

Turkey in the
Twentieth Century

La Turquie au
vingtième siècle

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The Greek-Turkish population exchange

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The Convention of 30 January, 1923

On the 30th of January 1923, after prolonged negotiations that had begun on December 1, 1922, Greek and Turkish diplomatic plenipotentiaries signed a convention at Lausanne providing for the "compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory" (Article 1). Forced population movements had been a quite common phenomenon in human history, usually as a result of war, invasion and enemy raids upon settled territories. In the history of Asia Minor, in particular, massive population movements, either under duress in war-time or as a result of colonization, relocation or socio-economic change had been a standard feature for millennia. What was novel about the *Lausanne Convention* was the provision for compulsory exchange, without any form of prior consultation of the populations involved. This was unusual in that it wrote into an international document and thus enshrined in international law a practice which the law of war and peace, since its inception in the seventeenth century, had striven to bring under control and, if possible, eliminate: to prevent the dislocation of civilian populations and to protect, to the extent possible, non-combatants from the consequences of war. By adopting a document which stood in such glaring contrast to the course of international law, the signatories of the *Lausanne Convention* interpreted at the level of diplomacy a profound determination to remove the most serious cause of conflict between the two nations. That is probably why the Convention on the exchange of populations was agreed upon relatively early on, while the overall settlement of Greek-Turkish disputes at *Lausanne* turned out to be a protracted process, that was not concluded until July 24, 1923.

The *Lausanne Convention* on the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey introduced the novelty of the compulsory nature of the exchange, but as an approach to the settlement of disputes in Southeastern Europe, the convention had certain precedents during the previous decade. In 1913, after the *Second Balkan War*, Turkey and Bulgaria attempted a partial exchange of populations along their border in Thrace, while in 1919 Greece and Bulgaria had signed at Neuilly a convention on reciprocal emigration, which provided for the voluntary exchange of their respective minorities. In 1914 a limited and voluntary exchange of rural populations between Greece and Turkey was proposed by the *Turkish Government* through its minister in Athens and accepted by Venizelos, the Prime Minister of Greece. The eruption of the *First World War*, however, prevented the implementation of the exchange (PENTZOPOULOS 1962; PSOMIADES 1968). Thus the *Lausanne Convention* of 30 January 1923 represents the first instance of a

compulsory exchange of population sanctioned by international law in modern history.

On account of the delay in the ratification of the overall settlement, the January 30 Convention, which provided for the exchange to begin on May 1, 1923, could not come into effect until the following autumn. The first act of the drama was played out in the week of October 15-21 when the 8,000 Moslem inhabitants of the island of *Lesbos* were moved to *Ayvalık* in Asia Minor in exchange for 8000 Greeks from *Samsun* on the Black Sea coast of Turkey (CHARTER 1925). The exchange continued under international supervision over the next several months until well into 1925, when the last Orthodox communities from Eastern Cappadocia, deep in the interior of Asia Minor, were deported from their villages. This of course was the last, and relatively most orderly, act of the drama of forced migration brought about by a decade of war, which started with the *First Balkan War* in October 1912, continued with the *First World War*, the Greek landing and campaign in Asia Minor in 1919-1922, and the Turkish counter-offensive and final victory in 1921-1922. The wars created an enormous dislocation of people and caused a staggering refugee problem that was estimated by independent contemporary observers to have involved up to three million people (CHARTER 1925).

The *Lausanne Convention* provided that all people, Christians and Moslems, who had become refugees since October 18, 1912, when the *First Balkan War* was declared, and were originally inhabitants of regions whose populations were subject to the exchange, were considered as exchangeables (Article 3). Only two groups were excluded from the exchange: the Greek inhabitants of *Constantinople* who were permanently established (*établis*) in the prefecture of the City of *Constantinople* (including the Asiatic shore of the *Bosporus* and the *Princes Islands* in the Sea of Marmara) prior to October 30, 1918 and the Moslem inhabitants of Western Thrace (Article 2). To these two populations, which were excluded from the exchange, the subsequently signed *Treaty of Lausanne* added the population of the two Greek-inhabited and Greek-speaking islands *Imbroz* (*Imbroz*) and *Tenedos* (*Bozcaada*), which were returned to Turkish sovereignty under a special regime of self-administration (Article 14 of the *Treaty of Lausanne*).

The net result of the exchange was to produce, essentially for the first time in history, an almost entirely Moslem and to a considerable degree, though not entirely, ethnically homogeneous Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace as the Turkish national homeland. To appreciate the degree of the social and ethnological change brought about by the application of the *Lausanne Convention* of January 30, 1923 it is necessary to briefly survey the ethnological background in Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace prior to 1923.

The ethnological background in Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace

The ethnically Turkish territories of Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor which make up the republican nation-state of modern Turkey are a twentieth-century

phenomenon, the product of the application of the *Lausanne Convention* of January 30, 1923. This fact alone makes the exchange of populations of the 1920s a major milestone in the history of Turkish society. Before the 1920s the ethnological, demographic and social picture was very different. The population of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace was made up of a complex mixture of races, ethnic groups and religious communities. This demographic picture mirrored quite accurately the imperial history of these regions, which for two millennia had formed the heartlands of great multi-ethnic empires.

Eastern Thrace, outside the great imperial city of *Constantinople*, had up to 1922 a Christian majority in its population. Coastal regions along the *Dardanelles*, the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea up to about the city of *Burgas* (*Pyrgos*) in modern Bulgaria were primarily inhabited by Greek-speaking Christian Orthodox communities. The territory of the interior of Eastern Thrace was inhabited by compact rural Orthodox communities, mostly Greek-speaking but also Bulgarian-speaking toward the North and the Northwest. Greek and Bulgarian speakers made up two-thirds of the population of the region. Moslem Turks and smaller communities of Jews and Armenians were concentrated in the larger cities, especially *Adrianople* (*Edirne*). Literary evidence of the late nineteenth century shows a remarkable pattern of interaction between Christians and Moslems in the Thracian countryside, which was not disturbed until the *Balkan Wars*, when the region was temporarily occupied by Bulgaria.

The demographic and ethnological picture was even more complex in the vast geographical space of Asia Minor, where remarkable variation existed not only along and across ethnic demarcation lines but also within the religiously defined ethnic communities themselves. Greek settlement in Asia Minor prior to 1922 was composed of three geographically based ethnographic entities, clearly distinguishable from each other on the basis of sociological, cultural and linguistic characteristics. The first ethnographic unit was made up of the compact Greek settlements in Western and North Western Asia Minor, along the coast of the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean, extending inland along the riverine valleys of the region. The *Centre for Asia Minor Studies* has managed to identify 401 Christian Orthodox settlements in this area prior to 1922. The Greek population of Western Asia Minor was for the most part the product of migrations from the Aegean islands and continental Greece since the eighteenth century. The advent of an independent Greek Kingdom after 1830 and the emergence of international borders in the Aegean for the first time since 1718 did not create serious obstacles to migration which continued throughout the nineteenth century with people moving back and forth between the Ottoman Empire and Greece. The unity of Aegean society in this period was reflected in the use of common Modern Greek as the *lingua franca* of the regions around the Aegean basin and as the exclusive linguistic medium of the Orthodox populations in Western Asia Minor. Local variations in the Greek language of Western Asia Minor (North, Central and South) were akin to the idioms spoken in the Greek islands of the Eastern Aegean, especially *Lesbos*, *Samos* and *Rhodes*.

A second ethnographic unit of the Greek Orthodox population of Asia Minor was composed of the communities of the interior, which formed Christian islands in the midst of the Moslem population masses in the regions enclosed by the great rivers to the east of the valleys of the *Hermus* and the *Meander*, to the south of the *Kizilirmak* and the *Sakarya*, to the west of the region of the sources of the *Tigris* and the *Euphrates*. The 168 Orthodox communities of Central and Southern Asia Minor, in contrast to those in the West, constituted a meagre numerical presence, which represented a lingering survival of the Medieval Byzantine Christian population of the region. Continuity with the Byzantine past was reflected especially in the peculiar, highly idiomatic dialects of Greek spoken in thirty two out of eighty one Orthodox villages in Cappadocia, in the township of Silli outside *Konya* and in the townships of *Makri* and *Livisi* on the Lycian coast (DAWKINS 1916). The rest of the Christian Orthodox population of Central and Southern Anatolia spoke Turkish, except for Arabic- and Syriac-speaking Orthodox and Monophysite Christians in the Southeast.

The Turkish-speaking Christian Orthodox population of the interior of Anatolia, known as the *Karamanli*, formed a uniquely interesting and important cultural group. Their ethnological origin has been repeatedly contested in scholarly literature: they are claimed by Greek historiography as Greeks who were linguistically Turkified under the pressure of the conquest, to which Turkish historiography replies that the *Karamanli* were in fact Turks who had espoused the Christian faith (BARKAN 1953, 9). As it is usually the case the truth could probably be closer to some intermediate position, which could suggest that this diverse and wide-spread population probably descended from both types of ethnic background. In any case the continuing transition from local idioms of Greek to Turkish in Cappadocia, noted by Dawkins in the early twentieth century (DAWKINS 1916), probably supplies evidence of the dynamics of a much more protracted process going deeply into the past. In the century or so before their uprooting in 1924-1925 the *Karamanli* groups of Asia Minor were experiencing the effects of remarkable economic and cultural change, which instead of levelling, cemented their distinctive identity and enhanced their historical awareness of their local Byzantine heritage (KITROMILIDES 1998). The growth of a secular *Karamanli* literature (books in Turkish printed in Greek characters) in the course of the nineteenth century provided in several instances the initial conduit for contact of Turkish culture with Western ideas and sensibilities (TIETZE 1991).

Finally a third area of Greek settlement in Asia Minor that formed a distinct ethnographic unit was that of the Pontic coastal and highland regions. In this area along the Black sea coast and deep into its hinterland, extending to the Southeast toward the sources of the *Tigris* and the *Euphrates*, an exceptional Greek Orthodox society had survived as the direct descendant of the Medieval Pontic Empire of the *Grand Komneni* of *Trebizond*, the last Byzantine state to fall to the Turks in 1461. Defined by its highly peculiar form of speech, which under different political circumstances might have naturally evolved into a separate Neo-Greek language parallel to common Modern Greek, this was a rural, tightly knit and inward-looking society, which had preserved intact many extraordinary

features of an ancient culture (BRYER 1980). Pontic Greeks formed the denser and geographically the most extensive component of the Greek Orthodox presence in Asia Minor, dispersed in almost 1500 communes (27 in Paphlagonia, 1454 in Pontos proper, 4 in the region of the sources of the *Tigris* and the *Euphrates*), townships and cities such as *Trebizond*, *Samsun*, *Sinope*, *Amasya*, *Gümüshane* etc.

These Orthodox communities dispersed throughout Asia Minor from the Aegean coast to the depths of Kurdistan and the borders of Armenia and beyond, primarily Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking but also on occasion Armenian, Bulgarian, Arabic, Syriac, and even Kurdish-speaking, were held together as a cohesive society by their Church, the Patriarchate of *Constantinople* and to the South East the *Patriarchate of Antioch*, based in *Damascus*. The Church, through an expanding network of local dioceses, provided for the spiritual and educational and even the welfare needs of the faithful and thus kept them within the fold, despite extensive religious syncretism at the grass-roots (HASLUCK 1929). The Orthodox communities lived side by side with the Moslem Turkish majority, other Christian communities, especially Franco-Levantines in the coastal cities, Armenians in the major cities and in the rural areas of the East, and smaller Christian communities belonging to ancient Near Eastern Churches like the Syro-Chaldeans, Nestorians and Jacobites in the deeper interior and the Southeast of Anatolia. Jews of course were to be found everywhere in urban settlements and Moslem groups distinguished by their language such as Lazes, Kurds and Arabs completed the ethnological mosaic of Asia Minor at the dawn of the twentieth century. The Moslem population of Anatolia was made up of Sunnis, who formed the majority, and a sizeable Alevi community. This religious division of the Moslem population cut across linguistic groups and was spread throughout the peninsula, without a distinct regional basis. These different groups, religions, languages and communities, colourful human collectivities of infinite variety and rich cultural expression had been accommodated by the institutions of the imperial state and had managed to survive imperial repression and their own conflicts, working out forms of coexistence in daily life, constantly redefining but also preserving the essentials of identity.

Such was the ethnological and cultural background that had met the test of centuries and was to be obliterated within three or four decades by nationalism, war and modern power politics. The logic of this new configuration of historical forces was encompassed in a skeletal form in the Convention on the population exchange.

Forms of exodus

In the tradition of Western political thought that goes back to the Bible, the idea of exodus evokes the prospect of redemption by means of return to the homeland, a land of promise and freedom. This biblical evocation of redemption was distorted by the same logic of power politics that could germinate the concept of the compulsory exchange of populations and was turned into the experience of forcible expulsion and exile. As such it was acted out as a classical Greek tragedy,

only with modern Christian and Moslem protagonists on the plains of Eastern Thrace, Western Macedonia and Epirus, on the Pontic littoral and highlands, in the troglodyte culture of Cappadocia, in Crete and the Eastern Aegean Islands. The respective Moslem and Greek Orthodox minorities of these areas were the recipients of the directives of the *International Mixed Commission* set up by the *Lausanne Convention* to enforce and supervise the exchange (Articles 11-14).

It will be noted that from the above geographical list of places affected by the exchange the regions of Northwestern and Western Asia Minor are omitted. The reason is that when the Convention was signed and the *Exchange Commission* formed, in these regions of compact and flourishing Greek settlement, including its metropolis 'giaur' *Izmir*, the cosmopolitan *Smyrna* of old, most of the Greek presence had been wiped out by ten years of war, persecution, deportation, flight into voluntary exile and massacres. The fire and destruction of *Smyrna* in September 1922 represented the bloody *dénouement* of the tragedy. An extensive collection of eye-witness accounts has been collected by the *Centre for Asia Minor Studies* (1980; see also HOUSEPIAN 1988). The hundreds of thousands of those who had fled the region since 1912, culminating with the exodus of those who managed to escape to foreign vessels in the port of *Smyrna* in September 1922, came under the category of exchangeables (Article 3 of the *Lausanne Convention*).

Exodus took different forms elsewhere. In a way the form of exodus was linked to the different patterns of Greek settlement. The Orthodox, mostly Turkish-speaking, of Central and Southern Asia Minor totalling to over 200,000 and the approximately 450,000 Moslems, mostly Greek-speaking, of Western Macedonia, *Epirus*, *Crete*, *Chios* and *Lesbos* were exchanged under the supervision of the *International Mixed Commission* from October 1923 to 1925, carrying with them their movable property, occasionally their herds and domestic animals, their community records, holy relics and icons (*Centre for Asia Minor Studies* 1982 and 1992). Some villages were collectively resettled, starting life in their new environment as a community. This practice was followed more consistently in Greece than in Turkey, where communities for the most part were scattered all over the country to fill the enormous demographic vacuum.

In the Pontic regions the exodus took a still different form. The coastal regions and port cities were evacuated more or less under conditions similar to those of Central and Southern Asia Minor. In the highlands, however, where a tradition of resistance to authority had lingered on since Medieval times, groups of Pontic fighters took up arms and attempted to protect their communities from being uprooted from their ancestral hearths. This became the famous Pontic rebellion in the Eastern highlands, a movement of desperate protest that ended up not in capitulation to the International exchange commission but in exodus of the communities led by the fighters toward the Caucasus, where they hoped they could await their return. Thus only about 200,000 of the compact Pontic Greek population were exchanged and reached Greece. They were resettled mostly in areas vacated by exchangeable Moslems in Western Macedonia and in suburban areas.

Finally in Eastern Thrace, the presence of Greek forces which had not suffered defeat like their counter-parts in Asia Minor, made possible the peaceful evacuation of the Greek population in October 1922. Shielded by the Greek army before its withdrawal to the river *Evros (Maritza)*, the Thracian Greeks, mounted on their oxen-drawn carts or on foot, kept crossing the river for weeks, uprooting themselves into exile. This epic of silent grief was described by Ernest Hemingway in his reports in the *Toronto Star* in the autumn of 1922 (HEMINGWAY 1968). The impression made upon him by this «silent, ghastly procession» haunted him for a long time and it often reemerges in his writing of the interwar period (HEMINGWAY 1939). Thus when the *Lausanne Convention* was signed Eastern Thrace had already been evacuated from its Greek inhabitants, whose number exceeded a quarter million.

Grim numbers

The numerical magnitudes involved in the massive population movements described above have formed the object of endless controversies. The statistics put forward in order to bolster territorial claims during the negotiations of treaties in the period 1912-1919 are notoriously unreliable. It is pointless in my opinion to engage in polemics aiming to deny the truthfulness of particular sets of quantitative data. Given statistical methods at the time and the context of their application we can be certain that we will never arrive at precise quantitative information on population data. We have to live with approximations and the task of historical analysis ought to be to appraise the reliability of individual sources of statistical evidence and to judge whether the quality of such evidence warrants taking the numbers seriously.

According to these criteria the only reliable sources would appear to be the 1928 official census of the refugee population of Greece, the statistical information recorded by the *Refugee Settlement Commission* as reported by its chairman C. B. Eddy and whatever numbers on the refugee population of Turkey were collected by the *State Statistical Institute* in 1930 (LADAS 1932; EDDY 1931; PETROPULOS 1976).

The evidence of these sources, however, does not provide an adequate basis for a precise estimation of the number of Greeks living in Asia Minor in 1912. This is the critical number because it would have provided the precise demographic picture before the decade of conflict and upheaval set in, bringing massive displacements and death upon this group of people. Given the state of the sources it is probable that this number will never be known with certainty. Two other important numbers, on the contrary, can be known with considerable certainty on the basis of available evidence. One is the number of the Greek population of Eastern Thrace. Considering that a significant part of the Bulgarian population of the area had already been exchanged in 1913 and that the Greek population had been enabled to leave the area under the protection of the Greek army in 1922, the number of 256,635 recorded in the Greek census of 1928 can be safely accepted as a very close approximation of the Greek population of the area at the time of the

exchange. A similarly safe number is that of the exchangeable Moslem population of Greece as recorded by C. B. Eddy as up to 354.647. Information collected by the *State Statistical Institute of Turkey* slightly raises this number to 384.000, which made up 61% of the total refugee population of the country in the period 1923-1933 (KAZGAN 1970-1971). The numbers for Asia Minor will never be known with equal certainty. The Greek census of 1928 recorded a number of 626.954 for Asia Minor (including 35.000 Armenians) and recorded a separate number of 182.169 for Pontos. This totals up to 809.123 persons, which leaves a glaring gap when compared to the number 1.547.952 persons of Orthodox faith living in Asia Minor (including Pontos) in 1912 according to a census taken by the Patriarchate of *Constantinople*, which has recently come to light (KITROMILIDES - ALEXANDRIS 1985). Allowing for natural mortality and reemigration from Greece between 1922 and 1928 (estimated at 75.000 and 66.000 respectively) and taking into account an estimated number of about 80.000 Pontic Greeks who went to Southern Russia and the Caucasus, we are faced with a macabre discrepancy between the numbers of the 1928 census and those of the ecclesiastical census of 1912. This was the human cost of the tragedy, which the *Lausanne Convention* was designed to prevent from being extracted again.

Relocations

'Relocation' and 'resettlement' sound quite mild and neutral terms when they are used to describe the massive upheaval brought into the lives of individual families and communities by the process of uprooting and deportation involved in the exchange of populations. The population groups that survived the actual movement in space that led them into permanent exile sought to create a new homeland amidst novel, strange and often inimical environments. In Greece, in particular, the influx of the refugee population in the wake of a humiliating military disaster, brought enormous strain upon state and society and provoked, on many occasions, open hostility on the part of local populations. The refugees were initially housed in public buildings, schools, theatres, military barracks and camps. New spaces were opened up for resettlement around *Athens*, *Thessaloniki* and other major cities, whereas refugees from rural areas in Asia Minor were settled in rural areas mostly in Northern Greece. In these projects Greece received considerable help from the *League of Nations* and under the guidance of an international *Refugee Settlement Commission*, after the initial shock and desperation, managed effectively to absorb and integrate the refugee population.

Whole new areas to the East of *Athens* on the southern slopes of *Mount Hymettus* were opened up for the settlement of refugees. The same process went on in the areas to the West of *Pireus* and around *Thessaloniki*. Gradually whole new cities made their appearance out of the original makeshift refugee settlements, recalling the names of the original cities of provenance in Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace in the new geographical nomenclature employing the epithet New before the names of settlements — *New Smyrna* being the most prominent, but also *New Ionia*, *New Philadelphia*, *New Chalcedon* in the *Athens* area, *New Krini* (*Çeşme*) in

Thessaloniki, New Halikarnassus in *Crete* to give only a few examples. Refugees from rural areas were given agricultural plots mostly from nationalized church lands and monastic estates, which were used to supplement the insufficient properties left behind by the much fewer Greek Moslems who took the road to exile in the opposite direction.

A guiding principle generally followed in resettling the refugee population in Greece involved the preservation of communal groups as much as possible. Thus whole villages or urban population groups were resettled collectively in new localities, usually renamed after the original place of provenance. In their new localities the communities attempted to recreate their traditions by rebuilding their churches, which were rededicated to their original patron saints. Very often, especially refugee groups from the interior of Asia Minor deposited in these new churches icons and holy relics that they had carried with them. The resettlement of integral communities made possible the preservation of either Turkish or regional dialects like Pontic as the language of refugee groups for at least one generation. Thus Turkish-speaking *Karamanli* groups were settled in Northern Greece in the region of *Serres* and also in scattered villages in Thessaly. Pontic speakers were established in Western Macedonia, where, on *Mount Vermion*, they eventually also recreated their Medieval imperial shrine, *Sumela Monastery*. Also Pontic groups were settled in the Eastern suburbs of *Athens* and in *Thessaloniki* (e.g. *Stavroupolis* and *Kalamaria*). Thus a whole culture, with its distinctive music, dances and other forms of symbolic expression, was transplanted from Asia Minor to Greece and, in a curious way, at a time when the two nations appeared to be cutting the ethnic bridges between them, an important component of Asia Minor society and culture was being incorporated at all levels of collective experience into the formation of twentieth-century Greece.

Resettlement followed different patterns and principles in Turkey. There the vastness of available geographical space after the deportation of the Orthodox population and the relatively smaller number of incoming Moslem refugees (by all accounts fewer than 400,000), made resettlement a lesser strain on the society at large, although equally painful at the level of individual feelings. Uprooting and exile, even 'exile to the homeland' as a refugee woman put it, still remains a tragic experience. The refugee population of Turkey was mostly resettled on the basis of their agricultural skills. As it turned out, the Moslem population of Greece were almost entirely rural, with the exception of small groups from *Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Iraklio* and the lesser cities in Macedonia and *Crete*. Thus planning the resettlement of the refugee population in Turkey was based on a categorization according to specialization in forms of agricultural production as follows: out of an estimated total of up to 395,000 according to one account, 95,000 were classed as tobacco producers, 200,000 were classed as peasant vine-growers and 100,000 were classed as olive-oil producers. These groups were dispersed as individual families, not as communities, in areas of Turkey where there was availability of cultivated land appropriate for their agricultural skills. Thus thirty thousand tobacco growers from Eastern Macedonia (*Drama* and *Kavalla*) were settled in the *Samsun* region. Twenty thousand tobacco growers, fifteen thousand peasants and

vine-growers and five thousand olive-oil producers from the region of *Serres* were relocated in the *Adana* region; 22,500 persons of all three categories from Western Macedonia (*Kozani* and *Grevena*) were established in *Malatya*; forty-three thousand people of all three categories from the areas of *Katerini* and *Langada* in the regions of *Amasya*, *Tokat* and *Sivas*; sixty-four thousand people of all three groups from Eastern Macedonia and the region of *Thessaloniki* were relocated in the *Manisa*, *Izmir* and *Denizli* areas; ninety thousand refugees of all three groups from *Kassandra* and *Nevrokopi* in Macedonia were settled in *Tekirdağ* in the *Redesto* region in Eastern Thrace and in *Niğde* in Cappadocia; fifty-five thousand refugees of all three groups from *Preveza* and *Ioannina* in the regions of *Antalya* and *Silifke* and the remaining fifty thousand, again made up of all three agricultural groups with provenance from the islands, especially *Crete* and *Mytilini*, were established in the regions of *Ayvalık*, *Edremit* and *Mersin*. Of all these groups of Moslem refugees the one that preserved its Greek language and passed it on to the following generation were the 'Turco-Cretans', who settled in *Ayvalık*. Members of this group and their descendants preserved the memory of their Cretan roots and occasionally attempted to reestablish ties with their places of origin in *Crete*.

'Ethnic cleansing' or nation building?

Scholarly debate on the *Lausanne Convention* and the exchange of minorities has up to now focused primarily around two main issues. First at the initial period after the ratification of the Convention and the *Treaty of Lausanne* there was considerable debate especially from the point of view of international law on the nature of the convention, pointing to the inhuman aspects of the policy of compulsory exchange (KIOSSEOGLOU 1926; SEFERIADES 1928; THEOTOKAS 1947). As a method of achieving the settlement of international disputes, the exchange of populations has been severely and justly criticized on account of the human costs and suffering involved (MACARTNEY 1934; MITRANY 1936) and on account of its moral repulsiveness from the point of view of a philosophy of human rights (CLAUDE 1955). A second issue of historiographical controversy in connection with the exchange of populations concerned the precise quantitative magnitudes of the groups involved, especially population groups affected by the conflicts in Asia Minor, Greeks, Armenians and Turks. It is obvious that it would be desirable to arrive at precise numerical information in order to appraise the scale of the tragedy and the concomitant demographic change, but, as it has been explained above, it is very difficult to arrive at definitive conclusions on the basis of available evidence. Hence the contradictory positions on these issues, especially in connection with the estimation of the number of victims of the catastrophic years 1914-1922.

The scale of the refugee problem that resulted from the exchange has formed the object of a remarkable literature focusing on Greece (MITRANY 1936; ANDREADES 1928; MARAVELAKIS-VAKALOPOULOS 1955). This literature, initially the work of historians and demographers, has been enriched by important

contributions by political scientists and anthropologists (MAVROGORDATOS 1983; HIRSCHON 1989). Thus the historiography of refugee resettlement in Greece is a growing field of research, whose importance has been enhanced from the point of view of comparative social research on account of the urgent need to study the serious refugee problems in the contemporary world. Greece's experience in absorbing the Asia Minor refugee population despite the pain and the agonies of the 1920s, appears in retrospect as a success story and therefore it is judged to be of relevance in approaching other cases of refugee experience (PETROPULOS 1976). The social and cultural background of Asia Minor refugees and their integration into Greek society has formed the object of a gigantic privately organized research project which commenced in 1930 on the initiative of Melpo Merlier and has produced the important research resources of the *Centre for Asia Minor Studies* (oral history archive, music collection, refugee memoirs collection, printed materials, photographic archive etc.). The Moslem population of Greece that migrated to Turkey in the context of the exchange has not formed the object of similar research and filling this gap in the social history of Turkey would be highly desirable (MITRANY 1936). Evidence about this population of Greek Moslems and their reaction to the exchange which forced them to become Turks overnight, is scattered in Greek primary sources and deserves to be collected and studied (NIKOLAIDIS 1993, 156-158).

The study of the refugee experience in Greece was initially premised on the idea that the exchange was an unmitigated disaster, the greatest catastrophe in the history of the Greek nation. The consideration of the actual consequences of the exchange in the long run, nevertheless, has tended to mitigate this wholly negative picture and historians have gradually come to recognise the contribution of the resettlement of the Greek refugees from Turkey not only to the ethnological homogeneity and thus to the security and territorial integrity of Greece but also to the significant enrichment of Greek life, society and culture. (AIGIDIS 1934; VALAORAS 1925; PENTZOPOULOS 1962; KITROMILIDES 1992).

By contrast with Greece, in Turkey in the exchange of populations and the refugee experience has generated minimal historiographical and literary interest. Only in the last decade of the twentieth century has the 'great exchange' formed the object of monographic treatment (ARI 1995), while in the new critical social history one can detect the beginnings of a reassessment of the overall significance of the expulsion of the Christian population for the development of Turkish society (KEYDER 1987). This may be connected with an overall reappraisal of twentieth century Turkish history, intended to revise the state-sponsored historiographical views that streamlined historical research and historical thought for a very long time.

The appraisal of the long-term significance of the exchange of populations brings up some broader issues that might be considered in conclusion. The conventional view in both Turkey and Greece holds that the exchange of populations by contributing to the ethnic homogeneity of the two countries constituted a final, but critical, stage in the production of viable national societies in Greece and Turkey. In other words the exchange is considered as the final act that completed nation-building in the two countries. This view has been probably

stronger in Turkey than in Greece. It was certainly integral to the philosophy of Kemalist nationalism and provided the major motivation behind Turkey's adamant position on this issue at Lausanne (DAVISON 1953). In Greece, in turn, the achievement of one of the most homogenous societies in Europe following the departure of the majority of Moslems from the country and the influx of Greeks from Asia Minor, has provided consolation for the great historical and emotional loss associated with the exchange (SVOLOPOULOS 1981).

From the perspective of the last decade of the twentieth century, however, the events of the exchange seventy years ago may appear in a different, less glowing light. The exchange may be seen as a form of 'ethnic cleansing', masquerading behind the respectability of international law and sanctioned by the blessing of the *League of Nations* and the great powers of civilised Europe who were present and parties to the Lausanne negotiations. Of course the issue here is not a question of names and semantics. The exchange of populations was *both* a stage in nation-building and a policy of ethnic cleansing, which involved an enormous human cost. It is neither morally edifying nor intellectually honest to downplay this aspect of the problem. Nevertheless, if this dimension of the exchange strictly-speaking belongs to the past, another dimension was to form part of the future of the affected societies. By reducing ethnic pluralism through such radical means, the exchange prevented the modern national societies that emerged from it from learning the skills and internalizing the values necessary for the practice of toleration, mutual respect of social groups and recognition of otherness. This can explain in turn the seemingly incomprehensible insecurity often encountered in Greece over 'nationally sensitive' questions. More seriously it can explain to a considerable degree the great tragedy through which Turkey has been going in the closing decade of the twentieth century in connection with the residue of ethnic pluralism left behind in its society by the application of religion as the primary criterion of the exchange. This had forced away in the 1920s the loyal Turkish-speaking Orthodox of the hinterland of Asia Minor but left unaffected the Kurdish-speaking Moslems, whose future later on in the twentieth century was to be determined not by religion but by the indomitable force of ethnic nationalism.

Postscript - 2006

In the decade or so since the original writing of this chapter there have been important scholarly developments in the broader field of the study of the Greek-Turkish population exchange of the 1920s. In this postscript, written in December 2006, I should like to record the most important such developments that have come to my attention, as an update of the text I wrote in response to the original assignment of the editors of *PhHTE*. In my judgement in the period under review this field of scholarship has been marked by two significant developments that promise to bring about a noteworthy transformation of the subject. Of these two developments one is institutional, the other conceptual.

The important institutional development that has taken place has to do with the establishment in Istanbul of the *Lausanne Exchanged Population Foundation*

(*Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı*), which held its inaugural congress in November 2003, marking the eightieth anniversary of the 1923 Population Exchange Convention. The proceedings of this conference entitled *Yeniden kurulan yaşamlar* edited by Müfide PEKİN, were published in Istanbul in 2005.

The significance of this development for the study of the refugee population of Turkey cannot be really overemphasized. In a way eighty years too late the *LMV* comes to fulfill a research mission in contemporary Turkey that had been undertaken in Greece, on a private initiative, already in the 1920s with the Merlier project and the eventual establishment of the *Centre for Asia Minor Studies*. Indeed the initiators of the *LMV* project came to Athens and studied in detail the organization, archives and other resources and research methodology of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies as a model for their own operation. The Istanbul project, however, came in a sense too late in time to replicate the *CAMS* methodology, which had worked entirely with the refugee population itself in the three or four decades immediately following the exchange. By the time the Istanbul operation was set in motion, most of the refugee population of Greek Moslems who had been moved to Turkey by the exchange, had died out or those still alive were impossible to locate for lack of evidence concerning their precise relocation in a much vaster country. So the *LMV* project has had to work with second or third generation descendants of the refugee population trying to recover the picture of the exchange indirectly through family memory and tradition. The concrete empiricism, precision and detail of the oral history archive of the *CAMS*, however, concerning the refugee population of Greece and their Anatolian background cannot be approximated. The Istanbul project, nevertheless, even with its approach of indirect oral history can go a considerable way in covering at least one serious lacuna in available knowledge of the Turkish aspect of the exchange, that is the pattern of relocation of Moslem refugees in Turkey. Thus the hitherto available picture with its primarily quantitative features of the resettlement of Moslem refugees in the Turkish Republic, already recorded by Stephen Ladas in 1932, can now become more nuanced and detailed. What can be gained, especially, might be called the recovery of lost communities. Thus on the basis of the new evidence collected by *LMV* researches it may become possible to retrace the resettlement and dispersal within Turkey (in Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace) of Moslem communities evacuated from Greece. It could, hopefully, become possible for instance to retrace the Turkish trajectories of the Greek-speaking Moslems of Western Macedonia, the Valaades, thus constructing the research basis for a second case study in refugee resettlement besides the better known case of the Turco-Cretans who were resettled in the Izmir region and in the city of *Ayvalık* and on *Cunda Island (Moschonisi)* just off the Aeolian coast, where the Cretan Greek dialect of this group lingered on until the closing decade of the twentieth century. Similar information concerning the Orthodox refugees from Asia Minor on the level of community relocation is readily available in the records of the *CAMS* - under the rubric *Simerini Egkatastasi* = Today's Settlement - and in a remarkable literature of monographs, photographic albums and personal accounts recording the resettlement in Greece. With the coordinated work initiated now in

Turkey under the aegis of *LMV* it may be hoped that more systematic comparisons on refugee resettlement in Greece and Turkey may in the future become possible, thus providing a more sound basis for the assessment of the impact of the exchange on the two countries and on the two societies. On the Turkish side even personal accounts of the uprooting and refugee experience remained sparse and came rather late in time. This literature could provide another point of comparison, covering the entire range of the refugee experience: uprooting from the original homeland, transfer to the new motherland, relocation and reception in the new national environment, the elaboration/suppression of refugee identity, the handling of memory. Such have been the successive stages of the creation of refugee identity in both countries, with time lags characteristic of and dependent upon differences in the respective ideological attitudes toward the historical fact of the exchange itself. All this has been reflected most characteristically in literary works recreating personal and family experiences, such as the work of the *Ayvalık*-based author of Turco-Cretan origin Ahmet YORULMAZ, *Savaşın çocukları* (Istanbul 1997). Contextualized within the evidence of the oral history projects on the exchanged populations such literary sources can provide evocative testimonies of the social psychology nurtured by the experience of the exchange.

The second important development in scholarship on the exchange of populations has been conceptual. It arises from an enrichment of the range of approaches bearing on the subject and from a more pronounced normative perspective that emerges from a systematic connection of the subject with the study of minorities and human rights — a connection long overdue. This perspective also makes it possible to raise questions of responsibility and to rethink the whole range of issues connected with the idea of obligatory exchange first introduced by the *Lausanne Convention*, regardless of the wishes of the populations involved. All this is important and welcome and it brings a salutary humanist outlook to bear upon the understanding of a problem that has been for the most part conceptualized in terms of the dictates of reason of state.

Another distinctive feature of recent work on the exchange has been a preference marking the work of historians and social scientists of the younger generation to treat the subject as 'narrative' and to look at it critically in terms of the 'discourses' of official ideology. This can be quite useful as a critical perspective unveiling the ideological manipulations of the refugee experience. The practitioners of this type of analysis, however, should be warned that focusing on "narratives" and forms of discourse runs the risk to obscure the historical ontology that exists *hors texte* and thus it can involve other kinds of distortions, which eventually ignore the social content and human cost and suffering that make up the refugee experience in real terms.

One further important and most welcome feature of recent literature on the exchange of populations has been the systematic attempt to bring the Turkish and Greek experiences together rather than treat each case in isolation. This feature of earlier literature, that has marked its greatest part that had focused exclusively on the Greek case, has now been overcome. A sincere three-way dialogue between Greek and Turkish scholars and foreign observers of the Greek-Turkish scene and

a noteworthy willingness to develop the linguistic and other skills necessary to work with source material in both languages is setting a new trend in scholarship which has produced in the very recent past some remarkable works. The model of this encounter between traditions of scholarship has been set by the volume edited by Renée HIRSCHON, already a well established authority in refugee studies: *Crossing the Aegean. An appraisal of the 1923 compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey* (Oxford 2003). A second collection along the same lines has been put together by C. TSITSELIKIS, *Η ελληνοτουρκική ανταλλαγή πληθυσμών. Πτυχές μιάς εθνικής σύγκρουσης* [The Greco-Turkish population exchange. Aspects of a national conflict] (Athens 2006). An evocative addition to this literature has been produced by Bruce CLARK, *Twice a stranger. How mass expulsion forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (London 2006), whereas Onur YILDIRIM, *Diplomacy and Displacement. Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Population 1923-1934* (New-York and London 2006) is a good example of the work produced by the younger generation of scholars entering the field, with both its strengths and weaknesses. All of these works include bibliographies of writings not only in English but also in Greek and Turkish and therefore constitute very useful research guides for an initial orientation in this field of scholarship. Two other monographs examine in depth important aspects of the population exchange and its consequences. Elisabeth KONTOGIORGI, *Population exchange in Greek Macedonia. The rural settlement of Refugees 1922-1930* (Oxford 2006) and N. MARANTZIDIS, *Yasasin Millet, Ζήτω το έθνος* (Iraklio 2001).

By contrast to Greece, where the subject has been a major historiographical concern, in Turkey interest in the population exchange until comparatively recently has been minimal. Some recent works have contributed significantly in redressing this picture, including Mehmet Ali GÖKAÇTI, *Nüfus mübadelesi: kayıp bir kuşağın hikâyesi* (Istanbul 2002) and M. PEKİN, ed., *Yeniden kurulan yaşamlar. 1923 Türk-Yunan zorunlu nüfus mübadelesi* (Istanbul 2005).

This necessarily brief and compressed survey of a complex subject with a remarkable history of its own should conclude with a word on research aids that provide fuller compendia of sources and studies to be consulted by interested scholars. One such extremely useful compendium is provided by P. HADJIMOISSIS, *Βιβλιογραφία 1919-1978. Μικρασιατική εκστρατεία-ήττα-προσφυγιά* [Bibliography 1919-1978. Asia Minor campaign-defeat-refugee experience] (Athens: ERMIS 1981). Correspondingly on the Turkish side Müfide PEKİN and Ç. TURAN, eds., *Mübadele bibliografyası* (Istanbul 2002). Indispensable research aids are the compendia of *Karamanli* bibliography compiled by S. SALAVILLE and E. DALLEGGIO, *Karamanlidika. Bibliographie analytique d'ouvrages en langue turque imprimés en caractères grecs. I. 1584-1850* (Athens 1958), *II. 1851-1865* (Athens 1966) and *III. 1866-1900* (Athens 1974) and continued by E. BALTA, *Karamanlidika. Additions (1584-1900)*, (Athens 1987), *Karamanlidika. XX siècle: Bibliographie analytique* (Athens 1987) and *Karamanlidika. Nouvelles additions et compléments* (Athens 1997).

The same scholar has produced important and extensive work on the Ottoman historical background in Greek society and on the Orthodox community in Asia Minor and their cultural heritage, including two albums of photographic documentation on two important Cappadocian communities that were exchanged in 1924: *Προκόπι/Ürgüp* (Athens 2004) and *Σινασός* (Athens 2004). All of the above works have been published by the *Centre for Asia Minor Studies* and their appearance over the years suggests the pluralism of approaches and the range of primary source material that have been brought to bear upon the study of the refugee community produced by the exchange of populations.