

THE GREEK GENOCIDE 1913-1923



A TEACHING GUIDE

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A Teaching Guide

*The Asia Minor and
Pontos Hellenic Research Center, Inc.*

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*This book is
dedicated to all
victims of genocide.*

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Preface: Note to Instructor and Suggested Lesson Plan

The Armenians are not the only subject people in Turkey which have suffered from this policy of making Turkey exclusively the country of the Turks. The story, which I have told about the Armenians, I could also tell with certain modifications about the Greeks and Syrians [Assyrians]. Indeed, the Greeks were the first victims of this nationalizing idea ...

—From *The Murder of a Nation*, by Henry Morgenthau, American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, 1913–1916

The horrors of the Holocaust have largely obscured the first large-scale genocide of the 20th century, which Ottoman Turkey committed against its Christian minorities. While the Armenian experience, often referred to as the “Forgotten Genocide,” is gaining wider recognition, few today know what happened to the Greeks of the Pontus (or Pontos) region of Asia Minor, also known as Pontian Greeks; to Greeks living in other regions of the Asia Minor peninsula (Anatolia), and eastern Thrace; and the Assyrians, who together may have lost more than one million people. They were all murdered by different methods, and many more were driven into exile. The need to understand the nature of genocide grows ever stronger, as evidenced by what has happened in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and now Darfur. In addition, genocide denial, often called the final stage of genocide, is today being used by the government of Turkey, which has yet to recognize the crimes committed against its Christian minorities in the years before, during, and after World War I.

It is important to note that throughout this guide, the term “Ottoman Greeks” refers to ethnic Greeks of the Pontus region and other parts of Asia Minor who lived in the Ottoman Empire (1299–1923). The terms “Turks,” “Turkish,” and “Turkey,” when referring to events prior to 1923, indicates “Ottoman Turks” and “Ottoman Empire.”

This guide addresses Greeks of the Pontus region and other parts of Asia Minor, whose ancestors migrated there as far back as the 11th century B.C. Later, like the Armenians and Assyrians, they created an enduring and vibrant culture as a Christian minority in a Muslim world. During this genocide, Greeks in the Ottoman Empire—in the Pontus region, and western Asia Minor, including Smyrna and Thrace—were also victims of Turkish persecution and atrocities.

Placement of these lessons within the curriculum is, of course, based on the subject being taught. In a world history class, the lessons fit chronologically with the study of World War I. They also fit with a U.S. History class study of World War I because Americans were leaders in relief efforts to help Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks (see “Historical Documents” section, numbers 6 and 8). A psychology or sociology teacher will find this material useful, as students attempt to understand the nature of genocide. Of course, with the current crisis in Darfur, this material will help students understand current events. In addition, these lessons offer a comparative study with the Holocaust. By examining the genocide of the Greeks with that of the Jews, students can gain a better understanding of what was distinctive about each. However, they can also look for patterns common to both. For example, like the Nazis, the Turks did not begin mass murders immediately; it was a gradual process (as is reflected in the “Historical Documents” section). And both the Turkish government and the Nazis tried to hide their crimes from international organizations such as the Red Cross.

The following material is offered as a five-day learning session. Even so, this is merely a general introduction to the Greek Genocide. Because many instructors are subject to severe time constraints, a one-day mini-session is also offered. Of course, the lessons are only suggestions—good instructors will take this material and make it their own.

The five-day learning session incorporates the following pedagogical strategies:

Analysis of primary sources, including official reports, newspaper accounts, and survivor narratives

Multiple intelligences, including verbal-linguistic exercises such as worksheets, journals, poetry, and essays; art projects; cooperative learning activities; and individual reflection

Writing, including journalism, creative writing, and persuasive essays

Questioning, including building vocabulary and critical thinking

Higher-order thinking, including analysis and evaluation

5-Day Lesson Plan

Before Day 1, as homework, students should have completed the background reading, “Greek Genocide, an Overview” and the accompanying worksheet.

Day 1

1. Review and discuss the background reading, referring to the worksheet.
2. As homework, students should read the part of the packet labeled “Historical Documents” and complete the accompanying worksheet. (Note: These documents may be used to generate questions.)

Day 2

1. Briefly discuss the homework, “Historical Documents.”
2. Divide the class into small groups (3-4 persons per group). Each group should complete the activity, “Why Was What Happened to the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire a Genocide?”
3. Each group should share its findings with the class as a whole.

Day 3

1. The class will explore the various experiences of genocide victims.
2. Divide the class into six groups by random selection, self-selection by students, or the teacher may wish to match better readers with longer readings and artists with the Smyrna activity—as long as there are six groups of approximately equal representation. Each group will complete one of the following lessons:
 - Exiled from Espye
 - *Not Even My Name*
 - The Horrors of a Labor Battalion
 - The Story of Christos Iliadis
 - The Destruction of Smyrna
 - Saving the Orphans

3. Have each group together read through the beginning of their assignment. The instructor should circulate through the room to be certain that students understand their assignment.
4. Students should continue working within their group through the rest of the class period and complete the assignment as homework.

Day 4

1. Give students a few minutes in their groups to share with each other what they've learned and to prepare a 3-5 minute presentation to the class.
2. Each group provides a brief presentation.
3. Drawing upon this assignment, as well as readings from earlier in the guide, each group is to design its own memorial dedicated to the genocide of the Greeks. Students should follow the guidelines in the study guide, "A Memorial to the Greek Genocide," adopted from Facing History and Ourselves lesson and used in the Choices for the 21st Century Education Program's work, *Confronting Genocide: Never Again?*
4. Give students the remainder of the period to work on the project.

Day 5

1. Give students an opportunity to complete their memorial (half the period).
2. Allow each group to share its memorial.
3. Discuss as a class or assign as homework the topic, "Why is it important to remember the Greek Genocide?"

Supplemental Lesson: An Upstander—Ibrahim's Soul

To study one person's response to genocide, the instructor may want to have the students complete the lesson, "An Upstander—Ibrahim's Soul." This lesson offers many possibilities for discussion. For example, if one views genocide as the ultimate form of bullying, the bully's actions against the target/victim are, to a great extent, permitted by what bystanders fail to do. Why do many people collaborate with those who commit genocide, while others, like Ibrahim, do not? These others, often called "the Righteous" in Holocaust studies, or whom Samantha Powers, author of *A Problem From Hell*, calls "Upstanders" are relatively few in number but can be inspiring to students and offer a powerful affirmation of goodness in human nature.

1-Day Lesson Plan

As homework before the lesson, students should have completed the background reading, "The Greek Genocide" and the accompanying worksheet.

1. Ask the students, "What was the Greek Genocide in Turkey?" (10 minutes)
 - a. Students should write their answers.
 - b. Discuss their responses.
2. Distribute the "Historical Documents" packet and the worksheet, "Was What Happened to the Greeks a Genocide?" (25 minutes)
 - a. Working in small groups, students should find one example of each part of the definition of genocide.
 - b. Students should share their findings.
3. Closure: Discuss why it is important to remember the Greek Genocide? (5-10 minutes)

A Note on Geography and Maps

Summarized from *Geo-Data: The World Geographical Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed.
John F. McCoy, ed. Thomson/Gale, NY, 2003:

Modern-day Turkey spans two continents. About 3% of the nation is in Europe and is known as Eastern Thrace. It is separated from Asian Turkey by the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles, which, in turn, connect the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea. The remainder of the country is located mostly on the peninsula of Asia Minor, also known as Anatolia.

Because Turkey is located on a large tectonic plate, it has experienced many earthquakes throughout time, accounting for its geography. The Taurus Mountains extend from Turkey's entire Mediterranean coast eastward to Iran. To the north, the Pontic and other mountain ranges run along the Black Sea. In between is the Anatolian Plateau which has a rough, uneven topography, such as deep canyons. Rivers include the Euphrates and the Kizil.

Although the southern part of Turkey has a mild Mediterranean climate, the northern Black Sea area is cooler, and the central plateau can experience very cold winters, with a great deal of snow, and hot summers.

For those Greeks, Armenians, and Assyrians who were forced, day after day, to walk through this rough terrain, often in extreme temperatures, with insufficient clothing, little or no food, and little rest, their journey truly became a death march.

Maps

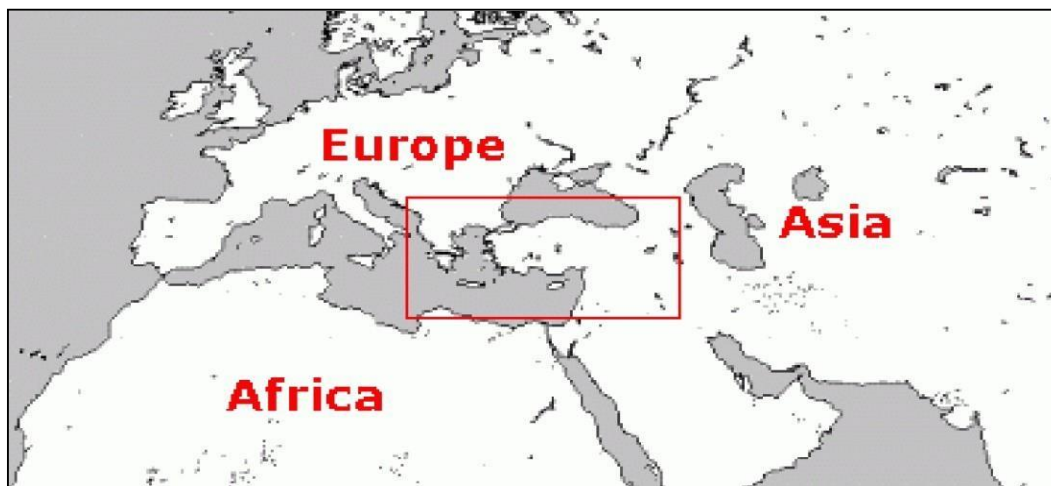
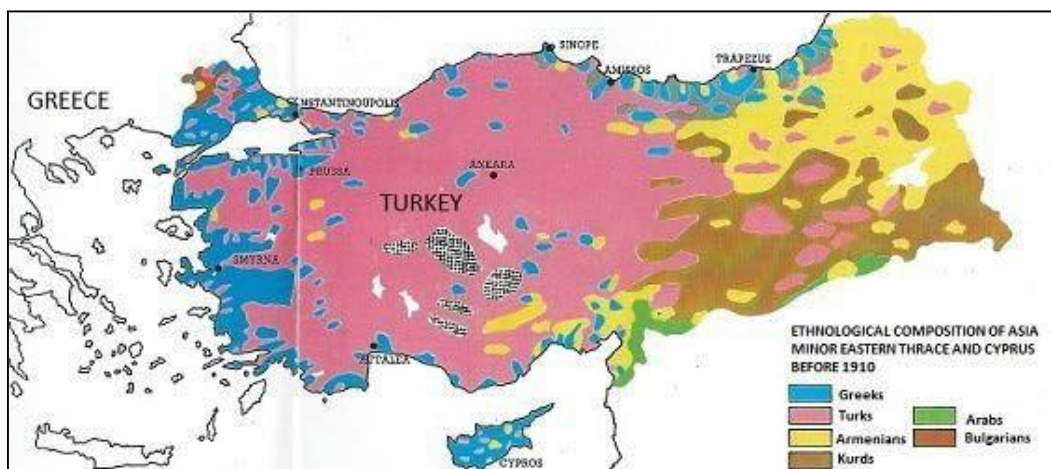


Figure 1. Europe and Middle East.



*Figure 2. Concentrations of Armenians and Greeks in the region before 1910.
(Institute of Historical Studies, Athens, Greece)*



Figure 3. Physical map of Turkey/Anatolian Peninsula, circa 1912.
(www.Atlapedia.com)

Chronology of Major Events

11th Century	Turkic nomads migrate from central Asia and invade Byzantine-controlled areas
1204	Fourth Crusade; Crusaders capture and sack Constantinople; Greek Empire of Trebizond established in the region of Pontus on the Black Sea
1299	Formation of Ottoman state
1453 (May 29)	Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Turks; end of the Byzantine Empire
1458–1460	Ottoman Turks complete their occupation of mainland Greece, lasting approximately 400 years
1461 (August 15)	Empire of Trebizond falls to the Ottoman Turks; forced conversions of Christians begin
17th and 18th Centuries	250,000 Pontian Greeks forced to convert to Islam; thousands depart for Russia, Constantinople, and the Danubian Principalities to avoid persecution
1821–1828	Greek War of Independence
1832 (August 30)	Greece becomes an independent state
1877–1878	Russo-Turkish War; after a series of defeats at the hands of Russia, the Ottoman Empire is crippled; Russia becomes a dominant power in the Balkans and Black Sea
1880	Ottoman reprisals in response to Russian victories cause 250,000 Greeks to leave Pontus and settle in the Russian-held Caucasus Mountains
1894–1896	Hamidian massacres of the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire
1908	Young Turks Revolt; rise to power of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) party, which restores parliament; the constitution of 1877 and promises reforms, including equality among all ethnic groups

Chronology of Major Events (Continued)

1911 (November)	CUP's meeting and decision in Salonica, Greece to eliminate the Ottoman Christians
1912–1913	First and Second Balkan Wars; Ottoman Empire loses significant territories in Europe
1913	Coup within the CUP; a triumvirate (three pashas) seizes control of the government and establishes a military dictatorship that rules the Ottoman Empire until the end of WWI Ottoman Empire masterminds and implements the genocide against the Christian minorities with a goal of establishing a Turkish, Islamic, nationalistic empire as “the only solution for their salvation”
1914	Deportations of Greeks in Eastern Thrace and Western Asia Minor
1914–1918	World War I; conscription of Christians to the Ottoman army in 1914; many Pontian Greek men flee to the mountains to avoid military service and “labor battalions”; they form guerilla groups to protect themselves, their persecuted relatives, and co-nationals; first phase of the Greek Genocide
1914–1922	Pontian Greek fighters resist deportations, persecutions, and massacres
1915	Armenian genocide begins; perhaps 1.5 million Armenians eventually perished
1916	Greek inhabitants of the Pontian Greek towns of Matsouka and Tripolis deported to the interior of Anatolia
1918	Allies defeat the Ottoman Empire; World War I ends; Armistice of Mudros; Allies occupy Constantinople; Ottoman Empire partitioned

Chronology of Major Events (Continued)

1919 (May 15)	Greek army lands in Smyrna, at the suggestion of the Allies, to prevent Italy from controlling Asia Minor and to protect the Greek population of the surrounding area from Turkish persecutions and atrocities; this was also part of a longstanding dream of the Greeks, called " <i>Megali Idea</i> "—the recapture of old Greek homelands
1919–1922	Nationalist movement of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk); second phase of the Greek Genocide ; Pontian Greeks attempt to establish independent state as the only solution for their salvation
1920 (August 10)	Treaty of Sèvres between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire liquidates the Ottoman Empire; the Treaty was not ratified by the Grand National Assembly or Kemal Ataturk during the Turkish War of Independence
1922 (August-September)	Turkish Army defeats Greek expeditionary army and destroys Smyrna; hundreds of thousands of Greeks flee or are expelled by the advancing Turkish forces
1923	Treaty of Lausanne; Turkey and Greece agree on compulsory exchange of populations; Turkey regains control of all territories in Asia Minor; remaining Asia Minor Greeks are exchanged with the Muslim population of Greece; thousands of Greeks die of starvation and disease while in transit to Greece; this also results in thousands of orphaned Greek children
1924	Last survivors of Greek Genocide leave Turkey

Greek Genocide, an Overview

The Ancient Greeks in Asia Minor

Early History: Migration to Asia Minor from Ancient Greece

From 2000 to 1000 B.C., there were three tribes: Ionians, Achaeans, and Dorians. These tribes migrated in successive waves from northern Europe to the mainland of Greece.

Around 1050 B.C., the Dorian invasion of the Greek mainland resulted in the Ionians being driven out of northern Peloponnese and they settled in Athens. The Ionians crossed the Aegean Sea colonizing the western shores of Asia Minor also known as Anatolia.

Settlements in Asia Minor (9th and 8th Centuries B.C.)

First Cities in Coastal Areas

The Ionian Greek colonists established cities such as Miletus, Ephesus, Phocaea, Smyrna, and Perganum on the western coast of Asia Minor—beginning along the Mediterranean Sea and advancing along the Aegean Sea to the north. These cities were major centers of Greek civilization during ancient and Roman times.

While the Greeks colonized and built cities throughout western Asia Minor during the 9th and 8th centuries B.C., they were also very active along the Black Sea coast. By the 8th century B.C., Miletus was the oldest and most powerful Greek city in Asia Minor possessing great economic and naval power. The Milesians expanded their colonies along the Mediterranean and then moved north to the shores of the Euxeinus Pontus (Black Sea). They became a major economic power engaging in trade selling fish, farming products, and ores including silver, gold, iron, and copper.

The first wave of Milesians founded the port city of Sinope (785 B.C.), located in the easternmost part of Pontus and became a route for trading caravans. They established other cities such as Amisos (Samsun), Kotyra, and Trebizond (756 B.C.). Trebizond (known as Trapezus today) was considered a gateway to

the famous 7,000-mile-long Silk Road, a series of trading routes that covered Asia, Europe, and Africa, and was an early banking (money trading) center.

According to John Freely, author of the book *Children of Achilles*, Miletus was the most important of the mainland cities during the early years. It founded a far greater number of colonies than any other city-state in the Greek world, including more than 30 around the shores of the Pontus Euxinos (Black Sea) and its approaches in the Hellespont and the Sea of Marmara. The Milesian colonies founded on the Anatolian shores of Pontus, beginning in the 8th century B.C., included Sinope (Sinop), Amisus (Samsun), and Trebizond (Trabzon or Trapezus). Today, these are the three important Turkish cities on the Black Sea.



Figure 4. Colonization of the Asia Minor and Pontos region by the Greeks.

The Greeks from the city of Megara near Athens with their leader, Byzas, sailed northeast across the Aegean Sea in 667 B.C. to establish the city of Byzantium. This city was later renamed Constantinople, which became the capital of the Byzantine Empire in 330 A.D.

Anatolia was the birthplace of world literature, including Homer's "Trojan War," the acclaimed account of mainland Greeks fighting the Trojans during the second millennium B.C.

"Pontus," an ancient Greek word for "sea," refers to the Black Sea and surrounding coastal areas. The presence of Greeks at the Black Sea dates back to early times. Research suggests that around 1000 B.C., the first trading ventures in this area took place, searching mainly for gold and other minerals.

The voyage of Jason and the Argonauts to Colchis, the adventures of Odysseus in the country of the Cimmerians, the punishment of Prometheus by Zeus on the Caucasus Mountains, the voyage of Hercules to the Pontus, the land of Amazons, for his ninth labor, and other Greek myths related to this area testify to the existence of ancient Greek trading routes through the Bosphorus, reaching the Black Sea's shores. Pontus was the birthplace of great thinkers such as the philosopher Diogenes of Sinope and the geographer Strabo of Amasia. After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., the city-states of the Pontus formed a kingdom under the Mithridates family that lasted until the Romans defeated them in 63 B.C.

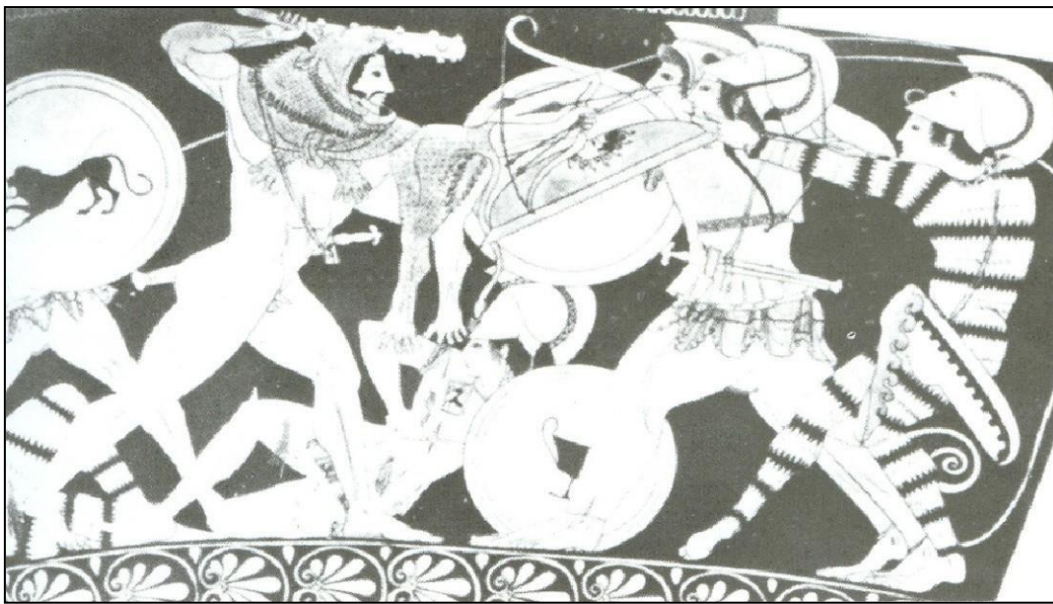


Figure 5. Hercules fighting the Amazons.

Introduction of Christianity

The Greek King Alexander the Great (Μέγας Ἀλέξανδρος) of Macedon is remembered for spreading Hellenism to the east after he captured Asia Minor. He brought additional Greek colonists to the area and further spread the Greek language, art, education, and government. The Greek cities of Asia Minor flourished during the Hellenistic period and Roman times (323-146 B.C.).

After the destruction of the city of Smyrna by the Lydians, Alexander the Great reestablished Smyrna at its present location. The Smyrna of the Hellenistic and Roman years was a brilliant Asian capital, admired by Strabo and Cicero. During the years of the apostles, the city became a cradle of Christian faith for more

than two millennia. Smyrna grew at a rapid pace into a dynamic metropolis. It became the second largest city in the Ottoman Empire.

In 313 A.D., Roman Emperor Constantine granted Christians religious freedom. In 330, he renamed the Greek city of Byzantium “Constantinople” and made it the new capital of the Christian Roman Empire. The emergence of Christianity as the official religion of Rome led to the creation of great monasteries that served as centers of Christian and Hellenic (Greek) learning, along with universities and schools. A number of saints, patriarchs, and bishops of the Orthodox Church were from the Pontus region.

As part of the Eastern Roman Empire (also known as the Byzantine Empire, or Byzantium), the Pontus region was a busy trading center, with the Black Sea as well as land routes, such as the Silk Road, which stretched as far as China. The Pontus region also served as a military base against Persians and, later, Arabs.

After the Crusaders’ sack of Constantinople, Byzantium weakened, and in 1204, the Greek Empire of Trebizond was established in the Pontus region. In 1461, the Ottoman Turks conquered Trebizond, the last independent Greek state until the modern nation of Greece would be established in the 19th century.

How Did the Ottoman Empire Affect the Pontus?

After the fall of Trebizond, Pontian Greeks suffered large-scale massacres and deportations. During the 17th and 18th centuries, approximately 250,000 Pontian Greeks were forced to convert to Islam. Thousands retreated inland or fled the area for Russia, Constantinople, and the Danubian Principalities (modern day Romania).

During the 19th century, the central government of the Ottoman Empire increased its power over local rulers. To some extent, imperial laws improved the lives of non-Muslims and encouraged new economic opportunities based around the Black Sea and Persia (present day Iran). Although most Greeks remained in the Pontus region, more than 250,000 migrated into areas of the Caucasus and northern shores of the Black Sea controlled by Russia. This movement was encouraged by Russia, which preferred that fellow Christians populate this area. Pontian Greeks also fled there to escape Turkish rule and reprisals after Russia’s defeat of the Ottomans in 1878.

The 19th century fostered a renaissance in Pontian Greek society, which numbered approximately 700,000 people. More than 1,000 churches and 1,000 Greek schools were built. Greek newspapers and books flourished, as did cultural and scientific societies. Heartened by the independent Kingdom of Greece, Pontian Greeks grew more nationalistic and assertive of equal rights in an empire where they had frequently faced oppression.



Figure 6. Pontian Greeks at a picnic.



Figure 7. Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Smyrna blesses newlyweds.



Figure 8. Pontian Greek girls working.

What Was the “*Megali Idea*” (“Great Idea”)?

When an independent Greek Kingdom was established in 1832 under the London Protocol, the vast majority of Greeks lived within the Ottoman Empire. Many Greeks within both Greece and the Ottoman Empire came to believe in the “*Megali Idea*,” or “Great Idea,” a concept of creating a greater Greece that included all the areas of Greek settlement in Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace, with Constantinople as its capital.

Those sharing this concept viewed the Russian Empire as sympathetic to this concept. As an Orthodox Christian nation, Russia considered itself the protector of the Ottoman sultan’s Orthodox Christian subjects, among whom were the Pontian Greeks. During the Crimean War (1853–1856), Greece supported Russia against the Ottoman Empire, which put the Asia Minor Greeks in a difficult position.

During the First Balkan War (1912–1913), Greece and its allies (Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro) defeated the Ottoman Empire. As a result, Greece increased

its territory by 70%, adding Macedonia (northern Greece) and the island of Crete. Its population increased considerably, from 2.8 million to 4.8 million.

What Caused the Greek Genocide?

At the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire spanned three continents, with 4 million square miles and 38 million people. The multiethnic and multireligious empire included 5 million Christians, most of them Armenians and Greeks. As “People of the Book” (Bible), Christians were tolerated, however, they had to pay burdensome taxes (including one exempting them from military service) and among other things, were not allowed to own weapons or hold public office. Although most Christians were lower-class farmers, many, who resented these discriminatory policies, became successful businessmen and leaders. Armenians, for example, called for political equality and relief from excessive taxation. In contrast, Muslims often resented Christian exemption from military service and the protection that European nations sought to gain within the Ottoman Empire for Christian minorities. Manifesting this resentment, from 1877-1879 and 1894-1896, Sultan Abdul Hamid II encouraged the massacre of as many as 300,000 Armenians.

In 1908, a revolt within the Ottoman army forced the Sultan to cede power to a nationalistic group of “Young Turks” called the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). At first, minority groups within the Ottoman Empire supported this change, hoping the new government would bring reforms that would give minorities religious and political rights. However, when Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire, the government grew defensive and sought to “Turkify” the empire, distrusting those subjects not ethnically Turkish or Muslim. Technically non-Muslims citizens would be excluded from the ethnic definition of the Turkish nation. Resettlement, deportation, and even violence were discussed as ways of removing the Christian minorities from the Ottoman Empire. More Armenians were massacred in 1909 in the province of Adana.

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 led to disastrous defeats for the Ottoman Empire with the loss of 70% of its European population and 85% of its European territory. Thousands of Muslims fled or were expelled from the Balkans into Anatolia, telling stories of cruel treatment at the hands of their former Christian subjects. Sixty years earlier, in its own example of ethnic cleansing, Russia had forced a half-million Muslim Circassians from the Caucasus into the Ottoman Empire. Many leaders of the CUP, who later carried out the genocide of Christian

minorities, were from families that had been forced to leave their own homelands in these border areas.

In 1913, an extremely nationalistic section of the CUP led by three Young Turks, Enver, Jemal, and Talaat, staged a coup. These men defined the nation in terms of Turkish ethnicity and the Muslim religion. Christians were described as “foreignbodies” and “microbes.” When World War I began, a holy war or jihad was declared against the nation’s enemies—Great Britain, France, and Russia. Initially, the Ottoman Empire lost several battles to Russia. The Empire’s Armenian citizens became scapegoats and were called traitors and Russian collaborators. Armenian men were drafted for the first time, only to be disarmed and put into labor battalions where they were either executed or worked to death. On April 24, 1915, the Armenian cultural elite was rounded up from Constantinople and other major cities and murdered. Armenian villages were emptied; many of its older men, women, and children were sent on death marches into the desert, with no food, water, or shelter, where they died of disease or exposure. Others were set upon by bandits and raped, carried off into slavery, forcibly converted to Islam, or murdered. Often people were crammed into railroad freight cars or cattle trucks. Soldiers sometimes placed Armenians on boats in lakes and then set the boats on fire. At other times, people were herded into barns that were then burned down or into caves where brush was set on fire to smother those inside. Between the years 1915-1924, approximately 1.5 million Armenians were murdered.

Meanwhile, Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire in 1914 were similarly victimized. As early as 1911, the Young Turks already had banned the ethnic, cultural, and political associations of minority groups. Greek schools were placed under government control, and Turkish was to be the language studied. In the Pontus region, teachers from mainland Greece were forbidden to work in Greek schools. One of the worst government orders was compulsory military service for all religious communities. Christian recruits were treated brutally, leading to large numbers of deserters, many of whom found their way into the mountains or neighboring Russia. Under the pretense of searching for these deserters, bands of Turkish marauders broke into Greek homes, robbing, raping, and/or murdering their inhabitants.

Coincidentally, the suffering of Greeks living in Thrace was especially terrible. During the two Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, Thrace was a battle zone where Greek residents lived in the crossfire among Greek, Bulgarian, and Ottoman armies. The Peace Treaty of Bucharest 1913 gave northern Thrace to Bulgaria and eastern Thrace to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government began

a systematic campaign to remove Greeks from eastern Thrace, either through massacres or forced exile. That year, approximately 233,000 Greeks were deported from Thrace into Asia Minor with many of them being forced to convert to Islam. A great number of men were exterminated while serving in labor battalions. The area became one of anarchy and terror. After World War I, when the Greek army left Thrace in 1922, the remaining 300,000 Greeks (excluding those living in Constantinople) were compelled to leave their homes and seek refuge in Greece.

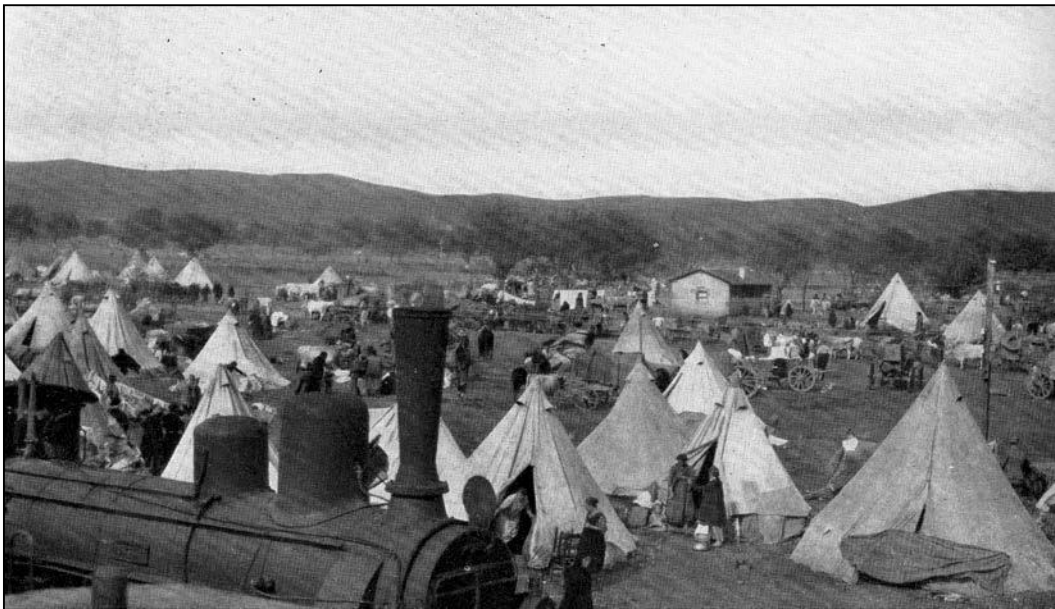


Figure 9. A tent city on the Maritza River, where tens of thousands of Greeks camped after fleeing Thrace before the incoming Turks. (Frank America. *National Geographic*, Nov. 1925)

During World War I, What Forms Did the Greek Genocide Take?

In 1914, Turkey joined the Central Powers led by Germany and, therefore, fought the Allies, including Russia. When the Armenian Genocide began in 1915, persecutions of Greeks in the Ottoman Empire increased dramatically. The government organized boycotts of Greek businesses and encouraged Turkish irregular forces and Turkish neighbors to attack Greek villagers. With the excuse that the southern coast of the Black Sea was vulnerable to Russian attack, the government ordered mass deportations forcing many to travel on foot in the middle of winter, as far south as the Syrian Desert. Tens of thousands died. Turkish police and vigilante mobs, again under the guise of hunting down

deserters, were granted free reign to steal, rape, and murder. Between 1914 and 1918, more than 100,000 unarmed Pontian Greek civilians were deported; most died. A few Pontian Greek guerrilla bands, called “Andartes,” formed resistance groups in the mountains to protect themselves and their families, but they could do little to stop these mass murders.

In the other parts of the Ottoman Empire, such as eastern Thrace and the western coast of Asia Minor, persecutions of Greeks began in April of 1914, with campaigns of deportation, terror, and massacre. Although ceased briefly in 1916, they resumed in 1917. The Ottoman Empire’s genocidal campaign against Greeks stopped temporarily in 1918 after World War I, but began again with much greater intensity in 1919.

How Did the Idea of an Independent Nation Affect the Pontian Greeks?

In 1916, Russia occupied Trebizond and allowed the area to be governed by local Greek religious and civic leaders. Many Pontian Greeks believed that the Russians would stay, allowing the Pontus region to be an autonomous state within the Russian Empire. However, after the Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks (Communists) ended Russia’s involvement in the Russian-Turkish war and left the Pontus area in 1918. As Turkish troops reentered the area, thousands of Pontian Greeks followed the Russian army into the Caucasus.

At the Versailles Conference in 1919, Greece’s Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos wanted control of the city of Smyrna, which had a larger Greek population than Athens, as well as more land in Asia Minor, and either international control or a U.S. mandate over Constantinople. Bishop Chrysanthos of Trebizond urged the victorious Allies to create an autonomous Pontus as a British protectorate, as opposed to what the Allies offered—guarantee of minority rights by the Turkish government. Although the Allies knew of the Turkish deportations and massacres of the Pontian Greeks, they refused to intervene.

What Happened to the Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire After World War I?

Before a final settlement was reached regarding the Ottoman Empire, Italy sent troops into Asia Minor, moving toward Smyrna. Alarmed by this, in May 1919, the other Allies (Great Britain, France, and the United States) supported a Greek

landing in Smyrna. Many in Greece, including Prime Minister Venizelos, wanted control of western and eastern Thrace as well. The Allied occupation of Constantinople and the Greek occupation of Smyrna spurred a rise in Turkish nationalism under the leadership of a military officer named Mustapha Kemal (later called “Ataturk”—the father of modern Turkey). Denouncing and separating himself from the defeated Turkish government in Istanbul, Kemal led nationalist Turkish forces against the Greek invaders. In March 1921, the Greek army advanced within 50 miles of Kemal’s stronghold of Ankara, however, Turkish forces held their ground. The deterioration of the political and military situation in Greece and the defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor resulted in Italy, France, and Great Britain declaring their neutrality—thus abandoning Greece (Italy and France even sold weapons to the Turkish forces). On August 26, 1922, the Turkish army went on the offensive, quickly pushing the Greeks back to Smyrna, which the Greek army evacuated on September 8. The next day, the Turkish army entered Smyrna and burned most of the city, killing as many as 30,000 Greeks and Armenians.



Figure 10. Greek men being deported. (*National Geographic*)

The need for Turkey to secure ports on the Black Sea to help its trade with communist Russia and the desire for Turkification (“Turkey for the Turks”) were reasons used to eliminate the remaining Greek population of the Pontus. Under Kemal, who succeeded the Young Turks, the massacres continued. On May 19, 1919, Kemal landed in Samsun. This began the second phase of the genocide

throughout the Black Sea coastal area. Between 1919 and 1922, nearly 150,000 Pontian Greeks were murdered. One of the perpetrators of these massacres was Topal Osman Pasha, who led paramilitary forces that destroyed unarmed Pontian Greek villages and massacred innocent men, women, and children.

Ioannis Koktzoglou witnessed an example of these atrocities. When he was 16 years old, Turkish troops surrounded his village of Ada, near Samsun, killed over 340 Greek inhabitants and burned the village to ashes. Koktzoglou and two others were the only survivors from his village. The destruction of Ada, along with seventy other villages in the surrounding area, was documented in the *Los Angeles Times* (August 9, 1921):

EXTERMINATION PLAN ALLEGED.

**Turks Murdering Greeks on
Black Sea Charged.**

—

**Last Appeal to America is
Made Public.**

—

**Government Asked to Help in
Grave Situation.**

[EXCLUSIVE DISPATCH]

BOSTON, Aug. 8.—Charging that "the Turks evidently have a deliberate plan of exterminating the entire Greek population on the shores of the Black Sea," the Pan-Epirotic Union of America with headquarters here, has made public a cable message from Dr. Thoidis, president of the League of the Greeks of Pontus, in which he makes, "in the name of justice and the most sacred rights of man, a last appeal to the humanitarian sentiments of the United States." The message, dated Constantinople, July 24, reads as follows:

CRIMES NUMEROUS.

"The inhuman acts, assassinations, thefts, violations, arbitrary confiscations of property, all sorts of male-

factions unheard of before, are in the daily program since the armistice in the littoral of the Pontus and in the Interior of Asia Minor.

"Recent news just received from the Pontus described with the blackest colors the desperate condition of the Greek population. The male Greek population from 13 to 60 years of age of all the cities of Pontus, Ineholi, Samsoun, Kerassund, Ordou, Tripoli, as far as Trebizond, has been deported to the interior.

"The largest part of this population has been massacred on the way by the Turks and those who could survive have arrived by way of Siyas as far as Albostan in Kurdistan. The fate of the Christian villages of the interior is ignored.

TOWN IS BURNED.

"The village of Ada and its surrounding country, containing a Greek population of nearly 3500 persons, has been burned down and its inhabitants massacred by the Turks, who turned these villages into ashes after having plundered them. Over seventy villages around Samsoun were pillaged and burned down some time ago.

"Yesterday the commander of the American torpedo boat 232, V. S. Houston, brought the news that on the 19th of July the Turks compelled the women, the girls and the children, who were abandoned by their relatives now in exile, to vacate their houses and also to be ready to start for an exile. Fifteen thousand of these unfortunate beings from Samsoun, 6000 from Kerassund and 14,000 from Ordou, Ounlah, Fatsa, etc., are in danger of being annihilated, if they are not already."

Figure 11. The destruction of Ada, along with 70 surrounding villages, was international news. (Los Angeles Times, August 9, 1921)

According to Koktzoglou, "On May 15, 1921, thousands of irregular Turkish troops surrounded the village forming seven rings around it. At 7:30 p.m. they gathered all of the inhabitants. They murdered some of them outright. They forced the rest into houses, poured fuel oil on the houses, and set them on fire. They shot those attempting to flee and threw them back into the fire. The

Turkish troops had another method to kill those who tried to escape from the fire. They would soak a rope in oil and put it around their victim's neck. Two men would pull on the rope; each holding an end. They then stabbed the victim in the forehead or abdomen with a bayonet. Finally, they threw the dying victim back into the fire. These savage Turks held so much rage against the Greeks that they even burned the babies' cribs."

Kemal Ataturk's nationalist movement also used false criminal charges to deprive the Pontian Greeks of their leaders.



Figure 12. *Stavros Xygalas, one of 168 Greek notables executed in Amasia, Sept. 21, 1921, on false charges of treason, after a summary trial by the Turkish Independence Courts.*

Similar horrors befell Greeks in other areas of the Ottoman Empire. For example, the Diocese of Heracles in Thrace reported, "At the end of May, 1919, three Albanian-Turks, guarding the Tsikili Farm on the Tads-Tyrolae road, killed two young Christian men from Tsads, whose clothes and ears they sent to this town, to frighten the peasantry and whose corpses they gave to the dogs of the farm for food."

As reported by the *British Express Daily*, October 26, 1922:

Two hundred and fifty thousand refugees have now crossed the River Maritza, leaving Eastern Thrace like a semi-deflated balloon. The sudden advent of winter—the weather is now wet and icily cold—must add to the misery of the refugees, many of whom will perish long before they reach the journey's end.

I [H.J. Greenwall] also had a conversation with the General commanding the Greek troops, who told me that the army had now retreated about half-way across Eastern Thrace, and to-day was no longer in contact with the Bulgarian frontier.

Allied troops will be moving in a few days towards the left bank of the Maritza, where they will eventually form a living barrier separating the Greeks from the Turks.

Small bands of Greek fighters called “Andartes” continued to use guerrilla warfare to defend themselves and their people against overwhelming Turkish forces.



Figure 13. Expelled survivors to the interior of Asia Minor returning to the Black Sea ports before the November 30, 1922 evacuation deadline. (National Geographic, November, 1925)

As a result of the outcome of the Greco-Turkish War, and the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), Greece lost all the land it had gained earlier in Asia Minor. The treaty also provided for a compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey based on religion. Approximately the 1.25 million Greeks that survived the deportations and massacres had fled to Greece before the Treaty. The remaining relocated to Greece, while 380,000 Muslims living in Greece were relocated to Turkey. Out of approximately 2 million Greeks living in Ottoman Turkey at the start of World War I, more than 700,000 died between 1914 and 1923 as a result of systematic ethnic cleansing which included massacres, forced deportations, death marches, expulsions, and executions.

As a consequence of the Ottoman Empire's systematic policy of Turkification, an estimated 2.5 million Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks were slaughtered outright or were victims of the "white death"—disease and starvation, a result of the routine process of deportations, slave labor, and death marches. The deliberate ethnic cleansing against Christians in Anatolia became the first large-scale genocide at the beginning of the 20th century.



Figure 14. Greek refugee girl.
(*National Geographic*, Nov. 1925)

Vocabulary List

“Andartes” _____

Armenians _____

Assyrians _____

Atrocities _____

Autonomous _____

Bolshevik _____

Boycott _____

Compulsory _____

Deportation _____

Ethnic _____

Ethnic cleansing _____

Guerrilla _____

Kurds _____

Mandate _____

Marauder _____

“Megali Idea” _____

Monastery _____

Mationalist (nationalistic) _____

Orthodox Christian _____

Patriarch _____

Pontus _____

Protectorate _____

Renaissance _____

Turkify _____

Worksheet: Greek Genocide

1. Where were the Pontian Greeks located?

2. Why was Pontus so important to the Eastern Roman Empire?

3. During the 19th century, in what ways did life improve for Greeks living within the Ottoman Empire?

4. Explain the “*Megali Idea*.”

5. Why did the Young Turk government begin persecuting Armenians and Greeks?

6. In what ways did the Young Turks persecute Greeks in the Ottoman Empire?

7. What effects did World War I have on the Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire?

8. As World War I ended, what type(s) of government(s) did many Pontians want to replace Turkish rule?

9. Why was Smyrna important in the war between Greece and Turkey (1919-1922)?

10. How did this war affect the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire?

11. By 1923, what had happened to the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire?

Thinking Further

1.

Why did so many Turkish people participate in their government's destruction of Pontian and other Greeks?

2. Why didn't other nations do more to stop the Greek Genocide?

Historical Documents

(See Appendix for complete citations)

Document 1

From *Persecutions of the Greeks in Turkey before the European War* by Alexander Papadopoulos:

At the beginning of 1914, they [Young Turks] put into play all possible inhuman and violent means by which they aimed at the destruction of Hellenism.

First, they attempted to destroy the Greeks by attacking their material prosperity. This they sought to attain by a commercial boycott, which the Governors and Sub-Governors imposed by going to the Greek cities and villages. The measure was actually enforced by bands of Turko-Cretans [Turks from Crete] and refugees from other places, whose duty it was to take their stand before the Christian shops and to prevent the entrance of any Turks.

Document 2

From a report by James Morgan, British Acting Consul General in Salonica, Greece, June 2, 1914, in *The Genocide of the Pontus Greeks by the Turks*:

The refugees on the *Belgian King* [steamship] were from three separate villages and the procedure adopted in order to force them to leave seems to have been the same in each case. Bands of armed Moslems would surround and enter the Christian villages at night and by firing off their guns or by beating on the doors of the houses and shouting out threats to the villagers would create a state of panic among the latter. In the daytime the Moslems would summon the villagers before them and order them to leave Turkey as soon as possible and threats of confiscation of goods and massacre would be freely uttered. Actual violence was rarely resorted to although out of the three emigrating villages ten persons had been killed. Seeing no hope for the future and no cessation of Moslem persecution, the inhabitants of each of the three villages finally collected all their effects, including the church furniture and church bells, and transported

them to the coast where, after sailing [selling] off for next to nothing their carts and oxen, they embarked for Greece. The abandoned villages were at once occupied by Moslems.

Document 3

From *The Blight of Asia*, by George Horton, U.S. Consul-General in the Near East:

In January 1916, the Greek deportations from the Black Sea began. These Greeks came through the city of Marsovan by thousands, walking for the most part the three days' journey through the snow and mud and slush of the winter weather. Thousands fell by the wayside from exhaustion and others came into the city of Marsovan in groups of fifty, one hundred and five hundred, always under escort of Turkish gendarmes. Next morning these poor refugees were started on the road and destruction by this treatment was even more radical than a straight massacre such as the Armenians suffered before.

Document 4

From *The Genocide of the Pontus Greeks by the Turks*, a "Report by Lieutenant Slade (British Navy) on the situation along the south coast of the Black Sea," September 11, 1919:

It frequently happens that [kidnapped] Islamised women and children are, as a matter of practical well-being, better off in their present condition than if they were, by persuasion or compulsion, restored to the care of their communities, for in the majority of cases their families no longer exist.

Document 5

From *The Genocide of the Pontus Greeks by the Turks*, a “Report of the protest of the Locum Tenens of the Greek Patriarchate and the Armenian Patriarch” to the British High Commission in Constantinople, October 18, 1919:

What confronted the Christians today was what the deputation called “white” massacre. They could not live without cultivating their fields. Their fields were well outside the villages, and the situation was such that they dare not go to them. The Turk, so cowed and submissive ten months ago [at the end of World War I], was today all arrogance and menace.

Document 6

Also from *The Genocide of the Pontus Greeks by the Turks*, a report given by Stanley K. Hopkins of the Near East Relief (NER), November 16, 1921:

After leaving Samsoun on my return trip to Kharpoot I passed the old men of Samsoun, Greeks who were being deported. Many of these men were feeble with age, but in spite of that they were being pressed forward at a rate of thirty miles a day and there was no transport available for those who were weak or ill. There was no food allowance for them and any food they could obtain had to be procured by money or sale of small articles that they could carry with them. On this trip I passed many corpses of Greeks lying by the roadside where they had died from exposure. Many of these were the corpses of women and girls with their faces toward the sky, covered with flies.



Figure 15. Deportation route of the inhabitants of Derekioe.

Document 7

From journalist and foreign correspondent Herbert Adams Gibbons' article in *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 31, 1922, "Greek Massacres by Turks Continue."

Despite repeated blank denials, the Angora Turks are following a deliberate and ruthless policy of extermination of the Greeks, I find that Trebizond is being cleared of the remaining Christian population.

Two years ago there were 25,000 Greeks here. To-day, between the ages of 80 and 14, the male population numbers 6 priests and 10 civilians. Not one doctor, not one teacher is left. The Greek hospitals and Greek schools are closed and even private lessons in the homes are forbidden. There are no Greeks in business. The Greeks were the most prosperous element here, with fine homes, a splendid hospital, owning large summer villas on the hills; but now that the fathers and the husbands and the sons have gone, the women are plunged into deep poverty.

I see the women digging ditches, passing stones to masons, carrying heavy burdens in bare feet and rags. They are the longshoremen of the port. Now, after having deported all the older boys, the Angora [Turkish]

Government has ordered the seizure of children of 14 down to 11 years of age. It is a heartrending sight to see the poor little children herded like cattle, driven through the streets to the Government House, where they are being thrown into a filthy underground dungeon. Some 300 werethus collected on May 20th at Trebizond.

Document 8

From "Chicago Girls Brave Death To Help Refugees Fight Disease in Asia Minor" by Otis Swift, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Dec. 31, 1922:

Along the lonely deserted shores of the Black sea, where at Samsun, Trebizond and Sinope hordes of Greek and Armenian refugees await evacuation; Chicago women and girls today are playing a prominent part in the arduous work of the American relief.

Miss Charlotte R. Willard, 7613 Union Avenue [sic], assistant director of the Near East Relief orphanage, is at an isolated relief station at Marsovan, fifty miles inland from the Black sea, where she has superintended the evacuation of 2,600 orphans during the last two months.

Miss Willard is now in full charge of the station, due to the death of Director George J. Williams of Foxburg, Pa., who caught cold while conveying orphans across the desert in a blizzard last week and died within three days. The only American woman in the district, she is facing the task of sending 5,000 orphans to the sea coast over roads where convoys have been held up and robbed by brigands on several trips during the winter.

Miss Elizabeth Thom, a trained nurse, of 549 Grant Place, is stationed in Erevan, Armenia. In the shadow of Mount Ararat, where, with a smallpox epidemic aboard the Greek refugee ships anchored in the Bosphorus, which caused the deaths of 300 persons in a week, the Angora government has forbidden landing further refugees.

Document 9

From Mr. Vasileios Anastasiades personal account as stated in *Survivors' Testimonies of the Pontian Genocide* (Australian Institute for Holocaust and Genocide):

I was born in Kaesareia/Kayseri district, Kappadokia, in 1912. ... When the Turks hit Pelemet, attacking the French, the Hellenes (Greeks), and especially those who worked on the railways, that is when they took us into exile, the men separate from the women, separate from the children. The children were taken to Zougoultah. Next to us was a camp for Hellene POWs, all but one of whom died as slave labourers. The sole survivor was Dimitrios Pairahtaroglou. The soldiers gave us some of their meager food rations, so that we would not starve to death.

When the Red Cross was notified about us [about our captivity] and came looking for us, the Turks would move us around by night. One Christian prisoner, serving as a guard, told the Red Cross where we were hidden, on condition that they free him also. That is how one hundred and fifty children were saved.

Document 10

From *Not Even My Name: A True Story* by Thea Halo (the story of 10-year-old Sano Halo's survival of the death march, that annihilated her family—as told to her daughter, Thea):

We stopped in the road like a pile of stones in a river; the weary exiles ruptured out around us and continued their march. Mother took Maria from Cristodula's back and cradled her in her arms as her tears washed Maria's lifeless face.

"Move!" a soldier shouted as he trotted up to where we stood.

"My baby," Mother said.

She held out Maria for the soldier to see, as if her shock and grief could also be his.

"My baby."

“Throw it away if it’s dead!” he shouted. “Move!”

“Let me bury her,” Mother pleaded, sobbing.

“Throw it away!” He shouted again, raising his whip. “Throw it away!”

Mother clutched Maria’s body to her breast as we stood staring up at him. Her face was gripped with torment I had never seen before. Father reached for Maria, to put her down I suppose, but Mother clutched her even more tightly. Then she walked over to the high stone wall that separated the road from the town and lifted Maria to lay her on the wall’s top as if on an altar before the Almighty.

Document 11

From Ester Pohl Lovejoy’s work, *Certain Samaritans*. Dr. Lovejoy was Chairman of the Executive Board of the American Women’s Hospitals and President of the Medical Women’s International Association. She was in Geneva attending the conference of the latter organization during the Smyrna fire and was dispatched there immediately by the former. An excerpt from Dr. Lovejoy’s eyewitness account as she was helping the destitute people on the quay of Smyrna:

The greatest crime against humanity with which I am personally familiar was committed on the Smyrna Railroad Pier during the last week of September, 1922, and consisted in the separation, by military force, of the members of all the Christian families. At every gate during the daylight hours, this atrocity was conducted systematically. As family after family passed those gates, the father of perhaps 42 years of age, carrying a sick child or other burden, or a young son, and sometimes both father and son, would be seized. This was the climax of the whole terrible experience for every family. In a frenzy of grief, the mother and children would cling to this father and son, weeping, begging and praying for mercy, but there was no mercy. With the butts of their guns, the Turkish soldiers beat these men backward into the prison groups and drove the women toward the ships, pushing them with their guns, striking them with straps or canes, and urging them forward like a herd of animals, with the expression, “*Haide! Haide!*” which means “Begone! Begone!”

I shall never forget those women with their little children clinging to their skirts as they moved backward, step by step, gazing for the last time, perhaps, upon the faces of their husbands and sons. **“Their wives shall be widows and their children orphans”** is a prophecy which was fulfilled on the Smyrna Railroad Pier, the “Via Dolorosa” of those unfortunate people.

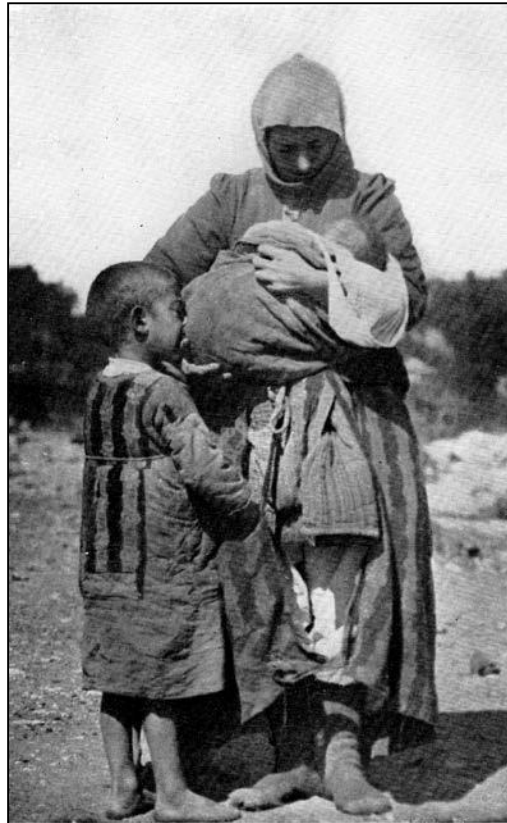


Figure 16. *“Their wives shall be widows and their children orphans.”*
(*Certain Samaritans by Ester Pohl Lovejoy*)

Deportation is a common practice during war, but this was not a common deportation. The men were going to the “interior,” and the women, children and old people, were going to a strange country to begin life anew without the support of their natural protectors. Day after day the pitiful procession of mothers and their little children, the aged, sick and helpless, moved toward the ships. This was the cruelest, cowardly and unsportsmanlike spectacle that ever passed under the eyes of heaven.

“Haide! Haide!” Everybody was echoing this expression, and *“Haidegit”* for special emphasis. The Americans and English took it up. They didn’t know exactly what it meant. They only knew that it kept the crowd moving, and

it was imperative to get these people away as quickly as possible. There are times when human beings must seem cruel to be kind, and many a man with a tender heart puts on an armor of hard-boiledness.

Worksheet: Historical Documents

1. In early 1914, the Turkish government ordered a _____ of Greek businesses.

2. In June of 1914, why did many villagers leave their homes?

3. According to George Horton, what was worse than a “straight massacre?”

4. Why did Lt. Slade believe it was better to leave kidnapped women and children where they were?

5. Explain what was meant by the term “white massacre”:

6. How does Stanley Hopkins’ report explain why so many Greeks died?

7.

How does Herbert A. Gibbons' news report demonstrate that the Turkish policy of genocide was "deliberate and ruthless"?

8. How does the *Chicago Daily Tribune* article demonstrate that some outsiders were willing to help?

9. Survivor Vasileios Anastasiades reports, "...When the Red Cross was notified [about our captivity]...and came looking for us, the Turks would move us around by night." Why do you think the Turks suddenly became secretive?

10. In her moving account about her little sister Maria's death, why do you think Sano Halo uses the image of an altar?

Lesson: Why Was What Happened to the Greeks a Genocide?

Using the United Nations' definition of genocide (see Appendix) and the primary sources included in your packet, your group will prove why what happened to the Greeks was, indeed, genocide. Use specific examples from the sources (be sure to cite your examples).

The United Nations defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," such as:

"Killing members of the group"

"Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group"

"Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part"

"Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group"

“Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group”

After gathering your evidence, prove that what happened to the Greeks was genocide (summarize your group’s findings below):

Lesson: Exiled from Espye

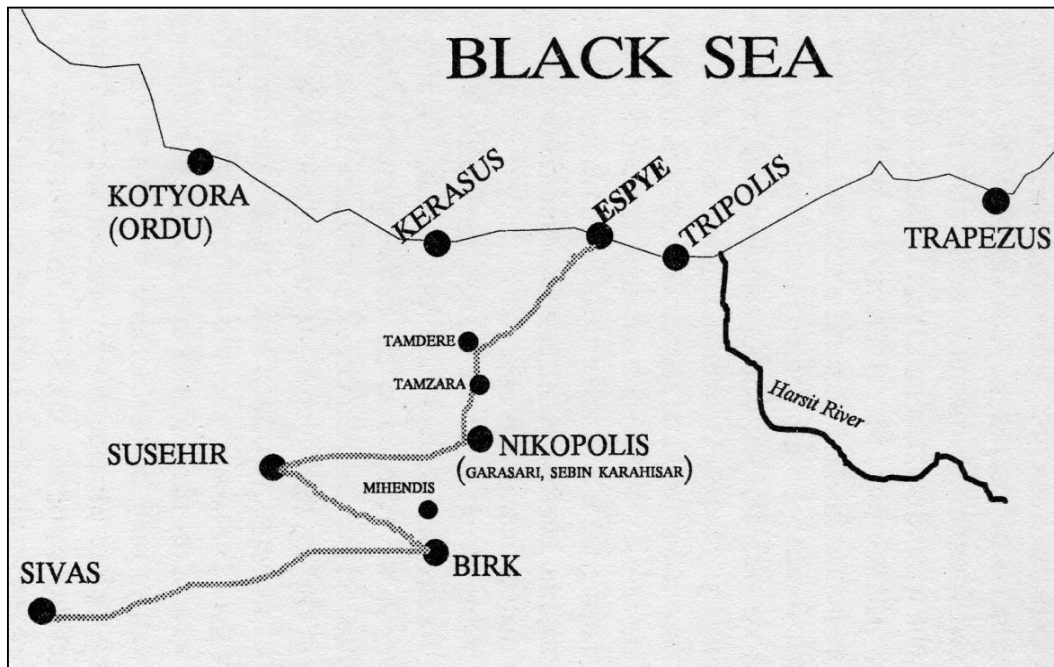


Figure 17. The route taken by the exiles of Espye stretched 200 kilometers to Sivas.

Tamama, The Missing Girl of Pontos, by George Andreadis, is the true story of a seven-year-old girl who, along with her family, was forced to leave her village on a long journey that became a death march that many did not survive. The following selection provides us a glimpse of this terrible journey.

Papayiannis, the village priest, was Tamama's father. As you read the following excerpts from the book, use the accompanying map to follow the journey of Tamama's family and her fellow villagers. Also, review the information on Turkey's geography and climate to gain a better understanding of the difficulties of their journey.

Section 1

The news reached Espye on the morning of Sunday, 16th November, 1916. The town crier went around the Greek houses and summoned all the Greeks to gather shortly in front of the church, bringing with them only what they could carry. Turkish drovers with beasts of burden would undertake the transportation of more belongings, for those who could pay.

The Christians gathered a short time later. Papayiannis arrived last, because his brother Kostas had been ill for two days with a fever and wanted his help. Grim looking zapties [mounted police] who were strangers stood on the steps of Saint George's church and they were to accompany the deportees for a distance of 50 kilometres south of Espye, according to the plan. The Turkish drovers bargained with those who had money to pay their demands for the carriage. Papayiannis went directly to a mounted officer, who seemed to be in charge of the whole affair. He told him that his brother, Kostis was ill with a fever and asked if he could stay at home with his wife, Eleni. The officer did not even look him in the eye but said grimly that Kostis must come at the double, so that they could set off before noon to be in time to get to their first stop, before nightfall, for their first overnight stay. The days had already shortened and it went dark early. With his head down, Papayiannis went to his brother's house, lifted his sick brother out of bed and, with his sister-in-law Eleni, arrived in the church yard. All Christian Espye was there, 480 souls who set off at 11 o'clock on Sunday 16th November, 1916 on the way to Golgotha.

Section 2

It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They had already walked for more than 20 kilometres.... It was cold and nobody was in the mood. From this spot you could see Espye for the last time. After this the mountain sloped away and then one mountain followed the other and nobody could see the sea any more. They all turned their eyes towards Espye, instinctively. They were seized by a vague fear that perhaps they were never to see Espye again.... And what did they see? The whole of their neighborhood had gone up in smoke. Their Espye was on fire. Their world was on fire. Papayiannis wept, turned his head forward and never looked back again.

Section 3

Their destination was an inn, a short distance from the road to the summer huts, about seven hours' traveling distance from Espye.

When they arrived at the inn, they were all exhausted, hungry and frozen. They built rough fires to get warmer while outside the sleet continued to fall. They spread out their wet clothes round the fires. They ate dry pieces of bread and whatever they had ready with them and bundled up they lay

down to sleep on the floor inside the inn. First they settled uncle Kostis, who was exhausted from his fever and only wanted to drink some water. Because of their great exhaustion, they fell deeply asleep at once. Not even two hours had passed when a loud noise awakened them. The children did not wake even with the noise. The adults went outside the inn to see what the noise was. Papayiannis went outside with them. Kostas did not even open his eyes in his exhaustion. His wife moistened his lips with a little water. It was chaos outside the inn. Christian deportees from the villages round Tripolis had arrived in conveyances for their exile. Where so many people could be accommodated? Outside the cold and sleet continued.

Section 4

The morning of 17th November dawned with clear skies and shining sun. Everybody knew that they were exiled 50 kilometres. Courageously, they faced the sun, which would help them a great deal on the remaining fifty kilometres of their journey of exile. The zapties shouted to wake the children until the march of the exiles started again. Suddenly screams were heard inside the inn. It was Aunt Eleni, the wife of Kostas. When she had gone to waken her husband, it was too late. Kostis was not alive, that same night he departed forever, breathing his last in the inn. He was the first victim from Espye on the Golgotha of exile. Papayiannis wept for his only brother.

Section 5

The following two days the weather was good, and that made the march of the deportees slightly easier. The nights, however, were terribly cold. After three days they arrived at the village Tarn Tere, which is situated at the foot of Mount Erimez. This village had many empty houses, which were soon filled with the Christian exiles. The mountain peaks were covered with snow and from what they heard, the snows remained there all the year round, and that was why the mountain was called Erimez Dag, meaning the mountain that never melts. They had to pass over this mountain in order to go to the south.

Papayiannis filled with dread gazed at the mountain covered in snow. There were often unexpected snowstorms on this mountain. Apart from

this danger, he was dreadfully worried about little Alexander [his only son], who had developed a high temperature and diarrhea. They all found shelter in the deserted houses, lit fires to get warm and took the edge off their hunger with soups quickly made from coarsely ground corn, or barley. The children's hunger and exhaustion were greater. Papayiannis did not touch a thing. He was sitting by the side of his dear little Alexander, caressing him and trying to persuade him to eat some of the soup that his mother and aunt had prepared. The other children, Marigoula, Symela and Tamama were ravenously eating the awful soup, without paying much attention to their sick brother. The heat of the soup cheered them. The instinct for self-preservation was in operation, which often makes man worse than the animals. Everybody, except Papayiannis, slept that night. At dawn great tiredness caused Papayiannis to fall asleep. The screams of his wife Kyriaki awakened him. Alekos [Alexander] was no longer alive. His beloved son Alexandros had died in this ruined house, in the village of Tam Tere.

The four days, which had passed since they set off from Espye, seemed like an age. Within four days, Papayiannis had lost his brother and now his beloved son, whom he had brought into this world with so many prayers and expectations. Black clouds spread over Papayiannis's face and he did not care about anything, not where they would go, nor whether they would be saved, or whether they would die. At dawn, however, he found other corpses amongst the other families who had stayed in the ruined houses of Tam Tere. Most of the victims were young children. A total of 20 people died that night. There was a mass burial conducted quickly, because the military authorities had ordered strict isolation, and military doctors had come and done a stringent check on everybody. They were all seized by a great fear that the great evil of some epidemic struck the unfortunate Christians. For five days now these people had been living in filth, they had no time to change clothes, and had hardly anything to eat. It was possible for anything to happen to these people. Ill and healthy together. Old people next to children. Only God could save them.

The Espyelis, grim-looking and with tears in their eyes, stood up like a herd for their exile march. Now the caravan became longer, as more and more villages joined the procession. They by-passed a village that had been occupied by Muslim refugees to avoid their attacks.

Section 6

[Papayiannis died along the road and was quickly buried in the snow.]

They arrived in Su Sehir in incredibly bad weather. The heavy snowfall lasted for three days. As soon as the weather had improved, the order was given, for some unknown reason for them, all to return to Birk. Get moving—back again.

The return journey to Birk was, however, accompanied by great disaster. An epidemic struck them all down. The symptoms were serious and looked like typhoid. No one knew what it was, or how to combat it. And above all, there was great confusion. Some said the climate was to blame and others were spreading rumors that the Turks were contaminating their water to annihilate them. When, however, the accompanying Turkish soldiers fell victim to the illness too, these rumors ceased to be passed on. There was not even a doctor and if there had been, what would he have done? The typhoid affected all the families. As soon as one fell, the other members of the family followed. Lice became rife and probably speeded up the spread of typhoid. People's ignorance about how to combat the typhoid contributed in its further spread. Patients watched each other, without being able to help in any way. The people died in great numbers and the dead bodies remained next to the living, because no one had the strength or courage to remove them, or move away. Many people lost their lives there and left their troubled bodies in that desolate land. Kyriaki, the priest's wife, was one of the many. She could not endure the symptoms of typhoid and after suffering for some days, she went out, like a candle, therein Birk, that desolate Armenian village.

When this dreadful fury abated and people were able to stand on their feet again, a new order came to continue the march. Sivas [Sevasteia] was the destination for everybody. The total distance between Espye and Sivas, more than 200 kilometres. Eleni gathered Papayiannis's and Kyriaki's orphans, Marigoula, Symela, and Tamama. The children were really shadows of their previous selves, after the ordeal of typhoid all three had had. So many dead, nobody cried any more. They got used to it. Nobody collected the dead bodies, nobody bothered to bury them. Desperation and weakness had exceeded all the limits of human endurance. Tamama was just 7 years old then.

Worksheet: Exiled from Espye

1. In Section 1, to what does “On the way to Golgotha” refer?

What comparison is the author making?

2. In Section 2, what does the narrator mean by saying, “Their world was on fire?”

3. In Section 5, why is there a difference between the sisters’ concern for their little brother’s well-being vs. their father’s concern?

4. In Section 6, how did the death march of the Greek families also hurt their Turkish guards?

5. Describe how the geography and climate (weather) made the death march even more horrible:

6. In the selections of the story that you read, the viewpoint is often omniscient (having total knowledge) or from Papayiannis' perspective. Write a portion of the above story from the point of view of Tamama. Think about how a seven-year-old might view the remarkable and terrible changes going on around her.

Lesson:

***Not Even My Name* by Thea Halo**

Below is an excerpt from Thea Halo's *Not Even My Name* depicting the death march survived by the author's mother, Sano, who at the time was a little girl. The story is told from Sano's point of view.

Each day Mathea was heavier on my back, and my clammy, long-sleeved dress, thick with dust and perspiration, stuck to me like wet glue. With each passing day, Mother seemed more debilitated, perhaps from the extra strain of nursing the twins without proper food or water. At the edge of a small town, there was a water fountain with water flowing continuously, spilling its cool treasure into a stone bowl, then overflowing onto the ground, turning the stones around it black. I had never seen Mother so in need of anything before. She had always been the graceful, patient jewel the Turks rightly named "Kozel." But Mother left the file to stumble to the fountain. The exiles stopped and watched expectantly; ready to race for the fountain also if she succeeded in her quest. But just before she reached it, a Turkish soldier trotted up on his horse spitting out commands. He raised his whip and gave her a lash like one would an ox or a donkey. She fell to her knees as my feet rooted to the earth and my heart slit open. Father threw down his bundles and ran to her.

"Water, please," Mother said to the soldier. Father tried to raise Mother to her feet.

"Please."

The soldier raised his whip again, spitting out more abuse. He would have hit her again but Father threw his arm around her shoulder and pulled her away.

The disappointment on the marchers' dirt-streaked faces was barely noticeable. It was more like numbness that showed in their eyes, the numbness that comes from deprivation and prolonged defeat. Mother stumbled back to her place as the others turned like robots to continue their march.

Was it on that day that little Maria died? I don't remember. I only remember her little body tied to Christodoula's back like a papoose,

her little head bobbing back and forth, and the realization that something was wrong crept up my hot body with a cold, clammy, panic.

“Mama!” I said as calmly as I could, hoping my calmness would make everything all right. “Maria looks funny.”

Mother looked up and burst into tears. Maria’s face had turned ashen. Her eyes stared out at nothing like little doll eyes that were broken in an open position, and her head rolled back and forth with each step.

“What’s wrong?” Christodoula demanded in a panic. “What is it?”

We stopped in the road like a pile of stones in a river; the weary exiles ruptured out around us and continued their march. Mother took Maria from Christodoula’s back and cradled her in her arms as her tears washed Maria’s lifeless face.

“Move!” a soldier shouted as he trotted up to where we stood.

“My baby,” Mother said. She held out Maria for the soldier to see, as if her shock and grief could also be his. “My baby.”

“Throw it away if it’s dead!” he shouted. “Move!”

“Let me bury her,” Mother pleaded, sobbing.

“Throw it away!” He shouted again, raising his whip. “Throw it away!”

Mother clutched Maria’s body to her breast as we stood staring up at him. Her face was gripped with a torment I had never seen before. Father reached for Maria, to put her down I suppose, but Mother clutched her even more tightly. Then she walked over to the high stone wall that separated the road from the town and lifted Maria up to lay her on the wall’s top as if on an altar before the Almighty. That night Mother cried herself to sleep. And each time I closed my own eyes, I saw her holding Maria up to the heavens like an offering. The image of her lifeless body lying on the wall, like some gift in a pagan ritual, followed me even into my dreams and all through the next days. Each time I thought of my little sister left lying there alone in the burning sun, with the buzzards flying about waiting for us to pass, the sobs would come without my ability to control them.

Worksheet:
***Not Even My Name* by Thea Halo**

1. Who is the subject of this memoir?

2. What emotions does the author quickly create as the overall impression of this piece?

3. List the images that enhance the emotions evoked in the memoir (for example: “stuck to me like wet glue”; “had always been the graceful, patient jewel,” etc.).

4. What are your feelings after reading this piece?

Lesson: The Horrors of a Labor Battalion

Elias Venezis' memoir, *Number 31328—The Book of Slavery*

Elias Venezis was born in 1904 in Ayvali, a town located on the northwest coast of Asia Minor. After graduating high school in 1922, the 18-year-old Venezis was conscripted by the Turkish army and for fourteen months served in a forced labor brigade. Of the 3,000 men forced into labor from his hometown, only 23 survived. The selection below is from Venezis' memoir of those events titled, *Number 31328—The Book of Slavery*. The title refers to the dehumanizing act of identifying each prisoner by number. Venezis saw the most unspeakable acts of horror—including torture, rape, and murder—during his forced labor experiences. After his miraculous survival, Venezis settled in Greece and became a famous writer. His books often deal with the world he and other Greeks had known in Asia Minor, a world that no longer existed. He died in Athens in 1973.

The following is from Speros Vryonis, Jr., "Greek Labor Battalions Asia Minor," in Richard Hovannisian, ed., *The Armenian Genocide—Cultural and Ethical Legacies*.

The sun was ascending the skies, burning, hostile, and merciless. And so, thirst began to burn us. The dust became glued to our tongues, which came in and out of the mouth as though they had been wound up. We were spitting in order to get rid of the bitter taste ... but our mouths were completely dry ...

We cried out, "Water, water!"

"What?" replied the officer of the guard.

"Su, su [water]," we would shout out in Turkish.

"Water?" the guard responded. "Well [we shall see]."

We arrived near a spring. But they kept us some 20 meters distant from the spring. The soldiers went in order, drank, watered their horses, and filled their canteens. They were drinking water by the handful, and much was falling and dripping about. The prisoners cried out, "Mercy," but to no avail. They kept us far from the water. They allowed only the females and

the little child to go and drink. Then they marched the prisoners off for about half an hour until they came to a swamp, and there was deep green grass growing nearby. There were many mosquitoes. And the trees close by provided shade, and there were also small birds mating in the leaves.

“Here, drink!” the commander ordered. We fell on the swamp water and were drinking it by the handfuls ... this polluted water. We poured it on our burned faces and chests so that all our blood and life might be flooded with water ... water. One of our comrades shouted, “Don’t. Do not drink it, comrades. It is the white death.”

We responded: “White, black, green, let it come, comrade!” Our comrade made one last effort: “Dysentery will assail us.” But, in the face of all this water in our mouths, and the latter were dripping water, and in the face of this challenge, our comrade was seized and so finally he buried his face in the swamp water where he drank and drank.

Thus our thirst was assuaged. I stretched out on the grass. ... Someone near me was chewing quietly. I gazed at his mouth and saw that he was eating grass and when he would spit it out he would proceed to chew fresh grass. I bent over the earth and I began to chew myself. For some time I chewed the bitter substance of the grass. I did this from a hidden joy of remembering how it is and what it was that a human eats.

It was not long before dysentery appeared in the labor battalion, which was so weakened by the lack of clothing, healthy water, and food, and by the beatings and exhausting labors. The office of the guards knew full well that the swamp waters, grasses, and encampments filled with urine and excrement would eventually lead to death. Often there was no roof to shield the workers from the cold and rain, and so the human population of the work battalion was constantly changing, decimated by deaths and replenished by other equally suffering laborers. The drinking of swamp water became a regular part of the diet and those who survived, survived. The others met sorrowful and painful demises.

Worksheet:

The Horrors of a Labor Battalion

1. In the first paragraph, what adjectives does Venezis use to set the tone?

2. At the spring, how do the Turkish soldiers mistreat the Greek laborers?

3. When do the soldiers finally allow the Greeks to drink water?

Why? _____

What does this suggest is the real purpose of the labor battalions?

4. After drinking the water, what does Venezis eat?

Why does this experience give him “hidden joy?” What does this tell us about the extent of his suffering?

5. Why did so many of the workers die?

How does Venezis explain how some men lived while others died?

6. What makes this selection a powerful piece of writing? Why does it move us?

7. In the same book, Venezis tries to explain the torture that he and others endured. In this moving paragraph, he compares the body to the soul:

I speak of burned “matter” [hyle], of the flesh which drips blood and thus floods the pages of the book; of the human heart which is being torn apart and not of the soul. Herein there is no soul whatsoever, for there is no space for a trip into the regions of the metaphysical. Then flesh when it is scorched as it is here with the red-hot iron, the flesh rises to the heights as an all-powerful deity, and all else becomes mute in its presence. It is often said that there is no pain, which is the equal of moral pain. Such things are

uttered by wise men and by books. If, however, you go out on the streets and you inquire of the martyrs, that is to say those whose bodies were tortured while death commands them from above (and it is an easy thing to find such humans as our era has provided an abundance) and should you ask them, you will learn that there is nothing—indeed nothing—in existence which is more profound and more holy than a body which is suffering torture.

Paraphrase the above paragraph:

8. According to Venezis, a tortured person is not only a martyr, but is elevated to the status of:

Why does he say this?

9. Does anything in the paragraph apply to events occurring in the world today?

Lesson: The Story of Christos Eliadis

This true story from *Brazier of Memory—Stories Forgotten Even by God* was written by George Andreadis and translated by the Pontian Greek Society of Chicago.

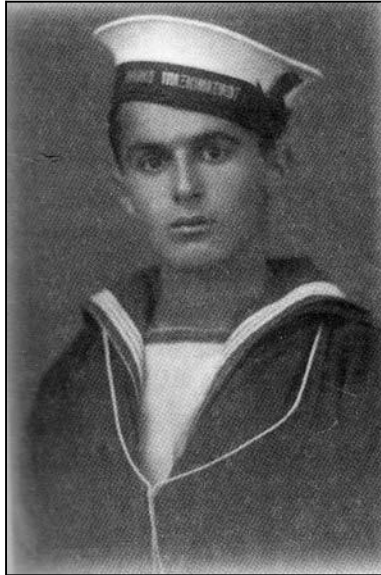


Figure 18. Christos Eliadis at his graduation from the War Naval School of Poros, Jan. 1, 1926.

I was born in 1911, in the village Ahurnu, south of Ordu, in the Black Sea region. I had nine brothers and sisters. My father's name was Panagiotis and my mother was named Pelagia.

When the tragic moment came, they gathered all the Christians of our area. I was only five years old at the time and cannot remember much more. All I recall is that only my sister, Evropi and I survived; the rest of my family perished.

Many of the women in our village followed the gendarmes [armed police] that night, while all the men were exiled. Through their tears and sobbing, these women tried to elicit the sympathy of the gendarmes and the soldiers who monitored the deportation.

When night came, the cries of children from each home could be heard. In our home that night, there were only six children. My four sisters and my brother Haralampos, who was not older than fifteen. I was only five years old. We agonized over the return of our friends, relatives, and neighbors. In vain, our poor mother followed the route of exile taken by my father and her older sons.

All women abandoned their search and returned home, desperate and dying from marching in the cold weather. Our mother also returned alone. One hour later, she was dead. Her death left six orphans abandoned and unprotected. I was too young at the time to fully understand the loss of my mother.

Our village was destroyed. No men remained. Everyone had gone on foot to the city of Ordu. Without any support, or protection, we also took the road to Ordu, which offered greater safety. We embarked on this destination on the advice given by our church. Thank God, the people of Ordu helped us. They provided us with shelter and food.

Soon after, we faced a new calamity. Turkish police arrived and they gathered all females over the age of fifteen, kidnapping my three sisters. Now only three of us children remained in Ordu.

Much time had passed and we heard no news about the girls. Later, some people said that the Turkish policemen sexually abused them all and then threw them down the cliff. Only God knows what really happened. Many Christian families in Ordu adopted the orphans. My brother was adopted by a family called Grigoriadu. My sister was adopted by a family called Semertzidis. By now, I had turned 6 years old.

I was also adopted by a family, but after three days they threw me out on the street, leaving me at God's mercy, because I was very weak and they were afraid I might get sick. All children like me, who were not accepted into households with families, were instead placed in an orphanage administered by the rich Christians of Ordu. The school building next to IPAPANTI Church, became our orphanage.

One day in 1916, or 1917—I do not remember the exact date—the Russian fleet of the Black Sea, appeared in Ordu. The Turkish population of Ordu ran away to the mountains because there were great rumors that many Armenians were serving within the Russian army vessels. The Russians

brought boats to the coast and gathered Christians on their fleet to be transferred to Russia. The teachers and personnel of our orphanage ran out to the sea, leaving behind the crying orphans.

We then left our orphanage and ran towards the sea coast, to save ourselves by boarding the Russian boats. I was six-and-a-half years old and found myself responsible for my own survival. I managed to enter a small boat, which exceeded capacity and could not depart. My brother and my sister left with their new parents for Russia. Before I realized it, I was thrown out of the boat. A man threw me out and the only thing I could do at that moment was cry.

When the Russian fleet left, the Turkish police returned to Ordu. They were evicting residents from their homes. They also came to our orphanage to find one hundred of us. They were very angry as they forced us outside. They informed us of their new plan, in which we were to be transported away from the coast. We were then exiled—memories of which can bring shivers to one's spine. From this exile, I only remember a two-month martyr's march, when 2,500 souls departed Ordu and by the end of this ordeal, only 1,350 human beings resembling skeletons remained.

Some of us were taken to Erbaa, others to Tokat. We were kept alive with a little bread and some olives.

One morning, they told us we could return to Ordu. I was very glad for our return to Ordu, because we were not aware of the deserted city that we were to face. Our Patriarch arranged for our transportation to Constantinople. We all had tears in our eyes as we bid a final farewell to our beloved homeland. In Constantinople we were brought to an orphanage located on one of the islands on the Sea of Marmara. There were 700 orphans from several regions. They cut our hair and gave us a bath, along with clean clothes and shoes.

It was here where I took my first school lessons. There were some American ladies who also brought us some gifts. It was at that time when I received the first gift of my life, a small ball, which I kept like a talisman. One day a picnic was also organized for us.

We stayed in that orphanage for about four years and were then taken to Greece. The orphans were relocated to several orphanages around the country.

I finally entered the Naval School for officers in the island of Poros.

When the holidays came, any of my classmates who had a mother or other relatives received permission to leave school and visit their families. Those of us who had nobody else on earth had to stay at school. I will never in my life forget the feelings of joy when our classmates returned from vacations and brought some gifts to me saying: "Take it. This gift is from my mother to you." My eyes were full of tears, knowing that there were still people in the world who cared about me.

I graduated from the naval school and served in the Greek Naval Fleet for thirty-seven years. Now, at the end of my life, I am glad to be a grandfather and I thank God that everything came to a good conclusion.

Worksheet:

The Story of Christos Eliadis

- 1 In the second paragraph, what does Christos mean by “the tragic moment?”

- 2 How did Christos lose his father and mother?

- 3 How did he lose his three eldest sisters?

- 4 What happened to Christos when the Russians came?

- 5 Why does he call the journey from Ordu “a martyr’s march?”

- 6 How does his life improve in Constantinople (renamed “Istanbul” by the Turks)?

- 7 Why does Christos say at the end of his story, “I thank God that everything came to a good conclusion.”

Do you agree?

- 8 How do eyewitness accounts like that of Christos help to verify that the Greeks did, indeed, suffer genocide?

Lesson: The Destruction of Smyrna

In September of 1922, the Greek army retreated from Asia Minor, the Turkish army occupied Smyrna, the city on the western coast of Asia Minor. Smyrna, also known by its Turkish name “Izmir,” was a major port and one of the largest and most cosmopolitan cities in the Ottoman Empire. At the time, Smyrna’s non-Turkish population (Greeks, Armenians, and Jews) represented the majority. On September 13, the “Great Fire of Smyrna” began, lasting four days. Although the cause of the fire is still debated, many contemporary eyewitnesses stated that Turkish troops deliberately started the fire. Between the fire and massacres, perhaps as many as 100,000 people died.

One of the most powerful forms of writing is poetry, which uses few words to convey powerful images and feelings. Below is an excerpt by an anonymous poet on the burning of Smyrna—contrasting what the city was like before and after the fire:

“The Martyred City”

Glory and Queen of the Island Sea
Was Smyrna, the beautiful city,
And fairest pearl of the Orient she—
O Smyrna, the beautiful city!
Heiress of countless storied ages,
Mother of poets, saints and sages,
Was Smyrna, the beautiful city!

Silent and dead are church bell ringers
Of Smyrna, the Christian city,
The music silent and dead the singers
Of Smyrna, the happy city;
And her maidens, pearls of the Island seas
Are gone from the marble palaces
Of Smyrna, enchanting city!

She is dead and rots by the Orient’s gate,
Does Smyrna, the murdered city,
Her artisans gone, her streets desolate—
O Smyrna, the murdered city!
Her children made orphans, widows her wives
While under her stones the foul rat thrives—
O Smyrna, the murdered city!

(From *The Blight of Asia*, by George Horton, Consul-General of the United States, 1926)

Below are four accounts, as well as photographs, regarding the destruction of Smyrna. After studying these sources, write a poem dealing with the destruction of Smyrna. Your poem should include the following:

- Title
- Consist of 10-12 lines (rhyming is optional)
- Draw upon one or more of the images from the written accounts and/or photographs
- Convey your feelings about this event
- Illustrate your poem (optional)



Figure 19. Smyrna, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation.

From “History’s Greatest Trek” by Melville Chater, *National Geographic*:

Some of the destroyers had crept in close enough for men aboard to behold pandemonium’s silhouette against a two-mile frontage of leaping flame, to sicken at the unforgettable odor of Smyrna’s hecatomb [great sacrifice], to catch the shrieks with which the multitude’s outermost ranks hurled back by its scorched inner ranks, toppled over the jetty’s sledge into the sea.

Beside this nightmare of 300,000 souls crushed together on Smyrna’s quay, with no escape through the encircling ring of sea and fire ...

From *The Blight of Asia* by George Horton, Consul-General of the United States, 1926:

Looking from the door of the Consulate, I saw a number of miserable refugees with their children, bundles and sick, being herded toward the quay [sic] by several Turkish soldiers. One gray-haired old woman was stumbling along behind, so weak that she could not keep up, and a Turkish soldier was prodding her in the back with the butt of his musket. At last he struck her such a violent blow between the shoulder-blades that she fell sprawling upon her face on the stony street.

Another old woman came screaming to me, crazy with grief, crying, “My boy! My boy!” The front of her dress was covered with blood. She did not say what had happened to her boy, but the copious blood told its own story ...

The last view of the ill-fated town by daylight was one of vast enveloping clouds rolling up to heaven, a narrow water-front covered with a great throng of people—an ever-increasing throng, with the fire behind and the sea before, and a powerful fleet of inter-allied battle-ships, among which were two American destroyers, moored a short distance from the quay and looking on.

From “On the Quai [Quay] at Smyrna” by Ernest Hemingway:

In 1922, Ernest Hemingway, writing as a war correspondent, covered the fighting between Greece and Turkey. Hemingway arrived in Constantinople after the war ended. Though he did not personally see the destruction of Smyrna, he penned a

short story based on what he had heard from others. What follows is a selection from “On the Quai at Smyrna”:

The worst, he said, were the women with dead babies. You couldn't get the women to give up their dead babies. They'd have babies dead for six days. Wouldn't give them up. Nothing you could do about it. Had to take them away finally. Then there was an old lady, most extraordinary case. I told it to a doctor and he said I was lying. We were clearing them off the pier, had to clear off the dead ones, and this old woman was lying on a sort of litter. They said, “Will you have a look at her, sir?” So I had a look at her and just then she died and went absolutely stiff. Her legs drew up and she drew up from the waist and went quite rigid. Exactly as though she had been dead over night. She was quite dead and absolutely rigid. I told a medical chap about it and he told me it was impossible.

From *A Coffin for Dimitrios* by Eric Ambler:

Eric Ambler was a British writer of suspense and spy novels. Perhaps his most famous book is *A Coffin for Dimitrios* (also called *Mask of Dimitrios*), about a mystery writer who becomes intrigued with the story of a criminal named Dimitrios, who appears to have been killed. The novel includes an account of the burning of Smyrna.

At first, attempts were made to isolate the fires. Then, the wind changed, blowing the fire away from the Turkish quarter and further outbreaks were started by the [Turkish] troops. Soon, the whole city, with the exception of the Turkish quarter and a few houses near the Kassamba railway station, was burning fiercely. The massacre continued with unabated ferocity. A cordon of troops was drawn around the city to keep the refugees within the burning area. The streams of panic-stricken refugees were shot down pitilessly or driven back into the inferno. The narrow, gutted streets became so choked with corpses that, even had the would-be rescue parties been able to endure the sickening stench that arose, they could not have passed along them. Smyrna was changed from a city into a charnel-house. Many refugees had tried to reach ships in the inner harbour. Shot, drowned, mangled by propellers, their bodies floated hideously in the blood-tinged water. But the quayside was still crowded with those trying frantically to escape from the blazing waterfront buildings, toppling above them a few yards behind. It was said that the screams of these people were heard a mile out at sea. *Giaur Izmir*—infidel Smyrna—had atoned for its sins.

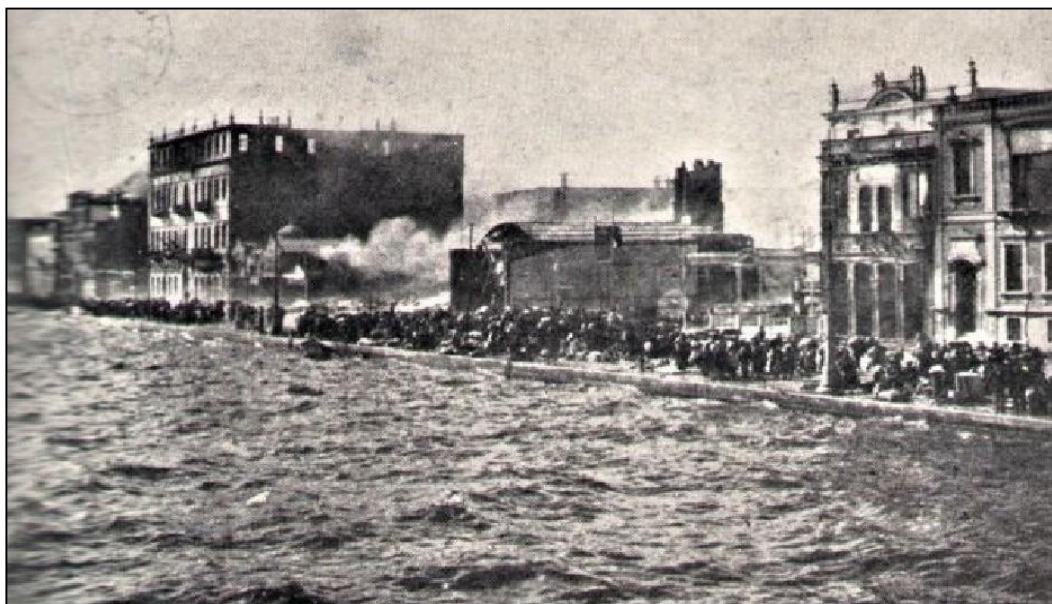


Figure 20. *The burning quay of Smyrna.*



Figure 21. *Christians trying to escape the burning quay at Smyrna.*

Reading: Saving the Orphans

According to history professor Dr. Harry Psomiades, at the time of the Smyrna fire (September 1922), only the United States provided organized assistance for refugees. Such assistance came from relief committees organized by the U.S. Consulate, religious and educational organizations, the YMCA, the Red Cross, and the Near East Relief (NER). After the fire, the NER requested that the new Nationalist government under Mustafa Kemal assure the safety of children living in NER orphanages throughout the country. When the government refused this request, the NER decided to leave the country and take all its Christian orphans to Greece. In October 1922, it began a systematic program of evacuation. The journey sometimes lasted hundreds of miles, during a bitter winter, through mountains and plains.

According to Dr. Psomiades,

The following telegram urgently dispatched at that time to the New York head office of NER by one of its managing directors tells the sad story of countless thousands of refugees on a tortuous march to an uncertain future:

Extreme cold, snow and storms aggravate the plight of Asia Minor refugees. Death is overtaking thousands of the children and the aged infirm on the frozen roads of Anatolia, aboard the tossing rescue ships in the Black Sea, and in the camps near Constantinople.

Moving over the worst mud roads in the world, I saw a crowd of broken civilians more depressing than an army in hard-pressed retreat. Women about to become mothers tramped in snow up to their knees. Tired children dropped weary by the wayside, and girls of tender years bore men's burdens.

By the end of December 1922, 15,644 orphans had been transferred from Turkey to Greece.

In the following page are two photographs, each depicting orphans being rescued by the NER. Study each photograph carefully before answering the worksheet questions.



Figure 22. *Exodus from Turkey: orphans await transport to Greece.*



Figure 23. *Orphans in Marathon, Greece, having come from the interior of Asia Minor.*

Worksheet: Saving the Orphans

1. Explain briefly what is happening in each photograph.

2. Compare the two photos in terms of the feelings the children might have experienced at the moment each photograph was taken.

3. Assume that one of the orphans is pictured in both photographs and that he/she lives to an old age. Which of the two memories is likely to evoke stronger memories? Why?

Lesson: A Memorial to the Greek Genocide

As a child, Sano Halo lost her mother and four sisters during Greek Genocide. She never learned what became of her father and brother. Years later, she raised a family in the United States. Her husband built a small cabin in the country as a weekend getaway. In her daughter Thea's book, *Not Even My Name*, Sano reflects on what she lost:

When all my children were finally fed and washed and put to bed, when the kerosene lanterns were put out, and all in the house were sleeping, I'd lie in bed and listen to the spring frogs and the whippoorwills, and smell the fresh, sweet air, and I'd think of my home long ago. I'd think of my mother and father, my grandfather, my sisters, and brother. I made it a point to think of them to keep them alive in my heart.

If future genocide is ever to be prevented, people must never forget the genocides that have occurred. One way nations remember important historical figures and events is by constructing memorials. Consider examples in Washington, D.C., such as the Washington Monument, the Vietnam Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. There is a memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, dedicated to the civil rights movement. "Ground Zero" has itself become a memorial to Americans who died during the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Your assignment is to draw the plans for a memorial to the victims of the Greek Genocide. In creating it, consider the following questions (use a separate sheet of paper and submit it with your drawing):

1. What do you wish to be remembered?
2. What mood are you trying to create? How do you want people to feel as they view your memorial and after they have left it?
3. What images can you use to convey the mood you want to create?
4. What are some courses you can consult to find the images that will express your feelings?
5. Do you want to use words as part of your memorial? These could be your thoughts or a quotation.

6. Consider what materials you use to construct your memorial that would be most effective for your purposes (e.g., granite, marble, and polished stone reflect light).

Be prepared to describe and explain your memorial to the class.

If you have time, you may wish to create a model of your memorial.

Lesson: A Documentary about the Greeks of Asia Minor

Using the Chronology of Major Events handout and the Internet, you will create a short film documenting the history of Greeks in Asia Minor, along with the major events preceding and during the genocide.

1. Search the Internet for images that best depict each major event you wish to include in your film (make sure to cite your websites and save your images in one location—USB, desktop or folder on the hard drive).
2. Place these images in chronological order.
3. Create short explanations of your images, which will add relevant details to your documentary. For example:

Major Event:

Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Empire in 1453

Image:

“Siege of Constantinople” by Jean Chartier, found on Wikipedia.org

Now you are ready to create your short, 3-5 minute film using your computer’s movie application. See the list of requirements below:

- **Title Page:** Create a title that accurately represents your film
- **Five-to-Seven Image Slides:** Depict each major event with a corresponding image

- ***Five-to-Seven Content Slides:*** Explain and add relevant details to your film
- ***Two Maps:*** Include relevant maps of the region
- ***Credits:*** Include your name (“written by” and/or “directed by”) and a list of works cited on the last slide
- ***Transitions and Effects:*** “Transitions” control how your movie plays from one video clip to the next; “Effects” allow you to add special effects to your movie clips
- ***Optional Elements:*** You may choose to include appropriate music, movie clips, and narration

Note to Instructor

The objectives of this activity are to explore the historical background of the Greeks of Asia Minor, as well as the Greek Genocide, and to create a short documentary using available technology, including the Internet.

Variations to this lesson:

- In place of a movie, have the students create a PowerPoint presentation
- Instead of (or in addition to) using the Chronology of Major Events handout, students can read the following selections from Thea Halo’s book, *Not Even My Name*, to create a “universal” timeline:
 1. Section One: pages 39-40
 2. Section Two: pages 98-101
 3. Section Three: pages 117-131

Supplemental Lesson: An Upstander—Ibrahim's Soul

The “Historical Documents” section of this packet refers to the book, *Not Even My Name*, which recounts the experience of Sano Halo during the Greek genocide. Similarly, the book, *Tamama, The Missing Girl of Pontos*, tells another true story of a Pontian Greek girl's separation from her family during a death march that claimed the lives of both her parents, as well as hundreds of other members of her village.

For centuries, Pontian Greeks and Turks had lived in separate neighborhoods but near one another in the village of Espye. They got along well as neighbors and friends. An especially strong friendship grew between Papayiannis, the Greek Orthodox priest of the village (and Tamama's father), and his Muslim Turkish neighbor, Ibrahim.

In November 1916, the Turkish government ordered local authorities to force the Pontian Greeks to leave Espye and other cities throughout the region. Unknown to the Pontian Greeks, this was the beginning of a terrible death march. As the villagers left, “tsetes”—Turkish irregulars, more criminals than soldiers—began looting their houses.

Below is an excerpt from *Tamama*, with a detailed experience:

Three of them [“tsetes”] got into Papayiannis's yard. Ibrahim, the neighbor, was watching horrified, through the window opposite from behind the curtain, to see what they intended to do. In a short while Papayiannis's door had been broken and Ibrahim saw them throwing out Papayiannis's belongings into the yard, where they did an initial sorting out. They were beginning to do the same in the other houses too. They piled up whatever was of interest and they threw away whatever was of no interest to them. Ibrahim's soul could not bear the evil being done to his neighbors and especially to his friend Papayiannis. Despite his wife's screams, he opened the door and went out to Papayiannis's yard. From her yard his wife desperately called him and pleaded with him to return home. For a moment, when the tsetes heard Ibrahim's wife's screams, they stopped the sorting and noticed Ibrahim approaching. From afar they asked him what he wanted and the only thing Ibrahim managed to say was: “*Allahtanbul*” [may Allah pay you back for this]. Even before he had finished his curse a shot was fired. The bullet struck Ibrahim on the

forehead and he fell down dead. That was the shot the Christians had heard, as they were leaving the village. As soon as Ibrahim fell dead, his wife sat down in her yard and starting beating herself and pulling out her hair for the misfortune that had befallen her. She was cursing the Christian serpents, who made her husband lose his life. How different people are and how differently they each see the events around them.

Worksheet:

An Upstander—Ibrahim's Soul

1. What were the “tsetes” doing to Papayiannis’ home?

2. What did Ibrahim do?

3. Why did the “tsetes” shoot Ibrahim?

4. What did Ibrahim’s wife call her Pontian Greek neighbors?

Why did she blame them for the death of her husband?

5. Why did Ibrahim take the action he did?

Do you think he knew that he was risking his life?

6. What do you think of Ibrahim's action? Was it foolish? Courageous?

7. What might have happened if many more of the Turkish villagers had taken the same action as Ibrahim?

8. What lesson(s) about genocide does this passage teach?

A Final Message to Our Readers

*It is our hope that this history lesson teaches us all,
young and old, so that future generations
do not experience genocide.*

Appendix

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

*Adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly,
December 9, 1948*

Article 1

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

Article 2

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Article 3

The following acts shall be punishable:

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
- (e) Complicity in genocide.

Article 4

Persons committing genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties undertake to enact, in accordance with their respective Constitutions, the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and, in particular, to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3.

Article 6

Persons charged with genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

Article 7

Genocide and the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall not be considered as political crimes for the purpose of extradition. The Contracting Parties pledge themselves in such cases to grant extradition in accordance with their laws and treaties in force.

Article 8

Any Contracting Party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3.

Article 9

Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfillment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute.

Historical Documents

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- Document 3 Horton, George. *The Blight of Asia: An Account of the Systematic Extermination of Christian Populations by Mohammedans and of the Culpability of Certain Great Powers; with a True Story of the Burning of Smyrna*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1926. Print.
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Additional Resources

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RESOLUTION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS (IAGS), 2007



WHEREAS the denial of genocide is widely recognized as the final stage of genocide, enshrining impunity for the perpetrators of genocide, and demonstrably paving the way for future genocides;

WHEREAS the Ottoman genocide against minority populations during and following the First World War is usually depicted as a genocide against Armenians alone, with little recognition of the qualitatively similar genocides against other Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire;

BE IT RESOLVED that it is the conviction of the International Association of Genocide Scholars that the Ottoman campaign against Christian minorities of the Empire between 1914 and 1923 constituted a genocide against Armenians, Assyrians, and Pontian and Anatolian Greeks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association calls upon the government of Turkey to acknowledge the genocides against these populations, to issue a formal apology, and to take prompt and meaningful steps toward restitution.