

AGREEMENTS AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY IN
1930: CONTESTING NATIONALIST DISCOURSES AND PRESS REACTIONS

by

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Submitted to
the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

Boğaziçi University

2007

“Agreements and Friendship between Greece and Turkey in 1930: Contesting Nationalist Discourses and Press Reactions,” a thesis prepared by Anna Vakali in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History.

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PREFACE

How fluid is the content attributed to the “nation”? In what ways does it change when international constraints are involved or domestic necessities imposed? Furthermore, which different social classes invest the “nation” with what different nationalist imaginaries within the same society at a specific point in time? This thesis reflects these questions on the Greek-Turkish rapprochement of 1930, and states that beyond its official interpretation as the “friendship-era,” its full picture contains all the opposing and silenced nationalist discourses that were being voiced around it, as well as the unravelling of the strategies employed by the official discourse in order to render the other party as a “friend” at all.

Contrary to this statement, the “friendship” established between the prime ministers Eleftherios Venizelos and İsmet Paşa (İnonü), with agreements signed in June and October 1930 on behalf of Greece and Turkey, respectively, has been interpreted by the historiography of both countries¹ more or less as the “work of art of two able politicians,” who, empowered with great diplomatic skills and helped by the existence of the two nation-states, were able to transcend the inimical past and unwrap a “brand new era” in the bilateral relations. By acting so they were presented as simultaneously adhering to the international matrix following the First World War, which called for peaceful conduct and the political resolution of bilateral problems, *and* giving priority to

¹ Harry John Psomiades, *Greek-Turkish Relations 1923-1930-A Study in the Politics of Rapprochement* (Michigan: University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, 1967); Iphigeneia Anastasiadou, *Ο Βενιζέλος και το Ελληνοτουρκικό Σύμφωνο Φιλίας του 1930* (Venizelos and the Greek-Turkish agreement of friendship of 1930) (Αθήνα: n.p., 1982); Bilgiç Bestami Sadi, “Turkish-Greek Relations in the Interwar Era: From War to Détente, c. 1923-1940” (Ph.D. diss., Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, 2004); Damla Demiröz, *Savaştan Barışa Giden Yol-Atatürk-Venizelos Dönemi Türkiye-Yunanistan İlişkileri* (The way from war to peace-Turkish-Greek relations in the era of Atatürk and Venizelos) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2007).

the domestic reconstruction of the countries they were leading, after a decade of almost continuous fighting.

Another part of the literature has aimed at analyzing the rapprochement from the perspective of international relations,² sometimes even under the light of disillusioning the followed policy by underlining the innate expansive character of the opponent.³ In any case, the scanning of the existing bibliography reveals the extent to which the interwar period has been a neglected phase by historians dealing with Greek-Turkish or Greek-Ottoman history. They mostly focused either on the Ottoman era or on the course of the bilateral relations after the rise of the Cyprus issue in the 1950s.

Opposite to that tendency, this study draws attention to the forms in which the official nationalist discourse was dressed in order to justify the agreement itself and mostly its repercussions for the two nations, as well as to the accompanying reactions mirrored in the press of both countries. Particularly, attention will be given to the language employed by political speech with the intention of eradicating prevailing inimical perceptions of the common past and thereby rendering the neighbouring country eligible for friendship, in short, justifying the change of official policy introduced with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, and empowered with the agreements of 1930.

Next to the fluidity of official nationalist discourses, the research deals with press reactions, taking into account that mass media were among the novel means employed in the interwar period for the standardization, homogenization and

² Konstantinos Svolopoulos. *Το Βαλκανικόν Σύμφωνον και η Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1928-1934* (The Balkan Pact and Greek foreign policy, 1928-1934), (Αθήνα: Βιβλιοπωλείο της Εστίας, 1974); Konstantinos Sotirelis, *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Προσέγγιση του 1930 (Το Σύμφωνο Φιλίας και το Πρωτόκολλο των Ναυτικών Εξοπλισμών)* (The Greek-Turkish rapprochement of 1930 (The friendship agreement and the protocol of naval armament)) (Αθήνα: n.p., 1990).

³ I.P. Píkos, *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 for the policing of the Balkans, 1930-1943) (Αθήνα: Βιβλιοπωλείο της Εστίας, 1996).

transformation of popular ideologies, breaking down the divisions between the private and the local sphere, the national and the public one. Not representative and indicative of the “public opinion”, it regards though the press as a form of (limited) social response, and traces the extent to which it reproduced the official language, revealed less visible of its facets, or provided an outlet to voices of opposition and hostility that had been silenced by the official discourse.

The sources for doing so used were on the one hand the discussions made in both the Greek and Turkish parliament following the economic agreement signed in June and the “friendship agreements” of October 1930, the latter including an agreement of “friendship, neutrality, conciliation and arbitration”, a naval protocol, and a commercial agreement combined with a settlement convention.

On the other hand, a variety of newspapers was scanned in both countries. In the library of the Greek parliament in Athens newspapers were chosen with the criterion to provide as many facets as possible of the political matrix existing in interwar Greece: The main political division of the period between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists is represented by their main publishing organs, *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (Free Tribune) and *Η Καθημερινή* (The Daily), while further voices were found in one of the newspapers representing refugees, called *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος* (Refugees’ World), and in the official newspaper of the Greek Communist Party, *Ριζοσπάστης* (Radical).

Unfortunately, as far as we were informed from the *Mübadilleri Vakfı* (Institution of the Exchangees) situated in Istanbul, Beyoğlu, no publishing organ analogous to the Greek *Refugees’ World* exists for the part of the Muslim exchangees for that period. Taking into account that the press dating from the single-party era in Turkey overwhelmingly reflects the official policy and oppositional voices are almost non-existent, the two newspapers found in the Beyazit Library in Istanbul and included in the research, *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) and *Vakit* (Time), were chosen for their production

of an official and a more popular nationalist, albeit situated still in the realms of the official, discourse, respectively.

In the course of this study, I first briefly describe the agreements signed between the two countries in 1930, while further placing their diplomatic conduct within the context of the worldwide international matrix of the interwar period. Furthermore, I pinpoint the main issues concerning the two governments after Lausanne, and the problems burdening their bilateral relations until the signing of the agreements in the 1930s. This more or less technical background will facilitate a better understanding of the issues raised by the following discourses.

In the following chapter, while briefly touching upon the nature and the importance of nationalist discourses, I draw the picture of the main elements in modern Greek and Turkish nationalism and the political forces contesting their content in the interwar period. Having these in mind, one will be able to grasp more completely the importance of the changes that followed in the discourses' content and the re-arranging of their various components by different social groups.

The third and the fourth chapter reconstructs the sum of Greek and Turkish discourses, respectively, by firstly shedding light on the content of the different newspapers throughout 1930, followed by the political discourses evident in the respective parliament discourses. In the fifth and final chapter I discuss the totality of the findings, comprising on the one hand the similar justification used by both official discourses for the agreement, as well as the elements underlined by each of these official discourses separately in order to show the other partner as “new,” “changed,” and, most importantly as we will see, “modern.” Furthermore, I unravel the contesting nationalist discourses, which in Turkey take the form of more popular variants than the official one, due to carrying the memory of past ethnic tension, evident in an inimical attitude to the

Rum minority in Istanbul and the Rum refugees in Greece -combined nevertheless with a friendship discourse towards Greece and the followed rapprochement.

In Greece on the other hand, the main oppositional front, the anti-Venizelists, show a longing for the abandoned expansionist policy of the country, coined *Μεγάλη Ιδέα* (“Great Idea”) in 1844 and seen its demise with the failure of the Greek army in 1922, and a fear of abandoning the “national ideals” due to the conclusion of friendship with Greek nationalism’s “main other.” The Greek-Orthodox refugees, constructing their identity around their Asia Minor origins, were stuck between voicing their opposition especially to the economic agreement signed with Turkey -concerning their left-behind properties- and proving their loyalty to their new home country, avoiding thereby being labeled “troublemakers.” Lastly, the main challenge to bourgeois nationalist concepts, the communists, rejected the ideal of “national cohesion” by proclaiming a common front between “workers, farmers and *refugees*,” and saw the Greek-Turkish rapprochement as another front against the Soviet Union.

Indeed, what becomes more than clear is the refutation of the self-depiction of the official nationalist discourse as the dominant one, presented with a historical dimension and representative of the public opinion, as there existed in society a variety of different and opposing nationalist discourses, all investing the nation with a particular content and meaning.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

GREECE AND TURKEY IN THE INTERNATIONAL “PEACE ATMOSPHERE” OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Greece and Turkey Heading to the Ankara Agreement

The Agreements Signed in 1930 and Their Aftermath

In June and October 1930 the political representatives of the two countries, Greece and Turkey, gathered in Ankara to sign agreements encompassing all their two-pronged issues. Thus, following the model of the Lausanne Agreement of July 1923, which had ended the war conducted among the Greek army and the Turkish nationalist forces between 1919 and 1922, the two countries, transformed from inimical parties conducting warfare to cooperating ones, presented themselves as “democratic, modern” states, and moreover, having carried through the exchange of populations after 1923, “homogenous” ones, solving their problems in a “diplomatic and civilized way.” In the course of the year, the contemporary prime ministers, İsmet Paşa (İnonü) and Eleftherios Venizelos, solved all of the problems pending from the agreement of the exchange of populations (signed in the framework of the peace negotiations in Lausanne in January 1923), which had been burdening bilateral relations, to the extent of relapsing into war, between 1923 and 1930.

Particularly, during these years the two governments had attempted fruitlessly to arrive at an *accurate* estimate of *all* the properties left behind by the people exchanged, as stipulated by the respective agreement (see below), in order to carry through the liquidation of the properties and compensate the people involved.⁴ After his return to power in July 1928 with a strong parliamentary majority, after eight years of abstention, Venizelos put forward that the continuation of the negotiations on the basis of the existing conventions and the presentation of conflicting claims served no useful purpose. According to similar positions, the difficulty in estimating such a vast quantity of properties, as well as the differences appearing between the declaration of the refugees and the actual value of the properties, rendered the liquidation of the latter in the way the treaty stipulated impossible.

Accordingly, in August 1928 Venizelos sent letters to both İsmet Paşa (İnonü) and Rüştü (Aras), the Turkish foreign minister, expressing the intention of Greece to establish “more than friendly relations with *democratic* Turkey (my emphasis)” and assured that “we have no claim on [Turkish territory].”⁵ The ensuing positive response on the part of the Turkish officials was followed by negotiations, resulting in the signing of the above-mentioned agreements.

The first one, signed on 10 June, had mainly an economic character. By its means, the Turkish foreign minister Rüştü (Aras) and the Greek ambassador in Ankara, Spiridon Polichroniades, settled the transferring of the immovable and movable property left behind by the Muslim and Greek-Orthodox exchangees in Greece and

⁴ According to Articles 8 and 14 of the “Convention concerning the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations”, signed at Lausanne on 30 January 1923, people subject to exchange were being allowed to take with them their movable property, receiving a document containing an evaluation of the part of their movable property they were not able to carry with them upon their departure. For the immovable property left behind by these people, the owners concerned would receive “in the country to which [they] emigrated... property of a *value equal* to and of the same nature as that which they [have left] behind them (my emphasis).” In Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact on Greece* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002), pp. 257-263.

⁵ Anastasiadou, p. 14.

Turkey respectively in complete ownership to the Greek and Turkish government, annulling in that way the premise of *full* compensation of the exchangees stipulated in the exchange protocol of 1923. Thus, every state became not simple administrator but owner of these properties, and the right for compensation of the exchangees was limited to the value of the property left behind in every state subsequent to the exchange.⁶

Etablis (established) on the other hand, that is, people excluded from the agreement,⁷ acquired full ownership of their property, as long as it was within the non-exchangeable area. Lastly, properties in Greece owned by Muslim citizens who had departed from Greek territory before October 1912, that is, at the beginning of the Balkan Wars (in Turkish terminology, the so-called *gayri-mübadiller*, non-exchangees), would be transferred to the Greek government, while the ones found in Turkey and belonging to Greek citizens would be administrated according to following provisions: The immovable properties outside the area of Istanbul would be transferred to the Turkish government, while the ones within would be restored to their Greek owners.⁸

In addition, the Greek government contracted in making a payment of 425,000 pounds, covering the indemnification of *etablis* in Istanbul for property outside the city and thereby falling into the hands of the Turkish government (150,000 pounds) and the compensation of *etablis* in western Thrace (150,000 pounds) for property they owned

⁶ Anastasiadou, p. 48.

⁷ Those were the Muslims inhabiting western Thrace and the Greek-Orthodox people residing in the prefecture of Istanbul, albeit before October 1918. Parts of their properties had been expropriated by the respective governments in the years after 1923 (see below).

⁸ Melek Fırat, “Yunanistan’la İlişkiler” (Relations with Greece), in *Türk Dış Politikası-Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* (Turkish foreign policy-Incidents, documents, comments from the independence war to today), ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), pp. 346-347.

and had been given to the Greek government. The rest of the money (125,000 pounds) was given to the Turkish government.⁹

Erstwhile pending issues were solved by means of Article 10 and 14 of the agreement. The status of *etablis*, so disputed between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s, was granted to *all* the Muslims and Greek-Orthodox people who were residing in western Thrace and Istanbul respectively *on the day* the agreement was signed. The 30,000 to 40,000 Greek-Orthodox residents of Istanbul, who would have been entitled to non-exchangeability but had left the city in the course of the Greek-Turkish war (1919-1922), were not allowed to return.¹⁰

Having settled the main thorn perplexing the bilateral relations, the governments of the two countries moved to the signing of the actual friendship agreement(s). During their official visit in Ankara between 27 October and 1 November 1930, Venizelos together with the Greek minister of foreign affairs, Andreas Michalakopoulos, signed with İsmet Paşa (İnonü) and Rüştü (Aras) a treaty of friendship, neutrality, conciliation, and arbitration, valid for five years, a protocol for the limitation of naval armaments, and a commercial combined with a settlement convention.

In brief, the first one prohibited the two countries to enter any political or economic agreement aimed against the other, compelled them to remain neutral in case the other part suffered an invasion by a third state, as well as to enter a legal procedure in case bilateral issues failed to be settled through the diplomatic channels; issues

⁹ Firat, pp. 346-347.

¹⁰ *Loc. Cit.*

though pertaining to “rights of sovereignty” or to incidents that had taken place before the conclusion of the agreement were excluded from the latter, diplomatic, provision.¹¹

The naval protocol required from the two states to inform each other six months before the commission of any new naval armament, so that “opinions on the matter could be exchanged in a friendly way.” The commercial agreement, on the other hand, signed in a period during which trade relations between Greece and Turkey were roughly 394 to 10 million drachmas in favour of Turkey, provided for the reciprocal diminishing of certain tariffs.¹²

The settlement agreement, according to a leaflet issued by the political bureau of Venizelos, opened “for the first time the door for the future...massive settlement of Greeks in Turkey.”¹³ It provided the citizens of the two countries with the right to freely enter, travel and settle in the territory of the other state, being subject to the provisions valid for the indigenous, or, in case special requirements for the foreigners existed, for the citizens for which the legal status of the “most favoured country” was recognized.¹⁴

¹¹ One has to be reminded here that Turkey was still not a member of the League of Nations, which it would enter in 1932, and was therefore not bound by the provisions of this organization. Anastasiadou, p. 50.

¹² Greece received the right to export to Turkey forty percent of its yearly alcohol production, and a diminishing of the tariff for soap of 22.5 percent. Also diminishing of tariffs concerning other products was agreed upon. Turkey on the other hand was favorably treated in the issue of importing big animals to Greece, and Turkish products were excluded from paying the municipality tariff practiced in Greece when domestic products were transported from one city to another. According to the expectations both countries would be profiting from the economic agreement, as according to Ahmet Hilal Bey, journalist of the Turkish newspaper *Akşam* (Evening), “Turkey being from its nature an agricultural country, is not opposing the naval and industrial Greece.” Expressing this mentality, a contemporary Greek drawing depicted Venizelos making the Greek and the Turkish farmers give the hands to each other. In reality though, the economies of the two countries were very similar: sixty-one percent of the population in Greece and eighty-two percent of the one in Turkey were preoccupied with agriculture. Anastasiadou, pp. 60-66.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁴ The right of the two countries though to restrict per law the emigration to it was not lifted, nor the right to restrict the above-mentioned provisions on account of “domestic or external security of the state”, or forbid the practicing of specific jobs to the settled people. Also it was stipulated that this protocol was not opposing the population exchange agreement, meaning that it was not valid in the case

Following the signed agreements and the general rapprochement thus created, the two countries refined their attitudes towards their respective minorities (see footnote four). Turkey fully stopped its backing of the leader of the Turkish-Orthodox Church, papa-Efthim, who was undermining the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate (see below), as well as intermingling in the patriarchal elections of the latter, and lifted its pressure on the Rum schools and institutions mainly pertaining to school books and teachers. Greece equally expelled from its territory the sub-group of its Muslim minority which was opposed to the Ankara nationalist government (see below), halted the minority's education in Arab letters and introduced instead, similar to Turkey, one following the Latin alphabet, and facilitated the transfer of books and teachers from Turkey.¹⁵

The diplomatic aftermath¹⁶ of the rapprochement initiated in 1930 was a visit of the Turkish prime minister and foreign minister to Athens in October 1931, of the latter again to Athens in March 1933, and the signing of an agreement of cordial understanding guaranteeing the inviolability of the two countries' borders, carried through during a visit of the Greek foreign minister Dimitris Maximos and prime minister Panagiotis Tsaldaris in Ankara in September 1933. The culmination of this diplomatic exchange was the Balkan Pact in 1934, another bilateral agreement followed in 1938, guaranteeing neutrality between the two countries.

Comprising Greece, Turkey, Rumania and Yugoslavia, the Balkan Pact aimed at both the preservation of the existing borders and the protection of each other in case

of the exchanged people. Anastasiadou, pp. 56-60. For a discussion of these agreements in the respective parliaments see below.

¹⁵ Firat, pp. 355-356.

¹⁶ The cooperation assumed also cultural facets, whereas in 1937 the Greek sculptor Athineos made a sculpture of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), and the municipality of Thessaloniki gave as a gift to Turkey the house of the latter. Exchange took place in the field of education as well.

of an external aggressive act. While the Balkan conferences,¹⁷ taking place yearly from 1930¹⁸ to 1934, aimed at projects dealing with a multiparty Balkan pact of non-aggression, a bolstering of inter-Balkan trade through the establishment of a customs union (by simultaneously preserving trade with some, often money-lending, countries, like the USA and Britain), and an agreement recognizing the rights of free movement, work and establishment among the citizens of the Balkan countries,¹⁹ Hitler's seizure of power rendered the preservation of the existing territorial status-quo a priority.

The limits of the Balkan Pact became soon visible, not only due to special clauses added by the contracting countries for its implementation,²⁰ but also by German economic penetration into the Balkans. The appeasement policy led by Great Britain, corresponding to the view of the Foreign Office, that "the fear of a 'complete [German] economic stranglehold' over the economy of the Balkan countries appeared not justified,"²¹ was within the context of the policy that would gradually lead to the Munich agreement a few months later, and, finally, to the next world war. The latter promptly also ended the period of Greek-Turkish rapprochement: In the time when

¹⁷ Different projects of a Balkan federation had occurred since the 18th century and the awakening of modern nationalisms. A concrete relevant idea, incorporating also Turkey, came from Alexandros Papanastasiou, former prime minister of Greece, during the 27th Universal Congress of Peace held at Athens in October 1929. Robert Joseph Kerner and Harry Nicholas Howard, *The Balkan Conferences and the Balkan Entente, 1930-1935* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936), pp. 15-27.

¹⁸ The first such conference took place in Athens, in October 1930, few days before the arrival in Ankara of the Greek politicians for the signing of the bilateral friendship agreement. It was warmly welcomed by the Turkish press (see below).

¹⁹ Procopis Papastratis, "Εξωτερική Πολιτική" (Foreign policy), in *Ιστορία της Ελλάδος του 20^{ου} αιώνα-Ο Μεσοπόλεμος 1922-1940* (History of Greece in the 20th century-The interwar period 1922-1940), ed. Christos Chatziiosif (Αθήνα: Βιβλιόραμα, 2003), p. 277.

²⁰ Greece wanted its provisions to be valid only in the case of an invasion of a *Balkan* country to one of the countries which had signed the agreement (avoiding that way a clash with Italy); Turkey didn't want to adhere to its provisions in case the Soviet Union would be involved, due to its close diplomatic relations with the latter. Firat, pp. 350-352.

²¹ Procopis Papastratis, "German penetration and Appeasement," *Thetis* 2 (1995), p. 178.

Greece was under Italian and later German occupation, Turkey, focused on its own national interests and, insisting on neutrality, was able to help only very indirectly.²²

In the next unit I will further elaborate on the international matrix and its constraints, which led both Greece and Turkey to follow anti-revisionist policies and sign the above-mentioned agreements.

Introducing Greece and Turkey to the International Matrix of the Interwar World

Both faced with the repercussions of ten-year long fighting, and simultaneously contracting parties of the Lausanne Treaty, Greece and Turkey based their foreign policies and the accompanying discourses on the preservation of their existing, final borders, as well as their being part of the “Western, civilized, peaceful” state-system. With the memories of the First World War and the subsequent Greco-Turkish war being unmarked, they equally avoided getting entangled in alliances, preferring instead the conclusion of bilateral agreements. Such was moreover the general contemporary practice followed by smaller states, owing to the inability of the League of Nations to deal effectively with international aggression, in correlation with the appeasement policies pursued by Britain and France.

Indeed, the Western powers, among which the USA had dynamically penetrated owing to loans to its allies, still shaken by the human and economic losses of the war and unable to engage in new confrontations, favoured a policy of appeasement towards the defeated and revisionist ones. Britain had withdrawn from the Mediterranean area, while France’s preoccupation was with keeping its older rival, Germany, in check, either

²² Firat, p. 355.

through building alliances -putting for that end under its tutelage the “Little Entente,” the countries uniting against a potential revisionist policy of Hungary, that is, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and signing a treaty of alliance and secret military convention with Poland-, or through enforcement,²³ like in the case of the 1923 occupation of the Ruhr area in Germany by French and Belgian troops in order to take by force reparations from the products of the local industry.²⁴

On top of that, the League of the Nations had from the beginning shown its limits, predominantly in the case of the Corfu incident,²⁵ during which the decision of the Great Powers to support Italy by by-passing the League led many of the smaller states to believe that they could expect no more than moral support from the international organization in the event of aggression.²⁶ While after 1924 the period of the enforcement of peace and of German humiliation ended, and a more positive era was ushered in with the Dawes Plan of 1924, aiming at settling the reparation problem with Germany, and the Locarno Treaty of 1925,²⁷ guaranteeing the Franco-German and Belgian-German frontiers, in 1930 the League of Nations saw its last enthusiastic

²³ Germany had been charged, mainly for the satisfaction of the public opinions in Great Britain and France, with the “war guilt clause”, that is, with being the only one to blame for the First World War, and was therefore faced with a series of harsh measures, aiming to keep its future aspirations in check. Instead of doing everything in their power to enhance its prestige, the western powers exposed the Weimar democracy to such constant humiliations that it could never hope to win the loyalty and affection of the German people. Edward H. Carr, *International Relations in the Interwar Period*, (London: Macmillan, 1947), p. 45.

²⁴ Carr, pp. 56-60.

²⁵ In August 1923, following a diplomatic episode between Greece and Italy, the Italian fleet bombarded the Corfu island, causing the death of fifteen people and the injury of thirty five. Despite the Italian aggressive behaviour, Greece was obliged to pay an indemnity to Italy by the Conference of Ambassadors, as Italy (with the support of the Great Powers) didn't recognize the jurisdiction of the League of Nations in the matter. Papastratis, “Εξωτερική Πολιτική” (Foreign policy), pp. 262-264.

²⁶ Psomiades, p. 114.

²⁷ Carr, pp. 81-85, 93-97.

sessions.²⁸ It afterwards failed to intervene in a series of important violations, including the invasion of Italy into Ethiopia in 1935, the Manchurian invasion of Japan in 1931, the German and Italian support in the Spanish civil war, and, finally, Germany's partition of Czechoslovakia and Poland.

This shortcoming of the League of Nations was largely due to failure of the peace treaties signed after the First World War to create a stable and liberal Europe. Following the Russian revolution and the restoration of the pre-war world order in 1920 and 1921, whereby bourgeois "forces of order" had pushed "forces of movement" onto the defensive,²⁹ the social upheaval nonetheless had led the western countries to attempt to play the card of nationalism against the concept of the internationalism of the working class.³⁰

New actors hence evolved in the international arena following the collapse of four empires, whereby the world was divided among pro- and anti-revisionist countries, the former having felt mistreated by the peace dictated and the treaties signed in 1919 and 1920.³¹ These were mainly Bulgaria and Italy, embodying therefore the main menace for and guiding the interwar-policies of Greece and Turkey. They were joined

²⁸ In the preceding years the League of Nations had managed to deal effectively with some cases (such as the Mosul issue, a border dispute between Greece and Bulgaria in 1926 during the Pangalos dictatorship and a dispute over Vilna between Poland and Lithuania), none of them though at the expense of a Great Power. Carr, pp. 104-108

²⁹ Charles S. Maier, *Recasting bourgeois Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 3-15.

³⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes* (London: Abacus, 1995), p. 54-84

³¹ These were signed between the winning powers, France, Britain, Italy and the defeated ones, Germany (Versailles), Austria (St. Germain), Bulgaria (Neuilly) and Hungary (Trianon). The prime minister of the latter, Cont Bethlen, was actively for a revision of the Trianon treaty. The coincidence of his visit in Ankara on the same days as Venizelos aroused a lot of political gossip in the foreign press, which both Greece and Turkey denied (see below).

by Germany, after Hitler openly withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933 and repudiated the Versailles Treaty in 1935.³²

Whilst Bulgaria's expansionist tendencies erupted simultaneously with its foundation and remained thereafter an important factor in the Balkans through the Macedonian issue, the stipulations put upon it with the Neuilly treaty rekindled its demanding policy, leading to claims upon Romanian, Yugoslavian, Greek, and even Turkish territory, and intensifying its controversy with Yugoslavia over so-called northern Serbia, corresponding to today's Macedonian Republic.³³ Despite the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) and Comintern, which called for a united and independent Macedonia and Thrace, not being under the control of the Bulgarian government, the Sophia authorities, at times, could not or did not want to prevent their activities.³⁴

In keeping with its own policy, Italy boosted Bulgarian revisionism, both in the framework of its own expansionism and as a balancing to Yugoslavia, which, with the support of France, sought domination in the Balkans.³⁵ Despite having been on the winning side of the First World War, Italy turned out to be the main advocate of a revisionist foreign policy, especially after the seizure of power in 1922 by Benito Mussolini, who managed to exploit the feeling of injustice cultivated in the Italian public opinion over the *victoria mutilata* ("truncated peace") signed by the country in 1919. Whereas the secret treaties attributed to Italy large parts of the parcelled Ottoman

³² Hobsbawm, p. 116

³³ Papastratis, "Εξωτερική Πολιτική" (Foreign policy), p. 262.

³⁴ Psomiades, p. 140.

³⁵ Procopis Papastratis, "Balkans revisited: Great Powers Penetration and Conflict in the Inter-War Period and the Mediterranean Connection," in *The Seas as Europe's External Borders and their Role in Shaping European Identity*, ed. Marta Petricoli and Antonio Varsori (n.p.: Lothian Foundation Press, n.d.), p. 106.

Empire, France and England not only reneged on the issue, but even assigned, through the Sevres Treaty (July 1920), Smyrna to Greece. Consequently, the Italian government unilaterally denounced the Venizelos-Tittoni agreement of 1919,³⁶ signed at a time of nominal cooperation between the two countries in the framework of the First World War.³⁷

Dissatisfied with their treatment at the Peace Conference and solicitous for the protection of routes bringing food and natural resources from the Soviet Union and the Black Sea, the Italians, in the face of French predominance in the western Mediterranean, were determined to play a decisive role in the destinies of the entire Near East and beyond.³⁸ The bombardment of Corfu in 1923 being the testing ground, Mussolini's government introduced henceforth a pattern of unilateral action and of weak reaction of international organizations and the western powers.³⁹

The aggressive foreign policy Italy followed until 1926 was transformed, from 1927-1930, into one aiming at an Italian organization of southeast Europe, as after the final solution of the Mosul issue in June 1926 Italy could no longer count on British help against Turkey.⁴⁰ The Greek-Turkish rapprochement of 1930 itself developed as a

³⁶ With this agreement Italy and Greece agreed to support each other's claims at the Peace Conference. Italy promised to support Greek claims in Thrace and northern Epirus and to give Dodecanese islands to Greece except Rhodes. Greece promised to support Italian demands for a mandate over Albania, and a zone of interest in southwestern Anatolia.

³⁷ Papastratis, *art. cit.*, p. 107.

³⁸ Kerner and Howard, p. 18.

³⁹ Papastratis, "Balkans revisited: Great Powers Penetration and Conflict in the Inter-War Period and the Mediterranean Connection," p. 106.

⁴⁰ Psomiades, p. 118. At the end of 1928 the Italian foreign minister had visited Athens and Ankara with the aim of concluding a tri-lateral agreement, according to Mussolini's vision to create a south-Mediterranean axis of cooperation between Rome, Ankara and Athens, facilitating Italian imperialism's penetration in the eastern Mediterranean through a "peaceful penetration." While pending problems between Greece and Turkey didn't permit the conclusion of such an agreement, Italy signed separate friendship agreements with each of them and later substantially provided its help for the conclusion of the Greek-Turkish agreements of 1930.

result of the penetration of fascist Italy into the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean in the 1920s.⁴¹

Feeling the threat of Italy, and mainly Bulgaria, Greece nevertheless could no longer afford it to determine its foreign policy around the expansionist “Great Idea” (see next section), as it lacked everything which had made such a strategy workable in the past: political support, economic resources and external backing. Hence, the main target of its diplomacy thereafter would be the safeguarding of its security and the territorial integrity of the country.⁴² Indeed, the change in Greek foreign policy, which, after the disagreement of King Constantine and Venizelos over Greece’s alignment in the First World War⁴³ had passed from the decisive role of the King to the government, and secondary to the parliament,⁴⁴ is explained both by its army’s failure in 1922 and the government’s need to secure the main funds for the settlement of the refugees and the stabilization of the economy.

The only exception occurred in the course of the dictatorship initiated by Theodoros Pangalos (1925-1926), owing to the latter’s seeking of a big success in the foreign arena by taking advantage of the on-going Mosul dispute between Turkey and Britain. The relevant agreements signed by Pangalos may have not been ratified by the following government; his short-lived expansionist policy nonetheless opened the door for the oppositional, royalist party to indirectly prop up a revision of the Lausanne

⁴¹ Psomiades, pp. 112-113.

⁴² Lina Louvi, “Μηχανισμοί της Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής μετά τη Συνθήκη της Λωζάνης (1923-1928)” (Mechanisms of Greek foreign policy after the Lausanne treaty (1923-1928)), in *Βενιζελισμός και Αστικός Επιστημονισμός* (Venizelism and bourgeois modernization), ed. Giorgos Mavrogordatos and Giorgos Chatziiosif (Ηράκλειο: Πανεπιστημιακές εκδόσεις Κρήτης, 1988), p. 392.

⁴³ A disagreement which ended with the abdication of the former and the entry of Greece in the war, according to Venizelos’ will, on the side of the allies.

⁴⁴ Papastratis, “Εξωτερική Πολιτική” (Foreign policy), p. 260.

treaty,⁴⁵ partly reminding the discourse of some of its deputies during the 1930 rapprochement (see Chapter Three).

Especially in the first five years after Lausanne, the Greek foreign policy came secondary to the internal problems and was being left mainly to the diplomats, resulting in the so-called “bureaucratic diplomacy.”⁴⁶ The new, moderate foreign policy was in the hands of Venizelos, who at that time had retreated from politics (after losing the elections of 1920, during the Greco-Turkish War), and was residing in Paris. Even though Greece followed to the letter, under his instructions, the provisions of the League of Nations, the Great Powers, due to the new international constellation, were indifferent to the diplomatic position of Greece, which found itself isolated in 1923.

Isolated and simultaneously dependent, Greece in the interwar period qualified for the description of Nikos Mouzelis as a “parliamentary semi-periphery.” For nearly all the time since 1844 it had experienced parliamentary rule; it had shown substantial progress towards industrialization, yet, it had remained dependent on advanced capitalist countries in many spheres, economic, military, and cultural.

The political dependence of Greece on the Western powers had been continuous since its establishment, while economic dependence was reflected in a massive and mounting foreign debt. The reliance of rapid industrialization during the interwar period on foreign investment had increased the economic dependence, whereas much of the industry and communication systems were financed by the Western powers. Dependency was also reinforced by its geographical position, Greece being small and situated at the international crossroads. It was vulnerable to pressure from the sea, because in the 1930s, its five largest cities were ports.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Louvi, p. 400.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 392.

⁴⁷ David Close, *The Origins of Greek Civil War* (London, New York: Longman), pp. 1-27.

Above all, diplomatic relations with England were burdened both due to the so-called “execution of the six”⁴⁸ and because the former, which anyway at that time pursued a policy of political neutrality in the Balkans, did not trust Greece, due to its domestic political instability. It thus created serious obstacles to Greece’s application for a loan -so needed for the settlement of the refugees- to the League of Nations (which it finally received in 1924 and 1927), while Greece tried during the whole period (1924-1928) to conform its interests to those of England.⁴⁹ France, focused on its economic destruction after the war and the isolation of Germany, left Greece out of the alliances it created for this purpose in central Europe.

Greece attempted different actions in order to regain the sympathy of the two powers, ranging from the financing of a philhellenic propaganda in the French press, to the signing of a protocol in September 1924 for the recognition of the Slavophone minority, which was established in Greece, as Bulgarian, a step wished by the Great Powers, who wanted to solve the issue of minorities in Macedonia.⁵⁰

Being in this difficult international position and seeking diplomatic support, Greece sought reconciliation with Italy, despite the Corfu incident and the Italian possession of the Dodecanese (continuously from 1911 to 1947), as well as the proclamation of the *mare nostrum*. The foreign ministry, headed by Michalakopoulos in the years 1926-1928, would continue this policy, which would result in the signing of the Greek-Italian friendship agreement in September 1928, after Venizelos’ ascension to power in the summer of that year.

⁴⁸ During the reign of the “revolutionary government” (1922-1923), established by the army right after the loss of September 1922, six political and military figures, who were held the main responsible for the preceding events, were executed.

⁴⁹ Louvi, p. 398.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 399 (The agreement though was not ratified by the Greek parliament).

According to the Greek perception, the main threat for the country came from the north, as the prospect of a unification of all of the south Slavs under a single authority would tend to bring the non-Slavic people of the Balkans, including Turkey, closer together.⁵¹ Bulgaria was felt as the chief danger, as it openly aspired to extend its territory at Greece's expense, and sheltered the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), which periodically raided Greece and encouraged the separatism of part of the Slavophone minority living at that time mainly in western Macedonia. Although Article 48 of the peace treaty of Neuilly stipulated an economic outlet for Bulgaria to the Aegean, it refused Greek offers during the interwar period of a territorial exit to the sea with freedom of transit and the permanent lease of a free zone at Alexandroupoli/Dedeagaç where it might construct a port. It demanded a port and a territorial corridor leading to it, which could be definitely set under its sovereignty and control.⁵²

A passage to the sea was the common theme in Greece's relations with its northern neighbours: The importance of the city of Thessaloniki had been recognized by Yugoslavia since the Balkan Wars, and a free zone in the Aegean port had been given to the disposal of the latter's commerce with an agreement dated 1925. But Yugoslavia's demands for greater control over the railway linking Thessaloniki with Yugoslavia and the insistence upon a reduction of freight charges on the railway, and later in the 1920s also of placing the zone virtually under Yugoslav sovereignty and the railway under its administration, brought the relations to a standstill.

Only after the return to Greek politics in 1928 of Venizelos, who used the agreement he had concluded with Italy as a means of exerting pressure on Yugoslavia,

⁵¹ Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941* (New York, Evanston, London: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 405-409.

⁵² Psomiades, pp. 139-145.

did the normalization of the two countries' relationship ensue.⁵³ Indeed, signing friendship agreements first with Italy and consequently with Yugoslavia and Turkey, Venizelos' rule (1928-1932), the most stable political period in interwar Greece after the loss of 1922, managed to substantially elevate the country's international position, rendering it a factor of stability.

Being the only country among the losers of the First World War which managed after all to sign a truly negotiated treaty, Turkey became equal to Greece, one of the most ardent advocates of the territorial status-quo, seeking in so doing recognition in the international arena. The Kemalist elite made sincere efforts in this period to pursue an independent foreign policy, keeping the Great Powers at bay, while giving utmost priority to good neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union.⁵⁴

When revolution in the West proved not to be imminent at all, the Bolsheviks advocated a united front between communists and eastern nationalists against western imperialism. For its realization the Soviet government applied a multi-faceted strategy of concurrent alternative policies, which simultaneously combined "peaceful co-existence" and "fraternal aid" to communist parties and movements, with collaboration and assistance to nationalist governments which were suppressing those same parties and movements. The activities of the Bolshevik Politburo in a number of countries in the east comprised three players: the Politburo itself in Moscow, the bourgeois-nationalist government of the foreign country and the local communist party.⁵⁵

In conformity with the new eastern orientation of its foreign policy, the Soviet government pursued common interests with the nationalist government of Turkey.

Drawn together by a mutual fear of the plans and activities of the Western powers in

⁵³ Psomiades, p. 139.

⁵⁴ Bülent Gökay, *Soviet policy in the East and Turkey* (London, New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 39.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

the region, Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey moved to an uneasy rapprochement, including the signing of regular treaties in the 1920s and 1930s, in the preamble of which both countries were committed to “the struggle against imperialism.” The Soviet government continued its official policy of cooperation with Ankara, regardless of the fate of the local communists loyal to Moscow.⁵⁶

The suspicion towards the West, which had drawn it close to Soviet Russia, was attributed by Turkey to the past intervention of the former in Ottoman domestic affairs, mainly through the utilization of the minorities’ issue; more important, to the Turkish Independence War itself, fought against the Greek army, which was regarded a “tool” of the Western powers. In matters like the transfer of the capital city of the new state from Istanbul to Ankara, the content of the courses in the foreign schools of Turkey, or the attribution of a special flag to the International Commission of the Straits (asked by the western powers), Turkey avoided adhering to western wishes.⁵⁷ On top of that, issues like the Mosul (solved finally in June 1926), the Ottoman debts, and border differences with the French mandate of Syria put a load on its relations with the western powers for more or less ten years after Lausanne. At the time of the rapprochement with Greece, Turkey was seeking to disentangle itself from Soviet Union’s influence, and agreements with both England⁵⁸ and France⁵⁹ were concluded.

After Mussolini’s coming to power in 1922, Italy’s plans, encompassing the colonization of Turkey and finally the annexation of portions of Anatolia became the

⁵⁶ Gökay, p. 10

⁵⁷ Mehmet Gönlübol, *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish foreign policy [depicted] with events) (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1969), pp. 63-67.

⁵⁸ A treaty of commerce and navigation was signed between the two countries in autumn 1929, and British dominated Iraq formed closer ties with Turkey. Psomiades, pp. 121-127.

⁵⁹ A treaty of arbitration and conciliation was signed in February 1930 between France and Turkey, complementing the agreements entered into between the two states in July 1929, relating to the Turkish-Syrian frontier and the Mersin-Tarsus-Adana railway. Psomiades, pp. 127-129.

source of great anxiety for the latter.⁶⁰ And despite the Turkish press finding pleasure in Greece's difficulties during the bombardment of Corfu in 1923, Turkey soon became apprehensive of Mussolini's action and preferred to deal with a weak Greece rather than a strong and ambitious Italy. Turkish-Italian relations became smoother only after the change of the latter's foreign policy following 1927, even resulting in the Turkish-Italian friendship agreement of 1928,⁶¹ which both increased Italy's influence on the western Mediterranean, and distanced Turkey from the political influence of the Soviet Union.⁶² But for the agreement, Turkish-Italian relations remained in a sensitive balance,⁶³ and in this light the Balkan Pact of 1934 and the Sadabad Pact of 1937 can be interpreted also as movements against the Italian threat.

Another ambivalent relation for Turkey was seated in the Balkans, with Bulgaria. Ten per cent of the latter's population was composed of ethnic Turks whose settlement in Bulgaria was centuries old. Whilst a treaty of friendship and a convention between Bulgaria and Turkey respecting the condition of residence was concluded at Ankara, on October 1925, Turkey's efforts to cultivate this friendship and to use it as a level against Greece were never too successful, owing to Bulgarian designs on both their territories and the growing hostility of the Bulgarians towards their sizeable Turkish minorities.⁶⁴ These disputes, however, were not sufficiently serious to prevent the two states from signing a treaty of neutrality and arbitration in March 1929, and to conclude a

⁶⁰ Psomiades, p. 115.

⁶¹ This was the first political treaty the Turkish republic was concluding with a western power.

⁶² Gönlübol, pp. 87-90.

⁶³ Despite the continuous threat felt by Turkey from Italy, the ruling Republican People's Party was also closely watching and copying practices of the fascist regime, like the institution of the *Halkevleri* ("People's Houses") and the *Milli Şef* notion ("National leader").

⁶⁴ Psomiades, p. 145.

commercial agreement in May 1930. Turkey remained the only one of the Balkan countries with which Bulgaria could be said to be on normally friendly terms.

The 1920s: The Two Countries Once More on the Brink of War

The “Great Idea” and Its Demise: The Exchange of Populations

The Lausanne Treaty, signed in July 1923, formally ended the ten-year long fighting between the Greek state, an expansive nation-state, and the Ottoman Empire, a decaying empire. The former, established by the protocol of London in 1832, encompassed only a small percentage of the Greeks living around the Aegean sea, managing to extend its borders gradually,⁶⁵ through the application of an official expansive foreign policy, given in a speech made in the Greek parliament in 1844 (the year also constitutional monarchy was established in the Greek kingdom) the name *Μεγάλη Ιδέα* (“Great Idea”). This ideological construction, going back to the Byzantine epoch, aimed at liberating the “unredeemed” Hellenes, by expanding the recently born kingdom over all the regions inhabited by them. For almost one century it provided the lodestar of Greek domestic and foreign modus operandi, founding its main exponent in Venizelos, the prevailing figure in Greek politics since 1910.

In the framework of this vision, Greece claimed both provinces of an essentially Greek character, such as Thessaly and the Aegean islands including Crete,

⁶⁵ Upon Venizelos’ arrival in Athens from Crete in 1910, the population of the Greek kingdom was barely 2,631,952 people. Out of the estimated seven million Greeks who were living around the shores of the Aegean and the Black Sea, the people of the contemporary Greek state represented - before the Balkan Wars- only thirty-seven percent of the total figure. Pentzopoulos, p. 27. The first Greek state established in 1832 was comprised of the Peloponnesus, central Greece and the Cycladic islands, while the Ionian islands were added in 1864 and Thessaly in 1881. The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 brought Greece Macedonia, Crete, Epirus and the islands of northern Aegean, while western Thrace was added in 1920 and the Dodecanese islands in 1946. Richard Clogg, *Συνοπτική Ιστορία της Ελλάδας* (*A concise history of modern Greece*) (Αθήνα: Κάτοπτρο, 2002), pp. 304-311.

and areas with different ethnic populations, like Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace. Predominantly in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, after which Greeks proved to form 44.1 percent of the total population of Greek Macedonia, the “Great Idea” took the form not of establishing a purely Hellenic Greece, but a large Hellenic state in which many foreign elements would coexist with the Hellenic one, keeping their particular national consciousness under the sovereignty of the Hellenic element and [using] as their connecting link the Greek language, the official language of the state.^{66 67}

Apart though from and more important than the unequal distribution of Greek population was the extent to which the expansionist project, similar to relevant contemporary visions articulated by Balkan states such as Bulgaria and Serbia, was satisfying the interests of the state-dependent urban strata, the rising bureaucracy. The latter welcomed the state-legitimative function provided by the mission innate in the ideological construction of the “Great Idea,”⁶⁸ coming moreover at a time when the country was a cultural and economic backwater.⁶⁹ In this sense, the totality of such diverse elements as bankers and army officers, merchants and university professors, manufacturers and lawyers, shaped its world outlook always in the context of the state’s authority, interests and objectives.⁷⁰ Added to them was the military, which, in contrast to the peasantry, welcomed such aspirations, having grown into an important

⁶⁶ A.A. Pallis, cited in Pentzopoulos, p. 28.

⁶⁷ For the cultural implications of the expansionist vision see the next chapter.

⁶⁸ Victor Roudometof, “The Social Origins of Balkan Politics: Nationalism, Underdevelopment, and the Nation-State in Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria, 1880-1920,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* (Summer 2000), p. 154.

⁶⁹ Panos Eleftheriades, “Political Romanticism in Modern Greece,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, No. 17 (1999), p. 48.

⁷⁰ John S. Koliopoulos and Thanos S. Veremis, *Greece-The Modern Sequel-From 1831 to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), p. 196.

constituency after the reformation of the military academy in 1870 and the establishment of universal conscription in the years between 1879 and 1882.⁷¹

While the outbreak of the First World War⁷² and the post-war rivalry among the allied powers over the “Eastern Question,” combined with diverse offers of territories made by the latter to elicit Greek participation, seemed to create the conditions for the realization of Greek irredentist policy, the Greek Asia Minor campaign, issued in May 1919 with the invasion of Greek army in Smyrna, and culminating for the Greek part in the treaty of Sevres,⁷³ ended in the latter’s defeat in August/September 1922. When peace negotiations were inaugurated in Lausanne at the end of November 1922, already two-thirds of the Greek-Orthodox population residing in Asia Minor had departed. 750,000 Rums left the Ionian shores together with the defeated Greek army, in the period between the entrance of the Turkish nationalists to Smyrna on September 1922

⁷¹ Roudometof, pp. 155-156.

⁷² In light of the below-described incidents and the compulsory exchange of populations after 1922, one has to keep in mind the movement of populations throughout the previous decades due to the ongoing warfare. Before the Balkan Wars, according to estimations both of the Turkish Official Statistics of 1910 and of the Greek Patriarchate statistics carried out in 1912, the number of Greeks (or, better said, Greek Orthodox people) in Asia Minor was around 1.7 million (the bulk of which was living in the vilayet of Aydin and in Izmir, in Bursa, in Trabzon, and in Istanbul and Ismit, much less in Konia and Adana), while in Thrace before the Balkan Wars, according to the same statistics, there must have been around 650,000 to 750,000 Greeks. It is important to note that the Turks were predominant in the Sandjak of Gumuldjina (present day Komotini, in western Thrace), while the Greeks formed an overwhelming majority in eastern Thrace, especially around the shores of the Dardanelles and on the Black Sea coast. Pentzopoulos, p. 29-32. On the other hand, while all Muslims had been forced to leave the territories of the Greek state immediately after its establishment (that is, Peloponnesus and central Greece), there were still hundred thousands living in Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace and Crete. At the time of the Balkan Wars, Macedonia and Thrace, which were lost to Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, were inhabited by approximately 1.5 million Muslims. Kemal Karpat, *Osmanlı Nüfusu (1830-1914), Demografik ve Sosyal Özellikleri* (Ottoman population [1830-1914], Demographic and social peculiarities) (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003), pp. 300-310.

⁷³ By the treaty of Sevres, western and eastern Thrace as far as the Chatalja line and the Aegean islands were united with Greece, while the Dodecanese islands were ceded to Italy which, according to the Venizelos-Tittoni agreement, would give them to Greece. The future of Ionia in Asia Minor would depend on a plebiscite. Pentzopoulos, p. 36.

and the signing of the ceasefire in October, flooding Greece in a state of complete destitution and suffering.⁷⁴

Whereas on the part of England the main issue of interest was the oil-rich Mosul, an issue which was postponed anyway, and France and Italy were interested in gaining economic concessions in newly born Turkey -in which direction they gained rather little-, for Greece and Turkey, the Lausanne Treaty, both officially and symbolically, was identified with the end of Greek expansionism and, simultaneously, the establishment of the Turkish Republic in the place of the Ottoman Empire, by setting *clear and definite borders* between the two entities. With Article 16 Turkey resigned from every claim of territory beyond the borders that were assigned to it by the treaty, and was obliged to recognize the peace treaties signed in the aftermath of the First World War. The borders between Greece and Turkey were finalized, with the river Maritsa constituting the final border in Thrace,⁷⁵ the islands of northern Aegean were given to Greece (with the provision of demilitarization), and the islands Imvros and Tenedos (Gökçeada and Bozcaada) were attributed to Turkey, also with the provision of demilitarization, as well as an autonomous political administration. With Articles 37 to 44 Turkey recognized the existence of religious, that is, non-Muslim minorities on its

⁷⁴ Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve 'Türkleştirme' Politikaları* (Wealth tax and 'turcification' politics) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2000), p. 35.

While these 750,000 people were regarded part of the exchange of populations, a de facto exchange had already taken place during and after the Balkan Wars: Around 150,000 and 200,000 Greek-Orthodox people who had been living within the borders of the Ottoman Empire left the Aegean shores for the nearby islands between the Balkan Wars and the First World War, while one half-million Muslims arrived in Anatolia during the Balkan Wars and the exchange of populations with Greece. Çağlar Keyder, *State and class in Turkey*, (London: Verso, 1987), p. 80. A number of at least 250,000 Muslim people coming from Macedonia and Thrace poured into Istanbul following the Balkan Wars. Thus, the idea of an exchange between the Muslim people of Macedonia and Epirus and the Greek-Orthodox of Thrace and of the vilayet of Smyrna was first conceived in 1914 and negotiated between Greek and Turkish officials, but not carried out because of the outbreak of the First World War. Aktar, pp. 27-29. As a result of all these population movements, while in the Ottoman Empire before the First World War one out of five persons was non-Muslim, the same number had fallen to one out of forty after the war. Aktar, p. 35.

⁷⁵ The Greek-Turkish-Bulgarian borders would be demilitarized, a provision changed in August 1938 with an agreement signed between the Balkan Pact countries and Bulgaria. Firat, p. 353.

territory (but not ethnic ones), committing itself to ensure them the same civic and political rights as to Muslims, equality before the law, access to public places of work and various kinds of professions, as well as free usage of language. Greece was obliged to recognize the same rights for the Muslim minority on its territory.⁷⁶

Within the definite borders fixed by the Lausanne Treaty, the governments of the two nation-states sought to build homogenous populations. Touched upon also above, six months before the Lausanne Treaty, another agreement stipulated a forced exchange of populations. Apart from the 750,000 Rums having arrived as refugees in Greece in the autumn of 1922, according to official numbers given by the Mixed Commission,⁷⁷ 354,647 Muslims and 192,356 Greek-Orthodox were exchanged, mainly during 1924.⁷⁸ The precedent thus formed allowed the countries to save each other from their respective minorities or use them as a means of creating balance in troubled times.⁷⁹

Initiated by Dr. Nansen, who was appointed Commissioner of the League of Nations for the repatriation of war prisoners after the armistice, the proposal of an exchange was welcomed by both countries. For Turkish leaders, the precedent of the

⁷⁶ Lausanne Peace Treaty.

⁷⁷ An organization provided by the exchange of populations protocol, embedded with the task to supervise the exchange procedure and the liquidation of the abandoned properties. It was comprised of Greek, Turkish and neutral members.

⁷⁸ Aktar, p. 37. While the vast number of Greek-Orthodox residents of Asia Minor had moved to Greece as refugees in 1922, and only a small number was transferred under the regulations of the exchange of populations, constituting the group of exchangees, in Greek historiography they were wholly put under the category of “refugees,” for both practical and symbolical reasons. See Sia Agnastopoulou, “Κοινωνικές και Πολιτισμικές Επιδράσεις από την Εγκατάσταση των Προσφύγων” (Social and cultural impact of the settlement of the refugees), in *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών* (The Greek-Turkish exchange of populations), ed. Konstantinos Tsitselikis (Αθήνα: Κριτική, 2006), p. 252. Contrary to that, as far as the Turkish part is concerned, Muslim Greek citizens were transferred mainly in 1924, under the provisions of the exchange protocol. While today they are also called refugees, they themselves preferred the description *mübadil* (exchangee), to differentiate themselves from the vast number of *muhacir* (refugee) who were pouring into Ottoman and later Turkish territory from the Balkans and the eastern provinces.

⁷⁹ Aktar, p. 18.

Great Powers' intervention into the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire using the Christian minorities as an excuse, rendered the existence of national minorities and the practice of foreign intervention in their domestic affairs inter-related in a manner of cause-effect. More than this perspective, put forward only too often in the Turkish nationalist discourse, one of the cores of the nationalist project itself was the notion of the "purification" of the territory: The idea of a massive deportation of the Greek-Orthodox elements of the Smyrna region had been adopted already in 1914 and had led the Young Turks to deport 481,109 persons in the interior during the four years of the war.⁸⁰ Venizelos, on the other side, having in mind the need to settle the hundreds of thousands of refugees pouring into Greece, insisted on the compulsory character of the exchange.⁸¹

While the production of an order based on ethnic homogeneity constituted the guiding line of the "Convention concerning the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations," religion, a rather pre-modern unifying factor, was chosen as the decisive criterion for this kind of "refining." From this perspective, the text can be regarded as a transition from the pre-modern to modern definitions of identity and at the same time an indication of the intermingling of national and religious elements in both Greek and Turkish nationalist discourses.

The agreement therefore, introducing into world history the concept of an *enforced* exchange of populations, provisioned the exchange of the Turkish nationals adhering to the Greek Orthodox religion and established in the Turkish state, and of the Greek nationals practicing Muslim religion and established in the Greek state. Article 2 excluded from the exchange parts of these populations, that is, the *Greeks*

⁸⁰ Pentzopoulos, p. 54.

⁸¹ Aktar, p. 36.

inhabitants established in Istanbul before 30 October 1918 (the Mudros Armistice) and the *Muslim*⁸² inhabitants of western Thrace⁸³ established in the region eastern to the frontier line, as this had been defined by the treaty of Bucharest in 1913.⁸⁴

The exact definition of the people entitled to exclusion, that is, to the status of *etablis*, together with the dealing with the properties of both the exchanged and non-exchanged populations, proved the most difficult issues to tackle in the next years and heavily burdened Greek-Turkish relations until 1930, when they were solved in the above-mentioned way.

⁸² The difference in the definition of the decisive identity of the populations excluded from the agreement, as expressed in article two (Greek/Muslim citizens), using in the first case an *ethnic* and in the second a *religious/cultural* factor, must be attributed to the intention of the allies to keep as many as possible *etablis* in Istanbul. While the exchange of the adherents to the Greek-Orthodox is stipulated, and thereby the Greeks belonging to the Catholic or Protestant faith were being excluded from the exchange, when providing for the people who would stay in Istanbul, the usage of the ethnic characteristic of Greek, without paying attention to dogmas, provided for the bigger number of people remaining in Turkish territory. Baskin, p. 333. The ethnic criterion dominated in some cases of Greek Protestants and Catholics, who were obliged to emigrate under the exchange of populations. Konstantinos Tsitselikis, “Εισαγωγή του Επιμελητή: Ανιχνεύοντας το Ιστορικό και Ιδεολογικό Υπόβαθρο της Ανταλλαγής” (Introduction by the editor: Investigating the historical and ideological background of the exchange), in *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών* (The Greek-Turkish exchange of populations), ed. Konstantinos Tsitselikis, pp. 30-31.

Pertaining to the Muslim definition of the minority excluded in western Thrace, one has to keep in mind that the minority was both ethnically and linguistically very diverse, being comprised of Turkish-speaking Muslims, Pomaks, Roms and Circasians. According to Alexandris, this was the reason why the composers of the Lausanne Treaty preferred to call the minority by a religious definition. Alexis Alexandris, “Το Ιστορικό Πλαίσιο των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων, 1923-1955” (The historical framework of Greek-Turkish relations, 1923-1955), in *Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις 1923-1987* (Greek-Turkish relations 1923-1987) (Αθήνα: Γνώση, 1991), p. 64.

⁸³ With the Article 14 of the Lausanne Treaty, contracted six months later, also the Greek-Orthodox populations of the islands Imvros and Tenedos (*Gökçeada and Bozcaada*) in northern Aegean were excluded from the exchange. Furthermore, with a decision of the Mixed Commission of 14 March 1924 the Albanian-speaking Muslims residing in Greece were excluded from the exchange, amounting to more than 30,000 people. On the side of Turkey, excluded were the Arabs belonging to the Greek-Orthodox religion and residing in Cilicia, as well as other groups of Orthodox people (Albanians, Bulgars, Serbs, Rumanians), of whom it was thought of that they didn't have bonds with Greece and who were under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria or the Independent Churches of Cyprus, Mountain Sina, Serbia, Rumania, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Rumania. Some cases of Albanian Orthodox people though, who belonged to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, were excluded. Tsitselikis, p. 31.

⁸⁴ Treaty ending the second Balkan War, stipulating southern Macedonia to Greece, regarded as the region under the mountains of Beles, with its eastern border the river Nestos. Apostolos Vakalopoulos, *Νεότερη Ελληνική Ιστορία 1204-1985* (Modern Greek history 1204-1985) (Θεσσαλονίκη: Βάνιας, 2004), pp. 346-365.

Indeed, maybe the main point of dispute between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s was the difference in the properties left behind by the exchangees. Evident also in the Greek and Turkish discourses analyzed in the next chapters, the Greek part regarded the difference in the number of refugees⁸⁵ as indicative of the properties having been left in Turkey to be considerably more. On the contrary, the Turks pointed to the destruction of the latter during the long years of fighting in western Anatolia.

The Turkish researcher Aktar disputes the Greek calculation, widely accepted among Greek historians, according to which Turkey benefited more in the settlement of the Rumeli refugees, due to both their smaller number and its vast geography. A very complicated and strained social matrix comes to the surface if one takes into account that Turkey was emerging from a ten-year long war and its western region had experienced bloody clashes between 1919-1922 (atrocities being committed by both Greeks and Turks, and especially Greeks when departing from Asia Minor after September 1922); that many inhabitants had lost their houses because of the atrocities; and, moreover, the fact that these inhabitants (who regarded themselves as “true children of the mother country”, *vatanın asıl evlatları*) were in antagonistic relationships with the Muslims coming from Rumeli and the eastern provinces,⁸⁶ as far as the distribution of the properties left behind by the Greek-Orthodox citizens was concerned. Even before the arrival of the exchangees from Greece, a big part of the

⁸⁵ Among these, between one and one and a half million were the Greek-Orthodox refugees and close to half a million the Muslim ones.

⁸⁶ Accordingly, antagonism prevailed also in the Greek part: Settled mainly in Macedonia, the newly arrived refugees were fearful of their newly acquired lands and so suspicious of Slav expansionism, supported by Bulgaria and part of the Slavophone minority living mainly in western Macedonia, numbering around 100.000 people. Close, p. 5. The indigenous population on the other hand felt threatened by the refugees, in combination to the fear of the bourgeois class about the radicalization of the masses and the spread of the ideas of the October revolution. Elsa Kontogiorgi, “Η Αποκατάσταση 1922-1930” (The settlement, 1922-1930), in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού, 1770-2000, τόμος 7: Ο Μεσοπόλεμος, 1922-1940* (History of modern Greekness, 1770-2000, volume 7: The Interwar Period, 1922-1940), ed. Vasilis Panagiotopoulos (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2003), pp. 111-118.

properties left behind by the Greek-Orthodox people had been occupied by homeless people, refugees from other parts and high-level state officials.⁸⁷

Next to solving the economic issue came ascertaining who would be entitled to inclusion. Turkey sought to increase the number of people leaving its territory, at odds with Greece, which, already faced with serious social and economic problems by the entrance of more than one million refugees, was unwilling to welcome the arrival of wealthy middle class Rums of Istanbul and thus totally abandon the city. Added to that was the insistence of the Allies on the exclusion of the latter, as they themselves were involved in trade relations with them.⁸⁸

Owing to these opposing interests, Turkey recognized only Turkish law as suitable for determining the status of the *etablis*, contrary to Greece, which was willing to acknowledge solely the eligibility of the Mixed Commission. In a memorandum forwarded to the Mixed Commission in August 1924, the Turkish government supported that the term *etablis* could be applied only to Greeks registered with the civil authorities as citizens of Istanbul, under the Ottoman law of domicile of 1914, while Greece supported that registration was not an essential condition for residence in the pre-1923 period and only a small number of the Greeks had taken the trouble to register. The 4,500 Greek-Orthodox people living in Istanbul who were not registered with the Turkish official authorities would have to immigrate to Greece if Turkey's prerequisites were acknowledged.⁸⁹ After the Greek appeal to the League of Nations in

⁸⁷ Aktar, pp. 34-37.

⁸⁸ Firat, p. 332.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 339.

1925, which appealed to the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Greek view was favoured, but again the issue was not solved before 1930.⁹⁰

Another problematic aspect of the *etablis* issue was the 30,000-40,000 Greek-Orthodox citizens of Istanbul, who, though formally included in this category, had left Istanbul, carrying with them their Ottoman passports during the course of the Greco-Turkish war. The Turkish government was keen to consent to their return only in case they were in possession of passports issued by the Turkish Republic, proclaimed on 29 October 1923. According to the former's perception, these Greeks were "undesirables" for they had demonstrated their antipathy towards the new regime by fleeing rather than welcoming the nationalist order of modern Turkey.⁹¹

Whereas Turkey in both the afore-mentioned cases was in violation of the second article of the exchange protocol, Greece showed great difficulties in following its sixteenth article,⁹² by requisitioning the property of many non-exchangees Muslims in western Thrace and constructing villages on the lands belonging to them, following the pouring in of Rum refugees from eastern Thrace in autumn 1922.^{93 94}

⁹⁰ Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974* (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992), pp. 112-117.

⁹¹ Alexandris, *The Greek minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, pp. 117-124.

⁹² This article provided for the security of the exchangees and the *etablis*, the first by not being pressured to leave their places before the given datelines and the latter by being entitled to enjoy their rights of freedom and property.

⁹³ Psomiades, p. 169.

⁹⁴ The first steps taken by the government for the tackling of the influx of the refugees were the requisition of houses and the forceful cohabitation with the indigenous, while the first expenses for their establishment were being covered by the state budget, and domestic and international charity organizations. Apart from the properties of the minority in western Thrace which were expropriated, land both left over by the Muslim refugees as well as the one expropriated by the agricultural reform of 1923 was used for the settlement of the refugees. The main aim was to direct the, mainly of bourgeois origin, refugees into rural settlement and to enforce the ideology of small property among them, in order to avoid a coalition between the workers and the farmers, which would lead to a social struggle. (The opposite was the aim of the Communist party, as we will see in the discourse used by its main publishing organ.) The result was the astonishing fact that the rural establishment absorbed eighty six percent of the available funds, while only thirteen percent was devoted to the urban reconstruction, despite the fact that fifty-four percent of the refugees were of urban origin. Kontogiorgi, pp. 104-111.

Along with the fate of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate and the evolution of the rival Turkish-Orthodox Church, touched upon below, issues pertaining to the properties and the *etablis'* status constituted the matrix of the troubled bilateral relationships in the course of 1923 to 1929, seeing that even two related agreements, signed in 1925 in Ankara and 1926 in Athens, failed to be implemented. Powerless to find solutions to their bilateral issues, Turkey and Greece came to the brink of war in 1929.⁹⁵ Harsh polemics against each other had appeared in their respective presses some months before.⁹⁶ While a general agreement was reached in 1928 and 1929, the main obstacle remained the issue of the properties of the Rums who had departed from Istanbul with Ottoman passports.⁹⁷

Thus, the “nationally-purifying” method of the exchange was more easily envisioned than practiced. Greece and Turkey, while basing their whole rapprochement, as we will later see, on a discourse of modernity and modern conduct of domestic and external government, “[had frozen] the history for a moment, in order to apply non-modern relations on their citizens, who were treated as ‘subjects’, so that right after the exchange the national-modernizing program in the framework of the state-citizen relations could be applied.”⁹⁸ Indeed, the discourses maintained around the

⁹⁵ Demirözü, p. 14.

⁹⁶ At the end of 1928 the Greek press accused the Turks of building an aggressive naval force, and upbraided them for not allowing the return of certain original inhabitants to Imbros and Tenedos (*Gökçeada and Bozcaada*). Furthermore, it criticized the Turkish government for taking discriminatory measures against the Rum schools and business establishments in Istanbul. The Turkish press also renewed its charges regarding Greek oppression of Muslim minorities in western Thrace, and a twenty day investigation was conducted in the region by the mixed commission, only the Turkish members of which supported the charges. Psomiades, p. 260.

⁹⁷ In this matter, the Greek and neutral members of the Mixed Commission agreed that such persons be restored to their rights. But the Turkish government refused to accept this position, and on July 1929 informed the Greek minister in Ankara of its decision to consider the negotiations terminated. At the end of the year, a new Greek ambassador was appointed to Ankara, Polichroniades, with instructions to intensify efforts for a rapprochement. Psomiades, p. 261.

⁹⁸ Tsitselikis, p. 16.

rapprochement, analyzed below, sought to justify the exchange by evaluating the creation of nationally “homogenous” populations as a success, which facilitated the peaceful cooperation and placed Greece and Turkey among the modern states. Without a doubt, the extermination of minorities was often the way used by nation-states in order to create territorial states inhabited by a separate ethnically and linguistically homogeneous population.⁹⁹

In the rest of the chapter the main themes which, apart from the dominating issue of the exchange populations and its aftermath, burdened Greek-Turkish relations during the 1920s, and moreover erupted, in one form or another, during the 1930 friendship discourse between the two countries, will be discussed.

Suspicion of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate

Pointing to the support which the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate had provided to the Greek army during its Smyrna invasion in 1919 and the subsequent warfare, the officials of the newly found Turkish Republic showed reluctance to permit the continuation of its existence in Turkish territory. A discourse of conspiracy and betrayal was interwoven around it, evident also in the words of Kemal (Atatürk), who depicted the Patriarchate as a “source of evil and betrayal” and characterized its removal as “essential for the calmness and the comfort of the Christian citizens of the state.”¹⁰⁰ This argument was similar to that produced by the Turkish newspapers, which will be touched upon later.

⁹⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalisms since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 133.

¹⁰⁰ Yorgo Benlisoy, Elçin Macar, *Fener Patrikhanesi* (The Fener Patriarchate) (Ankara: Ayraç, 1996), p. 48.

Following suit, the Turkish representative at Lausanne, Riza Nur, pleaded for the removal of the Patriarchate from Turkey, maintaining that the political power it had wielded until then was not compatible with the separation of the state and the caliphate as well as the end of preferential treatment of non-Muslim minorities established in the new republic.¹⁰¹ Turkey was nevertheless obliged to soften its position, both because the Greek committee supported that the ecumenical character of the Patriarchate (existing since the fourth and fifth century) and its function as the Archbishopric of Istanbul, are two intermingled duties, and due to the resistance of the other participating countries, as well as the definitive behaviour of Lord Curzon on the issue, all of whom pointed to the historical character of the institution.¹⁰²

These oppositions, combined with Venizelos' proposal to withdraw the current Patriarch Meletios,¹⁰³ persuaded the Turkish committee in Lausanne to retain the religious institution, on condition that it would dismiss all the privileges from the Ottoman period, restraining itself to purely religious duties,¹⁰⁴ as well that it would not use the word "ecumenical" in its title.¹⁰⁵ İsmet Paşa (Inönü) gave a *note verbale* (oral promise) on the issue, which was in the nature of an international engagement, but the final Lausanne Treaty and the attached conventions included no clauses providing for the rights and privileges of the ecumenical Patriarchate. That is, while the Lausanne Treaty assured it a seat in Istanbul, it did not, in effect, prevent the Turkish government

¹⁰¹ Fırat, p. 334.

¹⁰² Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974*, p. 90.

¹⁰³ Meletios Metaxakis, Greek-Orthodox Patriarch since December 1921, had actively supported Greece during the Greek-Turkish war and had not recognized the political change in Turkey.

¹⁰⁴ Psomiades, pp. 198-200.

¹⁰⁵ Fırat, p. 341.

from interfering with the liberty of the Patriarch and the free exercise of his ecumenical function.¹⁰⁶

In the post-Lausanne period new clouds gathered over the issue. While the abolition of the caliphate in March 1924 led anew to discussions on the expulsion of the Patriarchate, the main problems arose from the exchangeable status of the elected Patriarch of that year. Despite Constantine's election as Greek-Orthodox Patriarch at the end of 1924, disagreements between Greece and Turkey over his exchangeability¹⁰⁷ resulted in a formula according to which he had to abdicate, while the rest of the members of the Holy Synod would be kept out of the exchange.¹⁰⁸

Following the election of Vasilios the Third, who died in 1929, Fotios the Second was elected in January 1930. During this period, keeping pace with the amelioration of Greek-Turkish relations, the Patriarchate experienced a period of revival. Venizelos, being the first Greek prime minister allowed to do so, visited the Patriarchate right after his Ankara visit in 1930, and again in 1931, and the Greek prime minister Panagiotis Tsaldaris did so in 1933 and 1934. While Turkey had in official papers and the press after Lausanne referred to the Patriarch as *başpapaç* (archpriest), Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) referred to the newly elected Fotios the Second as the "Patriarch of the Orthodox in Phanar."

¹⁰⁶ Psomiades, p. 188.

¹⁰⁷ Turkey maintained that he was an exchangeable, because he had come to Istanbul after October 1918. Greece on the contrary maintained that he was an *etablis*, because his "establishment" in Istanbul dated from the year 1902, the date when he had been appointed a metropolitan and thus gained permanent residence in that city, all metropolitans being members of the monastery of the Phanar in Istanbul. The Mixed Commission preserved that, because of his religious duties, it couldn't have a definite say on its status. Turkey expelled Constantine from its territory, although only the relevant Commission could utter a definite opinion on the *etablis* status of the persons. Psomiades, pp. 199-200.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

A Rival to the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate: The Turkish Orthodox Church of

Papa-Efthim

Another challenge to the existence of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate arose from the foundation of the Turkish Orthodox Church. Its founder, Efthymios Karahissaridis (known as Papa-Efthim), an Anatolian priest from Keskin, had started action against the Patriarchate already during the course of the Turkish Independence War. He finally founded the Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate in Kayseri in September 1922. His declared hostility towards the Phanar was combined with a proposal of establishing harmonious relations between the Muslims and the Orthodox people of central Anatolia.¹⁰⁹

Contrary to Papa-Efthim's expectations though, the latter were included in the population exchange, while he and his family were given permission by the ministers' committee to settle in Istanbul.

Indeed, there is little doubt that the Turkish authorities fully supported his activities, while the press gave him a very sympathetic hearing. Some newspapers went so far as to demand the appointment of Papa Efthim as Patriarch.¹¹⁰ The liveliest period of the Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate was during the first years of the Turkish Republic, during which its head invaded several times the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate, interrupted sessions of the Holy Synod or elections of Patriarchs (like the election of Patriarch Grigorios, following Metaxakis, in 1923), and seized churches belonging to

¹⁰⁹ The people addressed by the church of Papa-Efthim (and in whom he himself had his origins) were the Karamanli, Greek-Orthodox people living in inner Anatolia and using the Greek alphabet, while speaking and writing in Turkish. Their origins are disputed: Either they are Turks coming to Anatolia before 1071 and becoming Orthodox under the influence of Byzanz, or they were Orthodox people who during the Selcuk period became "Turkized." Benlisoy, Elçin, pp. 56-57. The basis of Turkish Orthodox church, however, was destroyed, as the Karamanli people were included in the exchange of populations.

¹¹⁰ Alexandris, *The Greek minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish relations, 1918-1974*, p. 154.

the Patriarchate in the Galata neighbourhood of Istanbul. He referred to the Greek-Orthodox people residing in Istanbul as traitors who “must abandon those who imbued [them] in errors and repent for [their] mistakes.”¹¹¹

Save for his violent methods and his arrogant declarations offending Ankara, in October 1923 the semi-official press bureau *Anadolu ajansı* (Anatolian agency) reported that the government had refused to accept Papa-Efthim as -according to his own declaration- an “official representative of the Phanar,” since the latter, a purely religious institution, had no right of formal representation in Ankara. Finally, the Turkish government’s support of Papa-Efthim was terminated with the election of Grigorios as the new Patriarch in December 1923. Still in 1931 though, as we will later see, Greek diplomats were complaining about the inactivity of Turkey on the matter,¹¹² expecting the expulsion of Papa-Efthim reciprocally to Greece’s banishment of part of the *Yüzellikler* (150s) residing in western Thrace (see next section).

Tension in Western Thrace between Nationalist and Religious Forces within the Muslim Minority

The political change going on in Turkey naturally was mirrored in the communal life of the minority in western Thrace, which was divided among the *muhafazakar* (conservatives, “old-Muslims”) and the *inkilapçı* (reformers), the latter being a small sub-group evolved in Ksanthi/İşkece around the publisher and teacher Mehmet Hilmi. The attempt of the indoctrination of the minority according to the new nationalist

¹¹¹ Alexandris, *The Greek minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish relations, 1918-1974*, p. 151.

¹¹² On March 1931 the Greek ambassador in Athens, Polichroniades, sends a letter to the Turkish foreign minister complaining about the non-recognition of the Patriarch, while in December of the same year a similar letter of him criticizes the non removal of Papa-Efthim from Turkey. Psomiades, p.

ideology had begun in 1924. The main initiators of this policy had been the Turkish consulate in Komotini/Gümülcine, the circle of the nationalist-reformers of Mehmet Hilmi with the newspapers *Yeni Ziya* (New Light), *Yeni Yol* (New Path) and *Yeni Adım* (New Step) -the latter instigating an anti-Rum campaign followed by some Turkish newspapers in the summer and autumn of 1930 (see Chapter Four)- and the “Comittee for the Liberation of Western Thrace.”¹¹³

The minority though generally had remained loyal to the holy law of the Koran (*Şeriat*) and was not willing to adopt the cultural changes carried out throughout Turkey. Their position had been strengthened after the settlement in Thrace of a group of Turkish and Circasian anti-regime people, the leader of which was Mustafa Sabri, the last *şeyhülislam* (highest religious leader) of the Ottoman Empire. While the battle between the progressive and reformers was going on, Turkey, absorbed in domestic issues in the course of the 1920s, focused on a systematic Turkish propaganda program in western Thrace only after Venizelos came to power in 1928.¹¹⁴ The means thereby used were the undermining of the minority’s (old-Muslim) and the Greek authorities, the minority press and the “Turkish Youth Organizations”, founded by Hilmi in 1927 and 1928 in Ksanthi/İşkece and Komotini/Gümülcine, respectively. These efforts were supported by both the Turkish consulate and the authorities in Turkey.¹¹⁵

The Venizelos’ government (1928-1932) tried to remain neutral in the inter-communal battle between the reformist and the progressive forces. In the course of the Greek-Turkish rapprochement, the Greek prime minister answered a long-standing

¹¹³ Konstantinos Al. Tsioumis, “*Η Μουσουλμανική Μειονότητα της Δυτικής Θράκης και οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις (1923-1940)*” (The Muslim minority of western Thrace and Greek-Turkish relations (1923-1940)) (Ph.D. diss., Aristoteles University, 1994), p. 275.

¹¹⁴ Alexandris, “*Το Ιστορικό Πλαίσιο των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων, 1923-1955*” (The historical framework of Greek-Turkish relations, 1923-1955), p. 66.

¹¹⁵ Tsioumis, p. 275.

demand on behalf of Turkey and proceeded to the expulsion of the old-Muslim heads of the minority, a measure leading in the course of time to an increase in the number of the Kemalist-friendly newspapers as well as of the reforming-nationalist organizations.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Tsioumis, pp. 278-279.

CHAPTER TWO

NATIONALIST DISCOURSES

Constructing and Constantly Rearranging Nationalist Discourses

This chapter depicts the main social forces and prevailing nationalist discourses appearing in Greece and Turkey in the course of the 1920s, as elements of the latter were used and reconstructed/ rearranged in different ways by the bulk of reactions which ensued in the two countries' rapprochement in 1930. Indeed, any complete explanation of the national phenomenon has to integrate the fact that the universal domination of the idea of the nation as a natural and primordial human community and the striving for a world system of nation-states cannot be reduced to economic structures and must therefore take into account the importance of the powerful discursive strategies that had been able to replace the older and more ecumenical (usually religious or dynastic) discourses with nationalism as a dominant narration and call thus for societal action.¹¹⁷

Detecting nationalist discourses presupposes a transcending of the essentialist paradigms of *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation*, which attribute to nationalism eternal characteristics and teleological features. What emerges instead is "an ideology of modernity, through which intellectuals, social movements or also political groups seek

¹¹⁷ Socrates Petmezas, "The Formation of Early Hellenic Nationalism and the Special Symbolic and Material Interests of the New Radical Republican Intelligentsia," *Historein*, no. 1 (1999), p. 52.

hegemony through the formation of collective and personal identities, every time in a specifically defined territory, an ideology which is formed around the empty signifier nation, by lending it simultaneously its meaning.”¹¹⁸ Nationalist content is thus rendered fluid not only over time, but also at a particular time spot. Indeed, the reactions to the Ankara agreement mainly in the Greek newspapers brought about a variety of nationalist imaginaries, stemming from different social groups, all aspiring to a true version of Greek nationalism after the radical change in state policy following the failure of 1922.

Meaning is ascribed to the nationalist concept by each separate nationalist discourse on the basis of certain criteria that evolve through a complex procedure of choosing and of bargaining upon content. Construction though is not evolving out of nothing, as nationalism orchestrates, rearranges and transforms pre-existing identifications, experiences, memories and facts, lending them a late compact meaning, which they never had before. Indeed, the usage of *existing* cultural elements is the main reason for the hidden constructed character of nationalism.¹¹⁹

Quest for a New Orientation after the Great Idea

The expansive national ideology of Greece, coined the Great Idea in 1844, differed ideologically from the initial Hellenic idea, the formation of which had been completed at the beginning of the nineteenth century and was nurtured by the premises of Enlightenment and republicanism. The larger group of the radical intelligentsia which initiated the latter, after prevailing over earlier projects of an enlightened

¹¹⁸ Nicolas Demertzis, *Ο Λόγος του Εθνικισμού. Αμφίσημο Σημασιολογικό Πεδίο και Σύγχρονες Τάσεις* (The nationalist discourse. Ambivalent semantic field and contemporary tendencies) (Αθήνα: Σάκκουλας, 1996), p. 56.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

monarchy,¹²⁰ saw the history of what it perceived as the “Hellenic nation” through the lenses of European Philhellenism’ adulation of a pagan Greece, enthusiasm for the French revolution and an utter revulsion against what they considered the superstitious Orthodox Church. Having revived during the troubled end-period of the Byzantine empire, the word “Greek” was given now, at the end of the eighteenth century, an ethnic dimension, comprising but extending beyond religion, the latter being used mainly for mobilization reasons.

The adherence of the first constitutions to the ideals of liberty and equality was reversed with the establishment of the regime of King Otto.¹²¹ From 1830-1880 the drift of Greek society was clearly towards anti-Enlightenment, pro-church, conservative and nationalist positions.¹²² With the affirmation of many concurrent Balkan “romantic” nationalisms a new rival nationalist model was produced out of a powerful blend of romantic nationalism and some of the most inane and insipid mytho-moteurs of the Romaic tradition, whereas religion prevailed as the dominant criterion for defining the modern Greek nation, marking the beginning of irredentism.¹²³ The latter evoked an ecumenical tendency of Hellenism (from the Hellenist time following Alexander the Great up to the Byzantine era), always with a Greek underlay,¹²⁴ present also in Venizelos’ less visible discourse around the Ankara Agreement (see next chapter).

¹²⁰ While Greek historians used to see a “revival of Greek national consciousness” starting as early as the 13th century and maturing, thanks to the so-called Greek Enlightenment in the 18th century, recent historiography differentiates between the novel Hellenic idea and the older ecumenical identity of the Greek-Orthodox Christians in the Balkans and western Anatolia. Petmezas, p. 51.

¹²¹ Eleftheriadis, “Political Romanticism in Modern Greece,” p. 47.

¹²² Paschalis Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, and Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Brookfield, Vermont: Variorum, 1994), pp. 13-14.

¹²³ Koliopoulos, p. 228.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.

The project had a political and a historical face: The representatives of official history, Spiridon Zambelios and Konstantinos Paparigopoulos, took over the establishment of the continuation of Hellenism in time, with the restoration of the Byzantine era as an inextricable part of Greek history and the depiction of the unity of Hellenism in its three phases: antiquity, Byzantium, and modern times, combining thereby the ancient Greek tradition based on *λόγος* (reason) and the idea of the free citizen, and the metaphysical discourse of Christianity and the Byzantine absolutist rule. The discourse was dominated by a rhetorical celebration of ancient Greek greatness and adhered to the feeling of a “mission” of the Greek nation as the trustees of a great civilization, but debased as they had been by servitude under barbaric (Ottoman) rule; their mission was to civilize the east after first purifying themselves.¹²⁵

Indeed, the Turks constituted the main “other” in this project -having an extraordinary position next to the other “others”, that is, the Slavs, Albanians and Latins. The prevailing view did not render them only the latest of all arrivals in the region they occupied, but also total strangers to its history and civilization. Following this path of thought, they had not been able, in the centuries when they held sway over their subject peoples, to produce real wealth; they had adopted aspects of the civilization of their subjects and were living as parasites on the wealth produced by them. They were temporarily camping in their lands until the inhabitants were in a position to evict them.¹²⁶

Greece’s failure in the war of 1897 and finally in 1922 disillusioned this ambition, whereas “political vicissitude serve[d] to open anew...the chasm of contingency, futility, and meaninglessness that must be filled by an ever-renewed, ever-

¹²⁵ Koliopoulos, p. 229.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 260.

redefined nationalism, the modern world's primary religion."¹²⁷ Accordingly, the article of Filippos Dragoumis in the magazine *Πειθαρχία* (Compliance) on 25 May 1930 entitled "Looking for the Lost Ideal-The Great Idea and Its Follower" underlined that after the *Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή* ("Asia Minor Disaster") in 1922 Hellenism was in need of a new symbol, a new ideal, rejecting at the same time both socialism and expansionist nationalism.

The different answers to the ideological vacuum evolving out of the newspapers of the time (see next chapter) have to be read through the social background of interwar Greece, which was marked by the division known as *Εθνικός Διχασμός* (National Schism). The latter was caused by a dispute between Venizelos and King Constantine over Greece's alignment in the First World War, and transformed into a social cleavage between the Venizelists, who were identified with the republicans, and anti-Venizelists, who were loyal to the King. The two camps alternated in power as a result of military coups or general elections, and each transfer of power was followed by a purge of the army and public administration.¹²⁸ Through the division of the Greek society in these two camps the protagonists of the political life were transferring the centre of the political struggle from the real social problems to the governmental issue.¹²⁹

The division had nevertheless social roots; Venizelism, constituting the more complete effort of a bourgeois modernization according to the Western pattern initiated by Venizelos in 1910, came about as an all-class-encompassing movement, headed by the entrepreneurial bourgeois class and followed by the lower middle classes

¹²⁷ Peter Bien, "Inventing Greece," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 23 (2005), p. 230.

¹²⁸ Close, p. 3.

¹²⁹ Pavlos Petridis, *Πολιτικές Δυνάμεις και Συνταγματικοί Θεσμοί στη Νεώτερη Ελλάδα-1844-1940* (Political forces and constitutional institutions in modern Greece-1844-1940) (Θεσσαλονίκη: Σάκκουλας, 1992), p. 147.

and the peasants, which, together with the refugees, formed the new small property owners of the agricultural reform. The opposition was formed by the Antivenizelist front, constituted by the so-called state bourgeoisie class (combined with landholders, other gentlemen of leisure and specific monopolies headed by the National Bank), but especially the vast majority of the small artisans and tradesmen of the city and the village, the main procapitalist and anticapitalist small bourgeoisie classes.¹³⁰ The social cleavage was also mirrored in geography, whereas the so-called old Greece, the Peloponnesus and central Greece, was predominantly conservative and rightist, while the incorporation of the Macedonia and Epirus through the Balkan Wars on the Greek mainland during the presidency of Venizelos constituted the latter an idol of all northern Greeks.

The coming of more than one million refugees following 1922 deeply affected domestic political life. The bulk of them were in favour of Venizelos, as they perceived the Sevres Treaty as his personal achievement, while the Asia Minor disaster occurred when his opponents were in power. Apart from a deep devotion to him, they had no sentimental affection for royalty as a symbol of the country that still held the imagination of many native Greeks, whereby their anti-monarchical stance was opposed to the anti-Constantinist sentiments of the mainstream Venizelists, and they were more cosmopolitan and liberal in thought. The settlement of the refugees mainly in northern Greece made the so-called new lands even more Venizelist than they had been in the period 1915-1920, and intensified the Antivenizelism of the old lands, with the exception of the periphery of the capital city.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Giorgos Mavrogordatos, “Βενιζελισμός και Αστικός Εκσυγχρονισμός” (“Venizelism and bourgeois modernization”), in *Βενιζελισμός και Αστικός Εκσυγχρονισμός* (Venizelism and bourgeois modernization), ed. Giorgos Mavrogordatos and Christos Chatziosif (Ηράκλειο: Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης, 1988), p. 11.

¹³¹ Νίκος Οικονομού, “Πολιτικές Συμπεριφορές στην Περίοδο 1923-1936” (“Political behavior in the period 1923-1936”), in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού, 1770-2000, τόμος 7: Ο Μεσοπόλεμος, 1922-1940*

The refugees added 300,000 men to the Greek electorate body (in 1928, the number of refugees above the age of 20 was 295,126), who voted predominantly for Venizelos, making him the dominant force from 1922 to 1932. The latter was the last year during which the refugees voted en masse for Venizelos, as an increasing number of them appeared to be heeding the call of the Greek Communists, following their disappointment when Venizelos abandoned Greek refugee claims against Turkey in 1930. But by and large, according to Constantine Daphnes, “in spite of all the reshuffles and differentiations that occurred during the crucial inter-war years, the refugee masses remained faithful to Eleftherios Venizelos.”¹³²

The cleavage between the afore-mentioned two bourgeoisie parties was imbued by the appearance of the Greek communist party (*Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας*, ΚΚΕ) in 1918. The latter opposed both the world war that had just ended, and particularly the Greco-Turkish war that broke out not long after it joined the Comintern, placing in it on a collision course, not only with the ruling parties of the time but with the entire state system, which was locked in mortal combat with the nation’s oldest enemies, the Turks. Moreover, its position on the Macedonian issue¹³³ associated the latter with

(History of modern Greekness, 1770-2000, volume 7: The interwar period, 1922-1940), edited by Vasilis Panagiotopoulos, (Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2003), p. 34.

¹³² Pentzopoulos, p. 176.

¹³³ The main reason, for which the Communists were represented as treasonable in Greece during the interwar period, was the official position of the Comintern on the Macedonian issue, which the ΚΚΕ endorsed since 1924. It recognized Macedonia as a “geographic and economic entity” and emphasised the need to opt for its political unity and independence. The Slavs, the Greeks, the Vlachs, the Albanians and the Muslims inhabiting it were recognized as so many “peoples”. The Slavs, eventually, became in Communist terminology the “Macedonians”, while “Greeks” were only the Christian refugees in Greek Macedonia. The ΚΚΕ, while looking for support among the refugees, at the same time alienated them, by condemning Greek official efforts to “nationalise” the Greek parts of Macedonia and Thrace by settling Asia Minor and Pontic refugees in these parts and denying the indigenous “peoples” the right to have their own schools and use their own languages. The principle put forward by the Comintern at its Fifth Congress in 1924 was that the inhabitants of Macedonia and Thrace were “neither Greeks, Turks, Bulgars, Albanians, nor Serbs, but Macedonians and Thracians with a Macedonian and Thracian consciousness respectively.” In 1935 the Comintern decided to drop the divisive line on Macedonia and Thrace and adopt in its place a new line, “equality for minorities.”

across-the-board rejection of accepted policy and was therefore presented by its opponents as an agent of external subversion.¹³⁴

The KKE struggled for the refugees' votes and in the elections of 1926, in which it participated as a "Common electoral front of workers, farmers and refugees," it received 4.4 percent of the votes and sent ten deputies to the Parliament, two of them being refugees, as the result of which strong measures were taken. The refugee support for the KKE became stronger after the 1930 Convention, as the former were disillusioned in their wish to achieve financial independence through indemnification.¹³⁵

During the interwar period, the presence of the KKE introduced a new threat to the Greek state, the danger "from within," so that the new content of Greek nationalism was a denial of the Communist creed. It also was connected with the insecurity that prevailed after the First World War, which had to do primarily with the threat from the "north." Whereas during the irredentist years the state ideology reflected a generosity towards potential converts to Hellenism and tolerance for ethnic idiosyncrasies, the interwar state strove for Hellenic authenticity as something conferred by history. The broad and all-encompassing approach to national identity in the nineteenth century, which did not distinguish Albanian-, Vlach-, Slav-, or Turkish-speakers from the dominant Greek-speaking component, had given way to the narrowest possible interpretation of modern Greek identity.

¹³⁴ Koliopoulos, p. 110.

¹³⁵ This view is substantiated by the results of the 1931 by-elections in Thessaloniki and Mytilene (Lesbos). In the former, support to the Liberal candidate fell from 68.67% to 37.5% and in the latter from 52.92% to 47.20%. The communists however, doubled their votes in Thessaloniki and tripled them in Mytilene. Pentzopoulos, p. 192.

Constructing Turkish Nationalism in the 1920s

Following the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the Kemalist elite legitimized itself mainly through the gradual formation of an official nationalist discourse, which (officially) replaced both the confusion which had prevailed during the Independence War,¹³⁶ and the various political projects which had been formed at the end of the Ottoman Empire by intellectuals and army officers for the restoration of the latter. The alternative projects which didn't succeed, ranging from Islamic to Panturkish/ Panturanish and liberal ones, remained -similar to the ones in Greece- popular at the unofficial level and their imaginary elements were used electively.

The nationalist ideology thereby produced was a product of the interests of the ruling classes. The Republican Peoples' Party, governing in a single-party system from 1923-1950, legitimized itself as the continuation of The Society for the Defence of the Rights of Anatolia and Rumeli and managed to eliminate through the elections of 1923 the variety of conservative, religious, socialist and populist groups which were among the leading members of the original organization. The RPP cadres of the public offices were the result of a silent alliance between the middle class, the intellectuals, the army, the state officials and the Anatolian notables, an alliance which had been formed even in the time of the national Independence War.¹³⁷ This was despite the party's self-presentation as the representative of all social strata and its depiction of Turkey as a non-class society.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Tanıl Bora, "İnşa Döneminde Türk Milli Kimliği", *Toplum ve Bilim* 71 (Kış 1996), p. 171.

¹³⁷ Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye 1945-1980* (Turkey in the course of democracy) (İstanbul: Hil Yayın, 1994), pp. 16-17.

¹³⁸ Taha Parla and Andrew Davison, *Corporatist Ideology in Kemalist Turkey* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004), pp. 80-86.

This alliance of classes supported the modernization reforms implemented by the party after 1924, as the latter did not lead to a fundamental transformation or to an uprooting of the social, political and economic structure of the ancient regime.¹³⁹

Kemalism became the official and exclusive ideology of the state, pursuing capitalist modernity and societal transformation, but rejecting both the individualist vision of liberalism and the class-based vision of society and social transformation of socialism.¹⁴⁰

In contrast to Greece, the initial aim of the state was not put on expansion, neither on industrial development, but on the cultural revolution, that is, on the formation of a new “national culture” which was being built in a way to represent more the ideology of the initiators, rather than the actual habits and values of the people.¹⁴¹

Both the lateness with which the nationalist project was started, as well as the imperial heritage which had to be dealt with, and the initial usage of religion in a restorationist context, resulted in the degree of construction in the case of the Kemalist nationalism being especially high. Turkish nationalism, reflected in public monuments, schoolbooks etc., was one, which despite the populist public political discourse, rather despised popular culture and used as a unifying thematic the army, war, modernity,¹⁴² and equally important, the war of independence itself.

Indeed, while in developing countries the imitation of the Western, nationalist model was using elements from the local, anti-imperialist culture in order to mobilize people for the nationalist cause, special features of the Turkish Independence War render the Turkish case a specific place. What Tanıl Bora calls the “in-between” of

¹³⁹ Parla and Davison, pp. 254-256.

¹⁴⁰ *Loc. Cit.*

¹⁴¹ Çağlar Keyder, “Türk Milliyetçiliğine Bakmaya Başlarken” (“Beginning to look at Turkish nationalism”), *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 62 (Yaz-Güz 1993), p. 14.

¹⁴² *Loc. Cit.*

Turkey's position, that is, not so near as Germany but not so far as the other, later called, Third-World countries, is constituted by the fact that its anti-imperialist discourse was not based on a long period of anti-imperialist struggle. The mobilization was fulfilled not through full mobilization, but by a ready army used to war and fighting. The modernist Turkish elite did not follow a Third-World country mentality, neither did they show an intense reaction to the West, or use the local culture. Much of the anti-imperialist discourse stopped altogether with the signing of the Lausanne Treaty.¹⁴³ Kemalism much more built its nationalist discourse around the Independence War, and even more presented itself as the true West, more close to positive sciences, and cleaned of Christianity.

The national other was thereby not the West, but the own past, that is, the Ottoman one. The enemies of the official nationalist discourse were the Arabs, Islam and the Ottoman Empire, which took the place of the Greeks.¹⁴⁴ The Turkish state was presented in antithesis to the rotten past of the Empire, which allegedly constituted a rebirth of the 2000-old Turkish nation,¹⁴⁵ and its aspects of dynamism and independence.

Indeed, astonishingly if one recalls the independence war fought against the Greeks in 1919-1922, the latter were not depicted as enemies in the official nationalist discourse of the intellectuals and politicians of the time. They were rather seen as part of the West, as tools which were used by the West to fight on their behalf the war between 1919 and 1922. The good relations with Greece were conditioned on the

¹⁴³ Keyder, "Türk Milliyetçiliğine Bakmaya Başlarken" (Beginning to look at Turkish nationalism), p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ Tanıl Bora, "Milli Kimliğin Kuruluş Döneminde Resmi Metinlerde 'Yunan Düşmanlığı' Neden Eksikti, Nereye Gitmişti?" ("Why does 'Greek animosity' lack in the official texts of the establishing period of a national identity, where did it go?"), *Değer* 32 (1998), p. 35.

¹⁴⁵ See Suna Kili, *Kemalism*, (İstanbul: Menteş Matbaası, 1969).

normality of the relations with the West. Even in the text of *Nutuk* (The Speech), Kemal (Atatürk's) famous speech in 1927, there are not inimical depictions of Greece. But as Tanıl Bora claims, and as also will be seen in the analysis of the Turkish newspaper *Vakit* (Time), the official discourse did not keep pace with the popular memories of the fighting with the Greek-Orthodox people before and during the War of Independence, and an unconscious hatred towards the Greeks continued to exist.¹⁴⁶

Moreover, while the hatred may not have been directed in the official nationalist discourse against the Greeks, the minorities living in Turkey after 1923, one of which was the Rum one, were invested with all the real and constructed traumas pending from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁷ While in every nationalism the minorities living within the territories of the nation-state are perceived as “others”, foreigners/strangers and their existence as exceptional, the ideology of the nation-state which is the remaining of a multinational empire, as happened in the Turkish case, fairly completely obscures the approach to the minorities.¹⁴⁸ More than that, in the Turkish Republic founded in 1923, the minorities whose existence was legally recognized were accused of having collaborated with the imperialist powers during the period of the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The ethnic slaughters that took place in Anatolia during the Independence War accumulated a hatred towards the different ethnic groups residing in it, which was intensified by the economic crisis of the 1930s and the authoritarian ideologies of the 40s and the Second World War. Thus, the

¹⁴⁶ Tanıl Bora, “Milli Kimliğin Kuruluş Döneminde Resmi Metinlerde ‘Yunan Düşmanlığı’ Neden Eksikti, Nereye Gitmişti?” (“Why does “Greek animosity” lack in the official texts of the establishing period of a national identity, where did it go?”), p. 42.

¹⁴⁷ Tanıl Bora, “Türkiye’de Milliyetçilik ve Azınlıklar,” *Birikim* 71/72 (March/April 1995), pp. 34-39.

¹⁴⁸ *Loc. Cit.*

increasingly marginalized minorities were perceived as enemies much more than their proportion and their importance had been.¹⁴⁹

From a political perspective, Kemalist nationalism was built and articulated on two levels, an inclusive and an exclusive one. Membership in the Turkish nation included or not -like in the case of the constitution of 1924- particular religious and ethnic identities. Terms of ethno-racist nationalism were used alongside terms of a civil or civic nationalism. Thereby an ambiguity between a legal-political definition of the citizen and one based on ethnic criteria was created, an ambiguity which usually remained *hidden* in the Western cases.¹⁵⁰ On many occasions, like in the Youth Oath or the speeches of the Minister of Justice Esat Bozkurt, nationalist discourse was based simply on the existence of pure Turkish blood.

¹⁴⁹ Bora, “Türkiye’de Milliyetçilik ve Azınlıklar”, p. 34.

¹⁵⁰ Bora, “İnşa Döneminde Türk Milli Kimliği”, pp. 172-173.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GREEK DISCOURSE

Reflections in the Greek Press

The Venizelist Agent

Ελεύθερον Βήμα (Free Tribune) and *Καθημερινή* (The Daily) were the biggest newspapers in interwar Athens,¹⁵¹ representing respectively the Venizelist camp and the main oppositional constellation, the People's Party. The former was a daily, political and economic newspaper, issued in Athens from 1922 to 1944. It had been initiated by members of Venizelos' Liberal Party, among whom only D. Lambrakis remained after the withdrawal of the others in October 1922. He reissued the newspaper as *Το Βήμα* (The Tribune) following the liberation of Greece on 12 May 1945, and with this name it continues its existence until today.¹⁵²

Remaining loyal to its ideological roots, *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* expressed and supported with consistency the attitudes of Venizelos, his party and more widely the "democratic world." Having lent their support to the so-called revolutionary government initiated by the army following the Greek defeat of 1922 and the

¹⁵¹ Athens with a population of about 453.000 people had thirty three daily newspapers in 1927. (Pentzopoulos, p. 172).

¹⁵² *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια του Ελληνικού Τύπου* (Encyclopedia of the Greek press), under publication.

consequent abdication of King Constantine, the founders of the newspaper proclaimed their intention to enlighten the public opinion about the need to establish democracy, beyond the use of violence and within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Indeed, by opposing thereafter Pangalos' dictatorship (1925-1926), as well as the Venizelist attempts at a coup d'état (like in 1933), the newspaper declared that it was against "any violent solution of the domestic problems of the country," on top of the "modern" premises of fascism and Hitlerism. Similarly, after the Second World War, it supported the "law-obeying democratic world," beyond the ideology of the two extremes.¹⁵³

In the light of its political and ideological origins, the newspaper not only reproduced in every detail, but firmly supported the government's policy and adopted the discourse the latter uttered related to Turkey in 1930. This stance included the dedication of whole pages to the speeches of Venizelos and the minister of foreign affairs, who proposed the silencing of the past and the adoption of a new anti-militarist nationalism, focused on modernization and internal reconstruction. Simultaneously, the newspaper backed the government's policy of silencing the refugees' demands, combined with justifying Turkey in the eyes of the Greek public as a *modern* and *democratic* country -and therefore a reasonable and reliable partner-, while it exhibited a limited nationalist discourse running parallel.

The economic agreement of June 1930 was referred to as a "welcoming contribution to the political stability of the East,"¹⁵⁴ whereas in the newspaper's editorial of 31 October the Ankara agreement was described as a "historical point." Official state policy is presented to be wholly embraced on behalf of the Greek population, as during Venizelos' first speech in Athens following his Ankara visit a vast

¹⁵³ *Εγνωνλοπαίδεια του Ελληνικού Τύπου* (Encyclopedia of the Greek press), under publication.

¹⁵⁴ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 17 June 1930.

crowd came to listen to him, “as always happens when the president of the government appears in public.”¹⁵⁵ The same position was reflected upon the Turkish public, which *en masse* was expecting Venizelos both at his departure and his arrival, at Haydarpaşa and Ankara, a fact attributed also to the peoples’ origin: Some of these Turkish citizens spoke Greek, due to being exchangees, and asked Venizelos whether they would be able to return to Greece after the signing of the agreement¹⁵⁶ -this being a sign of the confusion which still existed among the exchanged population considering their fate.¹⁵⁷

Similarly the Turkish press was constantly reproduced in the *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, according to which the Greek friendship was welcomed in Turkey and the past was viewed as “unfortunate misunderstandings,” as well as the welcoming responses of Turkish politicians to speeches of Venizelos, especially when the latter was praising Turkey or the concept of peace. The speeches of Turkish parliamentarians were covered, especially those in which Venizelos was depicted as a “diplomat with long experience, sharp understanding and logic”, who “understands Turkey’s need for peace, in order to fulfil its constructive work.”¹⁵⁸ Exceptional was the anti-Rum propaganda initiated by some Turkish newspapers (see next chapter) in June and some days before the signing of the Ankara agreement in October, which was not given much

¹⁵⁵ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 17 June 1930.

¹⁵⁶ *Loc. Cit.*

¹⁵⁷ This depiction of vast crowds, composed (also) of Turks and Muslim exchangees, contradicts the statements and memories of Lütfü Karadağ, the only first-generation exchangeable we were able to reach to through the *Mübadilleri Vakfı* (“Institution of the exchangees”) in Istanbul, Beyoğlu. He came from the city of Yannitsa in northern Greece and was settled in the district of Pendik, Istanbul. According to his opinion, the Muslim exchangeable people didn’t want to return, as they had been afraid in Greece since the invasion of the latter in Asia Minor in 1919 -and not, as one may think, after the Balkan Wars-. More than that, few Turks really welcomed Venizelos, as he was seen as the invader and the main expression of the “Great Idea.” (Interview conducted by the writer, in the *Mübadilleri Vakfı*, on 25 March 2007).

¹⁵⁸ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 17 February 1930.

attention.¹⁵⁹ However, one day before the arrival of Venizelos in Ankara, the Turkish press bureau, following the order of the Minister of foreign affairs Rüştü (Aras), asked the Turkish newspapers to stop the aggressive attitude against the Greek minority.

Less focus was given on the actual provisions of the signed agreements, in contrast to exalting the political leaders and the procedure itself, which is read through the human characteristics of “great men.” Especially during Venizelos’ visit in Ankara, the newspaper’s correspondent in Istanbul, Iliadis, gave a highly emotionalized and romantic tone to the communication between the leading Greek and Turkish political figures. İsmet Paşa (İnonü) and Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) were read through the civilizational discourse of the time, depicted as having totally changed in comparison to the past, and thus become “more delicate and approachable.”¹⁶⁰ They were not to be identified with the persons who had waged war with Greece some years earlier, and the agreement was described as almost a personal matter for them, in which they acted as paternalistic figures on behalf and for the good of their nations.

This glorification of the on-going diplomatic conduct presupposed a reordering of the elements constituting the common past of the two countries, on which it shed a new, positive light. Modern, progressive essentials, the development of human thought

¹⁵⁹ The Turkish newspaper *Vakit* (Time) is mentioning the existence of a secret Greek-Orthodox organization, which is inspired by Athens, while the *Milliyet* (National) notes that only the Turcified minorities should be able to use their political rights. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 1930. Warnings of the Turkish press are being reproduced, which maintain that the Patriarchate should be abolished, the Greek schools should be closed and the Byzantine time should be forgotten. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 17 October 1930. Even during the days when the trip of Venizelos to Ankara is being announced, notes of the *Vakit* newspaper asking for the assimilation (described as the “mental assimilation”) of the minority by the Turks are being reported. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 21 October 1930.

¹⁶⁰ “İnonü didn’t have the old, *strict and military appearance*, but was *sweet and smiling*. During an interview he gets highly touched when speaking about the expected results of the agreement.” Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) himself is described in a separate article as an important, respectful politician - accompanied sometimes by almost mythical descriptions-, dedicated to his country and fighting for its reconstruction. His old “fierce, hard decisiveness” have been transformed into “extraordinarily kindness.” Politically he is considered a dictator, but a democratic one (sic). *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 4 November 1930. In another article, an interview made by the German Emil Ludwig, he is described as a dictator, unless one who believes that all power comes from the people, whereby “he has much less initiative than one may think.” *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 12 March 1930.

combined with the local and universal reality, were praised for having driven the two historical foes together, while the enemies of this rapprochement were considered “slaves of the past.” The “new history” that had begun between the two nations was possible only as long as they were “freed from the past,” as sticking to the latter was identified with backwardness and inability to understand the global changes.¹⁶¹

The darkest spot for Greece in the bilateral history (the failure of 1922, described as “the biggest tragedy that has ever happened to a nation”) was remembered in the summer of 1930, ten years having passed from the signing of the Sevres Treaty: It was a sign of a “healthy nation to face the reality of its time and harmonize with its ideals.” Instead of militarism and expansion, “eternal reconstruction” was suggested for the present, a phrase taken by a telegram of Venizelos, and interpreted as constituting Greece a real state, with knowledge, culture, justice, a health system, and a national economy.¹⁶² Even during the celebrations of the centenary of Greek independence on March 1930, the past was viewed as something that had to be forgotten, and “new ideals ha[d] to be given to the youth.”¹⁶³ ¹⁶⁴ This moralization of the past as negativity doesn’t inhibit the occasional evocation of periods of friendship, dating back to the Byzantine empire as far as 568, when a Turkish committee visited Constantinople and the Emperor Justinian the Second, in order to initiate diplomatic and economic relationships between the two state entities.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, October 1930.

¹⁶² *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 27 July 1930.

¹⁶³ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 26 March 1930.

¹⁶⁴ This is much to the opposite to the comments of foreign newspapers on the centenary celebration, which, following the oriental discourse of the time, stress the cultural similarity between Greece and the other European nations, especially Greece’s contribution to European civilization, and maintain that despite the “corrupting influence of Turkish rule, the Greek character didn’t suffer any changes and retained its old traits.” *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 7 April 1930.

¹⁶⁵ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 3 January 1930.

Next to this exaltation of the rapprochement, much less coverage was given to the unsatisfied part of the agreement. Less than the grievances of the refugees, their positive contribution to national life was brought to expression. Keeping in mind the tension, antagonism and even inimical relationships that evolved between the refugees/exchanged persons and the indigenous population,¹⁶⁶ one can read articles on the value of the refugees as attempts to bring about social peace and cohesion. In order to refute the widespread idea that the refugees constituted a burden to the Greek nation, living from its taxes, lengthy articles and economic tables were published, where it was maintained that they had contributed with their taxes more to the Greek economy than they had received as economic help (the biggest part of which was in the form of loans anyway); furthermore their demographic, ethnological and social contribution were underlined.¹⁶⁷

When protests arose among part of the refugees on the grounds of the economic agreement of June 1930, their credibility was de-legitimized. The “disproval of the government” erupting at a meeting of *ΠΟΑΛΑ*, one of the biggest refugees’ organizations, was led by some “known troublemakers,” depicted as noisy, disturbing social-peace breakers¹⁶⁸ -a discourse identical to the anti-Communist one.

Similarly, when 2,000 refugees meet in Athens in order to protest, the main speakers were having a “disgusting tone,” and the audience as showing indifference to them.¹⁶⁹ In general, the split among the refugees was underlined, whereas the newspaper reassured that the majority of the refugees did not approve of the demagogic movement of some *προσφυργοπατέρες* (“father-refugees”, that is, people trying

¹⁶⁶ Pentzopoulos, p. 209.

¹⁶⁷ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 5 January 1930.

¹⁶⁸ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 1930.

¹⁶⁹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 23 June 1930.

to patronage the refugees), and that the refugee organizations announced that they were ready to sacrifice “everything for the general interest of the Greek fatherland.”¹⁷⁰

The de-legitimization of the refugees’ voices went hand in hand with a daily bombardment of correspondence from Istanbul. A clear differentiating line was drawn between the “corrupt” Ottoman past, under the yoke of which the Greek nation had suffered, and the “new” Turkey, which was *modern, democratic, nationally homogenous*, and therefore had to be dealt with as an equal and was not to be held responsible for the sins of the past -a discourse closely following the official, Kemalist one-, less become the focus of irredentist plans.

Increased interest was shown in the domestic situation of Turkey, its bad economic condition in 1930,¹⁷¹ and the consequent suffering of the Turkish people, as well as their fears concerning foreigners’ taking advantage of this bad material situation.¹⁷² The probability of a governmental change due to the failure of İsmet Paşa’s economic policy,¹⁷³ as well as all the steps for the constitution of the oppositional party of Fethi Bey, the disagreement of the latter with the government’s economic and railway policies in the republic,¹⁷⁴ the incidents in Smyrna,¹⁷⁵ were all covered on an almost daily basis. The domestic political struggle of 1930, combined with the resignation of the fascist-oriented Turkish minister of Justice Esat Bozkurt, were welcomed, as new, anti-regime, newspapers could be published in Turkey.

¹⁷⁰ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 24 June 1930.

¹⁷¹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, reference to the Turkish newspaper *Aksam* (Evening).

¹⁷² *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 14 April 1930.

¹⁷³ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 5 April 1930.

¹⁷⁴ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 12, 13, 17 August 1930.

¹⁷⁵ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, September 1930.

All in all, Turkey was described as being penetrated by a *new, more democratic air*, the new party taking more account of and being welcomed by the people, being in favour of minority rights -proof of which were Rum men in its candidates' list-, and forcing the Republican Peoples' Party to think more about its economic monopolistic policies. Smyrna was depicted as an almost dead city, experiencing its post-war decline due to the forced departure of its Rum inhabitants, but, thanks to the new party, was given the chance to express its discontent.¹⁷⁶

Owing to the occasion of the Ankara agreement, the newspaper's correspondent in Istanbul, Iliadis, had the opportunity to travel around *urban* Turkey, and describe it to the Greek public in every detail. Its new centre, Ankara, was described as being in an "orgasm of development," in the process of modernization, whereby the fields had become streets and buildings, state buildings had been raised, and an atmosphere of Europe and East together, of Ottoman lavishness, prevailed, without any Muslim air, no mosques or minarets.¹⁷⁷ The extent of modernization followed through in the educational system, the change of the language and the opening of hundreds of *Halk Kiraat* (public reading houses) throughout the country, together with the investment of the state in national theatres.¹⁷⁸ Hamdullah Suphi, the president of the *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), was featured in a lengthy article, in which he noted that a group of Turkish intellectuals had taken up the role of awakening the Turkish nationalist spirit, which the Turkish nation had lost due to its Muslim character.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 15 October 1930.

¹⁷⁷ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 7 November 1930.

¹⁷⁸ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 10 November 1930.

¹⁷⁹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 11 November 1930.

The symbol of this fresh and awakened nation and its radical rupture with the past became the human body: The modern Turkish woman, liberated from the veil, symbolized the “new air of Ankara,” in contrast to the misery of the Ottoman *hanım*, had lived “like living corpse,” obliged to obey to the pervert wishes of the monarchs, due to a false interpretation of the Koran.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, in the *Himaye-i Etfal* (“Children’s protection”), a state institution for the protection of motherhood and children, healthy, robust children, “with beautiful white teeth” and “full of mental joy” could be seen.¹⁸¹ Past depictions of the Ottoman barbarians were thereby refuted, while simultaneously the bourgeoisie classes’ (for which he is writing) preoccupations with cleanness, health and external appearance came to the forefront.

The tone of Turkey’s description changes and became much more nostalgic when the journey approached Smyrna, the description of which was accompanied by drawings depicting Orthodox Churches, pointing to the Christian past of the city. Many of the new buildings had been constructed in the city, but the correspondent could still detect some labels with Greek names, which “probably have been forgotten to be erased.”¹⁸²

Correspondence from Turkey comprised also the opinions of the Rum minority living in Istanbul, which welcomed the agreement, especially the one signed in June 1930, as it secured the status of non-exchangeability to all who inhabited the city.¹⁸³ Its members awaited the conclusion of the agreement as an end to the general insecurity they were feeling.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, as a result of the Ankara agreement the Turkish press

¹⁸⁰ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 8 November 1930.

¹⁸¹ *Loc. Cit.*

¹⁸² *Loc. Cit.*

¹⁸³ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 10 February 1930.

¹⁸⁴ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 15 May 1930.

stopped its aggressive attitude, towards not only the Greek but also the other non-Muslim minorities. Although some general problems remained, like the ones pertaining to the prohibition of certain professions for the minorities, overall the general atmosphere towards them “[had] changed and they now [felt] more free.”¹⁸⁵

Parallel to this overall positive depiction of the bilateral relations, there ran in the newspaper a parallel, undermining and sometimes even inimical discourse. It started from practical issues, as during the negotiations Turks were often depicted as “having excessive demands,” while the delay in the conclusion of the final agreement was due to the “unchanged Turkish psychology and some intra-governmental combinations, unknown to Athens.”¹⁸⁶

Moreover, the excessive facets of the on-going cultural revolution were treated with irony: The scientific world was depicted as having fun with the theories of Professor Yusuf Sia, who on the basis of “over-daring linguistic theories tries to prove that the whole human civilization has Turkish roots.” Despite the disproving of these theories by the Turcolog Fuat (Köprülü), Ankara supported them and introduced them as teaching material into the schools. Examples taken from the nationalist writings of Afet İnan were given concerning the origins of the Turkish race, and concluded in an ironical way.¹⁸⁷ More analytical but un-commented remains the depiction of Turkey’s measures for the turcification of its economy, which were against Lausanne’s premises, such as the prohibition to work applied to foreign accountants and other professionals, as well as a general mobilization for the preference of domestic products.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 13 December 1930.

¹⁸⁶ Reference is being made to the aspirations of Şükrü (Saraçoğlu) to be the follower of Tefik Rüştü (Aras), and producing therefore difficulties in the negotiations. *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 24 April 1930.

¹⁸⁷ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 13 August 1930.

¹⁸⁸ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 1 February 1930.

The implication of racial factors somehow raised the tension. When a Greek woman was chosen “Miss Europe” in the beauty contest of 1930, the furious responses of the Turkish press were reproduced extensively and were characterized as the “shameful expressions of nationalist fanatics.” The antagonistic and ironic responses of the Turkish newspaper *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) from Yunus Nadi and Peyami Safa were mixed with humour. The Greek correspondent ended his article characterizing the Greek-Turkish friendship as “really a very strange one.”¹⁸⁹

The Royalist Opposition

The main press organ of the royalist, anti-Venizelist party was the newspaper *H Kathimerini* (The Daily). Founded in 1919 in Athens by G. A. Vlachos, it stopped its circulation, together with other reactionary newspapers, from October 1923 (when an anti-Venizelist coup d’etat took place) to February 1924, following an order from the First Army Corps, as well as during Pangalos’ dictatorship. Similar to the Venizelist one, it continues publishing today.

The newspaper’s aim was the demolition of the Venizelist power and it generally supported the governments after November 1920,¹⁹⁰ but also realized soon the futility of the Asia Minor war. While in June 1922 it still maintained that the Antivenizelists were continuing a war which had been left to them by the Venizelists, in order to protect the lives of the Christian populations in Asia Minor, articles on 14 and 18 August expressed the opinion that the adventure should stop.

¹⁸⁹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 11 February 1930.

¹⁹⁰ In November 1920 Venizelos unexpectedly lost the general elections, while the Asia Minor campaign of the Greek army was going on. Anti-Venizelist governments rule thereon, until the failure of the Greek army in September 1922.

Η Καθημερινή recognized the good intentions of the so-called revolutionary government of September 1922, established by Venizelist army officers, but the newspaper soon withdrew from such a fraternity speech, following the execution of the leaders of the Anti-Venizelist camp in November of the same year. In 1934 it proposed as a solution to the parliamentary problem of Greece a kind of “parliamentary dictatorial” government. It was on the side of the King, and later supported the dictatorship of Metaxas (1936-1941). Similarly, after the Second World War it supported that the “great mass” was on the side of the King, while after 1950 it pleaded to prime minister Papagos to “save Greece” and suggested the union of all Greeks against the Communist threat.¹⁹¹

While not disagreeing in essence with the diplomatic friendship policy conducted with Turkey, the discourse of the newspaper uttered around the agreements signed in 1930 attacked the Venizelist version pertaining to a new, modernist, non-militarist and non-expansionist nationalist discourse. Instead, while pinpointing the threats such a concept included for the union of the nation, much more so in the light of the “communist threat”, it proposed a more romantic, idealist and militarist discourse based on uncompleted nationalist missions.

During the bilateral negotiations the Greek government was accused of being too submissive as it cancelled the ordering of a ship for the navy, called “Salamina”, and for being “extremely careful at avoiding any misunderstanding with Turkey,” reaching so far as to avoid the commemoration of the death of Archbishop Chrisostomos of Smyrna, killed by the Turks in August 1922.¹⁹² A few days after its signing, the Ankara Agreement was being evaluated as “not equal,” as Greece had to

¹⁹¹ *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια του Ελληνικού Έθνους* (Encyclopedia of the Greek press), under publication.

¹⁹² *Η Καθημερινή*, 3 January 1930.

make big sacrifices without gaining anything. The settlement of Greek citizens in Turkey was not secured by the relevant agreement, Turkey being allowed to restrict it with internal laws, and the exchangeable people were not even included in its provisions. In addition, the naval agreement was supposed to be in favour of Turkey, as it secured the continuation of the status quo in the Aegean.¹⁹³ This was alleged to be also the position of the Greek public, which behaved towards Venizelos with “cold indifference” when he made a speech in Athens after his return from Ankara.

Indeed, Venizelos’ visit to Ankara for the signing of the treaties aroused the fiercest attack on behalf of the newspaper. While the sum of the diplomatic conduct that took place during the trip was consistently reproduced, caricatures humiliated Venizelos’ position in the Turkish capital city. Taking into account that all diplomatic bargaining had been completed before the trip, Venizelos was directly accused of proceeding to such a “humiliating and defeatist”, unnecessary deed:

Why is it necessary one more time for Greece to go over the bitter sea of the Aegean and reach Asia Minor, why does it have to go over the places where still yesterday there were the corpses of our soldiers, to face the black Afion, constituting a black spot on our glorious history, why does it have to stand there, where in the night, still today, when foreign winds are blowing the bloody echoes of the children, the women and the old men, whom the Turks killed, can be heard?...Why do Venizelos and his wife have to receive flowers from the gardens, for which our flesh has been fertilizer?...The Turks will be laughing at us, as some years ago we went there with aspirations, big armies and songs.¹⁹⁴

In direct opposition to the Venizelist newspaper’s attempt to transcend the past, the editor of *H Kathimerini* fully evoked it. Heroes of the Greek independence war were commemorated, as well as Archbishop Chrisostomos; fun was being made of the way Venizelos perceived the past, the 600 years of yoke, as a “peaceful coexistence.”¹⁹⁵ Its

¹⁹³ *H Kathimerini*, 4 November 1930.

¹⁹⁴ *H Kathimerini*, 24 October 1930.

¹⁹⁵ *H Kathimerini*, 4 November 1930.

most sensitive face was related to the culpability for the defeat of 1922, a constant issue of friction between Venizelists and the anti-Venizelists. The prime minister's trip to Ankara was interpreted as an attempt to distance himself from the recent national catastrophe, playing "the wise doctor, who follows the funeral of his patient, who died 'because she didn't use his recipes.'" On the contrary, Vlachos put the blame for the disaster totally on Venizelos, because of "who still yesterday all Greece was killed there, its soldiers, its happiness, its honour."¹⁹⁶

The past was perceived as part of some general Greek ideals, indispensable for the future and the cohesion of the nation, which were endangered by the glamorous diplomatic process going on in Ankara. The latter should have been held strictly at the political level, carried out on behalf of the state and the ministry of foreign affairs, and not expressed, as was the case, on the level of the people. Because the latter had suffering at the hands of the Turks and were taught and reminded so:

The Greek nation, which has suffered six centuries from the yoke of the Turks, is constituted by its history, its traditions (about the Stoned King, or the monster who sleeps in the Marmara Sea and will wake up one day to save the Greeks and make the bells of Saint Sophia ring again), its traditional songs, its nature, which holds the history of its defeats and successes, its hopes and its worries, its army... All our history, all our education, all our tradition, our popular poetry, our textbooks, are full of the tyranny of the Turks and the suffering of our nation, our honour lies still near the Sangaria river.¹⁹⁷

Contrary to that, the over-friendly communication evolving in Ankara left no ideals to the nation to dream about and nothing for which the army could get mobilized. The demise of the Great Idea itself was not taken for granted: "Venizelos' opinion that the national completion has been achieved is being doubted, but even if it would be true, it is not something to be admitted in public," the editor of the newspaper

¹⁹⁶ *H Kathimerini*, 26 October 1930.

¹⁹⁷ *H Kathimerini*, 4 November 1930.

complained. While the Venizelist newspaper drew a clear line between the past and the present, between expansion and internal reconstruction, for *H Kathimerini* the defeat constituted just an episode in the history of the Greek nation, and hope was given for the future, “as the defeated Greece of 1897 dreamed of the success of 1912.” In short, ideals were everything, and without them the nation, its cohesion and future were in deep trouble: “People need to feel national aspirations; the psyche needs to be filled with dreams and beautiful fantasies.”¹⁹⁸ Venizelos was throwing all these ideals away, when consulting the youth that “a Pasteur is a bigger hero than any soldier.”¹⁹⁹

Above all for the army, ideals constituted a form of “free armament,” which Greece threw away while paying so much money for the material one.²⁰⁰ “During the Balkan War, the issuing of postmarks with Hermes on them stopped, and we issued others with an eagle on them, a cross and a phrase of the Byzantine emperor: ‘With this you win.’ In front of the castles of Yanina, every night stories were told about the bloody Ali Pasa and the fierce way he killed Efrosini.”²⁰¹

On top of being the basic presupposition for the existence of the nation-state, ideals were rendered “weapons” against the “communist threat,” the latter being empty of any ideals and dangerous for the nation’s cohesion. According to the editor of the newspaper, national ideals, for which somebody may be willing to die if needed, constituted the basic line between communists and bourgeois parties. Greece was clearly identified as a bourgeois state that had nothing to do with communism, much more held it as a sin and sent its communists to exile.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ *H Kathimerini*, 3 November 1930.

¹⁹⁹ *H Kathimerini*, 6 November 1930.

²⁰⁰ *Loc. Cit.*

²⁰¹ *Loc. Cit.*

²⁰² *Loc. Cit.*

While the newspapers described until now reproduced more or less official discourses, that is, discourses adopted by the two main political forces in interwar Greece, in the rest of this chapter I will detect less visible and politically represented positions to the agreements of 1930 belonging to the refugees and the communists.

Refugees' Grievances

The refugees had a great deal of experience in journalism and pooled their meagre financial resources together to issue newspapers.²⁰³ On 18 December 1922, just three months after their arrival, the *Αμάλθεια* (Amaltheia), the oldest Greek newspaper in Anatolia which had kept alive the irredentist flame since 1838, re-appeared in Athens. Some time later, a second newspaper was published, the *Παμπροσφυγική* (Pan-refugees), devoted exclusively to the problems of the refugees. It was followed in 1927 by the *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος* (Refugees' World), the purpose of which, as expounded in its first issue, was to “fight for the interests and rights of the class of injured and oppressed refugees.”

Without any doubt, the main issue around which the discourse of the newspapers evolved pertaining to the agreements signed with Turkey in 1930 was the properties left behind in the exchange of populations. The main characteristic of the language in use was an attempt to balance between a struggle against the official state policy, which failed to protect the rights perceived by the refugees as given and protected by the protocol of 1923, and a rendering of themselves as loyal citizens of their new home-country, ethnically belonging to it and serving the common national interests.

²⁰³ In Smyrna alone, 135 newspapers, magazines and periodicals appeared from 1821 to 1922, many of them lasting for a long period of years. Pentzopoulos, p. 183.

While they did not oppose the project of bilateral friendship per se, in their opinion it was being built on a wrong basis. Its peaceful aim was being undermined, as the refugees, having felt so badly and unjustly treated,

will seek to take their own fate in their hands, by violently taking back the territories and the properties they lost, having felt that the civilization of the 20th century is not in the position to secure them justice... Nobody can imbue the Greek refugees with the belief that, in order to achieve the highest aim of friendship, they are forced to give to the neighbouring country almost the whole amount of their property, as it happened during the latest Greek-Turkish friendship.²⁰⁴

The Pan-Hellenic Centre of Law and Political Protection of the Refugees sent a letter to both Venizelos and Kemal (Atatürk), saying that “the refugee world is putting forward the claim for settlement, which is the presupposition of Greek-Turkish reconciliation.”²⁰⁵ Similar telegraphs were sent by other refugees’ organizations, all of which stressed the feeling of betrayal the refugees felt by Venizelos and utter a kind of threat that after this agreement nothing could hold the “flow of the historical streams of the people, which push the refugee populations to their fathers’ homes.”²⁰⁶

The refugees based their arguments on the premises of the 1923 population exchange agreement, where it was stipulated that each refugee would get full compensation for the property he/she had left behind in the country he/she had had to abandon.²⁰⁷ Venizelos, in contrast, offered a new interpretation, that is, that Greece had to provide compensation only according to the amount of the properties that had been left behind by the Muslim refugees, and stated that even when he was signing the agreement in 1923 he had not really believed that it could be implemented. To oppose him, the newspaper used the language of the bourgeoisie class he represented,

²⁰⁴ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 19 October 1930.

²⁰⁵ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 2 November 1930.

²⁰⁶ *Loc. Cit.*

²⁰⁷ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 31 March 1930.

complaining that the “holy right of property” stipulated by the Greek constitution was not being recognized for a part of the Greek population, that is, to themselves. The latter intended to fight for their rights with the weapons this same constitution granted them, while they were eager to reassure that they did not want to harm the “peaceful and normal life of the Greek people.”

Apart from pointing out the perpetrated injustice, articles of the newspaper delegitimized the signed agreements per se, by underlining that they could have been signed with any other country, without so many celebrations. Particularly, the friendship and non-aggression agreement was alleged to be of minor value, as it provided for the friendly solution only of certain disputes between the two states, that is, of legal differences, excluding sovereignty-related matters. On top of that, the protocol of establishment gave space for the restriction of its premises by domestic law, and was not valid in the case of the refugees, a fact regarded as humiliating by the refugees’.²⁰⁸

Another form of undermining the value of the signed agreements was attacking the opposite contracting party. The newspaper claimed that its protest was not based on sentimental reasons, but on totally objective ones, as the refugees had a deep knowledge of the Turkish mentality, won after centuries of living together, and ensured that the mentality of perceiving “any non-Turk as an enemy” was unchangeable. Not only was Turkey acting against its own declarations,²⁰⁹ but also the welcoming of Venizelos in Ankara with the jingle *Gazi Yaşa-Yaşa* (“Long live the hero”, referring to Mustafa Kemal), as well as the hanging of banners with the same slogan in front of the hotel in which the Greek president was staying, indicated, if not “the pure Turkish

²⁰⁸ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 1930.

²⁰⁹ While Turkish officials were declaring during that period that if Turkey would have had borders only with Greece it would not need its army, at the same time the operating of Greek ships and the fishing of Greek fishermen near the Turkish shores was not being allowed.

cruelty,” surely the fact that the warm speeches of the Turkish officials were not in accordance with the feelings of the Turkish nation. The de-legitimation of the Turkish part was based here on first-hand experience and knowledge, and one can discern in the used discourse the tension existing between the different ethnic populations before the departure of the Greek-Orthodox population from Asia Minor.

Despite their negative feelings though, the refugees promised to swallow their psychic ordeal, silence their logic and feelings, and refrain from reaction to the present situation, given that it consisted of the *official policy* of the Greek state. Considering that the “century-old gap [between the two countries] is being closed by the blood, the bodies, the history of the unredeemed Greeks,” the refugees maintained that at least “the material and moral revitalization” of these people and the completion of their settlement was not just a symbolic obligation of Greece, but the main presupposition for the success of this new policy.²¹⁰

More than rendering the refugees loyal citizens of the Greek state, the newspaper presented them as “*true* representatives of the Greek nation,” as the rest of the Greek population, numbering 4.5 million people, was comprised also of minorities, that is, Turks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians and other foreigners. This “pure” Greekness made them equal to every other citizen of the Greek state and therefore allowed them to fight for their rights. Such attempts of the refugees to prove their identity must to be read through the lenses of interwar Greek society, one of the main gaps as put between the differentiation between “refugees” and “indigenous”, the latter refusing the “Greekness” of the former, often on racial grounds, and calling them “Turkish seeds” or “baptized in yoghurt.”²¹¹

²¹⁰ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 2 November 1930.

²¹¹ Eftichia Voutira, Η «Επιτυχής» Αποκατάσταση των Μικρασιατών Προσφύγων (The “successful” settlement of the Asia Minor refugees), in *Η Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών* (The Greek-Turkish exchange of populations), ed. Konstantinos Tsitselikis, p. 245.

While the newspaper tried to keep a balance between expressing the refugees' complaints and rendering them loyal citizens of their new home country, the anger exploded during the trip of Venizelos to Ankara. Support was sought in the declarations of the Greek-Orthodox minority in Istanbul, which regarded the trip as happening too early, taking into account the fierceness of recent articles in the Turkish press. In addition to that, Turkey was not willing to implement the economic agreement of 1930 and violated its premises. "Still the trips of women and children to Istanbul [whose man/father resides in Istanbul] are not allowed, the police of the city are not giving the certifications of non-exchangeability and the held properties of the Greek citizens are still not given back."²¹²

An analysis of the extremely welcoming attitude of Ankara to Venizelos and the accompanying extreme romanticism of the whole diplomatic procedure was made, whereas the Greek politician was depicted as the biggest donator of Turkey, as one who used "foreign money" to fulfil its donation. While his own money, the money of his family, was "holy and inviolable," he used money of the "people whom his inconsistent and indescribable policy had brought out of their homes." By agreeing to the summing up of the properties, Venizelos was wasting the labour of two million Greeks who "had worked for hundreds of years so that he [could] be so generous today!" The act of a set-off of properties itself was being referred to as the most "bloody and honourless tragedy of our century," an act of "clear political sadism." The whole glamorous treatment of Venizelos in Ankara was just an expression of gratitude, because he acted as the best "Turkish citizen."²¹³ Venizelos treated the trip as a diplomatic success, but one which was undermined by the fact that in the souls of the victims of the Greek-

²¹² *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 26 October 1930.

²¹³ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 1930.

Turkish friendship there remained a basic human wish: the longing for home and the return of the properties.²¹⁴

After this incident, the refugees felt that they have taken their lesson, albeit too late: “When a national minority leads a good life in a foreign country, it owes not to look for national ‘settlement.’ It owes to behave honestly to the country, from which it sees so many good things. And when different ‘insects’ come sent by another homeland, the minority should send them back from where they came.” The refugees felt used, in contrast to the official discourse of the day, which wanted them “nationally liberated,” and therefore admitted that, if they had known before 1914 what was to follow, they would have taken a totally different position. In this whole framework the refugees felt the need to express their own voices, outside the pro- and anti-Venizelist newspapers, a voice which could have saved them, as they believed, provided it had been expressed earlier.²¹⁵

Communist Opposition

The official newspaper of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) was a daily newspaper called *Ριζοσπαστής* (Radical), issued by Giannis Petsopoulos in Athens from 23 July 1917.

While it did not show any relevance to socialism or communism in the beginning, it

²¹⁴ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 2 November 1930.

²¹⁵ *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, 9 November 1930 The distribution of the settlements gave the refugees a dominant voice in determining the victory or defeat of the old political parties of Greece but prevented them from forming an independent political force. For this reason, the attempt to establish a separate party in 1926 failed entirely, the Liberal Refugee Party obtaining only 13.798 votes or 1.4% of the total number of cast ballots. Pentzopoulos, p. 188.

In the parliament refugees were constantly underrepresented, as the parties included some refugees in their ranks to demonstrate their interests in the refugee problem, but were not willing to exceed this limit, the other posts filled by native politicians. They were determinant in the victory or defeat of a political party, but could not form an independent political force; in the entire country only in five communities they built a clear majority.

closely watched the Russian revolution and opposed the sending of Western troops to Ukraine. In September 1919 the subtitle of the newspaper changed from “newspaper of democratic principles” to “socialist newspaper,” explaining with a long article that the struggle for presidential democracy had been overcome and new ideas enforced new orientations. In June 1920 the newspaper published on its first page the whole declaration of the Communist International and from the second day of the same month next to the subtitle “socialist newspaper” the following phrase was added: “Under the political control of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Greece.” The newspaper eventually became the official organ of the Communist Party of Greece and started a fierce war against bourgeois political formations, the Venizelist and the anti-Venizelist one. In July 1921 next to the title of the newspaper the emblem of the party was added and in August of the same year Petsopoulos declared that he gave the newspaper to the party, as “it was not allowed for the newspaper to be a private enterprise.”²¹⁶ As early as 1924 the Greek Communist manifesto declared that “our struggle for powers is directed against the bourgeois-fascist republic in order that we impose by arms a workers’ and peasants’ and *refugees*’ government (my emphasis).”²¹⁷

Constituting the official organ of the Greek Communist Party (which viewed the country, through the eyes of the Soviet Communist Party, as a “backward, semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, dependent on Anglo-American capital”) *Ριζοσπάστης* interpreted the Ankara agreement through the policies of the Soviet Union. In the editorial of the newspaper both the Ankara agreement, as well as the rest of the friendship agreements between Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania and Turkey

²¹⁶ Kostas Mayer, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους, 1901-1959* (History of the Greek press, 1901-1959) (Αθήνα: n.p., 1959), pp. 140-145.

²¹⁷ *Ριζοσπάστης*, 14 December 14 1924. Cited by Pentzopoulos, p. 191.

(concluded in the name of “peace”) were described as nothing more than a temporary agreement between a bunch of thieves, preparing for war against the Soviet Union.

The international diplomatic arena was analyzed as a bipolar world between capitalism and communism, whereas the first was determined to overthrow the latter. Irony was shown towards the Greek scientific-trade committee that was travelling to Serbia to confirm the “tight bonds between the Serbian and Greek people” and the “deep wish of the Greek people to cooperate closer with the Serbians for the ‘common interests.’” Similarly, the conferences prepared in the Balkans (see Chapter One) were a “common front against the Soviet Union, the revolution in India and in China.” Behind all these “peace efforts”, a new war against the Soviet Union was prepared, in the name of the “common Balkan interests” and the “primordial common bonds.”²¹⁸ The threat of an attack on the Soviet Union was an ongoing theme throughout the newspaper, often combined with the evocation of Greece’s participation in Ukraine during the civil war in 1919 on the side of the allies. The result therefore of the Ankara Agreement would be a “new Ukraine,” while Venizelos, pioneer of the anti-Soviet war, rushed to settle the issues with Turkey so that the latter was dragged out of its Soviet Union orientation, and into the active anti-Soviet bloc.²¹⁹

The Liberal Party, but much more Venizelos himself, was the constant target of the newspaper, especially pertaining to the abolition of the right of the refugees for full compensation. His proclaimed promise to “complete the settlement” was also criticized, by making reference to the “people living in tents under terrible conditions, the arrest of the ones who are not able to pay the taxes of their houses, the pre-paying that is being asked for permitting the refugee to enter his/her new house, the sending of the

²¹⁸ *Πιζοπάστης*, 4 June 1930.

²¹⁹ *Πιζοπάστης*, 13 June 1930.

refugees to protect the borders with Bulgaria and Serbia, and the death of 300,000 people from the 1.3 million who came to Greece.”²²⁰ In addition, Venizelos’ “withdrawal” in the Ankara agreement, made despite the fact that the Greek properties left in Turkey were more than the ones left by the Turks in Greece, would be paid by the Greek working class, together with the loans contracted with the Refugee Settlement Committee²²¹ and the state on unfair terms for the refugees.

Venizelos was criticized for his overall foreign policy and naivety, and for supporting the fascist Mussolini, despite the latter’s speaking in a military way and increasing the military costs of his country. Venizelos tried to convince the Greek people of his own peaceful attitude, and of that of the whole imperialist world, including Mussolini.²²² A whole article was dedicated to the economic policies of Mussolini, who, due to the world economic crisis, decided for even heavier taxes on the Italian working classes and used state money to help the big companies overcome the problems caused by the crisis.

He was seen as the president “who has blood on his hands,” belonging to the people of Asia Minor and Ukraine, and to everyday people, the latter referring to the killing of a farmer by a member of the gendarmerie because he did not have enough money to pay his taxes.²²³ The policy of his Liberal Party, which maintained that “in the contemporary difficult times” the Greek bourgeoisie was unable to cope with “the luxury of a war of classes”, and did not have the luxury of a massive struggle of the “oppressed by the bourgeoisie classes,” was attacked. In order to be able to attack the

²²⁰ *Πιζοσπάστης*, 17 June 1930.

²²¹ An organization founded in Greece under the auspices of the League of Nations for the carrying out of the settlements process of the refugees.

²²² *Πιζοσπάστης*, 3 June 1930.

²²³ *Πιζοσπάστης*, 10 June 1930.

Soviet Union, the Greek bourgeoisie wanted “domestic peace” and therefore put down any struggle of the Greek people. Due to its contemporary crises, the Greek bourgeoisie enforced its aggression on the oppressed masses in Thrace and Macedonia, against the working class and the poor farmers in Greece, who constituted the “free Greek nation.” Macedonia and Thrace were referred to apart from the rest of the Greek working class, as the Communist Party aspired to an independent Macedonia and Thrace.²²⁴

Attacking Venizelos and his party, the newspaper clearly attempted to speak not only in the name of the working class, but also of the refugees, calling for a common front between “workers, farmers and refugees.” The protest actions of the refugee-fathers, who “have as their job to protect the refugees,” were decried. Refugees belonging to organizations like the ΠΟΑΛΑ (one of the biggest refugee organizations), who finally ratified the Ankara Agreement, sought for their compensation from the Turkish working people, while, according to the newspaper “the compensation should come from the government of Venizelos, and be a complete one, for all the property that the refugees left behind in Turkey, combined with a cancellation of all their debts to the Refugees Settlement Committee, the state, the banks.”²²⁵ The newspapers called the refugees to unite with the workers and the farmers, and fight for free settlement, financial help without return, and for the abolition of their taxes.

²²⁴ *Πιζοσπάστης*, 5 June 1930.

²²⁵ *Πιζοσπάστης*, 15 June 1930.

The Discourse of the Greek Political Elites

This section analyzes how the Greek political elites of different orientations reacted to the agreements of 1930, by looking at the different discourses they used to make their claims either for or against the rapprochement.

The composition of the Greek parliament in 1930 was the outcome of the elections of 20 August 1928, which were executed according to a majoritarian electoral system. During these elections Venizelos secured an overwhelming mandate to rule for the next four years, winning 223 out of 250 seats.²²⁶ The Liberal Party had collaborated for the elections with the Farmers'-Workers' Party of A. Papanastasiou, the National Democratic Party of G. Kondylis, the Conservative Democrats of A. Michalakopoulos and the Progressive Unity of Zavitsianos. The oppositional, anti-Venizelist forces did not unite and won only twenty-seven seats. Venizelos himself called the outcome of the elections of August 1928 a mandate for "parliamentarian dictatorship." Indicative of the support of the refugees for Venizelos was also the fact that twenty-eight of the thirty refugee deputies who filed for party membership declared themselves as belonging to the Liberal Party.

The Agreements of 1930

The properties issues being maybe the hottest point in the diplomatic conduct of 1930, discussions around the economic agreement in the Greek parliament were both fierce

²²⁶ Venizelos, who had been appointed prime minister in July 1928, proclaimed elections for August of the same year. He acted against the constitution of 1927, as he dispersed the parliament without the former agreement of the second chamber, and proceeded to the simultaneous publication of "legislative" decrees, without former constitutional or legislative authorization, with the aim of re-introducing the majoritarian electoral system. Petridis, p. 163.

and long.²²⁷ While the government was being accused by the anti-Venizelists of undergoing immense sacrifices for mostly in the economic issue, the deputies of the larger Venizelist front pointed out the practical limits of the procedure. Leon Makkas,²²⁸ Alexandros Papanastasiou,²²⁹ and Venizelos²³⁰ himself, although taking for granted that properties left in Turkey were more, all justified the followed decision of a set-off on account that the mechanism of estimation of each exchangeable person's property proved to be impracticable, the Mixed Commission established for that reason did not function properly, the estimations made by the refugees themselves about their properties were not realistic, and the continuation of the procedure would need immense time, money and personnel. They equally underlined the fact that Greece was a defeated state, with only limited power to impose its own will, while Turkey never expected that as the winner of the war it would be obliged to pay Greece any form of compensation; anyway, when it became apparent that the Greek properties were more, it stopped the assessment teams.

The deputies belonging to the opposition, despite their reassuring of their support to the followed friendship policy to Turkey, declared their negative vote on the ratification of the economic agreement of June 1930. Their focal point was not so much the full compensation of the refugees, than, rather, their diplomatic proposal that all agreements should have been signed simultaneously (the economic and the

²²⁷ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 20 June 1930, session 89, pp. 1271-1278, 23 June 1930, session 90, pp. 1278-1302, 25 June 1930, session 91, pp. 1303-1343. Finally, 191 deputies voted in favor of the agreement, and nineteen against it. For the discussion of the Ankara agreement, see Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 7-12, 20 December 1930, session 22, pp. 457-522

²²⁸ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 20 June 1930, session 89, pp. 1271-1276

²²⁹ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 23 June 1930, session 90, pp. 1297-1302

²³⁰ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 25 June 1930, session 91, pp. 1314-1330

diplomatic ones), so that some exchange could be obtained for what was being perceived as Greece's immense sacrifice on the economic issue. Furthermore, while the rights of the minority in Istanbul should have been secured more precisely, the leader of the oppositional party, Panagiotis Tsaldaris, expressed his dissatisfaction that the refugees had become the issue of one party only, that is, the Liberal (Venizelist) one, and maintained that while their full compensation was not possible, their settlement was not only a national responsibility, but also a social one, as the opposite could have wider implications for the whole nation.²³¹

As expected, the refugees-deputies themselves, the large majority of which (twenty-eight out of thirty) were to be found among the ranks of Venizelos' party, had a special place in the discussions around the economic agreement. Similar to the refugee's newspaper, the recognition of the difficulties of such a decision was accompanied in their discourse by the support to the government policy, "for the sake of national interests." Two of them, S. Hoursoglou and M. Tsigdemoglou, openly opposed the economic agreement, on account that it was against the constitutional property right of the refugees.²³²

Despite these latter cases though, the other deputy refugees uttered a discourse based on consensus-building. L. Iasonidis,²³³ A. Bakalbasis,²³⁴ F. Manouilidis,²³⁵ while recognizing the "barbarian act of the compulsory exchange" maintained that, on the one hand, the agreement served the foreign policy and stability of Greece, taken into

²³¹ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 23 June 1930, session 90, pp. 1289-1297.

²³² *Ibid.*, pp. 1281-1285.

²³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1282-1285.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1285-1286.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1286-1288.

account the political instability in Europe due to the economic situation, and on the other hand, the refugees “can’t go against an agreement which is in the interests of all the Greek people.” They reassured that the refugees were thankful “for the warm and mother-like hug of the Greek motherland.” Much more, it was reassured that [the refugees] did not adhere to the politics of some people who pretended to be their protectors, “a policy which would be against its real interests, and which careful policy would engender the division between refugees and indigenous population, which was so terrible at the first period of our settlement here. The sacrifices of us refugees will be compensated by the happiness of our brothers in Istanbul, who are sad that they can’t participate in ‘our freedom.’”

They also reassured that the refugees did not want to go back to Turkey, even if the latter would give them back the rights they used to have had during the Ottoman Empire. “We would not betray Greece,” said Bakalbasis, as the return to Turkey would be an ethnological disaster for them. While Iasonidis, speaking in the name of the government, ensured that it would care for the full settlement of refugees, rural and urban, and he reminded them also of the fate of the Greek community in Istanbul, which was begging for the completion of the agreement in order for its instability to end.

After the issue of the properties was once and for all solved with the signing of the economic agreement in June 1930, a friendship agreement followed in October the same year. The latter was justified by Venizelos and the liberal parliamentarians as a domestic and international necessity. While the opposition insisted during the parliament discussions to analyze the concrete premises of each of the signed agreements, Venizelos kept the discussion on a much more general level, underlining the importance of the general spirit of the agreements, which seemed to him to be

satisfying in itself, and a guarantee for whatever positive, future development in the bilateral relations.

Aiming at giving to the agreement a world-wide significance, it was viewed as a guarantee of the general stability in the Balkans and in Europe. This view was expressed mainly by the Greek foreign minister A. Michalakopoulos, who declared in the Greek parliament that the Greek-Turkish agreement surpassed in importance even the Locarno Agreement itself. “The agreement is adhering to a need not only of the governments, but also a *psychological need* (my emphasis) of the people themselves. The agreement was accepted by Europe as a beginning for a better future of it. We hope that around this agreement there will develop a new order of things in the Balkans and in the eastern Mediterranean, which will ensure a longer period of peace for the suffering nations. There is nothing against other powers in this agreement. And this treaty is not attached to any of the bigger or smaller powers. We made this agreement in order to become more independent.”²³⁶

Cooperation with Turkey was depicted as the necessary presupposition for the progress of the state: “[F]or five centuries Greeks and Turks had insisted in exterminating each other, because it had not become clear yet, that, actually, the states become exhausted by the *extreme expansion*, and the *mixing of ethnically foreign* elements to each other (my emphasis), that the people and the money spent on all this could instead be used for the own country, for the raising of the productive resources of the state, which would be much more useful.”²³⁷

These were more or less the viewpoints put forward by all the liberal, Venizelist parliamentarians, with which the two states were depicted as part and parcel of the

²³⁶ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 1289-1297, pp. 7-12.

²³⁷ *Loc. Cit.*

contemporary world-wide anti-militarist movement, which was enforced (at the least nominally) through the League of Nations and the rise of the idea of international justice. More than that, according to the Greek foreign minister, peace was the conduct of modern, democratic states, as in the past it had been the will of the monarch to decide for war. Instead of equating culture with Greekness and seeing Greece as the origin of European culture, as had been the dominant discourse of the nineteenth century, reference to a much wider, world culture was made, belonging to everybody and constituting of the modern spirit of peace and development. Greece and Turkey, at least in the words of this official discourse, shared this same culture and recognized each other through it.

But while Venizelos and his party men wanted to keep the discussion on a more general level and on the recognition of the success of the agreements, the opposition, not disagreeing with the signing of them per se, insisted on the discussion of their details. The main issues touched upon were the rights of the refugees pertaining to the settlement treaty, the naval agreement, and the failure of getting back any counters for the sacrifices made by Greece with the signing of the economic agreement.

Indeed, while the set-off of the properties was regarded as a huge sacrifice, also it was lamented on behalf of most anti-Venizelists that no concrete concessions were made by Turkey in the agreements of October 1930.²³⁸ Moreover, it was said that the settlement agreement did not involve the refugees, for which a special permission was asked for in order to visit their old homeland. While Greece was overpopulated, Turkey had too little population, and therefore it would be good if part of the Greek one could find exit in the Turkish territories. While the agreement itself was excellent, the

²³⁸ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 464-481, 498-500, 516-519.

restrictions put both on the people eligible to come and the professions which could be followed rendered it meaningless.

Similarly the trade agreement, providing for some diminishing of tariffs for both Greece and Turkey was criticized because at that time Greece's exports to Turkey were much smaller than those of Turkey's, a fact the change of which was not provided with the mentioned agreement. According to K. Zavitsianos, the trade agreement would be important only if the imports of Greek products into Turkey increased, while the former Venizelist G. Kafantaris maintained that Turkey was covering its own needs in products for which Greece achieved a tariff-decrease.

Above all nevertheless the naval agreement was criticized. According to I. Rallis, it put Greece into a weak position,²³⁹ by not securing the premise of an "equal amount of fleet," as at the time speaking Turkey's navy, including the ship "Yavuz", was in superior condition. According to Tsaldaris, Greece needed naval superiority, both because of the geographical needs of the country, and because of the big successes it had achieved in naval warfare in the past.²⁴⁰

Some parliamentarians even viewed peace with Turkey as a temporary phase, and opposed with that explanation what they perceived as the neglect of the Greek army. Deputy I. Mountzouridis maintained that "The friendship spirit about which the minister of foreign affairs spoke, and to which not all countries are adhering, is only temporary, which will be forgotten after some time, and the day will come when the people will seek to impose the will of one over the other. How are we guaranteeing the security of the country, by decreasing the war power of the country?"²⁴¹ The leader of

²³⁹ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 462-462.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 492-500, 518-519.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 461-462.

the Progressive Unity, K. Zavitsianos, maintained that such agreements would have no power, when the interests would change and an air of differences would blow.²⁴²

In the framework of this argument, which we followed also through the anti-Venizelist newspaper, armament and the preservation of ideals were the main weapons safeguarding the future of Greece, while bilateral agreements were temporary and of less significance. “Together with the friendship to our neighbouring countries we should follow a policy of more intensive armament...so that we can safeguard all our traditions, all our ideals, on which always our race had rested, in order not only to live united, but to thrive. The ideals and the armament are equally important and necessary especially for this after-war situation, as this is changing daily. The League of Nations, the Kellogg agreement and the Pan-European dream were not enough...The defence of a country can’t be based on agreements, much less the territorial and economic integrity of it.”²⁴³

To all these accusations for immense sacrifices during the agreements with Turkey, Venizelos answered in a realistic way, admitting the defeated position in which Greece was at that particular time: “We have lost the war and we can’t ask from Turkey to *re-activate the capitulations* (my emphasis). Our excessive demands would surely be rejected by Turkey, so we even didn’t ask for them...We can rise these issues again later when the friendly relationships will be going on...Greece can’t rely only on its military power; even the great German army didn’t achieve something like this.”²⁴⁴

Not much more could have been asked from Turkey, as in the after-war era anyhow all the countries followed a more nationalist policy and an economically

²⁴² Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 464-472.

²⁴³ *Loc. Cit.*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 507-516.

conservative policy. “We have to abandon the *old image* we have of Turkey (my emphasis), with the capitulations and the multiple restrictions on its sovereignty. We are used to a Turkey which was treated as a subject almost country to accept all the demands of other countries. Today Turkey is a free and totally sovereign country. We can’t impose a situation similar to the capitulations.”²⁴⁵

In private discussions after his return from the Ankara trip, Venizelos not only expressed his enthusiasm for the signed agreements and the accompanying atmosphere, but confessed also his belief that the *indigenous Greeks* (my emphasis), not the refugees, would return to Asia Minor by means of the settlement agreement and penetrate it economically. “With this new policy a big horizon is opening in front of us. The borders of Asia Minor are opening again to us; our population will again flow into these territories.” Venizelos told how he had said to Kemal (Atatürk) that the only reason for war between the two countries would be if Turkey would call back the Greek-Orthodox people who had left its territory. After the Greek state had made so many sacrifices for them, they would be a source of power and progress, and Greece could not accept their being taken back by Turkey. “Not right away, slowly slowly, maybe in the process of some years, the ones who will want to settle in their country (of the Turks) will not be the Greek-Orthodox coming from Asia Minor, who would want to go back to their places, but the Greeks, the Greeks who live in Greece...”²⁴⁶

To justify their policy even more, politicians close to the government spoke in the name of people who were supposed to share it. A. Papanastasiou, in a populist discourse, declared in the parliament:

²⁴⁵ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίδες των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 507-516.

²⁴⁶ P. Zannas, *Αρχείο της Π.Σ. Δέλτα, Ελευθέριος Κ. Βενιζέλος, Ημερολόγιο-Αναμνήσεις-Μαρτυρίες-Αλληλογραφία* (Archive of P.S. Delta, Eleftherios K. Venizelos, Diary-Memories-Confessions-Letters), (Αθήνα: Ερμής, 2002), pp. 170-171, cited in Demirözü, pp. 165-168.

[The ones that are against the agreement] forgot that in the past our own people were directed to negate the other people, the sufferings that both the Greeks and the Turks went through, more the former than the latter. The consciousness of the two people has changed, both in June and with this agreement now again. The big change is not so much in the details of the agreements, but in the *general spirit* (my emphasis): The two people come together *willing* (my emphasis) to recognize the need for change. Compared to the past we are a big step ahead.²⁴⁷

Venizelos, on the other hand, aware of the overwhelming support he was receiving from the refugees, took their support for the agreements for granted: “I admire the *political maturity* (my emphasis) of the young Greek citizens, who eight years ago were still citizens of Turkey and were dragged out of their homes, who not only share the happiness of their other fellow citizens for the new policy of the close friendship of the two nations, but directed by a *good political instinct* (my emphasis) for the national interests, the promotion of which helps in the best way also *their own interests* (my emphasis), they accept this policy without reservations, as far as I am able to know.”²⁴⁸ The interests of the “new citizens” were interpreted and filtrated through the interests of their new homeland, so they were not allowed to pursue any policies which would go against them. Compliance with state policy was the only way for the new citizens to prove their eligibility for their new citizenship, a fact of which they were aware and because of which they adopted a discourse of limited complaint.

The Depiction of Turkey

Similarly to the Venizelist *Ελευθέρον Βήμα* (Free Tribune), Venizelos was eager to fix the image of Turkey on new grounds, and in contrast to what he coins the “cosmopolitan chaos” of the Ottoman Empire. Following his return from Ankara, Venizelos declared

²⁴⁷ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 482-483.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 507-516.

to the Athenian public: “I found a wholly new Turkey, which doesn’t remind of anything the old one we used to know. It is a state fully organized and modernized, which is worth of being proud of.”²⁴⁹ ²⁵⁰ Similar to the effort he spent to disentangle himself from the gloomy past of Greece, he also tried to disentangle modern Turkey from all the negative connotations the Ottoman Empire brought to contemporary Greeks. In the parliament discussion in June 1930 he said: “But the new Turkey is the biggest enemy of the Ottoman Empire. We both work for the establishment of homogenous nation states” and “Both countries sincerely accept their present borders. They are concentrated on the domestic reconstruction. With sincere affinity and real admiration do we follow the work that is being completed by the present government of Turkey, for the reconstruction of the Turkish state.”²⁵¹

Keeping in tact with the general racial discourse of the time, Venizelos adopted himself the racially exalting discourses mushrooming in that period in Turkey. In a speech in the town of Rethimno, Crete, Venizelos characterized the Turks as a “race of

²⁴⁹ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 3 November 1930.

²⁵⁰ Similar are his observations in private discussions, when speaking to the Greek writer Pinelopi Delta: “[Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk)] is a big man. Even the decision to take the capital city from Istanbul and bring it to Asia Minor is a big decision, a decision which only a big politician can take. Ankara, this bad place, to what a condition did he bring it! There are buildings of which even we can be jealous. They made buildings or the ministry of internal affairs, for 400,000 lira and the Turkish Hearths and more and more. They construct even more buildings.” “If you would ask them [the citizens of Turkey] until now what they are they would say to you that they are “Muslims” or “Islam.” They were afraid to say that they are Turks. Now with the systematic national propaganda they are also proud and they say to you “I am Turk.” This was a success of Kemal. As you see all the women are with them, he achieved in raising the new generation of women with these ideas. [He] is very progressive. The women feel this part of him, they follow him and they raise their children in this atmosphere appropriately.” He also utters his surprise about the enthusiasm with which simple people accepted him in Turkey, as the Greeks passed through the same territories and burned everything during their withdrawal. Zanna, pp. 170-171, cited in Demirözü, pp. 165-168.

²⁵¹ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 25 June 1930, session 91, pp. 1314-1330.

lords.”²⁵² “After the realization of our common interests, we understood also how much we are close in racial terms, more than is commonly believed.”²⁵³

Culture and race, the two sides of cultural nationalism, were extracted from their specific meaning. Culture was the ecumenical, peaceful one, while race was no longer Turkish or Greek, but Aryan: “The Turks maintain, and I think rightly, that they belong to the Aryan race, while they also have blood from outside. They say that in Asia Minor there were always the Cappadocians, the Skithes, the Assyrians and other races. ‘You Greeks went and made them Greeks, and for a long time they were Greeks. And then we Turks came and made them Turks. But they are the same populations.’ During the march in Ankara..., I also saw a big number of soldiers and boy-scouts, which were wonderful boy-scouts, with blue eyes.”²⁵⁴

With all this positive discourse Turkey became a mirror and confirmation of Greece, as the same traits were attributed to it. In Venizelos’ discourse, Greece was also a homogenous country, having integrated the biggest possible ethnic population to which it could have aspirations, thereby somehow justifying the “necessity” of the compulsory population exchange. Similar to Turkey, Greece was no longer monarchy any more. Thereby, given the republican-royalist contest going on in Greece, Venizelos was legitimizing himself as a democratic ruler and together with him also Greece as a democratic country, de-legitimizing in that way the royalist, non-democratic aspirations of the opposition. In naming (Kemal) Atatürk a big state builder and a democrat, he justified himself also as one, and built the image of two powerful paternalistic figures deciding for the good of their nations. One has to be reminded here of Venizelos’

²⁵² *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 9 November 1930.

²⁵³ Eleftherios Venizelos, *Πολιτικά Υποθήματα* (Political), edited by Stefanos Stefanou, (Athens: n.p., 1969), p. 280.

²⁵⁴ *Loc. Cit.*

opinion about the public (“We have the people with us, but even if it wouldn’t be like that we again would make them follow the same policy, because the real leaders have to dare and not to be driven by the people.”) as well of the fact that Venizelos threatened with expulsion from the party whatever deputy of the Liberal Party voted against the agreement.

Turkey was made familiar and legitimized once more, through the underlining of the warm acceptance of the Greek politicians in Ankara, as well as the agreements themselves, by the whole political spectrum in Turkey. In Ankara Kemal (Atatürk) and Venizelos made compliments to each other, whereas Venizelos called the former re-creator of Turkey and Kemal (Atatürk) Venizelos as a big politician. Venizelos accused his opponents, maintaining that “The ones who accuse that we did too many sacrifices should be in Ankara to see how friendly we were welcomed by our neighbours. Greece was not diminished the least in Ankara” and Greek foreign minister Michalakopoulos reassured about Turkey’s intentions, “Also in Turkey the past wants to be forgotten and they want tight economic relationships in the future. Even the opposition party wants the friendship with Greece, Fethi Bey.”²⁵⁵

Apart from political similarity and the mutual recognition of each other as modern and democratic states, further elements were used by Venizelos in order to underline the common bonds between the two countries: The fact that they were neighbours, the Aegean Sea, the centuries of living together and the “mutual understanding” that had evolved within this process, a so-called common culture that was formed through the centuries-long living together.²⁵⁶ The past was therefore

²⁵⁵ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 26 November 1930, session 9, pp. 7-12, 20 December 1930, session 22, pp. 507-516.

²⁵⁶ “Our historical war with Turkey, which lasted for so many centuries, has come with the last war to an end. Our neighborhood, and especially the long living together on the same territories of Greek and Turkish populations, enables the understanding between the two nations, which ensures that our cooperation also on other fields, especially on the economic one, will be fruitful.” Democracy of

reinterpreted as a positive experience, which had brought about an understanding, while the black points in this framework were relativized. No reference to the “terrible Ottoman yoke, responsible for Greek backwardness for 400 years,” a discourse so common in official Greek nationalism, was being made. Even one of the darkest points in the common past, pertaining to the vanishing of the Byzantine Empire due to the Ottoman conquest, was put into a totally new light: “When the Turks arrived the Byzantine Empire was at its end, and somebody would take it. So, do you think that it would be less harm if somebody else would take it except the Turks? I don’t think so.”²⁵⁷

Negative moments in the past had to be forgotten, and it was recognized that this had to be done on both sides: “I was accused that I have forgotten the sacrifices of the Greek army in Asia Minor, but if we didn’t forget how else could we make friendship? Turkey is also obliged to forget, to a bigger degree, as all the western part has become playground of war. Turkey had to forget all this depopulation, as we constituted invaders, we were invaders. If Turkey forgot why shouldn’t I also forget?”²⁵⁸ Turkey was recognized as the victim of the preceding war, the “invaded country and playground of war,” and the progress of both countries was dependent on oblivion.

In the parliament discussions in June 1930 Venizelos also was eager to prove that he had always been in favour of the rapprochement between Greece and Turkey. What he meant back before the Balkan Wars had been a rapprochement through “peaceful” means, that is, a cultural domination of the Greek element in the Ottoman Empire. Going back to an article of his in a Cretan newspaper in 1908, Venizelos commented positively on the Young Turk revolution, believing that it would lead to

Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 25 June 1930, session 91, pp. 1314-1330.

²⁵⁷ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, 9 November 1930.

²⁵⁸ Democracy of Greece, *art. cit.*

stronger cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and Greece for the regeneration of Anatolia. In the same article, he spoke about Hellenism, which “has never been expansive” and what he felt could become the mean organ of the regeneration of Anatolia, that is, of the countries which it had influenced from the beginning.²⁵⁹ Venizelos indeed believed -before the Balkan Wars- in a “peaceful cooperation” between Greece and the Ottoman Empire, in which the former would dominate over the latter by actually taking advantage of the parliamentary reality of the later.

If Turkey would be demolished right away we would get only a small piece of Macedonia...But think about it, in Turkey there are eight million Turks and five million Greeks. We could play an important role in an Ottoman state which would be constitutional and liberal. We would accept a federation between Greece and Turkey. In that way we would have much greater influence, rather than in the case we would get a certain territory and the islands. Didn't the Eastern Roman state in time become a Greek state? Likewise today, in time, and with the weakening of fanatic thinking, the national element which is more civilized will manage to dominate. But will Turkey realize its real interests? If the Young Turks will continue to follow a nationalism dangerous for their country, if they are behind us, if they treat us bad, then an agreement between the Greeks and the Slavic nations will be inevitable.²⁶⁰

That is, Venizelos saw in the political change brought about in the Ottoman Empire with the Young Turk revolution, and the establishment of a constitutional regime, the potential for the Greek element living in the Ottoman Empire to dominate through exactly these new political opportunities. This political change gave the possibility for another way of realizing the Great Idea and the “cultural mission” of the Greek element, dependent though on the fact that the Turkish part would agree on its realization. He described Greece not as an expansive but as a cultural force.

But as Venizelos explains in the parliament discussions in June 1930 the course of history, that is the Balkan Wars, the First World War, prevented his vision of a

²⁵⁹ Venizelos, pp. 271-272.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 273.

cultural, “peaceful” domination.²⁶¹ His cultural discourse would evolve though again during the Greek-Turkish War, when Venizelos was writing in a newspaper article in 1920:

When it will be known that the Greek David won the Turkish Goliath, the tyranny of which was unbearable by all the nations which were under him, the Ottoman Empire will not be alive any more, while the Muslim populations of Asia Minor will be subject finally to the aegis of the Allies, whereas the *civilized* nations will be dominating (my emphasis)...No, Greece is not acting against Islam, but against the Ottoman Empire, which constitutes an anachronism, against the corrupt, blood-thirsty and unconscious Turkish administration, in order to oust it from the territories which are mainly Greek...We are not inspired by expansive aspirations, nor are we after dangerous idle wishes, that is, to capture and to hold Anatolia. Our aim is to enforce the peace of the Allies, and not our own, on Turkey.²⁶²

While Venizelos went back to the past to prove this long-life devotion to Greek-Turkish cooperation, we see that this was envisioned always through a way of cultural domination which would lead eventually to a political one. In the new discourse he came to use in 1930, culture was totally absent, as we will see in the new section, analyzing the elements to which Venizelos referred in his effort to build the discourse of a new Greek national identity.

²⁶¹ Some months before the Balkan Wars, he had suggested to the Ottoman Empire to accept the entering of Cretan deputies in the Greek parliament on the basis that Greece would recognize the domination rights of the sultan over Crete, and would pay a tax of subordination on behalf of Crete. But the offer was not been accepted. Similarly, after the Balkan Wars, when the Ottoman Empire started to expel Greeks populations from its territories, Venizelos proposed to the empire a partly exchange of populations, on a voluntary basis. But this idea, the exchange of which would be the recognition of the Greek sovereignty over the islands, couldn't be fulfilled because of the outbreak of the First World War. The dilemma Venizelos had when the First World War broke out was either to stay neutral, and endanger, if Germany would win, the loss of the Aegean islands and the expulsion of the Greek population of Turkey (as it had started to happen in 1914), or to take part in the war, and by contributing to the Allies' win, to secure the Greek population in Anatolia and the islands.

²⁶² Venizelos, p. 242.

Elements of a New Greek Identity

While legitimizing Turkey in the eyes of the Greek politicians and public opinion by depriving it of its inimical image, Venizelos simultaneously had to build a new national identity for the country he was governing, as by now he had rejected the Great Idea, having played a consolidating role for almost a hundred years. In this framework Venizelos offered a new, anti-militaristic nationalism, which for him constituted a new page in Greek history. While he still adhered to the image of the century-long presence of the Greek nation and the glorification of the glorious ancestors, this heritage was now to be proven in the field of sciences.

On 25 March 1930, during the centenary celebrations of Greece's independence, Venizelos saw the occasion as an opportunity for the national soul to prove that it was robust, but "it doesn't mean that we prepare for more wars."²⁶³ Addressing the youth, Venizelos maintained during his presentation of his new naval program at the beginning of 1930, that it should be raised with a peaceful spirit. Similar to a speech in Tripolis: "You will ask me: What are you going to tell our young people? I will tell them first to have a strong body, a good education, and with these virtues to go into the society... Instead of dreaming of war glories, as long as our independence is not under threat, see how to become big scientists. Nobody of the generals has such a big fame as Pasteur."

Similar to a speech to the Liberal Youth in February 1929, he maintains: "Humanity came to a point, when it is obliged to abolish wars, if it doesn't want the

²⁶³ *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*,

modern civilization to brake up and suffer shipwreck in the wars. That's why I fully accept the results of the agreements, through which the war had ended for Greece."²⁶⁴

The need for a new peaceful consciousness was recognized also by other Venizelist politicians, like A. Papanastasiou:

We lost and we were in danger, but we have to recognize, if we are just people, that the dangers which the Turkish nation went through because of us were much bigger and much higher than the ones we went through. If we recognize this we have to admit that as much as we may want to erase the past, this is not possible to happen within a day. The responsible persons of the two nations are aiming in creating a *new national consciousness* (my emphasis), a new psychology, but this is not possible to happen within a day. It will happen as long as the trust of one to another will rise.²⁶⁵

With this anti-militarist picture Venizelos and members of the democratic-liberal frontier were drawing, they were careful not to be mixed with any "subversive" communist ones. Speaking again to the Young Liberals he warned them not to be affected by the "mental illness of the time." "Don't be irritated by the mental illness, which was the result of the First World War, and which comes to the conclusion that all the old values have to be rejected. The idea of the motherland... of the human society...of the family... of the religious believes... are the most secure foundations on which we can secure our every effort, in order to achieve the gradual improvement of our social regime."²⁶⁶

The toleration of this "imported subversive idea" could be much less, taking into account the contemporary condition of Greece:

It would not be possible for the government to put up with this [the transmission of ideas about the violent subversion of the social regime] not even if the Communist party would be a product of the Greek territory. But at the moment at which we all know that the movement which looks for the violent subversion of the social regime is taking its

²⁶⁴ Venizelos, p. 260.

²⁶⁵ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 20 December 1930, session 22, pp. 482-483.

²⁶⁶ Speaking to the Young Liberals on 17 February 1929, Venizelos, p. 335.

aspirations from outside the borders of Greece it is impossible to tolerate that, especially today, in this transitory period through which Greece is going, coming out of the world war with a big destruction, having to care for the total settlement of a 1.5 million brothers, it is impossible to tolerate they way this crime is being presented to us, that is the subversion of the social regime, without taking any measures.²⁶⁷

Despite his underlining of the importance of the nation-state, Venizelos knew that his proposal for a Greek anti-militarist national consciousness would result in his accusation of oblivion of the bloody past and his own project, the Great Idea. “You will not deny me...that at least temporarily I managed to fulfil the craziest national dreams of ours...Why was it a failure?...I believe that the collapse of the project happened because of the civil war, and by saying this, I am not insulting anybody. How are [my opponents] thinking that it is allowed to this nation and its men to continue to have as a program of national policy the further pursue of the old “Megali Idea” through the expansion of our territories to the Turkish territories?” In this discourse the Great Idea was not seen as a negative conception from the beginning, but more a failure due to wrong implementation. Thereby Venizelos disentangled himself from Greece’s failure, constituted him the one least to blame for it, and the one, first and quick enough, to recognize its end and the need for a new start.

While a general dispute about the responsibility of the Asia Minor catastrophe between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists was going on²⁶⁸ -evident in relevant articles in newspapers trying to reinterpret over and over historical facts “from the right perspective,” it seems that Venizelos, attributing the disaster to a domestic dispute about the right conduct of the war following his loss in the elections of November

²⁶⁷ Speaking in the parliament in April 1929, Venizelos, p. 358.

²⁶⁸ Leading the leader of the opposition P. Tsaldaris to close his speech about the economic agreement in the Greek parliament in June 1930 with following words: “I despise the fact that part of the population has the idea that his party was to blame for the disaster. This part should learn today than neither we did want this war. Not because we wanted to have good relations with Turkey, but because we were afraid of the fate of the Greek population in it.” *Democracy of Greece, Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 25 June 1930, session 91, pp. 1314-1330, p. 1343.

1920, wanted to build for himself a new, modern, pacifist image, disentangling himself from the issue of war and defeat. In this image he went so far as to name the Greek army landing in Smyrna in 1919 an invasion, in contrast to the original justification of the act, explaining that it had been done to protect the Christian minorities living on the Aegean coast.

Contrary to the spirit of Venizelos, the opposition used a more danger- and ideal-based discourse and a much more romantic notion of nationalism. While the leaders of the opposition, Tsaldaris and Kafantaris,²⁶⁹ agreed with the policy of friendship, they had their reservations. Some party members even regarded peace with Turkey being viewed as possibly temporary and the present exaggerated way with which peace was being concluded a betrayal of ideals, while a longing for the Great Idea came to the forefront.

Parliamentarian I. Mountzouridis of the opposition party accused Venizelos of having betrayed the ideals and the dreams of the Greek nation, and acting “as if the territories belong to him, sometimes giving them sometimes aspiring to them, drawing the boundaries he wants. And he ended any bond to the city of dreams, the one which nurtured the national independence and the Greek freedom.”²⁷⁰ Similarly, the leader of the Progressive Unity, Zavitsianos,²⁷¹ who had collaborated in the elections with Venizelos, criticized, apart from the neglect of the armament, the neglect of the ideals of the Greek race, of the national ideals which should continuously have been cultivated in school and teaching.

In order to use your army you need ideals to make the people move. And the ideals are for free. The notion of homeland in Greece is connected to

²⁶⁹ Democracy of Greece, *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Newspaper of the discussions), 20 December 1930, session 22, pp. 472-475, 498-500, 516-519.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 461-462.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 464-472.

the national traditions, and the national ideals are being transmitted from generation to generation. Their neglect will have as a consequence the rise of incidents like of the 107 students in Thessaloniki, which when called to give their opinion about the issue of homeland, and whether we should continue to give importance to it or to dissolve in the League of Nations, they answered in a way of making fun of their fatherland, and of the glory of the ancestors. We are running the danger to loose our national soul, hearing all the time that the national restoration is completed, that nobody is against our territory, that we have no aspirations any more, no dreams and ideals. Without the ideals nobody will be willing to fight for some other part of Greece. The direction of the national consciousness to this comfortable ideology is very dangerous, not only because it leads to a youth which is materialistic, but is also against the basis of our own nation.

Similar to the discourse used by the main newspaper of the opposition, the *H Kathimerini* (Daily), the national ideals were regarded as a necessary protection against the communist danger, which was depicted as deprived of ideals, and any notion of homeland and family.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TURKISH DISCOURSE

Reflections in the Turkish Press

Newspapers issued in Turkey during the single-party era have to be read through the lenses of the contemporary political pressure existing over the field of journalism. A brief introduction into the legal prohibitions exerted on publishers after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 will facilitate a better reading of the following nationalist discourses.

While for a long period after the establishment of the Turkish Republic the old Press Law from 1909 continued to be valid, on 7 October 1923, a few days after the entering of the nationalist forces into Istanbul, the Turkish parliament voted for the abolition of the martial law and censorship established during the time of the allied occupation of the city. Nevertheless, the Kurdish uprising of 1925, the plot of Izmir in 1926, the establishment of the Independence Courts, the Menemen incident of 1930, were all factors resulting in extensive pressure on the press.²⁷² Particularly, according to the *Takrir-i Sükun* (Law for the Maintenance of Order) the newspapers which endorsed liberal or socialist views were closed in 1925. The total newspaper sales, amounting to

²⁷² Hifzi Topuz, *II. Mahmut' tan holdinglere Türk Basın Tarihi* (History of Turkish press from Mahmud the second to corporations) (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2003), p. 155.

120,000 in 1925, dropped after the establishment of strict censorship in 1926, to 50,000.²⁷³

After the closure of the short-lived oppositional Free Republicans Party (*Serbest Cumburiyet Fırkası*), which had been supported by a small number of newspapers in Istanbul and Smyrna, a new Press Law was issued in 1931. Following its provisions, people who had been tried for animosity towards the country, the national Independence War, the republic or the revolution, were forbidden to issue a newspaper. Similarly, articles provoking to the commission of a crime, publishing lies or making provocations pertaining to the sultanate, the caliphate, communism, or anarchism, were prohibited from being published. Most importantly, the government could close newspapers and periodicals which were against the “general politics of the country.”²⁷⁴

The Official View

According to Falih Rıfki Atay, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) considered the newspaper *Cumburiyet* (Republic) to be his own. The latter had taken in May 1924 the place of the newspaper *Yeni Gün* (New Day), which had first appeared, under the administration of Yunus Nadi, in Ankara on 9 August 1920, being the semi-official speaker of the Ankara government. Contrary to the full support provided by *Cumburiyet* to the friendship policy with Greece in 1930, publications from its first years comprised the following phrases: “The issue that we can’t forget even for one moment is the following: Greece has to collapse!” (Yunus Nadi, 9 December 1921), or “Greece has to collapse and it surely will do so” (Yunus Nadi, 7 April 1922).²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Keyder, p. 84.

²⁷⁴ Topuz, pp. 154-161.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

During the first half of 1930, articles of the newspaper dealing with Greece almost exclusively focused on the negotiations going on between the two countries concerning the signing of an economic agreement. Differences in the Turkish and the Greek views were reported. While Turkey was inclined to a paying off of the wishes of each party, Greece wanted the neutral members of the Mixed Commission to make their own estimations about the properties left behind.²⁷⁶

Through a reportage with Tevfik Kamil Bey, the Turkish representative in the Mixed Commission, the official Turkish position was reproduced, according to which the Rums left “very insignificant things” in Turkey,²⁷⁷ as well as the latter’s definite proposal about a set-off of properties. The editor, Yunus Nadi, maintained that, while Lausanne aimed at ensuring the personal rights of the exchanged and the *etablis* (established), its premises were difficult to apply to some millions of people.²⁷⁸

While the diplomatic conduct continued to be reported,²⁷⁹ from the beginning of the year the focus of *Cumhuriyet* was on the Greek prime minister, Eleftherios Venizelos. Especially in May, when due to the issue of a set-off of the properties negotiations were not developing in a positive way, Venizelos appeared to confirm Greece’s peaceful position: “I did everything for the unity of the nation, but later they took out their eyes with their own hands, and today’s Greece stretches until the Meric river, and has a dignified position between the big nations. We don’t need war any

²⁷⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 February 1930.

²⁷⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 22 May 1930.

²⁷⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 19 March 1930.

²⁷⁹ On March the perspective of a full compensation of the exchangees was still under discussion (*Cumhuriyet*, 14 March 1930), while Turkey was constantly proposing the solution of a set-off. *Cumhuriyet*, 4 May, 14 June 1930.

more...A new period of friendship has to begin between the two nations. We lost the war with Turkey in Anatolia, but we won in the European part.”²⁸⁰

But even before that, since the beginning of the year, Venizelos was systematically portrayed as a peaceful figure, with the reproduction of his statements during the discussions for a new naval program in the Greek parliament (“The fixing of “Yavuz” didn’t have Greece as an aim. Turkey follows a peaceful policy.”²⁸¹), of the thankful response to them by the Turkish ambassador in Athens (“Enis Bey met with Venizelos and thanked him for his positive language in the parliament during the discussion of the naval agreement.”²⁸²), and with presenting Venizelos’ commitment to Greek-Turkish friendship as ever-present (“My policy can’t be against Turkey...I worked as was possible to avoid the Balkan Wars. In 1914 the Turks started to throw out the Rums, they bought a ship from the British to use it against us, and so we tied ourselves to England, France and Italy. We don’t want to fight again. Why shouldn’t we become friends? Our economic interests are not different.”²⁸³).²⁸⁴

Reports on Greek-Turkish diplomatic conduct increased both before and after the signing of the economic agreement in June 1930. Pertaining to the ratification of the agreement by the Turkish parliament, İsmet Paşa (İnonü) and the Turkish foreign minister were reported to have made “wonderful” speeches, whereas the oppositional voices raised by deputies during the discussion in the parliament (see below) are being

²⁸⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 May 1930.

²⁸¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 22 February 1930.

²⁸² *Cumhuriyet*, 23 February 1930.

²⁸³ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 March 1930.

²⁸⁴ Similarly, on 30 March, Venizelos stated that Greece’s 500-years long trial with Turkey had ended, and now peace had been made (*Cumhuriyet*, 30 March 1930). Or in May, Venizelos declared in an interview the peace-loving policy of Greece, and assures that it had no eyes on Anatolia. *Cumhuriyet*, 4 March 1930.

silenced. The final approval of the agreement in Turkey was said to have been accepted in Athens with great satisfaction by both the political circles and the *public opinion*, which was equated with the country's government-loyal press.²⁸⁵

Pertaining to the relevant discussions in the Greek parliament, which had been going on for several days, the oppositional voices were mentioned,²⁸⁶ but attention mainly was given to Venizelos' statements that "Turkey is a homogenous nation," and that he "approach[es] the civilizing and regenerating accomplishments of modern Turkey with great admiration." His decisiveness was underlined, as he had threatened that he would dissolve the parliament in case the agreement was not accepted,²⁸⁷ and made clear that the ones who voted against the agreement would be thrown out of the party.²⁸⁸ After the ratification, he stated his satisfaction with the dissolution of the bilateral problems and promised that he would visit Ankara in the autumn, the people who ruled the fate of Turkey and worked for its development and reforms.²⁸⁹ Overall, the ratification was viewed as an accomplishment of Venizelos himself, who underlined in the parliament that "it is not possible to compel Turkey to abandon its dignity and pride,"²⁹⁰ while the agreement was accepted not only by the parliament, but also by the Greek *public*, which "feels the need for a more close friendship with Turkey."²⁹¹

The reactions of the Greek refugees to the agreement were reproduced, accompanied nevertheless by Venizelos' statements that he would not permit anybody

²⁸⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 June 1930.

²⁸⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 17 June 1930.

²⁸⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 June 1930.

²⁸⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 June 1930.

²⁸⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 20 June 1930.

²⁹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 June 1930.

²⁹¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 June 1930.

to disobey the policies of friendship with Turkey.²⁹² They were said to be backed by the oppositional, anti-Venizelist powers,²⁹³ while in one of their meetings in the theatre “*Trianon*” in Athens, “very bad words” were directed against Venizelos himself, while the demonstration ended in a fighting with the police.²⁹⁴ It was underlined anyhow that the refugees demanded the rest of their compensation from the Greek state, and Turkey was therefore no longer involved in the dispute.

During the summer of 1930, the on-going bilateral negotiations were reported almost on a daily basis.²⁹⁵ Celebrations on the anniversary day of the signing of the Lausanne Treaty are not combined with an inimical depiction of the Greeks as war enemies, but rather with the oppositional depiction of the “embedded with slaveries and degradations Sevres Treaty.”²⁹⁶

The positive atmosphere was interrupted twice in August. In the first instance, Yunus Nadi complained about the situation of the sub-group of Muslims who had left Greek territory before 1912 and were not compensated according to the agreement of 1930.²⁹⁷ This was also the only group of the exchange agreement, the interests of which were mentioned and supported by the newspaper, while no mentioning of the situation of the vast group of the refugees as a whole was being made. On the other hand, three days later an article dealing with the fleets of the two countries complaints about the

²⁹² *Cumhuriyet*, 21 February 1930.

²⁹³ *Cumhuriyet*, 20 June 1930.

²⁹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 June 1930.

²⁹⁵ See for example: *Cumhuriyet*, 5, 4, 6, 11, 14 July 1930.

²⁹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 July 1930. On the anniversary day of the second İnonü victory Greeks are presented to have attacked the Turks “with the help of the British.” *Cumhuriyet*, 30 March 1930. But on 9 September, the conquest of Smyrna eight years earlier was remembered, whereas in an article written by Abidin Daver, it was written: “I tremble when I think about that day...If it hadn’t been for that day, there would be trampling today on Smyrna’s streets the shoes of the *Efşon* (“Greek soldiers”), on the Kadife castle there would be a blue-white flag.” *Cumhuriyet*, 9 September 1930.

²⁹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 August 1930.

fact that Greece had continuously the Turkish fleet in sight, which “makes one think that the Greek fleet aims directly at the Turkish one.”²⁹⁸

The foundation of a new oppositional party by Fethi Bey at the beginning of August opened the issue of minorities in Turkey,²⁹⁹ much less in *Cumhuriyet* than in the newspaper *Vakit* (Time), analyzed below. While the foundation of the party under the auspices of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) himself initially was welcomed as a sign of democratic development in the country,³⁰⁰ which nevertheless would soon be transformed into an inimical depiction of Fethi Bey,³⁰¹ his founder’s ideas on the minorities issue seem problematic.

They were touched upon by an article of Yunus Nadi entitled “Turkish citizenship,” in which Fethi Bey’s statements that he would not take into account race and religion when choosing the candidates of the new party were criticized. Yunus Nadi maintained that “in Turkey we have and we don’t have minorities,” and that, while minorities came up as a concept after the world war, the Turks perceived it as their biggest principle to establish the new country’s life on the most appropriate rules and conditions. Having the latter in mind, priority was given to ensuring equal and contemporary law provisions for all citizens, rather than to the benefits the Lausanne agreement was procuring for the minorities. Nevertheless, the minorities chose to

²⁹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 August 1930.

²⁹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 August 1930. In addition, one month before, the writer of the daily column called “*Hem nalna hem mubna*” (“To hammer both horseshoe and nail”), complained one day that French was spoken too much in Istanbul and too many inscriptions were in French. On the next day, in an article called “Are we in Greece?” he complained about the Rum waiters in the district of Beyoğlu speaking and shouting in Greek to each other, although they knew Turkish and were in a Turkish environment. While he recognizes their right to speak whatever language they wanted in their own houses, he maintained that they were obliged to speak only Turkish in public spaces. Their doing the opposite was due to “our centuries-long carelessness and laziness to care about it! I don’t want to invade the minority rights, just as they shouldn’t invade publicly the Turkish law and language.” *Cumhuriyet*, 29, 30 July 1930.

³⁰⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 11, 12 August 1930.

³⁰¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 26 August 1930.

resign themselves from the minorities' rights, which were giving them a secondary position in comparison to the citizen rights. And as finally Turkey had come to make an agreement with Greece, the former could, not only in word but also in practice, *erase the difference* of minorities (my emphasis). So that Turkish democracy, being a *modern* republic (my emphasis), would embrace all its subjects without paying attention to differences of religions and race.³⁰²

The months before Venizelos came to Ankara were thus strongly coloured by the domestic politics of Turkey, whereas *Cumhuriyet* holds in general a more temperate position towards the new party and the incidents in Smyrna, in comparison to *Vakit*. Whilst the inimical discourse towards the minority-originated candidates of the party followed by the latter was not given credit, voters were divided anyhow. All of the minorities were said to give their votes to the oppositional party, and so, “consequently the ones who in every place give their vote to the Republican Peoples' party are *Turks* (my emphasis).”³⁰³

In anticipation of Venizelos' trip to Ankara in October, news about his arrival became more frequent,³⁰⁴ whereas the Greek prime minister himself continued to be the constant focal point of the whole bilateral process. The positive atmosphere created by the anticipation of his coming was distorted by the negative publications of some Turkish newspapers (see below, *Vakit*) against the Rum minority living in Istanbul, instigated by the appointing of minority candidates by the newly-formed oppositional party for the municipality elections. These publications were said to have strongly influenced “not only the *public opinion* (my emphasis), but also the most cool-headed

³⁰² *Cumhuriyet*, 21 August 1930.

³⁰³ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 October 1930.

³⁰⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 5, 12, 16, 21, 22 October 1930.

circles in Athens.”³⁰⁵ Some politicians visited Venizelos and asked him to postpone his trip to a more convenient time. The Greek foreign minister though rushed to state publicly that, while such statements did not cause pleasant feelings, they did not represent the Turkish press as a whole, and that only two of the newspapers issued in Istanbul had been preoccupied in the recent time with the minority issue. Finally, he reassured that Greek-Turkish relations would continue on the path of friendship, and that the anxieties stemming from such publications would disappear automatically during his trip to Ankara.

The latter was described in every detail and praise in the pages of *Cumhuriyet*. His arrival coincided with the victory of the Turkish football team Galatasaray against the Greek one, Aris,³⁰⁶ in Istanbul. Both news were given equal big space on the front page of the newspaper. “*Var ol, Galatasaray!*” (Well done, Galatasaray!), written in the colours of the team, red and yellow, was the headline put over the photo of Venizelos and his wife arriving in Istanbul.³⁰⁷ Venizelos was warmly welcomed by politicians and simple people gathered to see him, according to the reports, and back in Greece his trip was met with various remarks by the Greek press, of which once more only the newspapers close to the government were reproduced.³⁰⁸ Anyway, while during the next days details of the trip, the visits and the speeches were reproduced in all length, the

³⁰⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 October 1930.

³⁰⁶ The Greek group arrived some days before, on 23 October, accompanied by 200 Greek football fans, and it was the first time a Greek and a Turkish football group had played against each other. *Cumhuriyet*, 23, 24 October 1930.

³⁰⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 October 1930.

³⁰⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 October 1930.

focus remained on Venizelos, culminating in a series of articles dedicated to Venizelos, with the title “*Venizelos kimdir?*” (“Who is Venizelos?”).³⁰⁹

An article published on the day of the arrival of Venizelos in Ankara loyally reproduced the main lines of the official Turkish policy. The coming of the “person who was once called the biggest enemy of Turkey in the Balkans” to Ankara as a friend was described as one of the most important incidents among the political happenings of the world in recent years. The friendly atmosphere starting in Lausanne was perceived to start going “out of the official state relations and agreements” to influence also the *spirits* (my emphasis). While the Ottoman Empire and Greece had been in constant dispute, the national Independence War of Turkey and the Lausanne Treaty *had not eliminated only the sultanate, but likewise the Greek-Turkish animosity* (my emphasis), that is, the animosity and aggressive behaviour were something attributed exclusively to the Ottoman past. As no disagreement remained between the two countries, to continue the animosity only on the basis of past issues did not accord with *today’s spirit* (my emphasis). As both countries lived within *their national borders*, and had *no expansionist tendencies* (my emphasis), the reinforcement of the present peace with a friendship was no longer unthinkable. Greece and Turkey, having lived and fought against each other for centuries, knew each other only too well and could therefore be friends.³¹⁰

In another article, Venizelos’ life was presented as having been through four stages. The “man who represents the Greece of the twentieth century” was at this moment the guest of Ankara, which was “the centre of Turkey of the twentieth century,” and had come to erase the past of the last hundred years. Venizelos past

³⁰⁹ Similarly, when the ratification of the Ankara agreement by the Greek parliament was reported, while the existence of oppositional voices was mentioned, only Venizelos’ speech was reproduced in more detail. *Cumhuriyet*, 25 December 1930.

³¹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1930.

activity against the Ottoman state was twofold justified, not only because the latter “was *destined to fall off from its roots* (my emphasis),” but also because Venizelos was just practicing *idealism* next to the ones who wanted to practice *imperialism* (my emphasis) against the concussion of the Ottoman Empire.”³¹¹

Five articles were devoted from the first November and the following days to the life of Venizelos, starting from his early childhood years. Detailed information about his aristocratic origin and his family, as well as his school and study years was given.³¹² More or less he was presented as a very gifted person, a “wonder-child”, who developed the desire to build a big Greece due to the national raising he had had from his father, and the feelings he had developed during his law studies in Athens.³¹³

His arrival in Athens from Crete in 1910 after the “revolution of Goudi” organized by the Greek army, was described as the saving process of the Greek nation, which had been tired by the constant fighting between the political parties. His sweeping reforms encompassed the constitution, the judicial and administrative system, the finances and the army, rendering him a pioneer of *modernization* (my emphasis).³¹⁴

However, no mentioning of the Great Idea itself, or Greece’s expansionist aspirations, of which Venizelos was the main pioneer, was made in detail. On the contrary, the fighting with the Ottoman Empire was presented from the viewpoint of Venizelos’ discourse, according to which he was obliged to fight with the Ottoman Empire: After having made some proposals to the Ottoman state on the issue of

³¹¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 October 1930.

³¹² *Cumhuriyet*, 1 November 1930

³¹³ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 November 1930.

³¹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 November 1930.

Crete,³¹⁵ which remained unanswered, Venizelos was invited to participate in the alliance of the Balkan countries leading to the Balkan Wars.³¹⁶ Again, before the First World War, Venizelos was the one who tried to find a solution to the Greek-Ottoman problems, asking for an appointment from Ottoman vizier Sadrazam Sait Halim Paşa, which couldn't be materialized due to the breaking out of the World War.³¹⁷

In the latter Venizelos decided to enter on the side of the allies, “the countries which were ensuring the independence of Greece”,³¹⁸ as he was afraid of a possible attack by Turkey, having made an alliance with Bulgaria, and maintained therefore that the chance for cooperation with the allies was unique. Moreover, Venizelos strongly believed that England would greatly compensate Greece in western Anatolia. Finally, the participating of Greece in the world war on the part of the allies was presented as a result of promises, and finally immense pressures, of England, to which Venizelos succumbed.³¹⁹ Venizelos' hope for the realization of his dreams for a “big Greece” after the World War and for the parcelling of the Ottoman Empire was renewed only in the framework of the wider plans of the allies, as he awaited the “compensation” from them for Greece's services during the World War.³²⁰

After loosing the elections of November 1920, Venizelos still “didn't get tired of illuminating the politicians driven by the love for his home country,” and advised the Greek politicians to accept the offer of the allies for mediation in the Greek-Turkish

³¹⁵ The paying of some form of tax on behalf of the Cretans to the sublime porte, which would permit the entering of Cretan deputies into the Greek parliament.

³¹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 November 1930.

³¹⁷ *Loc. Cit.*

³¹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 November 1930.

³¹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 November 1930.

³²⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 November 1930.

war, whereas the final defeat was attributed to the wrong calculations of his opponents who were in power. Greece had come out of the Anatolian adventure in a ruined condition: “Finally the time for reconciliation with the winner Turks had come. There was only one person who could provide for the defence of defeated Greece: Venizelos.”³²¹ To the royalists who blamed him for the outcome of the war, Venizelos’ opponents were reported to have answered that it would be different if they had been in power, as Venizelos would have cared for an agreement with the Turks.

Apart from the articles focusing on the person of Venizelos, his diplomacy of a Greek-Turkish rapprochement was given special importance seen also from the angle of international, and particularly Balkan diplomacy. While the Balkan conference recently having taken place in Athens was evaluated as positive,³²² this peaceful atmosphere was attributed to the establishment of national states and the immense importance of the Greek-Turkish rapprochement.³²³ The disappearance of the “sick man of Europe,” the Ottoman Empire, for the heritage of which the Balkan countries had to quarrel with each other, and its substitution with a strong Turkey, “which accepts Western civilization and knows how to protect its rights and surrender to the real right of somebody else,” made understanding possible, as “in the time of the Ottoman Empire there was no possibility for the Balkan people to come to a mutual

³²¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 November 1930.

³²² During the Balkan conference in Athens in the beginning of October 1930 there were often correspondents writing from Athens to *Cumhuriyet*. Also Yakup Kadri, one of the Turkish representatives in the Balkan conference, stated after his return to Turkey that the Greek government warmly welcomed the participants, *especially* the Turkish ones (my emphasis). *Cumhuriyet*, 14 October 1930. Similarly, the head of the Turkish delegation, Hasan Bey, praised the unique Greek hospitality, shown especially to the Turkish delegation. *Cumhuriyet*, 19 October 1930. Both speak about the fruitful sessions between the representatives of the Balkan countries. Hasan Bey underlines that the Greek government “wants to forget the past and work unanimously on the common interests. The big minds that manage the fate of the nations, the big personalities that carry them will strengthen and consolidate their nation’s interests and future thoughts.”

³²³ *Cumhuriyet*, 19, 20 October 1930.

understanding neither among themselves nor with the government of Istanbul.”³²⁴

Under these circumstances, the signed and to-be-signed agreements between Greece and Turkey showed the way for the Balkan conference, which could not even have been thought of without these agreements.

The same writer appeared some days later with similar ideas, but a little bit refined, at least what the Ottoman past was concerned. This time, the Ottoman imperial past was interpreted under a different light: While the mentalities, social levels and political wishes of the Balkan people had been different, and antagonism prevailed among them, the Turkish rule had shaped among them a common economic, social and political level, and prepared that way the floor for a peaceful understanding among them. But the Balkan governments, solely because of their own political aspirations, where colliding with each other, to the extent that they constantly endangered European peace, whereas the first attempt by the Balkan countries to disentangle themselves from European policies was made by the Athens conference. While there were still many obstacles to Balkan peace, like the opposition to the Balkan conference showed for example in the Russian and Italian press, and the disagreements going on between Bulgaria and Serbia, and Serbia and Albania, if the Greek-Turkish rapprochement were taken as an example, both the way for a Balkan community would be opened and the intervention of outside powers impeded.³²⁵

Other articles focus on the simultaneous presence of the two prime ministers in Ankara, the Greek and the Hungarian one, both visits were regarded as “very important token of European politics.”³²⁶ Hungary was being approached with extreme warmth and understanding, due to its similarities with Turkey, both in its origins and in the

³²⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 19 October 1930.

³²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 October 1930.

³²⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1930.

recent calamities it went through due to the World War. Indeed, its prime minister was warmly welcomed according to the writer of the article, and, similar to the case with Greece, it was underlined that the rapprochement took place between two countries, which “are fully owning their *national independence* (my emphasis) and freedom”, while this rapprochement would be a “threat to the enemies of peace and reconciliation.”³²⁷

In the same article, the visit of Venizelos acquired special importance because of its coincidence with the prime minister of a brother-nation seen from the perspective of origin, that is, Hungary. In contrast to the “glorious Hungarian nation,” Greeks were described as “one of the smallest nations of Europe,” not having affinity with either the Slavs, or the Latin people or the Germans. Not only, like the Turks, were they a small nation in Europe, but they also were placed on a crossroad, where invasions between Europe and Asia take place. Due to their small quantity, they would not be able to stop future (Slav) invasions, and were therefore obliged to cooperate with Turkey against future calamities. While most Greek politicians did not realize this fact, “awaiting help from other places”, the experiences following the World War deceived them. Venizelos, who was praised for having understood “the real interests of the country” and saved his country from a lot of complicated situations, gave with his Ankara visit a lesson and a guide to the Greek nation.³²⁸

In another article, written by Yunus Nadi, extraordinary importance was attributed to the two visits from the perspective of world politics, due to their peace-corroborating role. As far as the “new Turkish republic is concerned” its focus was on its domestic development and progress, based on two principles: Not to have any expansionist aspirations outside its frontiers, and not to leave anyone the possibility to

³²⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1930.

³²⁸ *Loc. Cit.*

imagine the tramping down of Turkey's borders. Turkey starting its friendship policy with Soviet Russia, this gave space for several interpretations in Europe, despite the former not being the least an obstacle to the rapprochement between Turkey and the other countries.³²⁹

The same journalist used in another article a more intense and somewhat inimical discourse. Greek-Turkish animosity was attributed to the issue of Crete, in which on the Greek side Venizelos was at the fronts. After the incident of Tripoli, the Balkan Wars, and the World War, Venizelos, having returned to Greek governance, entered an alliance with the allies, wanting to “take a big part for himself from defeated Turkey, he proceeded to acts in order to take this morsel and eat it.”³³⁰ And while the allies were too “drunk” to think about the Turk's share in the heritage of the empire, and therefore may be excused, the Greeks “indeed pulled their curved daggers and aimed at the breasts of the Turks”, Venizelos being at the head of this movement. The Turks rebelled, crying “Greece is destined to collapse!”³³¹ Finally, Venizelos understood the sinking of his big dream when he participated in the Lausanne negotiations. Yunus Nadi described how he asked Venizelos personally about the change in his policy, and the latter answered: “In this matter I was a man following the stream of historical necessity...I didn't work against Turkey. I worked in favour of Greece...”³³²

The article concludes with the known, by now, reference to the modern world: “We have entered a *brand new world* (my emphasis), moving with brand new mentalities, which show us from totally new angles of perception the world situation and our

³²⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 31 October 1930.

³³⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 November 1930.

³³¹ *Loc. Cit.*

³³² *Loc. Cit.*

situation, comprised of our national life within our national borders, after the life of the empire which was lived with totally different mentalities became history.”

The agreement is described as being strongly endorsed by the public opinion in both Greece and Turkey. According to an editorial by Yunus Nadi, while Venizelos stated in Ankara that he made the Greek nation accept the agreement, he openly said that he expected the same from the Turkish public opinion.

There is no reason not to believe the personal sincerity of the [Greek] prime minister in this issue... Venizelos being a realist politician, his efforts undoubtedly are interpreted favourably biased also by the Turkish public opinion, and the friendship policy, which the Turkish government decided to follow towards Greece, are friendly accepted with vehemence and sincerity. Mister Venizelos and the Greek public opinion can be sure and reassured that the friendly manifestations continuing in Athens after Ankara are reflected and will be reflected in Turkey.³³³

Next to it is also “another view of Athens” was reported, which “is not as important as the former one, but can’t be neglected”: Reference was made to 500 supporters of the King, who had gathered in a theatre in Athens against the Turkish-Greek agreement, accusing Venizelos of betraying Greek traditions. This “false step” was characterized as peculiar, not only because it comes against the general friendly manifestations, but also because it came from people “who until now used to assert their peace-love and were accusing Mister Venizelos of war-addiction (*harpçuluk*).”³³⁴ Yunus Nadi asserted that “we just wanted to remind Mister Venizelos that there are also such people in Greece, who don’t share his own thoughts and line of action.” In addition, the “last initiative of Pangalos”³³⁵ was mentioned.³³⁶ Nevertheless, it was added that the

³³³ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 November 1930.

³³⁴ *Loc. Cit.*

³³⁵ This was the attempt of general Pangalos and some officers of the Greek army to stage a coup d’etat while Venizelos was in Ankara, manifesting thereby their opposition to the agreements under signing.

friendship policy would surely be able to put aside such barriers. “There has remained no obstacle for the foundation and the development of this friendship. In the face of the “views of Athens” (this being also the title of the article) this is also the conviction of the Turkish *public opinion* (my emphasis).”³³⁷

At the end of December, part of an article reporting on the ratification of the agreement by the Greek parliament was a paragraph with the heading “In Greece everybody is supporting the friendship with Turkey.” In it a Greek journalist visiting Istanbul ensured that all of Greece was moved by deep emotions for Turkey, and all the intellectuals and dignitaries thought that, among the good things Venizelos had done in Greece, the most important was the friendship between Greece and Turkey.³³⁸

The Official View: A Populist Variant

While similar to *Cumhuriyet* in that it gave its full support to the Kemalist government and therefore reflected the official line, *Vakit* (Time) was included in this research for the insight it provided into some facets of nationalist perception having been repressed or ignored by the official, governmental one.

This newspaper was issued for the first time on 22 October 1917 by Ahmet Emin Yalman and Mehmet Asım (Us) and gave its full support to the Turkish Independence War. Among the people who often contributed with their writings to the

³³⁶ Similarly, in an article of 20 November 1930, the “Pangalos incident” was referred to, being regarded as a token of the part of the Greek nation that had not been convinced of the necessity and the advantage of the Ankara agreement. Anyway, the expulsion from the army of the organizers of the attempted coup d’etat, and their legal persecution, was viewed as a sign of the power of the Venizelos’ government. But still some aspects of the incident are “not totally clear.” In an article of 11 November 1930, Venizelos answered to respective questions that the Greek nation was bound to a policy of tied cooperation and rapprochement with Turkey in a solid manner.

³³⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 November 1930.

³³⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 December 1930.

newspaper were Ahmet Şükrü Esmer, Resat Nuri and Prof. Selahattin, while Ziya Gökalp and Halide Edip wrote also from time to time in *Vakit*. As Yalman was exiled to Malta, because he had supported the independence movement, the direction of the newspaper remained in the hands of Asım (Us). The former departed totally from the newspaper after his return to Istanbul in March 1923, because of disagreements with his partners, leaving his share to the latter, who served also as a deputy of the region of Artvin during the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth periods.³³⁹

Vakit wholeheartedly supported the friendship policy with Greece, whereas the friendship discourse towards the latter³⁴⁰ was accompanied twice, during the signing of the economic agreement in June 1930 and before the signing of the Ankara Agreement in October with an inimical and conspiracy building discourse, if not propaganda, against the Rum minority in Istanbul.

Until the signing of the agreements of 1930 once or twice a week there appeared articles reporting on the progress of the negotiations between Greece and Turkey.³⁴¹ Similar to *Cumhuriyet*, the focus was on the economic issue and the possibility of return for the 30,000-40,000 non-exchangee Rums who had fled from Istanbul to Greece in the course of 1919 and 1922. While pertaining to the latter issue it was assured that these people would not be allowed to return and would be compensated on behalf of Greece,³⁴² in the property issue once more the official line is being reproduced, according to which the higher value of properties left in Greek over the

³³⁹ Topuz, p. 105.

³⁴⁰ Its only disgrace evolving, as we saw in the reports of the Greek newspapers, in the event of a Greek woman winning the European contest. The newspaper maintained that her origin was the Fener district of Istanbul, and part of her beauty was because of the city of her origin. The Turkish winner of 1929 stated to the newspaper that she was deeply hurt by the winning of a Greek woman, more than she would be in any other case. *Vakit*, 8 February 1930.

³⁴¹ *Vakit*, for example in January: See 5, 9, 24, 27 January 1930.

³⁴² *Vakit*, 12 January 1930, 8 February 1930.

ones in Turkey were being taken for granted. While Turkey was offering the solution of a set-off (*takas ve mahsup*), with or without the intervention of the neutral members of the Mixed Commission, Greece was expected to have to pay in this case,³⁴³ whereas the only issue under question was how much it would pay.³⁴⁴

People involved in the exchange process were either silenced, the refugees, like in the Turkish case, or discredited, this being true for the newspaper's position towards the Rum refugees in Greece. While the latter protest in Athens against the possibility of a set-off, which would leave them without compensation, their demands were rendered totally unjustified. Their estimations according to which the proportion of the properties' value left in Turkey and Greece was 350 to 45 million drachmas, were described as "silly", with the explanation that the Rum properties had been destroyed during the war, while "...the ones who left Greece had big land territories and rich houses. In Macedonia and Epirus eighty percent of the houses and the lands belonged to the Turkish refugees."³⁴⁵ The demands of the refugees are also de-justified through the reproduction of Venizelos' words, who describes their reactions as "meaningless."³⁴⁶

This being the attitude to the Rum refugees, which became even harsher as will see later, on the Turkish side refugees' demands were not represented, with the exception, similar to *Cumhuriyet*, of the ones coming from the special category of the Muslims who had left Greece before October 1912. These people had been unable since the Balkan Wars to take the rents from their houses in Greece, and the 1,000

³⁴³ *Vakit*, 20 February 1930.

³⁴⁴ *Vakit*, 12 January 1930.

³⁴⁵ *Vakit*, 4 March 1930.

³⁴⁶ *Vakit*, 24 February 1930.

Turkish liras they received per month from the Greek properties in Istanbul were considered not to be enough.³⁴⁷

However, the reporting on the bilateral negotiations for the expected agreements was accompanied by a positive depiction of Venizelos, with a parallel underlining of Turkey's peace policy. The former's speeches were reproduced. He expressed his optimism about the course of the Greek-Turkish relations and promised that he would do everything to prove the good intentions of Greece.³⁴⁸ With the heading "Venizelos becomes a peace-lover!" Venizelos presented himself as a peace-seeker, dragged to wars by external factors. He underlined that he had not started the Balkan Wars, and that he had wanted to stop the war in Asia Minor when it took an appropriate shape, but after the return of the King (in 1920) the disaster had been unavoidable. Anyway, by stating that now "All Greeks are in Greece" he justified to some extent the Great Idea.³⁴⁹ In an editorial of 9 March it was stated that it is time for Greece "to deal with reality," and that so long as Venizelos was looking for peace and Greece had dealt with its past and had withdrawn from the historical preservation against Turkey, peace with Greece was possible.³⁵⁰

Next to the peace-loving face of Venizelos, the one of Turkey is depicted as new and modern. The participation of the Turkish ambassador in Athens, Enis Bey, in the centenary celebrations for the establishment of Greece in March 1930 was described as totally normal, "for the ones who know the reality and the mentality of modern Turkey." The Turks were portrayed as people of peace, and exactly this mentality was described as separating the Ottoman from the Turk, "the Eastern person

³⁴⁷ *Vakit*, 22 May 1930.

³⁴⁸ *Vakit*, 6 January, 25 May 1930.

³⁴⁹ *Vakit*, 4 February 1930.

³⁵⁰ *Vakit*, 9 March 1930.

who acts with *nervous habits* and the Western one who acts *soundly* (my emphasis), while the Turk, who is a hero at war, can at the same time be a hero in peace.”³⁵¹

The on-going peace discourse will be interrupted few days before the signing of the economic agreement in June 1930, and much more systematically in October of the same year, by the minorities’ issue.³⁵² On 4 June 1930, there appeared an article with the heading “Are there secret organizations of the Rums in Istanbul? We are not the ones who say this!”, reproducing an article from the Muslim minority-owned newspaper *Yeni Adım*³⁵³ (New Tribune) from the city İskeçe/Ksanthi in western Thrace. According to its statements two organizations were administrating the Rum minority in Istanbul, one called the “National Organization”, and a Greek organization administrating the Patriarchate, which is taking yearly 320.000 Turkish liras from Greece. Due to these organizations, to which all members of the Rum community are bound in a compulsory way, the Rums “don’t feel any more whether they are minority or majority and continue to live with the *privileges* given to them by Fatih Sultan Mehmet (my emphasis).”³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ *Vakit*, 29 March 1930.

³⁵² The discourse seemed to change to an inimical one every time a danger “from within” was being perceived: While 11,000 trials against the Turkish government and its citizens awaited in the Greek-Turkish courts, the “rotteness” of these trials was said to have been understood and therefore most of them were not followed, as the Greeks did not have documents for all the trials they started, including cases of the damages, compensation, and return of immovable property. *Vakit*, 9 January 1930.

Anyway, the depiction of minorities as a source of danger and conspiracy was not limited to Turkey. On 29 January 1930 an article was published in the newspaper, in which it was described that Greece was astonished to find out that the community of 100,000 Armenians refugees living as guests in its territory were working against Greece and Greekness (*Rumluk*), by planning to gather on Cyprus and form there a new Armenian home (*nevi Ermeni yurdu*), an English person being at the top of this organization. The Greek newspaper *Akropolis* (Acropol) was reported to have written that the Greek nation “can’t nurture a snake in its breast!”

³⁵³ In Chapter One this was described as a newspaper belonging to the reformist forces among the minority.

³⁵⁴ *Vakit*, 4 June 1930.

The same allegations were made on the day the signing of the economic Greek-Turkish agreement was reported. While a small article on the first page informed the readers about the diplomatic accomplishment,³⁵⁵ on the third page an article entitled “Corruption is Going On” reproduced again an article of *Yeni Adım*. This time the so-called “National Organization” (composed of three persons, the names of whom were given) was divided in the “Morning-light organization” and the “Harmony lodge”, through which the Rum press and the schools, on the one hand, and the sport clubs and the pious foundations, on the other hand, were administrated, respectively, and kept under tight control.³⁵⁶ The angry responses of the Rum newspapers to these allegations were confronted with the heading: “Instead of Curses They Should Bring Proof!”³⁵⁷

Two days later, a new article appeared praising the newspaper *Yeni Adım* not only for fighting against the *Yüzellilikler* (the “150s”, see Chapter One), but also for being the only Turkish newspaper continuing publishing in Turkish despite so many difficulties in western Thrace, in contrast to the Rum minority, “which lives so free and makes organizations.” *Vakit* also answered to the Rum newspapers, which asked for the closure of such publications given the new Greek-Turkish rapprochement,³⁵⁸ that there was no connection between the writings against the minority and the agreement. The article closed warning the minority to be more careful, as “sometimes, with small

³⁵⁵ *Vakit*, 11 June 1930 (In the following pages of this day’s issue all the articles of the agreement are being reproduced).

³⁵⁶ *Loc. Cit.*

³⁵⁷ *Vakit*, 12 June 1930.

³⁵⁸ The reactions of the Rum newspapers were described as follows: The *Avyγή* (Morninglight) described *Yeni Adım* as continuing with its craziness, and characterized its position as a slander against all Rum institutions. This position was the worse false step in Greek-Turkish relationships. *Απογευματινή* (Evening) accused the newspapers *Vakit* and *Yeni Adım* that they wanted to show the Rum minority as being against the government of its own country. “The Turkish government knows too well that there’s no organization of ours, we don’t need any. It knows the situation of the Patriarchate, how much lawful our press is, and that the Rum club is nothing else than a place to drink coffee.”

mistakes, some hidden feelings, which find it necessary not to be expressed, come out.”³⁵⁹

While the matter was being revived with similar allegations one week later,³⁶⁰ the general assessment of the economic agreement made by Mehmet Asım (Us) himself was positive.³⁶¹ The agreement was viewed as a definitive way of solving the bilateral issues, in contrast to the previous agreements, the premises of which had not been applied by Greece. He furthermore repeated the official Turkish position that the properties which the Turks were asking from Greece were more than the ones left in Turkey by the Rums, despite the opposite claims of Greece, although the exact estimation would last for ages. Anyway, nothing impedes anymore the bilateral friendship, as Turkey had no aspirations to Thrace, Macedonia or the islands, to any territory outside its borders, and, mutually, Greece had also withdrawn from its vain illusions.³⁶²

In an article one day later,³⁶³ and contrary to the conspiracy building against the Rum minority which had preceded, Asım (Us) assessed the agreement positively also from exactly the perspective of the Rum minority. While for both minorities there had been restrictions during the previous years,³⁶⁴ when it still was not clear who was an

³⁵⁹ *Vakit*, 14 June 1930.

³⁶⁰ *Vakit*, 21 June 1930.

³⁶¹ *Vakit*, 16 June 1930.

³⁶² Similar views were expressed in an article signed with the name Seyyah: There the liquidation of properties was described as the most reasonable action, and Venizelos, after starting the evil Anatolian adventure, as having understood his mistake and guiding the Greek people on the way of friendship, a road he had opened already during the negotiations in Lausanne. *Vakit*, 22 June 1930.

³⁶³ *Vakit*, 17 June 1930.

³⁶⁴ In the article it was written that the Turkish government had forbidden the Rum minority to buy and sell property, travel freely inside and outside the country, take loans and consequently enter any economic enterprise, while the Greek government, after appropriating a lot of their property, left the Muslims of western Thrace in a condition near to death, and forbade its people to leave western Thrace with their elderly people. As a result of these measures in both areas, Istanbul and western Thrace, the

exchangeable and who not,³⁶⁵ and what would happen with the properties, the agreement cleared the situation for both groups of people (referred to as Rums in Istanbul and *Turks* and *Muslims* of western Thrace [my emphasis]), so that they could enter in business again and contribute to Greek and Turkish economies respectively.

During the reporting of the agreement's ratification by the Turkish parliament also the opposite voices were reproduced.³⁶⁶ When treating the discussions made on it in the Greek parliament,³⁶⁷ Venizelos was presented as defending Turkey during the negotiations: "Don't slander Turkey! It is not right to blame only Turkey for not executing the Greek-Turkish population exchange agreement!"³⁶⁸ His image as a decisive leading political figure was underlined by his decision to dismiss from the party those who would vote against the agreement or would abstain from the voting process.³⁶⁹

The inimical attitude reserved for the Greek refugees was evident in the economic agreement. With the title "*Dağdan gelen bağdakini kovuyor!*" (The ones from the mountains came to drive away the ones in the vineyards)³⁷⁰ the opposition to Venizelos by a group of refugees gathered in Athens and shouting slogans like "To hell with Venizelos!" "Venizelos should go from Greece, we have to send him away...!" was reported. When one day later they demonstrated in front of the Greek parliament,

economic crisis became worse. (*Vakit*, 17 June 1930) After the ratification of the agreement the Muslim deputies of the parliament from Western-Thrace thanked the Greek government for completing it. *Vakit*, 28 June 1930.

³⁶⁵ In the same article it is also being mentioned that it was great tolerance on behalf of Turkey towards the Rums in Istanbul to exclude all of them from the exchange.

³⁶⁶ *Vakit*, 18 June 1930.

³⁶⁷ *Vakit*, 22 June 1930.

³⁶⁸ *Vakit*, 19 June 1930.

³⁶⁹ *Vakit*, 25 June 1930.

³⁷⁰ *Vakit*, 24 June 1930.

where the agreement was being negotiated, and hooted against the minister of war, they were called *şmarık* (spoiled).³⁷¹ The two refugee deputies³⁷² who spoke against the agreement in the Greek parliament were described as “being out of control” and accused by Venizelos of exploiting the refugees.

Two days later Mehmet Asım (Us) took a clear position against the refugees in Greece.³⁷³ He first declared that he was shocked to hear that there was any opposition to this (economic) agreement, as that it was clearly in favour of Greek interests. Responsibility to what had happened was attributed more to the refugees themselves than to the policy of the Great Idea initiated by Venizelos. They were blamed for not having proved to be *loyal Turkish citizens* (my emphasis) and for giving excessive hope to Venizelos to annex Anatolia, as had happened with Crete, and their contemporary condition in Greece was perceived as a punishment for their betrayal to the Turkish independence movement. “*Kendi düşen ağlamaz*” (The one who falls down on its own isn’t entitled to cry.) was the Turkish proverb used for their condition, while a harsh language was used against them: “They prepared their disasters with their own hands, and they should by now leave aside crying in vain and lamenting. They have to bow to the fate history has brought to them as a necessity.” The help Greece had offered to them did not deserve criticism, but gratitude, as Greece, next to the disaster which fell on it, responded to the responsibility to keep alive the million of refugees who would have died if they had been left alone, making thereby a lot of material sacrifices.

Instead of leading Greece into a new political adventure, as they are trying to do now, the duty of the refugees comprised in being good citizens of Greece, as they

³⁷¹ *Vakit*, 25 June 1930.

³⁷² These were Tsigdemoglou and Hoursoglou, who threatened in the parliament that the refugees will take their rights by force, and maintained that forty million drachmas were being sacrificed with the economic agreement and that Greece was being destroyed. *Vakit*, 26 June 1930.

³⁷³ *Vakit*, 27 June 1930.

proved such bad citizens in the case of Turkey. “They were the reason why the Greek army came to Anatolia and was destroyed. At least [now the refugees] should stay still in the places to which they went...If they continue with today’s mentality, they should know too well that what will go under after this, will not be the Greek army, but whole Greece including them.”³⁷⁴

Two days later,³⁷⁵ the editor warned also from the provisions of the settlement agreement to be used by the Greek-Orthodox exchangees, as he predicted that there would be a lot of them wanting to come back.³⁷⁶ The Turkish government should not stay indifferent to such a probability, as some parts of Anatolia could again be colonized, by Rums who would try to come back under the “normality of a Greek mask.”

During the summer of 1930, while the telegrams exchanged by Venizelos and İsmet Paşa (İnonü) on the occasion of the approval of the economic agreement by the respective parliaments were being reported,³⁷⁷ as well as the preparations for the signing of the friendship agreement,³⁷⁸ an article by the Greek-Orthodox metropolitan of Aydin, Gennadios, in the Rum newspaper *O Aνεξάρτητος* (The Independent) was mentioned,³⁷⁹ and because of which the priest, and therefore the Patriarchate as a whole, were accused of getting involved in political matters. In an article in the Rum newspaper the

³⁷⁴ *Vakit*, 27 June 1930.

³⁷⁵ *Vakit*, 29 June 1930.

³⁷⁶ The columnist reproduces specifically the words of a refugee-deputy from Trabzon who in the Greek parliament expressed a longing of the refugees for Asia Minor and criticized Venizelos for not introducing into the agreement permission for the refugees to visit their family graves. *Vakit*, 29 June 1930.

³⁷⁷ *Vakit*, 7 July 1930.

³⁷⁸ *Vakit*, 19, 25 July 1930.

³⁷⁹ *Vakit*, 10 July 1930.

metropolitan had written that the way the Rum schools functioned was against the Lausanne Treaty, as the educational administration wanted a state administrator to be present in each school and some educational investigators were not permitting the practice of prayers in the classes. The metropolitan was accused of getting involved in non-religious issues and, additionally, of carrying the title of a place where no Rum was left. The contrast was made to western Thrace, where it was said that the education of the Muslim minority had nothing to do with Turkishness and the teachers were people among the fugitive Çerkez and the 150s. Two days later it was reported that the Rum newspaper defended the Orthodox metropolitan and his allegations, while the *Vakit* underlined that the “ones who want to awaken the den of mischief (*fesat ocağı*) that is called Patriarchate have always to be afraid of the Turkish people... We are not closing the eyes to the fact that the Patriarchate wants again *political rights* (my emphasis).”³⁸⁰

Indeed, the domestic political change that took place in August 1930 in Turkey brought once more to the forefront the conspiracy theories about the activities of the Rum minority in Istanbul. While the coverage of the Greek-Turkish negotiations was continuously presented in a positive light,³⁸¹ next to the friendship discourse towards Greece there started running a parallel albeit inimical one towards the Rum minority, combined this time with the propaganda against the newly founded oppositional party of Fethy Bey and the depiction of the danger of the members of the Rum minority to

³⁸⁰ *Vakit*, 12 July 1930.

³⁸¹ *Vakit*, 2 September 1930: “The Greek foreign minister made a very important speech, where he assures that the idea of friendship with Turkey has matured in the Greek public opinion. According to his opinion, the agreements give an end to the past and mark a beginning of affectionate relationships.” During the two months, September-October, there appeared every now and then news about the coming of Venizelos to Ankara and the developments in the Greek-Turkish relations. *Vakit*, 25 September 1930, 5, 9, 10, 12 October 1930.

At the same time the newspaper reports on the Balkan conference taking place in Athens and the enthusiastic, friendly reception of the Turkish committee by the Greeks. During the parade of the Balkan athletes was underlined that Venizelos stood up and applauded only the Turkish flag. See *Vakit*, from 2 to 17 October on an almost daily basis.

enter the city assembly as candidates of his Free Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), written thereafter as FRP.

Since September of the same year the newspaper had by and large devoted itself to a policy of legitimizing the Kemalist party as the “right” political force and a delegitimizing of the FRP.³⁸² Before taking as an aim its non-Muslim candidates,³⁸³ *Vakit* limited its criticism against the leader of the FRP, Fethy Bey himself,³⁸⁴ or his supporters.³⁸⁵ During the elections people are openly urged to cast their votes in favour of the candidates of the ruling Republican Peoples’ Party, written thereafter RPP.³⁸⁶

The propaganda in favour of the RPP and against the FRP culminated on the second day of the elections, which went on for several days,³⁸⁷ when general comments appeared about the fact that the FRP included in its lists non-Muslim candidates,³⁸⁸ followed on the next days by articles with the heading “Take a Lesson!” The series of these articles attributed to the past of the non-Muslim candidates of the FRP, and especially the Greek-Orthodox ones, all that was demonised in the nationalist identity of the modern Turkish republic: the Ottoman multiethnic past, the Sultan

³⁸² This is in contrast to the initial welcoming articles of the newspaper to the new party. For example, on 9 August the establishment of the party was characterized as opening a new and auspicious horizon in the sky of the young Turkish republic, whereas Atatürk was presented as being “above politics”, claiming that he would unite the two parties at his table at the nights they would quarrel the most. *Vakit*, 11 August 1930.

³⁸³ Among the candidates of the FRP there were at least twenty-two non-Muslim candidates, thirteen of them from Istanbul, four from Izmir, five from Edirne. Cem Emrence, *99 Günlük Muhalefet-Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Opposition for 99 days-Free Republicans’ Party) (Istanbul: İletişim, 2006), p. 167.

³⁸⁴ *Vakit*, 9 September 1930.

³⁸⁵ *Vakit*, 6 September 1930.

³⁸⁶ *Vakit*, 15 September 1930.

³⁸⁷ From 5 to 18 October 1930.

³⁸⁸ *Vakit*, 6 October 1930.

administration, the fear of Greek expansionism, the fear of excessive privileges given to minorities within the borders of the country.

In the article of 7 October 1930 different groups of candidates were de-legitimized, among whom some were described as being former members of the “Rum National Defence Organization,” which was established during Istanbul’s occupation by Rum newspapers and supported the Greek army with the money it gathered. *Vakit* maintained that the last resistance to the Turkish people, when the Greek army flew from Smyrna, was shown from this organization.³⁸⁹

While similar articles continued to be published during the following days,³⁹⁰ the longest and, more important, front-page ones started from 14 October. On this day the candidates of the FRP were linked directly to the so-called secret Rum organization activated in Istanbul at the time and secretly controlling the Rum minority. On 14 October 1930, with the headline “Read and Take an Example! The FRP Candidate Speaks in the Greek Club before He Speaks in the City Assembly about the Needs of the People!” a first-page article described the Rum committee, named “National Foundation” as having taken over the responsibilities of the *Cismani Meclis* (Corporative Assembly) of the Patriarchate (which had been closed according to the stipulations of the Lausanne Treaty). It allegedly met in the center of the city, in Beyoğlu, in a club where before the occupation of Istanbul a Greek center called “Greek Hearth” had had its offices, collected funds and directions from Athens and supported also the Patriarchate, whereby the newspaper warned its readers about the external danger: “You know what it means that the minority in Istanbul is under the management of Athens!” The latest accomplishment of the committee was alleged to be the signing of a

³⁸⁹ *Vakit*, 7 October 1930.

³⁹⁰ *Vakit*, 10 October 1930: The name of one candidate of the FRP was said to be involved in an incident taking place during the years of the Anatolian war and pertaining to the betrayal to the English people of the activities of the assisting navy in Istanbul.

document concerning the ensuring of the rights of the Greek-Orthodox people by external powers and diplomacy.

Particularly, a FRP candidate Mr. Orfanidis,³⁹¹ who “was said that he” attended the session of the committee and signed the respective protocol, was also a former Ottoman deputy parliament. In his person the Ottoman past, the right of minorities to political participation and the danger from foreign powers, in this case from Athens, were all melted into one and depicted as the ultimate danger.³⁹²

On the next day,³⁹³ in pages two and three of the newspaper, we find next to each other two articles: One is referring to a speech of Venizelos, the other de-legitimizes one more candidate of the FRP for the Istanbul city assembly. Venizelos had made statements pertaining to the peaceful policy of Greece, while excluding any coming back of the Greek-Orthodox refugees after having spent so much money (thirty million drachmas) for their establishment.³⁹⁴ Next to this friendship discourse and the official exclusion on behalf of Greece of any new expansionist projects, the newspaper returned to the issue of the Rum National Organization, and a certain Mr. Panciri, a candidate of the FRP for the city assembly, who took instructions from Mr. Nikopoulos, a man in direct contact with the Athens government, and transmitted them to the three-member National Organization.³⁹⁵

³⁹¹ A photo depicted Orfanidis Bey in Ottoman clothing.

³⁹² *Vakit*, 14 October 1930.

³⁹³ *Vakit*, 15 October 1930: On the front page of this day's edition, another candidate of the FRP for the city's assembly, Arpacı oğlu Nikolaki, member of the Rum minority, was maintained to have been a member of the municipality assembly of Istanbul during the Independence War. After the establishment of the republic Nikolaki was not permitted to participate in the assembly any more, because he had been on good terms with the occupational governments.

³⁹⁴ *Vakit*, 15 October 1930.

³⁹⁵ *Loc. Cit.*

On the second page of the same day's edition was an article of Zeynel Besim Bey, explaining that he had resigned from his position in the FRP because he had realized that he did not want to be in the national parliament with a *Vartan* and a *Yiorgi* (my emphasis). Although he agreed with the economic program of Fethi Bey, he was too well aware of what the country had gone through because of "the multi-national composition of the Ottoman parliament."³⁹⁶

Two days later, on the front-page of the newspaper, an article-letter from a "friend in Ankara who holds an important official position"³⁹⁷ -the name of the author though is not given- informs about the past of the FRP candidate Pantazidis at Robert College, twenty to twenty-five years earlier. At that time Pantazidis was described as having been the most active member of the Greek/Rum club, using any occasion to make demonstrations and manifestations in favour of his motherland Greece.³⁹⁸ He later became the head of a Greek-Orthodox sports club in Tatavla, which worked for the realization of the Great Idea.

However, not only did they fill places of candidates, but the minorities themselves were "accused" of casting their votes for the oppositional party; The Rum newspapers are reported to demonstrate that the Rums had to give their votes to the FRP, and answer to the respective articles about the Rum candidates: "It is not right to tamper with the past, don't touch subjects on which we are not obliged to give answers. This is not behaviour compatible with the noble-minded and real Turkish

³⁹⁶ *Vakit*, 15 October 1930.

³⁹⁷ *Vakit*, 17 October 1930.

³⁹⁸ The article described how the members of this club were met nights in the interior courtyard of the school and sang Greek songs for their motherland. The strongest voice was the one heard by Pantazidis. Also the writer of this article remembers how Pantazidis used to have on the wall next to his bed a huge Greek flag. *Vakit*, 17 October 1930.

generosity!”³⁹⁹ It was underlined though by *Vakit* that more than the Rums and the Armenians, the Jewish minority was the one that gave mostly its support to the FRP, and different explanations were being given on the issue.⁴⁰⁰

The respective publications were stopped a few days before the arrival of Venizelos to Ankara. While from the Greek newspapers we are informed that the Turkish Ministry of Press forbade such publications in view of Venizelos’ visit, from *Vakit* we are informed that the Greek newspapers wanted the Turkish ones to stop relevant publications against the Rum minority, first among them the main Venizelist one called *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (Free Tribune), and proposed that Venizelos should postpone his trip.⁴⁰¹ On the next day however, Venizelos’ trip on 30 October was announced and the writings of the Greek press were reproduced in which it stated its positive position over Venizelos being in Turkey on the day of the Turkish national Independence War. Similarly Venizelos’ statements, that “[he] would like to participate in the celebrations with great pleasure”, were reproduced. While the last article pertaining to the Rum minority in an aggressive way appeared on 23 October,⁴⁰²

³⁹⁹ *Vakit*, 9 October 1930.

⁴⁰⁰ *Vakit*, 16 October 1930: In an article with the title “Why Are the Jews Leaning to the FRP?” the program of the FRP against economic restrictions was supposed to be attractive to the Jewish minority, because it would profit from the abolition of restriction in tobacco, alcohol, gunpowder and cartridge. And on 17 October 1930, in an article with the title: “The Inquisitive Issue of the Day: Why Are the Jewish More Unsatisfied than the Rums and the Armenians?”, a letter from a Jew reader gives as an explanation the fact that, in contrast to the PRP, the FRP included Jew candidates in its lists for the elections. The newspaper, by-passing this issue, maintains that the Jews have been more privileged in the political, economic and administrative organization than the other minorities, since Istanbul has been under national administration: While there had been still travel restrictions for the other two minorities, the Jews were exempt from them, and after the Rums left from Anatolia due to the population exchange, *the Jews, more than the Turks, seized the commercial places left over by the Rums in the Turkish harbors which were the main trade centers* (my emphasis).

⁴⁰¹ *Vakit*, 21 October 1930.

⁴⁰² *Vakit*, 23 October 1930: “What Does It Mean to Be Good Rum?” In this article the writer Hakkı Tarık accused the Rum minority of having the desire to continue the Ottoman state. He referred to the Rum newspapers: “Are you not aware that the Ottoman state declined, [and that] in its place a Turkish republic was founded, the citizens of which are called Turks?” He did want the minority to regard the Turkish citizenship like an obligation, written only on paper. He wanted for them what he calls “real Turkish citizenship.” While among the ones who were called Turks there were people of different race, Rum, Armenians, Jews, they all share the Turkish citizenship written in the constitution

thereafter all relevant publications were stopped,⁴⁰³ while one day later details on Venizelos' trip and the welcoming of the Greek football team "Aris" being "warmer than any other foreign group in Turkey would be welcomed" appeared.⁴⁰⁴ Everyday detailed coverage was made of Venizelos' trip and activities in Ankara,⁴⁰⁵ while the day of his arrival the headlines with his own words appeared: "You See I Am Very Touched. Particularly When Coming I Became An Admirer of the Unparallel Beauty of *Your* Istanbul (my emphasis)."⁴⁰⁶ Also the positive articles from the Greek newspapers were mentioned,⁴⁰⁷ as well as Venizelos speaking in front of a big crowd after returning to Athens and inviting the people to shout: "Long live the Greek-Turkish friendship!"⁴⁰⁸

Placing, however, the strategy of the Kemalist party towards the non-Muslim minorities in Istanbul into a broader framework, we see it as part of a larger spectrum of propaganda methods used in order to de-legitimize the supporting base of the FRP, a propaganda which was increasing in proportion to the increase of the support the new party was receiving from the people, which, together with the disregard of the rules of elections and the mobilization of bureaucratic instruments in favour of itself,

and the same rights which stem from this citizenship. But as long as the minorities sought protection from foreign powers, and as long as they did not speak about racial, religious, but a national existence, the writer advised the readers not to give their votes to minority people.

⁴⁰³ While the anti-minority discourse stopped both due to the end of the municipality elections, followed by the abolition of the FRP, and the coming of Venizelos to Ankara, constructing conspiracies against the minorities as a mentality seemed to continue. On 25 November 1930 we found in the newspaper an article reporting about an Armenian organization which had been established forty years before in Tiflis for the preparation of the Armenian revolution and the founding of a new Armenia. The organization is said to have been provoking also the Armenians living in Turkey against their own state, and perpetrating the worst crimes during and after the Great War. Egyptian newspapers now seem to report that it is still active.

⁴⁰⁴ *Vakit*, 24 October 1930.

⁴⁰⁵ *Vakit*, 28, 29 October 1930.

⁴⁰⁶ *Vakit*, 27 October 1930.

⁴⁰⁷ *Vakit*, 30 October 1930.

⁴⁰⁸ *Vakit*, 5 November 1930.

provided it with the final victory.⁴⁰⁹ Either through the press or through the employment of paid groups, the main aim of the RPP was to slander the support basis of the party in opposition. Reactionaries (*gerici*), communists, infidels (*gavur*), and lower-class people (*aşağı sınıftan*) (my emphasis), were the main accusations attributed to them. In the newspaper *Milliyet* (the National), Fethi Bey was accused of working with pick-pockets, smugglers, and people of unknown identity, communists and reactionaries.⁴¹⁰

The strategy of depicting the FRP as a party of non-Muslims was empowered after the nomination of non-Muslim candidates on behalf of the party for the municipal elections. The party in power used this strategy especially in places where refugees and exchangees had been settled and in unison in strongholds of the new party, that is, western Anatolia and Thrace. According to a rumour spread in Smyrna, the new party would allow the Rums to take back their properties. In Istanbul, where the Rums had been regarded as *etablis*, the rich and religious figure Hoca Murat Efendi, ordered the people in Kemberburgaz not to vote for the FRP because it was in the hands of Rums, Armenians and Jews. All in all, the new party was aimed to be shown as the “instrument of foreign powers.”⁴¹¹

Nevertheless, while *Vakit* followed suit to that policy, from 25 October a total friendship discourse can be followed.⁴¹² On this day an editorial of Mehmet Asım (Us) on “Greek-Turkish friendship” welcomed the change in the bilateral relations, manifest

⁴⁰⁹ Emrence, p. 164. The introduction of the described methods into the parliament on behalf of FRP was also the beginning of its political end.

⁴¹⁰ Emrence, p. 167.

⁴¹¹ In combination to this approach to non-Muslims, the RPP at the same time was after the votes of non-Muslims and extracted pressure on them to that direction. Emrence, pp. 169-170.

⁴¹² The positive discourse towards Greece had not stopped during the negative publications against the Rum minority. On 18 October Mehmet Asım (Us) reported about the return of the Turkish representatives from the Balkan conference and the positive impressions they brought with them. The Balkan nations are regarded to have finally understood the services done in the past by the Turks for the comfort of the Balkan nations, and moreover at the expense of their own national existence, so that a new Balkan union can be built.

in the warm welcoming of each others sports group in Athens and Ankara, respectively. But the biggest token of the friendship was regarded Venizelos' coming to Ankara himself, proving the position of Greece towards new Turkey and of the latter's own political power to the entire world.⁴¹³ On the day of Venizelos' departure from Ankara, again Asım (Us) exalted in the editorial the friendship, which was evident in the way Venizelos was accepted and greeted *by the simple people* (my emphasis) who came to see him in the train station and applauded him.⁴¹⁴

Similar to how the leaders themselves and the official-inclined newspapers presented the rapprochement, *Vakit* depicted it as the accomplishment of two big leaders. Not only did it criticize the newspaper *Son Posta* (Last Telegraph) for not recognizing the immense success of İsmet Paşa (İnonü) himself in the policy followed towards Greece,⁴¹⁵ but, similar to *Cumhuriyet*, it provided the readers with Venizelos' biography. Without making any reference to the "Great Idea," Venizelos was described as the one who was called from Crete to save his motherland from political chaos and an anarchic situation, and despite the wars that followed, understood his political mistake in the past of taking position against Turkey and intensified his works for friendship with the latter.⁴¹⁶ In another article he was presented as one of the most intelligent politicians in Europe.⁴¹⁷

The final assessment of the diplomatic exchange in Ankara was again made by Asım (Us),⁴¹⁸ according to which, while three of four years before it was impossible to

⁴¹³ *Vakit*, 25 October 1930.

⁴¹⁴ *Vakit*, 30 October 1930.

⁴¹⁵ *Vakit*, 25 October 1930.

⁴¹⁶ *Vakit*, 26 October 1930.

⁴¹⁷ *Vakit*, 27 October 1930.

⁴¹⁸ *Vakit*, 22 October 1930.

make anybody believe that Venizelos would come to Athens,⁴¹⁹ his political might was a rare one, as he understood his mistake to come to Anatolia by violence and thereby was forgiven by world history for the sin of his past mistakes.

Importance also was attributed to the agreement from the perspective of international recognition and anti-Communist fight. Asım (Us) reports from Geneva, where the international conference for the limitation of war armament was taking place. There diplomats from different countries stated to the Turkish journalist that immense importance was ascribed to agreements like the Greek-Turkish one, taken into account the world economic crisis and the danger of the “microbe” of Bolshevism which can penetrate the countries at any time, as “people who can’t get by with their earnings may seek to burn whatever property there is around them.”⁴²⁰

The positive aftermath of the Ankara visit though soon was interwoven again with minority issues. The Rum newspaper *Ta Xρονικά* (The Annuals) was said to have published a telegram from Athens, according to which Turkey should expel Papa-Efthim, who “has brought so much trouble to the Rums,” as a reciprocal answer to Greece’s determination to expel the 150s from Greek territory. To this demand Papa-Efthim’s statements were published, saying that he had nothing to do with the 150s who had betrayed the country, and that he had served his country by being at the head of the Turkish-Orthodox Church.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹ A similar view is being reproduced from an article of “The London Times”, very it was said that the event would be very difficult to happen three years ago. In the same article it was also mentioned that the Greeks prefer to see on Saint Sophia (Ayasofia) the crescent and the star instead of the hammer and the sickle, that is, Turkish rule instead of Soviet one. *Vakit*, 7 November 1930.

⁴²⁰ *Vakit*, 25 November 1930.

⁴²¹ *Vakit*, 24 November 1930.

Some days later⁴²² an article expresses the disappointment on the Turkish side that the agreement did not bring the expected lifting of the pressure on the minorities. One week after the Ankara agreement the Greek government was said to have brought to the mufti office of İŝkece/Ksanthi a fanatic called Hüseyin Hoca, who was the head of clerk of the fanatic Nevzat hoca, who was against the revolutionary premises of Turkey and “deprives men who wear a hat from the inheritance of their father.” The new mufti dismissed from their offices all the imams of the mosques in İŝkece/Ksanthi, because they were against the fugitives and organs of the *Yeni Adam*. In their place English proponents and friends of the fugitives were appointed, meeting the objection of the minority itself, which asked back the old muftis. Anyway, while the 150s were notified to pack their things and rumours that they were expelled spread around, some Rum chiefs (*reis*) gathered in the main church of the city and asked that the removal be cancelled. Greece thereby was accused of protecting the fugitives, who were traitors and enemies of Turkey, and of not expelling them immediately as it should have.

The Discourse of the Turkish Political Elites

Looking at the minutes of the Turkish parliament for 1930 and 1931, one immediately sees the small extent to which the agreements with Greece were negotiated. Indeed, the limited function of the Turkish parliament during the single-party era was confirmed by Feroz Ahmad, who describes the legislative body, together with other institutional spaces and processes, as nothing but institutional vehicles for the concentration of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk's) and his party's will, while the two-tier electoral system provisioned that the people were voting for a group of representatives who would then

⁴²² *Vakit*, 29 November 1930.

choose the parliamentarians.⁴²³ The voters were disempowered two-fold, as Kemal (Atatürk) chose the candidates himself, and they were not allowed to oppose the principles or his name. The criteria for being a candidate were much too general so that he could appoint the ones he preferred.⁴²⁴

Apparently, the total consensus existing on the Ankara Agreement of October 1930, which was commented on only by the Turkish foreign minister Rüştü (Aras), much more contest arouse around the economic agreement of June 1930. The latter was discussed a few days after its signing,⁴²⁵ as it was the first agreement not to be passed with unanimity by the Turkish parliament.⁴²⁶

The Turkish foreign minister inaugurated the discussions on the economic agreements, structuring his speech less on its specific premises, and much more on the importance of *peace* (my emphasis) constituting Turkey's policy. Pursuing peace was evaluated by Rüştü (Aras) as the main directive guiding the international policy of the new Turkish state. Peace is "the voice coming out from every foreign minister, whatever the form and the regime of the state and the government he is related to may be." He himself maintained that following the path the Turkish parliament had approved of, he did not exempt himself even for a moment from "working for peace with great zeal and activity, even with love."⁴²⁷

Turkey's sincere interest in world peace, as much as in its own, domestic one, was a necessity stemming from "our big revolution and our geographical situation." Its

⁴²³ Ahmad, p. 16.

⁴²⁴ Parla and Davison, pp. 223-230.

⁴²⁵ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, 17 June 1930, pp. 264-271, pp. 273-277.

⁴²⁶ Psomiades, p. 269. From the 316 members of the parliament, 247 participated in the voting process, of which 230 ratified it, while fifteen didn't ratify the agreement at all, and two abstained from the process. Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, 17 June 1930, p. 274.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

devotion to the cause of peace was also proved in practice, as whenever there was an arrangement in the name of peace and Turkey was being called in, it immediately ran to participate, on condition that “equal conduct would be implemented and no other state would be aimed at.”⁴²⁸

Indeed, the lesson Turkey took from history and the Great War was that peace could not be fixed on alliances between small groups of countries. On the contrary, the solution it found as the most easy and productive one for attaining security is the completion of agreements of neutrality and arbitration; moreover, open agreements, in the place of a number of secret ones. That was the reason it hurried to participate in the Kellogg agreement, as it was one embracing all powers. All in all, as long as Turkey was not being touched, it sees itself as “an element of *order* and *regulation* among the *civilized nations*, which will not turn itself against anybody (my emphasis).” This policy also was embraced by the *simple people* (my emphasis), the Turkish nation, which “united around the big leader” and therefore sure about the defence and preservation of its existence, was pursuing its development in peace.⁴²⁹

The same peace-focused discourse was uttered by the Turkish foreign minister on the Ankara agreement, which was discussed only in February 1932.⁴³⁰ ⁴³¹ The notion of peace (and friendship) was directly connected with Turkey, as it followed the policy of peace and mutual friendship “from old times with continuously increasing zeal.”⁴³² The new agreement was viewed as a new and powerful sign of the policy followed by

⁴²⁸ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, 17 June 1930, p. 265.

⁴²⁹ *Loc. Cit.*

⁴³⁰ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 25, 12 February 1931, pp. 35-37, pp. 45-47.

⁴³¹ From the 316 deputies comprising the parliament, 187 participated in the voting and all of them voted in favor of the agreement, while 122 didn't participate in the process at all. Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 25, p. 45.

⁴³² Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 25, p. 35.

Turkey, comprising a chain of friendship and neutrality agreements signed firstly with the Soviet Union, later with Iran and Afghanistan, and in Europe with Italy, Bulgaria and Hungary (which were the main anti-revisionist powers of the time). Also agreements concluded or to be concluded with Spain, Germany, Switzerland, France and Czechoslovakia were mentioned.⁴³³

Akin to the Greek politicians, he underlined in his speech the extraordinary importance of the agreement with Greece, not alone for the contracting countries, “but for the Balkans and the Mediterranean, and actually for the whole of Europe.” He would return again and again to this point during his speech, maintaining that the agreement presented in front of the world an international pattern which was useful in preserving the peace in the regions in which both states were embedded. Proof for the international importance of the agreement was the “demonstrated interest and congratulations to the [signing of the] agreement on behalf of the worldwide *public opinion* (my emphasis).”⁴³⁴

Rüştü (Aras) quoted also the Greek foreign minister, according to whom this agreement constituted a work similar to which had not been accomplished in Europe since the signing of Locarno, adding that in his opinion it was even more important than the latter, because it followed the solution of the problems of the two sides and contributed immensely to the development of the friendship among the two countries. With his speech he portrayed Greece and Turkey not only as integral parts of the wider area to which they belong, be it the Mediterranean or Europe, but moreover as contributing to the stability of this area, and in this manner twofold legitimizes them as members of it.

⁴³³ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 25, p. 36.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Special attention was paid to the role of Italy in the signing of the agreement, as in the beginning (1928) it had strived for the signing of a trilateral agreement between Greece, Turkey and Italy. Though this was not realized, Italy, Mussolini himself, the Italian foreign minister Grandi and the Italian government still helped “us always in a neutral and friendly way to solve the common issues, and made polite and efficient interventions, and helped our issues to be finished earlier and more effective.”⁴³⁵

In the case of Greece, the realization of the friendship policy was possible after the two governments had left behind them not only the past softer or heavier “misunderstandings,” but also the old form of governance; that is, they became *states with national governments* (my emphasis). The Turkish foreign minister walked always on the way “our big leader showed, and our big parliament followed, and İsmet Paşa opened in Lausanne,” and came to that result within the “new and clean air” which had started from Lausanne, following also the development of the public opinion of each country.⁴³⁶

The followed policy was depicted, similar to the case of the neighbouring country, in which it was described as “the object of an approval by an alliance of all the political powers of Greece,” as being embraced “strongly and obviously” by the *public opinion* (my emphasis) and the newspapers of the nation, which had “showed an incredible unity and devotion around the big leader of the country.”⁴³⁷

This peace discourse and its allegedly whole-hearted embracement by the international and domestic political world and public opinion are interrupted in the discussions of June by three deputies who voiced their objections against the economic agreement under discussion: Avni Bey, Hüseyin Bey and Mazhar Müfit Bey,

⁴³⁵ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 25, p. 36.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

representing the regions of Samsun, Istanbul and Denizli, respectively.⁴³⁸ Avni Bey, himself an exchangeable, started by describing the act of the exchange of populations, that was, in his words, the passing of 400,000 *öz-Türk* (real Turks) from one shore to the other, as a disaster “similar to the ones which have been befalling the Turks since years...A deplorable and big migration.” He asked for the attention of his audience, by underlining both that he had experienced this tragedy himself, and that he was representing a region in which the process of exchange was being applied.⁴³⁹

Before pinpointing his particular objections Avni Bey defied the more general framework, that of the policy of peace: In his opinion, while Turkey had for a long time made so many sacrifices as a result of running after a mirage, that is, a peaceful atmosphere not only in the countries, but throughout the world, this standpoint of it had remained mainly a one-sided act. Turkey had been too generous: During the war it had spent so much blood and effort to support its justified rights, and in the end it had not got any reparations for the places which had been ruined owing to the fighting. And when it had to draw its borders, even though it had been a winner, it again had to succumb to sacrifices, abandoning both the straits in Çanakkale and the region of Thrace. In short, Turkey had “to put a black curtain over these areas and forget them.”⁴⁴⁰ And all that only because its neighbours, having lived for centuries under the Turkish rule, had learned the ways to profit from the Turks’ virtues and generosity. Similar to the above-mentioned cases, the Turkish government had again acted in the

⁴³⁸ The speeches of these three people were often interrupted by voices shouting “Bravo!”, the same reaction not seen in the speech of the Turkish foreign minister and only twice noticed during the last speech, made by İnönü.

⁴³⁹ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, pp. 265-266.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

case of the agreement with Greece with an extremely conciliatory attitude, showing an unnecessarily superfluous love for peace, despite its undisputable patriotism.⁴⁴¹

In his conclusion he added not only his opinion that world peace was temporary, as the human nature brought with it that people fell back “on the slippery rock [of wars]”, but also that Turkey, despite its peace-inclination, had been a victim in the last war: While it had participated in it as an “innocent and oppressed element”, and had had to give so much of its blood, be it “the families, widows, orphans and old people, who were left behind by the ones who had to give their life in the war,” or the 400,000 Turks who had “had to migrate, leaving on the other side of the sea their most sacred memories and properties”, all these people were again put into a deplorable situation, instead of the joy and consolation they had anticipated.⁴⁴²

However, the deputy of Samsun raised also specific objections during his speech, concerning the issues of the *etablis*, the properties, and the compensation of 425.000 English liras Greece was expected to pay to Turkey. Pertaining to the established people, the *etablis*, he maintained that their number had been too much raised and the content of the word rendered too broadly. On the other hand, the part of the 425,000 English liras that was destined for the Muslim *etablis* in western Thrace as compensation for the occupation of their properties by the Greek government after 1922, amounting to 125,000 liras, was estimated to be “less than the rent of one year of all these occupied properties together.”⁴⁴³

More extensively evaluated was the issue of properties, which was also supposed to have been decided against Turkey: While Avni Bey recognized that the Rums had also left numerous schools, monasteries, and churches, he maintained that

⁴⁴¹ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 266.

⁴⁴² *Loc. Cit.*

⁴⁴³ *Loc. Cit.*

these properties were mainly in Rumeli, that is, in Epirus, Thrace, and Macedonia, while the Turks had left in the same places not only mosques, fountains, small mosques, and dervish lodges, but also pious foundations of these and of Muslim theological schools, schools, bridges and sacred places. All this Turkish property would be lost due to the last agreement, because the Turkish foreign minister, influenced by his actual profession (as a doctor), had acted with “excessive tenderness.”⁴⁴⁴

The next oppositional voice came from Istanbul, from Hüseyin Bey, who clarified his position by putting himself from the beginning totally against the agreement under discussion, because it constituted an “immense sacrifice.”⁴⁴⁵ He confirmed a point, touched upon at the speech of the former speaker: Turkey was not the one who wanted the exchange of populations: “It was a situation resulting in the departure to Greece of the people, who were deprived of the right to live in the country...because of the *betrayal* they did to their own country (my emphasis).”⁴⁴⁶ He several times underlined that the Turkish nation was not the reason for this terrible situation, which had no precedent in history.

Having made this clear, he proceeded in maintaining that, despite Greece’s opposite allegations, the properties of the Turkish exchangees and non-exchangees (that is, Muslims having left Greek territory before 1912) had left in Greece were much more than the opposite ones. In addition, Greece was also the reason why the system stipulated in Lausanne, according to which the exchangees before departing should define the value of the property they were leaving behind, had not worked out.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 266.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

⁴⁴⁷ He exemplified the reasons for that failure by referring to a personal experience: He himself went to bring the exchangees from the city Kavala in the north of Greece, precisely to save the Muslims inhabitants from “the tricks, the threats, the murders” which were going on there. The only thing he

While blaming the Greek part for the failure of this procedure, he also opposed the general observation of the Greek government that the property left in Turkey *must* be more (my emphasis), on account of the number of people departing from one place to another. Indeed, he recalled the refugees who had left Greece during the Balkan Wars and were likewise included in the provisions of the exchange of populations' agreement.⁴⁴⁸ Greece also was accused of not applying the former agreements signed between Turkey and Greece in 1925 and 1926 (see Chapter One), according to which the occupied Muslim properties in western Thrace and the ones belonging to the Muslim non-exchangees would immediately be given back. In the end, nothing of these was implemented, and as a result "most of the people who went to Greece with some money in their pocket spend everything there and had to return without being able to do anything [there]."⁴⁴⁹

In contrast to these older agreements, Turkey was giving according to the newest agreement all the properties to Greece, of the Muslim non-exchangees, and the ones being in Istanbul and belonging to Greek citizens, which the Turkish government had been occupying in the last years. The former agreement of Athens had been more favourable for Turkey: The Turkish government would occupy the properties of Greek subjects which were outside the district of Istanbul. Greece had to pay compensation not exceeding the amount of 500,000 English liras, and if according to the done calculations there would be a difference between the two countries exceeding this

achieved was to prolong their stay in Kavala for six months, and help them in taking the things they could take with them, selling the ones they could sell, and liquidating part of the prices of the properties, so much as the Greek government gave permission for. The Greek government, however, did not respond to any complaints and reports he made about the situation prevailing in the district. Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 267.

⁴⁴⁸ He gave the example of the city of Drama in northwest Greece, from where 109,000 exchangees came, while before the Balkan Wars 240,000 Turks were inhabiting the city. Similarly 20,000 exchangees came from Serres, while 30,000 used to inhabit the city. Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 267.

⁴⁴⁹ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 267.

amount of money, it would have to be paid by Greece with an interest of six percent. But with the agreement under discussion, as mentioned above, not only the property of Turkish citizens in Greece, be it in western Thrace or the rest of Greece, was given to the Greek government; but also the properties of Greek citizens in Istanbul which were in the hands of the Turkish government and would be distributed to the Turkish non-exchangeables were given back to their owners.⁴⁵⁰

The last deputy speaking before the concluding speech made by İsmet Paşa (İnonü) himself was Mazhar Müfit Bey representing Denizli. While adhering to the analysis of the Turkish foreign minister pertaining to international politics, he opposed the agreement, because only Turkey sacrificed its particular to the common interests, while Greece did not do the same, to the point that Turkey was succumbing rights that İsmet Paşa had secured in Lausanne.⁴⁵¹

In particular, he referred to the situation of the Muslims falling under the so-called “protocol nine” signed at Lausanne (referred above as non-exchangeables), who according to Lausanne would not be deprived of their rights to the properties they had left behind them, a right annulled though with the latest agreement. Venizelos, who himself had signed the agreement in 1923, was accused now of agreeing to its annulment. “Who knows how hard İsmet Paşa had to fight for getting this right accepted...I can never give my vote to give back a right which İsmet Paşa won in Lausanne!”⁴⁵²

Following that, he referred to the case of the (30,000-40,000) Rum non-exchangeables who had left Istanbul between 1919 and 1922 and would not be able to return back according to the provisions of the economic agreement. The Turkish

⁴⁵⁰ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 268.

⁴⁵¹ *Loc. Cit.*

⁴⁵² *Loc. Cit.*

government would again be called on to make a sacrifice, by giving 25,000 of the 425,000 English liras from the compensation paid by Greece to these people, an amount he found an extremely high sacrifice, for “these four people.”⁴⁵³ In addition, the agreement recognized as *etablis* all the Rums inhabiting Istanbul at that time, rendering as established Rums people who were supposed to be exchangees, an incident to which “political history has not seen” a precedent.⁴⁵⁴

Putting the properties’ issue in a more general framework, while he acknowledged that the Rums living in Turkey were traders and artisans, and had left behind them houses, he pointed to the fact that a *çiftlik* (“agricultural estate”, like the ones left behind by the Muslim exchangees), in Thessaly, Greece, was worth 100,000 liras. While the farmers had left millions of lira in Greece, what remained in Turkey was “four apartments and three shops.”⁴⁵⁵ The 125,000 English liras Greece was giving were not enough even to fill the amount of one year’s rents of the farms in Thessaly.

İsmet Paşa (İnonü) put the discussion to an end, by emphasizing that the reason for the prolonging of the negotiations for seven years was that his government had as a priority not to violate *the rights of its citizens* (my emphasis). While this was the priority, pertaining to the liquidation of the properties, despite the difference in the number of people moving from the one shore to the other, one has to note “that a great number of the Greek properties had been *burned* and *ruined* during the war (my emphasis). Only a small number was left back in Turkish hands.”⁴⁵⁶ Even the Mixed Commission was not in the position to decide which side had left properties of bigger value, according to the information it had in its hands. Therefore a lot of money, labour

⁴⁵³ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 269.

⁴⁵⁴ *Loc. Cit.*

⁴⁵⁵ *Loc. Cit.*

⁴⁵⁶ *Loc. Cit.*

and expenses would be required in order to take new information. “For seven years indigenous and neutral members of the commission made use of all the means and the result that came to our hands was not a clear one. So how can somebody say to us that we sacrificed a lot of rights in this issue?”⁴⁵⁷

Pertaining to the rights of the people falling under the provisions of “protocol nine,” he put them into the larger framework of “the properties of the Ottoman Empire we have been trying to save for thirty years.”⁴⁵⁸ One has to be happy that at least in the case with Greece, within seven years some results were acquired, and nothing more than that can be expected. Moreover, the Turkish government also would care for the case of the people falling under “protocol nine.” Pertaining to the case of the Rum *etablis* of Istanbul, the decision of allowing all of them to stay in Istanbul was not taken by calculating the benefits and the damages, but by taking into account the general conciliatory spirit of the days, which did not render it proper to pay attention to some people more or less allowed to stay.

While giving credit to the insurance of the rights of several citizens on both sides, the Turkish prime minister underlined much more the agreement’s political importance, concerning the pacification of long fighting and the erasing of suspicions and insecurity in the bilateral relations. While from the Greek press Turkey gained access to the issues in which Greek public opinion still felt insecurity pertaining to its neighbouring country, he reassured that Turkey did not covet western Thrace, the islands or any other part of the neighbouring country. “We said it once and we will say it thousands times. We don’t have such a desire. In this case there is no reason for our neighbour to be worried of us.”⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁷ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 269.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

⁴⁵⁹ *Loc. Cit.*

But there are also voices in Turkey saying the opposite, that there were such desires on the side of Greece. From the perspective of science, geography and international politics, it was not possible for Greece to nurture such aspirations, according to the Turkish prime minister. Seeing the issue from the sentimental side, he uttered his respect for his political partner, Venizelos, who was “himself an experienced authority...and at the same time a guarantee that Greece has no expansionist desires towards Turkey.”⁴⁶⁰ What could be called “Venizelos after 1922” was described as being constantly on the side of Turkey, as İsmet Paşa remembers how “during the negotiations in Lausanne, in issues Greece was not concerned with, he always avoided to follow decisions taken at the expense of Turkey.”⁴⁶¹ Consequently, whatever thoughts about collision among the two countries were pathological (*marazlı*), and therefore the politicians “shout to the ones who, without knowing the reasons for the past fighting, have still hatred in their heart, that the establishment of friendship among the two countries is suitable to their interests...The latter enter a period of true peace, conciliation and reliance upon each other.” And although new problems would arise in the future, having their origins in “ill understandings”, once it was being established that there were no expansionist tendencies of the one country to the other, the development between the two countries could not be interrupted by anything.⁴⁶²

What draws one’s attention at the conclusion of the speech is that in contrast to the Turkish foreign minister, who “begs” the deputies to ratify the discussed agreement, by the prime minister it was something perceived as somehow already done: “You *will accept* a good agreement (my emphasis). With this agreement you will serve the country.

⁴⁶⁰ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 269.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 270-271.

The coming generations will be grateful to you for the relations which will open between the two countries.”⁴⁶³

⁴⁶³ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 20, p. 271.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Under the light of the ten year-long fighting that started with the Balkan Wars, its culmination being the Greek-Turkish War between 1919 and 1922, as well as the accompanying tensions between the different ethnic groups in both Asia Minor and the Greek Kingdom, the various agreements signed between Greece and Turkey in 1930, establishing diplomatic conduct coined by the official nationalist discourse as the “friendship-era”, urge for further research.

While detecting the discourse with which the political elites, the same persons who had led the preceding fighting, and their loyal press invested the signing of the agreements, this research sought to enrich the picture by uncovering the less visible voices and complaints which were uttered simultaneously. In the following presentation of the findings, I will first reconstruct the official nationalist discourses uttered by the Venizelist and the Kemalist government, respectively, followed by the presentation of oppositional or the ones even silenced by the official discourse.

From a strictly political and diplomatic perspective, the one historiography has primarily been focused on until now, the solving of the economic and political problems pending from the exchange of populations in June 1930 and mainly the signing of an agreement of “non-aggression and neutrality” in October 1930 made up part of a general policy of both countries, which guided their international affairs through the conclusion of bilateral agreements and the avoidance of bigger alliances.

Indeed, most small states followed a similar path in the interwar period, given the inability of the League of Nations to fulfil its role as an international referee, and the appeasement policies followed by France and England, which would finally result in the Second World War.

Particularly, the historical framework of the Ankara Agreement of 1930 comprised the return to power in 1928 of Venizelos, who sought to elevate Greece's diplomatic position, the latter having been isolated after its loss in 1922 and economically dependent on the West for the settlement of its refugees, and the Kemalist elite's inclination to disentangle the country from an increased impact of the Soviet Union, restoring it thereby as part of the Western state-system.

These being the international constraints, both the Greek and the Turkish government, supported by their loyal press, used similar arguments in order to justify the agreements to the inner political world and the people, attributing to them an international and a domestic importance. According to the global one, the two governments alleged to respond to the (albeit temporarily) international spirit of peace and diplomatic solution of occurring problems, evident in projects like the League of Nations and the international conferences for the limitation of naval armament. More important, they rendered their countries, Turkey being a recently established state and Greece in diplomatic isolation, part of what the Turkish foreign minister called in the parliament the “*modern, civilized, Western countries*”, regarded to be committed to peace, diplomacy and anti-revisionism. This presentation went so far as to call the agreements the most important accomplishment in recent European history, the base for European peace and the only prospect for the Balkan conferences initiated in 1930 to reach any concrete result.

Especially the Turkish discourse identifies the presentation of *peace* as the main aim of Turkish policy, with the country's “new, Western face,” and constitutes it

thereby, according to the Turkish foreign minister, an element of *order* in the international matrix. In this framework the adherence to the mentality of peace became also the means to refute Oriental depictions of the barbarian and blood-thirsty Turk. Indeed, according to the Turkish *Vakit* (Time), the mentality of peace was the one differentiating the Ottoman from the Turk, while in *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) it was written that the line dividing the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey was “the same [differentiating] between animosity and friendship towards Greece.”

This being the worldwide dimension given to the agreements, the same modernization discourse was applied also from the domestic perspective. Again, both governments and their respective presses recognized each other as so-called “modern nation-states,” mutually coined as *modern*, commanding over clear and *definitive borders*, being *ethnically homogenous*, and governed by a *democratic* regime. Modernization evolved as the dominant element in the language used both for the inside and the outside, and it was depicted as the precondition for any rapprochement what-so-ever.

Particularly, reference to ethnic homogeneity enabled a justification of the exchange of populations as a practice which somehow “cleaned the nations and permitted them to cooperate,” while it can also be regarded the main reason why the Muslim and Rum minorities and their contemporary situation were not given an important place in the official nationalist discourse.

The mutual acceptance, on the other hand, of definite borders and any lack of revisionist tendencies enabled both governments to present each other as “safe” and simultaneously differentiate themselves from past (failed) expansionist projects, be it the Greek project known as “Great Idea” for Venizelos or Pan-Turkic, Pan-Turanic ones designed at Ottoman times for the Kemalist regime. By calling each other

“democracies,”⁴⁶⁴ which had replaced former dynastic forms of government, again, apart from rendering the other as a reliable partner, the Turkish official discourse was building its identity on the opposition to the monarchic Ottoman regime, while Venizelos was taking a position in the on-going domestic quarrel in Greece between the republicans and the proponents of the King. According to the Greek foreign minister Michalakopoulos, democracies were different from dynastic regimes in that the latter “don’t have to account for their deeds.”

Despite recognizing each other as democracies though, the political implications were all-around paternalistic ones, accompanied by a constant reference to the public opinion (called *κοινή γνώμη*, in the Greek case, *efkari umumiye*, in the Turkish one), the support of which to the followed “friendship-policy” was taken for granted. The two nations were presented as guided by able and paternalistic figures, Venizelos, Kemal (Atatürk) and İsmet Paşa (İnonü), who “act for the good of their nations,” and therefore in case the people disagreed, according to Venizelos, “they will be *made* to agree with the opinion of the politicians.” The paternalistic aspect was much more underlined in the Turkish discourse, in which, while national unity was regarded to be produced around the person of Kemal (Atatürk), no speeches made in public to explain the agreements were described in the newspapers, in contrast to the Greek case. While politicians and the adhering press referred not only to the domestic public opinion, but also to the one of the other contracting part, and even to the one of other countries, or to the European one etc., in all cases public opinion was equated with the responses of the regime-loyal press.

Modernization being the common element of the discourse used by the government and the loyal press of both countries, they furthermore emphasized

⁴⁶⁴ While in the Greek discourse Turkey was called a democracy, and Kemal (Atatürk) sometimes a democratic dictator (sic), the Turkish discourse gave much more emphasis to the word *milli egemenlik* (national sovereignty) than to the term democracy.

different aspects (or silenced others) in order to construct the other part in the eyes of domestic political opposition and the public under a positive and acceptable light. On the part of the Turkish discourse, especially dominant in the case of *Cumhuriyet*, but partially followed also by *Vakit*, a tendency to rectify Venizelos' image and present him as a "peace-loving" politician is observed, while in articles dealing with anniversaries of past fights with the Greeks he was presented as "having fought for the English people." In the case of Greece, on the other hand, the government-friendly newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (Free Tribune) issued articles around the Ankara agreement systematically rendering Turkey as a modern country, totally extracted from its Ottoman past. As described in the following paragraphs, in both cases the discourse with which Venizelos, on the one hand, and official Turkish nationalist discourse, on the other, depicted themselves was fully adopted by the other part.

Indeed, in the case of Venizelos, apart from the constant reproduction of his (and only his) speeches in the Turkish press, articles the latter published around his Ankara visit in October 1930 loyally reproduce his self-presentation as a person with no historical animosity towards the Turks, but more as somebody who had been forced to resort to war by external factors (be it the inability of coming to an understanding with the Ottomans before the Balkans Wars on the issue of Crete, the outbreak of the First World War, before which he again had tried to come to an understanding with the Ottoman government on the issue of a voluntary exchange of populations, or the fighting of the "war of the English people in Asia Minor"). His image was a duplication of that of Kemal (Atatürk): A smart and able diplomat, a decisive politician (reported in the Turkish press to have threatened that he would dissolve the parliament in case the agreements with Turkey were not ratified, or would expel from his Liberal party those who would abstain from the ratification process), always caring for his nation in a paternalistic way, and even having saved it on several occasions. This policy included

also either an undermining of Venizelos' affection for the Great Idea, his depiction as "having totally understood his mistake," or even a characterization of his past expansionist policy as normal, as it was directed against the Ottoman past, which was anyway destined to fall. *Cumhuriyet* contradicted his *idealism* concerning the Great Idea to the *imperialism* of the Westerners. In addition, similar to Venizelos' discourse, he was not regarded to have any culpability in the failure of the Greek army in 1922. Yunus Nadi however, the director of the newspaper, did not come short of depicting him also as having been in the past a "greedy politician," in contrast to the Westerners who were being excused for their deeds after the First World War for having "been drunk."

While the Turkish official discourse felt the necessity of focusing on the person of the Greek prime minister, the Venizelist front engaged in legitimizing Turkey in the eyes of the Greek public as a *democratic, nationally homogenous, non-expansionist*, all in all, a *modern* country. Venizelos adopted fully the modern Turkish discourse, shedding a totally new light on the "new" Turkey, and depicting it as totally antithetical to the Ottoman Empire, under the yoke of which the Greek people had suffered for centuries. The Venizelist newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* described with admiration the modernization projects implemented by the Turkish state, through a correspondent traveling (solely) in Turkish urban space. Even the Turkish politicians themselves were read through the civilization discourse, presented as imbued with "delicate human characteristics." Venizelos himself made references to the concept of race, putting Greeks and Turks under the same umbrella of the Aryan race, explained by the fact that they, first the former and then the latter, invaded and ruled over the same ancient populations in Asia Minor. Moreover, he totally abandoned the civilizational discourse of the Great Idea, to which he had devoted himself from the beginning of his political career on Crete and until the Greek-Turkish war, according to which the superior Greek culture would

“naturally” dominate over and inherit the Ottoman lands, if not peacefully and “naturally,” then with warfare.

Nevertheless, whereas the division between Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey justified the latter as a diplomatic partner, in the Venizelist discourse the Ottoman past itself was rendered as something which had either to be forgotten (whereas the ones who insisted on remembering were “not modern enough to understand today’s spirit”), or could be used as a source of “positive” experiences between the two nations, which taught them how to live together and resulted in the production of some form of a “common culture,” which could facilitate the ongoing rapprochement. In the references of Venizelos to the past, the importance of the “fall” of Constantinople to the Ottomans was relativized, and Turkey was recognized as the victim of the recent war, which was said to have been *invaded* by Greece in 1919.

These being the main discourses formed by the governments and constantly reproduced by their loyal press, the Greek and Turkish newspapers and the parliament debates of 1930 also offered insight into oppositional or less visible voices. In the Turkish case, given the high degree of control over the press during the single-party era, such voices found (albeit minimal) expression in the discussions of the parliament. Contrary to the Greek case, where the main opposition drew an opposing nationalist imaginary (see below), the three Turkish deputies who opposed the economic agreement of June 1930 disagreed with some of its technical aspects.

Given the fact that Turkey had come out of the last war as a winner, they supported -the opposite being complained about by the opposing parliamentarians in Greece- that it acted too generously towards Greece: While there is no doubt about the official Turkish position that the properties left behind by the Muslim exchangees were substantially more than the ones left behind in Turkish territory (whether because the Rum properties had been destroyed during the fighting in Asia Minor, or because the

property of the Rums had been mainly situated in Rumeli, that is, Epirus, Thrace and Macedonia, or, lastly, because the large agricultural estates left by the Muslim exchangees were considered to be much more than the ‘four apartments and three houses’ left behind by the Rum traders), objections were raised that the word *etablis* (established) has been interpreted too broadly in the case of the Rum minority in Istanbul, that the amount destined to be paid by Greece (125,000 English lira) compensating Muslim *etablis* (established) in western Thrace for the appropriation of their properties by the Greek state after 1922 was minimal. Finally, the Muslims who had left Greek territory before 1912 were not compensated at all, contrary to the protocol nine of the Lausanne Treaty. Furthermore, the return to their owners of properties situated inside Istanbul and belonging to Greek citizens was criticized, while the number of the Rums who had left Istanbul during the Greek-Turkish War and were not allowed coming back (numbering between 30,000 and 40,000) was regarded as minimum, called these “three or four people.” Lastly, in the speech made by a refugee parliamentarian, we observe, similar to the tendency of Greek refugees, the eagerness to render the exchangees as genuine Turks (*öz-Türkler*).

Apart from the material estimations however, what was underlined by all three parliamentarians opposing the economic agreement of 1930 was the point that Turkey was “dragged” as an innocent element into the last war, and consequently bore no responsibility either for it or for its repercussions, one of it being the exchange of populations. For the latter mainly the Rums formerly residing in Asia Minor had to be blamed, as they had “betrayed” their country by supporting the invading Greek army, whereas the Muslims exchanged from Greece had to be seen as totally innocent victims of the whole exchange procedure.

Apart from the one exchangeable-deputy uttering his objection in the parliament, the Muslim exchangees as a whole were given minimal space in the Turkish

official nationalist discourse, both by the politicians and in the newspapers, added to the fact that there was no publishing instrument providing them with a form of expression. Being part of the general tendency of the official Turkish nationalist discourse to silence its Ottoman and Balkan past, their claims and demands did not come to the forefront, and even those who spoke against the economic agreement in the parliament were not reported in the official *Cumhuriyet*, in contrast though to *Vakit*. This can also be regarded as one of the facts explaining the high degree of support among the exchangees for the short-lived oppositional Free Republicans' Party appearing in 1930. For unknown (to us) reasons, the only sub-group among them the demands of which were both reported and supported by the Turkish press was the Muslims who had left Greek territory before the Balkan Wars (called *gayri-mübadil*, that is, non-exchangees, in Turkish discourse) and, through the establishment of an organization, demanded their property rights which were under guarantee by the Lausanne Treaty.

Equally covered by the official Turkish nationalist discourse were the past ethnic tensions that continued to exist in popular discourses, that came to light with the anti-Rum propaganda initiated by the (anyway regime-loyal) newspaper *Vakit* during the municipality elections of September 1930. The decision of the above-mentioned Free Republicans' Party to include non-Muslim Turkish citizens in its candidate lists for the municipality elections was the reason for the *Vakit* (together with *Milliyet* (National) being the two newspapers to do so) to initiate, *parallel* to its friendship discourse to Greece, a propaganda and conspiracy building discourse attacking the minorities living in Istanbul. This strategy was part of a general discourse and policy initiated by the Kemalist ruling party and aiming at the de-legitimization of the candidates and supporters of the new party, who were labeled among other "reactionaries, communists and coming from lower-classes."

Particularly, the Rum members filling the candidate ranks of the FRP and generally the Rum minority, the latter taken as one, solid entity, were depicted as been secretly directed from Athens, and their political participation de-legitimized from different perspectives, all of which in one way or another were haunting at that time official Turkish nationalist identity. Having been a member of the Ottoman parliament, having supported the Great Idea, having supported the Greek army and its activities in Asia Minor after 1919, having collaborated with the allied occupation of Istanbul after 1920, being currently a member of the organizations alleged to be directing the Rum minority under the auspices of Athens, all these elements were used in order to attack the trustworthiness of the Rum candidates, while the minority as a whole was depicted as living “still in Ottoman times”, seeking the support of foreign powers (in this case, from Athens), and aspiring to the privileged position it was considered to have had during the Ottoman Empire, resisting that way assimilation. Similarly, the Patriarchate was being depicted as aspiring again to political activity. The denial on the part of the Rum press of these accusations was answered by *Vakit* with a threat to be more careful; otherwise “hidden feelings may come out.”

In sum, Athens was simultaneously depicted as a diplomatic partner *and* as secretly guiding the Rum minority and encouraging its disloyalty to their Turkish citizenship and identity, while *Vakit* maintained that the two issues had not the least connection. It is important to underline here that more than depicting Athens and Greece as an inimical element, attention was mainly drawn to the repeated motto of “foreign powers directing domestic groups,” and “domestic groups seeking the protection of foreign powers.” Indeed, while the discourse was directed at domestic consumption and aimed at the legitimization of the ruling Kemalist party as the only trustworthy and “genuine” Turkish political representation, the minorities were freely depicted as positive from other perspectives, for example concerning their contribution

to the economy of Istanbul. One way or another, the stopping of such publications during Venizelos' visit in Ankara in October 1930 was further proof of the degree of political control over the press in the single-party era.

On the other hand, from the perspective of this less visible facet of Turkish official nationalist discourse, everything opposing the homogeneity and the interests of the nation-state was put in an inimical position. The refugees in Greece, lamenting the final loss of their properties with the economic agreement of June 1930, were attacked by *Vakit* for being spoiled and unfaithful. According to the newspaper, while they failed to prove their loyalty to the Turkish state, by "provoking" the Greek invasion in Asia Minor and therefore bearing the culpability for their present condition, they should "at least" prove their loyalty to their new home-country, which was alleged to have done so much to settle them. In addition, the fear of the "Rum refugees coming back" was expressed, and all the relevant measures were asked to be taken in the provisions of the settlement agreement signed between Greece and Turkey in October 1930 in order to prohibit them from using its stipulations and re-settling thereby in Turkish territory.

On the Greek side, on the other hand, opposed to the Venizelist discourse were those uttered by the anti-Venizelits, the refugees and the communists. The anti-Venizelists, representing different social strata, while not clearly opposing the friendship policy with Turkey (albeit the way the properties' issue was being dealt with, and didn't therefore ratify the economic agreement), totally disagreed with Venizelos' answer to the ideological vacuum in Greece following the end of the policy of the Great Idea in 1922, that is, his anti-militarist, anti-expansionist, modernist nationalist discourse, given priority to internal reconstruction and science -uttered albeit carefully in order not to be mixed with any existent communist discourse, which was blamed by

both bourgeois parties, the Venizelist and anti-Venizelist one, for “being deprived of any ideals.”

Contrary to that the anti-Venizelists, themselves having opposed the invasion of Smyrna in 1919 decided by Venizelos, now base their discourse on the danger of losing the national ideals, and warned about abandoning the Great Idea, if not as a policy, then at least as an ideology producing social cohesion. In the anti-Venizelist newspaper *Καθημερινή* (Daily) the nation’s past, or what has been constructed as such, and the animosity to Turks were perceived as the *core* of Greek national identity, and any betrayal of this pattern as diminishing the fight-willingness of the Greek army and endangering the cohesion of the Greek nation, much more in the light of the “domestic threat,” which was seen in the existence of the communists. The ideology of the Great Idea was not regarded as having reached its demise, and the peace agreements signed with Turkey may constitute only an interval, as “the defeated Greece of 1897 dreamed the success of 1912.” While the expansionist Great Idea had stopped to guide official state policy, its ideological constructions continued to be both popular and used for political mobilization.

Part of the refugees, who were either described by the Venizelists as troublemakers when they opposed the economic agreement of 1930 or praised as “loyal citizens” when they swallowed their complaints, found a representation in the newspaper *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος* (Refugee’s World). In its articles expressing their anger for the decided set-off of the properties left behind by Rum and Muslim exchangees were combined with an effort to constitute themselves as loyal citizens of their new home country. On the one hand, they expressed rage at having been treated in an unjust way, resorted to threats that they would take their properties back by force, by making use of the “holy right of property” guaranteed by the Greek constitution, or that they even would seek to return to the lands of their ancestors. While on the one

hand they did not oppose the rapprochement with Turkey per se, they tried to delegitimize Turkey as a diplomatic partner, basing their estimations on a more profound knowledge they had gained due to the long-year living together with Turks. In the end though, the articles of the *Προσφυγικός Κόσμος*, similar to the position of the refugee Venizelist parliamentarians, promised to somehow swallow their bitterness for the sake of “social peace” and the “general national interests,” refusing to be rendered as any kind of “troublemakers,” and therefore eventually be identified with a discourse similar to the one used for the communists. In constituting themselves as Greek citizens, in the light also of the on-going social tension between indigenous population and coming-in refugees and exchangees, they went so far as to assert that they were more “native than the natives,” because they had come from Asia Minor and were therefore representatives of “pure” Greekness, in contrast to the indigenous, who had mixed with “all kind of minorities.”

Lastly, *Ριζοπάσης* (Radical), the official publishing organ of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), read the rapprochement with Turkey as one more alliance concluded against the existence of the Soviet Union and a prelude of the new war which would be instigated against the latter. It placed the Greek-Turkish agreements within the totality of the bilateral agreements signed in the interwar period between European states, all of which were interpreted as attempts to build an anti-Communist front and prepare the new war. Simultaneously, it tried to engulf the refugees, by announcing a common front between “workers, farmers, and refugees,” by uttering the latter’s complaints and pinpointing to the thousands of refugees living under terrible conditions still in 1930. Indeed, support for the Communist party among the refugees, the big majority of whom had been loyal to Venizelos in the interwar period, increased after their disappointment following the signing of the economic agreement and the

definite loss of their right, guaranteed by the Lausanne Treaty of 1930, for full compensation for their properties.

All in all, both in Greece and Turkey, we see various nationalist discourses running parallel to the official one, revealing either popular, covered facets of it or totally opposing nationalist imaginaries. Taking into account the single-party rule in Turkey and the high degree of control it exerted over the press, the detecting of such discourses in the Turkish case was rendered more difficult. Anyhow, in both cases refugees and exchangees' demands were silenced, accompanied by a demand from them to prove their loyalty to their new home countries.

Each of these discourses actually opens areas of further research, among which we pinpoint to detecting the voices of the Turkish exchangees to the signed agreements, and especially the economic one of June 1930; to further following the path of the conspiracy building propaganda against the Rums in the following years and connecting it (if possible) to phases of domestic political crisis; to tracing back the ethnic tensions existing during the ten-year long fighting and its (hidden or not) influence on nationalist discourses, its occasional reflection on the Rum minority in Istanbul or on Greece/Greeks themselves; to further elaborate on the different ways, politically and intellectually, the demise of the Great Idea was encountered with, or, maybe more important, the forms it continued to exist in political and popular discourse, and the political circumstances under which it was occasionally being brought back into linguistic usage.

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