



## BOOK REVIEW: 99 QUESTIONS ABOUT LOUSANNE

### *Kitap Kritiği: 99 Soruda Lozan*

**Dr. Barış ÖZİNAN**

Ministry of National Education, Bulancak District Directorate,  
Giresun/Turkey, E-mail: barisozinan@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7082-3614>

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99 Questions about Lausanne, was written by Prof. Dr. Mustafa Budak and published by Ketebe publications in 2018. As the title suggests, it provides basic information about the Lausanne Peace Treaty. The book consists of the following sections: Contents, preface, 99 Questions, Appendices, Bibliography, and Index and has 191 pages in total.

In the preface the author criticizes Turkish historiography by stating that it cannot go beyond the official historical framework, and that the National Struggle movement was written with an understanding centered on the Nutuk, and therefore exhibits subjectivity. The author notes that Lausanne Peace Treaty was also affected by this situation and reminds that the Treaty of Lausanne does not only concern Turkey, but is a multilateral international document. He states that Westerners came to Lausanne to resolve the issue of the East by dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Written at a time when the Republic approaches its 100th anniversary, the book emphasizes

the need to reassess the Lausanne Conference and Treaty from both an international and regional perspective. Taking into account the diversity of archival materials, and abundance of written memoirs, and scientific facts revealed by thousands of studies, the author considers it necessary to reevaluate Lausanne from Turkey's perspective as well (Budak, s.14-15).

Although the Lausanne Peace Treaty is the founding treaty of the republic of Turkey (Budak, s.14.), it has maintained its relevance through debates that extend to the present day. Taking into account other peace treaties that ended World War I, the Treaty of Lausanne is the only one among them that has remained in force. In this respect it is the first treaty referred to in face of any international issue currently encountered by the Republic of Turkey.

Despite being such an important and still relevant agreement, there is a significant amount of misinformation about Lausanne. The public believes a lot of incorrect information to be true. The debates over whether Lausanne was a victory or a defeat still continue to this day. A segment expressing their views on the subject, praise Lausanne by comparing it to the Treaty of Sèvres. Another segment, however, compares it to the Misak-ı Milli, which was put forward as the 'Turks' peace proposal during the War of Independence, and criticizes it on the grounds that the objectives were not achieved. (Budak, s.151.) These perspectives on Lausanne has created a kind of polarization in society. When examining the historical process, considering that there was political reluctance in the Grand National Assembly regarding the ratification of the Treaty of Lausanne and that this situation was overcome by the renewal of elections (Budak, p. 77), we can say that today's polarization emerged as early as 1923.

Within the context of all these discussions, 99 Questions About Lausanne emerges as an important work that fills a significant gap. Questions that the public has about Lausanne have been addressed in this book. The author identified 99 topics, which were turned into questions. Clear answers were first provided to the questions, and then the topics were elaborated. The question-and-answer method has provided the work with a quality enabling it to be easily followed by all segments of society.

The work has addressed and answered many questions that the public wants to know, such as whether the treaty has secret clauses, whether Lausanne was a victory or a defeat, whether it has a validity period of 100 years, whether it will expire in 2023, and whether the US ratified the treaty.

In terms of style and method, it is clear that the book was primarily written for the general public. Furthermore, considering the correction of the misinterpreted aspects of the treaty, the objective approach to the subject rather than a political or ideological perspective, the choice of sources used and the scientific method employed during the writing of the book, it is evident that this is an academic study.

Supporting images related to the questions asked are provided on various pages of the manuscript. Four maps have been published consecutively in the Appendix section at the end of the book. These are the "Known Treaty of Sèvres Map," "The True Borders of the Treaty of Sèvres," "The Misak-ı Milli Map," and "Turkey's Borders According to the Treaty of Lausanne" maps. The first map is incorrectly referred to as the "Treaty of Sèvres Map" in school text books. Therefore the "Known" map and the "Real" map are presented consecutively to draw the reader's attention. The "Misak-ı Milli Map," showing the territories planned to be acquired in line with the Misak-ı Milli, which is the target program of the National Struggle, and the "Turkey's Borders According to the Treaty of Lausanne" map, showing the territories remaining in Turkish hands after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, have facilitated comparison. The absence of a scale on the second and third maps can be considered a shortcoming of the maps.

The author made use of archival documents, Turkish Grand National Assembly proceeding reports, memoirs, maps and various books and articles while creating his work. It can be understood that an academic sensitivity was employed via a broad literature review and the examination of works reflecting diverse perspectives. The information provided is supported by footnotes, establishing a connection between the reader and other sources in the literature.

Written in very simple language, the work has the quality of a resource that even someone completely unfamiliar to the subject can easily understand. The work ends with an index section. The name of any person or settlement, or a subject to be researched can be found very quickly in the Index section. This aspect of the work provides great convenience to readers and researchers.

99 Questions About Lausanne has become a reference book that enables people of all ages and backgrounds to quickly and practically access accurate information. It has formed a series with the author's previously written work titled Turkish Foreign Policy: From the National Pact to Lausanne, From Ideal to Reality.