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# The Legacy of Forced Migrations in Modern Turkish Society : Remembrance of the Things Past ?<sup>1</sup>

Nergis Canefe

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- 1 In the era of post-industrial capitalism and amid new patterns of globalisation, international migration is the norm rather than the exception regarding population movements. In the economic sphere, complex population movements taking the form of labour migration within and across the state borders constitute a primary mechanism alleviating supply and demand pressures<sup>2</sup>. In the political sphere, on the other hand, population movements generally assume a darker face. During the twentieth century, the largest number of people moved across state borders due to population exchanges and forced migration. These kinds of population movements tend to function as quick remedies for problems around political legitimacy and instability in both weak and strong states. Furthermore, certain sectors of the society seem to be disproportionately affected by them<sup>3</sup>. Recent comparative work in migration studies prove not only that ethnic, religious and racial factors have a systematic appearance in out-migration flows, but also that ethno-religious minorities are particularly prone to be displaced<sup>4</sup>.
- 2 The topic of this paper is the legacy of the forced migration of ethno-religious minorities in and out of Asia Minor that took place during the initial stages of the nation-building process in modern Turkey. The examination provided here has a particular focus : the remembrance of the life and times of Orthodox Christian communities that once lived in Asia Minor. Rather than being a celebration of Turkish society's return to its past, however, the present work problematizes the selective use and presentation of refugee memories. The Republic of Turkey is a relatively young nation-state. Meanwhile, since its foundation in 1923, the intense struggle the Republican cadres undertook to establish the legitimacy of the new regime has hardly lessened. In this work, I argue that part of the reason for this ongoing crisis of historical identity in modern Turkish society is the denial or only partial recognition of

both the causes and the effects of the large-scale demographic re-shuffling that took place during the closing decades of the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, I propose that the nostalgic return to the days of Ottoman Anatolia and the longings for harmonious multiculturalism in modern Turkish society remain unbalanced in terms of the perception of the Turkish national past. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, there existed a specific set of socio-cultural conditions under which ethno-religious difference created a subset of people whose lives were uniquely traumatized by nascent nationalist ideologies in the Ottoman Empire. As such, it was not only the Ottoman Christians residing in Asia Minor who were affected by the demise of the Imperial system and the burgeoning of new nation-states. The new revisionist movement fails to pay attention to this fact and underestimates the significance of the massive influx of Muslims of various pedigree from the Balkans and the Caucuses into the Ottoman heartlands prior to or during the departure of Ottoman Christians from Asia Minor. In the following pages, I reach the conclusion that unless the picture of forced migration in and out of Ottoman Anatolia is recaptured in its totality, popularised reiterations of the sad exodus of Ottoman Christians offer little insight for the current problems ailing Turkish society around issues of cultural and religious tolerance, political pluralism and civic ideals of nationhood.

- 3 Mass population movements are a challenge to the generic nation-state model based on the assumption of a culturally homogeneous citizenry. Meanwhile, we can identify at least three patterns according which national polities are affected by regular waves of migration. Traditionally immigration-based societies such as USA, Canada and Australia have standardised procedures for acquisition of citizenship by the eligible newcomers. They, by definition, are obliged to accept a multi-ethnic / multi-religious population composition as the foundation of their societies. Western European democracies, on the other hand, were and still are subjected to successive waves of both labour migration and population flows from their ex-colonies. And yet, there is a strong tendency in European societies to err on the side of a discourse of cultural purity. Consequently, for the majority of European societies, acquisition of citizenship has long been a contentious issue and there are frequent referrals to the “true” spirit of the nation in mainstream political rhetoric. Finally, we have societies made up of various ethno-religious communities but whose “national identity” stresses ethno-religious unity and commonly overlooks the ingrained heterogeneity of the national polity. Turkey constitutes a hybrid case squeezed between the aforementioned second and the third categories. Therefore, there are grounds to test the applicability of the developments in European societies regarding the acceptance and legitimation of the heterogeneous make-up of the national polity. Indeed, a relatively recent debate concerning international migration, citizenship and nationalism within the Western European context looms large in the Turkish context, as well. This debate can broadly be titled as the post-nationalist discourse. The realisation that “Europe for the Europeans only” is not a viable promise led to a serious revision of views concerning the characteristics of cultural and political life in major European societies. Despite the restrictions imposed upon foreigners and visitors regarding the length of their stay, their travel and residence rights, and of course their participation in social, cultural and political spheres, selective labour migration, refugees and the long-term settlement of migrants from ex-colonies are now deemed as an integral--as opposed to being imposed or temporary--part of European social and political life<sup>5</sup>. As a response to this contradiction between European self-image and European realities, since the 1990s,

alternative suggestions are being made regarding the status of settled immigrant communities irrespective of their inclusion by European citizenship laws. In this new context, full access to citizenship rights are no longer seen as the *sine qua non* of political, social and cultural participation and integration<sup>6</sup>. Especially in the field of international studies, there is a tendency to generalize the terms of this primarily European debate and to argue for the inherent multi-culturality and hybridity of all societies regardless of the formal structures dictating admittance to citizenship<sup>7</sup>.

- 4 Meanwhile, as this work proves, there are also grounds to propose that the euphoria about tolerant multi-culturalism is slightly out of context in the Turkish case. The crust of the problem concerning the identity of the modern Turkish nation rather concerns Turkish society's misgivings about and dealings with its own history. There still remains a demarcation line drawn between the native born, the naturalised, and the alien, based on ethno-religious attributes. Therefore, the appeal to cultural rights, group rights, and selective exercise of political rights as a panacea for issues relating to the lack of legitimacy of the Republican regime yields only limited results. Hundred of thousands left their ancestral homelands in Asia Minor as a result of forced migrations at the onset of the Republic. Similar numbers also arrived to Asia Minor again as a result of forced migration movements, and were resettled. Therefore, there is an inherent "applicability problem" regarding Turkish society's perceptions of multi-culturalism and tolerance. The dominant assumption that modern Turkish society is composed of a Muslim majority of clear Turkish ethnic ancestry underwrites the significance of both in and out migration across Asia Minor at the onset of the Turkish nation-state. In parallel, the human costs of forced migration and population displacements implicated by the Republican regime and its immediate predecessors remain a buried issue. The foundational phase of Turkish national history exemplifies the identification of indigenous minority groups with distinct ethno-religious identity claims as threats, and their targeted elimination via demographic reshuffling. Denial or selective granting of citizenship rights came as part and parcel of this package. Consequently, both members of ethno-religious minorities who left and those who arrived in Asia Minor are more often than not barred from having access to their own history and ancestral land. In this context, in societies like Turkey that are ethno-religiously diverse in reality but claimed to be homogeneous by authoritarian nationalist ideologies, acquisition and protection of citizenship remains as the *sine qua non* for the establishment of inclusive regimes and general enjoyment of relative social peace. In order for multi-culturalism to flourish, Turkish culture and politics has to witness the coming to terms with the Republic's past outside the sanitised parameters of the narrative of national independence.

## Remembrance of the Things Past ? Revisionist Accounts of the Life and Times of Ottoman Society of Asia Minor

- 5 Since the early 1990s, the Turkish market for popular culture has been filled with an abundance of products depicting the particular cultural richness and ethno-religious colorfulness of late Ottoman society. These include collections of Rembetika or Sephardic Jewish songs, hymns of the Greek Orthodox Church, Ottoman music in the immediate pre-Republican period clearly carrying the mark of multi-denominational

influences, oral history accounts of the past of the remaining families of Christian pedigree in modern Turkey, architectural and urban historical revelations about the multi-ethnic and multi-religious background of Ottoman cities and towns, series of chronicles and memoirs of Ottoman Christian refugees, depictions of inter-communal life in Ottoman Anatolia as well as in the major cities of the Empire such as Constantinople and Smyrna as they were known, translations of works on minorities in the Ottoman Empire, and auto-biographical stories by Armenian and Greek writers about their birthplaces, childhood, ways of life, and of course their catastrophic exodus and uprooting.<sup>8</sup> The emergence of this trend of “remembrance of the things past” coincides with daring albeit not always consequential attempts towards the establishment of political pluralism and cultural pluralism in the civic sphere. As a totality, this appears as a promising picture regarding the self-understanding and historical identity of the modern Turkish society.

- 6 However, especially on the remembrance front, the presented narratives come forward as far too circular, self-referential and largely devoid of gruesome or contentious details. There seems to have a “moral of the story” in each case, but it is not necessarily applicable to the understanding of our past. Whichever catastrophic events took place, these are portrayed as serious misfortunes and traumas without obvious or identifiable perpetrators. The blame is on violent nationalist rhetoric, culture of intolerance, forced circumstances dictated from “high up” in the state or military bureaucracy. Houses may be demolished, communities uprooted, property looted and confiscated, churches defaced, relationships severed, lives lost, but the human actors involved in these violations are largely absent from the revisionist accounts. Furthermore, the presentations tend to be either highly personal or individual cases. Unless one puts a mark on the map after attending to each manuscript or record, it is rather difficult to have a general sense of where these Christian communities lived, what their numbers were, their political and economic involvements, class-structure, etc. The revisionist literature and products aim at consolidating a generalised culture of tolerance for difference and civic citizenship based on common residence and adherence to common ideals<sup>9</sup>. The past, in this context, is treated as a fable. Its characters are mythically beautiful and elusive, its events only accountable as passing glimpses, while the lessons to be learnt from it have primarily a futuristic dimension. Looking back for the sake of reaching a better understanding of history is not necessarily included in this agenda of revitalisation of memory.
- 7 In the larger Turkish context of obsession with national history and heightened worries about the legitimacy and continuation of the Republican regime, these aims and products fall short of providing new outlets for addressing some of the key issues regarding the foundational identity of the modern Turkish nation. Is this a nation built upon war not only against imperialist Western powers but also against religious minorities ? Is this a nation built up of multiple ethnicities and cultures sharing the Muslim faith and some linguistic commonalities or simply a grandiose conglomeration of “Turkish people” ? Is this a nation united together in its faith in the Republican regime or did the regime acted as a buffer against the unwanted vestiges of a multi-denominational, multi-linguistic imperial Ottoman system with myriad kinds of inter-communal tensions ? What happened to the land and property of millions of Christians that left Ottoman Anatolia with no promise of return ? Who moved into their houses, who tilled their land, who took care of their orphans ? Who replaced them in the

financial, cultural and social spheres? These are only some of the questions that remain unanswered or even totally avoided by the revisionist movement. Their avoidance is partly due to the factor of blame that would be cast upon the parents and grandparents of the current generation of Turkish youth. Or else, they would bring to the surface all other kinds of memories of where many of today's Turkish families initially arrived from and under which conditions they made Asia Minor their new homeland. This, in turn, would force the credibility of Turkish national history to its limits as its focal point is the rebirth of the Turkish nation assumed to have been resident in Anatolia and Thrace for centuries.

- 8 In this context, there are three issues that need to be opened up for debate regarding the current uses and presentation of memories pertaining to inter-communal life, exodus and multi-culturality in what was Ottoman Anatolia. First and foremost, the general historical background to the demographic make-up of Asia Minor is to be reinstated. Second, the politics of multiculturalism in the Ottoman Imperial realm demand critical examination. Finally, the distinct characteristics of the socio-economic position of Ottoman Christians, particularly Orthodox Greeks as they are the most popular group for both the producers and consumers of revisionist accounts, have to be acknowledged. The combined effect of the addition to this enhanced background to the accounts of a pre- or early-Republican past would be not only its de-romanticisation. It would also involve introduction of real life actors into these stories of departure and severance. Furthermore, it could indeed show the human face of the perpetrators of forced migrations, as well. We still need more stories and accounts of Muslim migrants expelled from the Balkans and the Caucasus, Muslim businessmen not allowed to exercise their trade or not able to break into the circles of international finance and trade dominated by non-Muslim counterparts, Muslim religious leaders, soldiers and bureaucrats not willing to share power or allow the bringing down of old, rigid hierarchies in Ottoman society, and intellectuals of various background not content with what the Imperial legacy symbolised in the world at large and yearning for a recapture of their sense of pride and achievement. However, with the provision of an informed introduction to revisionist accounts, one is at least one step closer to making sense of all the suffering and loss, not only in terms of empathising with “the other”, but also in terms of reaching a better understanding of how one arrived at where one is today and at what cost.

## Historical Context : Demography, Geography and Other Givens

- 9 The current political rhetoric suggests Turkey is a land of “99 percent Muslim” population. Revisionist accounts, on the other hand, suggest that Ottoman Anatolia was a truly polyglot society where ethno-religious communities of multiple backgrounds lived together. The historical facts lie somewhere in between. Christian communities of Asia Minor had a long history in what was known as “Ottoman Anatolia” well into World War I<sup>10</sup>. However, there was also a large Muslim population among whom the ethnic Turkish element was dominant. In this context, it is imperative that the somewhat fuzzy picture of harmonious inter-communal coexistence is replaced by a more accurate account of the demographic make-up of the late Ottoman society.

- <sup>10</sup> As already suggested, the Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire was by no means homogeneous despite the fact that ethno-linguistic differences among the Muslims have generally been overridden for administrative purposes<sup>11</sup>. During the nineteenth century, Anatolian Muslim communities were mainly composed of Turks, Kurds, Greek speaking Muslims (Laz) and a small number of Arabs. To these groups, later on joined the Caucasian Muslims emigrating from the Russian territories and Balkan Muslims emigrating from the newly established nation-states in the region<sup>12</sup>. In terms of gross figures, however, Muslims of Turkish ethnic descent constituted the largest ethnic group<sup>13</sup>. Both Ottoman sources and censuses of the Turkish Republic suggest that Muslims of Arab ethnicity inhabited mostly the south-east of the Asia Minor land mass, Kurds traditionally lived in the east, and Laz communities were found in the north and north-east. Peoples of Turkish ethnicity were found in every region, although they were the predominant group in Central Anatolia. Similarly, immigrants arriving from the Balkans and the Caucuses were strategically scattered around all parts of Anatolia.
- <sup>11</sup> The population distribution of Anatolian *vilayets* according to the 1330 (1911-1912) census also suggests that virtually all provinces had settled Greek and Armenian communities<sup>14</sup>. Christian communities of Asia Minor included Greeks and Armenians (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant), Catholic and Orthodox Assyrians, Chaldeans and Nestorians of Anatolia, and, several others in small numbers such as Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians and Romanians. There were also marginal communities practicing religious heterodoxies, syncretisms and different varieties of crypto-Islam<sup>15</sup>. The crucial fact is that these communities did not constitute “compact minorities” with identifiable borders that divided Anatolia into ethno-religious enclaves. Rather, Ottoman Anatolia was a historic example of inter-communal existence, with all the blessings and problems that come with it within an Imperial context<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, the majority of the Christian communities that remained in Asia Minor well until the establishment of the new Turkish nation-state inhabited this land for centuries. Under the Ottoman reign, non-Muslim communities were acknowledged and incorporated into the imperial order under the rubric of the *millet* system. As illustrated in the next section, the costs and benefits of this political arrangement are open to debate. However, what matters in the context of demographic and geographic givens is that under the millet system, religious minorities by and large remained in their ancestral lands. During the break-up of the Empire and later the hey-days of national self-determination, on the other hand, they first became immigrants and refugees. In the first few decades of the twentieth century, they then became subjects of international treaties proposing population exchanges for the homogenisation of newly established nation-states. In particular, the political turmoil between 1914 and 1922 permanently changed the human geography of both Asia Minor and portions of the Balkan peninsula<sup>17</sup>. Finally, in the era of Republican Turkey, those who remained within the newly drawn borders became the religious minorities of Turkey, protected by laws and international treaties on paper but living in a precarious situation in reality<sup>18</sup>.
- <sup>12</sup> In the course of their changing status, the total population of Christian communities diminished radically. Admittedly, a reliable comparison of Ottoman and Republican Turkish statistics on Christian communities is by no means an easy task to achieve. To begin with, population figures belonging to specific Christian communities living in Anatolia during the pre-1923 period remain controversial to this day. During the Ottoman period, as a general rule Christians were tallied neither by ethnicity nor by



language but only by religious denomination. This meant that ethnic and linguistic differences largely remained unaccounted for<sup>19</sup>. Population estimates on ethno-religious groups of the Empire are thus derived from suggestions of European scholars or emissaries, who traditionally relied upon religious leaders' counts or self-estimates by the communities<sup>20</sup>. During the Republican era, the censuses did include entries on mother tongue and religion up to 1965. However, ethnicity was not used as an entry. Consequently, neither before 1923 nor after 1965 do we have reliable and organised data that could reveal the changing population dynamics within ethnically distinct Christian communities. Meanwhile, the period between 1923 and 1965 provides significant information for educated estimates based on a combination of data on mother tongue and religion. Within this period, the first full-fledged Republican census taken in October 1927 is a particularly important source of information revealing population composition in Anatolia and Thrace following the upheavals of the Balkan Wars, World War I, and the Turkish War of Independence<sup>21</sup>. In its basic method of enumeration, the 1927 census repeats the tradition of Ottoman censuses and primarily focuses on the male populace. As a result, it underestimates the total population. It also suffers from deficiencies in the enumeration of the eastern provinces. In the meantime, what is valuable and new about the 1927 census is the fact that it categorises the entries according to "Population by Place of Birth" and "Population by Mother Tongue". These two categories, combined with the category of religion, provide a general picture of refugees arriving in Turkey as well as a rough estimate of those who left Anatolia. Taking into consideration the correction factors for the total figures, the Muslim population of Anatolia in 1927 was 14 184 381 out of the total of 14 589 149<sup>22</sup>. This is a substantial increase from the total figure of 11 618 550 in 1922. The difference is primarily due to Muslim in-migrants from the Balkans arriving to various provinces between 1922 and 1927. As to the total Christian population, the 1911-1912 Ottoman census figures suggest that in Anatolia as a whole, 17 % of the population was non-Muslim. Out of the total of 17,5 million inhabitants, this percentage amounts to a figure of close to 3 million people. Needless to say, the difference between the 1927 estimates for the non-Muslim population of 404 768 and the 1911-1912 figures of close to 3 million signals drastic changes in demography and politics between World War I and the founding of the Republic of Turkey.

## The Political Context : From Empire to Nation-State

- 13 Political historians of the Middle East argue that across the region, the condition of the state envisioning its nation is a common occurrence. During this process, competing nationalist movements challenged each other's national narratives and counterpoised their own ethno-religious uniqueness. Therefore, traditionally ethno-religious distinctiveness came to be identified with politically volatile "compact minorities"—that is, communities concentrated in often geopolitically defensible and defined areas<sup>23</sup>. In reality, however, ethno-religious communities show a great more variation than this stereotype of irredentist-separatism suggests. They can be in the position of a majority as well as a minority, dominant, subordinate, or in alliance with others. Similarly, their membership of a chosen group, community or polity may or may not overlap with clear territorial boundaries. They may be united by a vision of a common racial and linguistic descent, belief system and confessional practices. And yet, they are equally prone to be divided by internal primordial ties, tribal membership, linguistic or denominational



differences, cultural cleavages, familial linkages and regional attributes. Indeed, internal conflict and divisions reflect the predicament of Christian communities of Asia Minor more than the politically volatile suggestions of “Greek” or “Armenian” threats to the Empire and later to the Turkish nation-state.

- 14 With the rise of Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian, Albanian, Serbian, Arab and subsequently Turkish nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Christian communities of Asia Minor no longer belonged to a working political order. Changing circumstances commanded that they make choices concerning their political loyalties, citizenship and nationality, and eventually their place of residence. In the larger, regional context, the ending of the *millet* system coincided with political expressions of the resentment of Turkish preeminence. Consequently, successive nationalist regimes embarked upon demolishing the remnants of Ottoman legacy<sup>24</sup>. The interwar period (1914-1945) in particular signifies the territorial destruction and total annihilation of the Ottoman Empire. Political changes in this period laid the foundations of a new state system in both the Balkans and the Middle East. By the 1960s, territorial states of a post-imperial and post-protectorate era were already parading as the nation-states of the foreseeable future<sup>25</sup>. Meanwhile, up until the present day, problems around ethno-religious minorities and political pluralism remain largely unresolved. Beneath the surface of formal institutional continuity, bureaucratic and military strength, and, central rule lie the troubled waters of political and cultural integration as well as recurrent waves of ethno-religious unrest.
- 15 Retaining the allegiance and securing the loyalty of ethno-religious communities to the state and central government is crucial for political stability and establishment of legitimate rule. However, some regimes resort to a short-cut and opt of radical demographic re-arrangements such as forced migration or cleansing of select minorities. What would be the foundations of a people's claim for nationhood under such circumstances ? While factors such as population size and ethno-religious or linguistic homogeneity, economic resources, military strength, or structures of bureaucratic centralisation shed light on the mechanisms of state-building, they illustrate little about the distinct character of a national polity and the citizenship contract it embraces. In this larger context, although the term itself has been contentious since the critical work of Braude and Lewis, the principles behind the Ottoman *millet* system provide critical clues about the backbones of many a national revival movement across the Balkans and the Middle East. The *millet* system, whether a coded term used primarily in foreign correspondence by the Ottoman state<sup>26</sup> or a socio-political reality larger than the dictates of Ottoman central bureaucracy<sup>27</sup>, was the key administrative tool developed to account for the ethno-religious diversity within the borders of the Empire. It allowed a high degree of flexibility around issues of language, religion, ethnicity, distinct cultural practices and local customs while achieving an effective level of centralisation for the incorporation of various communities into the imperial administrative, political and economic system<sup>28</sup>. Indeed, as many Ottoman historians argued, the actual practice of the regulations and restrictions that came with this political system exhibited a great degree of variation depending on the individual situation of a given non-Muslim community as well as the personality and politics of local administrators. As a result, ethno-religious communities who were clustered into Greek, Armenian or Jewish *millets* with large administrative brush-strokes remained more or less independent in their linguistic, ethnic and local religious affairs. These

separate communal and religious identities ascribed by the *millet* system then delivered a vocabulary of cultural uniqueness to the cadres of nationalist revolutionaries across the Empire. The young nation-states of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century burgeoning across former Ottoman territories aspired to the modern notion of a territorially sanctified secular state while simultaneously enhancing exclusively defined ethno-religious identities<sup>29</sup>.

- 16 The first major *millet*, the Orthodox Rum, was established in 1454. The Orthodox Christians of Asia Minor, the Middle East and the Balkans were thus brought together under a single religious authority. The Armenian *millet* with its own patriarchate was established in 1461. Unlike the Greek Orthodox community, the Armenians did not have a patriarchate in Constantinople before the Ottoman conquest<sup>30</sup>. Their ecclesiastical centers were the See of Etchmiadzin and the See of Cilicia. Then the Jewish *millet* was founded as yet another pillar in Ottoman administration. The Chief Rabbinate of the Ottoman Empire, however, did not survive the “centrifugal pressures” resulting from the large-scale Jewish immigration from the Iberian peninsula and ceased to be the single authority for all the Jewish communities with different cultural and linguistic traditions<sup>31</sup>. In this early order of things, the Greek and Armenian communities represented Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the West and the East, respectively. The patriarchates in Constantinople assumed a central position *vis-à-vis* all other patriarchates due to their proximity to the Palace and thus to the heart of Ottoman bureaucracy. Meanwhile, the Greek and Armenian patriarchates were not furnished with rights to infringe upon the ethno-linguistic integrity of the multiplicity of communities under their jurisdiction. They were ordained to function in the manner of “umbrella organizations”. As numerous ancient churches of the East were included in the Ottoman territories, Copts, Maronites, Jacobites and other smaller and unorthodox sects of Christianity entered the domain of Ottoman rule. The autonomous survival of these various ethno-religious communities were guaranteed by a highly developed system of local administration based on rural or town quarter representation. In this context, the basic organizational unit of the *millet* system was not larger than the family-unit within a given community<sup>32</sup>. Indeed, the *millet* system cannot be identified with significant territorial divisions compared to administrative or political units such as the *eyalet*. Instead, it accounts for an abstract mapping of the ethno-religious communities within the Ottoman territories. Consequently, the *millet* system simultaneously encouraged religious universalism and administrative parochialism.
- 17 Meanwhile, the *millet* system was a mixed blessing in areas other than efficient imperial administration. To start with, in conjunction with the regular practice of *sürgün* (planned and selective forced migration) pursued to provide a “balanced” distribution of communities across the vast geography of the Empire, the Ottoman administrative apparatus has often been accused of a benign neglect towards the communal autonomy of non-Muslims and their right to their ancestral lands and property<sup>33</sup>. Similarly, the *devsirme* system based on the periodic levy of unmarried male children from the Christian peasantry of the Empire to be trained as Ottoman soldiers and bureaucrats after their conversion to Islam is commonly identified as an absolute abridging of the rights of Christian communities living under the Ottoman rule. Finally, the constitutional basis of the Ottoman *millet* system was the Islamic principle of recognition of the “Peoples of the Book”, which accorded them protection as *dhimmis*<sup>34</sup>. The term “religious tolerance” usually indicates the willingness of a dominant religious

community to live side by side with members of other faiths<sup>35</sup>. In the case of the poly-ethnic Ottoman state, however, religious tolerance was offered to the “People of the Book” if and when they unequivocally recognised the primacy of Islam and the supremacy of Muslims. In this sense, the main noteworthy feature of the *millet* system appears to be the identification of non-Muslims as a category of Ottoman subjects divided within themselves according to their attachment to one of the three main faiths recognised by the Ottoman state well into the nineteenth century (Greek and Armenian Patriarchates and Jewish Rabbinate). Furthermore, it is commonly argued that although Greeks, Armenians and Jews had the same status as subjects of the Ottoman Sultan, there was a substantial difference in terms of how they came under such authority, and how they were treated from that point onwards. The Sephardic Jews migrated to the Ottoman lands for protection whereas the Greek and Armenian communities became subjects of Ottoman authority as a result of military conquests and invasions. Therefore, as far as cultural memories were concerned, the dictates of the *millet* system did not suffice to override the nationalist fervor of the nineteenth century to create a tradition of equality among cohabiting confessional communities. Instead, its emphasis on confessional distinctions insured a continued sense of ethnic and political separateness and unequal access to power based on such differences. Differing and sometimes hostile perceptions of other non-Muslims among Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities, dictated by religious biases and conflicting views of their communal histories and attachment to land, further clouded inter-communal relations<sup>36</sup>. Competing economic interests among non-Muslim communities as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims was yet another significant factor mitigating intercommunal friction, particularly among members of the classes engaged in commerce, finance and trade.

- 18 On the question of how long the *millet* system stayed in effect, arguments vary. However, there is common agreement that its inevitable death was signalled by the erosion of the distinct position of non-Muslims in 1856 in exchange for equal rights to all Ottoman subjects<sup>37</sup>. The subsequent process of absolute centralisation of state power that started with the Tanzimat reforms in the Ottoman Empire came together with politics of cultural and linguistic homogenisation that targeted the former *millets*<sup>38</sup>. With the establishment of the Republican regime in 1923, remaining Ottoman Christians were added into the “religious minorities” of Turkey. In the Lausanne Treaty (1923), they were accorded the right to speak their communal language, and to maintain and perpetuate their religion<sup>39</sup>. However, the Jacobin logic espoused by the cadres of the secular Turkish Republic favoured their total or near-total assimilation. As studies on Jewish, Greek Orthodox and other non-Muslim communities indicate, however, patterns of assimilation of non-Muslim communities did not exactly follow what was envisaged by the new Turkish state<sup>40</sup>. The dissolution of a once-widespread network of local communities following waves of emigration and compulsory population exchanges brought about the formation of compact minority communities. Among the Jewish, Greek and Armenian communities of Istanbul, communal structures led to the development of mechanisms of closure in order to perpetuate these group’s linguistic and religious identity in a rapidly changing and ethno-religiously homogenised Turkish society. Particularly after the 1960s and the massive forced exodus of Greeks of Istanbul, the combination of bureaucratic secularisation in Turkish society and a rise of Islamic ideologies in the political arena fed into the formation of self-affirming and yet simultaneously insecure gestures among the remaining non-

Muslim communities. Consequently, once espoused by the *millet* system for the purposes of “good governance” under the Ottoman rule, religious difference became a legal stigma ordaining the lives of Christian communities in Republican Turkey. Even with their ever diminishing numbers in select metropolises and their aging population, they are still far too visible, and all for the wrong reasons.

## The Greek Christian Communities of Asia Minor

- 19 The last of the critical issues to be discussed with reference to the revitalisation of “refugee memories” in modern Turkish society concerns the socio-cultural and political characteristics of the life of Greek Orthodox communities under Ottoman rule. The agreed upon revisionist sentiment about their forced departure is that it created a cultural lacuna as well as an economic loss in post-Ottoman Turkish society. Meanwhile, the reasons for the growing unease among local and newly settled Muslim populace concerning the status of Ottoman Christians come forward only in the more traditionalist and nationalist literature and memoirs. Similarly, the changing and at times conflicting aspirations of Ottoman Greeks, as well as the divisions and clashes within these communities, are addressed mostly in passing. This gap in both knowledge and understanding has to be closed to make sense of what prompted the massive forced exodus of historic communities to be overseen not only by rings of Independence fighters or later, soldiers of the new Turkish Republic but also by their neighbors, friends, customers, business relations and former allies in local, regional or imperial politics. Otherwise, history is prone to repeat itself albeit in different contexts as the lessons from it are yet to be learnt.
- 20 Until the end of the eighteenth century, Greek Orthodox communities of Asia Minor and the Middle East distinguished themselves based on three overlapping cultural worlds<sup>41</sup>. The most circumscribed and immediate of these was the local community within which an individual was born to and raised. It provided a sense of identity via its traditions, customs and social structure. Those who left their immediate communities and migrated elsewhere could still remain as part of it by retaining its particular customs and keeping the memory of their “place of origin” live. The second world of culture for an Ottoman Orthodox Greek was that of the larger confessional community. It symbolized commitment to a particular religious belief and to the hierarchical order that came with it. The world of Greek Orthodox Church was not bound by time or space, as one's immediate local community was. Nor, given the immense ethnic diversity of Greek Orthodox Christians scattered around the Empire, did it exclusively use the language of a particular ethnic group. In addition, the Church suffered from a peculiar tension within the institution itself. On the one hand, it bore the historically significant authority of Byzantine Hellenism. On the other, it was bound by the authority of the Ottoman Empire and was therefore reduced to be part of the larger mosaic of *millets* dictated by the imperial political system. Consequently, although essential for the Greek Orthodox identity, the Greek Orthodox Church was characterised more by paradoxes than by certainty. The third realm that shaped the life of Ottoman Greek Orthodox communities was what gradually became crystallised as the “Hellenic culture” by the advent of Greek nationalism. Initially, it was primarily defined in terms of language. Later on, however, territorial boundaries became the

primary consideration, particularly after the 1821 Greek Revolt and the establishment of a Hellenic state<sup>42</sup>.

- 21 As the Ottoman state began to show clear signs of internal fragmentation and an independent Greek state became a political reality, there was a fundamental change in the relationship between these three worlds of culture and identity which affecting the ordinary lives of ethnically Greek Christians. The founding of a Hellenic nation-state was accompanied by the creation of a set of central institutions that organised and re-focused the elements of what was deemed to be Greek. This did not necessarily mean that previous modes of identity were preempted or pulled under the dictate of a single political center. The young Greek state did, however, assume both political representation and cultural leadership of the dispersed and variegated world of Hellenism<sup>43</sup>. The new state, in a process very similar to that of the Turkish national experience to follow some 100 years later, produced a self-generated and nationalist urban bureaucracy in contradistinction to the cosmopolitan entrepreneurial middle classes of the Ottoman-Greek realm. Concomitantly, the problem arose of who has the most legitimate voice to be the spokesperson of “the Greek people” on the two sides of the Aegean Sea and around the Eastern Mediterranean littoral.
- 22 By the second half of the nineteenth century, individual communities residing in what remained Ottoman territories were already drifting away from the orbit of the “*millet* system”<sup>44</sup>. In particular, ethnic Greeks who were detached from their “place of origin” and joined the larger world of trade, commerce and bureaucracy became more attentive of matters concerning language and religion and showed great eagerness to assert their distinct identity in an increasingly cosmopolitan Ottoman urban culture<sup>45</sup>. For centuries, the Greeks of Asia Minor shared a social and political space as well as routines of everyday life with Muslims and other Christian communities--such as Armenians, Catholic and protestant Christians from various ethnic groups, and Jews. Nevertheless, by the closing years of the nineteenth century, what mattered most was not commonalities but differences. The motto of the day was the survival of the individual through the ethnic group<sup>46</sup>. Under such circumstances, narratives of Greek nationalism echoed across the Aegean Sea and found diverse expression in cities like Constantinople and Smyrna as well as the towns and the countryside. They combined with the *Megali Idea* of the geographic unity of all Hellenic peoples to orient the ethnically-Greek communities of Asia Minor towards integration with this new and promising “Greek world”<sup>47</sup>.
- 23 Not all the communities were influenced by Greek national revival to the same degree. The impact of Greek national consciousness on local Greek communities' sense of their cultural distinctiveness was significantly affected by their relative distribution--the proportion of Christians to Muslims in their area of residence--and their location within the imperial system. Within the borders of the Empire, more often than not, it is either the Orthodox Patriarchate's or the urban middle classes' attitudes that is considered worth mentioning. At one end of the spectrum of nationalist fervor, the ancient nobility of the *Phanar* district in Constantinople--its superior clergy as well as the lay dignitaries of the Greek Orthodox Church--and the majority of the established Greek Orthodox merchant families were opposed to acting against the *status quo*. On the other side, the enlightened and liberal class of members of the medical, legal and literary professions were identified as “most susceptible” to the Greek nationalist call. Still, even taken together, these two groups constituted only a minor portion of the

Greek population in the Ottoman Empire. A much larger group was made up of settled rural communities outside the Greek mainland, and artisan and laboring classes in a range of Ottoman urban centers and towns. Those who lived in the interior of Asia Minor and were outnumbered by Muslim or non-Greek communities were considerably far away from the centers of Greek nationalist upheaval. However, they were not absent from the political project of *Megali Idea*. It was not only the mainland Greece that was seen as integral to the history and myths of Western European civilization<sup>48</sup>. According to both European philhellenes and Greek nationalists, ancient Hellenic culture survived among small Greek communities across Asia Minor. In this context, the Greeks of Asia Minor featured in the narratives of Greek national enlightenment as crucial compact units of culture that bore witness to the authenticity and continuum of Greek ethnic identity. Local dialects, confessional practices and ways of life of Asia Minor Greeks thus became an essential part of this standardised and official package of cultural distinctiveness disseminated by the Hellenic Kingdom.

- 24 In summary, long before the total collapse of the imperial political system, the “Greek subjects” of the Ottoman Empire were faced with a difficult choice between three futures : remaining part of the Empire and changing with it in a way that secured its continuity, following the example of their fellow nationals and struggling for territorial independence, or finding a third alternative that allowed them both the opportunity to entertain their newly defined ethnic identity and to reap the benefits of their position within the empire as intermediaries in the larger world of finance, trade, and business<sup>49</sup>. Adding to the complexity of the situation, thousands of Greek nationals--their foreign status being an asset--migrated to the major commercial centers of the Ottoman Empire in the course of the nineteenth century. They were drawn to the new possibilities in trade and liberal professions that came with the integration of the Ottoman markets into the world economy<sup>50</sup>. These migratory waves brought in new patterns of mingling between “local” and “outside” Greeks, thereby facilitating the formation of an umbrella ethnic Greek political identity. Combined with community-supported educational institutions teaching the curriculum sponsored by the Greek state across Asia Minor, Constantinople (Istanbul), Smyrna (Izmir), Trabizond (Trabzon) and Caesarea (Kayseri) became key points in the matrix of a new feeling of Greek nationhood. Furthermore, the appeal of the goal of liberating the lands of ancient heritage from “foreign forces” was unmatched in an age of political turmoil shaking the roots of the Old World Empires of Habsburgs and Ottomans. Competing political projects of “Greek ethnic liberation” included annexation of Asia minor by the Greek state, replacement of the Ottoman Empire with an Hellenic one ruled by a relative of the Orthodox Russian imperial family, or reorganisation of the Empire into a federation of autonomous states based on ethnic lineage<sup>51</sup>. It is true that economically or militarily there was very little that the new Greek state could do on its own concerning the political status of Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. Still, plans for the “liberation” of Asia Minor Greeks provoked enough of a nationalist fervor among the Ottoman bureaucratic *élites* against the Christian minorities. The critical issue that determined the final solution to this “problem” of dissident minorities was that of “political loyalty”. Rising cadres of both the old Ottoman and the young Turkish state were convinced that a homogeneous population in Anatolia was politically much more viable for the establishment and running of a nation-state than a microcosmic replica of the Ottoman *millet* system. It is under such an initiative that the 1922-1923 Compulsory Population Exchanges between Greece and Turkey took place.



- 25 The first wave of Greek Orthodox Christian refugees left Asia Minor between 1912-1914. Some others, who were moved from the coastal regions to the interior of Asia Minor as a security measure undertaken by the Ottoman authorities, returned back to their original settlements during the years 1918-1919<sup>52</sup>. Following the Greek-Turkish War of 1919-1922, however, the Greek communities who left Asia Minor during the clashes could not return back to their land and property. As they waited their faith to be determined in mainland Greece, the Aegean islands or other parts of the eastern Mediterranean, remaining ethnic Greek populace of Asia Minor was then subjected to a Compulsory Population Exchange agreed between Turkish and Greek governments. Consequently, 774 123 Greek Orthodox refugees from Asia Minor had to be resettled in Greece by 1928<sup>53</sup>. This, however, is the lowest estimate regarding the numbers who were forced to leave Asia Minor. Not all refugees resettled in Greece. Some moved to Western Europe, North America or the Middle East. Secondly, there were deaths and disappearances caused by the brutal circumstances of what perhaps could count as a civil war between Muslims and Christians of Asia Minor, in addition to the casualties that occurred during the long-haul Muslim Turkish defense against invading European armies.
- 26 During the population exchanges, 73 000 Greek Orthodox Christians were allowed to remain in Istanbul as Turkish subjects and another 30 000 as Greek nationals, in addition to 7 000 Greek Orthodox Christians on the island of Imvros and 1 200 on the island of Tenedos<sup>54</sup>. In correspondence, 106 000 Moslems in Western Thrace were granted Greek citizenship<sup>55</sup>. However, during the 1950s, the lives of Greek Orthodox Christian communities in Turkey changed dramatically. On September 6 and 7 of 1955, violent anti-Greek riots in Istanbul led to a major exodus of the Greek communities of Istanbul<sup>56</sup>. During these mob-lead riots, 3 000 - 4 000 Greek businesses were sacked and plundered, churches were burnt down, Greek Orthodox cemeteries were vandalised, more than 2 000 Greek homes were robbed and Greek schools were attacked. Following this first wave of exodus from Istanbul, at the time of increased tension between Turkey and Greece over the Cyprus issue, the Greek church press was banned and the operation of the theological college was curtailed in 1963. By 1964, on the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, the teaching of Greek was prohibited at schools and community ownership of property (including schools and churches) was forbidden<sup>57</sup>. Then came the 1964 expulsion of Greek Orthodox Christians who had Greek citizenship on the grounds that they were a security threat to the Turkish state<sup>58</sup>. By September 1964, an estimated 12 000 Greeks were expelled from Turkey upon discontinuation of their residence permits. In October of the same year, another 30 000 Turkish nationals of Greek descent were reported to have left Turkey due to family ties and general discomfort<sup>59</sup>. Following the military confrontation of Greek and Turkish governments in Cyprus in 1974, the situation more or less reached a deadlock. The population of remaining Greek Orthodox communities of Asia Minor declined from 110 000 at the time of the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 to less than 2 500 today<sup>60</sup>. This includes the elderly populace of less than 500 left on the islands of Imbros and Tenedos<sup>61</sup>.
- 27 In the face of this sketchy portrait of the faith of Greek Orthodox Christians of Asia Minor in both late Ottoman and Republican times, it becomes harder to understand the nostalgia about intercommunal living in a polyglot Empire shaken by the growing circles of separatist nationalism. Certainly, in the area of arts, crafts, architecture, cooking,



music, popular culture, *et cetera*, both Istanbul and other parts of Ottoman Asia Minor had a much more cosmopolitan feel to them before the forced departure of large Christian communities. In the meantime, the co-existence of Muslims and Christians was not devoid of problems concerning the legitimacy of the Imperial system, lack of rights and representation for the Christian minorities if they remained Christian, and, power struggles culminating along class lines. The order of the day had to change, albeit not necessarily in the direction of ethnic homogenisation and massive exodus of minority groups. Still, the way things were was not satisfactory for the majority of the subjects of the Empire, be it Muslim, Christian, Jewish or secular in their attachments. This is a historical fact largely overlooked by the revivalist movement on the history of nationhood in modern Turkey. Similarly, further waves of exodus that affected the remaining Christian minorities took place under the Republican and not under the Ottoman regime. On this subject, there is less of “remembrance of the things past” and more of an inability to come to terms with one’s immediate political history<sup>62</sup>. The popularisation of Rembetika music or multi-cultural cuisine of the Ottoman times in modern Turkish society and similar causes are laudable *cultural gestures* in terms of protecting a heritage that is all but lost. However, as long as they are not accompanied by guarding of the cultural and political rights of the remaining Christians, protection of cultural and architectural sites, right of return or even visitation for those whose families were forced to leave Asia Minor, and a general debate on the kind of citizenship contract that the Republican regime was built upon, these gestures are forced to remain as just that and not much beyond.

## Conclusion

- 28 Walter Benjamin argues in his sixth thesis on the philosophy of history that, « To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it “the way it really was”. It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger (...). The danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers »<sup>63</sup>. The danger Benjamin speaks of is paramount in the narration of histories of nationhood. As a self-generative and self-renewing idiom, a nation’s becoming a sovereign political unit constitutes the bedrock of national politics<sup>64</sup>. This kind of history is cultivated for the purposes of both cultural survival and revival. The history of nationhood is constructed in response to the immediate and this-worldly call of politics, be it in the cultural, economic or public spheres. Connections established between memories—whether of traditions, values, norms or communal characteristics—and the political project of sovereign statehood, provide anchorage for the self-referential definition of the national polity. Based on an account of “who we were, who we are and who we shall be”, the history of nationhood articulates a current mandate for the national polity<sup>65</sup>.
- 29 In this context, new takes on national history are, in a way, inevitable. With the changing times emerge new political visions, novel articulations of culture, and critical reformulations of what nationhood or citizenship mean. As the revisionist accounts of pre-Republican, Ottoman Anatolia in modern Turkey illustrate, chronicles of older ways of life are not just historical accounts : they are perpetually re-contextualised to speak to the demands of new generations. Such reiterations of stories of national becoming interweave realms of ethics, politics, culture, economics and history. There remain nonetheless limits to re-writing or re-introducing history. Although

protagonists of revisionist or unorthodox politics claim the national polity as an interpretive community and call for divergences from singular statements of what the nation is, the ethical possibilities generated by such re-examinations of dominant nationalist movements are circumscribed by the degree to which they bring together seemingly disparate parts of the story they dare to re-member. In the Turkish case, overlooking the effects of the tragic exodus of Muslims from areas surrounding Asia Minor into the reduced borders of the Empire, as well as the deliberate shelving of economic, political, class and status based cleavages between Christian and Muslim communities residing in the Empire, lead to a romanticised look at the past. This smooth surface of memories of “the way we lived together”, constructed primarily based on the recaptured beauty of cultural artifacts, is not strong enough to serve as a mirror to the past of the modern Turkish nation. Early twentieth-century Asia Minor history has plenty of bones of contention—aspects of the *millet* system, problems concerning the mass Turkification of Muslim migrants who arrived to Asia Minor, and the local-level involvement of the public in the forced migrations of Christian communities to name but three. Unless such unpalatable issues are also brought onto the table and critically introduced to the political culture of the society, remembrance of things past in Asia Minor will remain merely fine-tuned nostalgia. It can hardly lead to a more pluralistic, less self-righteous re-embrace of the history of the Turkish nation.

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## NOTES

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2. **Giddens (Anthony)**, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge, UK : Polity Press, 1991.
3. There is an identifiable class of factors leading to the exodus or relocation of ethno-religious communities regardless of the religious and cultural make-up of individual countries. In particular, the work of Ted Gurr, Barbara Harf and other proponents of Early Warning Signs in international politics offer elaborate schemes of push and pull factors that shape the migratory patterns of ethno-religious minorities as well as global refugee flows. (**Gurr (Ted)**, **Harf (Barbara)**, « Early Warning of Communal Conflicts and Humanitarian Crises », *The Journal of Ethno-Development* (special issue), 4 (1), 1994 ; **Gurr (Ted)**, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*, Washington D.C. : United States Institute of Peace, 1993.)
4. **Richmond (Anthony)**, *Global Apartheid: refugees, racism, and the new world order*, New York : Oxford University Press, 1994 ; **Zolberg (Aristide)**, **Suhkre (A.)**, **Aguayo (S.)**, eds., *Escape from Violence : Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, New York : Oxford University Press, 1989.
5. **Canefe (Nergis)**, « Citizens versus Permanent Guests : Social and Political Effects of Immigration and Citizenship Laws in a Reunified Germany », *Citizenship Studies*, November 1998.

6. **Soysal (Yasemin Nuhoglu)**, *Limits of Citizenship. Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*, Chicago / London : University of Chicago Press, 1994 ; **Hammar (Thomas)**, *Democracy and the Nation-State. Aliens, Denizens and Citizens in a World of International Migration*, Aldershot : Avebury, 1990.
7. **Soguk (Nevzat)**, *States and Strangers*, Wisconsin : University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
8. An exemplary but by no means exhaustive list of publications and products include **Durbas (Refik)**, *Anılarımın Karesi İzmir* (Izmir : My Memorial Brother), Istanbul : Literatür, 2001, **Eksen (İlhan)**, *Çok Kültürlü İstanbul Mutfakı* (The Multi-cultural Kitchen of Istanbul), Istanbul : Sel Yayıncılık, 2001, **Bozis (Sula)**, *İstanbul Lezzeti. İstanbul'lu Rumların Mutfak Kültürü* (The Tastes of Istanbul : Culinary Culture of Istanbul's Greeks), Istanbul : Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000, **Yorulmaz (Ahmet)**, *Kusaklar ya da Ayvalık Yasantısı* (Generations, or, Life in Ayvalık), Ayvalık : Geylan Yayınevi, 1999, **Yorulmaz (Ahmet)**, *Savaşın Çocukları. Girit'ten Sonra Ayvalık* (The Children of the War. Ayvalık Following Crete), Istanbul : Belge Yayınları (Marenostrum Serisi), 1997, **Bijiskyan (Minas)**, *Pontos Tarihi* (History of Pontos), Istanbul : Civi Yazıları, 1998, **Yalçın (Kemal)**, *Emanet Çeyiz: Mübadele İnsanları* (The Peoples of the Exchange), Istanbul : Belge Yayınları (Marenostrum Serisi), 1998, **Margosyan (Mıgırdıç)**, *Söyle Margos Nerelisen ?* (Tell me Margos, Where Are you From ?), Istanbul : Aras, 1997, **Mıntzuri (Hagop)**, *Armıdan. Fırat'ın Öte Yanı* (Armıdan. The Other Side of Tigris), Istanbul : Aras Yayınları, 1996, **Andreadis (Yorgo)**, *Neden Kardesim Hüsnü* (Why, My Brother Hüsnü ?), Istanbul : Belge Yayınları (Marenostrum Dizisi), 1992, and, **Deleon (Jack)**, *Eski İstanbul'un Yasayan Tadı* (The Still-live Tastes of Old Istanbul), Istanbul : Remzi Yayınevi, 1999 [1988]. Some of the critical and yet largely academic works written or published in Turkish on religious minorities in Ottoman and Turkish societies, on the other hand, are **Özyürek (Esra)**, ed., *Hatırladıkları ve Unuttukları ile Türkiye'nin Toplumsal Hafızası* (Forgotten and Remembered : The Collective Memory of Turkish Society), Istanbul : İletisim, 2001, **Dündar (Fuat)**, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları Iskan Politikası, 1913-1918* (The Resettlement of Muslim Refugees under the rule of Committee of Union and Progress), Istanbul : Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2001, **Aktar (Ayhan)**, *Varlık Vergisi ve Türkleştirme Politikaları* (Capital Tax and Policies of Turkification), Istanbul : İletisim, 2000, **Bali (Rifat)**, *Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudiler. Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni (1923-1945)*, Istanbul : İletisim Yayınları, 1999, **Neyzi (Leyla)**, *İstanbul'da Hatırlamak ve Unutmak. Birey, Bellek, Aidiyet* (Remembering and Forgetting in Istanbul. Individual, Memory and Belonging), Istanbul : Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999, **Akar (Rıdvan), (Demir) Hülya**, *İstanbul'un Son Sürgünleri* (The Last Exiles from Istanbul), Istanbul : İletisim Yayınları, 1994, as well as translations of **Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, *The Greeks of Asia Minor : Confession, Community and Ethnicity in the Nineteenth Century*, Kent, Ohio : Kent University Press, 1993 [1997], **Andrews (Peter Alford)**, ed., *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, Wiesbaden : Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989 [1992].
9. **Igsız (Aşlı)**, « Memleket, Yurt ve Coğrafi Kardaşlık : Arşivci Kültür Politikaları » (Motherland, Homeland and Geographic Kinship : Cultural Politics of Archival Protection), in **Özyürek (Esra)**, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 153-182
10. As a controversial authority on the subject, Justin McCarthy defines Ottoman Anatolia as « [s]treched from the Iranian border in the east to the Aegean and Marmara Seas in the west and from the Black Sea in the north to the Mediterranean in the south » (**McCarthy (Justin)**, *Muslims and Minorities. The Population of Ottoman Anatolia at the End of the Empire*, New York / London : New York University Press, 1983, p. 1).
11. Pre-Republican censuses reflect the theocratic-bureaucratic nature of the Ottoman state broadly categorising its subjects according to their religious denomination. Subsequent demographic research during the Republican era also refers to Muslims as a unified group. This phenomenon goes hand in hand with the re-ethnicised the Muslim population of Anatolia as primarily Turkish. For further debate on this issue, see **Bora (Tanıl)**, « Turkish National Identity,

Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Problem », in Ozdogan (Günay Göksu), Saybasılı (Kemali), eds., *Balkans. A Mirror of the New International Order*, Istanbul : Eren Yayıncılık, 1995.

12. **Karpat (Kemal H.)**, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics*, Wisconsin : The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983, chapter 4.

13. **Behar (Cem)**, *The Population of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. 1500-1927*, Ankara : State Institute of Statistics Publication, 1996 ; **McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, p. 7 ; **Davison (Roderic)**, « Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem and the Ottoman Response », in Haddad (William W.), Ochsenswald (William), eds., *Nationalism in a non-National State: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire*, Columbus : Ohio State University Press, 1977, p. 29.

14. **McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115, tables 6.1 & 6.2.

15. **Davison (Roderic)**, *loc. cit.*, p. 35. In the 1330 statistics provided by McCarthy, there is a category of “Others” listed under each *vilayet*, which most likely refers to heterodox Christian and crypto-Muslim communities. Their numbers amount to a total of 31 604 (**McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, p. 115).

16. One reason for the wide-spread diffusion of Greek and Armenian communities was the changing politico-economic structure of the Ottoman Empire particularly during the nineteenth century. As a result, there was considerable rural to urban migration and a move towards coastal cities and newly emerging trade centers (**Kasaba (Resat)**, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy. The Nineteenth Century*, Albany : State University of New York Press, 1988 ; **Keyder (Çaglar)**, *State and Class in Turkey. A Study in Capitalist Development*, London / New York : Verso, 1987). Meanwhile, the experience of marginal groups such as Syrian, Chaldean and Nestorian Christians was different in the sense that they were concentrated in the southern/south-eastern *vilayets* of Adana, Bitlis, Mamuretülaziz, Diyarbakır, Van and Erzurum and traditionally stayed isolated in their original settlements.

17. By 1922 « 3,5 million Anatolian Muslims, Greeks and Armenians, and uncounted Nestorians, Chaldeans, and others, had lost their lives--more than one-fifth of the population. Another 1,8 million had emigrated to other lands (...). Centuries of Anatolian Christianity had come to an end » (**McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, p. 139).

18. **Akar (Rıdvan)**, (**Demir**) **Hülya**, *op. cit.* ; **Bahceli (Tozun)**, *Greek-Turkish Relations Since 1955*, Boulder, Co. : Westview Press, 1990 ; **Alexandris (Alexis)**, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, Athens : Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1983.

19. Well into the later part of the nineteenth century, statistical information pertaining to the unified category of Muslims in Ottoman documents is regarded reliable due to the need of accurate recording of Muslim males for conscription. The administrative initiative to have an accurate count of non-Muslims for purposes of higher taxation became a growing concern only towards the end of the Ottoman reign (**Karpat (Kemal H.)**, *op. cit.*).

20. **Marashlian (Levon)**, *Politics and Demography. Armenians, Turks, and Kurds in the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge, MA. : Zoryan Institute Publications, 1991.

21. **McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-147. Comparison with later censuses of Republican Turkey reveals that the 1927 census undercounts the total population.

22. **McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

23. For a contextual analysis of the term “compact minorities”, see Itamar Rabinovitch's classical study (**Rabinovich (Itamar)**, « The Compact Minorities and the Syrian State, 1918-1945 », *Journal of Contemporary History*, 14, 1979).

24. Comprehensive analyses of the Ottoman legacy across Southeast Europe became available only recently. For decades, Kemal Karpat's work on the legacy of the *millet* system (**Karpat (Kemal H.)**, *An Inquiry into the Social Foundations of Nationalism in the Ottoman State: From Social Estates to Classes, from Millets to Nations*, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Center of International Studies [Research Monograph No. 39], 1973) and S. D. Salamone's comparative analysis of Turkish and Greek nationalism (**Salamone (S. D.)**, *Hellenism and the Nationalist Crisis in*

*Greco-Turkish Historiography*, New York : Council on International Studies [Special Studies No. 141], 1981) remained as the main references for those who were not Ottoman scholars. Publications such as **Faroghi (Suraiya)**, *Approaching Ottoman history. An Introduction to the Sources*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1999 (1984), **Barkey (Karen), von Hagen (Mark)**, *After Empire : Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building*, Boulder, Colorado : Westview Press, 1997, **Todorova (Maria)**, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York : Oxford University Press, 1997, **Brown (Carl)**, ed., *Imperial Legacy : The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East*, New York : Columbia University Press, 1996, **Kafadar (Cemal)**, *Between Two Worlds. The Construction of the Ottoman State*, Berkeley, CA : University of California Press, 1995, **Faroghi (Suraiya), Berktay (Halil)**, eds., *New Approaches to State and Peasantry in Ottoman History*, London : Frank Cass, 1992, constitute a notable if still overlooked challenge to the general adversity towards the legacy of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans. They also embody the closing of the gap between studies on Ottoman Middle East, Ottoman Turkey and the Ottoman Balkans.

25. **Baram (Amatzia)**, « Territorial Nationalism in the Middle East », *Middle Eastern Studies*, 26, 1990 ; **Rabinovich (Itamar), Esman (Milton)**, eds., *Ethnicity, Pluralism and the State in the Middle East*, Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1988.

26. **Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard)**, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vols., Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1982.

27. **Karpat (Kemal H.)**, *op. cit.*, 1983.

28. Ibid.

29. **Karpat (Kemal H.)**, « *Milletts and Nationality : The Roots of the Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman Era* », in Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard), eds., *op. cit.* « Nationality, in the sense of ethnic-national identity, drew its essence from the religious-communal experience in the *millet*, while citizenship--a secular concept--was determined by territory. In effect, the political, social and cultural crises which have buffeted the national states in the Balkans and the Middle East since their emergence can be attributed in large measure to the incompatibility of the secular idea of state with the religious concept of nation rooted in the [Ottoman] *millet* philosophy » (Ibid., p. 141).

30. **Bardakjian (Kevork B.)**, « The Rise of the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople », in Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard), eds., *op. cit.*

31. **Kastoryano (Riva)**, « From *Millet* to Community : The Jews of Istanbul », in Rodrigue (Aron), *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry. Community and Leadership*, Bloomington : Indiana University [Turkish Studies 12], 1992.

32. **Karpat (Kemal H.)**, *op. cit.*, 1983.

33. **Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard)**, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

34. « In Muslim law and practice, the relationship between the Muslim state and the non-Muslim communities to which it extended its tolerance and protection was conceived as regulated by a pact called *dhimma* ; those benefitting from it were known as *ahl al-dhimma*, people of the pact, or more briefly *dhimmis*. » (**Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard)**, eds., *op. cit.*, p. 5)

35. **Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard)**, eds., *op. cit.*, « Introduction ».

36. Needless to say, when a common interest was concerned, non-Muslim communities would cooperate. For instance, Augustinos gives the example of Greek Orthodox and Armenian communities working together in the Anatolian town of Aydın to change the market day so that it won't coincide with their sabbath (**Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-204). However, such cooperation was event-based rather than being strong enough to provide a united-front of shared interests. Instead, the leadership of each non-Muslim community strived to take care of their own immediate interests and made individual agreements with the Ottoman authorities.

37. **Kushner (David)**, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism*, London : Frank Cass, 1977.

38. The institutions of religious minorities were to be run in accordance with the *Vakıf* law passed in 1935. *Vakıfs* are non-profit institutions which derive their revenues from contributions

by the members of a given community. They are autonomous in their administration and in their decision-making process concerning the functioning of the institution itself. Since 1960, however, *Vakıfs* have been limited in their expenditure in areas related to the renovation of religious sites and buildings as well as acquiring new acquisitions such as land, school buildings, etc. (**Kastoryano (Riva)**, loc. cit., p. 260). This had a direct impact on the way non-Muslim minorities organized their daily lives and communal activities (**Akar (Rıdvan)**, (**Demir**) **Hülya**, op. cit.).

**39. Helsinki Watch Report**, *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity : The Greeks of Turkey*, Human Rights Watch Publications, 1992. According to Article 39, « [N]o restrictions shall be imposed on the free use by any Turkish national of any language in private intercourse, in commerce, religion, in the press, or in publications of any kind or at public meetings. Notwithstanding the existence of the official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Turkish nationals of non-Turkish speech for the oral use of their language before the Courts ». Also see Article 40, « Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as other Turkish nationals. In particular, they shall have equal rights to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools or other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and their own religion freely therein » (Treaty of Lausanne, Section III. Protection of Minorities, cited in *Helsinki Watch Report on The Greeks of Turkey 1992*, Appendix D).

**40.** For instance, Riva Kastoryano states that « The passage from the pluralistic Empire to a Turkish nation state, far from leading to the assimilation of its minorities, has paradoxically led instead to the relative closure of the Jewish community » (**Kastoryano (Riva)**, loc. cit., p. 254). Similar arguments are found in Alexis Alexandris' work on Greek communities of Istanbul (**Alexandris (Alexis)**, « Imbros and Tenedos : A Study in Turkish Attitudes Toward Two ethnic Greek Island Communities since 1923 », *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 7 (1), 1990). Meanwhile, not all non-Muslim communities remained numerous enough to choose relative isolation. The Armenian communities as well as smaller unorthodox Christian groups are known to have diminished in size during the Republican years to such an extent that they almost reached a point of total disappearance in 1990s. One should also note that since there is no longer a category of religious or linguistic origins in the census data after 1965, the estimated numbers for the population of these communities are primarily provided by their own religious and communal registries.

**41. Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, op. cit., pp. 186.

**42.** Geographically, Greek national revival was articulated in terms of an open space of urban and coastal commercial centers as well as ancient rural communities across the territories of the Ottoman Empire (**Clogg (Richard)**, **Goncidas (Dimitri)**, eds., *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*, Princeton, New Jersey : Darwin Press, 1999 ; **Clogg (Richard)**, ed., *Anatolica. Studies in the Greek East in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Variorum : Aldershot & Vermont, 1996).

**43. Clogg (Richard)**, **Goncidas (Dimitri)**, eds., op. cit. ; **Kitromilides (Paschalis)**, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy. Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-eastern Europe*, Variorum : Aldershot and Vermont, 1994 ; **Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, op. cit. ; **Jusdanis (Gregory)**, *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture. Inventing National Literature*, Minneapolis / Oxford : University of Minnesota Press, 1991 ; **Herzfeld (Michael)**, *Ours Once More : Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*, Austin : University of Texas Press, 1982.

**44.** Referring to the *Tanzimat* reforms, Augustinos argues that « Under the cold light of a new political era the peoples reacted by viewing the imperial government and the Muslim population in ever darker ethnic terms » (**Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, op. cit., p. 189). Following the *Millet* Reform of the *Tanzimat* era in the Ottoman Empire, ethno-religious distinctions were transmuted into solid lines of ethnic differentiation along with growing political and cultural mistrust among communities. Under such circumstances, anti-Greek sentiments among the other

non-Muslim Ottoman communities protesting the Greek superiority within the Orthodox Church furthered the Greek communities' awareness of their cultural difference.

45. **Clogg (Richard)**, ed., *op. cit.* ; **Clogg (Richard)**, « The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire », in Braude (Benjamin), Lewis (Bernard), eds., *op. cit.*

46. **Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-192.

47. By the 1870s, Greek intellectuals and elite, whether in the kingdom or in the Ottoman or Russian Empires, developed a common appreciation of their past through a coherent narrative of national history (**Clogg (Richard)**, **Goncidas (Dimitri)**, eds., *op. cit.* ; also **Clogg (Richard)**, loc. cit.).

48. **Jusdanis (Gregory)**, *op. cit.*

49. **Clogg (Richard)**, loc. cit..

50. **Pamuk (Sevket)**, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy (1820-1913)*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1987.

51. **Augustinos (Gerasimos)**, *op. cit.*

52. **Ladas (Stephen P.)**, *The Exchange of Minorities : Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*, New York : MacMillan, 1932, p. 16.

53. Greek Census of 1928, cited in **McCarthy (Justin)**, *op. cit.*, p. 131. These figures do not include the number of deaths between 1922-1928 that occurred within the refugee communities. McCarthy suggests that when the deaths are included, the total amounts to 850 000 (*Ibid.*, p. 132)

54. Imvros (Turkish name : Gökçeada) and Tenedos (Turkish name : Bozcaada) are two small islands in the northeast corner of the Aegean sea, near the mouth of Dardanelles. Part of the Ottoman Empire since 15th century, they were captured by Greece in 1912 during the Balkan Wars. The islands were reverted to Turkey in 1923 due to security reasons. In 1920, Imvros was inhabited almost entirely by Greek Christians and Tenedos had close to an eighty percent Greek Christian population. Taking into consideration these demographic factors, Lausanne Treaty of 1923 established a special status for both Imvros and Tenedos concerning the rights of the Greek communities for local administration, the nature of the local police force and the protection of persons and property (**Helsinki Watch Report**, *op. cit.*, pp.27-32). Furthermore, the Greek residents of the islands were entitled to remain on the islands and they were thus protected by the minority provisions of the Lausanne Treaty (**Alexandris (Alexis)**, loc. cit.). For more on Imvros, see **Tsimouris (Giorghos)**, « Reconstructing "home" among the "enemy" » (this volume).

55. **Helsinki Watch Report**, *op. cit.*

56. **Akar (Rıdvan), (Demir) Hülya**, *op. cit.*

57. Again on the islands, between 1960 and 1990, an estimated number of 200 churches and chapels have been abandoned or destroyed (**Helsinki Watch Report**, *op. cit.*, p 28).

58. **Helsinki Watch Report**, *op. cit.*, p. 9, footnote 12.

59. *Ibid.*

60. **Helsinki Watch Report**, *op. cit.* ; **Alexandris (Alexis)**, loc. cit. According to Alexandris, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate estimated that during 1920s there were close to 250 000 Greeks in Istanbul in 1923, approximately 150 000 of whom left during the population exchanges.

61. **Akar (Rıdvan), (Demir) Hülya**, *op. cit.*

62. **Bali (Rıfat)**, « Toplumsal Bellek ve Varlık Vergisi » (Collective Memory and the Capital Tax), in Özyürek (Esra), ed., *op. cit.*

63. **Benjamin (Walter)**, « Theses on the Philosophy of History », in *idem.*, *Illuminations*, New York : Schocken Books, 1968, p. 255.

64. For a critical re-evaluation of the relationship between history and myth, see **Ginzburg (Carlo)**, *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method*, Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press, 1989.

65. For further debate on the relationship between history, tradition, and memory, see **Lewis (Bernard)**, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1975. Although



Bernard Lewis's attempts to limit the effects of myth-making to "colonial or Islamic cultures" only are alarming, his depiction of how myths work in the context of history-writing is lucid.

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**Mots-clés :** Déplacements de population, Migrations, Réfugiés

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