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RUSSIAN EMIGRATION TO TURKEY IN THE 1920'S: A CASE STUDY

Yelena LYKOVA*

Abstract

The issue of migration became more sensitive, painful and extremely important in contemporary world affairs. Governments, international organizations, NGOs are all trying to solve this problem of the massive transboundary movements of people. International cooperation in itself is not enough and present conditions require new approaches and a very flexible policy on this matter.

The causes of the modern problems of migration often are laying in the historical, religious, and ideological traditions of the state's migration policies. In this way a historical background of Russian and Turkish States' (Ottoman Empire and then the Turkish Republic) migration policies will be studied and their reflections on the behaviors of Russian emigrants and developments of the legislation on this subject will be specifically analyzed.

Keywords: State migration policy, Russian refugees in Turkey, Russian Diaspora, and legislative conditions of Russian refugees in Turkey.

Öz

1920'lerde Türkiye'ye Rus Göçü: Bir Örnek Olay Çalışması

Günümüz dünya politikası alanında göç sorunu eski dönemlerden daha hassas, daha ıstırap çektiren ve çok daha önemli bir konu haline gelmiştir. Devletler, uluslararası örgütler ve sivil toplum kuruluşları bu sınıraşan kitlesel insan hareketlerine ilişkin sorunları çözmeye çalışmaktadır. Günümüzün mevcut koşulları bu konunun çözümü için tek başına uluslararası işbirliğini yetersiz kılmakta, çözüm için yeni yaklaşımları ve çok daha esnek bir politikayı gerekli kılmaktadır.

Modern göç problemleri genelde devlet göç politikasının tarihi, dini ve ideolojik geleneklerinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla Rusya Devleti'nin

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ve Türkiye Devleti'nin (Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve sonrasında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti) geçmiş göç politikaları Rus göçmenlerini ve bu konudaki hukuki gelişmeleri etkilemiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Devlet göç politikası, Türkiye'deki Rus diasporası ve Türkiye'deki Rus mültecilerin hukuki şartları.

INTRODUCTION

There was practically not the significant historiography on the issue of the Soviet migration policy, neither the USSR nor abroad. Even the Soviet encyclopedias, including 16 volumes Soviet encyclopedia did not mention anything about the migration policy. The fundamental works of the Soviet historians and researches of the Soviet history and the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were also quite silent about the Soviet policy on emigration and immigration. The Western historiography didn't spare enough attention to the subject, either.

While the emigration policy of the Russian Empire before the Revolution of 1917 is known quite well, the Soviet period's state emigration policy is still not really investigated. The emigration and migration policy of the Soviet Russia was predetermined by the political and ideological factors. First of all, by class attitude, distributed even to the definition of the 'internationalism'. Just because of that the emigration laws of that period were influenced by ideology, which divided the world into two enemy's camps – proletariat and bourgeoisie.

During the Soviet period there was a historical succession and the emigration continued as the escape from the Soviet government, which in Stalin's time took the imperial character. The cause-effect relation was the same: Oppression, fear, hate. However, if to compare with czarists Russia, the Soviet border became the real 'Iron curtain'. The Soviet government was the monopolist of the right to enter and exit, exile, to control the emigration with the help of the secret service.

The historical retrospective of the immigration policy in the wide chronological frame has to precede the formulation of its new philosophy and ideology. There is the possibility to re-evaluate the modern situation and to forecast possible consequences through understanding of the principles and mechanisms of the realization of the immigration policy of the past and through the analyses of its contradictions and mistakes.

1. THE PREHISTORY OF RUSSIAN EMIGRATION POLICY

Russian emigration policy includes several periods:

- a) Pre-Peter the Great period
- b) Petersburg period
- c) Soviet period
- d) Modern period

a) There were two stages in the first one: Pre-Peter the Great (15-17th cc.) -the stage of the genesis and the stage of the law framing. Starting since the Muscovite State was established (time of the conception of the Russian emigration law) the aim of the Great Muscovite princes was to limit free movement of Boyars in such cases when new territories were added to the central Muscovite state. The right of free movement of those princes who became vassals was not officially cancel, but Muscovite princes used other methods to keep new vassals in their places in order to manage them. For instance, the departure from Lithuania (the part of the Muscovite Principedom in 15th century) was legitimate, but the escape from Moscow to Lithuania was considered treason.

The beginning of the Russian emigration policy can be counted from Great Prince Basil and his son (the first Russian tsar) Ivan the Terrible, who tried to prevent the systematical escape of the boyars abroad. In case of move, boyars had to pay a significant amount of money to the government or to have someone to guarantee the payment on behalf of them. Ivan the Terrible required practically from all boyars to sign special papers "to serve faithfully the tsar and do not look for another ruler and do not escape to Lithuania or another country"(Gradovskiy, 1983: 15). Actually in the 16th century the ideological concept of the Russian emigration policy was established: The official doctrine was the idea of "Moscow is the Third Rome", which defined the closed character and hostile attitude of the Orthodox Muscovite State to the Roman Catholic surroundings by the prohibition to emigrate abroad. Later in XVIIth century the first legislative documents on emigration policy appeared to prevent the massive escape of Russian peasants abroad. The state representing the interests of the nobility had to elaborate the legislative limitations for emigration. Since 1610 Russian governments brought in the special article to the new code "...to prohibit any movement of peasants inside the Muscovite State, from Russia abroad and particularly to Lithuania and Poland" (Gradovskiy, 1983:71). Also since 1617, Russian authorities started to conclude Peace Treaties with neighboring countries containing such articles, which regulated extradition of deserters from both sides. For other estates there were different regulations being legislatively formulated in 1649: The order of

departure from Russia was very strict – the departure from Russia was possible only in time of peace and only with personal permission of the Russian Tsar (Gradovskiy, 1983:73). Russians who left the country without such permission had to be interrogated and in the case of disloyalty were subject to the death penalty. But at the same time the legislation concerning cross border matters was a quite flexible. The main reason of such a policy was the fear of the state to lose serving people and peasants as a source of income. The regime in Russia contrasted with European freedoms very dramatically. That was another reason of restrictions in emigration policy – the fear of the Russian State to give the opportunity to see the difference and another quality of life in the West to compare with Russia.

However, since the end of the 17th century the influence of Peter the Great started to be noticeable: The need to interact with the West, to move freely abroad, to acquire European knowledge.

In fact the cases of Russian emigration in this period were mostly the emigration of local political elites in order to save their independence from the mighty, strict and severe Muscovite power. The main receiving country for the first Russian political emigrants in the 15th –17th centuries was neighboring Lithuania. It must be stressed that the idea of free departure from the Muscovite State did not exist in that period.

b) Since the beginning of the 17th century the phenomenon of the Russian emigration had a more complicated character. This was the consequence of the activation of the relationship with the West. The specific type of Russian people oriented towards European culture appeared. Many young Russian people were sent abroad to study in European universities. After the acquaintance with the European reality they were so disappointed with the Russian one that they didn't want to return.

The split in the Russian Orthodox Church became the reason of the religious type of emigration – the escape of Old Believers to Poland and the Balkan part of the Ottoman Empire.

The massive Russian emigration started during the transformation of the Muscovite State to the Russian Empire as the reaction of Russian society to the radical reforms of the Peter the Great. Peter's reforms divided Russian society into two parts: The ordinary Russian people and the Europeanized ruling class as the emigration was also divided the same way. Also in consequence of the colossal enlargement of the Russian Empire and the inclusion of a new nation into it there was a third type of the emigration – the emigration of national minorities. Actually these three types of Russian emigration were its main

exponents till the October Revolution 1917, and particularly the emigration of national minorities was repeated after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. A feature of the transformation of Russia into the largest European state was the severe tax oppression, enslavement, military recruiting and religious persecution of the Russian peasantry. This led to the escape of thousands of peasants and Cossacks from Russia to the territory of the Ottoman Empire (Caucasus and the Black Sea area). For example, their descendants still live in modern Bulgaria, keeping strongly their traditions. Another destination of emigration was Poland. The problem of the emigration to Poland was the sharpest one in the 18th century till the division of Poland (about twenty thousand peasants emigrated). There were some attempts to solve the problem: Michael Lomonosov – the great scientist at the time of the reign of Catherine the Great reign - made proposals to make the rules for peasants more flexible and also to optimize the emigration legislation. On this base Catherine the Great permitted the entry to Russia of foreigners, particularly Germans, in order to develop new territories along the Volga River.

Very strong oppression and imperial enlargement of the Russian borders became the reason of the ethnical emigration from Russia. For instance, in the beginning of the 18th century Kalmyks (nomadic tribes, who used to serve under the patronage of the Russian Tsar) because of the inhuman policy immigrated to southern Asia in a quantity of almost 250 thousand people. After the conquest of the Crimea (1770-1780) approximately 200 thousand Crimean Tatars immigrated to the territories of Ottoman Empire. It is known that in the beginning of the 19th century there were 275 thousand Tatars and other nomads in Rumelia (the European part of the Ottoman Empire).

Besides popular and ethnical types of emigration there was another type – the “internal” or so to say “mental” emigration that reflected mainly the mood and disappointment with the Russian order of some of the most educated parts of the ruling class (the nobility). In the end of the 18th century “unsatisfied Russian Europeans” were everywhere. They preferred to stay abroad for a very long time, and finally after the Manifesto of 1761 by Peter III, permitting the movement abroad, the “mental” emigration was slowly transformed into the “external” or real emigration.

b) From the rule of Peter the Great a new period of the history of the Russian State including the Russian emigration policy, started. Four stages can be defined:

- i) Penitentiaries stage
- ii) Amnesty-repatriation stage
- iii) Police-protective stage
- iv) Liberal stage

All these stages are quite conditional, but the principles of the emigration policy were formulated and implementation mechanisms were elaborated exactly during this period, being used later in the Soviet and even in the modern period.

i) Peter the Great permitted the exit abroad for the nobility, but at the same time the power to give the permission he preserved for the state. In this way the legislative base of the emigration policy stayed unchanged. The closed nature of the orthogonal Russian state has not fundamentally changed since then. Even in 19th century the nobility had to sign special documents with the promise to return by the first request of the authorities. From another side Peter's reforms in emigration policy complicated the matter: The escape of peasantry abroad had a massive character. Old believers fled from the religious oppression, the peasantry fled from enserfment and taxes, soldiers fled from recruiting. In the conditions of the Great Northern War and the formation of the Russian Empire, the massive flight of the population started to threaten the national security. The state lost income, labor and its mighty army. As the consequence, Peter the Great had to apply the penitentiary emigration policy. His successors – Catherine the Great and then Peter III - used the same methods in a more severe way.

ii) The amnesty-repatriation stage began with the reign of Anna Ioanovna and finished in the epoch of Alexander I. The Empress Anna continued to strengthen the borders but the same time understood that the problem couldn't be solved by such severe methods. Hence, she started a consistent amnesty policy towards fugitives and regularly promulgated decrees about free return to Russia (without the punishment). The imperial forgiveness to fugitives became the special tradition in the political practice of some Russian Tsars (Elisabeth, Peter III, Alexander I) during 18-19th cc. In the reign of Anna there was at first the practice to use economical stimulation to emigrants to come back (liberation from the taxes for a few years, and other advantages). Catherine the Great allowed Old Believers to come back and gave them rich lands in central Russia.

iii) With the reign of Nicolas I the Police-protective stage of emigration policy started. Being scared of the Decembrist rebellion in Russia and revolutions in Europe Nicolas started the policy of limitation of the duration of Russian citizens staying abroad and prohibited Russians from studying in European universities. The legislative base for these changes became the new law adopted in 1845. Those who refused to come back to Russia by request of the authorities would be deprived of citizenship, all belongings and properties, and in the case of returning they were exiled to Siberia. This practice was used also by his successors Alexander II and Alexander III. During the reign of

Alexander III the Russian secret police began to work abroad in order to control Russian political emigration.

iv) From the reign of Alexander III the period of slow liberalization and legalization of the emigration process started. The government had to take into account the massive emigration from the western territories of the Russian Empire since 1880 to America (mainly Jews, Poles, Lithuanians and others). During the reign of Nicolas the II citizens of cross-border territories had got the right to move to Germany and later to Scandinavian countries to work in seasons. Any way, the emigration process was still ignored. Russian authorities began to elaborate the legislation on emigration in the beginning of the 20th century but discoordination of interests of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry and government reaction led to the end of this work. Till 1917 the legislation of 1845 was still in use, and only the Provisional Government declared amnesty to all political emigrants and started to provide the financial aid to those emigrants who stayed abroad because of the World War I. The Amnesty of the Russian Provisional Government completed the beginning of the liberalization period, but the political emigrants returning to Russia accomplished the October *coup d'état* and all liberalization processes were broken off.

c) The Russian Revolution and civil war became a very strong impulse for the giant exodus of Russian emigrants from the motherland. Approximately 2 million people left Russia¹. As a result the unique phenomenon of "Russia abroad" was formed. The collapse of the Russian Empire led to the formation of the new states (Poland and Finland) and as the result of it the problem of the foreign citizenship acceptance appeared. All European states faced the analogical problem and tried to solve it. But the Soviet government from the first days of the new regime saw the problem from the very ideological point of view. The massive emigration from Russia was the result of such a policy, which led to the emergence of the political emigrant centers in Paris, Berlin, Prague, Sofia, Belgrade, Harbin and Istanbul (as the contemporary transit point for the emigrants). One of the main points of the new emigration policy became the principle of a total control of all links between Soviet Russia and abroad. In the 1917 the entrance to the Soviet Republic was aloud only to the people having the passports authorized by the only Soviet representative abroad V. Vorovsky, located in Stockholm². The exit from the Soviet Republic was forbidden for the foreign citizens of the states, which were in the conditions of war with Soviets without the permission of the local Councils. Till the death of Lenin the process of emigration still continued and contacts between motherland and Diaspora existed, but with Stalin the policy of "iron curtain" began. As the result of the World War II many Soviet citizens had moved to different parts of the world. They were mainly Ostarbeiters (eastern workers),

being brought from the occupied territories of the Soviet Union to Germany by force. However, their destiny was decided in February 1945 in the Yalta Conference where Churchill and Roosevelt promised Stalin to repatriate all Soviet people from abroad to the Soviet Union by force too. The wrong Soviet policy on repatriation pushed away thousands of Soviet people from coming back to Russia.

The next wave of emigration happened in the end of the 60's- the beginning of 70's mainly to Israel. Soviet Jews emigrated to Israel, and many representatives of the Russian intelligentsia went to Israel as well. Also the authorities practiced the policy of exiling dissidents from the country.

d) After the collapse of the Soviet Union the liberalization of all spheres of social life turned out as the second Europeanization. All restrictions, walls and borders were destroyed. For the first time in Russian history the right to entry and exit abroad freely has achieved the status of the state law. In a way it became the reason for the next very strong wave of post-Soviet emigration. First was the wave of ethnic emigration: Jews, Greeks, and Germans. Another wave was the emigration of those people who wanted to have a better life in the West, then the intellectual elite, then businessmen who were scared of the criminal situation in Russia and others. In the middle of the 90's the emigration didn't carry the Estate character, but all levels of the Russian population were involved to the process. But the main truth was that the Russian state, being the oppressor of emigrants during its whole history turned to be the defender of emigrants (new legislation on emigration 1992 and the indexes to the legislation on State support of compatriots abroad, 1999).

In order to understand the specifics of the destiny of Russian refugees in Turkey (especially in the beginning of the 20th century) it is also very important to consider what were the conditions and rules of the immigration policy of Ottoman Empire and later Turkish Republic.

2. SOME ASPECTS OF THE TURKISH EMIGRATION POLICIES

The Ottoman Empire, then the Turkish Republic has a long history of migration. Sometime the groups of emigrants were very small, but sometime much larger groups moved to Ottoman Empire, for instance in 1492 approximately 100 thousand Jews fled from Spanish Inquisition and created quite significant Jewish Diaspora in Constantinople. There were also refugees from the lands of the Habsburg Empire (Hungarians, Poles), Russian Empire (around a million Muslim refugees from Crimea and Northern Caucasus) in the end of the 19th century.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the First World War led to the emergence of new states and millions of Christians and Muslims were moved from the previous Ottoman's territories in the end of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th centuries. Armenians and Greeks, Albanians, Bosnians, Tatars, Turks from Balkans and Russians were the groups of people who became emigrants and many of them found temporary ground for the settlements³ in Turkey. All these events forced the Turkish government to establish the special and may be unique immigration programs and legislation.

The main approach of these programs was to encourage and accept those emigrants who were either Muslim Turkish speaking people or those who could be considered as ethnic groups as Albanians, and Tatars from Balkans or Circassians from the Caucasus. This policy was the result of the enlargement of the population (which in 1920's was about 13 million) and especially because the significant part of it was not Muslim. In spite of that more then 1.6 million immigrants came and settled in Turkey in 1923-1997, and the Muslims emigrants were successfully assimilated into the 'Turkish' national identity, the Christians emigrants didn't find themselves to be able to assimilate in Turkey because of the very strict legislation (The Law of Settlement of 1934) on emigration to Turkey to persons of 'Turkish descent and culture' (Kirişçi, 2001: 164). The government supportive immigration policy was stopped in early 1970's because of the overgrowth of the Turkish population.

The last wave of the emigration to Turkey happened as the result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, political changes in Eastern Europe and military conflicts in Balkans in early 1990's, but officially sanctioned immigration into Turkey has decreased to the minimum. But in the early 1990's, many Turkish companies won construction and industrial contracts in the Russian Federation and the other parts of the CIS, creating opportunities there for Turkish workers, engineers, and managers (Hale, 2001: 209-210).

However, Turkey today is facing challenges to change its both migration and asylum policies. Turkish traditional immigration policy was always shaped by nation-building concerns together with the efforts to keep a homogenous national identity. The requirements and conditions of the European Union membership are pressurizing Turkey to recognize ethnical and cultural diversity. The Turkish Parliament is working on the replacement of the Settlement Law of 1934, but even in the new draft law there is a restriction the right to immigration only to people of 'Turkish descent and culture'.

3. RUSSIAN EMIGRATION TO ISTANBUL IN THE 1920'S

The Russian emigration after 1917 is a unique historical phenomenon caused by the specifics of Russian development in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th c.c. The deepness and steadiness of the social split in the pre-revolution society, the huge distance between ruling classes and “bottom”, the overwhelming predominance of the tendencies of the threatening state administrative machine, the lack of differences between power and property, the replacement of democratic division of authorities by the differentiation of functions inside the bureaucratic apparatus – all these factors predetermined the character of the emigration, which is the predominance of political expediency and the natural desire to survive.

The Russian emigration after the 1917 revolution, called “white” or “anti-Bolshevik” is taking a very specific place in the emigration process. Being very significant by scale (geographical, economical, demographical, social, political, ideological and cultural) the emigration consisted of many Russian Diasporas all over the world, united by all Russian origin and culture. That became the basis of the phenomenon of the “Rossijskoe Zarubezhje” (Russia Abroad) with a unique similarity to the state. The uniqueness of the process was that from the three components of the state- people, territory and power – there was only one – people, who tried to find the territory and had no power whatsoever.

Geographically Russian emigration was targeted at Western Europe. The main transition base was Istanbul, and the destinations were Belgrade, Sofia, Berlin, Paris and in the Far East - Harbin.

There was a very wide range of social, educational, national and religious content of Russian emigration which included officers and soldiers of the White Russian Army, civil refugees, representatives of the nobility and bureaucracy, entrepreneurs and intelligentsia. The collapse and hunger, the Bolshevik nationalization and terror, the failure of Entente, and the irrationalism of the White policy led to the evacuation of the white forces and refugees from Odessa in March 1919 to Istanbul, the evacuation of the forces of the general A. Denikin⁴ and refugees from Odessa, Sevastopol and Novorossijsk in January-March 1920 to Turkey and Balkans, fled of the Northern-Western army of the general N. Yudenich to the territory of Estonia in December 1919-March 1920 and the escape of units of the White army from Vladivostok to China in October 1922 (Ippolitov, 1993: 78-79).

The biggest by number was the emigration of the Russian Army units and civil refugees from the Crimea to Turkey by more than one hundred military

and trade vessels. After the landing military units were located in the Gallipoli peninsula and civilians spread mostly in Istanbul.

By statistical data of the Soviet secret service OGPU⁵ from the Crimean port were evacuated: Cossacks – 15 000, officers – 12 000, soldiers - 4-5 000, cadets - 10 000, wounded officers – 7 000, other officers – 30 000, civilian population – 60 000. The general number was fluctuating around 150-200 000.

In January- March 1920 (after general A. Denikin's evacuation) British occupation authorities in Istanbul organized the registration of incoming refugees from Russia. The system of the registration was very far from perfect. That is why the statistics sometimes are very contradictory. According to the decision of the Central United Committee of Russian Public Organizations in May 1920 the Main Inquiry Bureau was established. The task of the bureau was to register all refugees who came and those who were expecting to come and also to help to inquire about lost relatives. In November 1920 after the evacuation from Crimea of the last units of general P. Wrangel's Army and following civilian people, the registration data changed from 130-135 000 to 190 000 names with their addresses. The number of emigrants in Istanbul was permanently changing. The wealthiest part of emigrants got visas and tickets and went to Europe very fast. It was mainly poor officers, Cossacks, soldiers and their families who stayed in Istanbul. At the same time re-evacuation started. Those who were not connected with the White Army and those who were not afraid of repressions – peasants, Red Army captives, sailors, and workers, went back to Russia. Up until February 1921 approximately 5 000 people went back.

The main factor, which defined the desire to leave Istanbul, was the very hard financial conditions, no possibilities to find a job, money, food and housing. The city of Istanbul was totally affected: The problems of provision and housing, the price inflation and the threat of massive epidemics among refugees. The centers of the emigrant's life were the buildings of the Russian Embassy, the Representation of Russian Red Cross, the All-Russian Zemski Union⁶ and the Union of the Russian cities.

The most enterprising Russians started to open restaurants and cafés, clubs and entertaining centers. In the beginning of 1921 a peculiar new elite inside the emigration society appeared. But this part was small by number and the general majority was in the severe process of the proletarianization and "lumpenization". The officers became loaders and opened workshops, noble ladies served as waitresses and bargirls, sometimes even as prostitutes. These emigrants who had lost the last hope to survive had the opportunity to live in

camps or, as they bitterly ironized to become the “guests of the British King”, where the British allies could give them some food and old military clothes.

In the springtime of 1921 the situation of the Russian emigrants in Istanbul became catastrophic. In March the Emigration Women’s Council published the Declaration about the terrible conditions of Russian emigrants’ life in Istanbul. In such a situation the specific ability of Russian emigrants to organize themselves in order to establish the structure, which could help to solve the whole complex of problems, became very important. The Central Committee of the Russian Red Cross representation, The All-Russian Zemski Union and The Union of Russian Cities became such a structure. It was subsidized by the Entente states and actually transformed into a kind of Ministry of Civil Affairs. The supply of provisions and medicine was arranged through this Committee. Two hospitals, the receptions, ambulances, dormitories, the House for the disabled people were arranged and financially provided for by the Committee in different districts of the city and refugee’s camps. For instance, for disabled people (who numbered 220 that time) five special workshops, an artificial limb’s unit and courses of foreign languages were arranged. The system of rehabilitation was established for the officers and soldiers being wounded. It has to be specially noticed that the Staff of the Commander of the Russian Army in Istanbul (P. Wrangell) was preoccupied just with the problems of the Army supply and location.

However, already in the spring of 1921 it became obvious that the destiny of 200 000 civilians and soldiers of the Russian Army depended on the military and diplomatic representatives of the Entente in Istanbul and their political interests. The Turkish state itself had a problem with the status. So, by the Sevres peace Treaty of 1920 there was the order of capitulation in Turkey. Then, the further destiny of the Turkish state had to be decided in Lausanne⁷ and the further destiny of Russian emigrants as well.

The Russian emigration in Istanbul made the economic, social and political situation very sharp. The main serious destabilizing factor was the presence of organized Russian military units (remained detachments of the former Russian Army) in Istanbul which was much more dangerous for the allies then for the Soviet Russian State. So from April 1921 France consistently reduced the aid to Russian soldiers and civilians. The American occupational administration and the American Red Cross followed the same policy. French propaganda announced the possibility for Russians to go to Australia, South America and Africa. The unbearable financial conditions, the threat of hunger and poverty, the desire to escape from all kinds of military authorities, presented by French and British former allies, forced Russians to leave the Bosphorus, and already in March 1921 approximately 20 000 emigrants left

Turkey. Because of the activity of allies to repatriate Russians civilians and first of all military personnel and in order to save the remainder of the Russian Army P. Wrangell decided on some steps to transfer units to the territories of the countries where the power of the Entente was not that strong. In the period of May-December 1921 approximately 29 000 officers and Cossacks were transported to Bulgaria and Serbia. At the same time around 10 000 former military personnel and their families were brought as civilian emigrants to other countries, particularly to Czechoslovakia. As a result until the end of 1923 there were just 5-6 000 Russian emigrants left in Istanbul from 200 000 in 1921.

4. LEGISLATIVE CONDITIONS OF RUSSIAN EMIGRANTS IN TURKEY

The problem of emigrants and refugees became urgent only in the 20th century. There were two main reasons: the First World War and the Russian October Revolution. The global changes in the world and connected with that flows of people from one country to another were regulated in certain measure by the Versailles –Washington system of treaties and peace conferences.

Mainly the Russian and Armenian refugees, fleeing from the political regimes in their countries, created many problems for the world society, which had never existed before.

The exodus from the former Russian Empire was the most extensive. The situation became more complicated with the appearance of the refugees without the citizenship.

The solution of the refugee problem lied with the League of Nations. The tasks were resettlement, employment, repatriation and legislative regulation of the emigrant's status. Unfortunately, those tasks were not achieved totally.

The roots of the refugee's problems can be found in the 1920's. However, refugees were not only the reason of the problems, but at the same time they were very active participants in the preparation of the international level documents on the refugee's legislation. Russian emigrants to Turkey played a very significant role in the elaboration of the refugee's status in 1920's.

The difficulties of the resettlement, repatriation and adaptation of Russian emigrants in Turkey (but also elsewhere) were the result of their specific conditions and status. Russian emigrants were not "normal category" of the foreigners who can be supported by the usual practice of the mutuality or the national regime because all of them lost their citizenship. The previous Russian law stopped to be valid after 1917. The emigrants didn't recognize the new

Soviet state and were not recognized by it. They lost the citizenship of the former Russian Empire, but they didn't become citizens of the Soviet Russia. The new group of Russian people appeared without the citizenship of the Russian origin that needed the international protection. In this way, the group neither had the rights of the citizens of the recipient country nor the diplomatic protection.

Only the League of Nation could provide the guarantee of the rights and freedoms for the Russian emigrants without the Russian citizenship.

For the first time the definition of the notion of "the refugee" appeared in July of 1922 during the Geneva Conference. The subject was only the "Russian refugees". By the definition "Russian refugee" was a refugee being Russian by origin who didn't have any citizenship. Then in the Geneva Interstate Agreement, (12.05.1926) there was more precise definition of the notion "the Russian refugee" and that was "every person of Russian origin without the citizenship of Soviet Russia and without the citizenship of any other country".

The International Red Cross Committee with the participation of the Russian Committee of Red Cross in Turkey particular has initiated the letter (20.02.1921) to the Council of the League of Nations with the description of the very poor conditions of Russian emigrants abroad and proposed some steps needed to be done:

1. The definition of the legislative conditions of the Russian refugees;
2. The repatriation to Russia or the possibility of an employment abroad;
3. The unification and coordination of the efforts to help Russian refugees;

The Council of the League of Nations recognized the subject as important, but didn't give any financial or official support. Then later, in June 1921, the Council took the decision to create the position of the Supreme Commissar of the Council responsible for Russian refugee's affairs, but with the condition not to be Russian by origin. There was mentioned that the person of the Commissar must be a man with very high authority, to be recognized and respected by the governments and organizations.

In August 1921 F. Nansen, famous polar researcher and public figure, became the Supreme Commissar on Refugees affairs of the Council of the League of Nations.

On 3-5th of July, 1922, in Geneva Conference there was approved a new certificate for the refugees, which took name of the Supreme Commissar Mr. Nansen – the Nansen's Passport. The first version of this document was elaborated by Russian lawyers-emigrants, but unfortunately was changed by initiative of French government. French authorities didn't want to distribute French citizen's rights to the Russian refugees. The first version of the passport included freedom of movement, the right to employment and etc. The representatives of all states were first of all concerned about their own interests, hence everything connected with the political and financial responsibilities towards refugees were excluded from the original status of "Nansen's" passport. So, in November of 1922 the system of Certificates for the refugees proposed by the Geneva Conference was accepted by only 12 European states.

Passports were legitimized by two international agreements of 05.07.1922 and 09.05.1926 and were recognized by 39 countries till October 1929.

However, the living conditions of the Russian refugees in Turkey were very hard, especially for some specific reasons. Following the memorandum of F. Nansen, sent to the Chairman of the French delegation in the Lausanne Peace Conference 05.07.1922 – 24.07.1923. There was mentioned that the Russians in Istanbul have the most difficult position because of the new peace treaty between Turkey, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France, and especially because of new legislative conditions for Russian emigrants connected with establishing of the Kemalist government in Turkey. The new Kemalist government signed the Peace treaty⁸ with the Soviet Union on special conditions by the issue of Russian emigrants in Turkey. According to that treaty Russian emigrants found themselves on the crossfire: From one side the Soviet representation in Turkey became responsible for the destiny of emigrants who didn't want to recognize the Soviet state (most Russians were representatives of the White movement against the Bolsheviks and were seen as enemies by the Soviet authorities) and from another side, because Moscow renounced the capitulations, Turkey could claim the whole authority over Russians not having national protection. And at the same time the adoption of the Turkish citizenship for Russians was not the solution, because it didn't give them equal rights with Turks. All these reasons were reflected in the report of representatives of the committee of Russian lawyers in the meeting with the Secretariat of the League of Nations on emigrants' issues in Geneva 22.11.1922. Russian layers expressed the opinion that it could be up to any European state to provide the national protection for the Russian emigrants from Turkey, for instance France. But it was not accepted.

The Supreme Commissar for the Russian Refugees Affairs of the League of Nations did a lot for the Russian emigrants, especially with the help of the

former official Russian representatives, settled in Paris as the Councilor K. Guljkevich and the Chairman of the Congress of Russian Ambassadors in Paris Mr. M. de Giers. By the inquiry of Mr. M. de Giers the Report on the situation of the Russian refugees in Istanbul was prepared in 1926. According to that report the number of Russians in Turkey in 1926 was approximately about 4 000-5 000 people (90% located in Istanbul and the rest in central Anatolia). After the evacuation and repatriation of the most able-bodied persons in 1920-1926 to the Balkans, United States and Western Europe mostly disabled emigrants remained in Turkey. Beginning from the autumn 1925 in the light of the negotiations on the Mosul issue, the policy of the Turkish government was strongly changed towards emigrants including Russians. Based on article n. 4 of Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish authorities in order to prevent interests of Turkish citizens against the competition with the foreign labour forces started to issue decrees, which forbade foreigners from working in many fields including private business and civil service. Russians not being protected by the national state were affected more than others.

This situation forced Russians to apply to the representative of the International Bureau of Labour (IBL) Mr. Charpantje to come to Istanbul to discuss the issue with the Turkish authorities. Mr. Charpantje came to Istanbul in March 1926 and met the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, but didn't succeed because of a very negative attitude towards White Russian emigrants, based on the strong influence of Bolsheviks on the new Turkish government⁹. According to the recommendation of the IBL, Russians were to leave Turkey for the sake of survival. Also in the report there were the possible measures proposed by the IBL in order to help Russian emigrants in Turkey:

1. To prevent on the Turkish government to abolish or to alleviate restrictive decrees on labor with regard to Russian refugees;
2. To provide as many as possible French visas for the Russians in Istanbul;
3. To attract the possible attention of the foreign states to the very difficult refugee's position on order to petition for visas, especially for those who were not able to work and to settle them in the most strong Russian colonies abroad.

Unfortunately, it was almost impossible to achieve these proposals on a large scale. From the correspondence and documents of the IBL and the Supreme Commissar Committee on Russian Refugees Affairs of the League of Nations it can be seen that the recommendations to solve the problem were very limited. For instance, to advise some groups of Russian emigrants to accept

Turkish citizenship with the cynical explanation that it would not be the worst as to be the emigrant without the national or another protection.

In any case, in the end of 1920's the Russian Diaspora in Turkey was relatively small (approximately 1 500 – 2 000 people, but all information is very contradictory because of lack of statistics) and Turkey didn't become the soil of any significant emigration center.

CONCLUSION

The study of the Russian emigration to Istanbul in 1920's still continues to be very specific and important. Constantinople in that time was the 'main gate' through which the remaining of the White Army and civilian refugees fled Russia. Turkey, Balkans and Middle East became one of the knots of sharp contradictions between great powers, which had a huge influence to the destiny of the Russian emigrants and their distribution in the world.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of the Russia emigration to Turkey showed the problems and challenges of old and new immigration state policies in Ottoman Turkey and Russia, then later in Soviet Union and Turkish Republic.

The attempt to solve these very new problems helped to create the model of the international policy in order to provide the rights of refugees. The decisions, adopted in the inter-governmental level with the assistance of the League of Nation, gave the first opportunity to form the juridical status of the refugees in the international law.

NOTES

¹ One of the most contradictory questions – the question about the number of emigrants. By sources of the State Archive of Russian Federation (F.5809, Op.98, p.189) and some other sources the figures change between 2 and 6 million.

² Decree of NKID (the People's Commissariat of the International Affairs) of December 2, 1917 signed by Trotsky 'The visa order to enter Russia'. The Decree pursued two aims: First, to control the entrance of foreigners to the Soviet Russia; second, foreign states and their citizens (also Russian citizens) applying to the Soviet government practically recognized the Soviet authorities *de-facto*.

³ Most significant of those settlements was the forced exchange of population between Greece and Turkey in the mid-1920's, involving over a million Greeks from Turkey and almost half a million Muslims and Turks from Greece.

⁴ Denikin A.I. – the leader of the White Movement, Commander-in-Chief of the Military Forces of the South of Russia.

⁵ OGPU - United State Political Department of the Soviet Republic (06.02.1922-10.07.1934) By data of OGPU in 1920's the distribution of the Russian emigrants in

foreign countries by number was: France – 500 000, Germany – 35 000, Serbia – 30 000, Bulgaria – 15 000, Poland – 30 000, South America – 15 000, Turkey – 4 500, Romania – 10 000, Greece – 10 000, Austria – 1 000, Hungary – 5 000, Australia – 2 000, Czechoslovakia – 10 000, Belgium – 10 000, British colonies – 50 000, Baltic States – 50 000, Finland – 5 000, Persia – 5 000, Italy – 5 000, Canada – 50 000, USA – 30 000, Philippines – 50 000. The total number is approximately 1 000 000 people. The statistic is quite relative by many reasons, but at least 2-3 million people were abroad and Russian Diaspora was the biggest in the world in 1920's-30's. Ippolitov, S. (1994) *The Russian Emigration in Turkey, Southen-Eastern and Central Europe in 20's*, Moscow.

⁶ All-Russian Zemski Union – (from Russian word *zemstvo* – the regional Parliament) – in this case The Union of representatives of all local regional Parliaments, which existed in Russia before the Revolution.

⁷ Lausanne Conference was held 20.11.1922-24.07.1923 (with the break 04.02-22.04) in Lausanne (Switzerland). The Conference was the initiative of Great Britain, France, Italy to prepare the Peace Treaty with Turkey and setting up of the regime of the Black Sea Straits.

⁸ The Agreement on Friendship and Brotherhood was concluded between Soviet Russia and Turkey in March 16, 1922.

⁹ The Report about the conditions of Russian Refugees in Constantinople, done by the Representative of the All-Russian Zemski Union in Constantinople Mr. A.L. Glazov, March 1926 (The State Archive of Russian Federation, F.R.-5680.Op.1.D.70.P.39-40)

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