapers published in İstanbul preferred to report the matter with translations from Turkish press and without any comments obviously to prevent any legal pitfalls. On March 5, 1929, *Apoyevmatini* reported the Turkish Government's "advice" for the minority press and repeated that the minority press published in İstanbul should not forget even for a second that they were publishing in Turkish soil. Every court session of Eleni Michailidou's trial hit the headlines. Meanwhile, the case of *O Kopanos* (knob, slang: knob-head), a satirical newspaper published in Greek, was concluded and the newspaper was permanently shut down

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<sup>1163</sup> The newspaper was by no means related to Stamat Hacıopulos. As the nameplate of the paper explicitly states the editor in chief of the paper was "Aleksandros A. Hacıopulos." Alexandros Hacıopulos was going to be a deputy at the National Assembly between 1954 and 1960. *TBMM Albümü 1950-1980*, vol. 2, 4 vols. (Ankara: TBMM Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 2010), 640 and 722.

for publishing political content on March 22.<sup>1164</sup> Although Eleni Michailidou and Pananos Kesisoglou were acquitted in November, particularly in March the legal procedure against *Ta Hronika* was used effectively in order to keep the intercommunal tension high and the ashes of Tavatla glowing.

In the middle of this plight, *Akşam* published an exclusive story on March 24. The title of the story was “A name reminiscent of murderers... The municipality decided to change the name of Tavatla – From now on the Tavatla street to be called Kurtuluş (salvation, liberation).” The report continued with:<sup>1165</sup>

After the latest Tavatla fire, Greek newspapers stated that Tavatla was a symbol of Byzantium in İstanbul in the articles they published. These publications caused a very adverse effect on Turkish public opinion. On the other hand, Tavatla is a name reminiscent of safe-breakers and murderers. With this reputation, hearing the name “Tavatla” causes a negative effect. According to the news we received, the municipality decided to change the name of this neighborhood and change the name of Tavatla street to Kurtuluş street and sent a letter to the governor's office. After performing required procedures by the governorship, Tavatla will be renamed as "Kurtuluş." Once a shelter to killers and villains like Hrisantos, Tavatla will finally become a clean neighborhood where many Turkish families reside. In this regard, it is very fortunate to annul the old, ugly name and renaming the neighborhood as “Kurtuluş.”

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<sup>1164</sup> *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, March 23, 1929.

<sup>1165</sup> Chrisantos (Hristos Anastasiadis, son of Achilles) mentioned in this article was a figure who occupied a prominent place in the collective memory of the city. In the *Esir Şehrin İnsanları*, Kemal Tahir refers Chrisantos as one of the most famous ruffians of Constantinople with the following passage: "Today newspapers are full of murders... Chrisantos stopped a policeman in plain clothes, did a body search and then released him. Asked the other policeman named Abdurrahman Efendi for his gun, and shot him in the head when he refused to do so... He fled from Akarca Street to Tavatla... This is the fifth policeman he killed. He has been wondering around freely for months. I have seen his photo. A filthy boy with faint eyes! The British are said to be protecting the rascal..." Kemal Tahir, *Esir Şehrin İnsanları* (İstanbul: İthaki Publishing, 2007), 36. For Chrisantos, Muharrem Alkor, *Hrisantos'u Ben Öldürdüm*, (İstanbul: Nebioğlu Yayınevi, 1952), Ali Karakaya, “Mütareke Yıllarında (1919-1920) İstanbul'da İşgal Güçlerinin Himayesinde Bir Katili Şerir; Hrisantos,” *Polis Dergisi*, no. 45 (Temmuz-Ağustos-Eylül 2005): 208–13; Gürkan Fırat Saylan, “İşgal İstanbul’unda Eli Kanlı Bir Örgüt: Hrisantos Çetesi,” *A.Ü.Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 44 (2010): 325–43.



Accordingly, required arrangements were performed quickly. On April 1, 1929, *Vakit* reported that the tramway signboards had been changed and the name *Kurtuluş* could be used instead of Tatavla from then on. According to the newspaper, "an eyesore have become disused." After then, the word "Tatavla" became a taboo. On *Vakit*'s August 8 issue, a reader's letter was published signed by "Feriköy resident M. Fehmi" and titled "Tramway does not go to Tatavla." The letter is given below:

I usually take Kurtuluş tramway. Greek passengers that are residents of Kurtuluş, formerly known as Tatavla, asked tickets to Tatavla from ticket conductors and despite our 'extramural' warnings they don't quit using the word 'Tatavla', and in this way, they both offend the national identity of the Turkish nation and violate the orders of the municipality. For this reason, I consider it a national duty to bring this matter to the attention of both the police department and the tramway company, and to point out as a definitive resort not to sell tickets to those asking tickets to Tatavla and to turn over those who insists on to the police by stopping the tramcar at police checkpoint locations to teach these people what the orders of city hall means.

#### **5.4-5 Tatavla as a "lieu de memoire"**

Tatavla, one of the historic neighborhoods of Constantinople, the history of which is full of fires, was not only burnt down to ashes by the fire on the night of January 21, 1929. The fire happened at a moment when the Exchange negotiations between Turkey and Greece was at a deadlock mainly due to the fate of Constantinopolitan Greeks. The Tatavla fire was quickly rendered instrumental in the formative years of the nascent Turkish republic which were dominated by political and economic nationalism. The fire was exploited as a means to realize the nationalist agenda of the nation state seeking ethnic homogeneity. The Turkish and Greek nation-states had already exchanged the majority of their Orthodox Christian and Muslim

minorities, but there were still unresolved issues regarding the exchange: The valuation of abandoned properties, and hence the amount of compensation that each state claimed had brought Turkey and Greece on the verge of a diplomatic crisis. Both states were looking for loopholes to maximize the number of people they included in the population exchange and minimize the number of minorities within their national borders. In addition to this, both states imposed strict regulations regarding the legal status of the remaining minorities as a means of assimilation and intimidation. As discussed in this section, this policy of the Turkish state can be observed through the Tatabla fire and the ensuing developments.

In the two months following the fire, Tatabla, which was a neighborhood in need in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, became "the cradle of Hellenism" to be cleansed and liberated "like the rest of the country." The name of the neighborhood is called a sore to the eyes, an annoyance to the ears. We observe that the "national memory" was fully mobilized and reorganized. A perception and memory manipulation operation were in progress where various places, events, and people were consciously evoked and some narratives gained primacy. From the towns and villages that had been set on fire by the Greek army after the collapse of the Anatolian front, to the Fire of Smyrna, from Chrisantos of Constantinople to General Trikoupis a number of historical representations were blended into a story that reflected not only the "national past" crafted by the power structure and struggles in Turkey, but also projected a national future where there was no place for Greeks as an ethno-religious minority in Turkey. Utilizing this emotional and mnemonic investment, the fire evolved from an urban disaster into an opportunity, or even into "the dawn of a blessed morning." One of the important reasons that allowed such a rapid transformation and to perform such a direct intervention was the extent of the hostility towards Greeks in the collective memory of the Turkish in that period. A point that

deserves special attention is that the Constantinopolitan Greeks did not get involved in the polemics in question through their press but instead they only watched their fates in despair. The Greeks of Tatavla/Constantinople, who did not get involved in this fight, eventually had to pay the ultimate price. The reconciliatory attitude of the Constantinopolitan Greeks made almost no difference in terms of their fate. The Tatavla fire, although paid little scholarly attention, constituted a turning point in the history of this neighborhood but in fact, for other minority elements along with them. The aforementioned provocation attempt against the newspaper *Hronika* and the owner of the newspaper, Eleni Michailidou while the Tatavla issue was still hot. Considering this campaign's resemblance to the campaign targeting Hrant Dink and his newspaper *Agos* and was carried out by the mainstream media and the entire bureaucracy hand-in-hand in the recent past, the *Hronika* case was neither the first nor the last of the "defamation of the Turkish Nation" cases. In fact, the legal actions that had been taken within the scope of "defamation of the Turkish Nation" were the most direct indicator that post-1929 was a tough period for the minorities as mentioned in the previous section. As stated, the number of the legal cases against "defamation of the Turkish Nation" targeting non-Muslims between 1925 and 1927 was sixty-two. This number increased to one hundred and seventy-two between 1929 and 1932. During 1925-1927 percentage of cases opened against non-Muslims based on defamation of the Turkish Nation charges were 13% of the total number of cases of the same kind. This ratio increased to 53% between 1929 and 1932. We also observe that in the post-1929 period, a major majority of the Greek press of Constantinople were closed due to the legal action taken by the government. *Anexartitos*, the first issue of which was published in 1927, was closed in 1931. *Metarrythmisis*, which had been published since 1925, was closed in 1935 and *To Fos*, which started its publishing life in 1924, was closed in 1929. The newspaper *Hronika*, which we have

discussed above, was going to be closed in 1933. In addition to these, there were a significant number of newspapers in Greek which started being published in this city after 1929 the lives of which did not exceed a couple of years.<sup>1166</sup>

The mnemonic aspect of this operation did not only include reminding of the period of occupation and national struggle. The primary purpose of this operation was not to remind the recent past but to bury it. The intolerance towards the name of the neighborhood not only within official contexts but also in daily life could be considered as a part of the efforts towards dissolving "Tatavla" and its specific identity in a narrative of national liberation, which happened to reach its apogee as a victory against Greeks. The new toponym for the neighborhood, "Kurtuluş" (liberation, salvation), is consistent with this. Another point, which deserves attention, is the availability of the documents and information on the fire. Let's not forget the fact that we are talking about a fire in the middle of Constantinople and that, as the result of this fire, a neighborhood was completely burnt down to ashes. This fire also became the subject of lengthy polemics between Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom and finally, the toponym of a historical neighborhood was officially changed. Despite these facts, neither is it possible to find a single mention of or reference to the event in the proceedings of the National Assembly nor to obtain information related to this particular matter via a research at the Turkish archives. It is, however, possible to obtain information, albeit limited, on various fires which were encountered during the same period via archival research.<sup>1167</sup>

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<sup>1166</sup> Stratis D. Tarinas, *Ο ελληνικός τύπος της πόλης* (Istanbul: İho, 2007).

<sup>1167</sup> For example, it is possible to access copies of the provincial reports which had been submitted to the Ministry of the Interior regarding the fires of Tahtakale dated July 19, 1929 and of Anafartalar dated 1932, both in Ankara, at the Prime Ministry Archives of Republic. Additionally, Documents on the fire of the İstanbul Courthouse can also be accessed at BCA. For the Fire of Tahtakale, see BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 120.851..35 [August 1, 1929]. For the Fire of Anafartalar, see BCA, 30..10.0.0 — 12.853..5 [October 18, 1932], for the fire of the İstanbul Courthouse, see 30..10.0.0 — 120.584..20 [December 7, 1933].

The Tatavla fire, the subsequent toponym change, and the erasure of the Greek character of the neighborhood left dark marks not only on the Greek community of Constantinople but on the Greek society in general as well. The collapse of Greek front in Anatolia in 1922, i.e. "Asia Minor Disaster," had already marked a crisis of Greek nationalist ideology and official historiography as mentioned. The idea of a Greater Greece, coded as *Megali Idea*, which had been the most important element of Greece's official ideology, ceased to have a political use and to be considered as a viable policy. The fire of 1929 was born into this crisis. While Modern Greek identity was being re-constructed on the foundation of an uninterrupted continuity from antiquity to the modern era, the period following 1453 was incorporated into Greek nationalist discourse after 1922 as a story of uninterrupted decline. It was a period starting in "the Fall of the City" [Αλωση της Πόλεως], continued with the "Turkish yoke" [Τουρκοκρατία] and ended with the Asia Minor Disaster [Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή], which marked the end of "Eastern Hellenism." The expulsion of Asia Minor, Pontus and Thracian Greeks from their homelands, which was referred as "the Exodus" [Εξοδος, ξεριζωμός] was accompanied Asia Minor Disaster. The Tatavla fire quickly and easily found a place in this narrative of uninterrupted decline best symbolized with the image of Smyrna in flames.

While the Turks preferred to forget "Tatavla," the name "Tatavla" itself was becoming a "lieu de memoire" for the Greeks (of Constantinople and Greece). As Giorgos Kamarados-Vyzantios stated in the last sentence of his book on "Greek Tatavla," "Tatavla belongs to the history after the fire."<sup>1168</sup> He further explains why Tatavla became a "lieu de memoire" as follows:<sup>1169</sup>

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<sup>1168</sup> Kamarados-Vyzantios, *Τά Ελληνικά Ταταῦλα*, 119.

<sup>1169</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

We do not use present tense for Tatavla; since Tatavla, which was well known to a generation whose members are now departing from this life one by one, exists no more. It perished in the fire of January 1929. It disappeared with the fire, and it was replaced by a neighborhood called Kurtuluş, where a few natives of Tatavla resides and tries to save and preserve what is left from this valiant district. [...] Liberated, saved, but from what? From the fire? Of course not. The following result could easily be reached: With the fire or maybe with the toponym change it was intended to wipe off whatever belonged to the past and to “*Gavur* [infidel] Tatavla.”

On November 11, 1930, as the part of an article series on the impressions from Constantinople, Nikos Fardis, the editor of newspaper *Makedonia*, wrote on Tatavla. Fardis depicted the history and current situation of Tatavla in detail and at one point stated the following regarding the place Tatavla occupied in the collective memory of Greeks:

But Tatavla will not be forgotten. It will forever live deep in our souls as our symbol, a shelter to our nation, which defies the years. Last year, more than 700 houses were burnt down by a fire started by an unknown hand. They may change its name and one by one its residents, they may try to oppress as hard as they can, but Tatavla shall remain as the Acropolis of Constantinopolitan Hellenism. As the only untouched neighborhood where the Turkish never had the courage to settle, neither during the rule of omnipotent Kemal nor the Hamidian period...

Even then the transition from Tatavla to Kurtuluş was not a simple toponym change for Greeks, but a trauma and “Tatavla” became a symbol, a *lieu de memoire* encapsulating the real meaning of this trauma. It is possible to observe the strength and importance of this symbol through other examples too. When the Turkish Government decided to rename the Patriarchate as *Başpapazlık* (The Archpriest’s Office) in March 1931, the common ground of all the reactions which emerged in response to this move of the Turkish government was “Patriarchate shall not

become Tatavla.”<sup>1170</sup> While mainland Greeks were more vocal about Tatavla and accepted the fate of this neighborhood as a symbol of Turkish oppression, the Constantinopolitan Greeks, as expected from a hostage minority, preferred silence to loquacity. For instance, in the *Εγκυκλοπαιδικόν ημερολόγιον εικονογραφημένον* (Illustrated Encyclopedic Almanac) of 1940 printed in Constantinople, Nikolaos A. Sarados, the former administrator of famous magazine *Απόλα* (1911-1920), published an article titled "Big conflagrations over the centuries," in which he did not refer to the Tatavla fire at all while the fire in Addis Ababa in 1936 was discussed at length along with the fires that burnt down Constantinople in the Ottoman times.<sup>1171</sup>

Today the name "Tatavla" have become a metaphor which depicts the nostalgia for the past for some among the Greeks of Turkey, the Turks, and the Greeks.<sup>1172</sup> Except for those who are indifferent to the matter, Tatavla constitutes a magical world to be mourned for, lost with the fire. For some of the Greeks which immigrated from Tatavla, without any doubt, “Tatavla” expresses a longing for home, a longing for the integrity of space and time which had been shattered upon their departure from home, and a desire to return. This meaning slightly changed after the fire, but it also grew stronger. For some Turks, who feel this nostalgia, Tatavla expresses a longing for

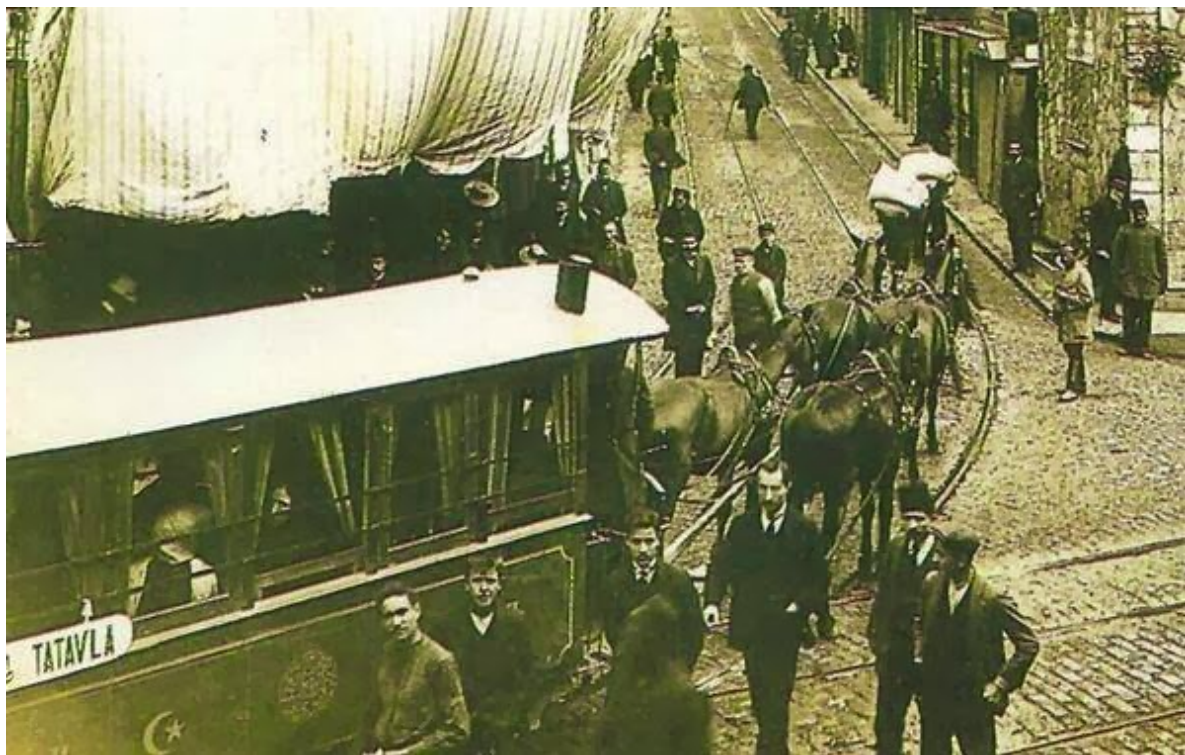
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<sup>1170</sup> For example, see *Μακεδονία*, March 3, 1931. A similar article published by *Αvgi* caught the eyes of the Turkish press and the Prime Ministry was provided with the translation of the article on the same day, March 3, 1931. See BCA, 030..10.0.0 — 109.726..9.

<sup>1171</sup> Nikolaos A. Sarados, “Αι Μεγάλαι Πυρκαϊαι Ανα Τους Αιώνας,” in *Εγκυκλοπαιδικόν Ημερολόγιον Εικονογραφημένον- Έτος Πέμπτον* 1940, ed. Stavros N. Zervopoulos (İstanbul: M. Konstantinopolos, 1940), 50–65. Even though the author was born years after the fire, a similar silence can be observed in Giorgos Valasiadis’ autobiographic work *Και στα Ταταύλα χιόνι* [It is snowing in Tatavla]. Valasiadis did not refer to this event that dramatically changed the landscape and the fate of the neighborhood, not to mention that of the community. This can be interpreted as a sign of familial and communal silence, too, which hindered the transfer of the memory of this particular event. Giorgos Valasiadis, *Και στα Ταταύλα χιόνι* (Athens: Gavriilidis, 2002).

<sup>1172</sup> Nikos G. Istecklis, *Ιστορία Των Ταταούλων Από Αρχαιστάτων Χρόνων Μέχρι Σήμερα: Μια Μικρή Αθήνα Μέσα Στην Πόλη* (Athens: Eptalophos, 2011); Buket Uzuner, *Benim adım İstanbul* (İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2011).

the cosmopolitan past of İstanbul and the meanings attributed to it, and at the same time a longing for personal experiences associated with the period in question, while this longing constitutes a romantic, semi-politicized narrative.<sup>1173</sup> As the nostalgia felt for Tatavla has become widespread, "Tatavla," as a memory space, has gained a commodity value as well. In addition to restaurants, cafe, and bars named after this historic neighborhood, even into the official narrative, the word "Tatavla" has started to penetrate. The nearest subway station to this neighborhood (Osmanbey) is decorated with historical photographs of the city, one of which shows a horse-drawn tram wagon carrying a "Tatavla" sign (Figure 5-14).



**Figure 5–14:** A photograph of the tramway heading to Tatavla from the Osmanbey subway station in Constantinople in 2014.

**Source:** Photographed by Aytek Soner Alpan on February 25, 2014.

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<sup>1173</sup> For instance, a novel, *Epepe Tatavla*, which narrates a story taking place in Tatavla in 1933, has been recently published in Turkish. The book is dedicated to “those neighbors that we have never met but whose absence we always feel... The Tatavlians...” Ekin Can Göksoy, *Epepe Tatavla* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2016).



Both forms of nostalgia only have a limited resemblance to the “real” Tatabla. It is limited because they seek an ideal past in its entirety, which had been left behind the flames and covered under the veil of the present. There exists no such entirety. For some of the Constantinopolitan Greeks and Greeks of the “mainland,” despite having a nostalgic aspect, “Tatabla” at the same time constitutes a means for collective belonging beyond personal memories and longings, which have been gradually integrated into a nationalist discourse.

## 5.5 Conclusion

Refugee (or similar terms that belong to the same semiotic universe), as discussed in previous chapters and reiterated in this one, is a category which is, by its very definition, inferior to *the citizen* which is the building block of a nation. Being external to the national entities, which are imagined around an identity based on shared ethnicity, religion, and language, this intrinsically marginalized category is served as an aberration of citizenship and, in a sense, it is the reverse affirmation of the status of being a citizen. On the contrary to the common belief that refugees are of putatively shared culture and descent and form a nondescript or undistinguished monolithic social group, they not only present economic, social, cultural and political differences; they are also treated differently, and some of them were less suitable for the integration and marginalized beyond the standard limits of refugeehood.

In the marginalization of refugees particular cultural, social and even racial markers play the most important role. In the case of the refugees of the Greco-Turkish population exchange, these markers were also used in the progressive marginalization of the displaced and exchanged

people in Greece and Turkey. A significant number of the displaced were incapable of communicating in the official and national language of the respective nation-states. On the top of it, most of these people spoke only the language of the national enemy with which their new neighbors had been fighting up until yesterday. That is why they were identified with the unwanted and expelled inhabitants of these lands. These linguistic minorities did not fit the triptych of nationality (ethnicity, religion, and language) and this posed serious challenges for the Greek and Turkish nation-states. Their presence continuously reminded to the state administrators that the national "purification" process was not adequately fulfilled. These linguistic minorities also gave the nationalist administrations of these countries a pretext to mobilize more legal, political, social and cultural means to push forward their cause of national homogenization.

The epitome of such communities in Greece that was created by the population exchange was, without any doubt, Turkish-speaking Greeks. Beyond the sociocultural deviations from the mainstream that refugees presented or were supposed to have they spoke and wrote in Turkish. Their level of linguistic proficiency was not sufficient enough to express themselves; they were not only silenced as refugees but as linguistic minorities "insisting" using publicly a language that was considered as entirely hostile in a period dominated by fervent nationalism. Macro-political developments, such as the defeat in Anatolia and the ensuing development triggered by this crippling loss and socio-economic bottleneck through which the country was passing rendered a new but vehement form of Greek nationalism dominant. The post-WWI Greek identity was strongly associated with the Greek language, and hence language became one of the most significant symbolic "border guards" which maintain to reproduce the national unity. In this period the language was "purified, " and the toponyms across the country were Hellenized, and

the usage of the enemy's language was seen irrational and the Turkish-speaking refugees were deemed surplus and alien and tried to be silenced and marginalized. Intellectuals, especially the official ones, who managed to secure a status within the bureaucratic mechanisms of the nation-state with their political ambitions and nationalist fervor, "envisioned" the national community as a profession; and, as result, historically saw themselves as generator and guardian of the symbolic border guards, in other words cultural markers maintaining ethnic distinctiveness and delimiting the boundaries of Greek national identity. In a similar vein, the Greek-speaking Cretan refugees were subject to a similar treatment in Turkey where the Turkish language was seen as an indicator of nationality and effective border guard mechanisms were employed against linguistic elements that were considered alien. Due to their linguistic incompatibility with the national identity, they were threatened with marginalization from the Turkish nation as it was being imagined in the nascent republic.

These marginalization or even exclusion processes were consolidated with further marginalization by accusing the Turkish-speaking refugees in Greece and the Greek-speaking refugees in Turkey of failing to meet other cultural markers, such as religion. These linguistic minorities created by the population exchange were inculpated for not being Christian/Muslim "enough" or not adhering to Orthodox Christianity or Islam at all. Comparing to the Turkish-speaking Greeks in Greece, the case of the Greek-speaking Cretans was more complicated because they followed the doctrines of some Sufi unorthodox sects, which were regarded with approval neither by the state nor the Sunni majority.

Both the Turkish-speaking Greeks and Greek-speaking Cretans tried to develop strategies to protect their identities and also to fit in. Most important of all, they created their alternative "myth" in which they were the real bearer and guardian of the authentic national identity, which

they had not betrayed and preserved even when they had been subject to persecution for centuries. In this narrative, they highlighted their religious identity, also under question, as a treasure they had heroically kept in the years of coercion. In the face of a similar exclusion and wrongfulness they experienced in their supposed fatherlands, sometimes openly and cogently sometimes in more private ways they expressed the bitter disappointment they felt after their compulsory displacement. There are also some subgroups, which were comprehensively discriminated against based on race. The Afro-Cretan community was subject to racial discrimination too in addition to the marginalization of refugees on multiple levels. The silence of this community continued until the end of the twentieth century.

The minority groups legally defined by the population exchange were (and are) the communities excluded from the population exchange, namely, the Muslims in Western Thrace in Greece and the Greeks in Constantinople and islands of Imbros and Tenedos. These communities were strategically excluded from the exchange process by the Turkish and Greek nation-states as diplomatic cards in their hands to play in the future and not to remove this issue from the agenda of the international community. This minoritization made these communities extremely vulnerable especially when the bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey deteriorated since being aware of their diplomatic and strategic value, they were also instrumentalized by the host nation-state, and were treated like hostages seized for the fulfillment of certain subtle conditions. The community of Tatavla, a Greek neighborhood near Pera found themselves trapped in the middle of a diplomatic impasse. A fire destroyed the entire area in January 1929. The fire, which was considered as a catastrophe by the Turkish public as well, came in handy for the Turkish nationalist agenda in a period where the negotiations regarding the aftershocks of the population exchange reached a deadlock. The issues on the bargaining table were detecting the *établi*

Greeks, redefining the social and legal position of the Patriarchate and the future of the Mixed Commission. To resolve these issues in favor of Turkey and support the ongoing multidimensional ethnolinguistic homogenization campaign at home the authorities saw this fire as an opportunity and increased the tone of anti-Greek discourse and xenophobia in general. Any form of humanitarian activity for the fire-stricken neighborhood became either a diplomatic problem if it was from the foreign missions in Constantinople or a stigma of disloyalty to the nation and country. Even though the Tattavians and Constantinopolitan Greeks were doubly careful and kept quiet in this tumult, the fire created an outrage in Greece and particularly the press in Greece agitated by the catastrophic incident and the following developments talked on behalf of them, which resulted in further marginalization of the Constantinopolitan Greeks, particularly the Tattavians as probable but latent members of a fifth column within the Turkish nation. As the semi-official narrative conveniently evolved in this direction, the word "Tattava" became a catchword indicating the Greek presence in Constantinople and the Greek past of the city. In this atmosphere, the government effortlessly took a step to erase those past and present traces, and the neighborhood was renamed as *Kurtuluş*.

From these examples, it can be concluded that the population exchange, which was and is eulogized as a means of conflict resolution and minority protection, did not serve the cause of peace and created new humanitarian and regional problems. Moreover, the exchange created new ethnic and linguistic minorities out of refugees vulnerable to the practices of Greek and Turkish nationalisms. On paper they were citizens. In practice, however, they were far from being acceptable. Nationalisms utilized them as negative examples, and they unwillingly served the cause of re-imagining the ideal citizen. In this process, those minoritized refugees were marginalized even further while defining the boundaries of the nation from outside.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

The 1923 Greek-Turkish population exchange was the result of two dynamics. First, there was the predominance of ethnic nationalism in Greece and Turkey and the relentless drive towards ethnic homogenization. The conception of disentangling populations through an exchange has a long history in the region. The decision to expel people was, however, hardly a national one. On the contrary, the so-called international community eulogized a population exchange as a method of conflict resolution. That was the second dynamic that made the transfer possible. The League of Nations was dedicated to the idea of a population exchange between Greece and Turkey to avoid potential future conflicts between these two countries and mainly to deal with the refugee problem. Immigration had been for decades, putting pressure on Greece. Ironically and tragically, world leaders believed that the humanitarian crisis created by the displacement of hundreds and thousands of people could be fixed by removing more people from their homelands and resettling them elsewhere. Although the people subject to the population exchange were reluctant to leave their homes, this did not stop them from being “liberated.”

The international and national consensus regarding the "national order of things" not only resulted in the formulation and imposition of compulsory population exchanges as a method of conflict resolution. Scholarship and historiography played a significant role in the ideological rationalization of exchanging populations for decades. Greece and Turkey's national(ist) historiographies were propelled by their respective nationalisms. In Greece, the narrative of the nation-state was reshaped after the military debacle in Asia Minor in 1922 because the Megali Idea that had shaped Hellenism for almost a century came crashing down. The large-scale international and national humanitarian mobilization throughout the 1920s connected with another element of the discourse, namely, a success narrative regarding the resettlement of the

refugees. In this sense, the refugees became instrumental in overcoming the ideological crisis after the Asia Minor Catastrophe. The refugees, however, were caught between Turkish and Greek ethnonationalisms. They had to, for example, be incorporated into the official narrative of the Greek nation-state, which claimed that the country not only liberated the subjects of the Great Idea but also ensured an uncontested national homogeneity in the national homeland. The expulsion of the Greeks from Asia Minor, Pontos, and Thrace and their “liberation” was engraved in the carefully crafted Greek national narrative while refugees’ travails were minimized.

On the other hand, different premises and priorities shaped the ideological sphere in Turkey. Unlike Greek nationalism, Turkish nationalism arose triumphant despite the great powers' plans regarding the partition of the Ottoman Empire, in which Greece took an active part. The new Turkish republic born out of this struggle preferred not to include the population exchange in its official history. Instead, its national historiography covered this momentous episode as a victory and referred to the population exchange only *en passant* as a “correction” of an archaic mistake, i.e., imperial cosmopolitanism. Within a narrative based on the Turkish people's victory, the country's independence, the establishment of the Republic and the following reforms, the population exchange and national homogenization reinforced the idea of an “eternal Turkish homeland.” Internationally, however, there was an asymmetry as to the exchange was perceived. Whenever world leaders, scholars, or the international media discussed the Greco-Turkish exchange, they focused on only one side of the story: the Greek one. The refugees and the problems and pains that they had to endure were to occupy a problematic space in both national narratives. In order to keep that story intact, the official record minimized the violent

dimension of the population exchange, thus glossing over the real experiences of the displaced people.

The post-war international political and intellectual atmosphere supported the Greco-Turkish population transfer and the idea of exchanging populations as a means of conflict resolution. Only a few scholars criticized the concept and defined it as the ultimate insult to human rights. But these criticisms remained limited and insufficient in changing the dominant approach. In short, the historiographical apathy towards the plight and experiences of the refugees is nothing but a political denial of history for the sake of national interests and diplomatic priorities. Because the sphere of politics is, as Hannah Arendt suggests, “the exemplary place in which man displays his essential capacity, as man, to act.”<sup>1174</sup> A comprehensive analysis of the historiography of the population exchange gives us the opportunity of establishing a research agenda and its basic guidelines based on the strengths and weaknesses of the literature as summarized in the conclusion section of Chapter I.

For this reason, my study places particular emphasis on political agency, which the current literature mostly neglects. There is, as mentioned earlier, a striking asymmetry in the quality and quantity of the historiography between Greece and Turkey. There is far more scholarship on the exchange in Greece. Whereas in the Turkish case, it was almost an untouchable subject.

An analysis of refugee politics in the early Turkish Republic clearly shows that, although they were considered displaced not only from their ancestral homelands but also from agency,

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<sup>1174</sup> Cathy Caruth summarizes Hannah Arendt’s approach to the political sphere developed in her influential book, *the Human Condition*. See Cathy Caruth, “Lying and History,” in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, ed. Roger Berkowitz, Thomas Keenan, and Jeffrey Katz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 79.



this supposition does not reflect the historical reality. The single-party regime in Turkey and its *modus operandi* were used as a shorthand to explain the refugees' invisibility and presumed passivity. Another assumption reduces hundreds and thousands of refugees into history's unwanted and restricts the research agenda to party politics and "official" civil society. Such assumptions contributed to the politically imposed invisibility upon the refugees. As shown in this study, a closer look at the sources with refocused lenses yields new conclusions regarding the population exchange, the refugees' agency problem and the political history of the early republican period in Turkey. Underanalyzed in the existing literature is how the people displaced as the result of the exchange responded 1) to the unfair and impersonal treatment they received from the central and local officials; 2) to the insufficient and inefficient institutional arrangements and support, and conditions; 3) to the hardship they were forced into because of the broken promises and the denial of their legal rights. Some of their reactions were spontaneous and sporadic, but the refugees embarked on an organized political quest for equality at a certain point. The exchangees, not as rights-bearing citizens but as rights-seeking refugees, established their organizations to pursue their claims. They also collectively raised their voices and expressed their problems in various forms, including individual and, more importantly, collective petitions. The refugees' target audience was not only state officials but Turkish society and the international community.

In pursuit of "justice," the refugees followed a multi-step strategy: First, they established local units and an umbrella organization called the Exchange Association to bring into dialogue. Second, they staged an independent rally in İstanbul, which was extremely rare in the early republican era. Third, the rights-seeking refugees underlined their exchangee (*mübadil*) identity to emphasize that their civil rights were guaranteed by the international agreements and had to be

met by the government. The association represented the exchangees as a subgroup within the nation, manifesting specific characteristics and needs, and it mediated between them and the state. At the same time, the nascent nation-state encouraged a monolithic understanding of society composed of equal citizens bearing an organic collective national consciousness.

The refugees also made manifest their collective grievances, particularly violations against their rights through the means of the Exchange Association or through alternative actions. Civil society was structurally very limited and under the government's strict control. In the last instance, the state was the sole authority determining what was legitimate and acceptable or what was not. As a result, the rights-seeking newly arrived refugees were deprived of political, social and economic means to participate in the public realm. But, as we saw, the refugees and the Exchange Association overstepped their bounds on numerous occasions. And that brings us to agency.

To conceptualize refugees' agency and their politics, Chatterjee' proposed the concept of "political society."<sup>1175</sup> According to Chatterjee, civil society is defined by the exclusive participation of the accepted members of the nation---the rights-bearing citizens--- whereas political society is a domain of the subaltern, who, by definition, do not have the same rights as citizens and are excluded from the former privileged domain. Through their collective actions to situate themselves in the political realm, the refugees claimed a vocal position in the civil society. Chatterjee underscores the possibilities that political society creates and suggests that it has the power to transform the political structure by expanding democratic society. This potential

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<sup>1175</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 27-51.

stems from the fact that political society can potentially challenge the establishment and its legal framework.

Although it was short-lived, the Exchange Association revealed some of the possibilities and opportunities that the concept of political society offers. Yet the association was incapacitated by a series of strategic flaws, which facilitated the state's intervention, interrupted its activities, seriously reduced the visibility of the exchangees by restricting their political actions, and restricted coverage of their actions. Although the association was a part of political society, it acted as a legitimate and recognized member of civil society. Although the refugees were inclined to the strategic use of illegality, the association, which did not enjoy the privileges of civil society, limited itself and its vision to the ambit of legality. Due to this strategic shortcoming, the association became susceptible to the state's aggression, which undercut its political capacity.

The Exchange Association is also a rare example of an organization trying to give a subaltern group voice and agency. An analysis of the practice and the range of its actions reveal the real and imagined political possibilities that existed in the "nebulous zone" of political society. It profoundly challenges the assumptions of the literature. It shows that the displaced people resettled in Turkey tried to establish a separate identity, express their sentiments regarding their immediate needs and rights, and to do so, they created organizations and demanded equal citizenship. Furthermore, they did all this in the face of state opposition intended to keep them out of the political sphere. Following the French political philosopher Jacques Ranciere's notion of the political, which supposes "for a thing to be political, it must

give rise to a meeting of police logic and egalitarian logic,”<sup>1176</sup> it can be claimed that the actions of the exchangees were political. Their actions allowed them to the political world of the new republic.

In Greece, on the other hand, the “refugee issue” was not swept under the carpet partly because it was too serious of a social problem to be glossed over and partly because after the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the ensuing ideological crisis that it caused forced an ideological recalibration of Greek national identity. Even before the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the signature of the Lausanne Convention, the refugee problem had already been a hot-button issue internationally and the Greek refugee crisis after the Balkan Wars fed into this narrative. When refugees from the Balkan conflict arrived in Greece, they established networks, organizations, and institutions, but they were modest and not prepared or equipped to deal with the Asia Minor refugees. Moreover, the political realm and society were already divided over the refugee issue. Nevertheless, as we saw, that division only worsened after the exchange.

Upon their arrival, the refugees of the 1919-1922 war began to organize. Pro-refugee political parties claimed to be their official representatives. However, at the same time, they also exploited anti-refugee sentiments by developing a racist and xenophobic discourse against them. Under these circumstances, refugee organizations, not surprisingly, proliferated throughout Greece. In contrast to Turkey, refugee organizations were not a rare phenomenon and took the form of a real frenzy at some point. In order to develop coordination among these numerous organizations, the refugees tried to create umbrella organizations and convened conferences. These organizations represented large constituencies and were very active politically. As a result,

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<sup>1176</sup> Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 32.

party politics and the refugee organizations interpenetrated each other in myriad contexts and ways.

Those organizations that penetrated party politics refugees employed different strategies. Most of the refugees collectively supported Venizelos and his Liberal Party, and they became a practical part of political life through their countrywide organized struggle. The refugees' active participation in politics and the sudden social and economic chaos created by their demographic impact added fuel to the schismatic fire of party politics in Greece. It constituted another axis of social antagonisms that fueled the National Schism. Not only did the refugees form associations, but they also founded political parties to defend their rights and to demonstrate their significance to the major political players. In addition to political participation, they also established communication mechanisms, especially newspapers, that allowed them to speak to their communities, convey their message to the wider public, and provide a voice for speaking truth to power.

Not surprisingly, however, tensions between the native population and the newcomers rose dramatically, and this development shaped political life in the interwar period. Moreover, the refugees performed a decisive role in some of the most momentous turning points in the country's history. One of those turning points was the establishment of the Second Republic. The majority of the refugees were staunch republicans. As we show earlier, refugee republicanism was a stable and consistent ideology, and it was in opposition not just to the Greek monarchy but to monarchy in general, a sentiment rooted in their anti-Ottomanism. Although they supported Venizelos' Liberal Party, the refugees kept their political options open by staying in contact with the other political parties and forcing them to improve their policies in exchange for refugee support. Eventually, however, the failure of the existing socio-political order to answer the

refugee question to consider more radical political options to defend their rights, and for many, this entailed a move to the left.

In the existing literature, left-wing refugee radicalism is considered a phenomenon of the 1930s; however, Minas Patrikios won the Thessaloniki mayoral elections in 1925. Although Patrikios' electoral victory did not mean an immediate refugee defection from Venizelism to communism, it early indicated the refugees' dissatisfaction with the status quo. When this defection occurred, it also became a determining factor in Greek politics in the late 1920s, especially in the 1930s. In order to prevent the devastating impact of an anti-systemic movement reinforced by the support of a large and marginalized sector of the society, the existing socio-political order fiercely reacted and adopted strict legal and administrative measures, which led to the authoritarian turn in Greek politics in the second half of the 1930s. The re-emergence of the Communist Party as a growing political force with strong support among the refugee populations in the urban centers and the rural districts fundamentally changed the ideological landscape of the country as well. The ideological vacuum formed by the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the collapse of the Megali Idea was filled with the new dichotomies and contradictions in society (Venizelist/liberal vs. anti-Venizelist/royalist, native vs. refugee) and particularly with anticommunism.

The political impact of the displacement on Turkey and Greece was strikingly different. Several factors account for this, including refugee demographic density, the newcomers' economic and cultural backgrounds, and the political structures of the two countries. In Greece, the refugees had a more profound impact politically than in Turkey. Their percentage within the total population was lower and the government dispersed them throughout the country, taking measures to avoid the development of a separate refugee identity. Being deprived of the

advantages offered by the social, political and economic networks in their original homelands, most of the urban refugees became laborers. Yet, the administration in Turkey obsessively opposed the working class's political representation by a socialist or a communist party. Despite the differences mentioned here, one common element was that the refugees in both countries struggled to obtain and then defend their basic political, economic, and human rights. They were neither silent objects that lapsed into a state of despairing apathy. On the contrary, they were active agents in shaping their lives in their new homelands.

This study challenges the widely-held view that population exchange is a viable form of conflict resolution and that the Greco-Turkish population exchange was a success. The 1923 convention formalized the displacement of more than 1.5 million people. As mentioned earlier, unlike previous attempts at transferring populations, the Greco-Turkish population one was mandatory and all-encompassing regarding its geographical and demographical scope: except for a relatively small number of people and places, everyone *had* to leave. This all-encompassing character and the small numbers excluded from it resulted in further marginalization of some populations that were somehow subjected to or excluded from the population exchange. Three such groups are investigated in this study. Two of them were the linguistic minorities created by the population exchange: Turkish-speaking Orthodox and Greek-speaking Muslim Cretan refugees. Since the population exchange was based on religion, not language, many found themselves in a “homeland” where they did not speak the language. Not only did the displacement shatter their physical home but also their “psychic home -of language, a webwork of cultural habits, ties with the past and even ties with the dead-” as well.<sup>1177</sup> After their arrival in

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<sup>1177</sup> Eva Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History, and the Legacy of the Holocaust* (London: Vintage, 2005), 80.

their new homes, they became both displaced peoples and linguistic minorities whose psychics were traumatized. In addition to the language issue, the newcomers' fit in the national fabric was problematic. Dealing with the displaced forced issues such as national identity and belonging into the foreground. The refugee issue carried the marginalization process of the displaced to a much further point where this process accelerated through another social process that dehumanized and stereotyped refugees. Moreover, these processes contributed to the coalescence to respective national identities in Turkey and Greece in the 1920s and 1930s and to support the sovereign nation-state. In this atmosphere Turkish-speaking Greek refugees and Greek-speaking Turkish refugees were quickly singled out, stigmatized and identified with the Other par excellence.

Those who were expelled became *de facto* minorities in their new country, while those whom the convention allowed *de jure* to remain in homes became even more minoritized and marginalized. Actually, the minoritization of these population pockets should instead be called an inclusion in the population exchange rather than exclusion. With the agreement reached in Lausanne regarding the population exchange, Greece and Turkey decided not only on the formalization of the displacement but also on creating legal minorities by exempting some of the population groups from the exchange process. The Muslims of Thrace and the Greek-Orthodox population of Constantinople, Imbros, and Tenedos were excepted from the exchange. This was a strategic and tactical move. As a result, these communities were treated as outsiders whose identity was disregarded or considered to be assimilable or whose members were to be driven out of their respective national territories. But, above all, they were held hostages to the fulfillment of the states' national or diplomatic goals. Their already-marginal position within the national



sociopolitical landscape deteriorated even more due to the diplomatic crises between Turkey and Greece.

As we saw earlier, both the Turkish-speaking Greeks and Greek-speaking Cretans developed strategies to protect their identities and adapt to their new social environment. The Turkish-speaking Greek community insisted on publicly speaking Turkish, and they published their media to defend their identity and human rights, such as the right to citizenship. The bilingual newspaper *Prosfygiki Foni/Muhacir Sedası* was published in Athens in Karamanlidika and circulated throughout the country for more than a decade. It constituted a peculiar but vocal element of the genre of refugee newspapers that emerged during the 1920s. Due to the “odd” nature of this publication and the entire community of the Turkish-speaking refugees, this publication was immediately shunned by the nationalist intelligentsia, who saw themselves as the self-proclaimed custodians of the national identity. The polemics directed against *Prosfygiki Foni* by the liberal or ultranationalist press, which was an uncharted scholarly territory, demonstrate how this idiosyncratic newspaper and community were perceived and marginalized.

Additionally, throughout these polemics, it is possible to observe how the Turkish-speaking community developed a “voice” against its critics, how the newspaper justified its existence and how this community developed an ontological narrative that accounted for its presence. Instead of challenging the nationalist metanarrative, the Turkish-speaking refugee community tried to develop strategies to broaden the scope of this metanarrative in a way that it could embrace them too, and for this purpose, they emphasized their ancient roots in order to incorporate themselves into the trope of the glorious ancient past. According to the ontological narrative developed by *Prosfygiki Foni*, the Turkish-speaking refugees were descendants of the core element of Eastern Hellenism, and they had already sacrificed their language to protect their

alphabet. This argument was, however, never enough for them to get acknowledged as “genuine Greeks” by the nationalist circles.

Although the Greek-speaking Cretans who came to Anatolia did not develop such large-scale means, they tried to 1) protect their community ties, 2) develop relationships with other Cretans who had resettled in Anatolia during the late nineteenth century, 3) keep alive the Cretan heritage, particularly the language, inside their homes and within their families. Island oral traditions were preserved in their new homeland. They expressed their problems and dissatisfaction through a Cretan oral tradition called *mandinades*, i.e. rhyming distiches. In addition to reciting old, traditional *mandinades*, they formulated new ones to express their anxiety they felt when they first arrived in an almost hostile environment. In recent years, some compilation of *mandinades* were published. In addition to *mandinades* tradition, the Cretan refugees continued the practice of reading or reciting the famous medieval Cretan saga *Erotokritos*, which still holds a significant place in Greek literature. The defense mechanisms that the Cretan linguistic minority in Turkey developed were less expressive in comparison to the resistance of the Turkish-speaking Anatolians in Greece and almost exclusively limited to the private or communal domain.

The communal domains served as cultural enclaves to keep alive and reproduce Cretan heritage and develop a sense of belonging among the younger generations of Cretans regardless of the linguistic ability they show regarding the Cretan dialect. Yet, there is a much more marginalized and almost exclusively neglected group of refugees, particularly among the refugees from Crete. Two such communities are discussed in this study and their stories are embedded in the history of the population exchange. The first subgroup was the lepers, who had been under quarantine in the leper colony in Crete and were included in the population exchange.

The information acquired from the Turkish state's official documents on refugee resettlement shows that this small community was subject to the population exchange and brought to Turkey and then sent to a distant, abandoned Armenian monastery. This story is also supported by the oral testimonies of Cretan refugees resettled on the Aegean coast of Turkey. Although this study traced the history of the small leper community displaced during the population exchange process, it is still primarily an uncharted territory. The other marginal subgroup among the Cretan refugees were the Afro-Cretans, whose history has been entirely excluded from the history of modern Turkey. While discovering the reasons for its historiographical invisibility how the displacement affected this neglected population group, my research confirmed that the displacement of the Afro-Cretan community, most of whom were slaves, did not improve their social status and intensified the discrimination they had been experiencing for decades. The collective historical trauma of slavery was coupled with that of displacement. The culture of silence developed by the Afro-Cretan community and historical scholarship was finally broken by the book written by a third generation Afro-Cretan, Mustafa Olpak, who passed away at a relatively young age shortly after I met and interviewed him. In his book *Kölekçisi*, Olpak conveys vividly his second-hand subjectivity regarding the historical trauma of slavery and displacement.

In addition to the linguistic minorities *de facto* created by the exchange convention, *de jure* minorities appeared “secured” by the exchange convention and Lausanne Agreement. As mentioned earlier, the groups excluded from the population exchange became minorities in their homelands. Since the convention's signing, this decision cast a shadow on these populations. Based on a case study, I tried to show how deep and dense this shadow was and proposed that the populations minoritized by the Lausanne Agreement became hostages in the hands of the

Greek and Turkish nation-states left to the mercy of international relations on many occasions. For this purpose, a fire that started in Tatavla, a Greek neighborhood of Istanbul in 1929 and subsequent political developments were investigated. The city's "Rum" minority was made the scapegoat for this and just about any adverse event, even though they were often the real victims. The Turkish nation-state used every single opportunity to fulfill the goals of their nationalist and assimilatory programs, which resulted in the erasure of the Greek character of this neighborhood, further marginalization of the Greek community of the city and This incident also shows how a relatively isolated incident such as a local fire was aggravated to the level of an international conflict, which is obviously in contradiction with the general approach to the population exchange claiming that the population exchange avoided any conflict between Greece and Turkey.

In one way or another, the long shadow of the displacement is still on these countries. The initial choices made by the actors and the parties to the displacement process as well as those of the scholarship on the issue create a path dependency regarding how the subject matter has been treated so far and how memory regimes were founded and have been evolving since their foundation. As pointed out in this study, in Greece the official discourse followed a notably and truly nostalgic path and deeply engraved the displacement into the carefully crafted national history. "Displacement" became one of the most significant cursors of the psychogenetics of modern Greece as well as the Greek national identity after 1922 (See Figure 6-1). In a perplexing way and through creating its own specific ideology the reproduction of the national trauma imposed by/derived from the displacement became the means of getting off the hook of the tragedy of the Asia Minor Catastrophe. Accordingly, in order to leave no room for confusion, the

population exchange was excluded from the collective memory of the nation. The memory of the displacement has been reproduced along these guidelines so far and kept its vivacity.



**Figure 6–1:** The *aide-mémoires* regarding the displacement are omnipresent in Greece and can be found in various forms. The photograph above shows the name plates of two intersecting streets near the northern harbor of Epano Skala, Mytilini: “Street of Asia Minor” (left) and “Street of Tears” (right).

**Source:** Photographed by Aytek Soner Alban in Mytilini on August 11, 2013.

In Turkey, however, a veil of victory was drawn over the displacement and the population exchange,, and this episode in Turkish history was referred if and only if necessary and, in this case, only superficially. Despite the initial attempts of the refugees to construct an exchangee identity, they were forced to disappear as a separate social/political group and assimilate into the existing social structure. And the silence prevailed in Turkey regarding the population exchange and the refugees. Although it was imposed from above, to a certain extent this silence could be considered as self-imposed, a strategy of conformity of the refugees and

their descendants, a turn away from the past that, no matter how aestheticized it was, served as a constant reminder of the fact that they were not native.

In Greece, the refugees organized various associations and developed means of self-expression such as their newspapers and journals. They transmitted and canonized their identity and experiences through literature and other art forms. In addition to the visibility of the refugee identity in the public sphere, family constituted an essential medium for transmitting this identity. Nevertheless, in Turkey, the state excluded refugee identity from the public sphere. In addition to this, their demographic vigor was not high enough to impose a distinct refugee identity either. Under these circumstances, the immediacies and intimacies of the family and small communal enclaves became the fundamental medium for transmitting the basic features of the consciousness and trauma of displacement. This hereditary consciousness gained visibility and enjoyed popularity in the public space only with the third generation.

This point brings us to a final difference between Greece and Turkey. The visibility/invisibility of the displaced in the public sphere played an important role in the formation of rituals and sites of nostalgia. As stated elsewhere,<sup>1178</sup>

[...N]ostalgic rituals and “sites of nostalgia” where some of these rituals take place serve different, or at least divergent purposes among the refugees in Greece and the exchangees in Turkey. In Greece, where a refugee identity is mature enough to establish itself formally and to be recognized by society, these rituals and sites of rituals are used to reproduce the fragmented memory of the Catastrophe and to utopianize the ancestral homelands in Asia Minor, as well as transmitting the memory of this event and the “lost homelands” to new generations. It can be said that the hinge generation, bridging between those who in the past experienced a calamity and the members of their subsequent generations, is the second generation in Greece. They inherited the means and methods of an ongoing “project” of building a refugee identity and of shaping the past memories of themselves and their children. With the third generation, existing means and

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<sup>1178</sup> Alpan, “But the Memory Remains”, 229.

methods are coupled with the means of the official discourse, which resulted in a proliferation of representations of refugee identity in the public sphere. Nevertheless, it is still hard to claim that there is a well-established exchangee identity in Turkey. After the suppression of the first generation's attempts to establish a distinct identity, it was only with the third generation that a discourse started to circulate in the public sphere in the second half of the 1990s. Therefore, the "guardianship" of the memory of the population exchange fell upon the third generation.

The position that the third generation in Turkey assumed was not only "guardianship" but also "apostleship." They were the pioneering public advocates of this identity and transmuted their ancestral/familial past into history. So why have the members of the third generation developed an interest in and, more importantly, a need to publicly circulate their past? This was closely related to the characteristics of our age and its anxieties. As Patrick Hutton suggests "memory is a problem in the postmodern age because of our anxieties about the implications of our loosening attachments to the collective memories that once sustained us."<sup>1179</sup> Iğsız investigates in what ways the *zeitgeist* has informed the revitalization of the memory of the displacement and she underlines five distinct dynamics:<sup>1180</sup>

- The development of information technology that makes research of familial origins relatively easier by making sources and records accessible;
- The civil war atmosphere in Turkey in the 1990s;
- The brutality of competing nationalisms in Turkey and in the region;
- The popularization of history;
- The Greco-Turkish rapprochement in the late 1990s

Regarding the *zeitgeist* and its relation to the memory of the displacement in the context of Turkey, I can add three more dynamics. First of all, the historiographical anxiety in Turkey,

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<sup>1179</sup> Patrick H Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Burlington: University of Vermont, 1993), 71.

<sup>1180</sup> Iğsız, "Documenting the Past", 72.

along the political tendencies, paved the way towards historical deconstruction of Kemalist ideology and hegemony. Consequently, the more critical the approach towards the foundation of the republic has become, the more visible the population exchange, forced migration and displacement have grown in historiography. Secondly, one should also think about the postmodern lure of victimhood. A postmodern enthusiasm that promotes or, indeed, celebrates victimhood prevailed in politics as well as in popular culture. Self-victimization, one's portraying herself as a victim of the calamities of history, has become sympathetic than ever before. So, by this way, the third-generation exchangees/refugees as the self-declared victims have actively solicited for public attention to the issue and this has turned into a way of ennobling. Ennobling has been working through another mechanism as well: The exchangee identity is also associated with European culture, which is considered to be "higher" and "more civilized."

In Greece, too, the third generation added a new dimension to consciousness of displacement and loss. Under the conditions of the "metapolitefsi" and in the face of the need for an ethno-popular ideology, a desideratum that emerged after the collapse of the military dictatorship in order to restore a sense of social order, the bundle of ideas, feelings and post-memories of the descendants of the displaced turned into an ideology, ideology of lost homelands, as Antonis Liakos named it.<sup>1181</sup> Not only did this ideologization result in the re-proliferation of the refugee organizations, the political struggle of the descendants of the refugees acquired a new facet: the politicization of nostalgia, a process that led to *de jure* identification of the displacement as genocide by the Greek state. In 1994, the Hellenic Parliament unanimously voted for the proclamation of May 19, which is recognized in Turkey as the day of Mustafa Kemal's initiation of the war of liberation by setting foot in Samsun and also observed as

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<sup>1181</sup> Liakos, "Η Ιδεολογία Των «χαμένων Πατρίδων»".



Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's birthday, as the "Commemoration Day for the Genocide of Greeks of Asia Minor Pontos" [Ημέρα μνήμης για τη γενοκτονία των Ελλήνων στο Μικρασιατικό Πόντο]. In 1998, with law no. 2645, the Hellenic Republic officially proclaimed September 14 as the "National Commemoration Day of the Genocide of the Asia Minor Greeks by the Turkish State" [Η ημέρα εθνικής μνήμης της γενοκτονίας των Ελλήνων της Μικράς Ασίας από το Τουρκικό Κράτος], referring to the "occupation of Smyrna by the Turkish armed forces" in 1922.

The nostalgia has not been politicized only in nationalist direction. The nostalgia of the displacement has also been articulated in a discourse of anti-racism in which care and protection of the displaced is seen and presented as a historical responsibility that falls upon the Greek nation. Against the public angst and hysteria over refugees, which is manipulated, abused and mutilated by Greece's thinly veiled neo-Nazi and right-wing populist parties, the slogan "Οι παππούδες μας πρόσφυγες, οι γονείς μας μετανάστες, εμείς ρατσιστές;" "Our grandfathers were refugees (prosfyges), our parents were immigrants, are we racists?," as well as its variants, has been raised throughout the country and become visible in various forms, such as graffitis, stickers, etc. On September 14, 2016 the liberal *Efimerida ton Syntakton* (Newspaper of Editors), known as EfSyn, used this slogan as its headline (See Figure 6-2). In Figure 6-3 the photograph of a variant of this slogan in the form of a sticker that I took in Nea Smyrni (New Smyrna), a neighborhood founded after the arrival of refugees in 1922 and called after Smyrna, is shown. The sticker is signed by the "Anti-racist Initiative of Nea Smyrni" and features one of the most iconic photographs of the expulsion of Anatolian Greeks that shows the transportation of the refugees to Patras after their arrival to Greece from Samsun.



# Η ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ

Τετάρτη 14 Σεπτεμβρίου 2016

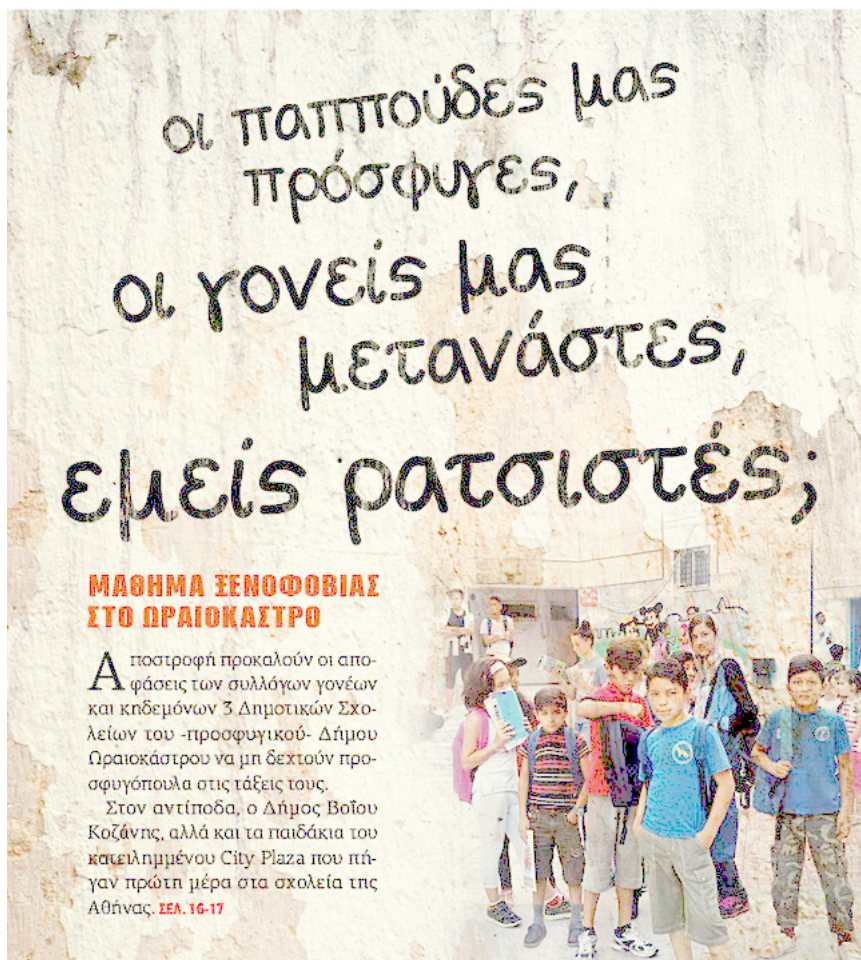
## ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΩΝ

Ευρώ 1,30

ΑΝΕΞΑΡΤΗΤΗ ΣΥΝΕΤΑΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΑΠΟΓΕΥΜΑΤΙΝΗ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ

ΑΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ 17 ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ

ΑΓΝΩΣΤΕΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΕΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΟΧΗ, ΤΟΝ ΕΜΦΥΛΙΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΗ ΜΑΚΡΟΝΗΣΟ  
**ΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΔΟΣΦΑΙΡΟ**



ΟΙ ΠΑΤΠΠΟΥΔΕΣ ΜΑΣ  
ΠΡΟΣΦΥΓΕΣ,  
ΟΙ ΓΟΝΕΙΣ ΜΑΣ  
ΜΕΤΑΝΑΣΤΕΣ,  
ΕΜΕΙΣ ΡΑΤΣΙΟΙΣΤΕΣ;

### ΜΑΘΗΜΑ ΞΕΝΟΦΟΒΙΑΣ ΣΤΟ ΠΡΑΙΟΚΑΣΤΡΟ

Αποτροπή προκαλούν οι αποφάσεις των συλλόγων γονέων και κηδεμόνων 3 Δημοτικών Σχολείων του -προσφυγικού- Δήμου Πραιοκάστρου να μη δεχτούν προσφυγόπουλα στις τάξεις τους.

Στον αντίποδα, ο Δήμος Βοΐου Κοζάνης, αλλά και τα παιδάκια του κατελημμένου City Plaza που πήγαν πρώτη μέρα στα σχολεία της Αθήνας. **ΣΕΛ. 16-17**

### ΓΑΛΑΖΟΠΡΑΣΙΝΟ ΣΚΑΝΔΑΛΟ

#### Νέο Αθήναιο: Χρεοκοπία με πολιτικές πλάτες

Ανώτατο κυβερνητικό στέλεχος επί συγκυβέρνησης Ν.Δ.-ΠΑΣΟΚ συνδέεται με τη διαχρονική αυσλία της ιδιωτικής κληνικής «Νέο Αθήναιο». Δεκάδες εκατομμύρια ευρώ τα χρέη σε εργαζόμενους, πιστωτές, Εφορία, ασφαλιστικά ταμεία. Ποιος διεκδικεί την επιχείρηση. **ΣΕΛ. 15**

### ΔΙΑΠΡΑΓΜΑΤΕΥΣΗ

#### Τρίτωσαν τα... αγκάθια

Το κοιαρτέο διαφωνεί για τον ακατάσχετο λογαριασμό των επιχειρήσεων και το ύψος του φόρου για τα αδήλωτα κεφάλαια. Στην κορυφή της σημερινής αιζίντας τα εργασι- **ΣΕΛ. 24**

### ΣΥΜΦΩΝΟ ΣΤΑΘΕΡΟΤΗΤΑΣ

#### Το ευρωπαϊκό δίλημμα του Γιούνκερ

Γράφει - οβνίνει την ομιλία για την κατάσταση της Ε.Ε. που θα εκφωνήσει ενώπιον του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου ο πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής. Θα ικανοποιήσει τις προσδοκίες για αλλαγή πολιτικής προκαλώντας τη δυσαρέσκεια του Βερολίνου ή θα περιοριστεί σε ευκολόγια; **ΣΕΛ. 26**

### ΕΝΦΙΑ

#### 145 μεγαλοιδιοκτήτες ακινήτων που δεν τους πτόπσε ούτε ο φόρος ούτε η κρίση **ΣΕΛ. 25**

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ: ΠΑΝΩ ΑΠΟ 1,5 ΔΙΣ. ΤΟ ΚΟΣΤΟΣ ΤΗΣ... ΕΞΩΣΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΟΥ **ΣΕΛ. 20-21**

**Figure 6–2:** The slogan “Our grandfathers were refugees (prosfyges), our parents were immigrants, are we racists?” on the first page of the *Efimerida ton Syntakton* (September 14, 2016)



**Figure 6-3:** “Our grandfathers were refugees (prosfyges), our parents were immigrants, we are antifascists - Antifascist Initiative of Nea Smyrni.”

**Source:** Photographed by Ayttek Soner Alpan on March 14, 2014.

Although there is a heated public debate regarding Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey, the parties to it have not referred to the role of immigration and displacement in the foundation of the Turkish Republic yet. However, another political debate regarding the people of immigrant- and exchangee-origin has been underway for at least a decade. In Turkey's highly polarized political climate, the exchangees and “Balkan immigrants” are considered the core of the secular population groups as well as the once secular establishment in Turkey, particularly by the Islamist circles in Turkey. As secularism in Turkey has been gradually “undone,” particularly in the last ten years, this argument in various forms has been utilized many times by the anti-secularist doxosophers and mouthpieces of the government. In 2007, Mücahit Bilici, a US-based



scholar, argued in an op-ed published in the pro-government *Yeni Şafak* that the Republic of Turkey had been a secular dictatorship founded and ruled basically by a coalition of non-Turkish, but Turkified and Turkifying, brigandist (*komitacı*) Balkan nationalists. Therefore, the stereotype of the ruling elite in Turkey and their supporters was “white” Balkan Turks. This elite imposed their secular rule upon “black” Anatolian Turks and Kurds, who were organic supporters of a genuine democracy in Turkey.

The struggle in Turkey is the struggle between the Balkans and Anatolia. It is a struggle of two culturally-defined class coalitions. On the one hand there are those who adopted Turkishness and generalized it although they were not ethnically Turkish, on the other hand there are those who were imposed upon a tailored Turkishness in spite of their ethnic Turkish origin. One party is composed of Westerners, so called seculars and immigrants, the other party is composed of Anatolians, pious people, natives. The capital of one party is Çanakkale, Tekirday, Beşiktaş and İzmir. The other of the other party is Üsküdar, Kayseri, Erzurum and Diyarbakır. On the one hand, there are the founders of the state, on the other hand there are people upon whom this state was built.<sup>1182</sup>

In 2008, Ali Bulaç, one of the most significant Islamist intellectuals in Turkey and then a devoted supporter of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), wrote a series of articles in his column in the Gülenist *Zaman*, on the population exchange. In the second these, he claimed that the exchange had been done as a means to the secularization and Turkification, and that the pious Muslim population of the region had been intentionally not included into the exchange. In addition to this, Macedonians and “Thessalonikans” (*Selanıkliler*), an allusion in the Islamist phraseology for the *Dönme* and/or crypto-Jewish community, had been given priority and went on: “Those brought from the Balkans endured great hardships, but they were given large pieces of lands, houses located in the most fertile regions of Turkey as well as credits

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<sup>1182</sup> Mücahit Bilici, “İki Türkiye ve Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimi,” *Yeni Şafak*, March 21, 2007, <https://www.yenisafak.com/yere/iki-turkiye-ve-cumhurbaskanligi-secimi-36163>.

if nothing else. They experienced rapid upward social mobility and outdid the historical peoples of Anatolia [in prosperity].”<sup>1183</sup>

In 2009 one of the leading liberal intellectuals and an enthusiastic supporter of the government policies at that time Ahmet Altan ran an article in his column in the *Taraf* newspaper, where he was the lead columnist. The article was titled “Greater Thessaloniki” and its main argument was more or less the verbatim repetition of Bilici’s op-ed. The article couched racial/religious insinuations about Sabbateanism and Thessalonikans similar to but more careful than the ones in Bulaç’s article. According to Altan, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had two aspirations: being the sole leader of the country and under his leadership creating a “greater Thessaloniki,” his hometown, in the heart of Anatolia through giving up the rest of the Ottoman soil. The “new Thessaloniki” was eventually created by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk with the help of the *nouveau riche* and bureaucracy at the expense of the Muslim peoples of Anatolia, who became “prisoners in the hand of new *Thessalonikans*” (my emphasis). He concluded, “Turkey has been going through the struggle between ‘Thessalonikans’ and Anatolians.”<sup>1184</sup>

Once more, Bulaç took to the stage and wrote another article in the Gülenist daily, *Zaman*, after the 2010 constitutional referendum. The map of Turkey based on the results of the referendum was very distinctive because pro-secular “no” votes prevailed along the western and southern coastline of the country and in Thrace, and there was not a single maritime city along the Aegean and Mediterranean where the constitutional changes proposed by the government were overwhelmingly supported. Bulaç interpreted this result as evidence that the population living on this “belt” (*şerit*) had interests embedded in status quo and deduced the following: “It is

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<sup>1183</sup> Ali Bulaç, “Mübadele (2),” *Zaman*, November 19, 2008.

<sup>1184</sup> Ahmet Altan, “Büyük Selanik,” *Taraf*, September 15, 2009.

significantly meaningful that a large portion of those who easily accepts the formulation “how happy is the one who says ‘I am a Turk’” and embraces the “official Turkish identity” - official constitutional Atatürk nationalism- are, ethnically speaking, not Turkish but Balkan immigrants, exchangees or Caucasian immigrants.”<sup>1185</sup>

There was a strain of skepticism regarding the founding cadre of republican Turkey and their ethnic and religious identity among the Islamist circles. They criticized these politicians for not being Anatolians, in other words, not being Turkish enough, and they tried to establish a correlation between their genealogical/geographical origin and their intention to secularize and “superwesterize” the society. That being said, these discriminatory allegations were never publicly projected on to large population segments and became one of the touchstones of a public debate pivotal to the future of the country. On the contrary, these circles used to define the Balkan immigrants and exchangees as descendants of those who conquered the Balkan territories in the name of the Ottoman Empire and call them *evlad-ı fatihan*, i.e. descendants of the conquerors. In the continuing political combat in Turkey, exchangee and immigrant identity gained a new meaning among these circles as the cities usually characterized with this identity defended secularism and resisted the ongoing political transformation of the country. This brand of scapegoating and bigotry that directly targeted exchangee/Balkan immigrant identity unsurprisingly triggered knee-jerk cries of protest. The reaction of the secularist pundits, some of whom happened to be of exchangee origin, was very strong. For instance, Cüneyt Ülsever, a columnist whose parents were exchangees coming from Kavala and resettled in Samsun, voiced

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<sup>1185</sup> Ali Bulaç, “Şerit Üzerindeki Kürt Nüfus,” *Zaman*, September 20, 2010.

a strident criticism over Bulaç's article and accused him of being racist and "Hitler and Mussolini's minion."<sup>1186</sup>

At this point, it should be underlined that there is a counter-mythology in the making. In recent years, the emphasis put on the immigrant, particularly exchangee origin by the third and fourth generation, has become a metonym for Europeanness, holding civic, liberal and/or progressive values. In addition to this, numerous people whose ancestors were subjects of the exchange started looking for opportunities or legal loopholes to get Greek, hence European Union citizenship. Many exchangee grandchildren contacted me regarding the citizenship issue and/or the properties their grandparents abandoned in Greece. The common point of the people who communicated with me was some hearsay on some other people of exchangee origin and somehow managed to get Greek citizenship. Although I told them that this was legally impossible due to the exchange convention and the national and international legal framework established after the exchange, I hardly convinced them that they had no legal grounds. Some of these people were not even sure about when their family ended up in Anatolia and in what way they migrated, i.e. if they were of exchangee origin. Their insistence was due to how widespread those rumors were particularly in social media. Together with the inauguration of a new e-governance service called "Lineal Kinship Inquiry" in early 2018, a service offering information about one's ancestors up to the nineteenth century, heritage seeking took the form of a nationwide craze and the website crushed immediately after it was launched and had to be shut down on the same day due to an overload of inquiries. After this service, the search for a "gateway" to EU citizenship became much more visible in the public sphere.

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<sup>1186</sup> Cüneyt Ülsever, "Ali Bulaç: Irkçılığın yeni mi zuhur etti?," *Hürriyet*, October 10, 2010, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ali-bulac-irkciligini-yeni-mi-zuhur-etti-16004422>.

This issue came to be a concern of popular cultural production in Turkey too. Together with the internet-doped genealogical craze that swept Turkey, a comic strip that had been drawn by the one of the most talented cartoonists of the country, Umut Sarıkaya, and originally published in the most widely circulated comic magazine *Uykusuz* (Sleepless) in 2011 widely re-circulated in social media (See Figure 6-4). The title of the comic strip is “Short story: Aspiring to hold on to Europe in some way.” In the first frame, you see a group of young people talking about their genealogical origins in a party-like atmosphere. One of them says, “Of course, since we are Cretan immigrants...” and a female character replies, “yeah, needless to say, we came from Greece.” Another person says, “we are originally from Thessaloniki, as you know,” and the person he talks to rejoins, “Sure, sure, we are from Bulgaria.” Another person says only “Rhodes.” The ones in the back talk about their Albanian and Macedonian origins. One character in the middle of this crowd listens to all these conversations in a fit of shock and despair. In the second frame, we see this character again, this time in his grandparents’ house and being apoplectic with rage, he inflicts violence upon them and shouts at his grandmother, “What do you mean by Yozgat [an inner Anatolian city known for its political and cultural conservativeness]?! Think thoroughly, remember! Didn’t you migrate from somewhere else? I will strangle you! What is Yozgat?” The distressed old woman answers in a local vernacular, “I swear to God, I don’t know... Ouch!” While kicking his grandfather, the grandchild shouts at him too and says, “Grandpa, you f\*ck off to Crete and stick around there. Then come back here.” The old man asks for mercy. “Oh my dear Mehmet, what do I do there? I don’t know anything about this place, and I don’t know how to behave there.” The grandchild Mehmet responds “How should I know? Drink some tea, take a walk around and come back to Yozgat after that. Come on, go to Crete.”





Figure 6-4: Sarıkaya's comic strip titled "Short story: Aspiring to hold on to Europe in some way"

Source: *Uykusuz*, April 28, 2011.

As far as the *zeitgeist* is concerned, another common characteristic of the public memory in these countries should be emphasized. As mentioned above, the Greek and Turkish nation-

states took divergent paths in remembering, forgetting and re-remembering the displacement and inscribing it into their national histories. The “official” memory of the displacement is determined by the immediate needs of these states and by their determination to achieve and consolidate their primary goal, national unity. With the third generation and under the influence of the global trends, nostalgia kicked in and the idealized collective memory gained new and common dimensions. So, the nostalgia of the third generation and the collective memory of the displacement have met with the capitalist logic of profitability. The refugee/exchangee nostalgia has been commercialized and the memories of the displacement become a commodity in the experience economy and given rise to new patterns of consumption. Memories *quâ* commodities emerged new patterns of marketing in both countries with the help of popular culture and arts. This was an old trend, but the commercialization of nostalgia has recently gained new dimensions, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

First of all, history and memory are commercialized through storytelling. Telling and selling stories in different forms of art is production of commodities as much as cultural production. Mnemonic commodities are, therefore, the products of cultural industry, or a subsection of it, namely, memory industry. In this regard, the communal culture of commemoration in Greece had already found its reflection in literature, music, theatre and cinema. In the immediate aftermath of the Asia Minor Catastrophe, displacement became one of the central themes of cultural production in Greece. As already mentioned, the tragedy of the refugees found its reflection in poetry as early as 1923. In 1927, famous rebetis Georgios Vidalis recorded a 10-inch 78 rpm (Odeon GA 1196), called *Προσφυγοπούλα* (*Prosfygopoula*, Refugee girl) the lyrics and music of which belonged to Panagiotis Toundos, probably the most famous

representative of the “Smyrna School” of Greek composers. The lyrics of chorus were written in the mode of nostalgia, in the literal sense of the word, sentimental sorrow for *nostos*:

Γέλα, προσφυγοπούλα, ξέχνα τη συμφορά  
και στα παλιά λημέρια θα πάμε μια φορά,  
στην έμορφη μας Σμύρνη, στον κήπο με πουλιά  
και ‘κεί γλυκιά μ’ αγάπη, θα ζούμε με φιλιά.

Laugh, refugee girl, forget the disaster  
And we will go again to the old haunts  
To our beautiful Smyrna, to the yard with birds  
And, my sweet heart, there we will live with kisses.

As previously discussed, the *Karamanlidika* poems that were published by the *Prosfygiki Foni* exhibit similar sense of poignant longing. Literary works reinforced the collective memory of the displacement as “Urtravma” with new images and representations and perpetuated certain stereotypes such as “the refugee,” “the refugee girl” (*i prosfygopoula*) and “the Turk.” These stereotypes and the literary representation/reproduction of the displacement were disseminated through radio programs in which the literary works on the Catastrophe and refugeehood were read or broadcast in the form of radio drama. But there were more efficient means than radio. So, the stereotypes and other melodramatic representations of the displacement as well as the main anxiety that triggered the production of the literary works on the drama of the refugees were transferred to theatre and cinema. As Vrasidas Karalis states,<sup>1187</sup>

Psychologically, the Asia Minor Catastrophe still remains the most traumatic event in modern Greek history. [...] The fear of expulsion and of losing contact with one’s historic origin, imagined or real, can be detected in most Greek movies, and in most art forms of

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<sup>1187</sup> Vrasidas Karalis, *A History of Greek Cinema* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), 10.

mainstream production, as a deep-seated anxiety, expressed on many occasions through a panic-stricken affirmation of national and personal identity.

Nikos Koundouros' *1922* (1978) constitutes a turning point in the cinematographic representation of the Asia Minor Catastrophe, displacement and refugeehood. Based on Elias Venezis' autobiographical novel *Number 31328*, *1922* can be considered to be the first movie with which "the magnitude of the disaster received visual representation as an imaginary event, seen through the eyes of a lost youth."<sup>1188</sup> The reception of the movie was far from being rapturous. The film caused a major political upheaval in Greece and is still surrounded by controversy. *1922*, using the stereotypes mentioned above, had secured financial support from the Greek Film Center in 1968, at the time of the military dictatorship. This was an unforeseen development because Koundouros was a leftist who shot the first movie on the Greek Civil War from a left-wing perspective, and a loud critic of the Greek junta. Yet, the movie was banned from screening in theaters by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the right-of-center government of the post-dictatorship era for three years for its potential of sabotaging the Greco-Turkish relations, which were still incredibly tense after the Cyprus crisis that had come to the climax in 1974. This decision did not keep the movie from winning best film, best director, best photography, best screenplay, best actor in a leading role and best lead actress in the 19th Thessaloniki Film Festival, the primary showcase not only for Greece but also for the entire Balkan region.

Unlike Venezis, who was criticized for being too lyrical and deficient in epic elements by the Greek right, Koundouros heavily relied on stereotypes and put a strong emphasis on Greek heroism. He came under fire for reproducing jingoism, or even chauvinistic nationalism even

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<sup>1188</sup> Karalis, *A History of Greek Cinema*, 185.

though he loosely attached a touch of Dido Sotiriou to the ending of the movie by implying that the Asia Minor campaign was nothing but a manipulation and provocation of the Great Powers and both Greeks and Turks were victims of imperialist interests in the region. As Vangelis Calotychos aptly summarizes the irony, “the leftist filmmaker had produced a film more rightist than the right-wing establishment could bear to support.”<sup>1189</sup> Shortly after the release of Koundouros’ *1922* with the permission of the government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), another movie, which became an international hit, was released in 1983: Costas Ferris’ *Rembetiko*.

The movie is obviously named after the music genre, rebetiko, originating from the urban centers of Anatolia, and sweeps through the life of *rebetissa* Marika, who was born in Smyrna before the Catastrophe and brought to Athens. This movie was, too, produced with the funds from the Greek Film Center and Hellenic Radio Television. In the end, the movie's soundtrack became more popular than the film itself. Particularly, the song *Μάνα μου Ελλάς* (Mother Greece), a magnificent and rousing requiem for the Asia Minor Catastrophe written more than 60 years after the actual event... Greek poet Nikos Gatsos’ lyrics played a decisive role in the success of this song, which perfectly captures the traumatic impact of Greece’s defeat in Anatolia and the plight of the displaced people after the Catastrophe, as well as the nostalgia of the 1970s and 1980s (See Table 6–1).

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<sup>1189</sup> Vangelis Calotychos, *The Balkan Prospect: Identity, Culture, and Politics in Greece After 1989* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 141.

**Table 6–1:** The lyrics of the *Rembetiko*'s soundtrack (My translation)

<p>Δεν έχω σπίτι πίσω για να'ρθώ          ούτε κρεβάτι για να κοιμηθώ          δεν έχω δρόμο ούτε γειτονιά          να περπατήσω μια Πρωτομαγιά.</p>	<p>Neither do I have a house to come back          Nor a bed to sleep          I have no street or neighborhood          To take a walk on the first of May</p>
<p>Τα ψεύτικα τα λόγια τα μεγάλα          μου τα 'πες με το πρώτο σου το γάλα.</p>	<p>Those big speeches full of lies          You fed me with your first milk</p>
<p>Μα τώρα που ξυπνήσανε τα φίδια          εσύ φοράς τα αρχαία σου στολίδια          και δε δακρύζεις ποτέ σου μάνα μου Ελλάς          που τα παιδιά σου σκλάβους ξεπουλάς.</p>	<p>But now the snakes have woken up          You wear your old ornaments          And you never cry, mother Greece          That you sell out your children as slaves</p>
<p>Τα ψεύτικα τα λόγια τα μεγάλα          μου τα 'πες με το πρώτο σου το γάλα.</p>	<p>Those big speeches full of lies          You fed me with your first milk</p>
<p>Μα τότε που στη μοίρα μου μιλούσα          είχες ντυθεί τα αρχαία σου τα λούσα          και στο παζάρι με πήρες γύφτισσα μαϊμού          Ελλάδα Ελλάδα μάνα του καημού.</p>	<p>But when I addressed to my destiny          You had already got dressed with your old fineries          And you, gypsy monkey, took me to the marketplace          Greece, Greece, mother of sorrow</p>
<p>Τα ψεύτικα τα λόγια τα μεγάλα          μου τα 'πες με το πρώτο σου το γάλα.</p>	<p>Those big speeches full of lies          You fed me with your first milk</p>
<p>Μα τώρα που η φωτιά φουντώνει πάλι          εσύ κοιτάς τα αρχαία σου τα κάλλη          και στις αρένες του κόσμου μάνα μου Ελλάς          το ίδιο ψέμα πάντα κουβαλάς.</p>	<p>But now that the fire rages again          You look at your ancient beauty          And in the world's arenas, mother Greece          You always carry the same lie</p>

**Source:** Ferris, Costas. *Rembetiko*. DVD. Athens: Victory, 2004.

After this dramatic and strong entrance of the Asia Minor Catastrophe, displacement and refugeehood into movie theaters, it became frequent for the new generations (of spectators) that had not experienced the displacement first-hand to watch the studio re-creations of the past traumas and tragedies of their ancestors (and the entire nation) as well as the lost homelands on the projection screen. In addition to fictive feature movies, historical documentaries enriched with archival footage contributed to the process of molding personal and collective memories as well as forming “Asiaminostalgia” to a great extent. So, cinematographic reproduction and

commodification of memory of the displacement also meant erosion of two dominant sources of memory based on written and oral narratives: national historiography based on the narrative model of the nineteenth century and family saga. This transformation took on a new, massive and unprecedented dimension with the advent of television. Particularly starting from the 1980s, television served as a theatre of memory that performed in the living room of almost each and every house.

In 1982, ERT produced a documentary film on the *Catastrophe, Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή* [*Mikrasiatiki Katastrophi*], directed by Popi Alkouli. The testimonies of the survivors having fled Anatolia and taken refuge in Greece serve as the backbone of the documentary. ERT produced numerous other documentaries on the cities in Asia Minor, particularly Smyrna, the catastrophe, the refugeehood and the resulting turmoil in the country. However, this particular documentary film has been broadcast several times since then. On September 1, 2012, I watched it on ERT1 as a part of the Asia Minor Catastrophe Special Tribute on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the catastrophe. The same period witnessed the proliferation of documentaries and their broadcast on different tv channels, which had already been flooded with Turkish serials.

On September 14, 2011, the first screening of the documentary *Δύο Φορές Ξένος* (*Twice A Stranger*) took place on television. The documentary is directed by Andreas Apostolidis and Yuri Averof and produced by the Anemon Productions for ERT. It was based on Bruce Clark's book of the same title. As mentioned before, for Greek historiography and public memory, the exchange and the Treaty of Lausanne never constituted the major focus of the matter. Moreover, the documentary carries out a comparative analysis and gives equal coverage to the Turkish side of the story. I am not sure if it was intentionally done to provoke the spectators or not; but the

documentary starts with the sound of a muezzin pronouncing azan. The broadcast of the documentary sparked an intense public debate.

At the same time, numerous other documentaries appeared as part of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations. One director's works, however, stands out. Maria Iliou, in collaboration with historian Alexander Kitroef, produced two documentaries in 2012: *Σμύρνη, η καταστροφή μιας κοσμοπολίτικης πόλης, 1900-1922* (Smyrna, the Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City, 1900-1922) and *Από τις δυο πλευρές του Αιγαίου, Διωγμός και Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών, 1922-1924* (From Both Sides of the Aegean, Expulsion and Exchange of Populations, 1922-1924). Both documentaries utilize a trove of visual archival materials and testimonies, and expert opinions. Although the screening of the documentaries took place in numerous places, both films first came to the big screen at the Benaki Museum and were accompanied by photographic exhibitions sharing the same title with the documentaries.

Iliou, whose father and stepfather were refugees from Smyrna and Kerasounta (Giresun), respectively, grew up with stories of the horrors and brutalities; nonetheless, she gives a balanced and well-documented account of this tragic historical episode. Even though both documentaries were well-received, in my opinion, they both have some problems, primarily with the existing historiography and with a failure to address the rise of nationalism from a historical perspective, by treating instead as a *deus ex machina*. Nevertheless, it was significant that particularly *From Both Sides of the Aegean's* comparative perspective and its visually engaging and information-rich content helped viewers to get out of certainties of nationalist prejudices.<sup>1190</sup>

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<sup>1190</sup> I had the chance to chat with a group of elderly women. Some of them were crying as we were leaving the auditorium. When I asked them why they wanted to watch this documentary, the answer was far from what I had expected to hear. One of them told me “it's time to understand the other side (την αλλή πλευρά). There is no point in wallowing in self-pity and crying for our fate (να κλαίμε τη μοίρα μας).” The answer was unexpected because it was an open criticism directed to the members of the group that were still crying. I asked her why it was important for her to understand the other side. She returned



The 1970s and 2010s marked periods of great social turbulence and drastic changes. The 1970s witnessed the military dictatorship and its tumultuous collapse as well as the ensuing political transformation. In the 1970s, the Cyprus issue, the trauma of the *de facto* partition of the island and the re-emergence of refugeehood due to this crisis should also be taken into account. In the early 2010s, on the other hand, the economic crisis was at its peak and not only the economic establishment but the entire political system and its ideological foundations were on the verge of complete collapse. Therefore, both periods provide the context for a collective identity crisis, in other words, present fears, discontents, anxieties or uncertainties. As Fred Davis underlines, nostalgia is a social and psychic instrument to abort, or at least deflect, threats of identity discontinuity and to marshal our resources for continuity when a society is anxious about and unsure of itself.<sup>1191</sup> What was the point to deflect the attention away from a period of intense crisis to the ur-trauma of the society? What was the resources for continuity in Greek context? As mentioned earlier, the foundational myth of modern Greek identity is the imaginary uninterrupted continuity from antiquity to the modern era. Especially after the Asia Minor Catastrophe, this continuity took the shape of a steady decline from the “fall of the City” in 1453 to the “expulsion of Eastern Hellenism” in the 1920s. I think “the Decline” is the element of continuity that the society, as well as the intelligentsia, retrospectively looked for. Although the decline metaphor flags the historical losses and perpetual vital chaos, it also points to the resilience of the nation, and that of the individuals as the members of this nation.

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to the family stories that used to hear in her childhood and underlined that her family members were settled in a Muslim family’s house in Greece and for months they had lived together without any problems until the owners of the house had been sent to Turkey with the population exchange. She considered the exchange was an adjunct to her family’s tragedy. It was apparent that she was able to place her familial calamity in a broader context beyond the nationalist framing.

<sup>1191</sup> Fred Davis, “Nostalgia, Identity and the Current Nostalgia Wave,” *The Journal of Popular Culture* 11, no. 2 (1977): 420.

The representation of the displacement and its history through mass media and culture industry get strengthened with new visual technologies and these technologies' becoming more widespread and accessible. They gained greater visibility in popular culture. Yet, this form of visibility offered by these new technologies comes with the problem of trivialization. One striking case of this problem arose during the singing competition *The Voice* [of Greece] in 2015. During the “blind auditions” where coaches form their teams without seeing contestants based solely on contestants' vocal performances, Kostas Ageris started singing with his poignant voice a sorrowful song in Pontika (Pontic dialect), namely *Την πατρίδα μ' έχασα* (I lost my homeland). Ageris' sheer talent impressed all four coaches and they all turned their chairs to show that each wanted him in their teams, while Ageris started playing his *kementzes*. In just a few seconds the haunting and elegiac lyrics and melody of the song was obfuscated by the show itself (applause, cheerful and reckless attitude of the coaches, joy of the contestant's family members, who were all “karapontios” in Argeris' words, etc.). Therefore, the audience witnessed and was pulled into a retreat from the moral gravity of the song and, more importantly, that of the historical tragedy it referred to. Ageris won *The Voice* after weeks long competition. The trivialization of the historical tragedy goes hand in hand with its co-optation by the culture industry, hence commercialization. In this particular case, the major predicament was not only how vulgar and commodified the platform was the irony behind the fact that the producer of *The Voice* was Turkish TV mogul Acun Ilıcalı, whose entrance into the Greek market had sparked a fierce debate.

In Turkey, on the other hand, cultural production, and hence its commodification, came much later than that in Greece. The circulation of “refugeeism” in the form of cultural goods in the market and inside the veins of the society started in the 1990s. Although there were some

earlier publications in the 1980s, it can be said that the silence was broken by Kemal Yalçın's *Emanet Çeyiz: Mübadele İnsanları (The Entrusted Trousseau: People of the Exchange)*. The book had curious history; because the book was awarded with the Turkish Ministry of Culture Novel Success Award in 1998 and in 2002 the book and its author were prosecuted for insulting Turkishness.<sup>1192</sup> the cultural production increased with a rapid acceleration. This was coupled with the foundation of the first "exchangee" organization after the closure of the Exchange Association in the 1920s, the initiatives of the establishment of the Foundation of Lausanne Exchangees (*Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı*) in 1999 and 2000. In recent years the cultural production about the population exchange has reached a boom. This is due to further expansion of the identity crisis triggered by drastic political changes, historical anxiety due to the extensive corrosion of the dominant ideological modes of governance and the development of new modes and narratives of existence and co-existence.

After *mübadele* was discovered and *mübadil* became an "institutionalized identification marker" in this ideo-political and cultural context mentioned above, it became not only possible to talk about the proliferation of cultural products<sup>1193</sup> but also diversification of this production, which had been limited to the publication of fictions. The subject started to attain scholarly attention it deserved and this was followed by the publications of diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, interviews. Moreover, the first feature movie was added to the list of cultural goods produced around the theme of the exchange in 2011. Çağan Irmak directed and wrote the screenplay for the critically acclaimed movie, *Dedemin İnsanları (My Grandfather's People)*, which was based on the director's family history. Mehmet Yavaş, the grandfather, is forced to

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<sup>1192</sup> The curious case of this book has attracted scholarly attention. Iğsız, "Documenting the Past," 451–87.

<sup>1193</sup> *Ibid.*, 473.

migrate from his home in Crete during the population exchange with his family when he is only seven. The family is resettled in a small town in the Aegean region of Turkey. Mehmet grows up in this small town and forms his own family. Since they are Greek-speaking refugees, Mehmet speaks Turkish in a slight accent. The movie underlines the fact that in the late 1970s the integration problems of the refugees persist, so does the blatant prejudices against them. Mehmet's strong desire is to see his hometown and visit his family's home in Crete before he dies. That is why he ritualistically expresses his longing by going to seaside and dropping bottles containing letters into the Aegean. Some suspect that he works for the Greek intelligence services. All these social tensions as well as the radical changes that the family, the town and the country underwent are described through the eyes of Mehmet's grandchild, Ozan. Ozan's unsettledness and restlessness regarding his grandfather's refugee origin and the nationalist bigotry against his family in the town also reflect the apprehensiveness of the third generation, the disquiet which finally led to the "discovery" of the population exchange and the "boom" in the public sphere. Ozan ultimately visits Crete and finds the house that his grandfather left when he was a child. It is important to note that only Ozan, the third generation, is daring enough to look for the roots of his family. The others bid farewell to Ozan at the airport. Ozan, the director himself, interprets this situation in a way that the other members of the family, the earlier generations, were either too tired to join this adventure or too fragile to handle another disappointment. When Ozan arrives in Crete, the dramatic tone of the movie suddenly changes and the element of humor outweighs the background tragedy in a parody-like setting. While trying to find his grandfather's house, Ozan stops at some places coffeehouses to ask for the address he has in his hand. At each and every stop, he is greeted with the verbatim and almost automated welcoming phrases "Turkey... Greece... Friends... The rest is politics..." and offered

coffee which apparently combines Greek and Turkish cultures for the director together with other culinary elements, such as *raki*. Ozan finally gets to the house. Now Eleonora, an elderly woman, owns it. She heartily welcomes Ozan and offers him some common dishes of Greco-Turkish cuisine, such as stuffed and rolled grape leaves, dolma/dolmadhes, and then brings a small wooden chest in which she keeps “some things” that her father-in-law entrusted to her in case one day the former owners of the house could come back. She takes a wooden pegtop that Mehmet left while leaving the house for good and a couple of photographs Mehmet and his family had taken in front of their house in Crete out of the chest and gives them to Ozan. At this point, they start hearing Vasilis Tsitsanis’ famous rebetiko song *Γκιουλ-Μπαχάρ* (*Gülbahar*).

*Dedemin İnsanları* was supervised by new feature movies on the population exchange such as *Evdeki Yabancılar* (*Stranger’s in the House*, 2012), which is based on the Homeric theme of *nostos*. *Evdeki Yabancılar* captures successfully the exilic situation in perpetuity and the utter impossibility of return. The movie brings hope that *nostos* entails into question. The story takes place in Turkey of the 1990s and is about the return of Agapi, an elderly Greek woman in her 80s, to the fishing Aegean town in Turkey, where she was brought up and forced to leave in the 1920s, in order to take care of some mysterious business she claims to have. In this homecoming journey, Agapi is with her grandchildren, Elpida, who by no means makes sense of why they return there. They finally find the house where Agapi used to live and meet its current owner, Yaşar, who want to convert the house into a boarding house let alone selling it. Yet Agapi was very insistent on that the house still belongs to her. Agapi’s resoluteness and Yaşar’s commercial plans regarding the house; and Agapi’s secretive but tenacious attitude regarding this journey and Elpida’s inability to comprehend all these at all constitutes the major dramatic tensions of the movie. These axes of tension reflect not only how the members of the first and third generations

perceive the displacement but also how differently the subject was treated in Turkey and in Greece. As mentioned earlier, the 1990s correspond to the period prior to the achievement of an awareness regarding the expulsion of the Greeks and the population exchange. In this movie, the population exchange is referred as an event that belongs to a distant, murky and foreign past by the Turkish characters.

Throughout the early 2010s, besides feature movies, documentary films regarding the exchange were released as well in Turkey. One major example of this is *Kardeş Nereye? Mübadele* (Where are you going, sib? The Exchange, 2011) directed by Ömer Asan, who had been charged with allegations regarding violation of Article 8 of Turkey's Anti-Terror Law by "propagandating separatism" for his book *Pontos Kültürü* (The Culture of Pontos). This documentary stands out with its comparative perspective and its strong emphasis on the population exchange as an utter offense to human rights and that the expulsion of the Greeks in Asia Minor, Thrace and Pontos was not the result of the population exchange but due to the policies harbinger of the exchange. In 2012 - 13, the longest documentary on the population exchange was broadcast by Kanal B (Channel B). The broadcasting of *Sakız Ağacının Altında* (Under the Mastic Tree) took 13 weeks. Other television channels produced documentaries and series on the population exchange too. In a country like Turkey, where citizens have been considered as media consumers for a long time, TV ownership is almost universal and watching television is the top activity regardless of age, education, urbanicity or ethnicity, the more extended the coverage about the population exchange and relevant issues on TV, the more restored and developed the consciousness on these issues become. In this way these historical episodes are given renewed visualness, public awareness and significance. Yet, insofar as their potential, the dangers of these media should be kept in mind. Geoffrey Cubitt describes the

gravest of these dangers: “By subjecting individuals with powerful immediacy to a delirious stream of images and information, evocative of a multitude of past and present situations, modern technologies, it is argued, relentlessly blur the distinctions [...] between reality and simulation, between knowledge and entertainment, and between what is experienced personally and what is experienced vicariously, on which the individual’s participation in a stable formation of social memory depends.”<sup>1194</sup> The quality of these “stream of images” is also far from being satisfactory. The clichéd continuation of the same themes and motifs, anachronistic, reductive and teleological readings of the displacement, usual degeneration of history and memory into a pandemonium of nostalgia, banal nostalgic narration of the actual events and the lives of actual people, those people’s being ripped off from history and substitution with cultural stereotypes, and the “depthless and affectless pastness”<sup>1195</sup> besieging history result in trivialization of the human suffering entailed by this historical episode. Moreover, Michel Foucault’s import on the issue of historical documentaries and historical movies should be kept in mind, particularly today. The historical documentary and feature films as the products of culture industry address to this anxiety and desire in a certain way, which is bounded with the material conditions, circumstances existing already, and as Foucault asserts, “people are shown not what they were, but what they must remember having been. [...] It’s vital to have possession of this memory, to control it, to administer it, tell it what it must contain. [...] And when you see these films, you find out what you have to remember.”<sup>1196</sup> As the high tide of Greco-Turkish friendship that

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<sup>1194</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 245-46.

<sup>1195</sup> Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 15-9.

<sup>1196</sup> Michel Foucault, “Film and Popular Memory,” in *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1966-1984*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 1989), 92-3.

emerged in the late 1990s has begun to recede, the tone and focus of the documentaries and historical movies should be expected to change. This is a process already underway. In fact, the historical narrative in the most popular historical TV series broadcast by the state television in Turkey takes on belligerent nationalist tones, which directly or indirectly addresses to the anti-Greek sentiments repressed or restrained in the previous period. The emphases on the common post, shared homeland, similar culture and forceful separation of neighbors, lovers, etc. give their place to age-long military and political struggle against each other, stories of stabbing in the back. This fusillade of heavy propaganda turns ultranationalism into a core substitute for the friendship discourse in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In the absence of historical and future visions, chasing future by confronting past in superficial ways generally produces the exact opposite results and aggravates already existing enmities and prejudices. On one level, the mob violence against Yiannis Boutaris, liberal mayor of Thessaloniki, which almost took the form of a lynching attempt during the rally organized for the purpose of commemorating the “Genocide of the Pontian Greeks” on May 19, 2018 is related to this problem. Boutaris, who was known for his anti-nationalist views and had been under attack since his candidacy for mayor of Thessaloniki, had been underlining the Ottoman past and shared history of the city, and had brought to the fore the fact that the city is Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s birthplace and was once the most important urban center of the Jews in order to attract tourism from Turkey, Israel and etc., and challenged the nationalist myths surrounding the history of the city. A 2012 article signed by Andy Dabilis called Boutaris “the Turk, Ataturk's brother.”<sup>1197</sup> On many occasions he told that the press he had been receiving death threats on regular basis: “Since I took over [as mayor], I

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<sup>1197</sup> Andy Dabilis, “Boutaris The Turk, Ataturk’s Brother,” *Greek Reporter*, November 7, 2012, <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2012/11/07/boutaris-the-turk-ataturks-brother/>.



have calls, I have letters saying, ‘you are fucking Jew,’ ‘you are a fucking Turk.’”<sup>1198</sup> The attack on the mayor was celebrated by the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn and other ultranationalist groups and parties.<sup>1199</sup> The argument used by the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn while glorifying this attack, is noteworthy: “The glass of rage against Boutaris the anti-nationalist, the vilifier of Pontians and the praiser of Kemal overflowed. The unacceptable mayor of Thessaloniki tarnished today's anniversary of the Memorial for the Victims of Pontian Hellenism, because he allowed the “gay pride” [march] to take place in the city on the same day.”<sup>1200</sup>

Regardless of their goals and intentions, liberal policies, including the ones carried out by Boutaris, prove the fact that identity politics hand an advantage to right-wing populism because "assertions of ‘difference’ are easily translated into an assertion of the ‘difference’ between ‘our’ national groups and their ‘otherness’.”<sup>1201</sup> In short, liberal policies may be anti-racist but its

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<sup>1198</sup> Niki Kitsantonis, “75-Year-Old Mayor Is Attacked in Greece, and Nationalists Rejoice,” *The New York Times*, May 22, 2018, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/21/world/europe/greece-mayor-thessaloniki-attack.html>; Amanda Erickson, “Greece’s Most Liberal Mayor Beaten by a Bunch of Far-Right Protesters,” *Washington Post*, May 20, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/05/20/greeces-most-liberal-mayor-got-beat-up-by-a-bunch-of-far-right-protesters/>; Patrick Strickland, “When Fascists Turn Violent,” *The New Republic*, August 3, 2018, <https://newrepublic.com/article/150346/fascists-turn-violent>.

<sup>1199</sup> “Οι ναζί της Χρυσής Αυγής πανηγυρίζουν για την επίθεση στον Γ. Μπουτάρη,” *Ημεροδρόμος*, May 20, 2018, <http://www.imerodromos.gr/i-nazi-tis-chrysis-avgis-panigyrizoun-gia-tin-epithesi-ston-g-boutari/>; Niki Kitsantonis, “75-Year-Old Mayor Is Attacked in Greece, and Nationalists Rejoice,” *The New York Times*, May 22, 2018, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/21/world/europe/greece-mayor-thessaloniki-attack.html>.

The presidents of the three federations of Pontic Greeks that organized the event "condemned the attack in the most categorical manner." “Καταδικάζουν την επίθεση στον Γιάννη Μπουτάρη οι Ομοσπονδίες των Ποντίων,” *thestival.gr*, May 19, 2018, <http://www.thestival.gr/society/item/383425-katadikazoun-tin-epithesi-ston-gianni-mpoytari-oi-omospondies-ton-pontion>.

<sup>1200</sup> “Ξέσπασε η λαϊκή οργή κατά του υμνητή του Κεμάλ, Μπουτάρη,” *Χρυσή Αυγή*, May 19, 2018, <http://www.xryshaygh.com/enimerosi/view/jespase-h-laikh-orgh-kata-tou-umnhth-tou-kemal-mpoutarh-binteo>. On October 7, 2020, the Athens Criminal Court ruled that the Golden Dawn was a criminal organization “dressed in the mantle of a political party” and its leading figures were convicted for heading a criminal organization.

<sup>1201</sup> Mark Neocleous and Nick Startin, “‘Protest’ and Fail to Survive: Le Pen and the Great Moving Right Show,” *Politics* 23, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 152.

rhetoric and logic can be abused by racism. This is coupled with the trivialization of the past through commercialization and playing [on history] by market rules, which can be sometimes considered as an insult by the “guardian generations.” How far right takes advantage of hollow identity politics is apparent from the argumentation of the Golden Dawn published on its website and cited above.

The discussion of the media and cultural products cannot be complete without referring to the Internet, which changed at least qualitatively the discussion around these issues with its enormous power of disseminating narratives, images, documents and commentaries, etc. But, the role of the internet cannot be reduced to the qualitative aspect. The internet transformed the ways in which ideas, knowledge and information circulate. It made archives, libraries and special collections accessible to a much larger public and extended the circulation of archival materials. Moreover, the circulation of memories, feelings and emotions became possible with the Internet, which contributed to social sharing, production and contagion of memories, and magnified the ways and speed of the construction of collective and cultural memory through changing the entire topology informing them. Particularly, social media have become highly instrumental in this process. Social media technologies provide users numerous means to express and educate themselves, but most importantly a common place for various collective remembering activities. Not only does digitally mediated collective remembering enhance the ways in which collective memory evolves and is revised but it also hampers -or at least transforms- certain qualities of remembering. As far as the 1923 population exchange is considered, on different social media platforms there are ever-increasing number of groups and networks that are dedicated to the lost homelands, the displacement, the experiences of ancestors before and after the displacement, heritage seeking activities, or just sharing nostalgic photographs, video footages as well as

historical documents and other archival materials. On the one hand, these groups and networks transcends the isolated narratives in Greek and Turkish historiographies in certain respects and facilitate interaction and dialogue between Turkish and Greek users. Although the quality of these communications varies and almost none of them can be qualified as academic, scholars interested in this issue participate or intervene in these networks too either by actively participating in the ongoing discussions or sharing their findings. So, on the one hand, it can be said that social media contributed to the democratization of knowledge and history writing. On the other hand, unchecked nature of these platforms undermines already thin historical credibility of memory and narratives based on memories. Moreover, these reconstructions of pasts are arguably regarded as individually satisfying rather than publicly beneficial. Social media and collective remembering and commemorating activities through these media transformed the notion of experience by means of the mass media and created “prosthetic memories” in Alison Landsberg’s concept. According to Landsberg, the commodification and dissemination of memories through the mass media result in the implantation of these memories to the minds of the audiences or Internet users that actually did not experience these events.<sup>1202</sup> As in the case of “fake news,” it becomes almost impossible to make a clear-cut distinction between genuine memories and the ones imagined and implanted based on the unprecedented circulation of memories and visual materials. Although this contributes to the political potential of the mass media to a great extent, it undermines the mission dispatched on memories and cultural

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<sup>1202</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (Columbia University Press, 2004); Alison Landsberg, “Prosthetic Memory: The Ethics and Politics of Memory in an Age of Mass Culture,” in *Memory and Popular Film*, ed. Paul Grainge (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 144–61.

production based on these memoirs, the mission of opposing the “erasure of collective vision (of the “community of seeing”), tacitly considered here as constitutive of the historical fact.”<sup>1203</sup>

As Svetlana Boym underlines, nostalgia is about “the repetition of the unrepeatable, materialization of the immaterial.”<sup>1204</sup> Although the return is practically impossible, it is always imaginable through its reconstruction offered by the market. Yet, this reconstruction has been co-opted by mass media and culture industry, resulting in the trivialization of the traumatic experience. This trivialization and the “pseudohistorical depth in which the history of aesthetic styles displaces ‘real’ history”<sup>1205</sup> offered by these cultural products make it possible for further distortion of history within a nationalist or even ultranationalist narrative through mobilizing “Gegenläufige Gedächtnisse.” As history is made a selling point, nostalgia is traded on, and the past becomes a fictitious commodity, a market for these commodified pasts and an entire universe of fictitious commodities produced in company with these processes create new problems that humanities and social sciences should concern with in the future with a sophisticated research agenda transcending the vicious circle of identity politics.

To sum up, human beings were exchanged and displaced from their homelands, and let alone resolving existing problems, the displacement inflamed them and created new ones. These problems became layered with additional complications and some of them reached to a complete deadlock where they have been waiting for a spark to burst into flames since then. The severe suffering of the displaced continued for decades and the displaced bequeathed their historical trauma to the later generations. The severe deprivation and misery experienced by the displaced

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<sup>1203</sup> Marc Nichanian, *The Historiographic Perversion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 101.

<sup>1204</sup> Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), xvii.

<sup>1205</sup> Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 20.

was coupled with the discrimination they were subject to due to their language, customs, skin colors, outfits etc. While in Greece the newcomers were called “Turkish seed,” in Turkey the exchangees were welcomed with the saying “one Greek left then another arrived.” Longing, which easily took the form of nostalgia, became the last straw for the displaced.

Almost a century has passed since the signing of the exchange convention, but its wounds have not yet healed. As the result of the regional policies of the imperialist powers, nationalism in conflict and narrow political calculations, hundreds and thousands of people passed away with a longing in their hearts for their homes, for the lands where their dead had been buried. After all, this tragedy was called “the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange” and justified as a successful and legitimate method of conflict resolution. In the preface of the Turkish translation of his Master’s thesis on the population exchange Mihri Belli wrote that what was done was done. Yes, there is no going back to change it. Today, however, we have to remember that the Greco-Turkish population exchange was brought to the table as a solution to the refugee problem in Greece and ethnic cleavage as well as future problems between Greece and Turkey. Time proved that this was a superficial “solution” with a high human cost for the sake of the nation-states. Today millions of people are displaced or live under threat of displacement, the very “high-minded” and loftiest institutions of the so-called western civilization have been crumbling under the weight of the refugee issue. Historians must ask themselves the very first question that was posed in this study: What is history good for? Because unless we find an answer to this question and develop a viewpoint that privileges human-beings rather than nation-state or the international order the states collectively constitute, and reconstitute society at large based on this principle and the lessons taken from history, there is no way of avoiding an economic, cultural and political collapse of apocalyptic scale. While waving their national pride and vanity in solemn

grandeur, the citizen of the “developed” host nations will find themselves in ruins together with the refugee.

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