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Greek minorities and refugee populations: the case of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople
from 1923 until today.

by

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ABSTRACT

The present research entitled “Greek minorities and refugee populations: the case of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople from 1923 until today” is attempting to record the violations of Turkey with regards of the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) and examine how these violations contributed to the extermination of the Greek presence in the Asia Minor. The first part will demonstrate the historical context and the composition of the refugee flows that were created after the catastrophe of the Asia Minor in 1922, as well as the role of the Refugee Rehabilitation Committee. The second part will examine the basic violations of the Treaty of Lausanne, but also the violations of human rights made by Turkey regarding the Greek minorities in the Turkish soil. With a specific focus on the populations of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople, we will investigate how the Greek element in the area was affected by the negative policies of Turkey. Afterwards, in the third part, there will be presented the findings of the research conducted in a population that comes from Asia Minor and lives in Greece regarding their attitudes towards Turkey’s policies from 1923 onwards.

Key-words: minorities, refugees, Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey, human rights, violations, ethnic cleansing

1. INTRODUCTION

The 1923 population exchange signed by the governments of Greece and Turkey stemmed from the “Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations”. It was signed at Lausanne, Switzerland on 30/01/1923. This population exchange involved more than 1.6 million people¹ (about 1.5 million Greeks in Anatolia, and 500,000 Muslims in Greece), most of whom became refugees, losing de jure the citizenship of the country they left behind.

The Greek Orthodox residents of Constantinople - those who settled within the city limits before 30/10/1918 (the so-called "etablis"), as well as the Muslims of Western Thrace - between the rivers Nestos and Evros - were excluded from the obligatory population exchange. These two populations were automatically transformed into minority groups. According to Article 14 of the Treaty of Lausanne, the inhabitants of Imvros and Tenedos were also excluded from this exchange.

The 1923 Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey was based on religious identity, and included the Greek Orthodox Christian citizens of Turkey, and the Muslim citizens of Greece. It was a mandatory exchange of large-scale populations, or otherwise, agreed reciprocal displacement. The only one in world history that was dictated by a transnational convention. Many historians characterize this exchange of population as a “legalized form of ethnic cleansing”². This treaty resulted in the destruction of the Hellenism in Asia Minor, a Hellenism that existed in the region for almost three millennia; the Hellenism that accepted the burden of suffering from political division, economic exhaustion and psychological disorientation.

The Asia Minor catastrophe was one of the most important incidents in modern Greek history. It was a turning point that shaped the history of Hellenism during the 20th century and, certainly, an event that determined the internal, economic, social and political development of the modern Greek state. The large-scale exchange of populations dramatically changed the ethnolinguistic and human-geographical composition on both sides of the Aegean Sea. At the same time, it prepared the ground for the development of the Turkish State, on the foundations of the Ottoman Empire. On the other side, the Greek State

¹ Motta, G. (2013). *Less Than Nations: Central-eastern European Minorities After WWI* (Unabridged edition). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

² G, Kaloudis (2014). *Ethnic Cleansing in Asia Minor and the Treaty of Lausanne*. International Journal on World Peace.

would have to feel the painful consequences of the shrinking of Hellenism in Asia Minor and would have to face the socio-economic problems that demanded an immediate solution. About one-quarter of the Greek population in 1922 were the refugees who left their ancestral homes in Asia Minor and moved to a country ravaged by a ten-year war, an internal division and a great national catastrophe.

In recent years, we have witnessed a continuous aggressive tendency of Turkey towards the Greek minorities. We are seeing the emergence of a hostile country that is politically isolated and is moving further and further away from the shared values of the European Union and the respect of human rights. This, of course, has an impact on its attitude towards the Greek element that is currently in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. The attitude of Turkey has been very negative and aggressive since the 1920s and continues to this day to show great resentment towards the Greeks in its territories.

In the first part of the dissertation, we will start with the historical context of the Asia Minor catastrophe in 1922 and how it led to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. The refugee dimension of the Asia Minor catastrophe will be examined as well as how important the "memory" of the refugees is for the formation of a common refugee identity. In the second part, we mention the refugee flows that were created after the Asia Minor catastrophe and we will refer to the role and the composition of the Refugee Rehabilitation Committee.

In the third part, we will examine the Turkish violations regarding the Treaty of Lausanne. More specifically, we will start with the islands of Imvros and Tenedos and we will see in detail which provisions of the Treaty are violated in the educational matters, in the property possession, but also basic violations in fundamental human rights. Then the main points of the report of Andreas Gross and the Resolution of 2008 will be presented, which were a turning point in the history of these two islands regarding the protection of minorities. At the end of this part, we will refer to the European Commission Reports on Turkey and evaluate the progress that has been made regarding the restoration of the rights of the Greek minorities on Turkish soil.

In the meantime, we will proceed to the area of Constantinople, where the violations, the economic exhaustion, the attacks, the killings and the massive deportations permanently marked the Hellenism of Asia Minor. The experiences of these people will forever be engraved in their memories, while the new generations will not be able to experience even the slightest pain and uprooting experienced by their parents and ancestors.

In the last part, we will present the findings of the research conducted on people coming from Asia Minor. Our research examines the attitudes of the people that are living in

Greece and originating either themselves or their parents from the regions of Asia Minor regarding the violations of Turkey in the Treaty of Lausanne. Finally, we will frame the concluding remarks based on the literature review and the empirical research.

PART 1

2. Anatolian Greek refugee flows

The memories of the Greeks, who fled Asia Minor after 1922, and their descendants, have helped them, first of all, to create a refugee identity as a strategy to cope with the trauma of forced displacement, and secondly to give shape to the imagined community of Mikrasiates (Greek people from Asia Minor). The concept of the “memory” has helped the refugees in the social construction of a common public and private identity. By using the memory as a tool, this displaced population in order to prevent the loss of their identity, created an imagined community of Mikrasiates, so as to give “profound emotional legitimacy to their existence as a people”. In that way, they managed to give meaning to social life in their new location, which now was Greece. It is important to pay attention to the construction of the identity constructed by the Greeks of Asia Minor and study their refugee experience. They have survived as a community within a larger population sharing common religion and language, despite being forcibly expelled from their homeland since the early 1920s.³

3. Historical context

3.1 Asia Minor War

Since the Ottoman Empire began to decline in the eighteenth century, and especially during its territorial collapse in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many refugee groups fled to escape the repression. Indeed, the Asia Minor Greeks were just one of the groups of refugees that arrived in the Balkans. The persecutions of the Greeks had started taking place long before 1908, however after the Neo-Turkish movement, the situation began to get worse and worse. Between 1908 and 1914 the murders and destruction of the Greek

³ James, A. (2001), *Memories of Anatolia: generating Greek refugee identity*, Balkanologie [Online], Vol. V, n° 1-2.

populations increased significantly. Turkish harassment of ethnically Greek villages and cities in Western Anatolia during WW1, and the conscription of ethnically Greek men into Turkish labor battalions, increased the Greeks' desires to unite the ethnically Greek areas within Turkey with mainland Greece. World War I (1914-1918) is marked by the brutal destruction of the Greek population with massacres, persecutions, burning of entire cities and mass exile of thousands of Greeks inside Turkey. In total, around 900,000 of Anatolian Greeks were killed during 1914-1924.⁴

The Treaty of Sevres (July 28/August 10, 1920) was one of the Peace Treaties that followed the end of World War I. Signed between the victorious parts of World War I and the defeated Ottoman Empire. This Treaty put an end to the Ottoman Empire. With the Treaty of Sevres, Ottoman territory was limited to one-fifth of the pre-war territory of the empire, which essentially meant its shrinking in Constantinople and Central Anatolia. In January 1920, it was decided that, contrary to earlier proposals, approved by the French, Constantinople, the seat of the Sultan Khalif (his religious title) was to remain part of the Turkish state. The Treaty of Sevres demonstrated the will of the Allies to destroy not only the Ottoman Empire, but also to place the remaining Turkish territory under close administrative-military and economic control. The Treaty of Sevres in the section referring to Greece attributed most of Eastern Thrace and the wider region of Izmir, to the Greek government and Greek army. With this Treaty, Greece managed to achieve the maximum possible results. The area of Constantinople and the Dardanelles Straits became an international region under the control of the "League of Nations".⁵

Greece was a politically unstable country with great poverty that fell victim to its ambition and tried in its own way to join the "the imperialists' club". But signs were hopeful in 1919, when Turkey lay utterly demoralized and defeated, while all major powers, including the United States which was considering a mandate of a Constantinople state and Armenia, aimed at establishing their authority over parts of the defunct Ottoman Empire. Greece could therefore count on minimum Turkish resistance and a community of interest with its mighty wartime allies. Furthermore, the single most powerful, almost sacred idea that since the creation of the modern Greek State dominated its foreign policy was the "Megali Idea", the liberation of all Greeks living under foreign rule. "As substantial Greek populations lived in Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor, the opportunity that now presented itself

⁴ James, A. (2001), *Memories of Anatolia: generating Greek refugee identity*, Ibid.

⁵ Τσιργιώτης, Δ. (2013). *Νεότερη και σύγχρονη ελληνική ιστορία: διεθνείς σχέσεις και διπλωματία*. ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑ.

to bring this policy one giant step closer to fulfillment could hardly be resisted. Conditions became less favourable later but Greece could still count on Britain's steadfast support to maintain its position".⁶

After November 1920 the Greeks continued to nurture the hope of a more favourable British stance, ignoring obvious signs that pointed in the opposite direction. They also resisted changes in the peace terms and rejected the idea of evacuation from Asia Minor even as they were acknowledging the seriousness of their situation. The century-old nationalist dream, now at the threshold of its fulfillment, was too powerful to abandon. Also, the Greek government faced fears about losing power and prestige. There was a big concern for the Christian minorities, the unstable diplomatic services, the weak military leadership, the unbridgeable political divisions, the lack of charismatic figures such as Venizelos (a Greek statesman and a notorious leader of the Greek national liberation movement⁷). As it happened, with the Treaty of Lausanne, Greece relinquished all claims on its briefly held Turkish possessions and undertook the enormous burden of providing for more than a million Greeks who were made to abandon their ancestral homes in Turkey. "The spectacular success of this process never entirely offset the deep sense of sorrow and frustration that the Asia Minor disaster left on the conscience of the Greek nation".⁸

The concepts of the Greeks' "Megali Idea" and Ataturk's modern Turkish State, as well as World War I and nationalism, caused additional large-scale population displacement. The Megali Idea, or "Great Idea", was the dream of the re-establishment of the Hellenic Kingdom that would include all of the territories that had previously been part of the Byzantine Empire. Greeks saw as inevitable the recovery of the capital of Byzantium and metropolis of the Greek Orthodox Church, Constantinople, where many educated, rich, and powerful Greeks still lived. This nationalistic desire to expand the Greek territory to include all ethnic Greeks, including the millions living in Asia Minor, brought Greece into direct conflict with Turkey.⁹

More specifically, with backing from Great Britain, France, and Italy, Greece invaded the Asia Minor port of Smyrni (1919) in an attempt to annex the parts of Turkey that were

⁶ Karvounarakis, T. (2000). *End of an Empire: From the Treaty of Sevres to the Treaty of Lausanne*. <https://ojs.lib.uom.gr/index.php/BalkanStudies/article/viewFile/3012/3036>

⁷ Kitromilides, P. M. (2006). *Eleftherios Venizelos*. Amsterdam University Press.

⁸ Karvounarakis, T. (2000), Ibid.

⁹ Hatzis, A. *A Political History of Modern Greece 1821–2018*. Encyclopedia of Law and Economics, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-7883-6_53-1

substantially ethnically Greek. The Greek forces did well at first, advancing within forty miles of Ankara, however, foreign support dried up and the Greek army was left helpless. In 1921 the Turkish forces under Atatürk were finally able to stop the Greek army and by 1922 the Greeks were in a panicked retreat. In September, Turkish troops invaded Izmir seeking revenge. Hundreds of thousands of Greek refugees had gathered there, hoping to be relocated outside Turkey. Tens of thousands escaped, but tens of thousands more were killed or captured.¹⁰

3.2 The Treaty of Lausanne

Greece was the defeated and exhausted party of the Greek-Turkish conflict. For this reason, the Hellenic Republic negotiated directly with Turkey, who was the victor, and signed a peace treaty which was favorable for the Turkish side. This Treaty ended the dispute and welcomed a speedy resolution. However, the price was very heavy for Greece. The great concern which was underlying the *Treaty of Lausanne* was the destruction of Hellenism in Asia Minor. The *Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek-Turkish Populations*, signed by Greece and Turkey on 30 January 1923, antedated by six months the general Treaty of Lausanne which was affixed.¹¹

After their forced evacuation, many refugees are expected to be allowed to return to their homes. However, the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, the Convention on the Exchange of Population between Greece and Turkey, put an end to their hopes of returning to their homes. The expectation of a financial return for abandoned properties in Anatolia was also in vain. In essence, the Treaty of Sevres carried out part of the Greek persecution, while the Treaty of Lausanne sealed the victory of Turkish nationalism and the final expulsion of the Christian population from the region that was now evolving into a purely national one.¹²

Desired by the Turkish government to prevent further problems from any minorities, the cleansing of Anatolia of ethnic groups, including the Orthodox Greeks, resulted in over one million Asia Minor Greek refugees pouring into Greece during 1922 and 1923. The Treaty of Lausanne, which ended the Greek-Turkish War of 1919-1922, set the conditions for population exchange and recompense for property lost. "This treaty, ratified and carried out

¹⁰ Brown, P. (1924). From Sèvres to Lausanne. *American Journal of International Law*, 18(1), 113-116. doi:10.2307/2189228.

¹¹ Petropoulos, John A. (1976). *The Compulsory Exchange of Populations: Greek-Turkish Peacemaking, 1922–1930. Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 2(1), 135–160. doi:10.1179/030701376790206199

¹² Brown, P. (1924), Ibid.

by the League of Nations, was the first of its kind: internationally negotiated and sanctioned compulsory exchange of minorities”.¹³

Turkey recognized the occupation of Cyprus by Britain and the occupation of the Dodecanese by Italy, while at the same time did not claim the former Arab provinces at all. The Allies abandoned their demands for autonomy for Turkish Kurdistan and the Turkish concession of territory to Armenia, abandoned their claims to spheres of influence in Turkey, and imposed no control over Turkey's finances or armed forces. The Turkish straits between the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea were declared open to all shipping.¹⁴

Forced population movements had been a common phenomenon in human history, usually as a result of war, invasion and enemy raids upon settled territories. In the history of Asia Minor, in particular, massive population movements, either under duress in war-time or as a result of colonization, relocation or socio-economic change had been a standard feature for millennia. What was novel about the Lausanne Convention was the provision for compulsory exchange without any form of prior consultation of the population involved. This Convention had certain precedents during the previous decade. In 1913, after the Second Balkan War, Turkey and Bulgaria attempted a partial exchange of population, while in 1919 Greece and Bulgaria had signed a convention on reciprocal emigration. In 1914, a limited and voluntary exchange of rural population between Greece and Turkey was proposed by the Turkish Government through its minister in Athens and accepted by Venizelos, the Prime Minister of Greece. However, the eruption of WW1 prevented this implementation of the exchange.¹⁵

The Lausanne Convention provided that all people, Christians and Muslims, who had become refugees since October 18, 1912, when the First Balkan War was declared, and were originally inhabitants of regions whose populations were subject to the exchange, were considered exchangeable. Only two groups were excluded from the exchange: the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople who were permanently established in the prefecture of the City of Constantinople (including the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus and the Princes Islands in the Sea of Marmara) prior to October 30, 1918 and the Muslim inhabitants of Western Thrace. To these two populations, which were excluded from the exchange, the subsequently signed

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2021). *Treaty of Lausanne*. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-Lausanne-1923>

¹⁵ Kitromilides, P. M. (2008). The Greek-Turkish population exchange. In E. J. Zürcher (Ed.), *Turkey in the Twentieth Century / La Turquie au Vingtième Siècle* (pp. 255–270). K. Schwarz. <http://www.kms.org.gr/Portals/0/the-greek-turkish-population-exchange.pdf>

Treaty of Lausanne added the population of the Greek-inhabited and Greek-speaking islands Imvros and Tenedos, which were returned to Turkish sovereignty under a special regime of self-administration.¹⁶

The arrival of refugees in Greece created gigantic technical problems, the solution of which would be facilitated by the departure of Muslims and the migration of the Bulgarian population. Finally, the Allies endorsed the solution of the compulsory exchange, as they believed that a radical solution to the issue of minorities would aid their efforts to ensure the stability of the new international order. Apparently, the obligation of the exchange was decided in order to maximize the benefits that the states would have from the departure of the minority populations but also to find resources for the settlement of the exchanged refugees. Thus, Greece and Turkey signed the Convention, under the auspices of the League of Nations, imposing the obligatory and permanent movement for the Greek Orthodox of Turkey and the Muslims of Greece on the basis of religion, but also prohibiting their return to the *de jure*. The pending issues created by the implementation of the Exchange were eliminated a few years later with the Greek-Turkish agreement of June 10, 1930, according to which the property issue of the exchange was finally settled at the expense of their financial recovery.¹⁷

The exchanged refugees immediately and automatically became citizens of the state in which they would settle and, therefore, lost their former citizenship. Even those who had left Greece and Turkey before the Exchange but after October 1912, acquired the citizenship of the state of establishment. This population movement had no precedent in history and was extremely difficult to execute. To alleviate some of these difficulties, the terms of the exchange were based on religious rather than racial criteria. In order to deal with these huge refugee flows, 2 major mechanisms were created: one was the Joint Committee based in Constantinople which undertook to manage the cases of 450,000 Muslims and 150,000 Greeks who were still in the East. The other side was the EAP with representatives in Thessaloniki and Athens and was responsible for assisting in the rehabilitation of all Greek refugees.¹⁸

3.3 The Refugee dimension

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Τσιριγώτης, Δ. (2010). *Η ελληνική στρατηγική στη Μικρά Ασία 1919 - 1922*. Ποιότητα.

¹⁸ Εξεργιζόγλου, Χ., Σταματοπούλου, Δ., Ozil, A., Κατσάπης, Κ., & Τσετλάκα, Α. Μ. (2011). *Το 1922 και οι πρόσφυγες*. Νεφέλη.

Following the disastrous campaign of the Greek Army in Asia Minor, massive refugee flows arrived in Greece in the last months of 1922, followed gradually by thousands of families who left their homes under the terms of the Exchange of Populations in 1923 between Greece and Turkey.¹⁹ Refugees probably numbered about 1.4 - 1.5 million, representing a quarter of the total Greek population at that time.

The urban population of Greece increased on a great scale. 300,000 refugees settled in Athens and Piraeus, while 170,000 in Thessaloniki. Drama, Alexandroupolis, Yiannitsa, Kavalla and Serres experienced refugee inflows amounting to more than 50 percent of their native populations. In Katerini, Salonica, Mytelini, Veroia, Xanthi and Edessa, it was between 40 and 50 percent, and in Heraklion, Chios, Komotini, Florina, and Athens-Piraeus, between 20 and 40 percent.” In 1928, refugees made up 31.7 percent of the population of towns with over 20,000 inhabitants. Reports of wandering refugees came from Salonica: ‘Conditions are not suitable. In other words, there is chaos’. British officials in the 1920s warned that it was in the slums of industrialised areas ‘where Bolshevism was expected to find converts more easily than anywhere else in Greece’.²⁰

Henry Morgenthau, chairman of the League of Nations Greek Refugee Settlement Commission, estimated that 750,000 refugees had fled Smyrni during the disaster. Many of these displaced people sailed to the nearby Aegean islands in small boats and hundreds of thousands were transported to Athens, where Morgenthau witnessed their arrival: The condition of these people on their arrival in Greece was beyond description. They were crouched on every kind of boat, and in some cases the boats were so full that they barely could stand on their feet on deck. They were exposed for hours under the sun and the cold rain of September and October. In one case Morgenthau saw seven thousand people placed into a boat that should have been loaded with a maximum two thousand.²¹

“In this and many other cases there was neither food to eat nor water to drink, and in numerous instances the ships were buffeted about for several days at sea before their wretched human cargo could be brought to land. Typhoid and smallpox swept through the ships. Lice infested everyone. Babies were born on board. Men and women went insane. Some leaped overboard to end their miseries in the sea. Those who survived were landed

¹⁹ Pentzopoulos, D. (1962), *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact Upon Greece*. Paris.

²⁰ G. I. Kritikos (2020). *Silencing inconvenient memories: refugees from Asia Minor in Greek historiography*. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, pp. 1–16.
doi:10.1080/1369183x.2020.1812282.

²¹ H. Morgenthau (1994), *Η αποστολή μου στην Αθήνα. 1922 το έπος της εγκατάστασης*, μετάφραση Ιωσήφ Κασσεσιάν, εκδ. Τροχαλία, Αθήνα, σ. 98-111.

*without shelter upon the open beach, loaded with filth, racked by fever, without blankets or even warm clothing, without food and without money. Besides these horrors the refugees endured every form of sorrow—the loss of husbands by wives, loss of wives by husbands, loss of children by death or straying, all manners of illnesses”.*²²

The experience of being *prosfyges* (lit. fugitives) was disastrous for those involved. The refugees from Anatolia were mainly women, children and the elderly people, as men between the ages of 18 and 45 were forced into labor battalions, moved into Turkey and put to work in order to rebuild cities and factories destroyed during the war. Greece had been impoverished by years of war and had a population of just over 5 million at the time. The difficulty of absorbing about 1.2 million Greeks in Anatolia, while expelling 356,000 Turks, flooded the country's financial resources. Malaria, typhoid and dysentery were epidemics among refugees. According to a source in the League of Nations, mortality rates among new arrivals have risen by one point to 45%.²³

Following their uprooting many refugees were in a state of shock and disbelief. They believed that it was a matter of time until they returned to their homelands. However, the Ankara Convention of 1930 put an end to the dreams of the refugees. Eleftherios Venizelos, while trying to attempt an international reconciliation with Turkey, led the Greek Government in a final settlement to resolve the issues concerning the minorities that have been exchanged. Unfortunately, the value of the properties of the Greeks in Asia Minor were accepted to be less than those of the Muslim properties in Greece. At the same time, most of the refugees felt betrayed: many promises had been made for various kinds of compensation against loss of property and livelihood to be returned in cash, bonds etc. but only a few had received what was due to them. This incident increased their feeling of alienation from the Greek State, their feeling of dissatisfaction and injustice.²⁴

3.4 Memories of Anatolia

As “*prosfyges*” these people could not hold and develop a collective identity, but “as Mikrasiates they felt that they had a superior cultural endowment from the Byzantine heritage of their place of origin”. The years of marginalization, both socially and politically, reinforced their sense of separation. It was very important for them to maintain their identity,

²² Ibid.

²³ H. Morgenthau (1994), Ibid., p. 15.

²⁴ Hirschon, R. (1998). *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*. Berghahn Books.

their past, their values and cultivate the sense of belonging. The Greek Orthodox religion and the Byzantine traditions were of utmost importance for the people coming from Asia Minor. These memories that they all shared, have allowed them to reconstruct their lives, if not just as they had been, “at least with continuity”. Memory is a special term and power in Orthodoxy; and at the same time, the tradition gives its meaning to the past. Religion has a special meaning for refugees, as memory gives Mikrasiates the means to build their social identity all together.²⁵

The Hellenism of Asia Minor never really vanished. Pontus, Cappadocia, and other areas may have lost their former status, but their inhabitants, like the Ionians and Aeolians in ancient times, inculcated mother Greece. The bitterness of the initial change of residence, since they did not get accepted right away, went away as the time went by and gave way to the respect a Greek should show his fellow neighbor from the beginning. These people made Greece more solid, wiser and richer as far as culture is concerned. The Greek nation of Asia Minor was severely stricken; out of five and a half million of its population, only one and a half made it to Greece. The rest either died of hard labor, met a tragic death, slaughtered without hesitation or succumbed to continuous hardship. Those who survived were scattered around the world. These people had born Civilization, showed dignity and retained their pride. With their bundle, the uprooted of that place brought their holy items, relics, traditions and the history of so many centuries with them.²⁶

It is crucial for the refugees to display, recount and recall their shared memories and their cultural heritage; and it is known that visual representations play a vital role in this. The more the history of the families and these groups is retold, the more it is preserved and enhanced. The photographs are “a personal message from the past, providing visual reinforcement of the assertion that because of their cultural heritage their family is different from other Greeks”. The past exists and will exist until the end of time. The memories of Anatolia, the traditions of Byzantium will remain forever. The construction of the refugee identity is supported and nourished by the memories of these people; and in this way, the chronicle of the ethnic history of Mikrasiates becomes clear. Through the memory and the recollection, the past becomes more concrete and more real. The remembered personal and

²⁵ James, A. (2001), *Memories of Anatolia: generating Greek refugee identity*, Ibid.

²⁶ Museum, V. (2020, February 26). *Asia Minor (1922)*. Paul Vrellis Museum - Μουσείο Παύλου Βρέλλη. <https://www.vrellis.gr/en/asia-minor-1922/>

public experiences help the refugees maintain and preserve their identity in the years to come.²⁷

4. Greeks of the Ottoman Empire

“The Ottoman Greeks were of the Roman millet (Rum-i Millet)”. They were structured into communities placed under the supreme religious and political authority of the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople who was acknowledged by the Ottoman authorities as the head of the millet (Rum milletbaşı, or Rumbaşı) and was granted certain “privileges.” This millet, which also included Serbians, Bulgarians, Orthodox Albanians, and others, was most likely the most populous non-Muslim millet in the empire. While demographic data covering most of Ottoman history are not precise, some estimates can be made. On the eve of WWI, the Ottoman Greek population in Asia Minor (i.e. Anatolia) and Eastern Thrace (Trakya) numbered around 2 million— approximately 1.7 million in Asia Minor and 270,000 in Eastern Thrace.²⁸

The genocide against the Ottoman Christians, as a whole, already existed as early as 1908. Concerning the Ottoman Greeks, the destructive intent entered its phase of radicalization after the Balkan Wars; as far as the Ottoman Armenians were concerned, this intent started after the “Armenian Reforms”. States of war, multilateral and even bilateral, were used as the pretexts for this radicalization. They also created the right time and space for committing genocidal crime. There is no doubt that the persecutions, massacres, deportations, and other genocidal measures clearly and convincingly accumulated in a total genocide of the Ottoman Greeks, an autochthonous and distinct ethno-religious group of the Ottoman Empire’s multi-national and multi-religious setting. The genocide of the Ottoman Greeks points towards a systematic policy of extermination and annihilation of the empire’s autochthonous Christian peoples. The aim was the creation of a Muslim and ethnically

²⁷ James, A. (2001), Ibid.

²⁸ Meichanetsidis, V. T. (2015). *The Genocide of the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire, 1913–1923: A Comprehensive Overview*. Genocide Studies International, 9(1), 104–173.
<https://doi.org/10.3138/gsi.9.1.06>

“Turkish State” where other non-Turkish and non-Sunni ethnic and religious groups, would not be tolerated, if not systematically persecuted.²⁹

The successor state of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic, continued this situation against the remaining Greeks of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. This negative behaviour also targeted the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople, which was a “panOrthodox, pan-Christian, and inter-religious point of reference”. Overall, from 1913 to 1923, the Ottoman Greek community was completely vanished by persecutions, slaughters, wars and genocides. In 1913, there were over 2 million Greeks in Turkey. Today, there are less than 3,000.³⁰

Three main categories of refugees after the exchange of populations have emerged from the Hellenism of the former Ottoman Empire. There were refugees from a) Eastern Thrace, b) Asia Minor and c) Pontus. These groups were distributed respectively alongside the west and northwest coasts of Asia Minor, inside the interior of the east (Cappadocia, Cilicia, Ankara) and finally in the region of Pontus. The persecution of the vast majority of this population group was completed in the autumn of 1922 long before the signing of Lausanne for the exchange of populations in 1923.

The population group of the Greek Orthodox communities of the east and mainly of Cappadocia, followed a somewhat different course. Although these communities had already experienced several persecutions since 1914, the inhabitants were informed about the provisions of the treaty only at the end of 1923, when their departure began; and despite the fact that they had been persecuted in the past, such as the forced deportation to the interior of Anatolia or the forced recruitment of the males to Labour Battalions, their movement to Greece was relatively peaceful. The case of the Pontians, however, differs because they reacted in an aggressive manner to the Treaty. The result, however, was disastrous, either with the extermination of many thousands of Greek Orthodox by the Turkish army or with the forced deportation of thousands of Pontians to the countries of the Caucasus. To this category we must add a section of the Greek Orthodox residents of Constantinople who chose to flee despite the relevant provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne.³¹

²⁹ Vallianatos, E. (2013). *The Genocide of the Ottoman Greeks: Studies on the State-Sponsored Campaign of Extermination of the Christians of Asia Minor (1912–1922) and Its Aftermath*; History, Law, Memory / The History of Greece. Mediterranean Quarterly, 24 (2), 111–115.
<https://doi.org/10.1215/10474552-2141935>.

³⁰ Bulut, U. (2020). *Greeks in Turkey on the Verge of Extinction*. Greek City Times. Published.
<https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/01/21/greeks-in-turkey-on-the-verge-of-extinction/>

³¹ Εξερχζόγλου, Χ., Σταματοπούλος, Δ., Ozil, A., Κατσάπης, Κ., & Τσετλάκα, Α. Μ. (2011). *Το 1922 και οι πρόσφυγες*. Νεφέλη.

4.1 Eastern Thrace

Up to 1922, there was a great Christian majority in the population of Eastern Thrace. Greek-speaking Christian Orthodox communities were primarily living in the coastal regions along the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. Eastern Thrace was also inhabited not only by Greek-speaking but also by Bulgarian-speaking Orthodox communities towards the North and the Northwest. Both Greek and Bulgarian-speaking habitants made up 2/3 of the population of the region. There were also some Turk, Armenian and Jew communities but they were concentrated in larger cities, especially in Adrianople. The bibliography of the late 19th century demonstrated a great pattern of interaction between Christians and Muslims in the Thracian countryside. However, this situation was changed at the time of the Balkan Wars, when Bulgaria temporarily occupied the region.³²

It is important to mention that the Greek population of Eastern Thrace exceeded 350,000 residents at that time. This area had a very significant strategic importance, but also was a particularly sensitive territory, since vital Turkish and Bulgarian interests were opposed. The political regime of the Greeks of Eastern Thrace was influenced by many international circumstances and suffered from the Turkish and Bulgarian territorial claims in various historical periods, culminating in the Balkan Wars and the First World War. However, the persecution of the Greek population of Eastern Thrace by Turkey surpassed the atrocities of Bulgaria in both intensity and savagery.³³

During the period 1915-1916 about 100,000 people were obliged to leave Eastern Thrace. That was only a single part of the whole plan to exterminate and destroy the Hellenism of Eastern Thrace. After the end of the First World War and when the Greek army moved to Eastern Thrace in 1920, the Greek refugees would return to their homeland and Eastern Thrace was ceded to Greece. However, the Asia Minor catastrophe in 1922 forced the Greek army to leave Thrace immediately after the signing the Armistice of Mudanya (1922). Accordingly, the Greek troops were to leave Eastern Thrace as far as the Maritsa River and Adrianople (Western Evros) within 15 days. Thus, it began the final uprooting of Hellenism

³² Kitromilides, P. M. (2008). The Greek-Turkish population exchange. In E. J. Zürcher (Ed.), *Turkey in the Twentieth Century / La Turquie au Vingtième Siècle* (pp. 255–270). K. Schwarz.

³³ Βακαλόπουλος, Ε. Α. (2003). *Ο χαρακτήρας των Ελλήνων / Ανιχνεύοντας την εθνική μας ταυτότητα και την ιστορική μόρφωση των Νεοελλήνων (έρευνα, πορίσματα, διδάγματα)*. Εκδοτικός Οίκος Αντ. Σταμούλη.

in Eastern Thrace and the arrival of Greek refugees in northern Greece and mainly in Western Macedonia.³⁴

4.2 Asia Minor

The demographic and ethnological picture was even more complex in the vast geographical space of Asia Minor, where remarkable variation existed not only along and across ethnic demarcation lines but also within the religiously defined ethnic communities themselves. Prior to 1922, the Greek settlement in Asia Minor was composed mostly of 3 geographically based ethnographic entities, distinguishable from each other since they had different sociological, cultural and linguistic characteristics. Asia Minor due to its position between Europe and Asia, received various raids and conquerors, was the birthplace of many ancient peoples and cultures, while also the presence of the Greek population from the Mycenaean era was strong. Especially on the coasts of Asia Minor settled various Greek tribes which founded important colonies, such as Miletus, Phocaea, Smyrna, Ephesus, Bodrum, etc. The settlement of Greek colonies on the beaches in fertile areas indicates the strong presence of Greek Asia Minor and shows that Hellenism in Asia Minor is an extension of Hellenism on both sides of the Aegean since 1100 BC.³⁵

The Greek settlements in Western & North Asia Minor, along the coast of the Sea of the Aegean and Marmara constitute that first ethnographic unit. The second unit of the Orthodox Greeks was composed of the communities of the interior. These communities formed Christian islands in the midst of the Muslim population masses in the regions that are enclosed by the great rivers to the east of the valleys of the Hermus and the Meander, to the west of the region of the sources of the Tigris and the Euphrates to the south of the Kızılırmak and the Sakarya. The Karamanlı, who are the Turkish-speaking Christian Orthodox populations of the interior of Asia Minor, formed their own and unique important cultural group.³⁶

Lastly, the Pontic coastal and highland regions make up the third area of the Greek settlement in Anatolia. In this area, a significant Greek Orthodox society had survived along the Black Sea coast and deep into its hinterland, extending to the Southeast towards the sources of the river of Tigris and Euphrates. “Defined by its highly peculiar form of speech,

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Kitromilides, P. (2011). Το τέλος των αυτοκρατοριών, η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή και το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο. *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών*, 17, 29-42.

³⁶ Ibid.

which under different political circumstances might have naturally evolved into a separate Neo-Greek language parallel to common Modern Greek, this was rural, tightly knit and inward-looking society.” Dispersed in almost 1500 communes, the Greeks of Pontos have formed one of the densest and geographically extensive components of the Greek Orthodox presence in Anatolia. Some of the towns and cities are: Trabzon, Sinope, Samsun, Gümüşhane, Amasya etc.

These Orthodox communities dispersed throughout Asia Minor from the Aegean coast to the depths of Kurdistan and the borders of Armenia and beyond, were held together as a cohesive society by their Church, the Patriarchate of Constantinople and to the South East the Patriarchate of Antioch, based in Damascus. The Muslim population of Asia Minor was made up of Sunnis, who formed the majority, and a sizeable Alevi community. This religious division of the Muslim population cut across linguistic groups. These different groups, religions, languages and communities had been accommodated by the institutions of the imperial state and had managed to survive imperial repression and their own conflicts. This significant ethnological and cultural background that survived through the centuries would be obliterated within 3-4 decades because of modern power politics, nationalism, war and extremism. “The logic of this new configuration of historical forces was encompassed in a skeletal form in the Convention on the population exchange”.³⁷

4.3 Pontian Greeks

From the middle of the 19th century, the Hellenism of Pontos had already achieved significant commercial, economic, intellectual, social development and population growth, accompanied by the creation of numerous institutions. In fact, the presence of the Greek element in the region of Pontus dates back to ancient times.

The Hellenism of Pontus was continuing to expand in all the historical periods: from the Alexandrian times to the Roman times and beyond. During the times of the Byzantine Empire, Constantine Palaiologos transformed Pontus into a state province, while Justinian I (Justinian the Great) set Trabzon as the capital of the province. The strong connection between the Empire and the Black Sea was maintained up until the Franks conquered Constantinople in 1204. In that time, the Komnenians created their own Empire of Trabzon, but lasted up until 1461, 8 years after the occupation of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453.

³⁷ Kitromilides, P. (2011), Ibid., p.19.

Subsequently, the occupation of Trabzon was marked by brutal massacres, killings and forced Islamization. Many Greeks took the road of refuge and the composition of the population was severely altered.³⁸

The Genocide of the Greeks of Pontus (1914-1923) is characterized by thousands of deportations. Populations were displaced during the winter months; people were not allowed to rest in residential areas, in order to be exposed to bad weather conditions. Tens of thousands of people lost their lives on the snow-capped slopes and icy plateaus of the East, where displaced people were forced to walk for weeks to their deaths. It is the process that the great historian Polychronis Enepekidis called “Auschwitz in flow”.

But especially in the Pontus region, Mustafa Kemal decided to intensify the inhuman measures and applied even more harsh methods for the extermination of the Greeks (for example the forced deportations and the Labour Battalion). At the same time, he gave political legitimacy, money and weapons to the leader of Chets named “Topal Osman” hundreds of Chets, in order to accelerate the process of destroying the Greek villages of Pontus. In fact, in order to deprive the Greeks of Pontus of their spiritual, religious and economic leadership, he established the infamous Independence Courts (İstiklâl Mahkemeleri), in which hundreds of clergymen and businessmen were tried by summary proceedings and sentenced to death by hanging.³⁹

The account of the Pontian Genocide was tragic: according to official figures recorded at that time, 303,238 were the victims by 1922, while in March 1924 (when the population exchange began) they amounted to 353,000.⁴⁰

However, despite these dramatic population changes, the Greek element of Pontus was even during the most turbulent periods of its history, the densest and ethnologically united population of the time. As it is mentioned, this historical reality was overturned during the later phase of the First World War, which proved to be fatal for the entire Hellenism of Asia Minor and led to the creation of a large wave of refugees to Greece. The barbaric persecutions of Pontian Hellenism led the Greek parliament on February 24, 1994 with a unanimous decision to declare the Pontian Genocide and to designate May 19 as the National Day of Remembrance of Pontian Hellenism.

³⁸ Φωτιάδης, Κ. (2015). *Η γενοκτονία των Ελλήνων του Πόντου*. Εκδοτικός Οίκος Αντ. Σταμούλη.

³⁹ pontosnews.gr. (2014, October 10). Ποντιακή Γενοκτονία.

<https://www.pontosnews.gr/498238/pontos/chronologio/pontiaki-genoktonia-1919-turkey/>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

4.4 The Refugee Rehabilitation Committee

The huge number of people who arrived in Greece created intense problems in order for them to meet their basic needs, and then to restore and integrate them into the Greek society. The difficult task for the care and rehabilitation of refugees in this extremely difficult period in Greece, has been enormous and suffocating. The economic hardship, the lack of state organization, the political circumstances, the large refugee flows, made it clear that the Greek government was powerless to deal alone with the enormous task of rehabilitating the refugees. The arrival of refugees has accumulated serious problems. Most of them were in a tragic situation and had just fled their country and homes, carrying little or nothing of their movable property. The state and especially the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, with the help of private and foreign charities, tried to cope with the refugees' basic needs: food, housing, medical care.⁴¹

Despite all the efforts, the situation of the refugees did not improve much and many of them due to unhealthy living conditions died of malaria and tuberculosis. The arrival conditions, the physical suffering, the malnutrition, the poor housing, the lack of water and sanitation along with their poor psychological state, were just a few of the factors that have burdened the overall situation of refugees. Mortality among them was very high. In fact, infant mortality prevailed, as many women had miscarriages and premature births. Efforts were made to treat infectious diseases such as typhoid, influenza, smallpox and intense efforts to reduce the cases of malaria and tuberculosis that had already occurred in Greece before the arrival of refugees. In 1922 a typhoid epidemic broke out and malaria broke out in refugees settled in Macedonia and Thrace. The Greek Government, during 1922, allocated about 1.7 million British pounds for the care and first settlement of refugees. In 1922 the Refugee Care Fund was established, which undertook the responsibility to temporarily provide housing to the refugees in the cities and handed over, by the end of its operation in 1925, 4,000 completed houses and 2,500 uncompleted. During the same period (1922-24) 18,337 houses were built by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, but could not be covered adequately to meet all needs, and as a consequence, available sheltered spaces, abandoned houses, basements, theaters, and even barracks continued to be used. It was when the Refugee Rehabilitation Committee would start its operations.⁴²

⁴¹ Κολιόπουλος, Ι. Σ. & Μιχαηλίδης Ι.Α. (2009). *Οι Πρόσφυγες στη Μακεδονία, Από την τραγωδία στην εποποιΐα*. ΜΙΑΗΤΟΣ.

⁴² Ibid.

The Refugee Rehabilitation Committee began its operation on November 11, 1923 in Thessaloniki, while later the Committee moved its headquarters to Athens and completed its work in December 1930. It was an autonomous legal organization. Its purpose was to promote and ensure the rehabilitation and economic integration of refugees in Greek society. In other words, it provided the refugees with permanent housing and productive employment (ex. agricultural fields). The Committee would use the available land and the relevant funds that the Greek government had ceded for this exact purpose. More specifically, the Greek government delivered to the Committee 5,000,000 acres of land (according to the Geneva Protocol) with full ownership titles.⁴³

This action would serve two main purposes: on the one hand, the refugees would gain a permanent residence in an area that they could also cultivate and, accordingly, allow them to be financially stable in a short period of time. On the other hand, the new residence of the refugees would work as a guarantee for the loan that the Committee had undertaken. If we take into account the difficulties, the dire financial situation of the country, the lack of state organization, the large number of refugees, as well as the political instability, within seven years of operation, the Refugee Rehabilitation Committee managed to complete its basic pursuit, that is, to “restore” almost the entire refugee population. In January 1930, a contract was signed between the Committee and the Greek Government, according to which the Committee would transfer the entire property, "movable, immovable, securities, rights and claims of any kind" to the Greek State and, in turn, the State would accept to fulfill all the obligations undertaken by the Committee towards the refugees.⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

PART 2

5. Imvros and Tenedos

Imvros and Tenedos are two small islands in the northern Aegean, between Greece and Turkey; their strategically important location is outside the Dardanelles Straits, which is the only sea lane between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Between 1912 and 1923, the islands were drawn into the Greco-Turkish conflict as well as into World War I, and changed hands several times. Whilst the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, never ratified by Turkey, granted sovereignty over the islands to Greece, the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, negotiated after the Turkish military successes in the so-called Anatolian war, gave the islands back to Turkey. But article 14 of the Treaty of Lausanne stipulated a strong regime of local autonomy in favour of the traditional inhabitants:

“The islands of Imbros and Tenedos, remaining under Turkish sovereignty, shall enjoy a special administrative organisation composed of local elements and furnishing every guarantee for the native non-Moslem population in so far as concerns local administration and the protection of person and property. The maintenance of order will be assured therein by a police force recruited from amongst the local population by the local administration above provided for and placed under its orders. The agreements which have been, or maybe, concluded between Greece and Turkey relating to the exchange of the Greek and Turkish populations will not be applied to the inhabitants of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos.”. After 1923, as the islanders had feared, the Turkish Government was reluctant to fulfill the undertaking of article 14 of the Lausanne Treaty. Indeed, Article 14 of Law No 1151 of 1927 establishing the “special status” of the islands abolished public Greek-language education.

In 1923 the population of Imvros was 10,000 inhabitants, who were 100% Orthodox Greeks, while Tenedos had 2,500 inhabitants, two-thirds of whom were Orthodox Greeks. Article 14 of the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 granted to the Greek Orthodox Imbrians and Tenedians a special regime of local self-government which provided for: a) A special administrative organization consisting of Greeks and providing all the guarantees to the native Greek Orthodox population (non-Muslims), in human rights on the life and liberty of the person and on property. b) A police force to ensure public order recruited among the

indigenous Greek Orthodox population, with the care of the foreseen local administration, under whose orders it would serve.⁴⁵

5.1 Violations on the Treaty of Lausanne

From 1923 to 1929 Turkey violated several times what was agreed in the Treaty of Lausanne. For example, in October 1923 Turks restricted the civil and political rights of the Greeks living in Turkey. All the enterprises were forced to dismiss all Greeks from their employ (Violation of Article 39). Immediately after the installation of the Turkish authorities in Imvros and Tenedos, on 4th October 1923 (where more than 90% of the population was Greek), Turkey completely ignored the special local administration and the autonomy which the two islands should have enjoyed. The Greeks were all dismissed from the courts, the customs houses, the police and the port authorities. They characterized 1500 people from Imvros and 64 from Tenedos as “personae non gratae” and their real property was seized (Violation of Article 14, 38, 39).⁴⁶

In 1934, Greeks were forced to Turkify their last name under Law 2525 because those last names with Greek roots were not accepted by the Turkish authorities. In the meantime, under the slogan “vatandaş türkçe konuş” (=citizens speak Turkish) a racist campaign was launched. Anyone daring to speak his mother tongue in the streets was abused and fined by the Turkish authorities (Violation of Articles 37, 38, 39). In the same year, a new decree in implementation of the Law 2007/1932, banned the Christian population with Greek nationality from exercising several professions. As a result, no less than 10,000 Greek Christians left Turkey (Violation of Article 2, 37,40).

During World War II, Turkey found the opportunity to strike heavy blows on the Greek minorities on its territory. Taking advantage of the weakness of Greece who was struggling for the ideals of freedom and justice at the side of the Allied Forces, in May 1941 the Turkish Government mobilized the prefectures of Constantinople. All Christians aged 20 to 45 were dragged to the army and were scattered in the depths of Asia Minor in order to construct buildings and roads under adverse circumstances (Violation of Articles 37, 38, 39). One year later, the Turkish Government with its Law 4305 using religion and ethnicity as criteria, imposed an emergency property tax named “Varlik Vergisi”. It required the payment

⁴⁵ *Ιστορία μέχρι τη Συνθήκη των Σεβρών*. (n.d.). Imvros Island - Imvrians on the Net.

<https://www.imvrosisland.org/imvros.php?catid=1>

⁴⁶ A, Alexandris. (1980) *Imbros and Tenedos: A study of turkish attitudes towards two ethnic greek island communities since 1923*, Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora, volume VII, number I, pp. 5-31.

within 15 days of an arbitrarily imposed tax by the Turkish authorities. Failure to pay this tax resulted in the confiscation of the taxpayer's property, his arrest and displacement to forced labor-camps in Askale. Their daily wages working in these camps were 2 TL (Turkish Liras). At the end of 1943 the victims were emancipated but 21 Greeks died out in Askale (Violation of Articles 37, 38, 39).⁴⁷

In 1943, Turkey colonized Imvros and Tenedos with Lazians (Muslims of Greek descent (Islamized) from the area between Trabzon and Batumi) in order to alter the ethnological composition of the islands. In the same year, all the monastic property in Imvros and Tenedos, which belongs to the Monasteries of Mount Athos Megisti Lavra and Koutlounousi in Halkidiki, was confiscated and sacred temples and buildings were leveled.

5.2 Human Rights Violation

In the island of Imvros and Tenedos, all the Christians who had lived during the persecutions and terrorism were about to experience even more human rights violations reaching the limits of horror. The year after Stelios Kavalieros was murdered by “unknown” parties in Panaghia, Imvros (the name of the Mayor of Imvros) together with 20 eminent islanders, were put in prison in the Dardanelles. When Turkey invaded Cyprus in July 1964, that exact night the old Metropolitan Church of Imvros was looted and the cemetery of the village “Casto” was desecrated. A citizen called Stylini Zouni, a mother of two, was raped and murdered by a Turkish soldier in the village Agii Theodori. During the next two years (1975-1976) even more lands were expropriated (Violations of Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14 of European Convention on Human Rights).

The convicts (ağır ceza), who were transferred from Turkey to the rural prisons of Imvros, were walking freely on the island. In coordination with the Turkish settlers, they spread terror with beatings without provocation, and blackmail with threatening letters, rape of women, murders. In the 1980s, new “unsolved” murders emerged out of nowhere. In July 1980, a Greek citizen called George Viglis was massacred in Schinouidi, supposedly by “unknown” parties. In 1984 another citizen called Efstratios Stylianidis was also murdered in Schinouidi and Nikos Ladas in Panaghia. In the village of Glyki Zaphiris Deliconstantis was also murdered. In the same year, the Turkish Government proceeded to seize the last remaining 956.000 square meters, decided to prohibit animal breeding and characterized the

⁴⁷ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Academia. https://www.academia.edu/6487178/The_violations_of_the_Treaty_of_Lausanne

remaining pastures as “forestlands” or “lands to be reforested” and also as “national parks” (Violation of Articles 14, 37, 38 and 39 of the Treaty of Lausanne and Violation of Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 14 of European Convention on Human Rights).

The violation of fundamental rights, a situation that continues to this day, remains an open problem. The Greek Orthodox minorities of Constantinople and the islands of Imvros and Tenedos should have the right to settle in their homelands and the right to compensation for their confiscated property. Despite the endless efforts of these people to restore their rights, the Turkish Government refuses to satisfy the demand for equal and fair compensation of the confiscated property, contrary to any rule of international law and ethics.

In 1974, after the Cyprus issue that caused a resurgence to the tensions between Greece and Turkey, a new massive refugee flow was created. Most of the inhabitants of Imvros and Tenedos were forced to flee their homes. In 1960, a total number of 5.487 Greeks and 289 Turks lived on the island of Imvros. However, in 1990, only 300 Greeks were left in Imvros and some 7,200 Turks respectively. At present, about 250 mostly elderly Greek people live on the island, whereas between 2,000-4,000 spend some time in their ancestral homeland as seasonal visitors, in particular around the religious holidays (Christmas, Easter and in mid-August. Concerning the island of Tenedos, 25 mostly elderly Greeks are still living permanently there.⁴⁸

5.2.1 Violations on educational issues

Turkish Law 1151 in 1927 (Article 14) banned the teaching of the Greek language in primary schools of Imvros and Tenedos and made it obligatory to teach only Turkish in children. At the same time, all Greek Schools as well as the Central School of Imvros were closed. "Ethnic tensions on the islands subsequently eased or flared, depending on the status of relations between Greece and Turkey". In the 1950s, the Greek language again started to be taught in Imvros and Tenedos and the schools operated along the lines of the minority schools on the mainland. However, things flared-up because of the Cyprus issue and as a result Turkish Authorities stepped against the Greek communities on both islands in 1963.

⁴⁸ *ΙΜΒΡΟΣ και ΤΕΝΕΔΟΣ - Οι Παραβιάσεις της Συνθήκης της Λωζάννης από την Τουρκία.* (n.d.). Imvros Island - Imvrians on the Net. <https://www.imvrosisland.org/presskit.php>

The Greek language was again prohibited under a new law (502/1964). At the same time, this law forbade community ownership of property, including schools, except for churches.⁴⁹

The 1992 Helsinki Watch report noted that the Turkish government:

- “placed all minority schools under the department of private schools of the Ministry of Education in 1961, thus making them no longer “communal schools” entitled to protection under the Lausanne Treaty,
- prohibited Orthodox clerics from entering the premises of Greek minority schools in 1964,
- banned from Greek schools’ morning prayer, Greek textbooks and encyclopedias in 1964,
- In the same year, began refusing permission for the repair of dilapidated school buildings and withdrew recognition of elected school boards of the Greek community.
- A retired primary school teacher reported that, although there is no law saying children cannot speak Greek in school, the Turkish directors of the schools tell the students that they must speak Turkish, even in the halls.
- The Greek community has also been angered by Turkish attempts to take over schools that can no longer be used for their original purpose, due to the shrinking of the Greek population. Once a building is no longer used for its original purpose, Greeks say that the Turks declare it to be abandoned and expropriate it.”

As Ioannis Marinos (PPE-DE) said at the European Parliament, Turkey did not implement the provision of Article 14 and thus the teaching of the Greek language stopped after the six Greek primary schools, the secondary school and the four day-nurseries catering for 1300 pupils and built with funding from the Greek communities of the two islands were appropriated by the Turkish Government.⁵⁰ Turkey finally approved, after 39 years of prohibiting the Greek language, the operation of a minority school in Imvros; thus in 2015 a

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey* (Library of Congress Card Catalogue No.: 92-71169).

<https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/TURKEY923.PDF>

⁵⁰ *Discrimination against the Greek inhabitants of the Turkish islands of Imbros and Tenedos*. (2003, November 26). © European Union, 2003 - Source: European Parliament.

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-5-2003-3617_EN.html?redirect

Greek high school was established and by 2016 the 2 Greek schools had 13 students. At the same time, many Greek families are returning to Imvros and Tenedos, the islands of their birth place. Today, we can say that more than 40 years after the abolition of the Greek language, Hellenism returns slowly but steadily to the two islands, as Greek is taught again.⁵¹

5.2.2 Violation on the properties

The ethnological composition of the population of the islands was forcibly altered, due to the obligatory settlement of settlers from the Turkish hinterland. These individuals settled in buildings created especially for them, or even in the homes of the Greeks who were captured and occupied by force. Among other things, these newcomers were also given the lands and properties that had been confiscated and that once belonged to the Greek inhabitants of the islands (Violations of articles 14, 39 and 40 of the Treaty of Lausanne).

After the islanders left Imvros and Tenedos, the Turkish Authorities confiscated most of their properties and deleted them from the registers of the municipalities to which they belonged; this happened despite the fact that at the time they left, they had Turkish nationality and official passports. At the same time, Turks from various parts of Turkey were transported to the capital of Imvros and three Turkish villages close to Greece. The Turkish settlers were given the lands that had been taken away by the Greeks with fictitious expropriations. Imbros was later renamed to Gökçeada and all Greek toponyms were replaced by Turkish ones.⁵²

At the beginning, the Greeks of Imvros and Tenedos who went abroad could not return to their homelands, not even as visitors, since Turkey prohibited those who left without permission or passport from returning to Turkey. The National Assembly of Ankara proceeded in March 1950 with the enactment of Law 5654 to modify the regime regarding the travel of former Turkish nationals to Turkey. In this context, those who had lost their Turkish citizenship could henceforth visit the country as travelers, remaining within its territory for up to four months a year. According to this law, the Greeks of Imvros and Tenedos, who had been removed from the registers of the two islands, had the right to visit their birthplace as tourists with a foreign citizenship passport, but without any obligation towards the Turkish State.

⁵¹ Chrysopoulos, P. (2021, February 7). *When Turkey Banned the Teaching of Greek on Imbros and Tenedos Islands*. GreekReporter.Com. <https://greekreporter.com/2018/07/01/when-turkey-banned-the-teaching-of-greek-on-imbros-and-tenedos-islands/>

⁵² A, Alexandris. (1980) *Imbros and Tenedos: A study of turkish attitudes towards two ethnic greek island communities since 1923*, Ibid.

However, in 1951, in its attempt to isolate the indigenous population of Imvros, Turkey began to raise various obstacles to the travels of foreign nationals. Thus, the provisions of the law that permitted the former citizens of Imvros and Tenedos to travel to the islands were revoked. As a result, visiting Imvros and Tenedos without a special permit from the Ministry of Interior of Turkey was prohibited. At the same time, Turkey began to raise the issue of compulsory military service for the Imvrians and Tenedians of the diaspora who visited their birthplace. The aim was to exclude the Greeks who had fled abroad and to delete them from the registers of the two islands in order to confiscate their properties. Consequently, Turkey began to confiscate their homes, since they were characterized as “abandoned”.⁵³

In 1964, by virtue of a secret decree with reference number 6/3801, Turkey proceeded to the methodological looting of the huge properties of the Christians: Turkish Government made it “illegal” for the Greeks to transfer their property titles and blocked the collection of all amounts due, all proceed, incomes and bank accounts. This was kept secret and implemented faithfully for decades, until it was uncovered 24 years later. By the same Law (Article 5) the local state agents were having the right to expropriate any assets without pay. Using these rights in Imvros, 98% of arable land was expropriated (in 1960, 25.000.000m² of land belonged to Greek but this number decreased to only 600m² in 1990). Fishing was prohibited despite being an important means of livelihood for the residents of the island. By the same secret legislation (6/3801 depends on law 1062 par.1) Greek citizens were deprived from purchasing any assets in Turkey.⁵⁴

The minorities who continue to live in Imvros and Tenedos are facing many more problems, related, mainly, to individual and community-bakuf properties. As said earlier, Turkey does not recognize the ownership of minority institutions over many properties, temples and chapels. Under the pretext of creating a new land registry, the Turkish Authorities declared large areas as “protected cultural or natural monuments”; as a result, many Greek properties and temples became expropriated and came under Turkish rule. Subsequently, some of them were sold to settlers from the hinterland. The Community of Tenedos (Vakoufi of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary) appealed to the European Court of

⁵³ (2005) *Ιμβρος, Μηνιαίο Εγκυκλοπαιδικό Περιοδικό, 1947-1955*, Εταιρία Μελέτης Ίμβρου και Τενέδου, τεύχος 16, Σεπτέμβριος 1948, 93-94, τεύχος 24, Μάρτιος 1949, 286 και τεύχη 25-26 Ιούνιος-Ιούλιος 1949, 34, τεύχη 34-36, Μάρτιος-Απρίλιος-Μάιος 1950, 188-189 και τεύχη 40-41, Σεπτέμβριος-Οκτώβριος 1950, 74.

⁵⁴ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Academia. https://www.academia.edu/6487178/The_violations_of_the_Treaty_of_Lausanne

Human Rights to secure its property. In its decision in this case, the ECHR rules in favour of the Vakoufi of Tenedos, asking, in fact, for three of the cult properties (temple, cemetery), their return to their rightful owners, without offering the Turkish state the alternative option of compensation.⁵⁵

5.3 Andreas Gross Report and Resolution 2008

An important turning point for the Greek minorities of Imvros and Tenedos, who still live on the islands, but also those of the Diaspora, was the report of the Swiss Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Mr. Andreas Gross. The resolution, which was adopted by the plenary (27/6/2008) and accompanies the report, makes some strong recommendations for Turkey (measures that will tackle unsolved problems, for example the property issue, education matters and the promotion of the special cultural characteristics of two islands) by seeking solutions that would allow in the future the harmonious coexistence of Christians and Muslims in Imvros and Tenedos. At the same time, it refers to the creation of such conditions that would allow the return of Imvrians and Tenedians to the islands, regardless of whether or not they hold Turkish citizenship. The reopening of the school in Imvros was clearly a first step, however the intentions of the Turkish side will be judged by ensuring the appropriate conditions (professional, social, educational, etc.) for the sustainable continuation of the presence of the Greek community in the place of origin.⁵⁶

The 20-page presentation consists of the draft resolution and the explanatory memorandum. After extensive documented references to the historical course of the two islands since 1923 and especially to the policies that forced the vast majority of Greeks to leave their homes in the decades mainly 1960-1970, the report provides a detailed record of the problems which is still faced today by the small community of Imvrians and Tenedians, but also by the thousands of exiled indigenous peoples and their descendants, and proposes concrete measures to "preserve the special cultural character of the two islands". A clear central political message in this direction would be an excellent example of Turkey's

⁵⁵ Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών, *Η Ελληνική Μειονότητα και τα Ιδρύματά της στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, την Ίμβρο και την Τένεδο: Ίμβρος και Τένεδος*. (2018, November 9). mfa.gr. <https://www.mfa.gr/zitimata-ellinotourkikon-sheseon/eidikotera-keimena/elleniki-meionotita-kai-idrimata.html?page=3>

⁵⁶ PACE website. (2008). Parliamentary Assembly. <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/News/FeaturesManager-View-EN.asp?ID=782>

willingness to transcend outdated nationalist tactics and embrace European values of good neighborliness, a positive example of tolerance, mutual respect and prosperity.⁵⁷

5.4 European Commission Reports on Turkey

The European Commission since the beginning of 2000 pointed out and identified the problematic parameters that exist in these two islands. More specifically, in the European Commission Reports on Turkey, EC addresses that the island of Imvros continues to encounter several difficulties, such as the land registry. At the same time, Turkey designated the land and buildings as “monuments of nature or culture”, something that has led to property confiscation. Additionally, in the Regular Report on Turkey’s progress (2007), EC stated that “Turkey has not signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities or the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages” and that there has been no progress on ensuring the cultural diversity, as Turkey does not promote respect and protection for the minorities in accordance with the European Standards.⁵⁸

More recently, in the European Commission Reports regarding the progress of Turkey, it was stated that “on property rights, the implementation of the revised Law on Foundations for restitution of properties was finalised. Overall, 1206 property claims were rejected, of which some are pending either before local courts or at the ECHR”. EC noted that CoE’s Resolution 1625 (2008) on property rights in Imvros and Tenedos should be fully implemented. Nevertheless, confiscations under that “state of emergency of property of many institutions, companies or private individuals, for which there is no domestic remedy, continue to be a serious concern”.⁵⁹

Turkey should guarantee the stability of institutions that promote democracy, human rights and rule of law. It is undeniable that the Turkish state should respect and protect all the minority groups and need to cultivate good neighbourly relations. It is of utmost importance for Turkey to comply with the international treaties, the international agreements and its

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ *Report on Turkey’s 2007 progress report*. (2007). © European Union, 2008 - Source: European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-6-2008-0168_EN.html

⁵⁹ *REPORT on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey*. (2018). © European Union, 2019 - Source: European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2019-0091_EN.html and *Texts adopted - 2016 Report on Turkey - Thursday, 6 July 2017*. (2017b). © European Union, 2017 - Source: European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0306_EN.html

obligations. A positive attitude towards the Greeks of Imvros and Tenedos would be an excellent example of Turkey's willingness to overcome "outdated nationalist attitudes" and to "embrace European values of good neighbourliness".⁶⁰

6. Constantinople

The legal status of the Greek community of Constantinople was established by the Treaty of Lausanne of July 24, 1923 and in particular by its Fourth Section concerning the Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey (signed 31/1/1923). According to Article 2 of the Exchange Treat, the *Greek inhabitants of Constantinople* and the *Muslim inhabitants of Western Thrace* are being excluded from the exchange of populations. According to the first official population census in Turkey in 1927, the Greek-speaking population was 119,822 people, including the islands of Imvros and Tenedos. The population includes the 25,666 citizens of Greece who were excluded from the Exchange.⁶¹

6.1 Violations on the Treaty of Lausanne

As early as 1923, the political influence of the Greek teachers in Constantinople was the subject of an investigation operated by the Director General of the Turkish Ministry of Education, Salih Zeki. Of course, this investigation resulted in the dismissal of 104 teachers of Greek origins and 52 Greek teachers, because they were considered to be "unfit" to teach in the minority schools (Violation of the Articles 40 and 41 of the Treaty of Lausanne).

In 1923, in order to limit the Greek presence in Constantinople, Turkey arbitrarily described as "personae non gratae" 40,000 Greeks who had fled Turkey temporarily before the signing of the Lausanne Treaty for security reasons. These people would permanently lose their Turkish citizenship and their properties would be confiscated. Turkey claimed that although these Greeks had settled in Turkey before 1918 and therefore could not be considered as "exchangeables" under the terms of the Convention on the Exchange of Populations, they were not listed in Constantinople's land registry. However, this was not at all provided by the population exchange agreement. The Greek position was declared righteous two years later, on 21 February 1925, by the International Court of Justice in

⁶⁰ Answer for question E-003662/19. (2020). © European Union, 2020 - Source: European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2019-003662-ASW_EN.html

⁶¹ Η Συνθήκη της Λωζάνης (το πλήρες κείμενο). (2013, August 30). IMBPIAKH ENΩΣΗ. <https://imbrosunion.com/174-2/>

Hague, but Turkey had already achieved the desired goal (Violation of Article 2 of the Convention on the Exchange of Populations incorporated into the Treaty of Lausanne).⁶²

By virtue of Decree 1092/6 (December 1923), the Turkish Government decided to downgrade the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to just a simple Turkish Institution - a local NGO with no legal personality - and determined for the Patriarch to be elected by some clergymen who had Turkish citizenship and were already living in Turkey. This is a big example of the arbitrariness of the Turkish Republic. The parties signing the Treaty of Lausanne forced Turkey to accept that the Ecumenical Patriarchate would remain in Constantinople and thus the Turkish State could not evict it from Constantinople, something that would have done for any other institution governed exclusively by the domestic Turkish Law (Violation of Articles 40, 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Lausanne).⁶³

In the meantime, it was important for Turkey to prohibit the Greek teachers from teaching in its territory. For this reason, the Turkish Government imposed some examinations in the Turkish language for the approval of a new teaching license. Most lessons in Greek schools were translated obligatorily in the Turkish language. Turkey decided to double the salaries of the Turkish teachers who taught in Greek schools, while at the same time imposed a special education tax on the homogenous Greek teachers, only to exhaust them financially. The operation of the Zappeion Girl's School was banned because it contained statues of Greek Mythology. The operation of the Patriarchal Business School, the Greek Business School of Halki and the private school of foreign languages Apostolidis was banned (Violation of the Articles 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42 of the Treaty of Lausanne).⁶⁴

Another very crucial matter is that in June 1932, the Turkish National Assembly (Law 2007) banned the Greek nationals, who were exempted from the exchange of populations, from the exercise of 30 professions. The list of professions prohibited by Law 2007/1932: Street vendor, photographer, musician, barber, printer, broker, producer of dresses, shoes and hats, stockbroker, seller of the State monopoly products, translator to tourist, translator to tourists iron, wood and construction industries, conveyor, permanent or temporary work in plumbing - lighting - heating, media, land unloader, driver and their assistants, hired labor in general, marketing in all kinds of companies - housekeeper hotels - businesses, concierge, cabin crew, concierge, male or female servants in hotels - inns - baths - cafes - restaurants -

⁶² Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Academia. https://www.academia.edu/6487178/The_violations_of_the_Treaty_of_Lausanne

⁶³ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007), Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

nightclubs - bars (garson & servant), singers and croupiers in casinos. In this way, the Greeks would have to either remain unemployed, work illegally or emigrate from Constantinople (Violation of Article 2, 37, 40).⁶⁵

During the Second World War, Turkey, while keeping a neutral position, found the opportunity to eliminate once more the Hellenism of the country. By taking advantage of Greece's complete weakness during this period, which was fighting on the side of the Allied forces, initiated the following plan: In May 1941, Turkey declared a military-call for the people of Eastern Thrace and Constantinople. Just after the Nazi and fascist forces occupied Greece and Yugoslavia, the government of Turkey issued a secret decree mobilizing the 40.000 non-Muslim minority men aged 18 to 45 (Greeks, Armenians and Jewish). These people were enrolled to work in labor battalions under extremely adverse conditions for road, airfield and building construction; they were not permitted to visit Constantinople. This event is referred to as “the 20 classes”; the exact motivation of this persecution is not known. However, the fact that the persons enrolled were demobilized with the turn of the tide of the War (in November 1942), and the rumors heard at that time about their non-return, leave the motivation open to interpretation; similar events have taken place in other regions of Europe. The older men were sent to Eastern Thrace while the younger to various places inland in Anatolia (Violation of Articles 37, 38, 39)

6.2 Economic exhaustion

6.2.1 Varlık Vergisi

Despite the fact that the Turkish Government had not taken measures to stop the expansion of the black market and the illegal profits, under the pretext of controlling the price of goods and preventing the accumulation of capital in a few hands, Turkey put into force the Law 4305 (1942) in order to impose a “burdensome” wealth tax on property. Using criteria such as religion and ethnicity, this tax aimed to financially exhaust the Christians in Turkey. This measure had enormous and dire negative effects on the non-Muslim minorities. Four weeks after the imposition of the tax, those who failed to pay would have their properties confiscated, would be arrested and displaced to forced labor-camps in Askale in very bad weather conditions. The aim was to exhaust and destroy the economic and cultural

⁶⁵ Vryonis, S., Jr. (2005). *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The Turkish Pogrom Of September 6 - 7, 1955, And The Destruction Of The Greek Community Of Istanbul*. Greekworks.Com Inc.

background and base of these minorities by looting their properties and any means of livelihood.⁶⁶

We can say that it had the nature of an “ethnic cleansing whip.” It was entirely political and represented a precapitalist implementation of social transformation. In this respect, the Varlik Vergisi was aimed especially in Constantinople, the only region in the country where a significant percentage of minorities (Greeks, Armenians, and Jews) remained after 1923. These minorities were selectively targeted: by implementing this extremely unfair, unequal and discriminatory measure, the Turkish state aimed at their economic destruction. In reality, these political practices showed the minorities that they were not welcome and they did not have a place to live anymore in Turkey.

It is important to highlight that after Turkey imposed this property tax, during the Second World War, the Greeks of Constantinople never managed to regain the extent of their pre-war economic power. An additional consequence of this cruel measure was the Greeks, in addition to losing their property, being displaced to the mainland of Turkey, where they were subjected to inhuman treatment.⁶⁷

The pogrom of 6-7 September 1955 made the minorities understand in an even more violent way that their only choice left was to leave the country and abandon their properties. The Varlik Vergisi was the last point on the path that had already begun in 1915 by the Committee of Union and Progress to sweep Ottoman Turkey clean of non-Muslims. After all these years, the victims of this inhuman measure have not escaped the fear, they feel the discrimination and find it difficult to even speak about this tax. For this reason, no research work can ever describe the level of barbarism and the amount of despair these people felt because of this taxation.⁶⁸

6.3 Attacks, killings and discriminatory practices

At this point, it is important to note that in 1948 the General Assembly of the UN adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 31 July 1950, Turkey signed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide without any reservations or declarations. Four months later, in November 1950, the Republic of

⁶⁶ Cetinoglu, S. (2012). *The Mechanisms for Terrorizing Minorities: The Capital Tax and Work Battalions in Turkey during the Second World War*. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 23(2), 14–29. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10474552-1587838>

⁶⁷ Okte, F. (1998). *Varlik Vergisi, O ληστροικός νόμος*, Ηρόδοτος, Θεσσαλονίκη-Αθήνα

⁶⁸ Cetinoglu, S. (2012), *Ibid*.

Turkey signed the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which entered into force in Turkey in 1953.⁶⁹

7.3.1 Pogrom 1955 (Violation of Articles 38, 39, 40 of the Treaty of Lausanne, Violation of Articles 2, 3 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crimes of Genocide, Violation of Articles 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16 of European Convention on Human Rights)

A few weeks before the Pogrom 1955, the heads of each municipality in Constantinople were asked to record the addresses of the city's non-Muslim residences and workplaces, a task that had also been taken during the outbreak of World War II. These lists facilitated the destructive work of the rioters, allowing them to extend their activities even to the most remote districts of the city.⁷⁰

In September 1955, the Turkish Government launched an organized riot against all the Christians in Constantinople in a pre-planned manner. Within six hours: 72 out of 95 holy places, 36 out of 48 Greek schools, 3 out of 3 Greek newspapers, 4228 shops, companies, factories belonging to Greeks, 2640 houses belonging to Christians, were demolished, looted or set on fire. The Patriarchal tombs were destroyed and the Greek cemetery of Sisli was attacked by the orchestrated movement of Turks. The tombs, old and recent ones, were opened, while many corpses were dug up and vandalized. During this night of terror for the Hellenism of Constantinople, at least seventeen deaths, dozens of injuries, two hundred rapes took place, while holy pictures and hagiographies of greatest historical and archaeological value were destroyed or stolen.⁷¹

The incidents at the expense of the Greek minority were not limited to Constantinople but also extended to the city of Smyrni. The crowd not only burned, in the midst of anti-Greek conditions, the Greek flag, which was waving in Konak Square, on the occasion of an international exhibition, but also attacked the Greek pavilion, setting fire to the building. The refusal of the employees of the Greek Consulate to raise the Turkish flag, enraged the Turkish

⁶⁹UNTC. (n.d.). United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 78, p. 277.

https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-1&chapter=4

⁷⁰ Guven, D. (2006). *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες, Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων τη Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, μετάφραση Σοφία Αυγερινού, Εστία, 34-35

⁷¹ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Academia.

https://www.academia.edu/6487178/The_violations_of_the_Treaty_of_Lausanne

protesters, who filled it with gasoline. The homes of six Greek officers serving in the NATO were also targeted.⁷²

The majority of the 80,000 refugees who were forced to seek haven in Greece or elsewhere because of the Pogroms of 1955, 1964 and 1974 and whose properties had passed illegally into the ownership of the Turkish State, lost all their hope not only of getting back their stolen estates but also of receiving compensation.⁷³

The Ottoman/Turkish policy was very clear at this time: the aim of the Pogrom 1955 was to eliminate and expel the Greek communities from their homelands in Asia Minor, Thrace, the Aegean and Constantinople. The Pogrom of 1955 falls within the definition of crimes against humanity in both the Rome Statute of the ICC and the Nuremberg Statute. If we see it through the context of a long, centuries-old process of massacres, expulsions, and discrimination in every aspect of human life, the Pogrom can definitely be classified as a form of ethnic cleansing, a genocide.⁷⁴

Up until recently Turkey aspired to be a member of the European Union, a community that shares some specific and fundamental moral values. Turkey must take responsibility-accountability for all the massacres and religious intolerance. “It is incompatible with this commitment to human rights that those responsible for the Pogrom of Constantinople have been rehabilitated, and schools and airports named after them”. A commitment to human rights and the right to truth would make Turkey more credible concerning its willingness to be a part of the EU. Seen in isolation, the Pogrom of 1955 can be considered a serious crime under both Turkish domestic law and international law.⁷⁵

6.3.2 The deportations of ‘64 (Violation of Articles 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 of the Treaty of Lausanne, Violation of all Articles 2 to 16 of European Convention on Human Rights)

⁷² Guven, D. (2006), Ibid.

⁷³ Savvaidis, P. (n.d.). *GREEKS OF CONSTANTINOPLE*. Photius.
<https://photius.com/thus/alavanos2en.html>

⁷⁴ Vryonis, S., Jr. (2005). *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The Turkish Pogrom Of September 6 - 7, 1955, And The Destruction Of The Greek Community Of Istanbul*. Greekworks.Com Inc.

⁷⁵ Zayas, A. D. (2007). The Istanbul Pogrom of 6–7 September 1955 in the Light of International Law. *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 2(2), 137–154. <https://doi.org/10.3138/gsp.2.2.137>

In 1964, while the Greek-Turkish crisis on Cyprus was at a critical point, the Turkish Government engaged in large-scale expulsions of the Greeks of Constantinople aiming at the complete extinction of the Christian minority in the area.

The press in Turkey became the carrier of hate propaganda against the Greeks of Constantinople and especially the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its clergymen. Turkey was trying to create a climate of psychological violence and make them leave the country. The human rights violations against the Greek community were linked to the tensions in Cyprus and the conflicts between Greece and Turkey. When a violation of human rights came to light, it was immediately silenced and the press was systematically having a leading role in the planned oppressive measures against the Greeks.⁷⁶

Some Nationalist, university-student organizations (with both right and left leanings), organized a widespread economic boycott. They were psychologically making the Turkish consumers stop buying products from Greek-owned stores. Distributing relevant propaganda leaflets in front of Christian shops, they had the slogan “Bu dükkân gavurların malıdır. Yanınkına girin, çünkü Türktür ”(This is an infidel person’s shop. Go to the next shop, it belongs to a Turk). This campaign, combined with the enforcement of the population to speak only the Turkish language (“Vatandaş Türkçe konuş”), perpetuated the intolerable atmosphere of terrorism that had been created in Christianity of Constantinople. More printed signs were placed at the entrance of Greek shops where one could read: “... as the money spent in this shop produces bullets used against your Turkish brothers in Cyprus, do not buy here”. This campaign was implemented in parallel with the slogan “Citizens, speak only Turkish and warn those not obeying”.⁷⁷

On March 16, 1964, Turkey suddenly and unilaterally announced the condemnation of the Greek-Turkish friendship convention of 1930, signed between Mustafa Kemal and Eleftherios Venizelos. The reason behind that, was that the Greeks were protected by Article 2 of the Convention "On the Exchange of the Greek and Muslim Populations", which was an integral part of the Treaty of Lausanne. Turkish newspapers began publishing lists of names of the Greek of Constantinople who "posed a national threat to Turkey" and had to leave their homes immediately. Greek minorities were accused of “spying” against the Turkish State and sending financial aid to help the Hellenism of Cyprus. At the same time, those “accused”

⁷⁶ *The Banishment of the Greek Community of Istanbul 1964*. (2014, April 8). Issuu.

https://issuu.com/panosanagnostopoulos/docs/16_mart_1964-english-low

⁷⁷ The Constantinopolitan Society. (2009). *The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey / Atrocities and persecutions 1923 - 2009*. https://www.cpolitan.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/The_Constantinopolitan_Society_booklet_low.pdf

had to sign a document in which they "confessed" all the "accusations" attributed to them by the Turkish authorities. The people who refused to sign were imprisoned until they changed their minds.⁷⁸

The expulsion was suddenly announced in the press, accompanied by the seizure of the moveable property and confiscation of the properties of the deportees. Turkey forced them to leave the country with only what they could fit in a suitcase of 20kg and no more than 200 Turkish Liras per person. In November 1964, the Turkish Government proceeded to the looting and confiscation of the Christians' properties. At the same time, the made illegal the transfer of property titles to persons of Greek nationality and blocked the collection of all amounts due all proceeds, incomes and bank accounts. The starting date for the new "Turkish Foreign Policy" started in July 1985, when Turkey, under the governance of Ozal, gave some rights to the Greeks who were deported in 1964. They could have the right to claim their lost properties. On one side there was "the democratic Turkey" and on the other side Turkey was still maintaining all policies against minorities.⁷⁹

6.4 Educational issues

In December 1964, the Greek students in Constantinople were not allowed to do their daily morning prayer in the Minority schools. They were also forbidden to use the Greek language even during the breaks of their lessons. At the same time, the operation of the historic Greek Orphanage in Prigipos Island was banned because of the violent occupation of the building by the Turkish authorities. In 1967, another 39 teachers were fired, and the operation of 6 Greek primary schools was banned. The children, whose ID card marked the sign "Christian" and not "Romios Orthodox", were not allowed to go to the Minority schools and were forced to go to Turkish primary schools.⁸⁰

Additionally, under the law 222 of 1961, the minority orthodox schools came under the jurisdiction of the private schools of the Turkish Ministry of Education in order to surpass

⁷⁸ E.N.Rigos, C. (2019, May 12). 16 Μαρτίου 1964: Το καίριο πλήγμα στον Ελληνισμό της Κωνσταντινούπολης. International Hellenic Association. <https://professors-phds.com/2019/03/17/17350/>

⁷⁹ Kyrtzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Academia.

https://www.academia.edu/6487178/The_violations_of_the_Treaty_of_Lausanne

⁸⁰ The Constantinopolitan Society. (2009). *The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey / Atrocities and persecutions 1923 - 2009*. https://www.cpolitan.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/The_Constantinopolitan_Society_booklet_low.pdf

the obligations undertaken by Turkey concerning the Treaty of Lausanne. (Violation of Articles 37, 39, 40 and 41 of the Treaty of Lausanne). In parallel with the deportations, an extensive program of repressive measures was put in force: Turkish vice directors were appointed at the Greek schools who limited the competence of the Greek directors, and all signs recalling the Greek-orthodox identity and culture were removed (e.g., signs in Greek, even cross-shaped window frames).⁸¹

At the same time, many Greek teachers were fired from schools without any particular reason or justification. At the end of 1964, the General Director of Education told the Greek teachers during a meeting held at the Ministry of Education that “his only reason for not implementing harsher measures against the minority schools was that this was not useful to the national interests of Turkey, creating an atmosphere of panic and anxiety.” The students whose documents described them as “Arvavut-Orthodox” were expelled from the Greek schools, while at the same time only those identified as “Rum-Orthodox” were allowed to stay.⁸²

In 1998, in the school textbooks, for the “National Security Class” lesson in the Chapter “The geographic position of Turkey and the threats against Turkey, the neighboring countries and the relations with international organizations”, the Turkish Ministry of Education decided to characterize the Ecumenical Patriarchate among the “problems” regarding the relations between Greece and Turkey. Additionally, the Commanders during the seminars to recruit military forces, are referred to the Ecumenical Patriarchate as a “hostile institution seeking to destroy Turkey”. It goes without saying that these kinds of actions and incidents against the Patriarch create a negative stance against the Hellenism of Constantinople.⁸³

6.5 Turkish provocations: 1990s

Among all the vandalisms of buildings, houses, tombs and churches, an incident that shocked the whole Christian community of Constantinople took place in August 1993. A 12-year-old girl named Petroula Syrigou was the victim of an attack by three “unknown” parties.

⁸¹ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007), Ibid.

⁸² *The Banishment of the Greek Community of Istanbul 1964*. (2014a, April 8). Issuu. https://issuu.com/panosanagnostopoulos/docs/16_mart_1964-english-low

⁸³ The Constantinopolitan Society. (2009). *The Violations of the Human Rights of the Greek Minority in Turkey / Atrocities and persecutions 1923 - 2009*. https://www.cpolitan.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/The_Constantinopolitan_Society_booklet_low.pdf

This girl, in front of a large number of witnesses, was dragged inside a black Mercedes and a little later was found naked and molested in a state of aphasia. Petroula died on the third day after the incident and was buried in the Christian cemetery of Neochori. But it did not stop there: a few days later, on August 24, some vandals broke into the cemetery, broke the tomb, scattered the bones of the dead girl, unburied its corpse and tore it apart. This does not only constitute a violation of the Treaty of Lausanne but also a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.⁸⁴

A month later, eight “unknown” parties used a tank of gas in order to start a fire at the Ioakimion School for Girls in Fener. Fortunately, the fire was extinguished by the local residents, because the Fire Department of Constantinople did not appear on the scene. These “unknown” attack was continued for months: on April 12, 1994, improvised incendiary Molotov bombs were thrown inside the yard of the Greek School in Fener, while on April 30, 1994, some parties broke into the church of Metamorphosis in the Sisli cemetery, looted it and destroyed various religious objects. In the same month, the home of the BBC reporter named Alkis Kourkoulas was broken into and a lot of valuable documents were stolen again by “unknown” parties. The same parties, in June, broke into the church of Agios Ignatios in Halkidona, stole valuable icons and destroyed the furniture. In October 1994, an elderly woman named Christina Frangopoulou was found robbed and murdered in Pringipos island (Violation of Articles 38, 42 of the Treaty of Lausanne & Violation of Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 14 of European Convention on Human Rights).

The church “Panagia ton Ouranon” became the target of “unknown” perpetrators on March 3, 1996. A remote-controlled device was found inside the church by a person who attended the church and it was disposed of at the last minute. On September 16 of the same year, two bombs went off almost at the same time, one in the Byzantine church of Panagia in Mouchli, and the other on in the building of the Ioakeimion School for Girls in Fener. All the mentioned and the unmentioned attacks went under the indifference of the Turkish Government. For this reason, the “unknown” parties were free to continue their attacks and the psychological pressure: on December 2, 1997, another bomb attack at the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate had as a result the injury of a deacon named “Nectarios” from Crete and the large-scale damage of the Holy Church of Agios Georgios. A month later, the 73-

⁸⁴ Kyratzopoulos, V. S. (2007). *The violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Republic 1923 to 1999*. Ibid.

year-old keeper of the church of Agios Therapon named “Haviaropoulos” was found murdered by “unknown” parties once again; the parties looted the place and set it on fire.

6.6 The Charitable Institutions - Christian Vakufs

The concept of "community vakufs" was introduced by law 2762/1935. With the creation of this special category of institutions, the Turkish state could therefore participate in the management of the financial resources inside the communities of the minorities. In 1935, the Turkish Government passed Law 2007, according to which no one could donate property to the churches or to the Greek charitable institutions any longer. However, Greeks did not stop donating property, but now Turkey claims that all property donated to Greek charities since 1936 is the property of the Turkish government.

Another important Law that the Turkish Government enacted in 1967 is Law No. 903/1967. According to this Law (Article 74), communal properties founded by a group (i.e the Christian community) and aimed at "the enforcement of a certain race or minority" would no longer be recognized as charitable institutions. Things became even worse in 1971, when the Turkish Supreme Court decided that minorities would no longer have the right to found new charitable properties - vakufs. Despite the Turkish Government's denials, Helsinki Watch concludes that the “Turkish Government has denied the Greek community in Turkey the right to control its charitable institutions, in violation of the Treaty of Lausanne and international human rights agreements”.⁸⁵

The Turkish High Court of Appeals in 1974 stated that the foundations and institutions of the minorities do not have the right to acquire properties other than those that are listed in the declarations of 1936. Since then, Turkey has used many regulations and enacted several undemocratic laws in order to confiscate the properties of the Greek community, because they are considered as “mazbut” (occupied). Thus, it is impossible to reclaim a previously expropriated property or to get any compensation by the State for the properties that have been expropriated.⁸⁶ The Law 5737/2008 does not address many issues, such as the return of some properties (that are considered as “mazbut”) to their owners or to the entitled persons, the return of the properties that have been resold to third parties after the

⁸⁵ Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey* (Library of Congress Card Catalogue No.: 92-71169).

<https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/TURKEY923.PDF>

⁸⁶ The Constantinopolitan Society. (2009b, October). *Greeks expatriated from Istanbul by Turkish coercion*. <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/1/2/38969.pdf>

confiscation that took place in 1974. The Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (April 21, 2009)⁸⁷ states that the Law does not address the question of the return of properties that are lost since 1974 to the Directorate General of Foundations, nor does it provide any compensation in case that the property cannot be returned to the owners.

The Greek minority in Constantinople has the right to “establish, manage and control their charitable institutions” according to Article 40 of the Treaty of Lausanne. In the report of the CSCE Meeting of Experts on National Minorities (Geneva, 1991) many fundamental rights were clarified and explained: the right of minorities to establish and maintain their cultural institutions, organizations and associations was absolutely included in the report. Despite all the standards and guarantees, the Turkish state interferes in the control of the Greek community’s charitable institutions. For many years, starting in 1969, Turkish authorities deprived the Greeks from electing their right to elect the boards of the councils responsible for the institution’s management and control. The Greek board members, either left Turkey or passed away through the years and, as a result, the council were left without members to run the communities’ affairs and they were losing their ability to administer their own institutions. In 1991, for the first time, the governor of Constantinople permitted the election for the board members of a Greek hospital, however, the Turkish authorities again interfered with the elections and posed great obstacles.⁸⁸

As it has become apparent, in Turkey, law and politics have always been closely linked. Bilateral relations with Greece, and in particular in regards to the Cyprus issue, have clearly influenced the authorities' attitude towards minorities. As long as they were not included in the 1936 declaration, all the properties that came into the possession of the minority institutions after this date, they were considered to be acquired “illegally”, even if they were purchased or donated. So, Turkey decided to cancel the transferring properties that took place between 1936 and 1971, the return of the properties to their former owners or the confiscation if the owners were not known. There are two main reasons: first, as noted in the decision, Turkish law prohibits foreign legal entities from owning real estate in Turkey. Secondly, since the minority vakufs - charitable institutions lacked a founding act, the

⁸⁷ Hunault, M. (2009, April 21). *Freedom of religion and other human rights for non-Muslim minorities in Turkey and for the Muslim minority in Thrace (Eastern Greece)*. Parliamentary Assembly. <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=12681>

⁸⁸ Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey* (Library of Congress Card Catalogue No.: 92-71169). <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/TURKEY923.PDF>

founder's intention to acquire new properties was not known precisely and therefore they were not entitled to acquire new properties beyond what had been declared in 1936. This decision provoked a storm of reactions. However, the political climate in Turkey in the 1970s and 1980s was anything but conducive to open controversy, especially over issues concerning non-Muslim minorities.

PART 3

7. Methodology

7.1 Research purpose and specific objectives

The motivation that led us to focus on the issue is that the author of this dissertation comes from the island of Imvros and his family experienced the savagery and the expatriation from its ancestral home. My family stories and experiences will forever be engraved in my memory and will always determine who I am.

Based on the literature review that preceded, our purpose is to investigate what are the attitudes of people coming from Asia Minor in the face of the events that took place in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople regarding the violations of the Treaty of Lausanne by Turkey. In particular, the questions on hand were as following:

1. Did the people coming from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople either themselves or their parents' experienced violations regarding their rights which stemmed from the Treaty of Lausanne?
2. Did Turkey comply with its international obligations regarding the respect of the minorities' rights and the restoration of the violations?
3. Did the "Cyprus issue" – that is, the ongoing conflict between Greece and Turkey regarding the mass violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms by Turkey as well as the illegal occupation troops on the country - play a significant role in the increase of Turkey's hostility towards the minorities?
4. Was the role of the European Union and the Greek Government sufficient to protect and redress the violations committed by Turkey?

7.2 Research Method

In this dissertation, I used a quantitative research method as I would like to approach more people who were born either themselves or their parents in Asia Minor. We tend to use the quantitative approach to focus on a specific fact or issue that we want to study in a particular demographic. Quantitative research provides the research with specific data and credible outcomes derived via statistical analysis.

Analytically, participants received either via email or social media the questionnaire of the research which included closed and open-ended questions (see APPENDIX, p. 62). The first questionnaire was answered on 1 October 2021 and the last one on 5 November 2021. In particular, it was shared with groups of people from Asia Minor, who I approached via social media. In addition, the snowball sampling⁸⁹ - a recruitment technique in which research participants are asked to assist researchers in identifying other potential subjects - was used, because referrals make it easy and quick to find subjects as they come from reliable sources. For reasons of confidentiality, the questionnaire was answered anonymously. Also, the questionnaire was accompanied by an informative text, which states the subject of the research and the Master's programme under which this dissertation is conducted. The text provided, as mentioned above, guarantees for the anonymity and confidentiality of the information and that the results would be used for research purposes only.

⁸⁹ Balakrishnan, N.; Colton, Theodore; Everitt, Brian; Piegorisch, Walter; Ruggeri, Fabrizio; Teugels, Jozef L. (2014). *Wiley StatsRef: Statistics Reference Online || Snowball Sampling: Introduction.* , (), – . doi:10.1002/9781118445112.stat05720.

To sum up, in this dissertation I followed a quantitative research method in order to explore and examine the possible relation according to the literature review that has been analysed in the previous chapters and the attitudes of the respondents of the questionnaire towards Turkey's policies and Turkey's violation of the Treaty of Lausanne. Through the questionnaire that I constructed and used, I tried to clarify and analyze whether the answers provided by the respondents verify or not our research questions.

7.3 Research limitations

The representativity is a central limitation when using the Snowball sampling methodology. Convenience sampling is usually not representative or random and it can result in selection bias and external/internal validity limitations. In fact, the research subjects are not collected in a random way, but they are dependent on the referrals of the participants that were firstly approached. This justifies the common claim that most snowball samples are biased and cannot be generalized.⁹⁰

We need to clarify that the sample of this questionnaire is not representative and cannot be applied to the general population, but we can say that it gives us a solid picture of the attitudes, thoughts and experiences of the people coming from Asia Minor. Individuals who do not have access to the Internet or did not happen to see this specific survey on-line, were also excluded from the questionnaire.

7.4 The significance of the study

As it has emerged from the bibliographic research I carried out, the Turkish hostility towards the Greek minorities has already become an object of interest and concern. Our research focuses from an interdisciplinary perspective on the legal violations of Turkey and the effects of these violations on the extermination of the Greek minorities in the once Asia Minor.

The importance of my research, which has as its main research object the violations of Turkey, lies in the fact that it summarizes the legal violations of Turkey against the Greek minorities of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople and concludes with a critical assessment of

⁹⁰ Cohen, N., & Arieli, T. (2011). Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(4), 423–435.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23035205>

them. The present dissertation therefore wants to focus on the violations of the Lausanne Treaty by Turkey, to gather and demonstrate all the parameters and effects of these violations, as well as the way in which they contributed to the destruction of the Greek presence in Asia Minor. So far there has been no other previous research focusing on Turkey's violations of the Lausanne Treaty and confirming the research questions with a questionnaire that was answered almost exclusively by people coming from Asia Minor. What is innovative about this dissertation is that we presented the relevant literature review and at the same time we followed a quantitative research in order to examine the attitudes of people who were born either themselves or their parents in Asia Minor towards the events that took place in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople after 1922.

7.5 Findings and Results

The number of participants in the present study was 65 people, of whom 28 were men (43.1%) and 37 women (56.9%) (Table 1).

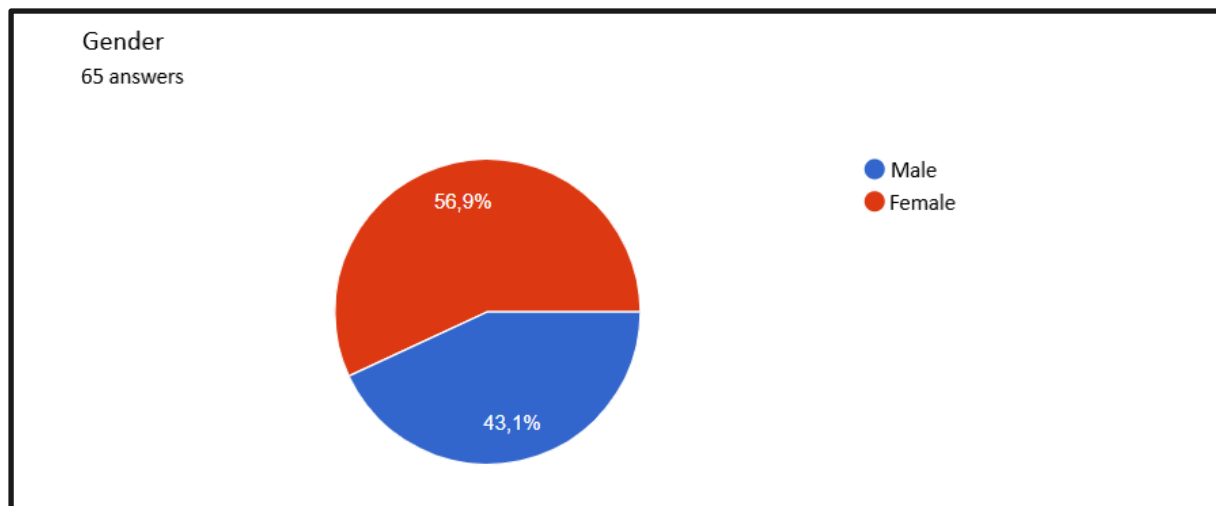


Table 1: Gender

The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 51+ years. 20% were 18-30 years old, 10.8% were 31-40 years old, 21.5% were 41-50 years old and 47.7% were 51+ years old (Table 2).

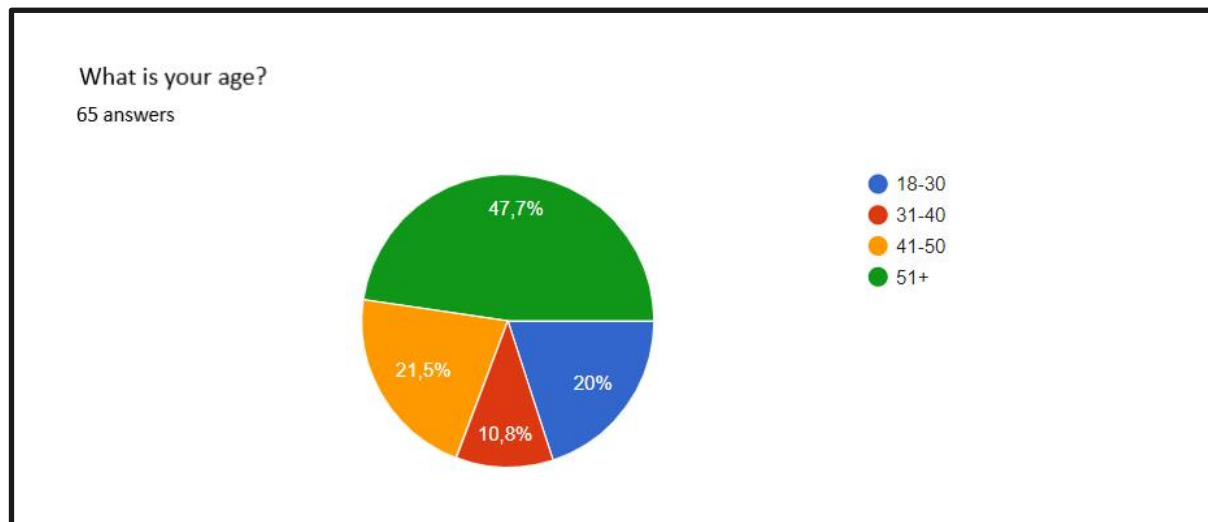


Table 2: Age group

Regarding the educational level of the participants in the questionnaire, 7.7% have completed the compulsory education (i.e., primary or high school), 30.8% are high school graduates, 41.5% are graduates of higher education institutions, 16, 9% hold a master's degree and 3.1 hold a PhD (Table 3).

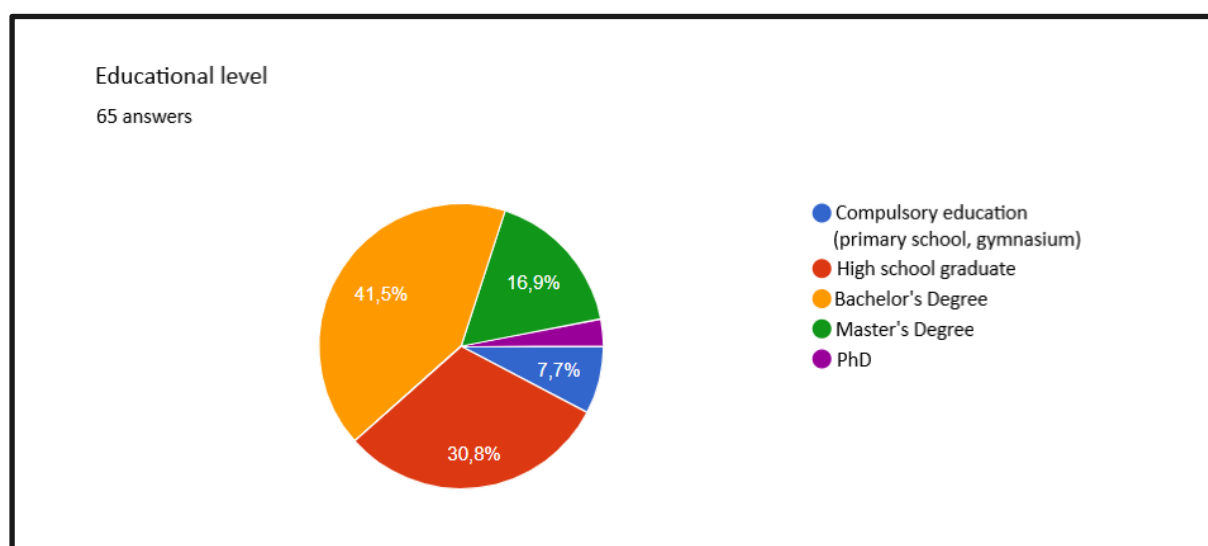


Table 3: Educational level

Moving on to the occupation of the people involved in our research, 6.2% of them are students, 6.2% are unemployed, 16.9% are self-employed or freelancers, 43.1% are employees of the private or the public sector and 27.7% are retired (Table 4).

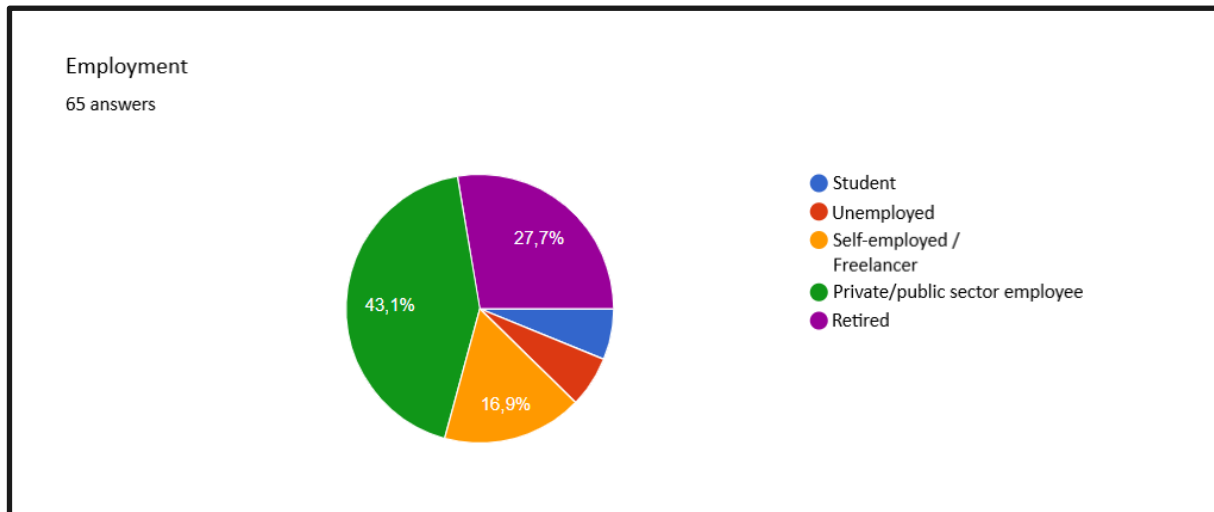


Table 4: Employment

36.9% of the participants answered that they were born in Asia Minor, while 63.1% answered that they were not born in Asia Minor themselves (Table 5).

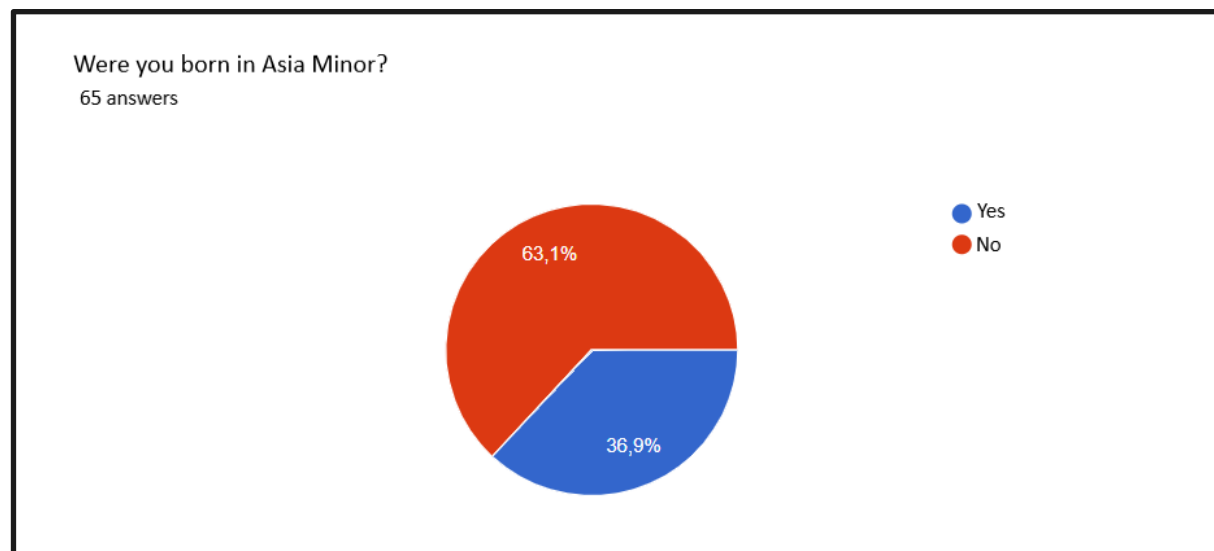


Table 5: People born in Asia Minor

Those who answered that they were born in Asia Minor, were asked to specify the exact location/region of their birthplace. Accordingly, 50% were born in Imvros, 41% in Constantinople, 5% in Tenedos and 4% in Ankara (Table 6).

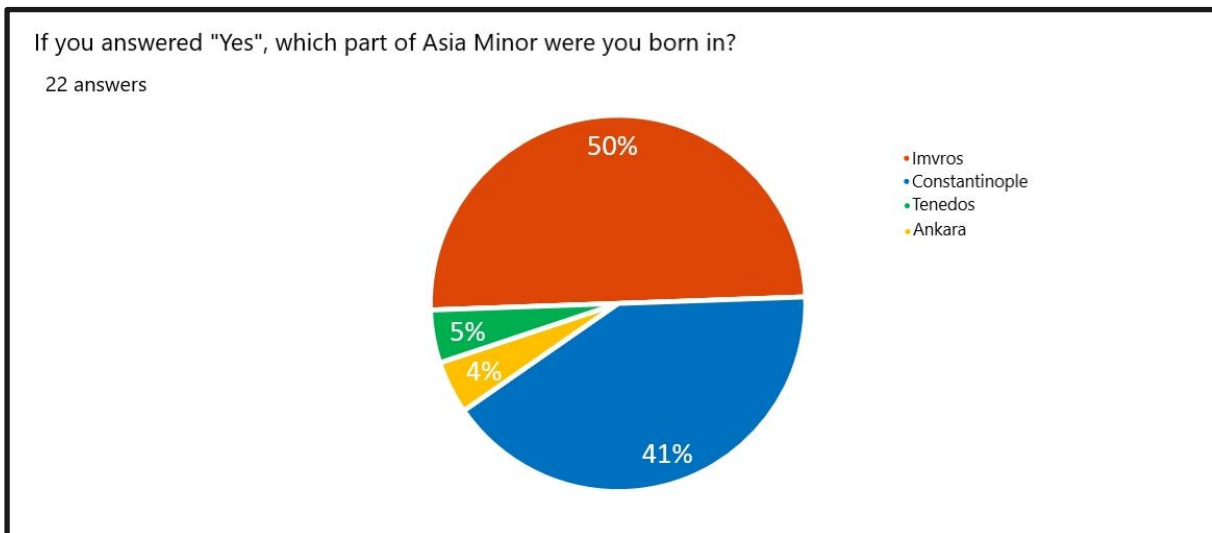


Table 6: Asia Minor regions

Concerning the participants who answered that they were not born themselves in Asia Minor, I decided to add a question which would clarify whether these peoples' parents were actually born there or not. The reason is that I wanted the majority of people who would answer this questionnaire to have direct or indirect contact with the uprooting experiences. In this case, people who would not have been born in Asia Minor but their parents, could have heard and learned a lot through the stories and the experiences of their ancestors or even face nowadays various problems regarding their movement to their ancestral homes, or have difficulties inheriting their parents' properties - as we will see in a while. Therefore, 63% of people who answered that they were not born themselves in Asia Minor, stated that their parents were born there (Table 7).

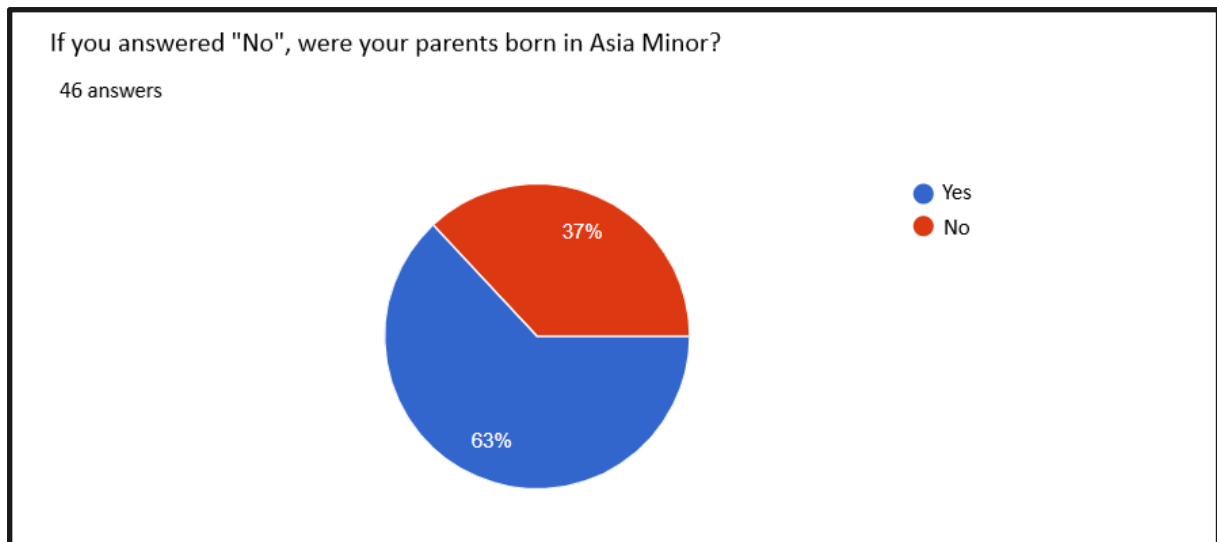


Table 7: People whose parents were born in Asia Minor

The next question was catalytic and brings us to the core of our research. 52 out of 65 people (80%) responded that they were forced either themselves or their parents to leave their ancestral homes in Asia Minor and seek refuge in another country. Through this question it became clear that the Turkish provocative actions during all these years have led many people to leave their homes and move on to an uncertain future by taking the path of refuge (Table 8).

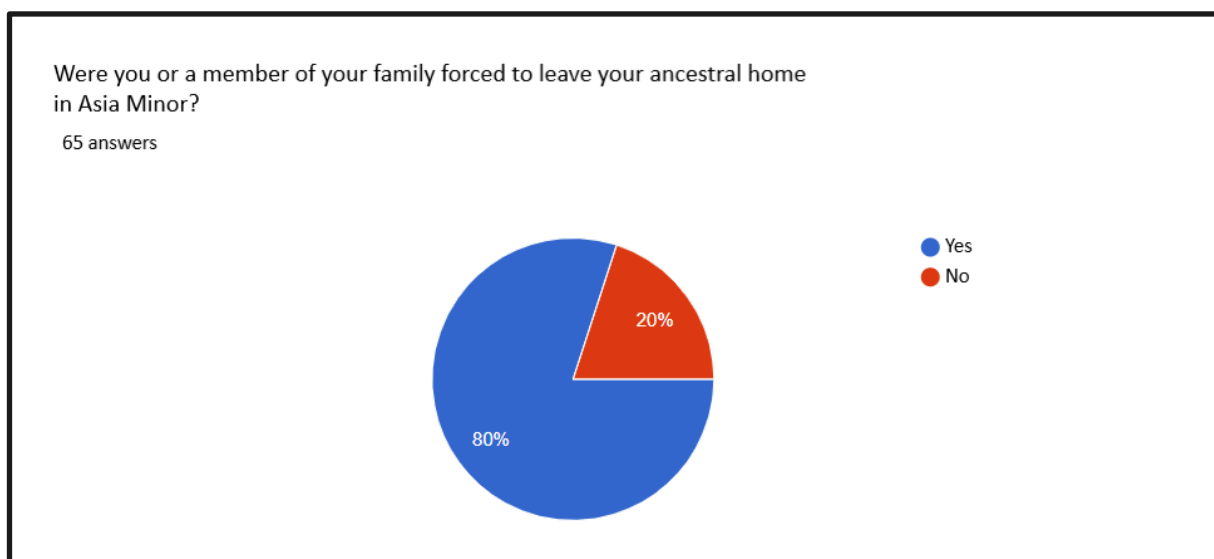


Table 8: People who were forced to leave their homes

Using a scale from 0 to 5 (where 0 means "not at all" and 5 means "very much") participants were asked to answer - according to their judgment, experiences and possibly

their knowledge - to what extent do they consider that Turkey has complied with its international obligations under the Lausanne Treaty, regarding the rights of the Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. As can be seen from Table 9, 43.1% answered "0" (i.e. "not at all"), 32.3% answered the number "1", 20% answered the number 2, and 4.6% answered the number 3. The numbers 4 and 5, that is, the belief that Turkey meets to a large extent its obligations regarding the Greek minorities, was not answered by any participant. Therefore, it turns out that, according to the answers, the majority of these people believe that Turkey did not respect the rights of the Greeks of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople, as they have been guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne (Table 9).

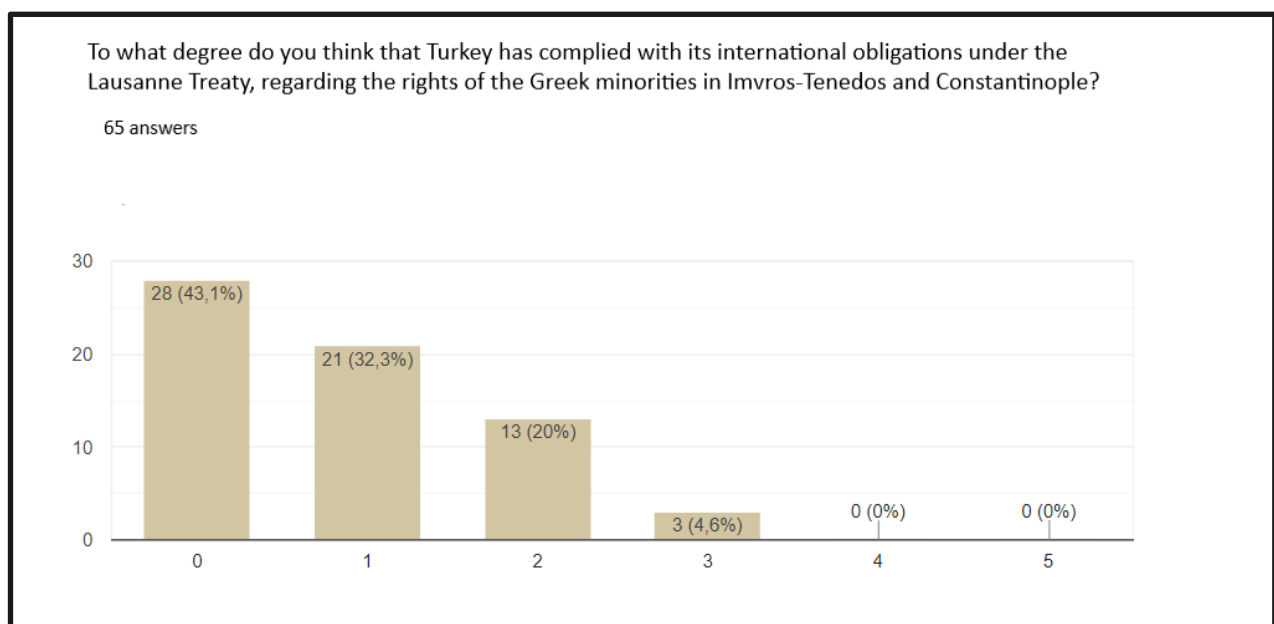


Table 9: Turkey's compliance with the international obligations

Afterwards, I phrased a statement in which the participants had to answer either that they agreed, that they disagreed or that they had no knowledge on the subject. The statement read as follows: "The Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople have faced violations in educational matters (e.g., prohibition of learning the Greek language in schools)." 81.5% answered that they agree and that indeed the Greek minorities have faced difficulties and violations in the educational matters. 13.8% answered that they do not know about this issue and 4.6% answered that they disagree with this statement. Evidently, the majority of participants agree that Turkey has not met its obligations regarding respect for the education system of Greek minorities while at the same time has violated the rights of Greeks in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople as far as education is concerned (Table 10).

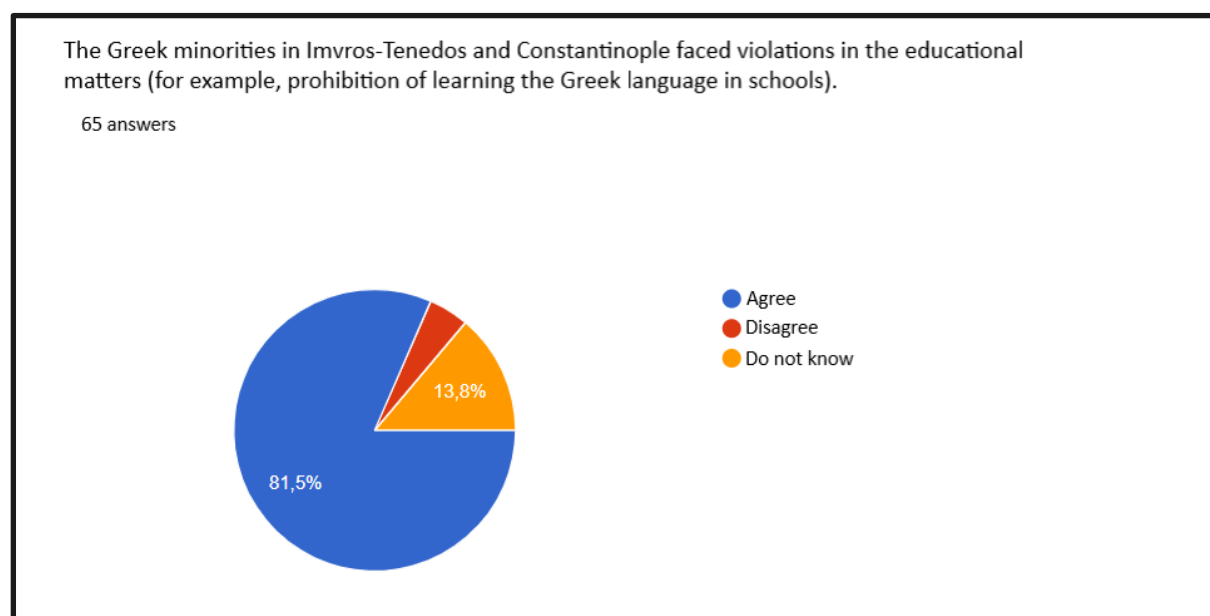
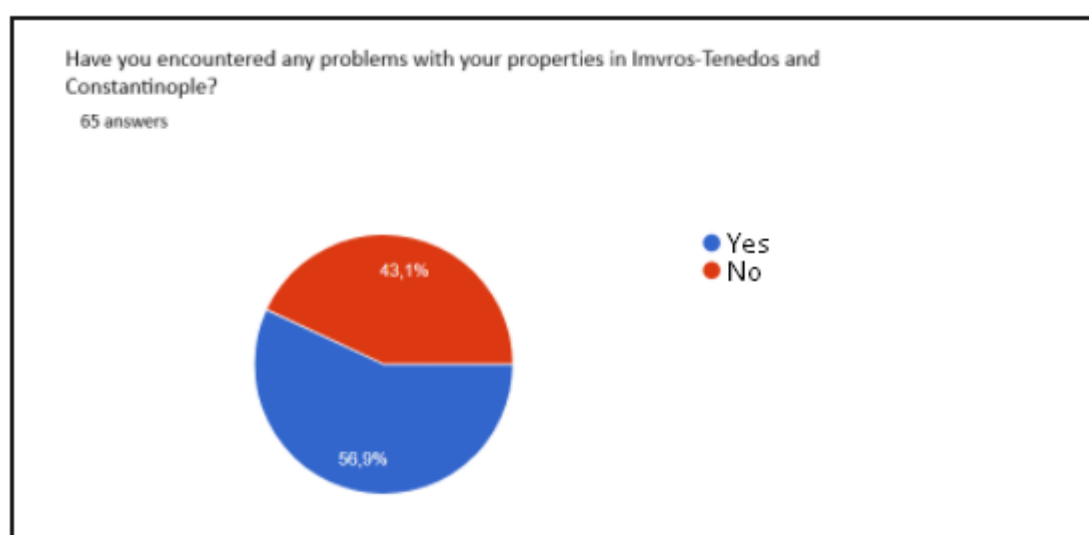


Table 10: Turkey's violations in educational matters

The next question touches on an important topic of my research. I asked the participants if they have encountered problems with their property in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. 56.9% answered that they have indeed encountered problems with their property while 43.1% answered that they have not encountered any difficulties in this matter

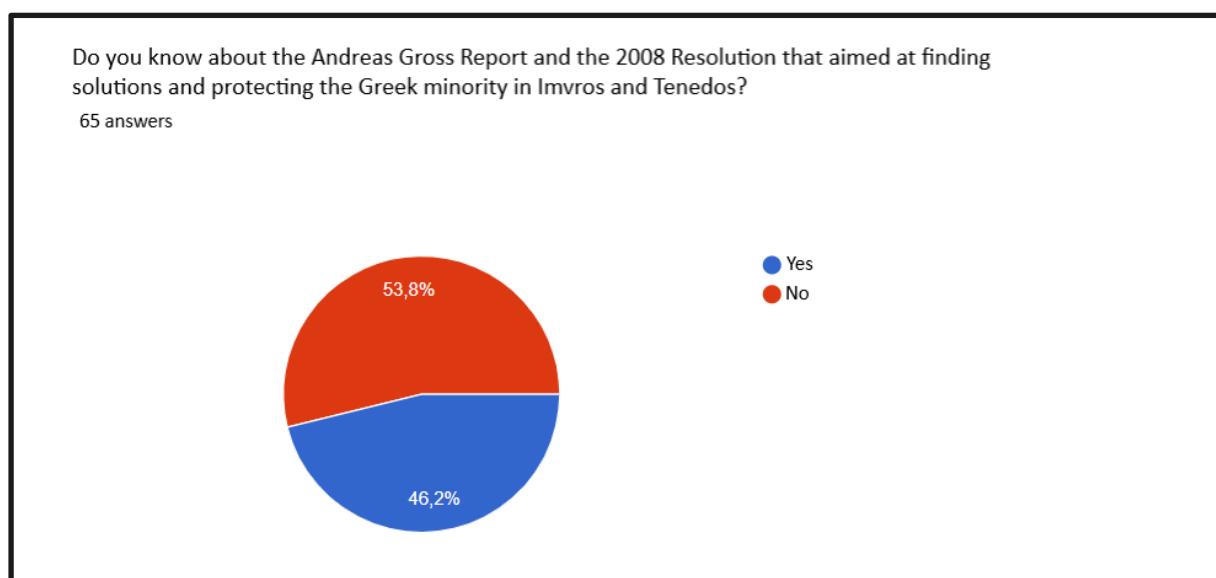


(Table 11).

Table 11: Issues with the properties

I then asked those who responded positively to write and become more specific about their property problems. I received 28 answers that were very interesting and most of them ranged on similar issues. It is important to recall at this point that all those who left their ancestral homes during the period of deportations and persecutions of the Greek minorities, automatically lost their Turkish citizenship. This is a very crucial problem that many Greeks from Asia Minor face nowadays, as Turkey prohibits the inheritance of the property of someone who does not hold Turkish citizenship. Consequently, 78% of the participants expressed that they can neither inherit their own or their parents' homes, nor sell them as they have lost all rights over them. Some participants reported that indigenous people looted their property or were forced to transfer their houses to the Turkish state, as they could not get it in their name.

As we mentioned in a previous chapter, the Andreas Gross Report and the 2008 Resolution were seeking to identify problems, to find solutions and to promote the protection of the Greek minority in Imvros and Tenedos. It was a very important chapter and a capstone in claiming and protecting the rights of Greeks in these islands. The purpose of this question was to investigate whether this report is known to the general public and especially to people coming from Asia Minor. 46.2% of the participants answered that they have knowledge of the existence of this specific report, while 53.8% answered that they do not know about it and its provisions. Probably some older people who do not have access to social media, internet or who have no way of being informed about such specific provisions and reports of the



European Commission, are unfamiliar with this report (Table 12).

Table 12: Andreas Gross Report

Another very important issue that had a profound impact on Turkey's attitude towards the Greek minorities is that of the Cyprus issue. As mentioned in a previous chapter, Turkey's hostility and negative attitude intensified every time there was a resurgence of the Cyprus issue and consequently a deterioration of the relations between Greece and Turkey. This fact was confirmed by most of the participants of the questionnaire, 93.8% of whom answered positively in the question "Do you think that the Cyprus issue contributed to the increase of Turkey's hostility towards the Greek minorities on Turkish territory?". 4.6% of the participants answered that they do not know and have no opinion on the issue, while 1.5% answered negatively in this question (Table 13).

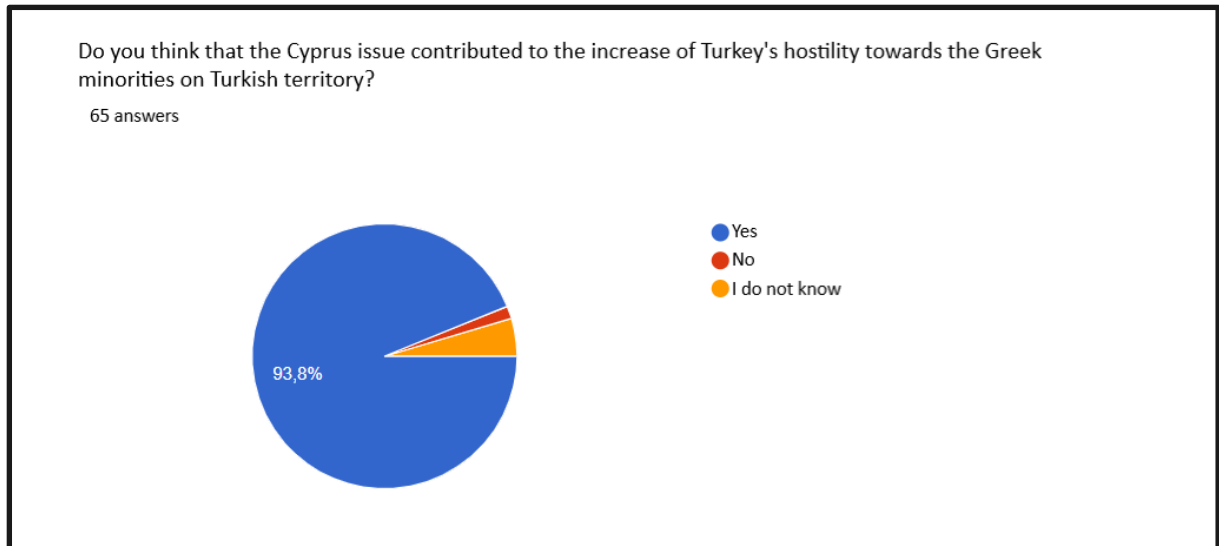


Table 13: The Cyprus issue

At this point we must also refer to the European Union, whose role in safeguarding and defending the rights of the Greek minorities was at the heart of the next question. The European Union is committed to upholding democracy and human rights, in accordance with the fundamental principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. Nevertheless, the participants of this questionnaire were asked if they believe that the European Union has adequately responded to the issues of people coming from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople regarding the restoration of the rights violated by Turkey. 87.7% answered that the European Union has not responded at all to the issue of Turkey's violations. 4.6% answered that the EU has responded positively to the issues of these people, while 7.7% answered that they do not have knowledge of this topic (Table 14).

Do you think that the European Union has adequately responded to the issues of people coming from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople regarding the restoration of the rights violated by Turkey?

65 answers

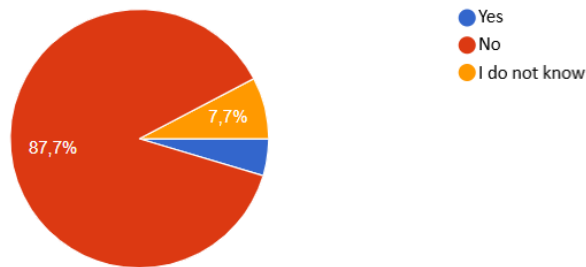


Table 14: EU on restoring the rights of the minorities

Regarding the opinion of people on the action taken by the Greek Government against the violations of Turkey, we can state the following: the results showed that 92.3% of the participants believe that the Greek government should have paid more attention to issues of the Greek minorities. It is therefore presumed that people from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople are not happy and satisfied with the Greek Government over the years as they believe Greece should have responded in many different ways to their demands. The Greek Government was the target of many criticisms for its weakness and indifference to the request of the inhabitants of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. The management of many national issues - including the Cyprus issue - has been in many cases ineffective, with the result that the rights of these people have been sidelined and a fertile ground has been created for Turkey to impose and continue its hostile policy against the Greek minorities (Table 15).

Do you think that more actions should have been taken over the years by the Greek Government in order to defend the rights of the Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople?

65 answers

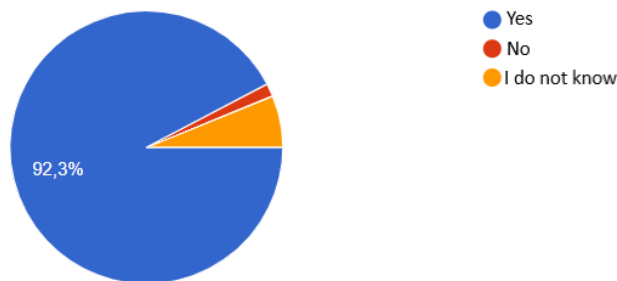


Table 15: Opinion on Greek Government's stance

The last question of the survey asked the participants to write the ways in which they believe that the Greek Government could and can respond to the requests of the people who come from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople. 14 out of the 38 participants who answered this open-ended question wrote that the Lausanne Treaty should be fully implemented and that the Greek Government needs to actively ask and demand the implementation of the rights deriving from the provisions of the Treaty. Others, expressed that Greece's passive attitude must stop and that all Turkish arbitrariness must be denounced in the International Organizations, in order to achieve the free exercise of religious freedoms. A small percentage also expressed a complaint regarding the indifference of the Greek state towards the violation of the rights of the Greeks, since those who were forced to flee Asia Minor and come to Greece did not receive the care they needed.

It was also noted by some of the participants that the Greek side should use all the legal arguments and solve the problems with the properties; these problems arise from the fact that they do not have or lost the Turkish citizenship and cannot inherit or sell the properties of their parents or their own. 3 participants also underlined the importance of listening to the concerns of these people, to spread information about their rights, to organize events, meetings and discussions and to raise public awareness. Lastly, 5 participants

expressed the opinion that the Greek community of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople should be supported both by the Greek state but also by the European Union.

8. Conclusions

The case of the Greek minorities in Turkey proves that despite the international guarantees through the Treaties and the Conventions, these minorities were excluded from the society in which they lived; the marginalization and the inhuman measures applied against them resulted in their shrinkage, either with the forced deportations or the “voluntary” but compulsory exit from the country. Although the Greek Orthodox minorities of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople accepted a series of guarantees with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, several events starting from the 1930s - including the Cyprus issue - led to the extinction of the Greek population. Under a series of unjust laws, the Turkish state pursued a repressive policy against the Greek community in many cases: the banning of several professions, of the freedom of expression, of the preservation of national and religious identity and of the right to education.

In addition, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has also faced serious problems, despite the fact that its legal status and function are and should be protected by the Treaty of Lausanne. It is crucial to underline the exclusion of the Ecumenical Patriarch from the right to manage the patriarchal property, since Turkish Law does not recognize him as a legal entity. In addition, the Turkish state does not recognize as property the donations to the charitable institutions of the Greek minority that have been offered from 1936 onwards. Also, many Greek Orthodox cemeteries have come under the jurisdiction of the Turkish state. Finally, the non-recognition by the Turkish authorities of the Ecumenical nature and status of the Patriarchate is a major obstacle for its proper function.

The deportations of 1964 stroked a blow to the Greek minority in Constantinople. Although the Pogrom 1955 (Septemvriana) caused some Greeks to flee from Constantinople, many of them were not willing to leave their homeland, despite the disasters they suffered. However, the deportations of 1964 severely damaged their identity and their integrity in the city, causing mass population influxes, something that became even more intense after the invasion of Turkey in Cyprus in 1974. The exodus of non-Muslims from Constantinople was offset by the mass arrival of internal migrants of rural origin in the city. Today, the presence

of Greeks in the city has become almost invisible, constituting less than 0.01% of its population, which is learning rapidly.⁹¹

Turkey, as an attempt to isolate the islands of Imvros and Tenedos, has banned the transfer of foreign nationals to these islands without the issuance of a special permit. However, the focus of the Turkish authorities was mainly on education. Education plays a vital role in maintaining the national identity of a minority. In this context, law 1151/1927 was implemented, the ultimate goal of which was the dissolution of Greek education on the two islands. Its abolition in 1951 was the result of Ankara's attempt to join the West and to show a liberal and democratic face internationally.

This did not last very long, because Turkey years later implemented the so-called “Eritme Programi”, the primary aim of which was to abolish the Greek education, the deprivation of the basic means of livelihood of the inhabitants and the psychological pressure against the Greek minority of Imvros and Tenedos. As a result, many Greeks were obliged to flee and seek haven to another place. Political choices and actions often determined the fate of the Greek minorities in Turkey. Consequence of that is a temporary improvement of the life conditions of the Greek minorities, every time that the interests between Greece and Turkey would coincide. However, with the subsequent deterioration of the Greek-Turkish relations on the occasion of the Cyprus issue - as happened in the 1950s and 1960s -, the Greek minority was used as a means of putting pressure on one country against another. This became apparent in many cases: one example is education, where we can mention the dismissal of many principals and school teachers, but also the violations of the Treaties and agreements on issues such as the free use of the Greek language.

In 1991, Helsinki Watch carried out a fact-finding mission to Turkey and published a comprehensive report titled “Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey”, which said, in part: “The problems experienced by the Greek minority today include harassment by police; restrictions on freedom of expression; discrimination in education involving teachers, books and curriculum; restrictions on religious freedom; limitations on the right to control their charitable institutions; and the denial of ethnic identity.”⁹²

According to the results of my research, which provide an overall picture concerning the attitudes of the participants towards that events that took place in Imvros-Tenedos and

⁹¹ Αναστασιάδου, Μ., & Dumont, P. (2007). *Οι Ρωμηοί Της Πόλης*. Εστία.

⁹² Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Denying Human Rights and Ethnic Identity: The Greeks of Turkey* (Library of Congress Card Catalogue No.: 92-71169).
<https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/TURKEY923.PDF>

Constantinople, it is noted that the great majority believes that Turkey treated unfairly the Greek minorities to a great extent and behaved in a brutal way towards the Hellenism of Asia Minor. Both the educational matters and the confiscations of the Greeks' properties have been in the focus of Turkish actions all these years. Violations of the Treaty of Lausanne began as early as the 1930s and continue to this day. At the same time, many participants stressed the ineffective and indifferent attitude of the European Union towards the demands of the Greek minorities, as the management of the problems on its part was not what they would expect.

As it became clear from the research, the attitudes of the respondents are in accordance with the literature review. Therefore, we can say that the research questions posed at the beginning of this dissertation were answered both by the literature and by the research conducted. The people who have participated in the research, either themselves or their parents, experienced firsthand the violence and atrocities committed by the Turkish State and believe that both the European Union and the Greek Government should be more interested in redressing the violations regarding the Treaty of Lausanne.

In the cases of the Greek Orthodox minorities of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople there has been a violation of human rights, despite the affirmations of Turkey to comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rome Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the seventh (VII) principle of the Helsinki Final Act, the Act of the Vienna Meeting, the Copenhagen on the Human Dimension, the Charter of Paris of 1990 and from the Exhibition of the Meeting in Geneva of the experts of the D.A.S.E. in matters of national minorities.

The fundamental rights, the violation of which continues to this day and remains an open problem, is the undeniable right of the Greek Orthodox of Constantinople and the islands of Imvros and Tenedos to settle in their homelands and the right to compensate for the confiscated properties. Despite the endless efforts of these people, the Turkish Government refuses to satisfy the demand for equal and fair treatment for the minorities, in contrary to any rule of international law and ethics.

9. APPENDIX

This research on the Greek minorities of Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople is a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of my Master's Degree in "Media and Refugee/Migration Flows" - Department of Communication and Mass Media of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Department of Sociology of the University of the Aegean.

The submission of the questionnaire indicates your consent to participate voluntarily in the research. The information you provide is confidential and can only be used for research purposes. The results of the research will not include information that will reveal your identity and will ensure your anonymity. Furthermore, the researcher is bound by the privacy of personal data and has all the obligations arising from Regulation 2016/679 of the European Council of the European Union for the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data, that the processing of information is done in accordance with the ethics of scientific research and the safety of their elaboration is preserved through the appropriate technical and organizational measures.

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 18-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51+

3. Educational level

- Compulsory education (primary school, gymnasium)

- High School Graduate
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD

4. Employment

- Student
- Unemployed
- Self-employed/Freelancer
- Private/public sector employee
- Retired

5. Were you born in Asia Minor?

- Yes
- No

6. If you answered “Yes”, which part of Asia Minor were you born in?

Write your answer

7. If you answered “No”, were your parents born in Asia Minor?

- Yes
- No

8. Were you or a member of your family forced to leave your ancestral home in Asia Minor?

- Yes
- No

9. To what degree do you think that Turkey has complied with its international obligations under the Lausanne Treaty, regarding the rights of the Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople?

0	1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. The Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople faced violations in the educational matters (for example, prohibition of learning the Greek language in schools).

- Agree
- Disagree
- Do not know

11. Have you encountered any problems with your properties in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople?

- Yes
- No

12. If you answered “Yes”, what sort of problems have you encountered?

Write your answer
.....

13. Do you know about the Andreas Gross Report and the 2008 Resolution that aimed at finding solutions and protecting the Greek minority in Imvros and Tenedos?

- Yes

- No

14. Do you think that the Cyprus issue contributed to the increase of Turkey's hostility towards the Greek minorities on Turkish territory?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

15. Do you think that the European Union has adequately responded to the issues of people coming from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople regarding the restoration of the rights violated by Turkey?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

16. Do you think that more actions should have been taken over the years by the Greek Government in order to defend the rights of the Greek minorities in Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

17. In which way do you believe that the Greek Government could and can respond to the requests of the people who come from Imvros-Tenedos and Constantinople?

Write your answer

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