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THE 1914 PERSECUTIONS AND THE FIRST ATTEMPT AT AN EXCHANGE OF MINORITIES BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY*

1. THE CONTEXT

In the aftermath of the 1912-1913 wars, the situation in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean was particularly fragile: the *status quo* in the area was profoundly upset by the collapse of European Turkey, and both the wars' winners and losers were forming new alliances while the Great Powers were engaged in a common effort to prevent the upheaval from spreading to Europe¹.

While these new alignments were changing the political identity of the Balkans, migrations of large populations were affecting the ethnic composition of the peninsula. It is estimated that in the years 1912-1914 about 890,000 people of various nationalities crossed the borders of the Balkan countries, including those of the Ottoman Empire².

These migrations were prompted by various reasons: a) As soon as the hostilities had broken out, civilian populations spontaneously fled the battlefields; b) the new political map of the area drawn by the treaties of London and Bucharest, prompted ethnic minorities to migrate to their mother countries; c) and finally, minorities were forcefully moved for political and strategic reasons at the end of 1913 and during 1914. It is to this kind of movement that the phenomenon of population exchange is related³.

* This paper is mainly based on documents at the Archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry, quoted as A.Y.E. (Αρχείο Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών - Archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry). A.Y.E./K.Y. denotes the records of the Central Service in Athens and A.Y.E./Π.Κ. refers to the records of the Greek Legation in Constantinople.

1. E. C. Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913*, third edition, New York, 1969 *passim*. D. Dakin, "The Diplomacy of the Great Powers and the Balkan States, 1908-1914", *Balkan Studies*, Vol. 3 No 2, Thessaloniki, 1962, pp. 327-374. G. B. Leon, *Greece and the Great Powers, 1914-1917*, Thessaloniki, 1974, pp. 11-15.

2. S. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities. Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*, New York, 1932, pp. 15-16.

3. S. Ladas, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

The authority of the idea of population exchange belongs undoubtedly to the Sublime Porte. The doctrine of complete ottomanization of the Empire dates back to the years of Abdul Hamid and the ancient régime, the Armenian massacres being a clear example of this⁴.

The idea was later seized upon by the Young Turks and included in their program for the modernization of the Empire⁵. The successive defeats of 1911 and 1912-1913 and the almost total loss of the Ottoman territories in North Africa and the Balkans had a direct impact on the Young Turks' ideology: the change of the ethnic composition of the Empire and the clear numerical predominance of the Turkish population resulted in the creation of strong nationalist tendencies. To be sure, the three components of the movement's ideology (Ottomanism, Islamism, Nationalism) remained the same, but the emphasis was clearly shifted toward the Asian heartland of the Empire. The Young Turks' original ideals concerning the multinational character of the Ottoman Empire and the federative role of the Parliament, and their plans to establish a liberal constitution with room for political parties of differing persuasions, were pushed aside by the emergence of an implacable nationalism⁶.

The Congress of the Committee of Union and Progress (C.U.P.) held in Constantinople in September 1913 affirmed the new ideological identity of the Young Turks⁷, and the general elections held in early 1914, in which the C.U.P. was the only participating political party, registered a shrinking of Christian representation in the Ottoman Parliament⁸.

This transformation of attitude toward the various ethnic minorities, once viewed as an integral part of the Turkish bureaucracy and economy and now seen as a threat to the survival of Turkish national identity, contributed to the adoption of a policy of ethnic purification which was to be implemented primarily by an exchange of populations.

Such an exchange was first carried out at the end of 1913 and involved

4. On the Armenian massacres and Greek attitude see J. K. Hassiotis, "The Greeks and the Armenian Massacres (1890-1896)", *Neo-Hellenika*, Vol. IV, 1981, pp. 69-109.

5. Dogu Ergil, "A Reassessment: The Young Turks, their Politics and anti-Colonial Struggle", *Balkan Studies*, Vol. 16 No 2, Thessaloniki, 1975, pp. 34-35, 40-41, 59-65.

6. Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, Oxford, 1969, pp. 152-155. A. Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations (1918-1974)*, Athens, 1983, pp. 42-43. Dogu Ergil, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-48.

7. Feroz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-142.

8. Feroz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, pp. 143, 155. Katerina Boura, "General elections in the Ottoman Empire: The Greek members of Parliament, 1908-1918" (in Greek), *Buletin of the Center for Asia Minor Studies*, Vol. 4, Athens, 1983, pp. 80-81.

the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria. The two defeated parties of the Balkan Wars concluded a Convention to that effect and set up a Mixed Commission charged with carrying out the exchange of populations and properties. In effect, the Convention only recognized a *de facto* situation, created by the wars, since the populations involved had already migrated. Furthermore, the exchange concerned only a limited zone whose width covered fifteen kilometers on either side of the border⁹.

The case with Greece was different, due to the peculiar state of Greek-Turkish relations. The uncertainty concerning sovereignty over the Aegean islands, a problem that under the terms of the Treaty of London was to be solved by the Great Powers, persisted even after the conclusion of the Greek-Turkish Convention of Athens (1/14 November 1913), straining the relations between the two governments and causing, in the spring of 1914, a naval arms race. An outright military confrontation was averted only through the intervention of the Great Powers, mainly of Germany¹⁰.

In this charged atmosphere, and while Greece and Turkey were on the brink of war, a wave of persecutions broke out against the Greeks in Eastern Thrace, laying waste Greek villages in the area¹¹. The persecutions usually followed this pattern: obstruction of agricultural activities, forced evacuation of whole villages within a few hours, forced expatriation. Furthermore, refugees were attacked and robbed on their way to the boats that were to take them to Kavalla and to Thessaloniki¹². In the period from January 1914 to July 1915,

9. S. Ladas, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20. D. Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact upon Greece*, Paris-The Hague, 1962, pp. 54-55. The Mixed Bulgarian-Turkish Commission drew up a list of 48,570 Muslims living in Bulgaria and 46,764 Bulgarians living in Turkish Thrace, whose properties were to be exchanged. The work of the Mixed Commission started in June 1914 and was discontinued in October of the same year. The appraisal and liquidation of the properties of these persons was never carried out. The exercise was, nevertheless, highly important, since it was the first attempt to condone, through official negotiations, an ethnic transfer caused by the upheaval of war.

10. A. F. Frangulis, *La Grèce et la crise mondiale*, Paris, 1926, Vol. I, pp. 109-110. E. C. Helmreich, *op. cit.*, pp. 414-415, 431-442. G. B. Leon, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-15. Y. Mourélos, *Les rapports gréco-turcs de 1908 à 1923*, Paris, 1975, pp. 68-72.

11. A.Y.E./K.Y./1915/A 21 z: "Memorandum on the general statistics of refugees in Macedonia", pp. 1-2. The first wave of Greek refugees arriving in Macedonia did not originate in Eastern Thrace, but in the regions which, in conformity with the Treaty of Bucharest, had been ceded to Bulgaria and evacuated of the Greek army at the end of 1913. The emigration of the Greek inhabitants of those regions (31,112 persons as for December 1914) amounted to a refugee flight in face of the arrival of Bulgarian administration.

12. A.Y.E./K.Y./1915/A 21 z: "Memorandum...", Table A.

15,572 families numbering 60,926 people were thus forced to flee Eastern Thrace¹³.

To the repeated démarches of the Greek Government, the Sublime Porte replied to the effect that it was indeed Greece that fostered among the inhabitants of Eastern Thrace the tendency to emigrate¹⁴. At the same time it deliberately played down the magnitude of the forced migrations presenting them as a natural, if uncontrollable, outburst of retaliations for the expulsions of Muslims from the newly liberated Greek provinces (Macedonia-Epirus). It is not accidental that the origin of the persecutions of the Eastern Thrace Greeks were Muslim refugees along with local C.U.P. chapters¹⁵.

This policy of persecutions aimed at the transformation of Eastern Thrace into a purely Muslim province, which the Sublime Porte considered necessary for the protection of Constantinople, having in this the support of Germany, especially after the arrival at Constantinople of the military mission under the General Liman von Sanders at the end of 1913¹⁶.

In the spring of 1914, Germany undertook to mediate the Greek-Turkish differences and to bring together the two rivals under her aegis, but her initiative was frustrated by the Turkish Government's refusal to contemplate any concessions concerning the question of the Aegean islands¹⁷.

13. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1915/A 21 z*: "Memorandum...", p. 2.

14. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 5,480, 26 February/11 March 1914, No 7,018, 11/24 March 1914, No 9,272-9,274, 1/14 April 1914, No 1,595, 3/16 April 1914, No 1,609, 4/17 April 1914, No 1,895, 17/30 April 1914, No 1,976, 29 April/12 May 1914. Ghalib Kemaly to Streit, Note 12/25 March 1914. *A.Y.E./II.K./1914/St 3*: Capsambelis to Panas, No 1,328, 13/26 April 1914. Panas to Streit, No 1,900 17/30 April 1914.

15. A. Pallis, "Ethnic Emigrations in the Balkans and Persecutions of Greeks (1912-1914)" (in Greek), *Buletin of the Center for Asia Minor Studies*, Vol. 1, Athens, 1977, p. 86. During the period 1912-1920, 143,189 Muslims left Greece. Problems between the Muslims of Macedonia and the Greek administration arose immediately after the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest, when the first complaints were registered concerning abuse of power (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission to require into the causes and conduct of the Balkan Wars*, Washington D.C., 1914, p. 201).

16. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Dragoumis to Streit, No 643, 7/20 April 1914. *Persecutions of the Greeks in Turkey since the beginning of the European War* (Translated from official Greek documents), New York, 1918, pp. VII-XI. Typical of the German attitude was the statement of the German Foreign Secretary, Gottlieb von Jagow, to the Greek chargé d'affaires in Berlin, Ion Dragoumis, that the underlying cause for the persecutions in Eastern Thrace was the fact that "every Greek in Turkey is an apostle of Panhellenism". On the Liman von Sanders mission, see Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey (1913-1923)*, New York, 1966, pp. 39-47.

17. A. F. Frangulis, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 110-111. G. B. Leon, *op. cit.*, p. 13. Y. Mourélos, *op. cit.*, p. 71,

The Turkish intransigence was coupled, in early May, by a new wave of persecutions whose victims were the Greek inhabitants of the western coast of Asia Minor. In a climate of generalized fanaticism, cultivated by the press, a new series of arrests and expulsions were launched, without the Greek consulates' and vice consulates' being informed¹⁸. The situation was closely followed by the Greek side. On 3/16 May, the Greek Minister at Constantinople, Dimitrios Panas, cabled the following to Foreign Minister George Streit:

“(...) Même dans le cas improbable où question des îles aurait été résolue d’une façon donnant satisfaction à la Turquie, celle-ci ne se départirait jamais du plan qu’elle a conçu de l’anéantissement de l’élément Grec en Turquie (...)”¹⁹.

On 4/17 May the Greek Government denounced to the European capitals the high-handedness of these recent Turkish actions. However, the Greek Legation at Constantinople acted in a very restrained manner for fear of further jeopardizing Greek interests within the Ottoman Empire²⁰. It even went so far as to propose to the Sublime Porte that a Mixed Greek-Turkish Commission be dispatched to Eastern Thrace and to Macedonia in order to ascertain in place the behavior of the respective Ottoman and Greek authorities²¹.

The Turks rejected the proposal and chose instead to send the Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, on a tour of Thrace, at the end of which it was announced that all appropriate measures had been taken to put an end to the persecutions²².

On 7/20 May the Turkish Minister at Athens, Ghalib Kemaly Bey, met with Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and proposed the exchange of the Greek inhabitants of the Aidin Vilayet with the Muslims of Macedonia and Epirus, claiming that his proposal was part of a more general effort to diffuse the crisis in the relations between the two countries. On 8/21 May he submitted his proposal in writing, and he received a positive reply the next day.

18. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 2,287, 3/16 May 1914.

19. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 2,310, 3/16 May 1914.

20. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 2,287, 3/16 May 1914. Streit to Greek Legations in Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna, Petersburg, Rome, No 12,831, 4/17 May 1914.

21. The Sublime Porte had explained away the new outburst of persecutions in Asia Minor as a natural consequence of what it claimed to be maltreatment of the Macedonia Muslims by the Greek administration.

22. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 1,895, 17/30 April 1914. Dragoumis to Streit, No 830, 5/18 May 1914.

Venizelos' letter of 9/22 May²³ stated as necessary preconditions for carrying out the proposed exchange that it should be done on a voluntary basis, that it should also include the Greeks of Eastern Thrace, and that a Mixed Greek-Turkish Commission should arrange for the exchange of the properties of the populations involved²⁴.

On 10/23 May the Greek Foreign Ministry further clarified the Greek positions in a *Note-verbale* to the Imperial Ottoman Legation: a) the Greek inhabitants of Eastern Thrace and of the Aidin Vilayet would be exchanged simultaneously with the Muslim inhabitants of Macedonia and Epirus after their desire to emigrate had been ascertained; b) the exchange would be carried out with the full agreement, and under the protection, of the two Governments; c) a Mixed Commission comprised of four members would be entrusted with the duty of assessing the value of the movable and immovable properties of the populations to be exchanged and of supervising the exchange. Furthermore it would determine the modalities of the exchange, concerning in particular the time periods within which the emigrants would depart as well as the regions affected by this measure; d) the Commission would establish its headquarters in Smyrna or Thessaloniki and would have the right to create any necessary sub-commissions; e) in addition to the duties mentioned above, the Commission would also undertake to assess the value of properties of those Greeks and Muslims who had already left their homes.

The Greek Government pointed out orally that the conclusion and the implementation of the agreement was conditional upon the termination of the forced emigration of Greeks in Asia Minor and in Thrace²⁵.

Foreign Minister Streit justified his Government's agreement to an arrangement that meant, in effect, the uprooting of peaceful peasants who were now suffering the direct consequences of the Balkan Wars without having been directly involved in them, in the following terms:

“Le besoin, d'un côté, d'enrayer le mouvement de l'émigration forcée en Thrace et en Asie Mineure, où la persécution systématique de l'élément hellène vous est connue, de l'autre la préoccupation de sauver dans la plus large mesure possible ces populations qui quittaient leurs foyers pour aller se réfugier en Grèce, en canalisant ce mouvement et en le combinant utilement à l'émigration volontaire

23. See Appendix.

24. A. F. Frangulis, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 111-112.

25. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Greek Foreign Ministry to Imperial Ottoman Legation, Note-verbale, 10/23 May 1914.

des Musulmans de la Macédoine aux frais d'un échange des propriétés délaissées de part et d'autre, voilà quel était l'objectif poursuivi par le Gouvernement Royal au moment où il accepta la proposition qui lui fut faite par la Turquie (...)”²⁶.

On 14/27 May the Ottoman Government announced its willingness to examine the Greek counterproposals, especially the one concerning the extension of the measure to include the inhabitants of Eastern Thrace. It added, however, that it deemed it a matter of urgency to see the measure applied in the Aidin Vilayet because of the increasing influx there of Muslim emigrants from Macedonia²⁷.

On 20 May/2 June it announced the appointment of Chukri Bey, civil inspector in Eastern Thrace, known for his anti-Hellenic feelings, as first member of the Ottoman representation on the Mixed Commission. The Greek Government pointed out that before any appointments were made the rules of procedure of the Commission should be clarified²⁸. Five days later it reiterated its requirement that an end be put to the persecutions as a *conditio sine qua non* for the beginning of negotiations²⁹.

Indeed, starting in mid-May, the persecutions of Greeks on the western littoral of Asia Minor had taken alarming proportions. Thousands of refugees had been gathering at the coast, trying to escape to Greece, and many had already arrived in Mytilene and Chios. The Ecumenical Patriarchate declared, on 25 May/7 June, the Orthodox Church in a state of persecution and suspended all church and school activities³⁰.

Faced with these developments, the Greek Government instructed its Minister in Constantinople to file a strong protest with the Ottoman Government making it clear that unless the wave of persecutions abated, not only would the planned exchange of minorities become impossible to implement, but also Greece would be forced to resettle the large numbers of recent refugees on the lands previously owned by Muslims who had left Greece³¹.

The reaction of the Sublime Porte was typical: first create *faits accomplis*

26. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21: Streit to Dragoumis, No 14,710, 23 May/5 June 1914.

27. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21: Streit to Panas, No 13,666, 14/27 May 1914.

28. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21: Streit to Panas, No 15,038, 20 May/2 June 1914.

29. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21: Greek Foreign Ministry to Imperial Ottoman Legation, Note-verbale, 25 May/7 June 1914.

30. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e: Streit to Panas, No 15,726, 24 May/6 June 1914. Panas to Streit, No 2,876, 25 May/7 June 1914, A. F. Frangulis, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

31. A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e: Streit to Panas, No 15,726, 24 May/6 June 1914.

and then cover them up with gestures of “good will”. On 24 May/6 June the Grand Vizir declared that he had no knowledge of the incidents denounced by Greece, and promised to monitor the situation closely and take any measures that might be necessary³². On 27 May/9 June and on 29 May/11 June, acting as if nothing extraordinary had happened, the Ottoman Legation in Athens reiterated the need for the Mixed Commission to start its work without further delay. An examination of the situation in Eastern Thrace had revealed nothing to be alarmed about, it added, and, as for the Asia Minor coast, an investigation conducted there under the supervision of Talaat himself had resulted in the dismissal of certain public servants found to be insufficient in discharging their duties³³.

Realizing that the long-term objective of Turkish policy was the extermination of the Greek element in the Ottoman provinces neighbouring Greece, the Greek Government concluded it had to examine the possibility of armed confrontation. To that end, it decided to sound the intentions of its ally Serbia, on 30 May/12 June³⁴. The tone of the instructions sent to the Greek Minister in Belgrade was clearly dramatic:

“(...) La situation étant devenue intolérable, la Grèce ne saurait plus rester impassible; l’extermination systématique de ses congénères ne peut qu’empirer si elle se laisse intimider par les provocations incessantes. Par notes que vous connaissez, nous avons demandé cessation immédiate persécutions et réintégration réfugiés dans leurs foyers. Si satisfaction n’est pas donnée, nous serons obligés poser ultimatum et exiger pleine satisfaction; à défaut, serons obligés rompre et ne reculerons pas devant extrêmes conséquences. Veuillez porter confidentiellement ce qui précède connaissance gouvernement serbe. Nous nous adressons au gouvernement ami et allié pour demander attitude bienveillante et son appui moral. Dans le cas où Bulgarie participerait guerre ou se refuserait défendre sa neutralité, nous invoquerions *casus foederis*. Pour le moment, Grèce ne compte pas mobiliser forces de terre espérant que guerre ne dépassera pas

32. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Panas to Streit, No 2,840, 24 May/6 June 1914, No 2,869, 26 May/8 June 1914.

33. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Imperial Ottoman Legation to Greek Foreign Ministry, Note-verbale, 27 May/9 June 1914. Nedjib Bey to Streit, Note 29 May/11 June 1914.

34. On the breakup of the Balkan League and the conclusion of the Greek-Serbian Treaty, see E.C. Helmreich, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-367.

opérations maritimes³⁵. Elle ne le fera que si Turquie concentre troupes à Andrinople pour traverser Bulgarie ou si Bulgarie mobilise. Notre action, due à provocations intolérables, n'a que le but d'assurer paix durable et *statu quo* dans Balkans. Je vous prie me télégraphier réponse que vous sera donnée (...)"³⁶.

This text shows Greece resolved to declare war on the Ottoman Empire if she could ensure Serbia's assistance against possible Bulgarian aggression. Unfortunately for Greece, the answer was negative. Absorbed by her differences with Austria-Hungary, Serbia viewed her alliance with Greece primarily in terms of her own protection against the Bulgarian threat. Certainly she had no intention of getting involved in a Greek-Turkish war over the future of the Aegean islands or the fate of the Greek minority in the Ottoman Empire. Minister Alexandropoulos' cable from Belgrade, dated 31 May/13 June, read in part:

"M. Passitch personnellement craint que si on arrive à une guerre à laquelle Bulgarie sûrement prendra part, les suites, à cause de la situation dans les Balkans, en seront désastreuses pour Grèce et Serbie, cette dernière n'étant pas préparée"³⁷.

The official reply of the Serbian Government, received on 4/17 June, was even clearer: while considering it of the utmost importance to observe faithfully all the provisions of her treaty with Greece, Serbia found herself in a position of having to point out that the Greek Government was pushing things to a dangerously explosive point without having exhausted all peaceful alternatives. In the event of a Greek-Turkish conflict Bulgarian involvement should be taken for granted, and that would result in a general mobilization in Greece since the war would no longer be limited to the Aegean. Under the terms of article 5 of the Greek-Serbian Military Convention, Serbia would also have to proceed to general mobilization in order to go to the assistance of her ally. But the Balkan Wars had already exhausted the Serbian army, and Bulgaria was better armed. Besides, the state of her economy did not allow Serbia any military adventures. Furthermore, Roumania had not made clear her intentions

35. As a result of the 1913 arrangements, Greece and Turkey had no common land boundaries. The Greek General Staff therefore assumed that the next confrontation between the two countries would take place exclusively in the sea.

36. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Streit to Alexandropoulos, No 16,530, 30 May/12 June 1914. A. F. Frangulis, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

37. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 e*: Alexandropoulos to Streit, No 547, 31 May/13 June 1914. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Alexandropoulos to Streit, No 613, 2/15 June 1914.

in the event of a third Balkan War. Finally, the restless Muslim population in Albania was likely to attack both Greeks and Serbs, if they were occupied by Bulgaria and Turkey. Therefore, all that Serbia could offer Greece was her unqualified diplomatic support to the Greek Government's denunciations of the persecutions³⁸.

Similar advice for a peaceful settlement of the Greek-Turkish crisis also came from Bucharest:

“M. Bratiano m'a dit qu'il est étonné du brusque changement de l'attitude du Gouvernement Royal qui, sans épuiser les moyens de conciliation et d'entente, parait provoquer la guerre. Comme vous le savez, m'a-t-il dit, j'ai déclaré à plusieurs reprises et je le répète encore, que la Roumanie ne laisserait pas les Turcs faire une guerre par terre contre la Grèce et porter ainsi atteinte au traité de Bucharest. Mais maintenant c'est la Grèce qui provoque et qui va troubler la paix à laquelle tout le monde tient et cela change la situation; mes dernières nouvelles sont que les Turcs se montrent conciliants, par conséquent Grèce en doit faire autant et arriver à une solution pacifique, autrement il y aura des complications dont elle aura à supporter les conséquences”³⁹.

Unable to secure international support, Greece had no other choice but, to accept Turkey's terms. Discussing the situation with the Roumanian Minister, Streit concluded with the following discouraging assesment of Greece's position:

“(...) J'ai ajouté ne pouvoir dissimuler que déclaration Roumanie rend plus difficile encore notre position vis-à-vis Turquie, assez difficile par elle-même par suite (...) vexations inouïes que ces populations (grecques) subissent”⁴⁰.

The prevailing impression in Athens was that Greece, having failed to launch a first attack on Turkey, was in danger of finding herself in a disadvantageous position. Everything seemed to point to the eventuality that the Ottoman Empire would decide, at the appropriate moment, to settle its disputes with Greece by force of arms⁴¹. Meanwhile, the Turks were largely successful,

38. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Alexandropoulos to Streit, No 614, 3/16 June 1914. Panas to Streit, No 3,262, 4/17 June 1914. A.F. Frangulis, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113.

39. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Papadiamantopoulos to Streit, No 601, 3/16 June 1914.

40. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Streit to Papadiamantopoulos, No 17,220, 4/17 June 1914.

41. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Panas to Streit, No 17,280, 4/17 June 1914, No 3,417,

on an international level, in their public-relations effort since they appeared to have offered a peaceful way out of the crisis through negotiations and had thus reassured those who viewed with fear the possibility of a third conflagration in the Balkans.

On 7/20 June the Turks, who were not unaware of the Greek Government's moves, reiterated their proposal that the Mixed Commission be set up and start its work immediately. At the same time they announced officially that the process of reinstatement of refugees in their homes had started⁴². Indeed the persecutions had by then lost some of their initial impetus.

Reluctantly and with great circumspection Greece embarked on the road to negotiations. Turning to the Great Powers, she promoted the idea of offering the Commission chairmanship to an official from a neutral country; it was the least she could ask for under the circumstances. The response of the European capitals was favorable⁴³.

Rendered slightly more optimistic by that response, Greece announced to the Sublime Porte, on 13/26 June, the appointment of the Greek representatives on the Commission (Consuls Constantine Dimaras and George Tsorbatzoglou) as well as her proposal concerning neutral arbitration in the event that the Commission should be unable to reach a decision by majority vote⁴⁴.

Meeting with Ghalib Kemaly Bey at the Foreign Ministry on 16/29 June, Streit announced to the Turkish envoy that the two Greek Commissioners had already been instructed to go to Smyrna, the Commission seat, and asked

6/19 June 1914. Streit to Papadiamantopoulos, No 17,302, 5/18 June 1914. Dragoumis to Streit, No 1,146, 8/21 June 1914.

42. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Ghalib Kemaly to Streit, 8/21 June 1914. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Streit to Greek Legations in Constantinople, Paris, London, Petersburg, Vienna, Rome, Bucharest, Belgrade, No 17,777, 7/20 June 1914.

43. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Greek Legations in Paris, London, Vienna, Petersburg, Rome, Berlin, No 17,783, 8/21 June 1914. Romanos to Streit, No 1,966, 10/23 June 1914, No 2,007, 11/24 June 1914. Theotokis to Streit, No 1,182, 11/24 June 1914, No 1,234, 14/27 June 1914. Psychas to Streit, No 946, 12/25 June 1914. Gryparis to Streit, No 1,132, 17/30 June 1914.

44. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Ghalib Kemaly, Notes 13/26 June 1914 and 15/28 June 1914. Streit to Panas, No 18,739, 14/27 June 1914. Constantine Dimaras started his career as court assessor at Smyrna. Subsequently he became Consul at Monastir, Consul-General at Jannina, Adrianople, Odessa and Constantinople. On 24 June/6 July, when the seat of the Mixed Commission had been announced, he was also named Consul-General at Smyrna. George Tsorbatzoglou had served at the consulates of Serres, Smyrna, Plovdiv, and at the Legation in Constantinople. He had also been Consul-General in Jerusalem, and, starting in November 1912, he had been holding the office of Secretary General with the General Administration of Macedonia.

the Porte to name her second representative on the Commission. At the same meeting he also reiterated the Greek proposal concerning arbitration, to which the Turkish Minister replied by expressing his skepticism on the ground that the search for an appropriate arbitrator would entail the loss of valuable time⁴⁵.

The next day Ghalib Kemaly spelled out his positions in a letter addressed to Streit: a) The choice of arbitrator should be made by the two Governments; b) the arbitrator should not be present at the deliberations of the Commission, but should step in only in the event of irreconcilable differences between the two Parties; c) the arbitrator's jurisdiction should be clearly defined by the two Governments before his arrival in Smyrna⁴⁶.

The Greek positions on the question of arbitration had by then been spelled out as follows: a) the person of arbitrator should be chosen by the Great Powers; b) he should be a citizen of a neutral country (Switzerland and Sweden were the most appropriate); c) he should be neither a soldier nor a diplomat, but a senior civil servant. Thus, the question of arbitration was still open to discussion⁴⁷.

On 17/30 June, the Ottoman Legation communicated to the Greek Government that the second Turkish delegate on the Commission was to be Moukhtar Bey, former Cabinet member, who would also assume the chairmanship of the Ottoman delegation. The same communication stated that the measure of population exchange would also include Greek villages in the zone of the Straits, but contained no information concerning the question of arbitration⁴⁸.

The Greek Government then brought up the question of arbitration directly to the Porte through the Greek Minister in Constantinople⁴⁹. On 22 June/5 July, the Grand Vizir agreed, in principle, to the presence of an arbitrator in the deliberations of the Commission provided that he did not act as its chairman. The Greek Government had no objection and on 24 June/7 July, acting on behalf of both sides, requested the Swiss Federal Government to

45. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Panas, No 18,940, 16/29 June 1914.

46. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Ghalib Kemaly to Streit, Note 17/30 June 1914. Panas to Streit, No 3,612, 16/29 June 1914.

47. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Theotokis to Streit, No 1,232, 15/28 June 1914. Streit to Theotokis, No 18,939, 16/29 June 1914.

48. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Imperial Ottoman Legation to Greek Foreign Ministry, Note-verbale, 17/30 June 1914.

49. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Ghalib Kemaly to Streit, Note 20 June/3 July 1914. Streit to Ghalib Kemaly, Note 21 June/4 July 1914, Streit to Panas, No 19,776, 21 June/4 July 1914.

name a person of its choice to the position of arbitrator⁵⁰.

The first session of the Commission was convened at the Governor's Mansion, in Smyrna, on 28 June/11 July. From the beginning, the talks revolved around three fundamental questions: a) the conditions of emigration; b) the bases for the appraisal of properties of the exchangeable persons and the modalities of payment of indemnities; c) the terms of seeking arbitration.

2. THE GREEK-TURKISH NEGOCIATIONS

Conditions of emigration

From the beginning of the negotiations the concerted effort of the Greek representatives aimed at limiting the wave of emigrations. The instructions from Athens were clear: the concept of exchange required, in principle, numerical equality between the Greek and Muslim persons to be exchanged; furthermore, the measure would affect only rural populations as distinct from the inhabitants of cities and their suburbs.

The spontaneous character of the emigration and the safety of the emigrants could only be guaranteed if, in the text of the Convention to be drawn up, these two terms were stated in such a way as to foreclose any use of force.

The desire of people to emigrate would be ascertained by the Commission, which could, for that purpose, create sub-commissions charged with the task of assessing the situation in the regions subject to the exchange. Each regional sub-commission would be composed of a local civil servant and of the Consul, Vice-Consul or Consular Agent of the other country. The duties of the sub-commissions would also include the supervision of the whole operation, which should be carried out within time limits fixed by the Commission.

The Greek Government would also prefer the principle of voluntary emigration to have a retroactive effect, which would allow those who had already emigrated under pressure to return to their homes. Finally, the instructions to the Greek members of the Commission called for the inclusion in the convention under consideration of a special clause settling the question of the emigrants' citizenship⁵¹. This approach was dictated by the Greek

50. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Panas to Streit, No 3,769, 22 June/5 July 1914, No 3,837, 23 June/6 July 1914. Streit to Panas, No 19,975, 24 June/7 July 1914. Streit to Ghalib Kemaly, Note 24 June/7 July 1914. Streit to Romanos, No 20,166, 24 June/7 July 1914.

51. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Instructions to the Greek members of the Mixed Commission, 1/14 July 1914,

Government's desire to see an end put to the Ottoman authorities' practice of exerting pressure on the Greek populations to emigrate. At the same time it was hoped that this would relieve the Greek element by helping to contain the outbursts of persecution.

The Greek proposals were rejected. At the meeting of 10/23 July the Ottoman representatives declared that, on instructions from the Sublime Porte, the spontaneous character of the emigrations could be ascertained beyond doubt by a simple statement to that effect of the persons concerned to the authorities of their place of residence, without any involvement on the part of the Mixed Commission. Behind this statement one could clearly see the Turkish designs for a new round of forced Greek emigration⁵².

The Greek representatives countered the Turkish objections by claiming that the Mixed Commission was the only body able to offer guarantees in that matter⁵³. Their arguments were based on the three principles of "échange de populations", "échange spontané", "échange simultané", thus reviving a terminology that had been used repeatedly in the letters exchanged by the two parties before the start of the negotiations⁵⁴.

A new disagreement developed when the Greek side tried to link the principle of voluntary emigration with that of simultaneous implementation and numerical balance of the exchangeables.

The Commission's mandate was, according to the Ottoman representatives, to appraise and exchange the properties of the emigrants, not to determine their number. Any restraining measures, such as insistence on numerical balance and on simultaneous departure, were likely not only to delay the whole process of emigration, but also, and more importantly, to jeopardize the very concept of exchange. The Turks believed that they could send to Greece and receive from her those inhabitants of the regions included in the measure of exchange who wished to emigrate, regardless of numbers⁵⁵.

The Greek representatives countered that the waves of emigration first had to be contained if the two countries wanted to be in a position to incorporate a significant number of refugees in their territories. Unproven speculations and preposterous guesses of people's desire to emigrate could not form

52. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 10/23 July 1914 and 19 July/2 August 1914. Tsozbatzoglou to Venizelos, unnumbered, 5/18 December 1914.

53. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Dimaras, No 22,371, 11/24 July 1914.

54. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Minutes of the 7/20 July 1914 meeting of the Mixed Commission.

55. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, Report No 2,699, 8/21 July 1914.

the foundations to support such an important contract⁵⁶.

The Turks reacted with similar intransigence to the idea of repatriation of those Greeks who had fled the Ottoman territory under persecution. The Sublime Porte made it clear that these refugees, regardless of their rural or urban identity, were completely covered by the exchange agreement. Under the terms of the agreement, a distinction between rural and urban populations would be applicable only in the future. Therefore, all those Greeks who had already fled to Greece were subject to the measure of exchange even if they came from cities or suburbs⁵⁷.

On 19 July/2 August the Turks announced that they rejected any further discussion of the subject and that they would interrupt the talks until the Greek side relented. The Greek Government, which from the very beginning had no illusions concerning the repatriation of the refugees⁵⁸, had no choice but to give in⁵⁹.

The question of the refugees' nationality gave rise to another disagreement. Under article 4 of the Athens Convention (1/14 November 1913), the Muslims of the newly acquired provinces of Greece (Macedonia, Epirus, Crete) could choose a nationality within a period of three years. Those who opted for the Ottoman nationality would have to settle outside Greece. Those who, although having opted for the Greek nationality, still wished to leave Greece would reacquire Ottoman nationality but would keep title to their immovable property in Greece, which they could lease or entrust to a third party for management.

At the meeting of 5/18 July the Greek representatives presented a draft text which, based on the Athens Convention, provided that the Greeks who had already arrived in Greece or would do so in the future, should automatically become Greek citizens, but keep the right, if they so wished, to reacquire Otto-

56. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, Report No 3,042, 27 July/10 August 1914.

57. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 7/20 July 1914.

58. This can be clearly seen in the instructions to the Greek delegates: "S'il est possible de donner au principe de la liberté d'émigration une sorte d'effet rétroactif, il serait désirable que la convention stipulât que les individus qui, de part et d'autre, ont déjà émigré, auront la faculté, moyennant une déclaration faite suivant la procédure prévue dans les paragraphes précédents, de réintégrer leurs foyers. Encore qu'il n'y ait pas lieu de fonder beaucoup d'espoir sur le succès de pareille demande, vous saisirez l'occasion de la formuler, sauf à l'abandonner contre des concessions sur d'autres points". (*A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Instructions to the Greek members of the Mixed Commission, 1/14 July 1914).

59. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 19 July/2 August 1914,

man citizenship by stating their wish to the competent Greek authorities within one year. By doing so they would be under the obligation to return to their place of origin⁶⁰.

The Turks rejected the Greek draft claiming that it jeopardized the very concept of exchange, a natural consequence of which was that the settlement of a refugee in a foreign territory would imply in itself the change of his nationality. Thus they frustrated all hope for a reinstatement of Greek refugees in their homes⁶¹. Furthermore, invoking the general provisions of Ottoman law concerning the change of Ottoman nationality, under which those inhabitants of the Empire who opted for another nationality had to leave its territory, the Turks made sure to have Greek refugees sign prepared statements to the effect that they would not return to Turkey. The only concession the Greek representatives managed to wrest from their interlocutors in this matter was the agreement that, by reciprocity, Turkish refugees leaving Greece would in turn relinquish their right to return to the country⁶².

The talks about the conditions of emigration (determination of desire to emigrate, numerical balance, question of nationality) made no progress until the end of the negotiations. Nor should one have expected otherwise, considering the disarmingly frank statement by the Turks to the effect that the long-term purpose of the exercise should be the gradual uprooting of Greeks and Muslims from mutually selected regions to the benefit of both countries⁶³.

60. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Minutes of the 5/18 July 1914 meeting of the Mixed Commission.

61. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Minutes of the 7/20 July 1914 meeting of the Mixed Commission. Dimaras to Streit, Report No 3,042, 27 July/10 August 1914.

62. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Minutes of the 12/25 July 1914 meeting of the Mixed Commission. Dimaras to Streit, Report No 2,699, 8/21 July 1914, No 3,075, 29 July/12 August 1914. The Turks had unofficially suggested setting a two-month time limit for the return to Greece of those Muslim emigrants who wished to do so, but the Greek reaction made them withdraw the proposal. Then they claimed that the Convention on the Exchange should in no way affect the provisions of the Athens Convention, so that those Muslims living in Greece who did not wish to exchange their property could leave the country under the terms of articles 4 and 6 of the Athens Convention. The Greek delegation countered that only those provisions of the Athens Convention would remain valid which were not modified by the letter or the spirit of the new Convention on Exchange.

63. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, Report No 2,699, 8/21 July 1914. Tsorbatzoglou to Venizelos, unnumbered, 31 October/13 November 1914.

Appraisal of properties

This problem was at the center of the negotiations. The striking imbalance in the numbers of refugees up until that time (150,000 Greeks against 52,000 Muslims) made it imperative for the Greek side to try to establish clear distinctions among the various categories of refugees and of the various categories of their properties⁶⁴.

The first category of refugees included those who had fled their homes but had not left the Ottoman Empire. Since the Sublime Porte was already committed to their reinstatement, they should be excluded from the measure of exchange, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate would see to it that they received compensation for possible loss of property⁶⁵.

A large dispute arose concerning the second category of refugees, those who, alarmed by the persecutions, had already fled to Greece leaving rural and urban properties behind them (many of them came from towns on the western littoral of Asia Minor).

The Turks first stated clearly that there was no hope of those refugees returning to their homes and then proceeded to exclude them from the measure of indemnisation as well, on the grounds that since the Mixed Commission's mandate was to arrange for the exchange of rural populations and rural properties, claims of urban property owners could not be considered by the Commission.

The Greek party stated that it would be inconceivable that those who had fled their homes because of the persecutions be excluded from indemnization, regardless of the nature of their immovable properties. To support their argument, the Greeks pointed out the fact that the Muslims who had emigrated freely under the terms of the Athens Convention had kept title to their immovable properties in Greece. Surely then the Greek refugees who kept arriving in Greece in such a miserable psychological state, after having been forced out of their homes, should not be deprived of their properties as well. In other words, the Greeks were trying to convince their interlocutors that the Ottoman Government was under the obligation to pay compensation for every kind of property left by the Greek refugees in their flight, property still in existence or already lost⁶⁶.

64. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Panas, No 18,287, 11/24 June 1914. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Panas to Streit, No 3,482, 10/23 June 1914.

65. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 28 June/11 July 1914, Report No 2,559, 30 June/13 July 1914.

66. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Streit to Panas, No 18,287, 11/24 June 1914. Dimaras to

The initial Turkish attitude to the question of appraisal of lost or damaged properties was that such an undertaking was extremely difficult if not impossible. They became more forthcoming later, when the Greeks dropped *ad referendum* their demand that the refugees be allowed to return to their homes, but finally no substantial progress was made in this matter either⁶⁷.

The third category included those who would emigrate in the future under the provisions of the Convention on Exchange. The two parties agreed that the appraisal of refugees' immovable properties would be based on land registers, tax records, and the administration of the Ottoman Public Dept. As for the appraisal of movable properties, which was a far more difficult task, it was agreed that each refugee's statement would be compared with the taxes he had been paying on the property concerned⁶⁸.

The Greek representatives refused to include religious and educational institutions in the exchange, as those were under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was recognized by the Ottoman Government itself as the highest spiritual authority over the communal properties of the Greeks in the Empire. In return they had to accept complete reciprocity concerning the fate of similar Muslim institutions in Greece⁶⁹.

Concerning large landed estates (*tchifliks*), the Ottoman representatives promoted the idea of having contracts drawn up between individual landowners from each side, it being understood that the value of the *tchifliks* included in such individual arrangements would be deducted from the total value of rural properties of the respective appraised village. Without objecting to the general idea the Greeks insisted on the need for a better method to be found permitting not only the total appraisal of the rural properties of each village, but also the distinction between big and small landowners⁷⁰.

Streit, Report No 2,559, 30 June/13 July 1914, Report No 2,699, 8/21 July 1914.

67. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 6/19 July 1914. Streit to Dimaras, No 21,816, 9/22 July 1914. Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered 10/23 July 1914. Streit to Dimaras, No 22,371, 11/24 July 1914. Dimaras to Streit, unnumbered, 13/26 July 1914. Minutes of the 23 October/5 November 1914 meeting of the Mixed Commission. Venizelos to Panas, No 39,158, 29 October/11 November 1914. Tsorbatzoglou to Venizelos, unnumbered, 31 October/12 November 1914.

68. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Instructions to the Greek members of the Mixed Commission, 1/14 July 1914.

69. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, Report No 2,559, 30 June/13 July 1914. Tsorbatzoglou to Venizelos, unnumbered, 31 October/13 November 1914.

70. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Tsorbatzoglou to Venizelos, unnumbered, 31 October/13 November 1914.

Finally, since the total value of property left behind by the refugees in one country would exceed that left in the other, the Commission took up the question of how the resulting surplus would be paid to the state concerned. The Greek delegation suggested that calculations be made to determine the amount payable every six months. It should be pointed out that, by the above arrangement, Greece was to receive money, particularly after the return of Greek refugees to their homes had been ruled out. It was finally agreed, as a compromise, that the question should be approached in two steps, the first concerning the value of property of those refugees who had left before the signature of the Convention on Exchange, and the second dealing with future refugees. Even this compromise, however, was a clear success for the Greek delegation since it guaranteed officially that those Greeks who had been persecuted would receive compensation⁷¹.

Arbitration procedures

Greek proposals concerning arbitration, made before the Mixed Commission started its work, had been received favorably by the Turks.

At the first meetings the Greek representatives presented a draft agreement outlining the arbitrator's jurisdiction⁷². Under that agreement the arbitrator's decisions would be definite and binding for both sides without delay or access to appeal. The two Governments would ask the Federal Government of Switzerland to appoint an arbitrator who would be entitled to be present, without participating, at the Commission's meetings and would be empowered to summon witnesses and to conduct investigations in place, having at his disposal every means likely to facilitate his task. His expenses would be covered in common by the two states.

The Swiss Government's initial response to the joint Greek-Turkish request⁷³ was positive, but it asked for more details regarding the arbitrator's jurisdiction before giving a definitive answer⁷⁴.

The work of the Mixed Commission was suspended suddenly after the meeting of 25 July/8 August 1914. The interruption was attributed first to

71. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, Report No 2,699, 8/21 July 1914.

72. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Instructions to the Greek members of the Mixed Commission, 1/14 July 1914.

73. See above.

74. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Sicilianos to Streit, No 2,360, 6/19 July 1914.

the observance of the religious holiday of Bairam, and later to the second Ottoman delegate's sickness. In reality, however, it was a deliberate move on the part of the Sublime Porte, which was awaiting the results of the Greek-Turkish negotiations about the future of the Aegean islands going on at the same time in Bucharest. When those talks collapsed, the Greek Government tried to get the Mixed Commission to resume its functions, especially since the persecutions of the Greek population had not abated⁷⁵.

On 11/24 September the Sublime Porte suggested that the Mixed Commission's seat be transferred to Constantinople. The Greek Government agreed, but despite its efforts for an early resumption of the Commission's work, the latter did not start its meetings before the 24 October/6 November⁷⁶.

The second round of the Mixed Commission's work (24 October/6 November-1/14 December) was even more disappointing. At its very first meeting disagreements arose on the major issues (appraisal of scattered property, determination of people's desire to emigrate, numerical balance of exchangeable persons).

The whole attitude of the Ottoman delegates left no room for optimism: declaring the points of disagreement minor, they made concessions on the question of ascertaining people's wish to emigrate, but demanded in return that the Greek side stop insisting on the simultaneous departure and numerical balancing of the emigrants.

The Greek Government found some merit in this Turkish proposal⁷⁷.

75. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Dimaras to Streit, No 3,459, 18/31 August 1914. Venizelos to Panas, No 28,729, 9/22 September 1914. Panas to Venizelos, No 5,966, 3/16 September, No 6,108, 7/20 September 1914.

76. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Panas to Venizelos, No 6,375, 15/28 September 1914. Venizelos to Panas, No 32,175, 16/29 September 1914. Panas to Venizelos, No 6,424, 17/30 September 1914, No 6,459, 19 September/2 October 1914. Venizelos to Panas, No 32,808, 19 September/2 October 1914. Panas to Venizelos, No 6,569, 22 September/5 October 1914, No 6,702, 27 September/10 October 1914, No 6,771, 1/14 October 1914. Venizelos to Panas, No 36,119, 9/22 October 1914. Panas to Venizelos, No 7,101, 15/28 October 1914, No 7,369, 24 October/6 November 1914. In the Greek delegation Constantine Dimaras was replaced by the first *drogman* of the Greek Legation in Constantinople, Ioannis Papas.

77. Venizelos's instructions read as follows: "Nous considérons que nous pourrions profiter des dispositions conciliantes éventuelles du Gouvernement Ottoman sur ces deux points, en n'insistant pas sur les questions de l'égalité stricte du nombre des individus à échanger et de la simultanéité de leur départ. La constatation dûment effectuée du désir spontané des populations à émigrer ôte d'ailleurs à la simultanéité du départ beaucoup de son importance". (*A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Venizelos to Panas, No 42,479, 24 November/7 December 1914).

It suggested that the emigration of big rural landowners be excluded from the rule of numerical balance and that their landed estates be exchanged with equal-sized land of rural settlements.

The Turks were not content. On 27 November/10 December they stated that they accepted the idea of ascertaining people's desire to emigrate, but added that it should be carried out by the lowest-ranking members of the various sub-commissions. They also stated that they agreed to the principle of appraisal of scattered properties on condition that it be extended to include the properties abandoned by Muslims who left Macedonia and Epirus when the Greek army arrived there. The Greeks considered the first solution proposed by the Turks insufficient, since in effect it placed no control on local administration, and asked for more details concerning the appraisal of scattered properties⁷⁸.

On 1/14 December 1914, the Ottoman delegates suspended the talks once more under the excuse that they had to inform the Sublime Porte on the points of disagreement. They claimed in particular that the Greek Government's interpretation of the question of ascertaining people's desire to emigrate differed from that of the Ottoman side⁷⁹.

The meeting of 1/14 December was to be the last one for the Mixed Commission. The obstructionist tactics of the Ottoman delegates did not allow the talks to make substantial progress. Neither did the general climate.

During the second round of negotiations the persecutions in Asia Minor followed this pattern: each time the Greek Government denounced incidents of mass expatriation, the Sublime Porte would claim ignorance, but when, subsequently, masses of refugees arrived in Greece, it would then admit the fact, while giving assurances that nothing of the sort would be allowed to happen again⁸⁰.

Upon the Empire's entry into the First World War, a method used by the Turks to scare people out of the country consisted in drafting into the Ottoman army Greek nationals who were Ottoman citizens. When a number of Greeks, evading the draft and there by facing even the death penalty, gathered in Smyrna to try to make their way to Greece, the Turkish authorities offered to let them go on the condition that this not be considered as a form of forced emigration. Finally, at the Church's mediation, a deal was worked

78. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Panas to Venizelos, No 8,233, 28 November/11 December 1914.

79. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21*: Panas to Venizelos, No 8,289, 1/14 December 1914.

80. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st.*: Venizelos to Panas, No 41,974, 16/29 November 1914.

out whereby draft evaders could join the army without fear of punishment. This solution, however, which was expected to contain emigration, had the exact opposite result since, by making draft possible, it therefore made it all the more imperative for draft evaders to flee the country on their own and join the swelling numbers of refugees arriving in Greece⁸¹.

The attempted exchange of minorities of 1914 differs from the two exchanges which were later actually carried out, i.e. the Greek-Bulgarian exchange of 1919 and the Greek-Turkish exchange of 1923.

The 1914 and 1919 exchanges are presented as mutual and voluntary emigrations, whereas in 1923 we are dealing with a compulsory measure. In 1914 and 1919 a relatively limited number of people are affected but in 1923 the exchange results in a generalized expatriation. In 1923 the measure is imposed by the winner of a war, Turkey, to the loser, Greece, as a natural consequence of the Asia Minor *débâcle*; in 1914, however, it is forced on the winner of the war, Greece, by the loser, Turkey, as the end result of a series of persecutions.

To be sure, the principle of exchange of minorities for the purpose of national purification remains the same, and one could not in good faith deny that the attempt of 1914 is a precursor of the Treaties of Neuilly and Lausanne.

Nevertheless, in 1914 the chances of a successful exchange were minimal. Both the obstructionist tactics of the Turkish representatives on the Mixed Commission and the unabating impetus of the persecutions after the beginning of the negotiations make one wonder whether the failure of the talks had been planned. In other words, the question is the following: the persecutions were launched in order to force the Greeks to accept the exchange, or rather were the exchange talks the smokescreen behind which to cover the persecution? Certainly, the reasons that led the Sublime Porte to propose this measure to Athens were political and strategic rather than the claimed humanitarian ones. The real objective of the Turkish Government was to rid whole Ottoman provinces of the Greek element, and this it could achieve by following a policy of force, not by signing a Convention on a voluntary exchange of minorities, in which it would of course have to make concessions to the Greek side. The Turkish filibuster on the two most critical points of the talks (determination of wish to emigrate, numerical balance of the exchangeables) seems to corroborate the hypothesis that in reality they were but a cover for the persecutions.

81. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Dimaras to Venizelos, No 9,185, 12/25 December 1914.

Why, then, did Greece accept a proposal that was in effect a blow to the *Megali Idea*, especially after her spectacular gains in the Balkan Wars, which had brought her most cherished irredentist dream closer than ever to realization?

In the spring and summer of 1914, as Europe was following its irreversible course to war, the Greek Government, lacking international support, could ill afford a new armed confrontation with Turkey. Taking advantage of this state of affairs, the Turks, although defeated on the battlefield, managed to impose their own terms, since they were in a position to present the Greek Government with the choice of either accepting their proposals or abandoning to their fate the Greek populations in Eastern Thrace and the Asia Minor coast.

The Hellenic Government was fully aware of the situation. In a characteristic comment, the Greek Minister in Constantinople called the resumption of the Mixed Commission's deliberations "*pure comédie*"⁸².

These tactics, followed by Turkey time and again, which consist in covering up *faits accomplis* by launching spectacular public-relations events, takes on special significance today. To neutralize these tactics one must first identify the underlying reasons that make them possible.

82. *A.Y.E./K.Y./1914/A 21 st*: Panas to Venizelos, No 8,118, 27 November/10 December 1914.

A P P E N D I X

Athènes, le 9/22 Mai 1914

Légation Impériale
Ottomane
En ville

Monsieur le Ministre,

J'ai reçu la lettre que Votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser à la suite de la conversation que nous avons eue récemment pour me proposer au nom du Gouvernement Impérial de "faire un échange des populations grecques du Vilayet de Smyrne avec les musulmans de la Macédoine" conformément à une idée qu'à titre personnel elle m'avait exprimée lors de la susdite conversation.

Le Gouvernement Royal, désirant donner une nouvelle preuve de son esprit de conciliation et de ses dispositions amicales, ne se refuserait pas à examiner sympathiquement cette proposition, si par l'adoption des mesures auxquelles elle vise, un terme était mis définitivement à l'état de choses en Thrace et que l'accord de l'échange des populations s'étendait, conformément d'ailleurs à une insinuation qui a été faite par S.A. le Grand Vizir à notre Ministre à Constantinople, aussi sur les populations grecques de la Thrace, comprenant avant tout une évaluation, aux frais du dit échange, des propriétés délaissées par les musulmans, qui ont déjà émigré de la Macédoine, avec celles des Grecs qui ont déjà quitté la Thrace.

Il est bien entendu que l'échange proposé ne pourrait avoir lieu qu'entre des populations qui volontairement émigreraient et sous le contrôle de commissions mixtes qui seraient chargées de vérifier l'intention spontanée d'émigrer et d'évaluer les fortunes aux fins du règlement définitif des comptes entre les deux Gouvernements.

Je n'ai pas besoin de relever qu'un accord entre les deux Gouvernements ne pourrait être réalisé, que si une fin était mise à l'émigra-

tion forcée en Thrace et que le calme revenait dans cette province, ce qui amènerait le calme nécessaire dans l'opinion publique grecque, impressionnée à juste titre des nouvelles qui journallement viennent au sujet du traitement des hellènes en Turquie.

Veillez agréer, e.t.c.,
Vénizélos