

The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey

Atrocities and persecutions
1923 - 2009



THE
CONSTANTINOPOLITAN
SOCIETY
Est. 1928

GREEKS EXPATRIATED FROM ISTANBUL
BY TURKISH COERCION

Athens, Greece
2009

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The historical building of The Constantinopolitan Society (Syllogos Constantinoupoliton).
Established in 1928, in Kallithea, Athens - Greece by Greeks forced to abandon Istanbul.

Preface

The extermination of the Greek Minority in Istanbul (Constantinople), Gokceada ((Imvros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos) is the continuation of the Genocide that had systematically annihilated the Greek populations of Asia Minor through the combined means of massacres, mass deportations into the interior, and the final onslaught of 1923 which resulted in the expulsion of more than 1,200,000 Greeks from their native land. The pogroms and attacks of 1955 and the forced expulsions of 1964 and later stand as a historical affirmation that the goal of every successive Turkish regime is to wipe out the Greeks from all territories under its control.

After the Lausanne Treaty (1923), there were still over 130,000 ethnic Greeks in Istanbul, Gokceada and Bozcaada. Since then, as a consequence of those systematic persecutions by the Turkish State, have led to a steep decline in their numbers. Today, there are clearly fewer than 4,000 ethnic Greeks left in Turkey.

Violations of minorities human rights have been a persistent policy in Turkey for over 100 years. In this booklet, we outline in brief only a few of those violations, during the period 1923 - 2009.

1923 - 1924



The Ecumenical Patriarchate in Fener, Istanbul.

- 1. In October 1923, Turks restrict the civil and political rights of Greeks living in Turkey.** Banks, civil services of all kinds and categories as well as big multinational companies and enterprises are forced to dismiss from their employ all Greeks.
- 2. In the same period, the political affiliations of the Greek teachers in Istanbul become the object of the investigation** conducted by Salih Zeki, General Director of the Turkish Ministry of Education. Of course, this was the occasion of the dismissal of 104 teachers of Greek origin and 52 Greek teachers, who were characterized as 'unfit' to teach in minority schools.
- 3. In 1923, Turkey, aiming to restrict the Greek presence in Istanbul,** arbitrarily characterized as "personae non gratae" 40,000 Greeks, who had found temporary refuge for reasons of safety outside Turkey, prior to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, removed their Turkish citizenship and proceeded to the mass confiscation of their properties. The occasion, as declared by Ankara, was that these people, despite being settled in Turkey before 1918, and thus not exchangeable under the terms of the Treaty on the exchange of populations, were not registered in the municipal roll of Istanbul – which is something that was not required by the Treaty for the exchange of populations. The Greek view was justified two years later, on February 21, 1925, by the International Court of Justice, but the Turks had already achieved their objective.
- 4. Turkey, in the framework of its strategic undermining and degradation of the Ecumenical seat of the Orthodox faith,** gave its full support in September 1923 to the establishment of the so-called 'Turkish Orthodox Church', which was founded by father Pavlos Karahisaritis (who later changed his name into Zeki Erenerol), a priest from Keskin, Anatolia, who was the blind instrument of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Young Turks' leader. In October 1923, father Eftim attempted to occupy the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, causing damages, while the Turkish authorities did not stir an eyelid.
(In 1921 he had stated thus: I shall turn the lights off the Patriarch in Fener, and I shall do this very fast. Long live the victorious Turkish Army!).
- 5. By virtue of Decree No 1092/06.12.1923, Turkey downgraded the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Istanbul to a simple Turkish institution** and determined that the Patriarch would be elected by clergymen who had Turkish nationality and were already serving in Turkey. The fact that Turkey was unable to unilaterally evict the Ecumenical Patriarchate from Istanbul, which is what it would have done for any institution governed by the domestic Turkish law, and was forced by the parties signing the Treaty of Lausanne to accept that the Ecumenical Patriarchate would remain in Istanbul, indicates the extent of the Turkish arbitrariness.
- 6. Immediately after the installation of the Turkish authorities in Gokceada and Bozcaada,** on October 4, 1923, where more than 90% of population was Greek, the Turks completely ignored the special local administration which the two islands, which were offered to them as a present with the initiative of Great Britain in the framework of the Treaty of Lausanne, should have enjoyed. The Turks appointed right away a Turkish commander and Turkish officers to the courts, customs houses, police and port authorities, dismissing all the elected local officials. They cut off the Christian leadership characterizing as "personae non gratae" 1,500 people from Imvros and 64 from Tenedos, who had found temporary refuge in safer places. Their real property was seized.
- 7. On February 12, 1924 father Eftim burst into the historic church of Panhaghia Kafatiani in Galatas and the church of Sotiras Christos and took possession of them,** with the undisguised support of the Turkish authorities. On February 19, 1924 the Patriarchal Holy Synod defrocked father Eftim, while he had already been excommunicated as an apostate and shameless traitor of the Orthodox faith. The Turkish courts rushed with unprecedented eagerness to fine the Ecumenical Patriarch in April 1924 for the mental anguish suffered by father Eftim as a result of his excommunication, while the Turkish State officially conceded to him the churches he had occupied with the violent 'backing' of the Turkish mob!
This year, father Eftim called a Turkish informal ecclesiastical congress that elected him "Papa (Patriarch) Eftim".

1925 - 1926



Patriarchal Great School of the Nation (Patriarchiki Meghali tou Genous Scholi).
Established in 1454.

8. On January 30, 1925, upon the conclusion of the mass for the celebration of the holiday of the three Hierarchs, **the Turkish police invaded the premises of the Patriarchate**, arrested Ecumenical Patriarch Constantinos VI and after giving him an exchange passport led him to the railway station of Sirketzi and deported him from Turkey.

9. In the same year, the Turkish Government decided to shut down the historic Greek Literary Club and the contents of its invaluable library were scattered among the state libraries in Ankara and Suleymaniye and the various Turkish language and Turkish history societies.

10. The Turkish Government, in order to prevent Greek teachers from teaching in Turkey, required them to pass examinations in the Turkish language in order to be approved a new teaching license. Most courses in the Greek schools had to be taught in the Turkish language. Ethnic Greeks in Istanbul were forced to bear the burden of the double salaries paid to the Turkish teachers teaching in Greek schools, while at the same time they were asked to pay a special education tax, invented for the purpose of draining them. The Zappeion School for Girls had to shut down because there were statues inspired from the Greek mythology in its premises. The Patriarchal Commercial School, the Greek Commercial School in Halki and the Apostolides Private School for Languages had to shut down.

11. On June 14, 1926, the Turkish Government, in the framework of its strategy of undermining and lowering the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, initiated criminal proceedings against the Ecumenical Patriarch and all the Holy Synod, on the grounds that they had convened a meeting at the Halki Seminary and not in Phanar (Fener), the administrative seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In the same period, the Turkish Government did not allow the organization of a Panorthodox Convention by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

12. The introduction of the Civil Code in Turkey, in October 1926, established for minority institutions the inability to acquire new real estate, either by property transaction or by donation or inheritance, while the Patriarchate's capacity as a legal entity ceased to be recognized, thus causing huge impediments to the management and representation of the huge Patriarchal estate.

1927 - 1939



Zografio Lyceum. Established in 1892.

13. Law 1151, passed by the Turkish National Assembly on June 25, 1927, substantially and officially abolished the self administration status of the islands Gokceada and Bozcaada, shut down on various pretexts the Greek School, prohibited the instruction of the Greek language and placed Christians under persecution, to their final extinction.

14. During the year 1930, the Turkish authorities openly intervened in the elections of the administration boards of the minority hospital in Baloukli and the community of Pera (Beyoglu), aiming at the big properties of the minority members.

15. Law 2007, passed by the Turkish National Assembly on June 11, 1932, banned Greeks from the exercise of thirty professions. These professions covered a wide spectrum, indicative of the intentions to indirectly force Greeks to emigrate voluntarily: The professions of itinerant salesman, barber, musician, photographer, carpenter, tailor and waiter were among the first to be prohibited for Greeks by the Turkish authorities. The banning of other professions as well followed later, compelling Greeks to make a painful choice: either remain unemployed, work illegally or emigrate from their land.

16. Law 2596, passed by the Turkish National Assembly on December 3, 1934, prohibited all Christian clergymen to wear cassocks outside the church. The only exception allowed by the Law manifests the Turkish intention to bring the Ecumenical Patriarch down to the level of :Papa - Eftim, since it set forth that only the Patriarch and "Papa – Eftim", under his capacity as self-declared head and leader of the Turkish Orthodox Church, were allowed to wear cassocks outside the church.

17. In the same year, Law 2525, under which all Turkish nationals should take on a surname, forced Greeks to turkify their last names, because those last names with Greek roots were not accepted by the Turkish authorities. At the same time, a racist campaign was launched under the slogan 'Citizens speak Turkish', with the result that anyone daring to speak his mother tongue in the streets was abused and fined.

18. Law 2762 on Vakuf, passed by the Turkish National Assembly on June 5, 1935, placed minority communities under the control and supervision of the General Directorate of Charitable Foundations (Vakuf) and required them to submit statements as to their income and their properties. The management of minority institutions and schools was assigned to a commissioner, appointed by the Turkish authorities.

19. On July 26, 1934, a new decree in implementation of Law 2007/1932, banned the Christian population holding the Greek nationality from the exercise of more professions, which resulted to the mass exodus of no less than 10,000 Christians with Greek nationality from Turkey.

20. In the years 1936-1937, Greek minority schools became the Turkish Government's target. All the courses had to be taught in Turkish, with the exception of the Greek course. The military education course was added, taught by an officer of the Turkish army. A Turkish deputy-principal was appointed to each minority school, answerable to the Turkish Ministry of Education, who gradually became the sole and dominant power in minority schools.

21. In the same period, pursuant to Law 2762/1925, the Turkish authorities appointed the infamous Zihni Ozdamar, who was "Papa -Eftim's" right arm, as commissioner to the Baloukli Charitable Foundation, causing an uproar in the Greek minority.

22. In 1939, all minority sports clubs were required to merge with Turkish sports clubs, so that they progressively shrank and lost their Greek identity.

1940 - 1949



Members of the Greek Minority arrested and sent to forced labour camps in Askale, 1942.



Members of the Greek Minority arrested and sent to forced labour camps in Askale, 1942.



Forced labour camps settlement of Greeks in the depths of Asia Minor.

23. During WWII, Turkey, due to its neutrality, grasped the opportunity to strike heavy blows on the ethnic Greeks of Turkey, taking advantage of the weakness of Greece, which was struggling for freedom and justice, at the side of the Allied Forces. Thus, in May 1941 the Turkish Government mobilized the prefectures in Eastern Thrace, starting from the prefecture of Istanbul. The enlistment offices were ordered, by way of a ciphered footnote under the mobilization decision, to summon selectively the reservists from the Greek, Armenian and Jewish minorities. This way, all Christians between 18 and 45 years old were dragged to the army and were scattered in the depths of Asia Minor to construct roads and military buildings under the most adverse circumstances. Many of them died.

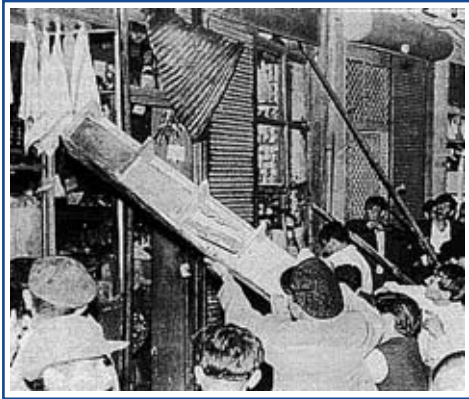
24. On September 21, 1941 'unknown' arsonists threw on the wooden roof of the Ecumenical Patriarchate rags which they had immersed in gasoline and put on fire. The Patriarchal Building burnt to ashes, taking with it records, paintings of Patriarchs and valuable relics of the Greek population.

25. On November 11, 1942 the Turkish Government put into force the Law 4305, using as criteria religion and ethnicity, imposing a burdensome wealth tax on property, which aimed at the financial extinction of Christians in Turkey. The Law, which is known as "**Varlik Vergisi**", required the payment of the tax arbitrarily imposed by the tax inspector within 15 days, and without the right to appeal. Four weeks after the imposition of the tax, failure to pay resulted to the confiscation of the taxpayers property, their arrest and displacement to forced labour camps in Askale, at extremely bad weather conditions. In total, 1,869 members of the minority saw their properties suddenly confiscated and themselves exiled to Askale, where they constructed roads in order to settle their debt to the Turkish State. Their daily wages were 2 Turkish pounds, out of which one was deducted for the rudimentary meals they were given and the other one deducted with regard to their debt to the Turkish State. Most of them, in order to settle the debt arbitrarily imposed on them, would have to work from 200 to 300 years! 21 of them died there.

It should be noted that the Greek minority, although it constituted only 0,5% of the whole Turkish population, contributed 20% of the country's total income emanating from this tax.

26. On January 1943 the Turkish Government confiscated the properties of the Holy Monasteries of Athos Megisti Lavra and Koutloumoussi in Gokceada and started to relocate settlers from Asia Minor to the island. The Mayor and three Community chairmen who dared to protest were banished in Asia Minor. The same destiny awaited two of the most important members of the Holy Synod: Metropolitan Maximos of Chalcedon, who later became Ecumenical Patriarch, and Metropolitan Dorotheos of Prussa.

1950 - 1959



The Turkish Pogrom against the Greek population of Istanbul, September 6 - 7, 1955

Turkish mob attacking Greek property.



Turkish mob looting and destroying Greek property.



Looting and destructions everywhere.

Exclusive Photos by D. Kaloumenos.

27. On September 6 - 7, 1955 the Turkish Government, in a cold-blooded, perfectly prepared and professionally organized manner, launched a pogrom against Christians in Istanbul.

Within six hours, a frenzy mob destroyed, looted or set on fire:

- **80 places of worship (churches, monasteries, holy water fountains)**
- **36 Greek schools,**
- **4361 stores, company offices, factories and other property belonging to Greeks,**
- **2640 houses**

The tombs of the Patriarchs were defiled and the Greek cemetery in Sisli was the target of a frenzied attack by the organized mob. The Turks were possessed with a cannibal-like mania and they ruined tombs, opened the more recent ones, unburied corpses, which they knifed and torn to pieces.

During this night of terror for the Greeks of Istanbul, no less than seventeen deaths, dozens of injuries and more than two hundred rapes took place, while icons and religious paintings of priceless historic and archeological value were destroyed or stolen.

No one of criminals was arrested. The denial of the State involvement in the pogrom continued till 2005.

According to Spiros Vryonis, who has recently published the book "The Mechanism of Catastrophe", there were three systematic waves of destroyers. "The first wave destroyed metal doors and barriers to all churches, house and businesses. They smashed all obstacles to entry. The second wave commenced pilfering and the pillaging. They came with trucks so as to systematically loot and carry off their booty. But the basic job of the second wave was to begin the destruction of the houses, the apartments, the church, the stores and then to move on, just as the first wave moved on very quickly. The third came some time later to finish off the marauding." The pilfering or destruction of Greek businesses was so great that it produced a food shortage in Istanbul. The price of eggs rose 6 times and as most bakeries were utterly destroyed people had to wait in queue for a piece of bread. People had nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep. Houses were looted, and then destroyed by pouring gasoline. Vryonis notes that the 100,000 rioters (students, labour unionists and peasants) came well equipped with pickaxes, shovels, wooden timbers to serve as battering rams, acetylene torches, gasoline, dynamite and large trucks full of stones. How could a spontaneous eruption occur when security police, municipal police, and the armed services were everywhere? The damages were estimated by the Turkish government at 1 billion U.S. dollars.

Only three days after the events, Ismet Inonu, Head of the Turkish opposition, stated with provocative explicitness: 'It is a good thing that our party was not involved in the events, however these acts were very well organized and aiming to clear our country from the Greek element, which is a burden!'

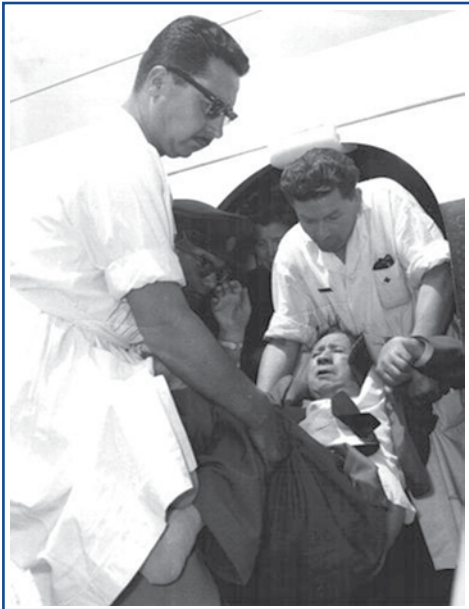
28. On September 16, 1955 the Turkish authorities interdicted the publication of the minority newspaper 'Eleftheri Phoni' and arrested its publisher Andreas Lambikis, whom they imprisoned without a warrant or official charges for a period of three months in the military jail of Harbiyie.

29. On November 1956, the Turkish authorities arrested twelve members of the Greek Association of Istanbul, which they dissolved by court decision in April 1958, allegedly for espionage for Greece and for financing the struggle of the organization EOKA in Cyprus.

30. Since early 1957 to 1959, the Turkish authorities deported 57 persons of the Christian minority in Istanbul, including reporter Dimitrios Kaloumenos, who had captured with his camera the vandalisms of September 6, 1955, offering invaluable documentation material to history regarding the Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 in Istanbul.

31. During the same period, the Turkish authorities with a campaign levered mainly by students-members of anti-Greek organizations and societies, used psychological pressure on consumers, forcing them not to buy products from shops owned by Greeks. To that end, they distributed propagandist leaflets in front of the Christian shops, with the slogan 'Bu dukkan gavurlarin malidir. Yankina girin, cunku Turk tur' (This shop belongs to an infidel. Prefer the shop next door, it belongs to a Turk). This campaign, combined with the other one asking people to speak only Turkish – the relevant slogan 'Vatandas Turkce konus' was everywhere – maintained the unbearable feeling of terror, which surrounded the Christians of Istanbul.

1960 - 1969



Even bedridden persons forcibly expelled from Istanbul.



Crippled old woman arrives in Athens after her expulsion from Istanbul.

32. In 1960, new restriction measures with regard to the exercise of various professions by Greeks in Istanbul were announced by the Turkish authorities in 1960, in implementation of Law 2007/1932.

33. That same year, the Turkish authorities abolished the three central Greek Orthodox boards of Stavrodromion (Beyoglu), Halkidona (Kadikoy) and Galatas (Karakoy), which coordinated the ethnic Greek institutions. That way, the real estate belonging to the institutions was led, through the progressive procedure of the physical wear of the members of the Greek institutions, to the Turkish State.

34. Law 222 of 1961 arbitrarily brought minority schools under the jurisdiction of the Turkish Ministry of Education, for the purpose of circumventing the obligations undertaken by Turkey under the Treaty of Lausanne.

35. In 1962, an application for the reconstruction the building of the Patriarchate seat, after the damages it had suffered from the fire in 1941, was rejected. Similar applications for the maintenance of other buildings belonging to the minority, such as the Prinkipos Orphanage (Buyuk Ada), the Metropolis at Derkon and the Tatalva (Kurtulus) School were also rejected. In the same year the plot of the church of Haghios Georgios in Therapia (Tarabya) was arbitrarily occupied for the purposes of developing a big tourist complex, without any attention paid to the protests of the Christians.

36. In 1963, the church of Sotiros Christos, which in 1924 had been forcefully occupied by Papa-Eftim, self-declared as “Patriarch” of the non-existent, “Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate”, torn down by the Turkish authorities. This church, 12 years after it had been occupied by coup by Papa-Eftim, had been returned to the Christians after a long struggle in the courts. In 1955 it had been completely destroyed by the organized demonstrators – contrary to the church of Panaghia Kafatiani, which had remained under the control of the pseudo-priest and which was left untouched during the night of the events. After it was torn down, the Turkish authorities awarded damages to Papa-Eftim!

37. In early 1964, the Turkish authorities implemented a coordinated wave of persecutions, aiming at the complete extinction of the Greek minority of Istanbul.

The year began with the authorities setting the proper climate, with the stoning of the Patriarchate. This was followed, on January 10, 1964, by the stoning of the Sinaitic Monastery of Haghios Ioannis in Fener. Then the wave of persecutions assumed torrential dimensions. Three principals of Greek High Schools and eleven Greek teachers were dismissed. Orthodox clergymen were forbidden entry in Greek schools by virtue of Circular No 410/16/26.03.1964.

On April 1, 1964 Emilianos, Metropolitan of Seleukia and Iakovos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, were deported from Turkey and were deprived of the Turkish nationality. Nine days later, on April 10, 1964, the Patriarchal printing office, which had been in operation since 1927, was shut down and the publication of the ecclesiastical publications ‘Apostolos Andreas’ and ‘Orthodoxy’ was forbidden. The handling of Greek books, whatever their form, in minority schools, the teaching of the religious education course and the celebration of the religious holidays of Easter, Christmas and New Year’s Day were forbidden by virtue of Circular No 3385, issued on September 15, 1964. On September 20, 1964, the community cemetery of Kuskuncuk was desecrated and on the following day, on September 21, 1964, the church of Panhaghia in Exi Marmara was stoned. Between October 4 and 9 the Patriarchate was blockaded by a mass of organized ‘demonstrators’. Morning prayers were forbidden for Greek students in minority schools by virtue of Circular No 8459, issued on December 18, 1964. Students were also forbidden to use the Greek language, even during the breaks. At the same time, the historic Greek Orphanage in Prinkipos (Buyuk Ada) was shut down, when the building was forcefully occupied by the Turkish authorities.

38. In March 1964, the Turkish Government began the massive expulsion of Greeks from Istanbul in the most provocative, flagrant and blatant violation of the Treaty of Lausanne, given that there was absolutely no question that Greek nationals settled in Istanbul prior to 1918 were not exchangeable. The mass persecution of the Greeks, which took place in the form of inhuman and

1960 - 1969



Greek school burnt down in Agioi Theodoroi village, in the island of Gokceada.



Greek school in Schinoudi village, Gokceada, transformed to disco club in 2007.

summary proceedings, was the last blow to the wounded and bled Hellenism of Istanbul.

The expulsion was suddenly announced in the press, accompanied by the simultaneous seizure of the movable property and confiscation of the real property of the deportees, forcing them to leave the country. Over a thousand Greeks were promptly expelled, most on a few hours' notice. They were permitted to take with them only \$22 and only one suitcase of clothes. Another 5,000 were expelled shortly thereafter. Another 11,000 Greeks were expelled after September 1964, when Turkey discontinued renewing residence permits of Greek citizens.

The Turkish authorities were so eager to uproot the ethnic Greeks of Istanbul, that in the lists they published with the names of the Greeks to be deported, allegedly on the grounds of being dangerous to the "internal and external security" of Turkey, they included the names of people with mental or physical disabilities, hundreds of elderly disabled persons as well as at least six ...dead people!

39. On November 2, 1964, the Turkish Government by virtue of its secret decree which acquired the reference number 6/3801, proceeded to the methodical looting of the huge Christian properties, make illegal the transfer of property titles to persons of Greek nationality and blocking the collection of all amounts due, all proceeds, incomes and bank accounts. This unprecedented plundering was kept secret and implemented faithfully for decades, until it was uncovered twenty-four years later.

40. In 1964, the notorious "eritme programi" was implemented in the islands of Gokceada (Imvros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos). This was the plan for breaking down the islands and giving them a Turkish identity. The operation licenses were removed from the Greek schools, which were shut down and their properties were confiscated. The arable lands of the islands were expropriated for next to nothing. Fishing, which was an important means of livelihood for the residents, was prohibited. The Metropolitane and elders of Imvros were exiled to Asia Minor. Gendarmerie camps were established and settlers were transferred from Pontus and Bulgaria. The area was declared 'supervised zone' and all Greek and foreign visitors had to secure a special permit from the Dardanelles' (Canakkale) Prefect. Some time later, open prisons for long-term convicts were relocated to the island, in order to terrify the residents, whose only way out was that, which the Turkish authorities systematically methodized: to leave their ancestral hearths.

41. On September 1965, "Papa Eftim" occupied by force, with the undisguised support of the Turkish authorities, the holy churches of Haghios Ioannis in Hion and Haghios Nikolaos in Galatas (Karakoy). The Turkish authorities rushed to offer to him the Greek institutions in the area, including 2 schools and 52 properties. Since then, all the legal efforts for the return of the churches and institutions have been met with legalistic problems, which have resulted to the continuous side die adjournment of the relevant proceedings!

42. In 1965, Andreas Lambikis, publisher of 'Eleftheri Phoni', the minority newspaper, was arrested and imprisoned. The newspaper, printing presses and the premises owned by him were seized, and the publisher was ousted from Turkey with the charge of 'insult to Turkism'.

43. The persecutions in minority schools went on, despite the rapid decline in the number of students. In 1967 another 39 teachers were dismissed and 6 Greek elementary schools were shut down. Children whose identity bore the indication 'Christian' instead of 'Rum' (Greek Orthodox) were not allowed entry in minority schools, and were forced to attend Turkish elementary schools.

44. Law 903/1967 imposed a 5% tax on the annual gross Vakuf income. The acquisition of any real property in excess of that stated in 1936 was prohibited. The establishment of new minority institutions was prohibited.

1970 - 1979



Halki Seminary. Established in 1844. Closed by the Turkish government in 1971.

45. On July 9, 1971, the Turkish Government discontinued the operation of Halki Seminary. In the 127 years from its establishment, 930 clergymen had graduated from the Seminary, including 12 Ecumenical Patriarchs, 2 Patriarchs of Antiochy, 4 Archbishops of Athens and 1 Archbishop of Tirana. At the same time, all Greek minority schools were required to open courses with the Turkish oath beginning with the words 'I am a Turk' and ending with the phrase 'ne mutlu Turkum diyene', which means 'How happy I am to have been born a Turk!'

46. In 1974, the Turkish High Court of Appeals ruled that minority foundations have no right to acquire properties other than those listed in 1936 declarations. Since that time, the Turkish government has used convoluted regulations and undemocratic laws to confiscate hundreds of Greek minority properties, considered as "mazbut" (occupied). Previously expropriated property cannot be reclaimed, nor is there any compensation provided by the State for expropriated properties.

Note: The new Law 5737 / 2008 fails to address a number of issues, such as the return of some properties, considered as mazbut (occupied), to their owners or to the entitled persons, that have been re-sold to a third party after their confiscation in 1974.

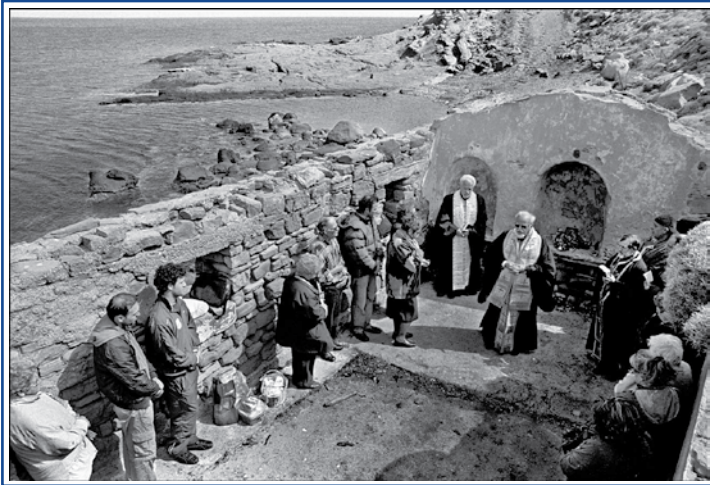
According to the Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, issued on April 21, 2009, the new Law in no way settles the question of the return of property lost since 1974 to the Directorate General of Foundations, or provides for compensation where property cannot be returned.

47. In September 1974, the Turkish authorities turned to mosques the Byzantine monastery of Akatalyptos Maria Diakonissa, which was built in 582, the monastery of Myreleo and the church of Haghia Theodora.

48. In the islands of Gokceada and Bozcaada, the heroic Christian residents who had lived through persecutions and terrorism, now had to experience more tribulations. The year after Stelios Kavalieros was murdered by 'unknown' parties in Panaghia, Gokceada in 1973, the Mayor of Gokceada, together with 20 eminent islanders, were put in prison in the Dardanelles. On the night of the Turkish invasion in Cyprus, in July 1974, the old Metropolitan Church of Gokceada was looted and the cemetery of the village Kastro on the island was desecrated. In the following summer, Styliani Zouni, mother of two, was raped and murdered by a Turkish soldier in the village of Ayii Theodori, Gokceada. Finally, in the two-year period 1975-1976 more lands, from what little had remained in the hands of the Christian residents, were expropriated for next to nothing, as usual.

49. The Turkish authorities, with Law 502/1978 managed to shrink the community property of the Baloukli Hospital to what it was in 1936, annulling all transfers of moveable and real properties which had taken place by virtue of donations, bequests etc.

1980 - 1989



Service at the ruined Greek church of Kardamos site, in Gokceada island.

Image creator: <http://eggs-in-art.blogspot.com/2009/04/29-2008.html>



Vandalized Greek cemetery in Agridia village, Gokceada island.

50. The 1980s were the “coup de grace” for the Christians of Gokceada and Bozcaada, in the form of new ‘unsolved’ murders. In July 1980, George Viglis was massacred in Schinoudi, supposedly by ‘unknown’ parties. In 1984 Efstratios Stylianidis was murdered in Schinoudi and Nikos Ladas in PanHaghia. A few years later Zaphiris Deliconstantis was murdered in the village of Glyky. In 1984 the Turkish Government, bringing to a conclusion the infamous ‘eritme programi’, meaning the plan for the complete turkification of those Greek islands, proceeded to seize the last remaining 956 thousand square meters, prohibiting cattle breeding and characterizing all remaining pastures as forestland or lands to be reforested and national parks.

51. On May 29, 1985, on a symbolic date, the Turkish authorities proceeded to an also symbolic act: They toren down the whole front of the holy church of Haghios Georgios in Makrochori (Bakirkoy).

1990 - 1998



Ioakimion School for Girls in Fener. Established in 1882. Closed when Greeks were forced to expatriate from Istanbul.

52. The current decade is characterized by the increased intensity of the Turkish provocations, not only against the remnants of the Greek properties in the unforgettable fatherlands of Asia Minor, which are the fixed target of the Young Turks, but also against the inanimate witnesses of the great Greek presence and the huge Christian estates.

After a period of 20 years from the last permitted elections in the Greek communities of Istanbul, it was only in March 1991 that the elections were repeated. However, the procedure permitted was only a parody, since the members of the appointed returning committee were also the only candidates! A Greek woman, who dared to protest, was found abused in her home, after having received the 'visit' of unknown parties who had tried to 'bring her to her senses'.

53. In 1991, the Turkish authorities took arbitrary occupation of the building of the Greek community of Tzivali (Cibali) and the Community building of Haghios Phocas in Mesochori (Ortakoy), Bosphorus. In both cases, the Turkish State paid the expenses for the restoration of the occupied buildings.

54. On August 25, 1991, perfectly organized demonstrators, with not only the tolerance but also the open support of the Turkish authorities, besieged, under the sounds of epic songs of the janissaries, the premises of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which they blocked off for four days and nights. When they had the pleasure to leave, they kept trumpeting forth their intention to return and install a Turkish patriarch in the premises of the Patriarchate!

55. In April 1992, four churches and one holy fountain were the targets of attacks: The church of Evangelistria, at the foot of Tattavla (Kurtulus), the church of Haghios Georgios in Edirne-Capi, the church of Haghios Ignatios in Halkidona (Kadikoy) and the holy water spring of Prophitis Ilias in Mega Revma (Arnavutkoy). In all these cases, the culprits removed undisturbed icons and religious vessels of great historic and archaeological value, without of course getting arrested.

56. On August 1993, 'unknown' parties entered the Christian cemetery of Neochori (Yenikoy), Constantinople, and opened and looted 30 tombs. At that time, the church in the cemetery of Prophitis Ilias was broken into and robbed, while at the holy water spring of Parthenos Maria in Gioksuyu, bold culprits opened a great hole on the wall of the building, destroyed the premises and the holy water's taps.

57. On June 12, 1993, 'unknown' parties as usual, catapulted an improvised Molotov bomb onto the building of the newly built, with great trouble and expenses, Patriarchal House in Phanare (Fener). The fire was extinguished by the clergymen, because the Fire Department was unable to intervene!

58. On early August 1993, one more incident shocked the Christian minority of Istanbul. A twelve-year old girl, Petroula Syrigou, was dragged by force inside a black Mercedes by three 'unknown' parties, in front of the eyes of a large number of witnesses. The poor girl was found a little while later naked and molested in a state of aphasia, which lasted three whole days. On the third day, Petroula Syrigou died and was buried in the Christian cemetery of Neochori (Yenikoy), Bosphorus. A few days later, on August 24, 1993, vandals broke into the same cemetery and after breaking the tomb marbles, scattered the bones of the dead and unburied a corpse from its shroud in order to tear it apart!

59. On September 28, 1993 eight 'unknown' persons entered the premises of the Ioakimion School for Girls in Fener, used a tank of gas and started a fire and then disappeared. The fire was extinguished by the local residents, because the Fire Department did not deem it necessary to make an appearance. The following month, in October 1993, a big rock was thrown inside the premises of the Patriarchate from the neighboring hill, a regular army bomb was placed in the church of Panagia ton Ouranon, in an old quarter of Istanbul, which fortunately did not explode, while the fire started by 'unknown' parties at the Monastery of Haghios George in Prinkipos (Buyukada) ruined a significant

1990 - 1998



Central School (Kentrikon), ruined. Established in 1893. Closed when Greeks were forced to expatriate from Istanbul.



Zappeion School for Girls. Established in 1875.

part of the building. In November 1993 'unknown' parties threw two bombs inside the precinct of the church of Panagia in Egri-Kapi and disappeared.

60. On March 30, 1994, three improvised incendiary Molotov bombs were catapulted from the northern wall of the Patriarchal Seat in Fener and twelve days later, on April 12, 1994 Molotov bombs were thrown inside the yard of the Patriarchal Great School of the Nation. On the night of April 30, 1994 'unknown' parties broke into the church of Metamorphosis in the Sisli cemetery, stole 7 icons of great value, four gold candle-stands and ruined various religious vessels. Immediately after that, they broke into the neighbouring chapel of the Apostles Petros and Pavlos, and desecrated the grounds. On the night of August 1, 1994 'unknown' parties entered into the chapel of Haghios Ioannis Prodromos in the cemetery of Makrochori (Bakirkoy), stealing innumerable icons and desecrating the grounds. In September 1994 the Turkish authorities, in a characteristic insult to the religious sentiment of Christians, make available the old Byzantine church of Haghia Irini for the conduct of an international beauty contest!

61. On April 1995, the house of BBC correspondent Alkis Kourkoulas was broken into and valuable documents were stolen. In June of the same year 'unknown' parties broke into the church of Haghios Ignatios in Halkidona (Kadikoy), stealing icons and five silver candle-holders and into the Holy Water Spring of Parthenos Maria in Gioksuyu, ruining furniture. On October 4, 1994 'unknown' parties murdered and robbed the elderly Christina Frangopoulos in Prinkipos (Buyukada). A powerful remote-controlled explosive device was discovered by the church attendant and disposed of at the last minute by the Turkish police. On September 16, 1996 two bombs went off almost simultaneously, one in the Byzantine church of Panagia in Mouchli (Fener) and the other in the now shut down building of the loakeimion School for Girls in Fener. Thirteen days later, on September 29, 1996 a grenade was catapulted onto the roof of the Patriarchal Church of Haghios Georgios, causing damages to the building.

62. The bomb attacks in Fener went on under the impassive indifference of the Turkish Government. Thus, on December 2, 1997 a new bomb attack at the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate resulted to the serious injury of deacon Nectarios from Rethymnon, Crete and to extensive damages in the Holy Church of Haghios Georgios. On January 13, 1998 the same always 'unknown' parties entered at two o'clock in the afternoon into the holy water spring of Haghios Therapon near Haghia Sofia, murdered the 73-year old keeper Haviaropoulos, threw his corpse into a well, grabbed valuable icons and set the place on fire in order to cover their tracks!

63. In the night of March 30-31, 1998 vandals entered the cemetery in Tatavla, near the center of Istanbul, ruined 51 tombs and pillaged undisturbed the grounds.

64. On April 3, 1998, Reuters reported: "Unknown attackers have desecrated 72 Greek Orthodox graves in Istanbul, state run Anatolian news agency said on Friday. It said the attackers broke gravestones and opened 15 tombs, breaking crosses and covering the area with bones taken from one of the graves at a cemetery in the city's Kurtulus district".

65. In early November 1998, the Turkish Government arbitrarily removed the supervisory committee returning of the Seminary in Halki, on the grounds of their alleged 'mismanagement' and 'propaganda against the Turkish State', condemning in fact the whole Institution to shut down.

66. In the school textbook published in year 1998 by the Ministry of Education in Turkey for the "National Security Class" lessons taught, in the Chapter "The geographic position of Turkey and the threats against Turkey the neighboring countries and the relations with international organizations", specifically in the section referring to Greece, **The Ecumenical Patriarchate (Fener Rum Patrikhanesi and the issue of Halki Seminary (Heybeliada Ruhban Okulu) are mentioned among**

1999 - 2009



The orphanage of the island Buyukada (Prinkipos).

the problems regarding the relations between the two countries. Also, at the seminars to military forces recruits, Commanders appointed by the General Staff are delivering speeches in which Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered as an hostile institution seeking to destroy Turkey. These defamatory incidents lead to provocative actions against the Patriarch as well as the members of the Greek minority.

Over the last decade (1999 - 2009), provoking actions by State Authorities or acts of vandalism that cause concerns for the security of religious places and members of the Greek Minority as well have been observed.

67. In October 2004, the Ecumenical Patriarchate was bombed yet again by extremists.

The Grey Wolves routinely demonstrate outside the Phanar and burn the Patriarch in effigy.

68. In the 2005, according to the Report issued by the Helsinki Commission, the laws are set forth in such a way that the confiscations technically may appear legal, but they are administered in an inappropriate manner. For example, permits are not granted for building in need of repair until after they are declared to have been abandoned and taken over by the Authorities.

69. On March 20, 2006, legal title to the orphanage of the island Buyukada (Prinkipos) was unilaterally altered, taken from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and given to the Turkish State. (Recently, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has taken this case to the European Court of Human Rights and it has won the case).

70. On June 1, 2006, the Ecumenical Patriarchate was informed that its ownership of several properties adjacent to the Monastery of Haghios Georghios Karype on the island of Burgazada (Antigoni) has passed to the Ottoman Foundation of Silahtar Abdulah Aga Vakfi. This foundation then transferred property rights to the Regional Directorate of Foundations, which demanded rent from the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the use of these properties !

71. In June 2007, the High Supreme Court of the Turkish Republic (Yargitay) put in force the rule which strictly prohibits the use of the title “Ecumenical” from the Patriarch.

Army officers in Turkey were arrested for planning the assassination of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew II.

72. In November 2007, Ministry of Environment and Forestry officials proceeded to a partial demolition of the roof from the Byzantine monastery of Metamorphosis Sotiros in the island of Halki (Heybeliada), as it was being restored. The officials claimed the restoration was illegal. However, an investigation conducted by island authorities determined the ministry officials acted without cause. During the same period, two Greek Orthodox Churches (Aghia Triada in Kadikoy and Pammegiston Taksiarchon in Istinye), have been attacked by nationalists. In the case of Kadikoy, they assaulted the personnel of the church.

73. In July 2008, two attacks and destructions in the Holy Fountain of Aghia Fotini on the island of Kinaliada were recorded.

74. In August 2008, a suit was filed, based on the aforementioned rule of the High Supreme Court, as well as the Greek minority's newspaper “Apogevmatini”, which is published in Istanbul.

75. On September 2-3, 2009, vandals caused damages in 90 graves of the Greek Orthodox cemetery in Baloukli, Istanbul.

Epilogue

In conclusion, Turkey, in its E.U. accession process, has a clear obligation to fully respect human and minority rights, as it is the case with the Greek Minority, in other words an obligation towards its own citizens. Turkey has also to abide by relevant International Treaties and especially the Lausanne treaty.

Turkey is invited to take immediate actions so as to redress past injustices, build -both politically and in daily life- a sense of tolerance and safety within the members of the Greek Minority and to allow them to continue their existence and well-being. Turkey is also invited to take all those initiatives to permit Greeks of Istanbul and of the islands of Gokceada and Bozcaada that have been forced to expatriate, as a consequence of the persecutions and continuing violations of their human rights, to return to their homeland.

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