

UDC 930.85(4-12)

ISSN 0350-7653

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BALCANICA

XLVI

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

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BELGRADE
2015



The Legacy of the Treaty of Lausanne in the Light of Greek-Turkish Relations in the Twentieth Century: Greek Perceptions of the Treaty of Lausanne

Abstract: The Treaty of Lausanne and the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey became the basis both for the reorientation of their foreign policies and for the establishment of close relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. But the Cyprus question and the Aegean conflict affected bilateral relations. It had a negative impact on the Treaty of Lausanne.

Keywords: Muslim minority, Christians in Turkey, Turkish identity, Greeks in Istanbul, Cyprus issue, Aegean islands, Western Thrace

The Treaty of Lausanne was a diplomatic victory despite all the negative conditions of the time, despite those who considered Turkey as a country losing World War I. Upon the foundation of this treaty rose the Republic of Turkey, a democratic, secular and social law state.

Behind this Treaty is our national struggle for independence that our nation self-sacrificially carried into victory with its blood, souls and determination. The Treaty of Lausanne which crowned our national struggle is also one of the milestones of our diplomatic history. Turkey, on the one hand, made historic attempts towards developments right after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, while on the other hand it began to pursue a peaceful foreign policy well beyond its time on the basis of the great leader Atatürk's principle "Peace at home, peace in the world". [...] The Treaty of Lausanne is a historical document that demonstrates our country's wish to live in peace, security and prosperity in the multi-dimensional geography where it is located. Our country established peace thanks to this treaty with the powers against which it had displayed its determination during the national struggle of independence and has become an ally of the western countries as well as being an integral part of the West on the foundation of their common values. [...] Turkey keeps the spirit of Lausanne alive with its tangible contributions to the regional and global peace.¹

These words are an excerpt from President Abdullah Gül's message on the occasion of the 87th Anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne (2010). It was, and still is, a treaty of national pride for Turkey. It was an interna-

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¹ Presidency of Republic of Turkey: The 87th Anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne, <http://www.teeb.gov.tr/speeches-statements/344/78923>

tional act signed by Turkey and the winners of the First World War, replacing the Treaty of Sèvres. In July 1923 the Turkish delegation in Lausanne had many reasons to celebrate the victory, having succeeded in abolishing the Capitulations and negotiating on equal terms with the winners of the First World War. Even though some questions – Straits, Mosul, Iskenderun (Hatay) – were not settled according to the suggested terms of the Ankara National Council, and even though the head of the Turkish delegation to Lausanne İsmet İnönü was not welcomed back by his prime minister Rauf Bey,² Ankara achieved its main goals, i.e. the national legislation of the new state and the warding off of any plans for the creation of an Armenian or a Kurdish state. In July 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne was perceived in Greece as “the lesser evil”, as one may conclude from the contemporary Greek press. The comments in the Greek press, which overlapped, focused on the following main points: The Treaty of Lausanne was a Treaty of defeat; there was no reason for triumph, but for contemplation. The road from Sevres to Lausanne proved to be painful because of the national split of the Greeks and the inconsistency of Greece’s former Allies. The revolution of the Greek Army in September 1922 and Venizelos, who opted for peace, saved Greece’s dignity in Lausanne. The Asia Minor debacle should be the beginning of Greece’s reconstruction and peaceful work. Greece’s only requirement was the implementation of the Treaty by Turkey. In that respect, Europe should exert pressure on Turkey using economic means.³

The Treaty of Lausanne had human and diplomatic-political implications as well. The official signing of the Treaty (24 July 1923) was preceded by the conclusion, on 30 January 1923, of the bilateral Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish populations⁴ which provided (Article 1) for the compulsory exchange of all Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Muslim religion established in Greek territory. The Convention exempted from the exchange the Muslim inhabitants of Western Thrace and the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople. It was the first time that a compulsory exchange of populations was legalized under international law with religion as the sole criterion.⁵ Lord Curson, President of the

² See Klaus Kreiser, *Atatürk. Eine Biographie* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2011), 182.

³ See Εμπρός (Emros), 23/7/1923; 25/7/1923; 26/7/1923; Νέα Αλήθεια (Nea Alitheia), 26/7/1923; Εστία (Estia), 22/7/1923; 23/7/1923; 25/7/1923.

⁴ See *Actes Signés à Lausanne le 30 Janvier et le 24 Juillet 1924. Lettres et Accords en date du 24 Juillet relatifs à aux dommages subis en Turquie* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1923).

⁵ See Kalliopi K. Koufa and Constantinos Svolopoulos, “The Compulsory Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey: the Settlement of Minority Questions at the Conference of Lausanne, 1923, and Its Impact on Greek-Turkish Relations”, in

Territorial and Military Commission at the Lausanne Conference, reiterated many times that all the delegates viewed the principle of compulsory exchange with abhorrence and dismay.

One need only read the papers to realize how widely this feeling of dissatisfaction had spread; and the conference had only yielded to the demand that the exchange should be compulsory because all those who studied the matters most closely seemed to agree that the suffering entailed, great as it must be, would be repaid by the advantages which would ultimately accrue to both countries from a greater homogeneity and from the removal of old and deep causes of quarrel.⁶

It is clear that homogenization of the nation-state underlay the compulsory exchange of populations. For the Greeks, it meant the eradication of millennia-long Hellenic presence in Anatolia. For Greece, it resulted in the continuous process of long-term economic, political, cultural, and social adjustment. The dramatic exodus of Greek populations from their ancestral homelands in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea and in Eastern Thrace meant the demise of any irredentist policy towards the new Turkey. But the concentration of the major part of the Greek ethnic family in the territory of the Greek state turned Greece into one of the most homogenous states in South Eastern Europe. After the accomplishment of the Greek-Bulgarian voluntary exchange of populations and the settlement of the Asia Minor refugees in Macedonia and Western Thrace, Greece believed that it was ethnically insulated against Bulgarian territorial claims. Christian refugees, although they did not speak Greek but Turkish, proved to be fanatical Greeks who saw Slavism and Communism as dangers for Greece. They easily became an integral part of the Greek nation-building process, shifting from the Orthodox millet to the Greek nation. Even if Greece had to meet the immense cost of settlement of the refugees in both rural and urban areas, the refugee population provided a hugely expanded market and labour force. The refugees' commercial expertise and skills in textile and carpet manufacturing, ceramics, metal work and silk production contributed to Greece's economic growth. At the same time there emerged a strong sense of nostalgia for the lost world of Anatolian Hellenism. Historical memories, fostered by countless refugee organizations, are still reflected in a number of archives, research institutes and publications devoted to the Greek communities of Asia Minor, in the urban popular music ("rebetica")

Ethnic Groups in International Relations. Comparative Studies on Governments and non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940, ed. Paul Smith in collaboration with K. Koufa and A. Suppan, European Science Foundation (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 279-287.

⁶ Ibid. 299-300.

and in a distinctive kind of literature inspired by the vision of the “lost” or unforgettable homelands.⁷

The Treaty of Lausanne defined the territorial status quo between Turkey and its neighbours. That was probably the main gain for Greece and Turkey after a period of war and animosities. Atatürk needed peace to consolidate the new state and to implement the reforms, Greece had no alternative than to get accustomed to new realities and to bury the so-called “Great Idea”. In the course of the nineteenth century the “Great Idea” was vaguely defined, leaving room for various interpretations. 1) That the free Greek state had the historical mission to civilize the East. 2) That the Greeks constituted a historical continuity from ancient to modern times through the Byzantine Empire. In other words, that Greek identity was inconceivable without a reference both to the achievements of Alexander the Great and to the Byzantine legacy. Only after the Balkan Wars did the “Great Idea” obtain a clear-cut meaning. The Greek victories re-established the reputation of the Greek state humiliated after its default in 1893 and the defeat in the Greek-Turkish War in 1897. The historical mission of the Greek state was not simply to civilize the Orient, but to unite the Greeks into one Kingdom in the name of liberty and Greek Christian civilization. All old concepts about Greco-Ottomanism (Zarifis, Ion Dragoumis, Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis), about the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a cosmopolitan one with Greeks as a dominant factor, were rejected. One made no distinction between the Greeks of the Kingdom and the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire (the *Rum Millet*) who allegedly did not have a Greek consciousness, but an imperial one, an eastern national consciousness deriving from the mixture of nationalities living in the Ottoman Empire.⁸ However, the destiny of the Ottoman Empire was in the hands of the Entente Powers. In 1919 Greece sent troops to Asia Minor as a member of the Entente. But for many reasons the war between the Entente and the Turks proved to be only a Greek-Turkish duel to the death. So, in 1921 not a military but a diplomatic solution was needed. Given the

⁷ For these aspects see Renée Hirshon, “Consequences of the Lausanne Convention: An Overview”, 13–20; Thanos Veremis, “1922: Political Continuities and Realignments in the Greek State”, 53–62; and Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, “Economic Consequences Following Refugee Settlement in Greek Macedonia, 1923–1932”, 63–77, all in *Crossing the Aegean. An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. Renée Hirshon (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003).

⁸ About this kind of Greek perceptions after the First Balkan War see Spyridon Sfetas, “Greek perceptions of the First Balkan War and Venizelos’ s efforts to preserve the Balkan Alliance”, *Thetis* 20 (2013), 263–267.

new circumstances, had the insightful politician Venizelos been in power, he would have avoided fatal mistakes.⁹

Even if the Turkish delegation in Lausanne demanded a plebiscite for Western Thrace, Atatürk had waived any territorial claims to that region being part of the Kingdom of Bulgaria from 1913 to 1919. Recently published Atatürk's speeches in Izmit (16–17 January 1923) corroborate this thesis. He stated that the article about Western Thrace for the National Pact had not been his idea, but that it had been added by thoughtless persons. It was claimed that a referendum would secure Western Thrace for Turkey. However, Kemal argued that Western Thrace would be a liability rather than an asset for Turkey, since the advantages to be gained by holding it would not balance the forces needed to obtain it. Thus, "the real solution of the matter is to leave it to Greece".¹⁰ He knew that Western Thrace was claimed by Bulgaria and that it would turn into a constant source of conflict between Greeks and Bulgarians. He was right. In the interwar period Greek-Bulgarian relations were plagued by the question of Bulgaria's territorial outlet to the Aegean Sea. In Lausanne the Bulgarian delegation rejected all Venizelos's proposals for Bulgaria's economic outlet to the Aegean Sea.¹¹ During the Greek-Turkish War the Bulgarian prime minister, Aleksandar Stamboliyski, was in contact with Atatürk. Fuad Bey recruited Muslims from Bulgaria for the front in Anatolia, and a Thracian Turkish-Bulgarian organization started a guerrilla war against the Greeks. However, the Bulgarian-Turkish military cooperation was merely the result of their

⁹ Speaking at the session of 22 November 1922 Venizelos argued that Greece sent troops to Smyrna for the protection of the persecuted Greeks in the framework of the Entente policy towards the Ottoman Empire. But the war turned only into a Greek-Turkish rivalry. "Certes, la guerre, commencée au nom de tous les Alliés, a été poursuivie après l'avènement du roi Constantine sans l'assentiment des Alliés. Le retour du Roi a rompu l'alliance et, depuis lors, le duel s'est continué uniquement entre la Grèce et l'état Turc. [...] Sans aucun doute, ce fut une sottise de la part de la Grèce de continuer la guerre à l'intérieur de l'Anatolie à des centaines de kilomètres de ses bases militaires. Ella a payé sa faute en perdant l'Asie Mineure; quant à la Thrace Orientale, elle l'a perdue, non par à la suite d'opérations militaires, mais en vertu de la Convention d'armistice de Moudania. L'armée qui refusait de se battre en Asie Mineure, rentrée à Athènes, a fait la révolution et s'est réorganisée dans le but de sauver la Thrace Orientale." *Documents Diplomatiques. Conférence de Lausanne*. Vol. 1: 21 Novembre 1922 – 1er Février 1923 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1923), 15–16.

¹⁰ See Vemund Aarbakke, "The Muslim Minority of Greek Thrace" (PhD thesis, University of Bergen, 2000), 25.

¹¹ About the Greek-Bulgarian diplomatic struggle over Western Thrace at the Lausanne Conference see Spyridon Sfetas, "Thrakien als Zugang Bulgariens zur Ägäis in der Aussenpolitik der Regierung Stamboliski (1920–9. Juni 1923)", *Balkan Studies* 33/2 (1992), 266–273.

common struggle against the Greeks.¹² There is no evidence for any official Turkish-Bulgarian agreement concerning clear demarcation lines on Thrace as a whole. Besides, Atatürk might have calculated that Bulgaria might lay claim on Eastern Thrace after a possible annexation of Western Thrace. A defeated Greece would have been a reliable neighbour. In order to complicate Bulgaria's territorial outlet to the Aegean Sea, Venizelos consented to the cession of Karaagach to Turkey in Lausanne.¹³ The railway that connected Svilengrad to Alexandroupolis passed through Karaagach.

Since the territorial status quo between Greece and Turkey had been internationally recognized in Lausanne, the main questions affecting bilateral relations were minority issues and security matters. The Convention of Athens (1913) provided minority rights for Muslims in Greece in a liberal spirit. It was a bilateral Greek-Ottoman convention.¹⁴ But ten years later, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, a new situation emerged. The settlement of minority issues in Lausanne should be viewed in the general framework of the minorities policy of the European states after the First World War, when the empires collapsed and new states came into existence. In Paris the Committee on New States charged with the task of setting post-war boundaries became known as the Committee on New States and the Protection of Minorities. The provisions of these interwar treaties were guaranteed by the League of Nations. The Permanent Court of International Justice was attached to the League of Nations. But the term "minority" after 1919 lacked any conceptual clarity. The treaties themselves did not offer any definition of minority per se but simply made reference to persons who belonged to racial, religious or linguistic minorities.¹⁵ But, in fact, minorities were regarded by the kin-state as an integral part of the nation that remained in a host-state. Thus, the minority issue was closely linked with nationalism. The kin-state used objective criteria (ethnicity, language) and not subjective criteria, i.e. self-identification of the members of the minority that stayed in the host-state. The key question was to what extent the members of a minority had a clear-cut national awareness. For example, the

¹² See Spyridon Sfetas, *Makedonien und Interbalkanische Beziehungen 1920–1924*, Veröffentlichung des Instituts für Geschichte Osteuropas und Südosteuropas der Universität München, vol. 12 (Munich: Hieronymus, 1992), 105–108.

¹³ *Ibid.* 165–166.

¹⁴ About the Convention of Athens and its problematic implementation see Giannis N. Glavinias, *Οι Μουσουλμανικοί Πληθυσμοί στην Ελλάδα (1912–1923). Από την ενσωμάτωση στην ανταλλαγή* [The Muslim Populations in Greece (1912–1923). From Incorporation to Exchange] (Thessaloniki: Stamuli, 2013), 129–138.

¹⁵ For a first approach to this subject see Jennifer Jackson Preece, *National Minorities and the European Nation-States System* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 15.

Germans and Magyars in Romania and Czechoslovakia did not experience any identity crisis. They stemmed from the former imperial elites, they had a complex of superiority towards the Romanians, Czechs and Slovaks. They sent many petitions to the League of Nations. The Slavic-speaking inhabitants in the Greek and Serbian parts of Macedonia were divided into four groups. Some had Serbian national awareness, others Bulgarian, having attended Bulgarian schools or being associated with IMRO, some had a fluid identity, they were an amorphous mass, some had a pro-Greek inclination, having attended Greek schools or belonging to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. But Bulgaria, using objective criteria (a common Slav origin, the affinity of the Slavic dialects spoken in the region with the Bulgarian language), took it for granted the every Slavic speaker was a Bulgarian. The provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne on the protection of minorities placed emphasis on religious identity and freedom. Turkey's aim probably was to avoid any clear mention of the Armenians and Roma under the general term "non-Muslim minorities". The Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish nationals and the Treaty of Lausanne equated religion with national identity in a local context which was far too complex to sustain such simplistic dichotomies (Turkish nationals belonging to non-Muslim minorities, Greeks in Istanbul, Muslim minority in Greece). In other words, Greeks in Istanbul were mentioned, but no Turks in Western Thrace. In subsequent decades this discrepancy gave rise to an enduring bilateral feud with significant legal implications but, in my opinion, in 1923 it did not seem to be contradictory.

Regarding Turkey, the Treaty of Lausanne reflected the transition from Ottoman patriotism to a Turkish ethnic nationalism. With the territorial dwindling of the Ottoman Empire, the rise of Balkan nationalisms and the enlargement of the Balkan states, all concepts set forth by the Ottoman intellectuals for the salvation of the Ottoman Empire since the Tanzimat period had failed, i.e. Namik Kemal's New-Ottomanism, Abdül Hamid's Panislamism, the Young Turks' Ottoman patriotism, Akçura's Panturkism. The total and permanent loss of the Balkan Peninsula in 1913 was a watershed that affected the existence of the Empire. The loss of many major Ottoman cities, property, human lives was unbearable to the proud Ottoman elite who originated from the Balkans and was dismayed at the powerlessness of the imperial army. From 1913 on the hitherto viable umbrella of Ottoman identity was no longer recognized by the hardliners in the inner circle of the Committee "Union and Progress". The Ottoman government, Ottoman literature and culture, even the Ottoman people, were built on an artificial edifice doomed to collapse. In his work *Will Turkey survive in Anatolia?* Naci Ismail urged the Turkish intellectuals and the political elite to bring about the formation of a Turkish nation, of Turkey in Anatolia,

abandoning territories that were not predominantly Turkish. The Turkish national awakening and the creation of a Turkish economy to the detriment of the Greeks and Armenians was emphasized. The corollary was clear: Anatolia should be turned into a homogenous Turkish state.¹⁶ To avert Europe's destructive plans, Naci İsmail argued that the Turks must unite in a nationalist movement, channel its unified strength and successfully defeat the enemy. The Turks were capable of such action because they were a true nation indeed; they required only awakening. "When the foreigners attack Anatolia, the Turks and the Turkish government will prove patriotism. Because Turkey exists,"¹⁷ he argued. But when Europeans attacked Anatolia after 1919, the Turkish War of Independence was waged not in the name of the Turkish nation, but for the salvation of the Caliphate from the infidels, from the crusaders. No matter what kind of reforms Atatürk had envisaged for the future,¹⁸ only Islam could mobilize the masses against the crusaders. The transformation from a Muslim to a Turkish identity was not unproblematic. In the Ottoman Empire the word Turk had acquired a derogatory sense. A gentleman would call himself an Ottoman, never a "Turk", which was a term associated with village bumpkins of Anatolia. For the majority of the rural Ottoman Muslim population, their Islamic identity superseded ethnic ones. In the first decades of the twentieth century large segments of Turkish-speaking Ottoman Muslims did not identify themselves with the concept of Turk. For them, in Eastern Anatolia, Turk meant "Kizilbash", and in Istanbul, a coarse person or a villager.¹⁹

After the Proclamation of the Turkish Republic and the abolition of Caliphate a large-scale operation was embarked upon for the construction of a Turkish identity by equating any Muslim with the Turk, according to Gökâlp's doctrine. This process went in parallel with the secularization of the society. It was a breakthrough with tremendous impact on religious tradition and household custom; it affected faith, time, dress, family, language. The adoption of the Latin alphabet and universally-used numerals, of the Gregorian calendar and the Western working week, the banning of the fez

¹⁶ See Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914. The Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 25–26.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 27.

¹⁸ At a night meeting with Mazhar Müfid (Kasnu) and İbrahim Süreyya in the summer of 1919 Mustafa Kemal disclosed his top secret for a future secular state (proclamation of the Republic, dethronement of the Sultan, adoption of the Latin alphabet, banning of the fez and of restrictions on women clothing). Both Mazhar Müfid and İbrahim Süreyya were amazed. See Kreiser, *Atatürk*, 145–146.

¹⁹ See Ugur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey. Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 39–42.

and the restriction on women's wearing the headscarf, with the enfranchisement of women, split the society. "Europeanness" and Turkishness moulded according to Atatürk's principles – known as "the six arrows" – were in tandem. A concept of Turkishness was constructed which glossed over real diversity in a bid to present the remaining population as homogeneous. A more ethnocentric Turkish consciousness evolved in which the Anatolian villager was transformed from the symbol of Ottoman backwardness to the guardian of the Turkish nation. Kemalism propagated an historical identity for the Turks as a people originating from Central Asia and spreading their civilization westwards.²⁰

The Greeks translated the term "Muslim minority"²¹ as Muslim minorities (μουσουλμανικές μειονότητες) to demonstrate the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the Muslims in Greece as those of Turkish origin, the Pomaks and the Gypsies (Roma). The minority was internally fragmented and it lacked the potential for action that derives from a sense of unity. The Muslim minority was neither socially cohesive nor geographically concentrated. It comprised the Turkish-speakers, concentrated largely in the lowlands in both homogenous and mixed communities, the Pomaks located mainly in isolated mountainous villages, and the Roma established on peripheries of the main towns. In Western Thrace the rise of Kemalism met with no great response, as the local Muslim community exhibited an Islamic outlook. The secularist, modernist ideology of Kemalism seemed alien to traditional Ottomans. But the Turkish nation-building process in Anatolia was combined with the diffusion of Kemalism and modernization into the Muslim minorities in the Balkans. In Western Thrace this role was assigned to the Turkish Consulate established in Komotini. Thus, the minority experienced modernity as an import. The rift between Kemalists (Young Turks) and traditionalists (Old Muslims) became more apparent with the arrival of a number of prominent Ottomans who fled Turkey as dissidents after the establishment of the new Republic. Among those who settled in Western Thrace was the last *Şeyhülislam* Mustafa Sabri, who became a vehement opponent of Kemalism in Western Thrace. Sabri's immediate family took control of key minority schools and published the influential Islamic newspaper *Yarin* (Tomorrow) and *Peyam-i Islam* (News of Islam). The Kemalist camp, supported by the Turkish Consulate, propagated its ideology through the creation of youth associations such as *Xanthi Youth Association* (1927)

²⁰ For the construction of Turkish identity in general see Soner Çagaptay, *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey. Who is a Turk?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

²¹ Article 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne provides: "The rights conferred by the provisions of the present Section on the non-Moslem minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Moslem Minority in her territory."

and *Turkish Youth Union* (1928). Thus, the minority split into two factions. It was the struggle between Islamists, who stressed the ecumenical quintessence of Islam, alien to nation, and the traditional Islamic way of life as well, and Turkish nationalists, who propagated the Turkish nation pattern after the Kemalist doctrine.²² Mustafa Sabri explained his opposition to nationalism through the three aspects of mentality, religion and international justice. In his poem “I am resigning”, published in *Yarin* (1927), he disavowed Turkishness.²³

In Istanbul the Greeks, like the Armenians, had a clear-cut national awareness. They were an urbanized community, engaged in business or trade or self-employed professionals such as lawyers, doctors, brokers, moneylenders etc. They could speak the official Turkish language. They were bearers of an ex-Ottoman cosmopolitan culture and more prone to integrate into their new host-state. The dichotomy between the Greek bourgeoisie in Istanbul and the rural Muslim minority in Western Thrace is important in understanding the different policy of the host-state towards minorities.²⁴ The Muslim minority in Western Thrace did not pose any threat to the Greek state. It was socially marginalized, but not subjected to religious oppression. The Greeks in Istanbul constituted a main hindrance to the creation of a Turkish bourgeoisie. One of the premises of Turkish nationalism was the creation of a Turkish economy as a backbone of the nation. Naci İsmail devoted a lengthy segment of his book to the dominant and undermining role of Greeks and Armenians in trade and business affairs, a common point of discussion in the press at the time. Greeks and Armenians controlled the economy with a devastating effect on the Turkish population: “Once the national movement has started, all patriots will patronize the shops of their fellow and this support will lead to the establishment of large companies. The Turk who is not a businessman today can be tomorrow.”²⁵ Etatism in the economy (state-run economy) was a main component of the Kemalist national doctrine. For that reason a clear anti-minority discriminatory policy was obvious in the economic realm in the 1920s. In the Treaty of Lausanne there was no

²² About this split see Aarbakke, “Muslim Minority of Greek Thrace”, 74–80.

²³ See Mehmed Nam, “Şeyhülislam Mustafa Sabri Efendi. Milliyetçilige İslamci Bir Bakış”, in *Bir Fikir Hareketinin Yüz Yılı: Türk Ocakları. Uluslararası Sempozyumu BILDİLER* 7–9 Mayıs 2012, İstanbul, ed. Mustafa Özkan et al. (İstanbul: Aralık, 2013), 384.

²⁴ For this dichotomy see Şulen Chousein, “Unwelcome Citizens: Muslim Turks of Greeks and Orthodox Greeks of Turkey”, *Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Arts & Sciences Journal of Social Sciences* 2. *Special Issue on Balkans* (2013), 72–77.

²⁵ As quoted by Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*, 26.

mention of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was stripped of any political function and confined itself only to religious and spiritual matters. Turkey, equating the Caliphate with the Patriarchate, exploited this omission in the Lausanne Treaty to downgrade the position of the Patriarchate as a “tool of Greek nationalism”. It denied its ecumenical character. Turkey’s efforts to establish a Turkish-Orthodox patriarchate (the case of Papa Eftim) failed. The spiritual life of the Greek community in Istanbul was closely linked with the Ecumenical Patriarchate.²⁶

In general, one could say that the application or revision of the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty and the treatment of minorities was contingent on Greek-Turkish relations. The stability that came to Western Thrace in the interwar period was due to the detente between Greece and Turkey. When Venizelos came to power in 1928, he applied a conciliatory policy towards Turkey. Greece needed time to absorb its refugees and to modernize its economy and infrastructure; in Ankara, Atatürk, having launched a massive domestic reform program, had similar preoccupations. Both countries saw Bulgaria as a revisionist power that questioned the territorial status quo established in Lausanne. Particularly a possible Bulgarian-Yugoslav rapprochement was Greece’s nightmare (Western Thrace-Salonica). The possible creation of an anti-Slav front resulted in a Greek-Turkish alliance. The Greek-Turkish rapprochement began with the Ankara Convention (June 1930) which sought to address some of the thorny issues inherited from the population exchange in favour of Turkey. As “established” were recognized all persons exempt from exchange who had left Constantinople furnished with passports issued by the Turkish Republic. This provision excluded all persons who had been established in Constantinople before 1918 but left prior to 1922. Greece had to pay indemnities to the Muslims in Western Thrace for their properties passing to the Greek government, and also to Greeks in Constantinople for their properties seized by Turkey. Even if the latter payment was unjust, Greece wished to clear up the atmosphere of unfriendliness and alleviate the tension which the economic consequences of the exchange of populations had created. Greece hoped that, by consenting to certain sacrifices and losses, it might receive compensation through the reestablishment of friendly political and economic relations with Turkey.²⁷

²⁶ For the marginalization of the Patriarchate after 1923 see Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918–1974* (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1982), 144–173, and Stavros H. Gioljoglu, *Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις (1922–1930). Από την αντιπαλότητα στην συνδιαλλαγή* [Greek-Turkish Relations (1922–1930). From Rivalry to Reconciliation] (Thessaloniki: Stamuli, 2011), 354–379.

²⁷ See Stephen P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities. Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1932), 575–583.

In October 1930, when Venizelos visited Ankara, a comprehensive friendship pact was signed which included a number of agreements ranging from naval armament to commercial cooperation (the Greek-Turkish Establishment, Commerce and Navigation Treaty).²⁸ In 1931 the Turkish prime minister, İsmet İnönü, visited Athens in an atmosphere of conciliation and friendship. The rapprochement was further developed by the Greco-Turkish Entente Cordial of 14 September 1933 for the inviolability of their common borders.²⁹ It referred only to the Greek-Bulgarian and Turkish-Bulgarian frontiers, not to the Aegean to avoid any challenge to Italy which controlled the Dodecanese Islands. Bilateral relations were strengthened as instability in Europe increased after Hitler's rise to power. The Balkan Pact was signed in Athens in 1934. It guaranteed the Balkan borders, an objective that was severely compromised by Bulgaria's refusal to join it. The secret protocol provided that if a non-Balkan power, assisted by a Balkan ally (Bulgaria or Albania), attacked one of the members of the Balkan Entente, all signatories would unite to fight against the aggressor Balkan state. Thus, they ventured to get embroiled in a war against a non-Balkan power. This clause met with reservation from Greece and Turkey, both of which wanted to avoid confrontation with Italy and the Soviet Union, and preferred to keep the mutual assistance clause within a purely Balkan framework.

The Ethiopian War in 1935/36 and the German reoccupation of the demilitarized Rhineland in March 1936 had important consequences for the Balkan Peninsula. Both cases demonstrated to the Balkan Entente members that they could not rely upon the League of Nations for security against aggression. Ioannis Metaxas, Greek prime minister, and Rüştü Aras, Turkish foreign minister, had agreed on a common policy before going to Belgrade to participate in the Balkan Entente Conference in May 1936. Turkey supported the Greek thesis that Greece's obligations towards the Balkan Entente would not involve it in a war with Italy.³⁰ Greece endorsed Turkey's demand to fortify the Straits. Despite strong opposition from Yugoslavia and Romania, the Greek-Turkish viewpoint prevailed in Belgrade. The sensitive issue of the status of the Straits was resolved with a *quid pro quo*: The Montreux Convention (1936) annulled the respective clauses of the Lausanne Treaty and ended the demilitarization of the Straits, handing over control to Turkey. Ankara, for its part, did not object to the *de facto*

²⁸ For the Greek-Turkish rapprochement in 1930, see Gioljölgu, *Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις*, 437–465.

²⁹ See Alexandros Papagos, *Ο Πόλεμος της Ελλάδος 1940–1941* [The War of Greece 1940–1941] (Athens: Goulandri-Horn Foundation, rpt. 1995), 53.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 43–46.

remilitarisation of the Greek islands Limnos and Samothrace,³¹ which were initially part of a demilitarised zone defined by the Treaty of Lausanne.

The results were the further weakening of the Balkan Entente as a Balkan collective security front, a Bulgarian-Yugoslav rapprochement and a Greek-Turkish rapprochement. On 24 January 1937, Milan Stojadinović, Yugoslavia's prime minister, and Georgi K'oseivanov, Bulgaria's prime minister, signed a friendship pact that alarmed Greece. The literal interpretation of the Pact was vague, but its spirit was perceived in Greece as directed against Greece's territorial integrity in the long run.³² Both Greece and Turkey feared that the South Slav front would dominate the Balkans. For Metaxas, cooperation with Ankara was of paramount importance in order to deter Bulgarian aggression. New Greek-Turkish negotiations led to an additional treaty signed in Athens on 27 April 1938. Despite its friendly undertones, however, the Additional Treaty was ridden with contradictions and open to interpretations and diplomatic manoeuvring.³³

In an attempt to win over Bulgaria, the Balkan Entente signatories, complying with the British appeasement policy towards Germany, Bulgaria and Hungary, signed the Salonica Agreement on 31 July 1938. The agreement recognized Bulgaria's right to rearm. Bulgaria's rearmament had been restricted under the Treaty of Neuilly (1919), but Bulgaria had been rearming secretly for some time. In exchange for this, the clause of the Treaty of Lausanne on the demilitarized zones in Western Thrace was annulled.³⁴ Greece and Turkey were free to redeploy troops in the area, thus making it easier for both to reinforce their mutual guarantee.

As Ankara and Athens became increasingly dependent on each other for their respective defence, issues of minority protection almost disappeared from their bilateral diplomatic agenda. At the diplomatic level the Venizelos government came under strong pressure from Ankara in 1931 to expel the nucleus of the anti-Kemalist opposition from Western Thrace. The expulsion of Mustafa Sabri and other conservative leaders gave rise to

³¹ See I. P. Pikros, *Τουρκικός Επεκτατισμός. Από το μύθο της ελληνοτουρκικής φιλίας στην πολιτική για την αστυνόμευση των Βαλκανίων 1930–1943* [Turkish expansionism. From the myth of Greek-Turkish friendship to the policy of policeman in the Balkans 1930–1943] (Athens: Estia-Kollaru, 1996), 58–59.

³² See Spyridon Sfetas, *Εισαγωγή στη Βαλκανική Ιστορία. Τόμος Β'. Από τον Μεσοπόλεμο στη λήξη του Ψυχρού Πολέμου (1919–1989)* [Introduction to Balkan History. Vol. II: From the Inter-War to the End of the Cold War (1919–1989)] (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 2011), 76–77.

³³ *Ibid.* 78–79.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 138.

Kemalism and Turkish nationalism in Western Thrace.³⁵ Turkish language was used in private minority schools. Under other circumstances Western Thrace would have been a bulwark against Kemalist Turkey. Metaxas's dictatorship remained conscious of the need to maintain good relations with Turkey. The Kemalist wing of the Muslim community became a preferential interlocutor with the Greek authorities. It is significant that both the "Association of Turkish Youth" in Komotini and the "Association of the Turkish Teachers of Western Thrace" were first recognized by Greece's Court of First Instance. Although the Turkish-speaking population in the lowlands was not seen as a reason for concern, in 1936 the Pomak villages of North Xanthi and Rhodope were explicitly included in the areas under surveillance to reinforce security and prevent espionage from Bulgaria. The basically Bulgarian dialect spoken by Pomaks in the Rhodope Mountains was regarded by Greek authorities as a sign of ambiguity over their "national loyalty". In Western Thrace the areas designated as "restricted" were almost exclusively inhabited by Pomaks. The designation of restricted zones had an impact on the minority as a whole. It resulted in the economic and social isolation of the Pomaks and put impediments to their communication with the city of Komotini or Xanthi and the Turkish communities in the lowlands. However, neither the Pomaks nor the Roma tended to self-identify as Turks.

From 1930 onwards the Turkish government allowed the Ecumenical Patriarchate to operate in a freer atmosphere in compliance with the spirit of Greek-Turkish friendship. On the other hand it tried to contain any growth of the Phanar's ecumenical character. On many occasions the Turkish government demonstrated its good will towards the Patriarchate and the Greek community. But at the same time, in pursuit of its secular policy, it took some measures to curtail the role of the Greek Orthodox community. In December 1934 the Turkish parliament banned the wearing of religious-ecclesiastical dress by the clergy except in church, reserving the right only for the heads of religious denominations. In 1935 all religious foundations became accountable to the Turkish government. The Department of Religious Foundations was instructed to supervise the property owned by religious, cultural and charitable institutions of all faiths. The self-administration of the Greek Orthodox community in Imbros and Tenedos never came into existence. In 1942 the wealth tax was imposed.³⁶

³⁵ See Lena Divani, *Ελλάδα και Μειονότητες. Το σύστημα της διεθνούς προστασίας της Κοινωνίας των Εθνών* [Greece and Minorities. The League of Nations's system of international support] (Athens: Kastanioti, 2002), 189–192.

³⁶ For the Greek minority in Istanbul during the Greek-Turkish rapprochement in 1930–1940 and the Varlik Tax see Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, 190–193 and 211–233.

Nevertheless, minority issues did not plague Greek-Turkish relations in the 1930s. A wartime British Foreign Office report noted that:

There is no evidence that under Greek rule they [the Muslims] were in any way a discontented minority, or that the Turkish government is dissatisfied at the way the Greek Government has treated them. In any case, Greece and Turkey have recognized the Treaty of Lausanne as final.³⁷

During the Bulgarian occupation of Western Thrace in 1941–44, Greeks, Turks and Pomaks faced similar plights. The Turkish Consulate in Komotini, capitalizing on the predicament of the Muslims in Western Thrace, tried to keep them loyal to Turkey by inculcating in them the basic principles of Kemalism and by building strong bonds with Turkey. The strategy was to use minority education as a vehicle for overriding conservative elements and promoting Kemalism. Teachers were often subsidized by the Turkish Consulate. The Turkish Consul, Tevfik Türker, wrote in his report to the Foreign Ministry on 16 December 1944:

I visited one of the newly opened Turkish minority schools. Despite three years of Bulgarian occupation, I witnessed with amazement the achievements of the little Turkish pupils in such a small period of time. I am touched by their expression of loyalty and respect towards our national leader İsmet İnönü, by their commemoration of Atatürk, by the flowers in red and white colours that were offered to us and by the sorrowful songs they sang for Rumelia, which were composed after the Balkan Wars. I knew that if these songs were heard by any of the Greek administration they would not be allowed and the teachers told me that such kinds of performance are hidden from foreign eyes and they are very careful to share sad memories only with friends.³⁸

Yet, Pomaks and Roma kept away from the Turkish Consulate.

After the Second World War Greece and Turkey, under American tutelage and according to Truman's doctrine, became again Allies in the common struggle against Communism and Slavism. Turkey reneged on the traditional policy of neutralism and joined NATO. The years 1946–1955 were the golden age for the minorities in Greece and Turkey. Turkey recognized the ecumenical character of the Patriarchate. Without being a Turkish citizen, Athenagoras became Ecumenical Patriarch.³⁹ For security reasons Greece reestablished the "restricted zone" on the Greek-Bulgarian

³⁷ FO/37/33211, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Foreign Research and Press Service to Howard, Southern Department, Foreign Office "Minorities in Greece", 28 August 1942, as quoted in Kevin Featherstone et al., *The Last Ottomans. The Muslim Minority of Greece, 1940–49* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 165.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 155.

³⁹ Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, 234–251.

border. The minority schools were officially called Turkish instead of Muslim for the first time in 1954.⁴⁰ In the early 1950s Greek began to be taught in Imbros and Tenedos. Turkish was the official language in all minority schools, attended by both Turkish-speaking and Pomak-speaking children.

But between 1955 and 1990 the Cyprus issue and the Aegean crisis (1973/4), which could be explained by the putative oilfields in the Aegean Sea, marred Greek-Turkish relations. This proved to be fatal for the minorities. The results are well-known: deconstruction of the Greek community in Istanbul, closure of the Theological Seminary-School in Chalki (1971), election of the Patriarch with direct Turkish government interference (1972), emigration of Muslims from Western Thrace to Turkey.⁴¹ In 1955 Greece introduced the deprivation of the Greek citizenship from the Muslims who migrated to Turkey, but it was restrained from stirring up a counter-riot similar to that of September 1955 in Istanbul⁴² due to the internationalization of the Cyprus issue. To gain international support for the case of Cyprus's self-determination, i.e. unification with Greece, Athens assured that the Turkish minority in Cyprus would enjoy the rights of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace. In official documents the term "Turkish minority" was mentioned. For example, in an aide-memoire of 21 August 1956 on the Balkan Pact and the Cyprus Issue, submitted to President Tito, the Greek government said:

Quant à la minorité on pourrait invoquer les excellentes conditions d'existence qui, même en temps critique, sont celles de la minorité turque en Thrace. Mais indépendamment de cela les garanties suivants seraient accordées à la minorité turque en Chypre.⁴³

⁴⁰ On Papagos's educational policy towards the Muslim minority in Western Thrace see Kostis Tsioumis, *Η μουσουλμανική μειονότητα της Θράκης (1950-1960). Πολιτικοδιπλωματικές διεργασίες και εκπαιδευτική πολιτική* [The Muslim minority in Thrace (1950-1960). Political-diplomatic ferment and educational policy] (Thessaloniki: Stamuli, 2006), 90-116.

⁴¹ See Konstantinos Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam in Greece. From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers* [Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2012], 101-102.

⁴² Turkish authors admit the victimization of the Greeks in Istanbul as a state policy. The Ecumenical Patriarchate was not involved in the Cyprus issue. See Dilek Güven, *Nationalismus und Minderheiten. Die Ausschreitungen gegen die Christen und Juden der Türkei vom September 1955* (Munich: Oldenburg, 2012).

⁴³ Spyridon Sfetas, *Στη σκιά του Μακεδονικού. Διεθνείς ανακατατάξεις και βαλκανικές αντανακλάσεις. Από τις ελληνογιουγκοσλαβικές συμφωνίες της 18^{ης} Ιουνίου 1959 στην κρίση των σχέσεων Αθήνας-Βελιγραδίου του 1960-1962* [In the Shadow of the Macedonian Issue. International Realignments and Balkan Repercussions. From the Greek-Yugoslav Agree-

It might have been Greece's diplomatic manoeuvre to appease Turkey, but in the 1930s Greece had opened the way to the spill-over of Turkish nationalism and secularism into Western Thrace. After 1964 Greece imposed some restrictive measures on the Muslims: expropriation of land, difficulties in real property transactions, in starting and running businesses, in licenses for home building, tractor driving, hunting rifles etc. In 1972 by decree the Turkish schools were called again Muslim schools.⁴⁴ As a repercussion of the Greek-Turkish crisis in the Aegean Sea in March 1987, in November 1987 the Xanthi Turkish Union (1927) and the Western Thrace Turkish Teachers Union (1936) were closed down on the grounds that the word "Turkish" should only refer to citizens of Turkey and that its use to describe Greek Muslims put public order at stake.⁴⁵ When in the 1980s minority activists, supported by Ankara, campaigned for the election of the muftis by popular vote, Greece, fearing the predominance of political Islam, interfered in the election. Since 1990 a committee of eleven Muslim clergymen and laymen proposes a list of qualified persons eligible for the post. After formal consultations with the religious leaders, the mufti is selected from the list by the Greek authorities on the basis of personal qualifications.⁴⁶ He is subsequently appointed by ministerial decision for a ten-year term. The mufti is a religious leader with judicial powers.

Election of muftis by popular vote would politicize Islam and could create clientelistic networks. There have been precedents. For instance, Reisu-l-Ulema Adem Ziklič in Belgrade and mufti Muamer Zukorlič in Novi Pazar are at loggerheads not for religious, but for political matters. Besides, the minority has deputies in Parliament.

It is evident that the minorities became victims of vicissitudes in Greek-Turkish relations, being affected by their adverse side effects.

But after 1990 some substantial changes occurred in the minority policy of both countries due to the developments in Europe in the wake of the downfall of communism and bipolarism. The divided Europe has been transformed into one world market, free trade and cross-border market economies. The European Union was established. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to Europe based on a common identity in which the ethnic and cultural diversity of eastern and western Europe was united under a single

ments of 18 June 1959 to the 1960 Crisis in Relations between Athens and Belgrade] (Thessaloniki: Epikedro, 2007), 150.

⁴⁴ See Baskin Oran, "The Story of Those who stayed. Lessons from Articles 1 and 2 of the 1923 Convention", in *Crossing the Aegean*, ed. Renée Hirshon, 104.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 105.

⁴⁶ See Alexis Alexandris, "Religion or Ethnicity. The Identity Issue of the Minorities in Greece and Turkey", in *Crossing the Aegean*, ed. Renée Hirshon, 123.

geopolitical umbrella. Protection of European minorities has improved. The rights of the minorities are seen as human rights with emphasis on the self-identification of the members of a given minority.

Francesco Capotorti's post-war definition of minority, a combination of objective and subjective criteria, is still valid: "a group numerically inferior in the rest of the population of a state, in a non-dominant position, whose members – being nationals of the state – possess ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the populations and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language."⁴⁷

It is not only the kin-state that stresses objective criteria for the minority (ethnicity, language), but also the subjective sense of solidarity of the members of the minority that should be taken into consideration. The minority must show a desire to preserve its unique cultural heritage fighting against possible assimilation.

Getting accustomed to the new situation, Greece suspended the restrictions regarding the purchase and sale of real estate and home building. In 1996 Greece abolished the "restricted zone" in Western Thrace, because there was no danger from Bulgaria any more.⁴⁸ Theoretically, it facilitated contacts between Pomaks and Turks. In 1999 the Greek government officially recognized that the minority in Western Thrace was in part constituted by Turks who were entitled to identify themselves as Turks at personal level. But Greece did not acknowledge the minority as being officially homogeneously Turkish as portrayed in the Turkish media. If one attaches importance to ethnicity and language, then the Pomaks are entitled to boost their culture as well, even if some Pomaks, having become Turkish speakers, feel an affinity towards Turkey. The Pomaks are a religious minority but, unlike the Turks, they are still an ethnic group, cramped by many impediments to develop a clear-cut identity. The main hindrance is the lack of a written language. A Pomak is a "torn personality". By origin he is neither a Turk nor a descendant of the ancient Thracians. He is of Slavic origin, stemming probably from the Bogomils, he speaks a Bulgarian dialect, but he is not affiliated with the Bulgarians, because of the bitter experience of the Pomaks by the Bulgarian rule in 1913–19 and 1941–44. He speaks a Bulgarian dialect in his inner family circle, he learns Turkish and Greek in school, but he does not master either Turkish or Greek. As the ethnographer Tatjana Seypell noted, some Pomaks claim to be Turkish, but in fact this means that they are Muslims, their relation to Turks may be generally described as "that of a client who seeks help and assistance from a stronger organization

⁴⁷ Jackson Preece, *National Minorities*, 19.

⁴⁸ Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam*, 136.

that is recognized by law".⁴⁹ Others prefer to utter the word "Pomak" only in a subdued way. Others, when asked about their identity, tend to hesitate. Today the Pomak youth is striving for the preservation of the Pomak ethnic and linguistic characteristics, but the creation of Pomak identity requires a scientific staff. Turkey sticks to the old obsolete Gökalpian concept that any Ottoman Muslim is a Turk. This concept failed even within Turkey itself. Gökalp's mental imbalance was triggered by his identity crisis of being stuck between his Kurdish past and his Turkish future. In 1894 he attempted suicide, but survived. By the time the Committee of Union and Progress had risen to power and his theories had gain a foothold, Gökalp had firmly established his identity as Turkish and Turkish only. Accusations by the opposition that he was really Kurdish he dismissed with nationalist poetry "Even if I was a Kurd, Arab, or Circassian / my first aim would be the Turkish nation". Later he repeated this assertion: "Even if I had found out that my grandfathers came from a Kurdish or Arab region, I would not have hesitated to conclude that I am a Turk."⁵⁰

Being aware of the fact that Turkey uses the term Turk and Turkish when describing the Muslim minority as a whole, Greece denies permission to any association bearing the collective title "Turkish", although Turkish identity within the framework of the Muslim minority is accepted. The basic principle underlying the Greek policy is the thesis that the self-identification of one group cannot infringe upon the self-identification of another group. Besides, Greece is still suspicious of Turkey's intentions to enforce the full Turkification of the Muslim minority and to use it as a diplomatic means of pressure on Greece to haggle with Athens over favorable solutions in the complex of the Greek-Turkish outstanding issues.

Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Code, which allowed the Greek government to revoke the citizenship of non-ethnic Greeks who left the country, was non-retroactively abolished in 1998.⁵¹ Since 1994 university diplomas obtained in Turkey have been recognized in Greece except in two fields: Turkish language and theology.⁵²

The grievances of the minority focused on the appointment (instead of election by popular vote) of the Muftis and of the members of the Commissions for the Management of the Muslim Properties (Διαχειριστικές Επιτροπές Μουσουλμανικών Περιουσιών-vakif).⁵³ Even if these injustices are

⁴⁹ Alexandris, "Religion or Ethnicity", 125.

⁵⁰ Üngör, *Making of Modern Turkey*, 36, n. 129.

⁵¹ Chousein, "Unwelcome Citizens", 83.

⁵² Oran, "Story of Those who stayed", 105.

⁵³ Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam*, p.98.

perceived by members of the minority as soft discrimination, in no way is the minority's existence endangered. But the tiny Greek minority in Istanbul is scrambling for survival. Even if the principle of reciprocity is not mentioned in the Treaty of Lausanne, even if one speaks of parallel obligations, the numerical imbalance between Christians in Istanbul and Muslims in Western Thrace is irreversible. Some positive steps undertaken by the Turkish governments in recent years (cultural activities, restoration of old schools and churches) have given the Greeks some breathing space and enabled Turkey to develop a flourishing religious tourism. The opening of the Theological School of Halki has in fact emotional-symbolic connotations for the Greeks and should not be bargained with the election of the Muftis by popular vote.

After a centenary the Lausanne arrangements are still in force and constitute the legal framework in Greek-Turkish minority issues, even if both countries violated the Treaty of Lausanne when bilateral relations deteriorated. Disagreements regarding the literal interpretation of some minority terms and their readjustment to changing conditions should be referred to the European Court for Human Rights by individuals. The Court's verdict may not be binding for the host-state, but at any rate it is conducive to the clarification of the problem. The territorial borders and the Aegean Sea boundary between Greece and Turkey have been mainly established by the Treaty of Lausanne. This is the spirit of the Treaty of Lausanne. There was no Aegean conflict until 1973–1974. It came up in the wake of the Cyprus crisis in 1972, when the Greek junta, in compliance with the Turkish government of Nihat Erim set up after the military coup d'état in March 1971, tried to topple Makarios and find a NATO solution of the Cyprus issue. But this plan was thwarted by America's strong objections. The failure of this plan, coupled with the Greek-Turkish dispute over Aegean oil rights, gave rise to a new situation, alien to the spirit of the Treaty of Lausanne. The Aegean issue involves delicate national issues, as sovereignty, continental shelf, airspace, territorial waters, oil reserves and now the so-called "Exclusive Economic Zone". Keeping the spirit of the Treaty of Lausanne alive, both countries should officially claim that they harbour no territorial ambitions vis-à-vis the other side. It needs to be made clear that Greece does not want to strangle Turkey in the Aegean Sea and that Turkey for its part does not intend to grab any Greek islands.⁵⁴ At any rate the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, is competent to clinch the matter, according to the principles of

⁵⁴ For a new approach to the subject in a conciliatory spirit see Alexis Heraclidis, *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the Aegean. Imagined Enemies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

International Law which Greece is sticking to. For instance, Greece invokes *Article 62 (Fundamental changes of circumstances) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969)* to justify the militarization of Lesbos, Chios, Samos and Ikaria.⁵⁵ But the most crucial issue is the re-instatement of good neighbourly relations. Greece still feels that it is militarily threatened by Turkey which, according to the new Turkish national doctrine, aspires to become a nuclear super power in 2023. On the contrary, for Turkey Greece is rather a nuisance than a real threat. No matter what their governments are doing, the intellectuals of both countries should sweep away embedded in the collective memories prejudices and biases that poison the citizens of both countries. Balkan peoples do not know and do not understand each other. The ignorance of the Other and its demonization has proved to be a cause for conflicts in the Balkans. A reappraisal of history does not aim at moulding the past to fit in with the political requirements of the present, but at explaining the facts in their historical context with new evidence and a new approach, starting with the challenges of the present. This is the sense of Karl Popper's thesis that every generation has the duty to re-write its history. In the Balkans we have prejudices towards others. Following Hans-Georg Gadamer's *philosophical hermeneutic of the prejudices*, at first a prejudice is a pre-judgment that probably distorts understanding. But the temporal distance can play a useful role in enabling us better to single out those prejudices that exercise a problematic influence on understanding. We are involved in a dialogue that encompasses both our own self-understanding and our understanding of others. Our prejudices are being questioned in the process of understanding. Gadamer sees understanding as a matter of negotiation between oneself and one's partner in the hermeneutical dialogue in such a way that the process of understanding can be perceived as agreement about the matter at issue.⁵⁶

Greece and Turkey must revitalize the spirit of the Treaty of Lausanne, even if times moved on and readjustments to changing circumstances are necessary.

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⁵⁵ See Konstantinou P. Oikonomidou, *Θέματα Διεθνούς Δικαίου και Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής* [Questions of International Law and Greek Foreign Policy], 2nd ed. (Athens and Komotini: Sakkula, 1998), 109–110.

⁵⁶ See Jörg Baberowski, *Der Sinn der Geschichte. Geschichtstheorien von Hegel bis Foucault* (Berlin: C. H. Beck, 2004), 110–125.

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