

## ANALYSIS OF TURKISH-GREEK POPULATION EXCHANGE IN THE CONTEXT OF GREEK AND TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

### TÜRK-YUNAN MÜBADELESİNİN TÜRK - YUNAN DIŞ POLİTİKASI BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ

Mustafa Yahya METINTAŞ<sup>1</sup>

Melike METINTAŞ<sup>2</sup>

#### Summary

Due to war conditions in the world, population exchange was a broad application of the states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This policy had been applied by the nation states in order to avoid conflict between certain ethnic groups. After the First World War, the Ottoman Empire, which had multi-ethnic character, collapsed and the new Turkish government changed its state identity as a nation-state under the name of Turkey as a land of the Turks. Also, in Greece many Turks and Muslims were faced with a miserable life from conflict with the Greeks. In these conditions, many Rum and Greek people, who lived in the Anatolian part of the Turkey, were obligated to migrate to the Greek lands; Turks and Muslims also migrated from Greece to Turkey when the policies and agreements were applied by both the Turkish and Greek governments. In this study, this population exchange between Turkey and Greece will be analysed and certain results of this policy that relate to international relations will also be discussed.

**Key words:** Turkey, Greece , Population exchange, Foreign policy,

#### Özet

Dünyadaki savaş koşulları nedeniyle nüfus değişimi, 19. yüzyılda devletlerin sık sık başvurduğu bir uygulamaydı. Ulus devletler kuruluşları sırasında etnik gruplar arasındaki çatışmaları önlemek için bu politikaya başvurlardı. Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra, çok etnisiteli karaktere sahip olan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun çökmesi ve yeni Türk hükümetinin devlet kimliğini bir Türk ulus devleti olarak belirlemesi bu doğrultuda bir nüfus politikasını zorunlu kıldı. Ayrıca, Yunanistan'da pek çok Türk ve Müslüman, Yunan hükümeti tarafından Balkan savaşlarından beri uygulanan zorbalığa ve baskıya dayanan bir siyaset ile karşı karşıya idi. Bu şartlarda, Türkiye'nin Anadolu kesiminde yaşayan Rum halkının birçoğu ve Yunanistan'da Batı Trakya dışında yaşayan pek çok Türk karşılıklı olarak göç etmek zorundaydı. Bu göç sürecinin çerçevesi Türk ve Yunan hükümetlerinin yaptıkları anlaşmalar ile çizildi ve bu anlaşmalar dönemin uluslararası politikalarına uygundu.

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasındaki bu nüfus değişimi analiz edilecek ve bu politikanın uluslararası ilişkiler ile ilgili bazı sonuçları tartışılacaktır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Türkiye, Yunanistan, Nüfus mübadelesi, Dış politika,

<sup>1</sup>Eskişehir Osmangazi University Science and Art Faculty Department of History, Eskişehir, Turkey; mmetintas@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup>İstanbul Sehir University Human Sciences Faculty, Dragos, İstanbul; melikemetintas@std.sehir.edu.tr

## Introduction

Population exchange or resettlement is a kind of movement whereby a large group of people move from one region to another. It is often forced by states of international institutions in the case of war, ethnic and religious issues. Today, population Exchanges and Resettlement processes are controversial arrangements and policies in the international order with the context of legitimacy.<sup>1</sup> However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century these arrangements found a significant place in international order because of the Wars, nation-state ideas and ethnic-religious conflicts. All wars in World history have resulted in miserable outcomes. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century in particular, war expanded into the cities, away from large savannahs that is the reason why mass civil deaths increased and people began to be overcome with the pains of war.<sup>2</sup> From this point of view, in order to prevent possible bad influence on the civilian people's lives, special kinds of policies were applied by the international institutions, authorities and states. One policy that applied in a war situation involving people was forced migration and resettlement. After World War I and collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey also had to experience this type of policy among the Rum and Turk societies. After the ethnic and religious conflict that existed in both Turkish and Greek regions, both states decided to do a population exchange within these regions. Thousands of Turkish people in Greece and Rums in Turkey who had lived in that land for hundreds of years were forced to move from their homeland to another region. This exchange was signed in the Lausanne treaty with Turkey's and Greece's agreement. In other words, population exchange was enforced due to this bilateral acceptancy. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, conflict with Greece also influenced the peoples of the region and those people became unable to live in these regions safely and peacefully. After the defeat in Anatolian territory, in order to protect the minorities in Turkish parts, Greek wanted that population exchange. By contrast, considering the establishment of nation-state idea and the risk of "Megalith Idea" of Greeks, Turkey had a more moderate approach to population exchange. But there were also economic and political reasons to support the idea of resettlement. For this reason, in Lausanne to preserve the life

---

<sup>1</sup> Mandacı, N. (2014). Ulus-Kurma Süreçleri Ve Nüfus Mübadeleleri: Dün–Bugün. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180). P. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Mandacı, N. (2014). Ulus-Kurma Süreçleri Ve Nüfus Mübadeleleri: Dün–Bugün. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180). P. 87.

and safety of people and states, population exchange and resettlement issue was put on the agenda.

On November 21, 1922 in the first meeting of the Lausanne Conference, Greek – Turkish issues that covered the borders between these two countries, minorities, the Orthodox Fener Greek patriarchate (*Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople*) and population exchange were discussed by all sides.<sup>3</sup> After these kinds of meetings, on January 30, 1923, the "*Bilateral Convention on the Exchange of Turkish and Greek Population*" and the Protocol on the Repatriation of Civilian Detainees and the Exchange of Prisoners of War<sup>4</sup> were signed between the two countries. After the certain negotiations and the establishment of institutions population exchange for these two societies begun. However, during the practice many problems existed on both sides such as status of people's immovable goods and property etc., and each of the issues were processed in the diplomacy agenda. From this point of view, it can be seen that population exchange between Greek and Turkish societies occupied the foreign policies of both countries and both countries were motivated to apply this resettlement policy within the context of fulfilling their foreign policy approach. In other words, during that time the population exchange idea was right for Turkey's and Greece's foreign policy understandings and they constituted the resettlement policy to fulfil their main foreign policy aims. Moreover, population exchange between Turkey and Greece was also an essential example for other population exchanges in the world which suffered similar issues such as wars or ethnic conflicts. For instance, population exchange in 1944 between Soviets and Poland and in 1946 between Czechoslovakia and Hungary took as an example the Turkish–Greek population exchange.<sup>5</sup> From this point of view, both sides had judicious reasons to apply population exchange into their foreign policy approach. That is the reason is why analysing Turkey's and Greece's foreign policies and strategies is essential to understand the reasons behind population exchange just as much as its historical process.

In this study, the Turkish-Greek population exchange process will be evaluated in two different parts. In the first part, reasons for population exchange, possible ideas of the governments, the main historical processes from beginning to end, agreements, institutions and influences that effected in further diplomatic contacts and issues between Turkey and

---

<sup>3</sup> Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. **Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, P.15

<sup>4</sup> Veremis, Thanos (2004) "1922: Political Continuation And Realignment In The Greek State", Renee Hirston (Ed.), **Crossing The Aegean: An Appraisal Of The 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece And Turkey**, New York Oxford, Berghahn Books, P.60

<sup>5</sup> Bozdağlıoğlu, Y. (2014). Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi Ve Sonuçları. **Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi**, 180(180), P.11

Greece. In the second part, the main approaches of Turkey and Greece on behalf of the foreign policies and strategies will be evaluated and the appropriateness of population exchange to these foreign policy approaches will be discussed to cover both countries.

During the study, certain resources about population exchange; records, official reports and academic books, will be used in order to reinforce to the argument of this study.

### **1. Main Reasons and Historical Process of the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange**

Although the meaning of population exchange almost exclusively covers the resettlement between the Greek and Turkish minorities who live in Greece and İstanbul and the Anatolian Part of Turkey, this term has become a historical context for both countries due to certain reasons, agreements, socio-political changes, foreign policy orientations diplomatic contacts, conflicts and economical aspects. In this case, population exchange should be evaluated with all different aspects which existed during that time and considering the situations of the both countries.

The first experience of migration for the Ottoman Empire was the Balkan Wars and the process that followed it. After the 1912 migration from the Balkans to Anatolia was accelerated and end of the year average number of Muslim people who moved to Anatolia was about 100.000<sup>6</sup>. Next year number of the people who migrated from Greece to Anatolia was doubled. Reasons for these migrations of Muslim people was based on the 1800's when the nation-state idea and nationalism increased in the Balkan countries. In that time Christian Balkan societies who had citizenship of the Ottoman Empire as Bulgarian, Rum or Serbians begun to revolt in order to gain their independence from the Ottoman Empire, aiming to become a nation-state and create a homogeneous, pure nation. In this regard, Muslim people who were living in Balkan territory were targeted by the rebels and faced with the great afflictions and persecution. Also, some European countries mainly Greece supported these revolts as challenging the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. In this case, the Ottoman Empire could not find any way to suppress the rebellions and save the Muslim societies there. For this reason, great numbers of Muslims in the Balkans had to migrate to the Anatolian part of the Ottoman Empire and the demographical structure of the Balkans was substantially changed with these migration movements. After the Balkan tragedy for Ottoman Empire, the idea of Ottomanism which refers to living together in peace, under the ruling of

---

<sup>6</sup> Erdal, İ. (2014). Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesinde Gayrimübadil Olma Konusu Ve Mübadeleden Iskat (Çıkma) Yolları. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180), P.134-135

Ottoman Sultan was rejected. Therefore, the Ottomanism idea was not discussed any more for the destiny of Ottoman Empire. This is essential because this process shows us how the Turkish side prepared for the population exchange policy with Greece.

In short, the Balkan Wars and rebellions of non-Muslim groups in that territory caused large-scale migration for the Muslim people. After the tragedy of the Balkans, demographical concerns and the loss of Ottomanism values, Turkish foreign policy evaluated the idea of population exchange. The Balkan Wars lost the Ottoman Empire most of its imperial power and brought it to the point of collapse. After the Great War, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and with the Mondeos Truce, lost almost it all competence in Balkan territory which was occupied by Greek forces up to the West Thrace region.<sup>7</sup> After the Mondeos Truce, a national struggle and War of independence was started by Turkish generals and a new government was established in Ankara. These movements suppressed the Greek forces from all around the territory of Turkey. In September 1922 Greek forces were routed by Turkish forces.<sup>8</sup> In this case, the great defeat Greece by the Turkish forces and success in the National Pact (*Misak-i Milli*) caused a security threat for both Greece and Rum society who lived mostly in the Anatolia and İstanbul part of the Ottoman Empire. Especially, the government of Greece expressed its concerns about Rum minorities due to this condition.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the Greeks had to find a solution to this situation with the certain negotiations which would held right after Turkey's victory. That is why Entente powers invited Turkey to meetings right after the battle.<sup>10</sup> For the meetings, Turkey offered the city of İzmir, however, due to war conditions and its being on Turkish land, entente states did not accept that city and preferred Lausanne for meetings.<sup>11</sup> Before the analysing the process of the Lausanne conference and debates on population exchange, it is essential to understand the main reasons for population exchange and the outlooks and conditions of both Turkey and Greece. Firstly, both countries had struggles with their economy because of the high level of war expenses. Also, again due to destructive influences of the Wars, socio-politics problems for both countries domestic politics had been caused. From this point of view, the countries both experienced economic and political problems after the war increased the ethnic conflicts between Rum and Turkish

---

<sup>7</sup> Biber Eray, T. (2015). 20. Yüzyılda Yunanistan'dan Türkiye'ye Türk Göçleri. **XX-XXI. Yüzyılda Türk Dünyasında Sürgün Ve Göç**, İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Yay, P.305

<sup>8</sup> Biber Eray, T. (2015). 20. Yüzyılda Yunanistan'dan Türkiye'ye Türk Göçleri. **XX-XXI. Yüzyılda Türk Dünyasında Sürgün Ve Göç**, İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Yay, P.311

<sup>9</sup> Mandacı, N. (2014). Ulus-Kurma Süreçleri Ve Nüfus Mübadeleleri: Dün-Bugün. **Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi**, 180(180), P.91

<sup>10</sup> Sonyel, S. R. (2006). **Gizli Belgelerle Lozan Konferansının Perde Arkası** (Vol. 103). Türk Tarih Kurumu. P. 114

<sup>11</sup> Zürcher, E. J., & Gönen, Y. S. (1999). **Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi**. İletişim Yayınları. P. 234

people. Unlike the unity of the societies as in the Ottoman era, these two groups separated from each other and understood that they could never live together now Greece and Turkey were allies. Due to society's conditions and economic-political problems both sides realized the necessity for population exchange. Secondly, despite Turkey's experience of similar stuff in the economic and socio-political field with Greece; Turkey's primary reason for population exchange was mainly about the rebellions which was one substantial factor to collapse of Ottoman Empire that gave the Non-Muslim groups in the various part of the Anatolia and Balkans the idea of becoming a nation –state separate from the empire. It is known that the rebellions which existed in the Ottoman lands were provoked by the great and Entente powers such as United States, Russia, France and United Kingdom.

As mentioned before, at the end of the rebellions thousands of Muslim people were faced with massacre and miserable conditions during their forced migrations. The Turkish government aimed that with the population exchange these rebellions would not re-occur again at least in the local scale. The Turkish government accepted resettlement as the right decision for security maximisation in the country. Moreover, rebellions of non-Muslim and non-Turks groups not only reinforced the idea of population exchange but also created an idea for the Turkish government to become a nation state to provide a pure and homogeneous ethnical society. The Nation-State idea, mainly followed by the Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's government, Mim Kemal Öke explained this concept in his book called *Ermeni Sorunu (Armenian Question)*. According to Öke, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk thought that the exchange between ethnic groups was an essential contribution to establish a homogeneous Turkish state. Therefore, Mim Kemal Öke puts forwards the view that population exchange would play an essential role in becoming a nation-state.

Thirdly, Venizelos, who was the head of the Greek State from 1910, had an irredentist strategy. He said that "Since I was young, the island of Skyros, which is in the middle of the Aegean Sea, has been the geographical centre of Hellenism."<sup>12</sup> Venizelos is seen as great contributor to the *Megalih* idea and expansion of the Borders of Greece. Also, he had targeted Anatolian geography afterwards in diplomatic contacts during and after the First World War.<sup>13</sup> In the light of this information, Greece expected the *Megali* idea to be reborn with the

---

<sup>12</sup> Uzun, H. (2004). **1919-1950 Yılları Arasında Türkiye-Yunanistan İlişkileri**. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, P.5

<sup>13</sup> Çaycı, A. (1987, October) "Yunanistan'ın Anadolu Macerası I", **H.Ü.Atatürk İlkeleri Ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Dergisi**, C.I, Sayı:1, (1-20), P.2

population exchange. However, the Turkish government believed that the *Megali idea* would be completely over with the population exchange.<sup>14</sup>

Returning to Lausanne conference, the conference's purpose was to conclude the war. The conference was led by Lord Curzon. Turkey joined the meetings with a group of delegates and under the leadership of İsmet İnönü. During the meetings the population-exchange issue occupied the majority of the time. Norwegian diplomat Fridtjof Nansen emphasised the importance of the issue of population exchange and the resettlement process in his speech at these meetings. *"This problem is unquestionably confronted with grave difficulties. The classification of the people who are more than a million in number and who are to be removed from their homes to be moved to a foreign country for their own purposes, the recording and evaluation of the personal property and property they will have to leave behind, the payment of damages they are entitled to anyone who will think about the problems that they can take, these difficulties will seem endless"* He voiced these dissidentative remarks about the formative population exchange.<sup>15</sup> The Turkish representative found chance to share the ideological and structural changes of both their domestic and foreign policies in the Lausanne Conference. In this regard, the identity of the Ottoman Empire as united almost completely changed in the new Ankara government of Turkey's policy, within the context of population exchange. From this point of view, it is essential to evaluate the Lausanne process on behalf of the population-exchange. In January 30, 1923 between the Greek and Turkish government the first agreement called *"Agreement and Protocol about Turkish and Rum Population Exchange"* was signed by sides.<sup>16</sup> According to the third chapter of the agreement the Turkish societies condition during the resettlement process was determined. The third chapter of the agreement is summarized as follows;

1. Turkey, citizens of race, religion, language will not make the distinction.
2. Every Turkish citizen will be permitted to fulfil his religious obligations as long as it does not disturb public order.
3. Minorities shall have the right to freedom of movement and immigration.
4. Each Turkish citizen shall be equal before the law regardless of religion.
5. Minorities will also benefit from all civil and political rights equally.

---

<sup>14</sup> Ari, K. (1995). *Büyük Mübadele*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları. P.118

<sup>15</sup> Meray, *Lozan Barış Konferansı*, I/I, P. 119.

<sup>16</sup> Sarımay, Y. (2000). "Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Mübadele Sorunu", *Atatürk 4. Uluslararası Kongresi* (25-29 Ekim 1999 Türkistan-Kazakistan), P.306

6. Minorities will have the right to establish their own schools. In these schools, they will be able to teach with their own language, but it will also be obligatory to learn Turkish language.

7. The Greek government has recognized the same rights, which were given to minorities in Turkey by the Turkish government, for Turkish minority in Greece.<sup>17</sup>

In the first phase of the population exchange, although Turkey and Greece seemed to be united in their resettlement policy, all sorts of disagreements existed as negotiations progressed between two countries.<sup>18</sup> Some of the noticeable problems were as follows: Firstly, determining which regions applied in both countries. Both sides did not want to include some parts in the population exchange process. Those regions and minorities are Rums in İstanbul for Greece and western Thracian Muslims for Turkey. Secondly, Turkish delegates wanted to move Fener Rum the patriarchate from İstanbul to Greece, however Greece and other delegates from Britain and United States wanted to leave the patriarchate in İstanbul. Thirdly, İsmet İnönü criticised the condition of the Rums which had shown as worst than Turks. He remarked that discussion about the *humanitarian dimension* is of this issue essential than other factors as conditions of Rums etc.<sup>19</sup> In this context, İsmet İnönü explained the concept of the *humanitarian dimension* with certain historical considerations. These are as follows: the invasion of Anatolia, Greece 's expansionist policy, the uneasiness and persecution condition for the Muslim-Turkish people living in Greece, the great victory of the Turkish Army and the desire of the Greeks in order to migrate to Greece after feeling unsafe in Anatolia after this victory, and the wish of The Christian minority living in Anatolia in the Ottoman period to emigrate after war and conflict. In this context, it is clearly observed that the Turkish government has in fact given up hope of the Turkish and Rum groups living together.<sup>20</sup> The fourth and the most substantial issue between the Turkish and other delegates was about *etabli* issue. The term of “*etablis*” was interpreted differently by the Turkish and Greek side and relations between two states was came to an end due to this problem.<sup>21</sup> The Turkish side accepted this term as calm behaviour which applied to Rum minorities who did not join the rebellion and obeyed the Turkish law. Turkey maintained that these people could

<sup>17</sup> Meray, Gül (1972) **Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Lozan (1922-1923)**, P. 97

<sup>18</sup> Bozdağlıoğlu, Y. (2014). Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi Ve Sonuçları. **Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi**, 180(180), 9-32. p. 11

<sup>19</sup> Kara, B. (2005). Dramatik Bir Huzur Mücadelesi: Mübadele. **Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, 5(1). p.1

<sup>20</sup> E, Macar, (2003) **Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi**, İstanbul, S. 96-97.

<sup>21</sup> Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. **Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, P.15



remain in Turkey in regards to *établi*. By contrast, the Greek side accepted this term as meaning the whole Rum people would stay in the Anatolian region. However, Turkey wanted to send as many Rums as possible out of Turkey, however the Greeks wanted to settle them in Anatolia in order to continue its connection with İstanbul. <sup>22</sup> The *Etabli* issue blocked both sides' foreign policy agreement until the Greek president Venizelos came into power in 1928. In June 1930 the Ankara agreement was signed between Turkey and Greece and reached a solution for both *établi* and population-exchange. <sup>23 24</sup>

In conclusion, the Greek Orthodox population in Anatolia which apparently numbered around 900,000 was exchanged with the Muslim population of around 400,000 who lived in Greece. <sup>25</sup> Moreover, the consensus view seems to be that after 1930, Greece and Turkey had a better relationship after compromising over the population-exchange. This agreement resolved the most important dispute which was left over from Lausanne, and a new era began for these two states. Greek-Turkish reconciliation or Greco-Turkish rapprochement was presented by the two visionary and powerful leaders of each country: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Eleftherios Venizelos in the year of 1930. <sup>26</sup> After Lausanne the Greek leader Venizelos changed his "irredentist" idea based on Greek expansionism called the *Megali Idea* in his foreign policy agenda and he repeatedly asserted that notion of the *Megali idea* was completely dead and buried. <sup>27</sup> However, this mutual agreement is not the only factor to explain this new wave of good relations between Turkey and Greece.

After 1930, the political conjuncture of Europe and the Balkans influenced these two countries' relationship. The reasons that Greece and Turkey united in their Foreign policy agenda is the revisionist manner of Bulgaria on Balkan territory <sup>28</sup> and fascist Italy's expansionism idea to the Mediterranean and Aegean region under the leadership of the fascist leader Mussolini. In these contexts, there results provide confirmatory evidence that population-exchange between Turkey and Greece had taken a long time and in each period of this policy these countries foreign policy approaches to each other had changed and there

---

<sup>22</sup> Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. **Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, P.15

<sup>23</sup> Karpat, K. H. (2010). **Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Etnik Yapılanma Ve Göçler** (Vol. 22). Timaş Yayınları. P.181

<sup>24</sup> Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. **Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, P.15

<sup>25</sup> Hale, W. (2012). **Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774**. Routledge P.40

<sup>26</sup> Aydın, M., & Ifantis, K. (Eds.). (2004). **Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma In The Aegean**. Routledge.P.96

<sup>27</sup> Alexandrēs, A. (1983). **The Greek Minority Of Istanbul And Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974**. Center For Asia Minor Studies.P.174

<sup>28</sup> Uzun, H. (2004). **1919-1950 Yılları Arasında Türkiye-Yunanistan İlişkileri**. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 5(2). P.43

were differences in conditions of the Balkan and European territories. Moreover, it can be assumed that leaders during the policy of population exchange and their main ideologies also shaped the main characteristics of the process. In the first half of the period of the population exchange Turkey followed a certain security-based, isolationist ideology. That is the reason why the main purpose of the population-exchange was to send as many Rum as possible from Turkish lands and provide ultimate security for Muslim minorities in Greek territory. By contrast, Greece under the leadership of Venizelos followed an expansionist type of foreign policy and their main objective was keeping more Rum people in İstanbul and west Trachea. On the other hand, in the second half of the period, Turkey followed securitization in its foreign policy agenda in general but this securitization shifted mainly towards Italy and the Balkans. This is the reason why mutual agreement with Greece appeared profitable for Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Turkish policy makers. In addition, Greece lost its expansionist *Megali* idea after the decisive political changes happened when the liberal party came into the power in 1928.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the centrality of the issue of population exchange and resettlement is mainly based on understanding the correlation between the ideologies followed by the effective and popular leaders of the countries in that time, and those influences on their foreign policy goals during the process. Next chapter of the study analyses in detail the main influences and ideologies in the population exchange period.

## **2. Population Exchange and Foreign Policy Approaches of Turkey and Greece**

In this part of the study, the discussion will analyse correlation between the policy of population exchange and both countries Foreign Policies in that era. In other words, the question under discussion is, “Was population exchange idea completely the governments’ strategies on behalf foreign affairs?” In this regard, the foreign policy approaches of the two countries carried importance in verifying or falsifying the main discussion of this study.

First of all, Turkey’s foreign policy in that era was mainly based on nationalism and an isolationist type of Foreign policy. During the 1920’s, Atatürk and his colleagues tried to transform most of the institutions of Turkey and reconstruct both the society and its culture that had been inherited from the Ottoman past on the basis of a new idea which involved nationalist and modernist dynamics.<sup>30</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Turkish foreign policy was mainly based on three principles. Firstly, Mustafa Kemal indicated that foreign policy for the new established republic of Turkey was based on the common idea, also expressed by himself

---

<sup>29</sup> Alexandrēs, A. (1983). *The Greek Minority Of Istanbul And Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974*. Center For Asia Minor Studies.P.174

<sup>30</sup> Hale, W. (2012). *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774*. Routledge.P.41

as, “*peace in the country, peace in the world*”. It is known that the Mustafa Kemal Atatürk followed a certain kind of foreign policy which accepted and obeyed international law and regulations. Therefore, Atatürk believed that for each conflict that Turkey experienced in the international area, the solution should be found in the international institutions and law. Secondly, while the Ottoman Empire lost a lot of its major lands during World War 1, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk did not have any expansionist ideas in his foreign policy towards getting those lands back. In other words, Mustafa Kemal's foreign policy aimed at strengthening the Turkish state within the current national borders.<sup>31</sup>

He was only abiding by the principles of the National Pact (*Misak-I Milli*) which was determined during the national struggle (*Milli Mücadele*) by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and other commanders of Turkey. Therefore, both in the Lausanne meetings and during the early republican era he stressed only the main principles of the National Pact for the Turkish foreign policy agenda. Thirdly, despite the imperial identity of the Ottoman Empire as a heritage for new republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk followed a nation-state idea which was an increasing trend in Europe from that time, for the new republic Atatürk clearly observed the necessity of nationhood based on his movement and ideology.<sup>32</sup> Atatürk always tried to create homogeneous citizenships for the country under the Turkish identity. Atatürk also realized that their nationalist claims as a political ideology must be reinforced with the strict definition of the national identity.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, whether Turkish nation-building process succeeded or failed, this ideology constituted the domestic ideological context of Turkish foreign policy.<sup>34</sup> The success and failures of the Turkish nation-building process have constituted the domestic ideological context of Turkish foreign policy. In his foreign policy strategies this approach can be seen as a Kemalist Nationalist ideology. From this point of view, population exchange is a clear evidence for the Atatürk's nation-state strategy in the foreign policy context. Hasan Kösebalaban explained this nation-state building with the population – exchange which demographically supported Atatürk's approach in his book called *Turkish Foreign Policy* as follows: “The Kemalist project of nation-building was achieved to the effect that non-Muslim population in Anatolia was significantly reduced as a

---

<sup>32</sup> Aydın, M. (1999). Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(4), 152-186. P.23

<sup>33</sup> Aydın, M. (1999). Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(4), 152-186. P.23

<sup>34</sup> Kösebalaban, H. (2011). *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*. Springer. P.48

result of the Turkish-Greek population exchange and the remaining population's migration in later stages under the pressure of policies such as the capital tax.”<sup>35</sup>

In that sense, this argument provides confirmatory evidence that the nation-state idea of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was not only a perspective but actualised with the sort of policies that applied in that time. Additionally, despite Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his colleagues trying to create type of homogeneous Turkish society on behalf of the nation – state idea and shaping their foreign policy based on this point, they were also well-aware that the cosmopolitan society inherited from the Ottoman Empire involved various numbers of ethnic groups still living in Turkish land. For that reason, they followed a realistic option for the society of Turkey based on “common citizenship” instead of “ethnicity” thus individuals who came from various different ethnic origins accepted to be Turks according to principle of Turkish Constitution as “all citizens are Turk”.<sup>36</sup> After the population – exchange many people were also affected by this policy. People who were Muslim, lived in Turkey but were not ethnically Turkish or Muslim people who came from former Ottoman territories with the population exchange were accepted as Turk not as a Muslim minority.<sup>37</sup> These kinds of information are proper evidence to accept population-exchange policy as a step for the Kemalist Nationalist ideology, which consisted of being Turk on behalf of a nation-state idea. In this sense, population exchange provided a demographical change for Turkey in order to create new homogeneous society. Therefore, population exchange was an essential foreign policy strategy which had direct connection with the further ideology of Turkish government. However, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's ideology and population exchange policy clashed with another idea of his called Westernization. According to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, modernization of the Turkish republic should be based on Western ideas and innovation. Thus, he put the Westernization idea in the centre of both his domestic and international policies. From this point of view, the project of the homogenization derived with the population exchange policy led to large scale Islamisation in the Anatolian population.<sup>38</sup> Atatürk's homogenization and building the nation-state idea conflicted with the Islamisation of the population in Anatolia. In that sense, it can be assumed that the population exchange caused a dilemma for Atatürk's ideological approaches and foreign policies.

---

<sup>35</sup> Kösebalaban, H. (2011). *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*. Springer. P.47

<sup>36</sup> Aydın, M. (1999). Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(4), 152-186. P.23

<sup>37</sup> Kösebalaban, H. (2011). *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*. Springer. P.50

<sup>38</sup> Kösebalaban, H. (2011). *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*. Springer. P.50

Second of all, during the 1920's and up until 1930, Greek foreign policy changed based on an international agenda. Also, Greece's policy makers under the leadership of Venizelos shaped the population exchange policy according to these international agendas. In that sense, Greek foreign policy influenced the population exchange process with its own evolution. Similar to Turkey, Greek foreign policy also had some struggles with Greek ideology in that time. Firstly, as mentioned before, Greece had the *megali* idea which carried certain peculiarities of the expansionist approach into their foreign policy. In that time, Greece tried to achieve domination over Western Thrace and control the Turkish government with the population of Rums who lived in İstanbul. Greece also tried to get support of European powers primarily Britain to succeed in its *megali* idea. In this context, with the *megali* idea as an ideology for the foreign policy of Greece, it can be accepted that the Greece had also sort of nationalistic approach as regards to Hellenism and the heritage of Byzantium. However, in contrast with Turkey, Greece did not follow any isolationist approach and wanted to expand its territory as much as possible after the Balkan Wars. On the other hand, while Greece followed an expansionist nationalist type of foreign policy during the 1920's due to victory of Turkey in both Aegean and Anatolian part of the territory, Greece had concern about its Rum societies who lived in these territories and immediately wanted to population exchange because of the security of these people. Despite the expansionist approach of Greece during the Lausanne meetings and population-exchange process, Greece had also sort of secularisation strategy in foreign policy in order to protect Greek-Rum society in Turkish lands. Secondly, due to *megali idea* aims in the population exchange policy, Greece did not agree with Turkey within some principles, however, by the 1930's Greece's expansionist idea was over and population exchange was determined by both sides peacefully. The key point that caused change in the Greek foreign policy approach was the increasing other threats which came from Bulgaria and Italy. Increasing fascism in Europe reached the radical level and especially Mussolini carried this ideology to procure Mediterranean territory. After these security problems that Greece faced, Greek policy makers decided to move their foreign policy agenda to security maximisation. In that sense, unlike past relations, Greece decided to move together with Turkey to suppress these threats of fascism and expansionism. Population exchange in this era became essential due to fact that until the 1930's, this mutual arrangement between Turkey and Greece was not resolved successfully and actual conflict had continued between the two countries. However, the 1930's population exchange was optimal for both countries interests.

## Conclusion

The population exchange between Greece and Turkey had an essential role to play in both foreign policy idea and the historical context. Turkey tried to provide homogeneity for its nation-state and nationalist approach, by contrast Greece wanted to protect its people in Anatolia and tried to rebirth the idea of *Megali*. In that sense, whether countries were successful in reaching their objectives with the population-exchange or not, it can be assumed that the population exchange expressed both of countries' foreign policy approaches and the ideological outlook clearly. However, it is also known that the population exchange caused a dilemma for both countries' ideological and international dynamics, such as Westernization of Turkey or struggle between securitization and expansionism ideas of Greece. For this reason, it is said that population exchange was a saviour for both countries in the short run, however, the extent to which this broad demographic change succeeded in the name of foreign policy and ideology is open to debate.

Overall, on the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that Turkish – Greek population exchange carried certain characteristics from both countries' ideological mind-sets and foreign policy approaches. Also, it can be also accepted that the leaders accepted the population exchange policy to carry through their main purposes in both domestic and international scale. However, the population exchange idea has still some blurred edges about whether it was successful on behalf of foreign policy in the long run.

## References

- Alexandrēs, A. (1983). *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974*. Center for Asia Minor studies
- Ari, K. (1995). Büyük Mübadele, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları
- Aydin, M. (1999). Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: Historical framework and traditional inputs. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(4), 152-186
- Aydin, M., & Ifantis, K. (Eds.). (2004). *Turkish-Greek relations: the security dilemma in the Aegean*. Routledge
- Biber Eray, T. (2015). 20. Yüzyılda Yunanistan'dan Türkiye'ye Türk Göçleri. XX-XXI. *Yüzyılda Türk Dünyasında Sürgün ve Göç, İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Yay*, p.311
- Bozdağlıoğlu, Y. (2014). Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi Ve Sonuçları. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180)
- Çaycı, A. (1987, October) "Yunanistan'ın Anadolu macerası I", H.Ü.Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Dergisi, C.I, Sayı:1, (1-20), p.2
- Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*,
- Erdal, İ. (2014). Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesinde Gayrimübadil Olma Konusu Ve Mübadeleden İskat Yolları *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 180-80
- Gül, M. Lozan Barış Konferansı, I/I, P. 119. Mübadeleden İskat (Çıkma) Yolları. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180)
- Gül, M. (1972) Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Lozan (1922-1923),
- Kara, B. (2005). Dramatik Bir Huzur Mücadelesi: Mübadele. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*,
- Hale, W. (2012). *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*. Routledge
- Karpat, K. H. (2010). *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Etnik Yapılanma Ve Göçler* (Vol. 22). Timaş Yayınları.
- Değerli, E. S. (2015). Atatürk Dönemi Türk-Yunan Siyasi İlişkileri. *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*

Kösebalaban, H. (2011). *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, And Globalization*. Springer.

Macar, E. (2003) Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi, İstanbul

Mandacı, N. (2014). Ulus-Kurma Süreçleri Ve Nüfus Mübadeleleri: Dün–Bugün. *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 180(180)

Sarınay, Y. (2000). “Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Mübadele Sorunu”, Atatürk 4. Uluslararası Kongresi (25-29 Ekim 1999 Türkistan-Kazakistan)

Sonyel, S. R. (2006). *Gizli Belgelerle Lozan Konferansının perde arkası* (Vol. 103). Türk Tarih Kurumu

Uzun, H. (2004). 1919-1950 Yılları Arasında Türkiye-Yunanistan İlişkileri. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*

Veremis, Thanos (2004) “1922: Political Continuation And Realignment In The Greek State”, Renee Hirston (Ed.), *Crossing The Aegean: An Appraisal Of The 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece And Turkey*, New York Oxford, Berghahn Books

Zürcher, E. J., & Gönen, Y. S. (1999). *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin tarihi*. İletişim Yayınları