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The repercussions of the 1930 Greek-Turkish rapprochement in Turkey

Abstract

The Greek-Turkish rapprochement of the 1930s aimed to sort out some problems that Greece and Turkey had to deal with after the Lausanne Treaty and also to bring peace to the Near East. Not much is known about the discussions that took place in Turkey during the rapprochement. This article aims to give some information about how this period was experienced in Turkey, in Turkey's public opinion and in the Parliament.

Introduction

The historical period of 1919-1922 shared by Turkey and Greece is narrated, perceived and interpreted by respective historiographies and the social memory of the two countries with completely opposing feelings. The end of this period, i.e. the year 1922, means the Asia Minor Disaster for Greek historiography and the end of the War of Independence for Turkish historiography.

The differences in approach of the two countries are not just limited to 1922. The year 1922 and the experienced migration, the population exchange, made official by the signing of the convention (30 January 1923) during the Lausanne Conference, constituted a large part of the social memory in Greece and form one of the most important reference points of the Greek identity. Meanwhile in Turkey, issues such as the 1922 immigration and population exchange were among the topics that historiography preferred to 'forget' until

recently¹. The first Turkish research book on the Muslims who immigrated to Turkey from Greece during the population exchange was published only in 1995².

Another striking example regarding the delayed interest in exploring the incidents of 1922 is, in all probability, the difference between Greece and Turkey vis a vis dates of the founding of the institutions that compiled the documents and oral testimony related to the migration, before and after the Lausanne Treaty. In addition to dozens of local organizations in Greece, the Center for Asia Minor Studies, with the largest archive related to the migration, was founded in 1930. Meanwhile, on the Turkish side, the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, which can be regarded as the equivalent of the above-mentioned institute was founded in Turkey only in 2000³.

Issues such as the period of 1922, the problems Turkey experienced with Greece due to the population exchange (1923-30), that during this period led Turkey and Greece to the brink of war, and finally the rapprochement that was reached thanks to the pacts signed between the two countries in 1930 have not been among the issues studied by Turkish historiography. Today information and comments on the said Turkish-Greek rapprochement of 1930 can mostly be found in non-Turkish historical studies⁴. These researches, naturally, aim

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1. We can summarize the reasons for this silence in Turkey as follows: (a) 1922 marks not an end but a happy beginning for Turkey and it is perceived not as a catastrophe but as a victorious war of independence. (b) Mustafa Kemal and İsmet İnönü, the leaders of Turkey in the battle fields and the founders of modern Turkey in the political field, accepted the borders drawn up by the Lausanne Treaty and the National Pledge (*Misak-i Milli*) as the final borders of the Republic of Turkey. A discourse about some 'lost homelands' at this period, in which a fight was given against the expansionist, Ottomanist, Panturkist and Panislamist views, was not to be tolerated. (c) The presentation of the Turkish Thesis of History at that period was presented as a reply to the West stressing the Turkish legacy of Anatolia/Asia Minor. (d) The rejection of the history of the Ottoman Empire by Turkish historiography developing in the first years of the Republic, just like that of Greek historiography in the 1850s, also had an effect.
 2. A. Kemal, *Büyük Mübadele, Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç (1923-1925)*, İstanbul 1995. (A. Kemal, *The Great Immigration, Mandatory Migration to Turkey (1923-25)*, İstanbul 1995.)
 3. For further information on the foundation, see: www.lozanmubadilleri.org. On the mentioned web page, the information related with the establishment and function of the foundation is given in English, Greek and Turkish.
 4. H. J. Psomiades, *The Eastern Question: The Last Phase, A Study in Greek-Turkish Diplomacy*, New York 2000.
 - I. Αναστασιάδου, «Ο Βενιζέλος και το ελληνoturκικό σύμφωνο φιλίας του 1930», *Μελετήματα γύρω από τον Βενιζέλο και την Εποχή του*, επιμ. Θάνος Βερέμης, Οδυσσεάς Δημητρακόπουλος, σ. 309-426, Αθήνα 1980. (I. Anastasiadou, "Venizelos and the Greek-Turkish Rapprochement of 1930's", *Studies About Venizelos and His Era*, ed. Thanos Veremis, Odisseas Dimitrakopoulos, pp. 309-426, Athens 1980.)
 - E. Χατζηβασιλείου, *Ο Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος, η ελληνoturκική προσέγγιση και το πρόβλημα της ασφάλειας στα Βαλκάνια 1928-1931*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1999. (E. Chatzivasiliou, *Eleftherios Venizelos, the Greek-Turkish Rapprochement and Problems of Security in the Balkans 1928-1931*, Thessaloniki 1993.)

at understanding and explaining how the 1930 Turkish-Greek Rapprochement was experienced in Greece, the Greek public opinion and Parliament. Briefly, they focus on only half of the picture.

This article aims to share with the reader some of the images left in the dark on the other side of the picture. On the one hand, information shall be given relating to the priorities of Turkey during Turkish-Greek rapprochement of 1930 and, on the other hand, the speeches given by the Turkish authorities on the Ankara Economic Convention, June 10, 1930, and the discussions held in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey shall be explained. Primarily, İsmet İnönü’s first spoken reply in Malatya to Venizelos’ letter; as well as his speeches expressing the positive impression he obtained from the “joint work” between Venizelos and himself during the Lausanne Conference, where they headed the Greek and Turkish delegations respectively, shall be quoted. The views of Turkish Foreign Minister, Tevfik Rüştü, expressed to Greek Foreign Minister, Andreas Michalakopoulos, during his visit in Geneva due to the ill health of the latter, the way Turkish Press faced the rapprochement efforts, the tumult in the Turkish National Assembly during the approval of the Greek-Turkish Convention (June 10, 1930) and the comments of Turkey’s founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk regarding the Turkish-Greek rapprochement shall be also presented.

Impact of the Lausanne Treaty on the Greek-Turkish rapprochement of 1930

During the Lausanne Conference, İsmet İnönü headed the Turkish delegation opposite Eleftherios Venizelos. İnönü was the representative of the new Ankara government which had just won the War of Independence. One of the significant issues for the Turkish delegation was to ensure the ‘homogeneity’ of the newly built Turkey. After all, Turkey was founded as a result of the successful fight against the Ottomans and the Greek army (among others) that marched into Anatolia with the *Megali Idea* in mind. The founders of Turkey wanted to create a nation and a nation-state different from that of the prior multi-national system of the Ottomans. The expulsion from the country of the Greek-Orthodox population, who were the largest Christian population that remained from the Ottoman Empire, was both an important step towards the realization of the desired nation-state and also an important development to prevent irredentist discourses in the future. Indeed, with the population exchange decided during the Lausanne Conference, the expul-

sion from Anatolia of the last major Christian population remaining from the Ottoman Empire was secured. Actually “*In 1913 one fifth of the population within the boundaries of today’s Turkey was Christian; at the end of 1923, the proportion had decreased to one fortieth*”⁵.

As a result of the population exchange, Greece also gained a population that was as homogenous as it had never been throughout its history. It was legitimized for Greece to incorporate the largest Greek-Orthodox population living outside the Greek borders - except in the case of Istanbul, Imvros and Tenedos - and at the same time to expel a significant number of Muslim people living within the borders of Greece - except in the case of Western Thrace. According to the information we obtained from the communications of the USA Foreign Affairs Archive, the ratio of the Muslim population in Greece was 20% in 1920, whereas the number decreased to 6% in 1930⁶.

Problems solved by the 1930 Ankara Economic Convention (June 10, 1930)

The problems that arose between Turkey and Greece following the Lausanne Treaty and the experienced mandatory population exchange can be summarized under three items.

(a) *établis*: Turkey wished to reduce the number of the Greek population in its territories as much as possible, while Greece wanted Greeks in Istanbul to remain in their places. The term *établis* was used to define those who would be liable to this right but the term was interpreted differently by the two parties involved⁷. In 1928 the two countries had not reached an agreement on who would be considered as *établis*.

5. C. Keyder, *Memalik-i Osmaniye'den Avrupa Birliği'ne*, p. 81, İstanbul 2003. (C. Keyder, *From Ottoman Empire to European Union*, p. 81, İstanbul 2003.)

6. *Archive of the American Research Institute in Ankara*, Raymod Hare, 767.68115/143, October 23, 1930.

7. “The Turks maintained that the status “established” depended upon the fulfillment of certain legal formalities which could only be determined by Turkish law and not by the mixed commission; [...] On the other hand, the Greeks insisted that the status “established” was defined by treaty and that any person who had resided in Constantinople before October 30, 1918, and had given definite proof of his intentions to remain there permanently was entitled to remain in the city under Article 2 of the Exchange Convention, and that the decision of the mixed commission for the exchange of population should be final in cases of doubt.”, Psomiades, *op. cit.*, p. 74, also see A. Αλεξανδρή, «Το Ιστορικό Πλαίσιο των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων», *Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις (1923-1987)*, σ. 44-49, Αθήνα 1991 (2^η έκδοση). [A. Alexandris, “Historical Background of the Greek-Turkish Relations”, *The Greek-Turkish Relations (1923-1987)*, pp. 44-49, Athens 1991 (2nd edition).]

(b) Patriarchate: Probably the most unwanted organization within the territories of the newly-founded Turkey was the Orthodox Patriarchate. The Patriarchate was both a political and social organization of the Greek-Orthodox community in the Ottoman Empire and it had also been influenced by Greek nationalism and the *Megali Idea* during the turbulent years. Consequently, the Patriarchate was an unwanted organization the existence of which was regarded with mistrust and skepticism by the Turkish authorities who had even abolished the Muslim Caliphate. Meanwhile Greece claimed that the Patriarchate had become a solely religious organization after the foundation of the new Turkey and requested recognition of its ecumenist status⁸.

(c) The indemnity to be paid in return for the assets that were left behind: Probably the most important of the three problems was the issue of immigrants' assets. As it is known, Article 8 and 9 of the population exchange Convention foresees the payment of an indemnity to the emigrants for the assets they left behind. The immigrants, who constituted one fourth of the population in Greece and were represented by approximately sixty deputies⁹ in the Greek parliament, believed that they should be paid an indemnity by Turkey for the assets they left in Asia Minor. They claimed that there were many and highly valuable immovable assets that had been left in Turkey. On the other hand, Turkey claimed that the lands that had been the scene of battles, especially the Western Anatolia coasts, were ruined and, therefore, no valuable Greek assets were left on those lands. Turkey claimed that the Muslim immigrants who came to Turkey had assets that were well-cared for and arable fields; therefore, their assets were more valuable than those of the Greeks in Turkey. Unlike the immigrants who went to Greece, there is no information to indicate that the immigrants who went to Turkey also got organized creating a pressure group for their assets left in Greece.

Unlike Turkey which was governed by a single-party, the great political turbulences experienced in Greece after 1922 that lasted until August 1928 elections, when Venizelos and his party were elected, also played a role in the failure to settle these problems and in causing tension to rise. The pacts of Ankara and Athens that were signed in 1925 and 1926 respectively could not

8. For the problems concerning the ecumenist status of the Patriarchate after the Treaty of Lausanne see, I. Anastasiadou, *op. cit.*, p. 376-379 and A. Alexandris, *op. cit.*, p. 57-63.

9. The number of the deputies is given at Spyridon Polychroniades' unpublished personal archive page number 3, see footnote number 29.

be realized due to various reasons. However, a strong political government appeared in Greece after the 1928 elections. Venizelos was to take the first initiative in favor of the Turkish-Greek rapprochement and this is remembered as his most important political success regarding foreign politics in the last four years of his government (1928-1932).

Despite the never-ending talks, the Ankara Government did not give up seeking peace with Greece. We learn from the researcher Ifigenia Anastasiadou that Greece's Minister of Foreign Affairs, A. Michalakopoulos, fell sick in Switzerland, where he went in March 1928 to represent his country at the League of Nations and stayed in Geneva. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Rüştü re-scheduled his route in Europe to visit Michalakopoulos¹⁰. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Rüştü Bey, mentions his visit during the speech he made in the Grand National Assembly. He mentions that after visiting the sick Michalakopoulos, he went on to Milan and held a meeting with 'Mr. Mussolini', who was looking for a new balance in the area. Italy, Turkey and Greece were seeking to preserve the status quo and the existing borders in the region. During that period, Tevfik Rüştü Bey acted according to the directives he received from Ankara. The signing of separate agreements between Turkey or Greece and Italy was considered appropriate, because the problems between Greece and Turkey had not yet been solved. Italy signed two pacts titled the Neutrality, Accordance and Judicial Resolution Pact. The agreement was first signed with Turkey on May 30, 1928, and four months later with Greece on September 23, 1928. During the process of negotiation which was to end with the Greek-Turkish Convention in 1930, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Rüştü Bey, tells that Mussolini's Italy also helped:

“Today, I am to explain a detail relating to the negotiations we have been carrying out. I had gone to Geneva for the negotiations of the commission to determine preliminary limitations. We had decided earlier through communications with my esteemed friend Mr. Michalakopoulos, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, that we would meet there, find a solution to fundamentally settle the unresolved issues between us and to offer that solution to our governments. I learned that this gentleman was under treatment at a private clinic in Geneva. He agreed to my visiting the hospital. It had not been long since he had undergone

10. Anasatasiadou, *op.cit.*, p. 313.

surgery. Even so, we talked comprehensively about our business and exchanged ideas to reach the agreement that I submit here for your approval without delay. Our meeting was both in writing and spoken. Then, one or two days later, we went to Milan. We had meetings with the esteemed leader of the Italian government Mr. Mussolini and Mr. Grandi. The issue of signing a pact between the three countries came up during these meetings. At that point, we had discussions on determining whether the pacts should be signed trilaterally or bilaterally. The ambiguous issues between Greece and ourselves had not yet been finalized. Moreover, I am able to tell word by word our terms at that moment; while we were willing to resolve all the issues with Greece and strongly reinforce amity, we preferred on the other hand to constitute a strong amity directly with Rome. I do not know, if it is necessary to tell this; I was receiving explicit directives from Ankara both on the way and there through correspondence. Thereby, the decision to sign bilateral pacts between the three countries was reached. Following that, the pacts were signed between Rome and Ankara, and Rome and Athens. [...] Then, the esteemed Mr. Mussolini himself and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Grandi worked to resolve the unresolved issues between Ankara and Athens in an unbiased and amicable manner and there is no doubt that, in addition to the willingness of the governments of both parties the very kind and prudent mediation of Italy was beneficial and influential in settling our issues without delay. In this regard, I thanked the leader of the Italian government with a telegram and the Minister of Foreign Affairs through our ambassador on the date the pact was signed, and I also repeated my feelings during my later visit to Rome, and now I hereby perform my duty in explaining the facts in your presence”¹¹.

11. *Parliamentary Proceedings of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey*, vol. 21, p. 36, Ankara 1931.

Letter diplomacy

In a letter that Venizelos wrote on August 30, 1928 addressing İsmet İnönü, he expressed that the ‘cooperation’ he had with him during the Lausanne Conference might also be beneficial in terms of resolving the disputes experienced by the two countries after the Lausanne Treaty.

İsmet İnönü was to reply in another letter on September 27, 1928, after a one month delay due to a trip he was to make to his hometown Malatya. However, İsmet İnönü was to give his first spoken reply to Venizelos on September 13 in the speech he made in Malatya:

“I would like to mention our problems with Greece. First of all, I have to say that there are no irresolvable fundamental and political problems between the two countries, which might remain as an eternal matter of dispute. The unresolved disputes are generally those legal issues which were deemed in the previous pacts and mostly related to personal benefits. Of course it is not possible to consider the necessity of resolving the issues related to the personal benefits of the subject citizens legally and contractually as negligible. However, legal issues can finally be solved so long as the parties have good will. We sincerely express our good will. We understand from Mister Venizelos’ latest speeches that he also has an earnest desire to settle the unresolved disputes. My confidence in him strengthened too with the amicable letter that I received just as I was about to leave Ankara. These desires will find a frank response from us. It is also my earnest wish to stop protracting the problems between us and resolve them practically and radically and assure their resolution”¹².

The ‘joint work’ of İsmet İnönü and Venizelos during the Lausanne Conference was actually one of the factors that positively affected the Turkish-Greek relations in the post-Lausanne period. From the Lausanne Conference onwards İsmet İnönü had positive sentiments about Venizelos. He had noticed during the Conference that Venizelos defended the interests of Greece in the best possible way but at the same time avoided adopting a hostile attitude towards Turkey unless the interests of Greece and Turkey were completely conflicting. *İnönü* stresses this in his speech at the National Assembly of Turkey on June 17, 1930

12. M. Gönlübol & C. Sar, *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası* (1919-1973), p. 71, Ankara 1974. (M. Gönlübol & C. Sar, *Turkish Foreign Affairs with Facts* (1919-1973), p. 71, Ankara 1974.)

“When working with Mr. Venizelos in Lausanne, I especially paid attention to one certain point, that he was very strict, hard working and formidable regarding problems relating to the interests of Greece, while he was not involved in any issue that was not related to Greece and might harm Turkey. Our observation from the first day was that there were no major conflicts between the major interests of the two countries and that the men leading the two countries did not intend keeping the two countries in a morbid controversy”¹³.

İsmet İnönü also had a talent to ‘empathy’ on the subject of the concerns of Venizelos and Greece. He understood that the two countries did not seek territories from each other, which was a precondition for peace; and Venizelos’ emphasis indicating that they recognized the Lausanne Treaty arose from his concerns regarding the territorial integrity of Greece. Again during his speech dated June 17, 1930 in the Assembly, he said:

“Now, is there a conflict of interests and a problem between Greece and us? In order to discuss this issue, we have first of all to consider our position. Through the media of our neighbor, we understand the core of their general concern. It is rumored that we have pretensions to the islands, Western Thrace or to another country. First of all, we can ask ourselves. Do we have such a desire? Now I will reply to that question. We have no such desire. We have said this one thousand times and we will say it another thousand times. We do not have that desire. Therefore, there is not a fundamental point that would cause our neighbor to fear us. In Lausanne, we were not interested in such issues although some opportunities did occur where we could have had such requests”¹⁴.

In fact the founders of new Turkey were willing to build good relations with Greece beginning from the Lausanne Treaty. In the political discourse expressed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk especially, the ‘other’ of new Turkey was not Greece but its recent past, the Ottoman Empire, as opposed to what is thought by the nationalist line of today. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who was eager for the structuring and foundation of a new nation-state in the country, resolved the problems of Turkey with its bordering neighbors through various peace treaties. The objective was to create a homogeneous state at home.

13. İnönü’s speech in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, *Parliamentary Proceedings of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey*, vol. 20, p. 271, Ankara 1930.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

The newly-founded Turkey was not a homogeneous nation. One of the major problems for the founders of the Republic was the Kurdish revolts. According to Mete Tunçay: “A very important issue related to the recent history of Turkey in the 1920s and ’30s was the situation similar to civil war, caused by the continuous Kurdish revolts. It is possible to say especially in terms of their reflection on domestic politics, that those revolts had as much influence as the Independence War”¹⁵. The Şeyh Said rebellion¹⁶ broke out in February 1925, soon after the abolishment of the Caliphate on March 3, 1924, which was an important reform in the creation of modern Turkey. The rebellion could be suppressed only by May 31, 1925. According to many researchers, the rebellion, that was a serious threat to the regime, was influential in determining the domestic and foreign politics to be followed in the first years of the Republic.

“[...] that rebellion reminded bureaucracy that the country could not achieve the desired homogeneity. With that rebellion, the government returned to a state of war, and re-activated the Independence Courts giving them extraordinary powers to suppress the demands of the Kurds in the East; martial law was announced throughout the entire country and the Law on the Maintenance of Order was passed. That law not only provided the government with the required institutional framework for an authoritarian regime, but also eliminated the potential channels of opposition. After 1925 (except for a short period in 1930) channels of opposition remained closed for the twenty years-long single party government”¹⁷.

15. M. Tunçay, *T.C. 'nde Tek Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*, p. 127, İstanbul 1989. (M. Tunçay, *The Foundation of the Single Party Rule in Turkey (1923-1931)*, p. 127, İstanbul 1989.)

16. Within the new borders of the republic about 20 per cent of the population was Kurdish, but they were not mentioned in the peace treaty of Lausanne and promises of autonomy made by the nationalist leaders during the independence struggle, were forgotten. This was a great disappointment to the Kurdish nationalists. The abolition of the Caliphate removed an important religious symbol which bound the two communities together. Şeyh Said, a religious leader, exerted great political influence in regions with predominantly Kurdish population. The rebellion broke out in February 1925. Although at one time the rebels threatened Diyarbakır, the only town the rebels managed to seize was Elazığ and that only for a short time. The government in Ankara took strong measures and the Kurdish rebels were pushed back into the mountains. The capture on 27 April of Şeyh Said really marked the end of the rebellion, although small groups continued a guerilla war all through the summer. See E. Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern History*, p. 176-180, London-New York 1993.

17. Keyder, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

İsmet İnönü, the second man of Turkey and Tevfik Rüştü, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, replied to Venizelos with two letters they sent in the same envelope on September 27, 1928¹⁸. In the letters referred to, the issue that Venizelos specifically emphasized and the one that İsmet İnönü was happy to hear mentioned was ‘the foundation of New Turkey’. The words of Venizelos regarding the ‘foundation of New Turkey’ were said not only to please the politicians in Turkey. When defending the Greek-Turkish Convention at the Greek Parliament on June 17, 1930, Venizelos was to say in his speech before the opposition that; the newly founded Turkey was the biggest enemy of the Ottoman concept, that the issues Turkey was dealing with were similar to those of Greece and that both countries had mutual problems¹⁹.

Another joint issue in the letters which is notable is the decisiveness of the two parties in resolving the problems no matter how complicated, and leaving them in the past. Tevfik Rüştü’s words: “*I do not think that this result can be obtained without building direct communication between the two governments, [...]*.”²⁰ indicate the belief that despite the unrealized agreements and uncompleted negotiations, the solution could be obtained only through dialogue between the two countries. This new dialogue aimed to bring a solution to the problems that occurred after the population exchange, and that overshadowed the ‘Final peace in the East’ and brought Turkish-Greek relations to the threshold of war. The letters of the leaders of the two countries in August and September 1928 started a new period of negotiations between Greece and Turkey.

Following the exchange of letters between İsmet İnönü and Eleftherios Venizelos, the Ambassadors were also to be replaced. In 1929 Mustafa Kemal appointed Enis Akaygen as Turkey’s Ambassador to Athens²¹. Venizelos also replaced Ioannis Papas, the Istanbul-born Ambassador who took part in the uncompleted 1924-28 negotiations with Spyridon Polychroniades in July 1929. Enis Akaygen, Turkey’s Ambassador in Athens, was to be the first ambassador of Turkey to attend the March 25 celebrations of Greece held

18. The original of the letters is included in Benaki Archive. For the translation into Greek, see: Anastasiadou, *op.cit.*, pp. 422-425.

19. Σ. Στεφάνου, Τα Κείμενα του Ελευθέριου Βενιζέλου, τ. 4, (1930-1936), σ. 210, Αθήνα 1984. (S. Stefanou, *Eleftherios Venizelos’ texts*, vol. 4 (1930-1936), p. 210, Athens 1984.)

20. Anastasiadou, *op.cit.*, p. 424.

21. E. Tulça, *Atatürk, Venizelos ve Bir Diplomat Enis Bey*, İstanbul 2003. (E. Tulca, *Atatürk, Venizelos and a Diplomat called Enis Bey*, İstanbul 2003.)

in 1929. Two years after the letters, and one year after the replacement of the Ambassadors, various regulations were to be brought with the Ankara Convention to the problems experienced between the two countries after the population exchange.

The first part of the Greek-Turkish Convention was prepared on the issue of immigrants' assets: that is, the most challenging problem between Turkey and Greece, and the most delicate issue for the immigrant population and public opinion of Greece. Under this title, a decision was taken to accept that the assets left by the immigrants in both countries were to be the assets of the departed country. In other words, Turkey and Greece agreed on accepting the assets of the immigrants as equal and erasing them. Another issue cleared by the Greek-Turkish Convention was the issue of the definition of *établi*. Everybody, who was in the region at the time when the pact was signed, would be accepted as *établi*.

The repercussions created by the Greek-Turkish Convention on Greek and Turkish public opinion were different. The general opinion in Greece claimed that the assets of the immigrants from Turkey were much more than the assets of the immigrants from Greece. As a result of an evaluation to be made in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty, they thought that Turkey should pay an indemnity to the immigrants. According to public opinion in Greece, the Greek-Turkish Convention meant waivering all these 'rights' in favor of Turkey.

In order to understand the disappointment of the Greek immigrants in this respect, it is enough to look at the newspapers "*Prosfigikos Kosmos*", "*Elefthero Vima*" and "*Kathimerini*" published in Greece. Some immigrant associations and the opposition represented by Yorgos Kafandaris and Panayis Tsaldaris were against the Greek-Turkish Convention. These elements defended the idea that the pact was signed with concessions and waivered the assets of the immigrants. Despite knowing that it was an unrealistic claim, the opposition, eager to pressurize Venizelos, defended the idea that the Venizelos government, which 'sacrificed' the assets of the immigrants under the table, should undertake the amount that should have been paid by the Turkish state.

From June 10 to June 26 Venizelos was obliged to maintain a policy defending the Greek-Turkish Convention until the Convention was accepted by Greek Parliament. The first of those assemblies was held on June 17 and the second on June 25. The Parliament records of both meetings are quite thick; the first one is nine and the second one is thirty-two pages. Looking into

the Greek Parliament records, we can see that both Parliament meetings were quite hectic and controversial. We can say that, in particular the sole subject of the assembly held on June 25, one day before the approval of the Pact, was the assets of the immigrants and the indemnity to be paid for the assets.

According to the information we obtained from the newspapers issued in Turkey in 1930, the session of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey held on June 17 to discuss and vote on the Greek-Turkish Convention was more crowded compared with other sessions. And two unusual guests were welcomed, Greek Ambassador Polychroniades and the Italian envoy. In the Turkish media, we do not come across any request by the Lausanne Immigrants for the assets they left, as opposed to that in the Greek media.

Due to the strong censorship in the first decade of modern Turkey it is difficult to understand the thoughts of public opinion on the Greek-Turkish rapprochement of 1930. From 1925 until 1931 the Press was under the control of a single party administration. It reflected the voice of the government not that of the people which is why we do not encounter views of disagreement in opposition to the developments concerning Greece. “*All newspapers and journals voicing a liberal thought were closed by the single party in 1925. After this date the papers that were published were the ones under the control of the single party government*”²².

Turkish Press in 1930 had a past of only seven years, and that period the Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun*) was still in force. After the censorship imposed on the Press, it was not only the number of papers that lessened, but also the number of readers: “[...] *the sales of newspapers, reaching 120.000 in 1925, went under 50.000 in 1926, that is after strict censorship imposed*”²³. Mete Tunçay stresses that this number lessened even more in 1928 after the implementation of the Letter Revolution (*Harf Devrimi*)²⁴. In order to see the impact of the Greek-Turkish rapprochement efforts in 1930, “*Cumhuriyet*”, “*Yarın*”, “*Milliyet*” and “*Akşam*” papers were scanned. In all these newspapers all through 1930 Greek-Turkish relations hold a major position. From January on we come across news concerning the negotiations (January, February, and March), Venizelos’ possible arrival in Turkey, the break off of

22. Keyder, *op.cit.*, p. 263.

23. Keyder, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

24. M. Tunçay, *Arif Oruç’un “Yarın”ı* (1933), p. 232, Istanbul 1991. (M. Tunçay, *Arif Oruç’s “Yarın”* (1933), p. 232, Istanbul 1991.)

the negotiations and the dialogue (April), the signing of the economic pact (June), Venizelos and Mihalakopoulos' visit to Turkey (October), and their speeches on Ankara and Turkey when they came back to Greece after the visit (November, December). Until the signing of the economic pact news about the course of the negotiations are sometimes positive and sometimes negative. Let's not forget that there is a very bad precedent. Seven years had passed from the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne and the Greek-Turkish dispute had not settled yet. On the contrary, in these seven years Greek-Turkish relations had reached a deadlock and the negotiations were often broke off. The image through Turkish Press is that it all hangs by a thread, from one day to the next things may change completely, and anyway nothing can be taken for granted. For example "*Yarın*" newspaper on 14 March bears the headline: "Once again it looks like Turkish-Greek negotiations will be in abeyance"²⁵, and on 27 March: "It is sure that Turkish-Greek negotiations reach a definite deadlock"²⁶. "*Akşam*" five days before the signing of the Pact asks itself: "No agreement with Greece this time also?"²⁷. However, "*Yarın*"'s headline one day before was trumpeting: "We are reaching an agreement with the Greeks!"²⁸. Finally, all papers agree that the most difficult problem of the negotiations is that of the properties of the exchanged refugees.

After the signing of the economic pact they publish the speeches of the two countries' leaders in their parliaments. Turkish newspapers follow the course in the greek parliament, the strong controversy, the protests of the refugees, Papanastasiou's pro-pact speeches, and Kafadaris'-Tsaldaris' anti-pact speeches. After the two parliaments' ratification of the pact we come across the Greek-Turkish friendship "literature", which prepares the ground for Venizelos' visit to Turkey. Let's not forget that that visit coincided with the Turkish national holiday of the 29th of October (Proclamation of the Republic). Two interesting details from the news of those days during Venizelos' visit in Turkey are the following. As far as the agreements signed in Ankara is concerned, in the Press there is too much of the "Protocol on naval Armaments Restriction", while, on the contrary, there is no information on the "Trade, Installation and Navigation Pact". The other interesting remark is that only "*Cumhuriyet*" uses the

25. "Türk Yunan müzakeratı yine sürüncemede kalacağına benziyor", *Yarın* (14 March 1930).

26. "Türk Yunan müzakeresinin kat'i çıkmaza gittiği muhakkak", *Yarın* (27 March 1930).

27. "Yunanistanla bu defa da itilaf olamıyor mu?", *Akşam* (5 June 1930).

28. "Yunanla uyuşuyoruz", *Yarın* (4 June 1930).

depreciatory terms "High priest" (*Başpapaz*) and what could be translated as "the Istanbul Greek-Orthodox Church" (*Başpapazlık*) instead of Patriarch and Patriarchate. Finally, two general remarks. Greek-Turkish relations consist all through 1930, except from July and August when the Parliament is closed, the major topic of the newspapers. According to what would be absolutely normal and expected today, the concealment of two major topics of those times is remarkable. Venizelos, on every occasion, refers to a new Turkey and its difference to the Ottoman Empire, that is Turkey as a nation-state. These statements are taken to the Press but nobody, journalist or other, makes any comments at all on these. The other striking concealment has to do with the *Megali Idea* and the 1919-1922 war. Only once or twice the Greek Prime Minister is asked in a very polite way, while a polemical discourse that would create at least sentimental tension is completely absent.

An analysis of four different newspapers ("*Akşam*", "*Cumhuriyet*", "*Milliyet*", "*Yarın*") published during 1930 shows that all the newspapers supported the Greek-Turkish rapprochement. We see neither opposition to the Turkish-Greek rapprochement in Turkish public opinion nor an unfavourable discourse about this rapprochement. We possess no information that the immigrants from Greece to Turkey held a different place or identity in Turkish society and that they expressed a different discourse. Reading the newspapers of the period (from January to December 1930) one gets the impression that the most important issue of Turkish politics was relations with Greece, in particular the visit of Venizelos to Turkey. Unlike today's nationalist line, no negative feelings were encountered, nor any voices raised against the *Megali Idea* or Venizelos and Greece. One cannot even imagine that the armies of those countries had battled against each other only eight years ago. One would think that Venizelos' visit to Turkey was the greatest event of the year. The silence of the Turkish side is expressed and explained in Polychroniades' archive with these words: "*One has to admit that İsmet Pasha did not need the same kind of encouragement that Venizelos needed in order to take a stand against public opinion. In any case public opinion in Turkey did not play a leading role in politics as it did in Greece*"²⁹.

29. Unpublished archive, typescript page 29. The personal archive of Sp. Polychroniades, which explains the period of the negotiations, covers important information regarding the course of the negotiations. We would like to thank Mr. Alexis Alexandris hereby, who provided us with that archive.

On looking into the records of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, we see that the pact was subject to serious debates in Ankara. Furthermore, those who defended the Pact in Turkey were Mustafa Kemal and İsmet İnönü who won the Independence War and brought about international recognition of Turkey's foundation at Lausanne, and Rüştü Aras, the deputy who conducted the negotiations. They were the President, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs respectively. In the group opposing the pact were the Samsun deputy Avni Bey, the Istanbul deputy Hüseyin Bey and the Denizli deputy Mazhar Müfit Bey. All three deputies were against the pact because of the mutual cancellation of the assets in the pact. In their speeches against the Greek-Turkish Convention they gravely accused the Assembly. There were even people who said that the Greek-Turkish Convention meant concession from the rights obtained in Lausanne.

In Turkey we do not have any findings to indicate that immigrants had demands similar to those in Greece. Those who presided over the discussions, that is, the President of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü and Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Rüştü Aras, thought that Turkey should not pay an indemnity for the assets of immigrants to Greece as the lands of Turkey had suffered the war. The war had been waged on Turkish lands that had been devastated, ruined and blasted. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey approved the Greek-Turkish Convention in the first session held one week after the latter was signed. However, as opposed to what is generally thought, the session, with records that were nine pages long, was quite heated.

The first person to speak in the session opened under the chairmanship of Kazım Paşa was the Deputy of Foreign Affairs, Doctor Tevfik Rüştü Bey. Rüştü Bey said that the new Turkey was following a policy favoring peace:

“Again, as you know, our Foreign Affairs department has not hesitated even for a moment on working with great efforts and diligence and even passion for peace, walking on the route approved by the Grand Assembly. Most of the amity and arbitration agreements we have signed and are continuing to sign with our neighbors and other States are a result of our efforts in this respect. [...] The Turkish nation, which forms a unity around its great leaders, is seeking its development in peace, assuring its defense and protection”³⁰.

30. *Parliamentary Proceedings of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey*, vol. 20, p. 265, Ankara 1930.

Speaking immediately after Tevfik Rüştü Bey, the Samsun deputy Avni Bey made a rather lengthy speech indicating that Turkey was about to lose the success gained in the battle fields on the diplomacy table through the Greek-Turkish Convention:

“This is my opinion, we have shed rivers of blood to protect and save our legitimate rights, and during that time many parts of our country have been damaged and ruined. We are deprived of even getting a penny of indemnity for damages. We are invited to great self-sacrifice even when the borders of our country are drawn with our bayonets that won the war. [...] We are completely loyal to our pledges. However, I think we are acting very extravagantly in settling our accounts today (Applauses)”³¹.

Avni Bey lists his objections to the Greek-Turkish Convention under four headings. According to Avni Bey, the Greek-Turkish Convention caused Turkey to lose in every aspect, to give concessions and therefore suffer harm. Avni Bey even claims that the foreign affairs of the period were exposed to a *fait accompli*³². Huseyin Bey’s thesis claims that the Turkish assets left in Western Thrace were more than those left in Turkey. At the end of the lengthy speech he made, he said the indemnity Turkey should be paid by Greece would be sacrificed by signing the Greek-Turkish Convention³³. Mazhar Müfit Bey was also stuck on the issue of the assets. He said that the Turkish side was making more sacrifices than the Greek side, that Turkey was even waiving the rights obtained at Lausanne:

“If there is also a general interest for the opposite party, we are now sacrificing ours and why isn’t the opposite party sacrificing its personal interest for the general interest? Should we be the only one to make sacrifices? (nodding murmurs) Our general interest is mutual. Whatever sacrifices we make the opposite party should also make. Let us sacrifice our interests but they not theirs, let them not sacrifice their interests to such an extent that we will be giving them back the rights İsmet Pasha obtained in Lausanne. Never sirs, never!”³⁴.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 266.

32. *Idem*.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 268.

The final words were spoken by Malatya deputy İsmet Pasha. İsmet Pasha's approach to the subject is not restricted to the assets issue. İsmet Pasha sees the Greek-Turkish Convention as the herald, the foundation stone of a new period to begin between the two countries. The Greek-Turkish Convention was to end the problems that occurred after the population exchange and Greece's perception of Turkey as a country threatening the territories of Greece, and make the two countries strong fortresses of peace:

"[...] I believe that if the problems can be resolved and if we shout these facts to our people and tell them clearly and if both countries realize the benefits of seeking amity, trust and support from the other, then it will be possible to overcome all the challenges. This is what we have been working on for so many years. Today, we are obtaining the results of it. This result is also the beginning of a new period. In the new period, everyone will be able to understand the stages and consequences of our relations that today may not be so easily understood. You will accept a good agreement. With this agreement, you will serve your country. With the developing relations between the two countries, the future generations will be grateful to you (a great applause)"³⁵.

The Assembly completed its hearing with the above mentioned words of the Malatya Deputy İsmet İnönü regarding the Economic Convention of Ankara. 247 of 316 deputies voted for the Greek-Turkish Convention. 230 of the votes were for, 15 against and 2 abstained.

After the Greek-Turkish Convention, Venizelos was to make a visit to Turkey from October 27 to 31. During his visit, Venizelos signed agreements which were briefly named as Amity Agreements or Ankara Pacts, and he became the first Greek Prime Minister who visited both Ankara and the Patriarchate.

Mustafa Kemal also mentioned the changing Turkish-Greek relations following the Greek-Turkish Convention in his speech at the annual opening of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey on November 1, 1930. The founder of Turkey also thought that the Greek-Turkish Convention and Venizelos' visit to Ankara marked a turning point in the relations between the two countries and a thoroughly new beginning. The past in which the interests of both countries conflicted ended with the Greek-Turkish Convention. A new period lay before Turkey and Greece:

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 270-271.

“I am particularly pleased with the official visits of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs’ Minister of our neighbor and friend Greece to Ankara. The higher interests of Turkey and Greece have entirely ceased to be in opposite directions. The sincere amity of these two countries provides a security and strength for both of them. The documents which contract the new principles of the new period beginning between the two republics have been presented for our final approval”³⁶.

From the newspapers which describe Venizelos’ visit to Ankara, one gets the impression that Venizelos’ visit was the big event of the period. People were in the streets, everywhere was full of Greek and Turkish flags. People were shouting in Greek: “Zito o Venizelos” (Long live Venizelos). About the welcome ceremony of Venizelos in Ankara the American Ambassador Joseph C. Grew notes that:

“These columns supported an inscription of welcome -in Greek. And to be perfectly sure that the Greek was grammatical and the spelling was correct, the Turkish Protocol Department consulted the Greek Legation. Those who remembered Ankara in 1924-25, upon seeing this description, felt the desirability of consulting a nerve specialist. Wasn’t it a hallucination? One found it hard to put down a feeling of unreality”³⁷.

36. *Atatürk’s opening speeches at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey*, p. 35, Ankara 1987.

37. *Archive of the American Research Institute in Ankara*, Joseph C. Grew, 767.68/685, November 5, 1930.