



## The Pontian Genocide

### From the Time of the Young Turks to the Advent of Mustafa Kemal

Dr. Konstantinos Fotiadis

#### The Mudros Truce

With the Germans and the Young Turks defeated by the Entente powers at the end of World War I, the Young Turk threat in the Caucasus also came to an end without peace being established in the area. The British occupation followed the withdrawal of the Germans, with military units and communication lines being set up in Kars, Batum and Baku to achieve complete control of the movement of oil in the area.<sup>788</sup> On October 30, 1918, Vice-Admiral A. Calthrope, acting commander-in-chief of the British forces, signed the Truce of Mudros with the Sultan's representation. This document imposed punitive and humiliating conditions on the Ottoman Empire, according to which the Sultan's government was obliged: 1) to open up the Dardanelles to allow the free passage of ships to and from the Black Sea while surrendering the fortifications in the Dardanelles; 2) to decommission its weapons and effect a general disarmament; 3) to subject its communications and transportation to Allied supervision; 4) to sever its relations with its former allies, to hand over its German and Austrian officers and supplies to the occupation forces of the Entente; and finally, 5) to concede the right to the Entente powers to intervene militarily wherever and whenever there was a disturbance of the peace.<sup>789</sup>

Following a Sultanic decree, a general amnesty was granted to the whole of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>790</sup> Liman von Sanders surrendered the military command of Syria to Kemal and returned to Istanbul, which, following an order by President Wilson, was to be evacuated forthwith. A part of the Turkish army surrendered to the Allies, which began the military occupation of strategically important parts of the Ottoman Empire. In Samsun, a British army unit under High Commissioner Sholtser was established along with a French one under the command of gendarme commissioner Favreau. The restoration of order to Pontos also had an immediate

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impact on the Pontian resistance fighters. Trusting in the Allies' victory and the amnesty granted by the Sultan, they descended from the mountains and handed in their weapons to the authorities, but "after a few days they were thrown into prison, although after this had come to the attention of Captain Solter, they were released. Since some of those who gave themselves up were secretly killed by the government, their bodies never being found, the remaining resistance fighters in the mountains were naturally convinced that they were not going to be reconciled with the Turks and refused to surrender."<sup>791</sup>

In contrast to the resistance fighters, all those who survived the dispersal and chose to return to their ruined homelands were confronted with a depressing scene. Destruction and ruin were everywhere. Despite all this, they took strength from the calamities of the previous years. They wouldn't succumb or lose their will and so from out of the ruins they began their struggle for a better future. Panaretos writes: "From their demolished houses they gathered and organized themselves for the sake of solidarity, philanthropy and strength, ready to claim at this hateful sight their fathers' earth, drenched already with the blood and tears of their nearest and dearest, and the graves and sanctuaries of their own parents, relatives and ancestors, since they had managed to come back to their lands despite intense opposition."

In the villages, the residents began building their homes, cultivating their fields, and sending their children to school. Life began to return to normal. Their Muslim neighbours and fellow villagers were in a state of acute embarrassment and fear. Their conscience would not allow them to look the victims of pan-Turkish bigotry in the eye. For the first time, the Muslim newspapers started to touch upon subjects concerning friendship and harmonious cooperation between the two communities.<sup>792</sup> At the same time, they promoted the politics of amnesia, an immediate prerequisite for the strengthening of the friendship between the peoples, a policy which Turkey has systematically pursued to the present day. These messages did not go unnoticed by the Greek press in Trebizond and were commented on accordingly. *Epochi* wrote: "We are following the Turkish columnists of Trebizond with great interest. We take note of each line as we hope they do to us. Why should we cover up the violence of the past in any way and begin to hail the life of fraternity, freedom and equality again with our eyes shut? Every country which forgets its past and wishes to proceed with youthful enthusiasm will be led into blindness. The past is the best guide. And the Greeks, whose recent past has taught them a great deal, proceed slowly, cautiously, unmoved now by cheers of 'Yasasin' and 'Vatandaslarim.' They can move us by their actions, not by words alone."<sup>793</sup>

Moved by the spirit of unity and peace, the editor of *Epochi*, Nikos Kapetanidis, a Pontian national martyr, wrote with pure and frank enthusiasm of his joy at freedom and justice having prevailed in his chronicle entitled "Why we are happy." There is not the slightest hint of hatred or vengeance in his article, unlike

that which the Muslims had systematically cultivated for four years in their newspapers. "This is not about taking to account. That belongs to the guilty parties. This concerns the honouring of every gentle soul moved by the beautiful expression of life, for the victory of Justice and Truth and for the victory of human justice."<sup>794</sup>

On November 2, 1918, the ministers of the Ottoman parliament, E. Emmanouilidis (Aydin), S. Meimaroglou (Smyrna) and T. Dimitriadis (Metra) raised a question in parliament about the sufferings of the Greeks, proceeding to a calculation of the victims and demanding that those responsible for the slaughter of the Armenians and the Greeks be condemned.<sup>795</sup> Accepting that certain government representatives were guilty, minister Fethi Bey, with typical Turkish diplomatic aplomb, attempted to evade the issue by answering that "I must admit that there are bad elements that enter the country illegally, that many false opinions prevailed, that they harmed the Greek, Armenian and Arabic elements, but more so the Turkish one and I am sorry that the questioner did not mention them. It is obvious that the government programme does not regard the country as the property of any particular element, but that it is a paradise for all."<sup>796</sup>

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the political life of the "Union and Progress" committee came to an end. The final meetings of the committee took place on October 14-19, 1918<sup>797</sup>, and a few days after the resignation of the government of Young Turks, a new one was formed on November 11, 1918, by the liberal party under Tevfik Pasha.<sup>798</sup> Most Young Turks went into self-exile or hiding to avoid the charges against them, while others formed small gangs that continued to harass the Christian populations.

### **Results of the Four-year Term**

The Ecumenical Patriarchate, a few days prior to the armistice, using documents revealing the picture of the general extermination, attempted to draw up the death toll of the previous four years. This text was published in edited form in the Patriarchate's weekly publication, *Ecclesiastiki Alitheia*: "...the mountains and the gorges of Asia Minor and the Pontian hinterlands even today preserve the remains and the bones of our race, who paid for the obsessive policies of Turkification with their lives, persecuted and relentlessly chased from their homes, condemned to take to the roads in the winter, starving and naked, wandering the mountains, surrendering finally after many days suffering to the most relentless of deaths, of starvation and exhaustion and becoming prey to the eagles and the vultures or surviving as spectres, human wrecks by now, turning out to be easy pickings for the moral catastrophe. Throughout all the region, cities and communities where Greeks lived, their policy was applied; the policy of diluting the ethnological features of these places and enslaving or exterminating everything non-Turkish. Where work and civilization once blossomed, the crow now perches undisturbed, the only company of the territory now occupied by Muslims and what were once Greek

homes and property. Now the gathered wretched settlers declare the importance of their completed work."<sup>799</sup>

In April 1919, the venerable Savvas Ioakimidis of Sivas published a detailed report on the destruction of the Greek community in a part of Epesios, in the province of Kolonia. Eighteen Greek villages suffered numerous horrors and destruction. The Turks' main method of extermination was the *amele taburu*, that is the work brigade, to which all Greek men from 16 to 55 were illegally drafted. These work brigades "were nothing more than places of execution for the Christians taking place under the cruelest conditions imaginable. There was neither food nor clothing. There was no heating and there was the burning sun of the day and the extreme cold of the nights. In the depths of winter they lived in holes and caves."<sup>800</sup>

During these four years, joining resistance groups was particularly risky for the men involved, but even more so for the family members, who rallied round them to avoid the violence. One of the first rebels—whose name, though virtually unknown in the Greek community, is still remembered by the Turks—was Vasil Ousta or Vasil Aga from the village of Kizik, Epesios:

... what happened in that part of Epesios, and especially in the villages higher up the mountain, is indescribable. Mourning and tears and wailing. Beatings, pillaging, abductions, rapes, kidnapping, burning, strangling and general mistreatment. After sating their savage thirst in whatever way they could, these monsters gathered together in the central square all those souls who had survived thanks merely to the carelessness of the victors. There the males between the ages of 10 and 70 were separated from the women and, at bayonet point, were led away by the monsters to the commander of the district; a brief interrogation followed, in the course of which people from other villages were also charged with aiding and abetting the rebels, thus leading to new arrests and torment. The total number of incarcerated men of different ages and backgrounds came to 600 in total. Their conditions of imprisonment were wretched, being damp, dingy basements in Zara and where, following merciless beatings, hunger (three days without bread or water) and asphyxiation due to up to 60 people being locked in a tiny room together, the first victims finally succumbed. The survivors of this ordeal were taken to a court martial at Sivas, where new victims died. In short, in one year, out of the 600 men it would not be an exaggeration to say that only 20 survived, and those only by sheer luck....

In the meantime, the women and children had their property and belongings expropriated and were escorted by savage gendarmes to Aziziye, a far-off place of banishment, where groups of between five and ten women were sent to Turkish villages to be converted to Islam. But few of these survived, most dying on the way or in the villages themselves.

The general plight of our region was indeed never worse. Fear and terror possessed everyone, who awaited their extermination at every moment...

No-one dared to leave his home or village for fear of falling victim to the savagery and fanaticism raging outside. Restricted to their homes, with no work or other means, many died of starvation.<sup>801</sup>

Starvation was one of the most effective means of exterminating the Greek population. In the Epesios area, 18 villages were forced by the Turkish authorities to abandon their cultivations under threat of death. This measure was applied so widely that starvation was considered to be a worse enemy than even the Young Turks. The hunger which afflicted Santa is graphically conveyed via the appeal made to numerous countries, especially Russia, by the Association of the People of the Santa Diaspora:

No Greek should be unmoved or indifferent to the news reaching us from beyond the far off mountains of heroic Santa. In these dark days of war, Santa has become the Souli of Pontos. Santa, rifle in hand, never bowed to the Turk. She did not pay the *haratsi* (punitive tax extracted by coercion) of subjugation to the tyrant. Armed with a number of brave lads, she continues to carry on the heroic war against her centuries-old enemy. Every day we hear news of the heroism and martyrdom of her children. Each day there is more blood is spilt to dye her much-suffering earth.

And Santa must fight against two equally savage monsters: the Turk and starvation. Unfortunately, hunger is even worse than the wild Turk, since the Turk proved feeble in the face of the manliness and courage of the boys from Santa. The Turkish Chetes were easily defeated, but the phantom of starvation cannot be quelled. Brave Santa is starving, and she asks for your help. There where the men of Santa fight the Turk and the women of Santa keep guard with rifles in hand, their last hope turns to you. Sign up for the heroes. Help our brothers....<sup>802</sup>.

The Greeks from Karahisar and its regions also suffered the effects of the famine because of the plundering of their belongings by the Turkish headquarters. According to the eye-witness account of G. Kalogeropoulos, the Turks, wishing to make the extermination of Christians appear legitimate, ordered for supposedly for strategic reasons that the whole population be relocated and mobilized, and all their produce to be requisitioned for the army.<sup>803</sup> The extent of the tragic condition of Greeks in the region of Epesios is conveyed by the following table, compiled after the armistice:<sup>804</sup>

### *Epesos Region*

	Before the war		After the war	
	<i>families</i>	<i>residents</i>	<i>families</i>	<i>residents</i>
Kizik	250	750	50	300
Pazar Pelen	90	450	15	90
Camli Kale	90	450	50	300
Kouleli	70	350	18	90
Panagia	90	450	35	210
Inonou	130	650	65	390
Kayatepe	180	900	90	490
Kovachuk	65	328	22	132
Marasul	60	300	25	150
Chelep	50	250	22	132
Derekoy	110	550	50	300
Koftepe	145	725	90	540
Armut Chairi	90	450	26	156
Kurvasi	100	500	50	300
Kanli Kayia	90	450	35	210
Cetoura	70	350	30	180
Deremtam	96	480	40	240
Piredete	112	560	48	288

The terrible toll of this four-year period was indeed enormous. The scenes of horror, the ruined villages and houses, the gutted churches and schools, the black-clad widows and the orphans comprise the tragic picture brought about by fanaticism, violence, and hatred, while bearing witness to the immoral, barbaric ideology and, above all else, the absence of education. The scars left on the psychologically-disturbed women and on the children who were denied a normal family environment remain unknown quantities. In retrospect, the lucky ones were those taken in by philanthropic organizations from foreign powers and were literally rescued from hunger, sickness, begging, Islamization, and Turkification.<sup>805</sup> On the other hand, thousands of unprotected orphans were placed in fanatical Muslim families, Koranic schools, or Pan-Turkist institutions with a view to a career in the state mechanism. This situation constitutes an unhealed scar, for which all those Greek governments until the 1960s bear a great deal of the responsibility due to the indifference they displayed to this issue.

## Expectations and Disappointments Following the Armistice

The question of the future of the ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire greatly concerned international diplomacy. The British under-secretary of Foreign Affairs, Lord Robert Cecil, declared: "I think, and I interpret all the other Allies as thinking the same way, that it is our desire and resolve to see the end of Turkish control over their sovereign nationalities and the end of dependency on the Turkish government."<sup>807</sup> Herbert Asquith, the opposition leader, expressed the same view in a speech in Fife:

Already the first steps towards the destruction of what is now the most suffocating and backward state régime ever known—that is the Turkish state in Europe—are underway.

Turkey, the Sick Man of Europe, extends its life only by dint of artificial means. Let us hope that, as a force of ill, as a negative force in the family of nations, it is breathing its last.<sup>808</sup>

A. Crossfield was a supporter of the various ethnic groups in Turkey, particularly of the Greeks. In a letter to the *Times*, he asked that the Allies not overlook the vital significance of the services rendered to the Entente by the Greek army under the inspired leadership of Venizelos:

If Greece remains under the influence of Germany and Constantine, all lines of communication between us shall be continuously in jeopardy. This serious danger can be avoided by having the Greeks co-operate.

Millions of Greeks who have suffered so badly under the Turkish yoke and Turkish barbarities have inalienable rights to self-rule in the land where they have lived from time immemorial.<sup>809</sup>

With a view to resolving the Eastern Question, the president of the French Republic, Millerand, took the position that the non-Turkish ethnic groups should be liberated from the Ottoman Empire: "The Allies clearly see that the time has come to put an end once and for all to the rule of the Turks over other ethnic groups.... The Turkish government not only failed to protect those of its subjects that did not belong to the Turkish race, it plundered them, spreading violence and death. Moreover, well-documented evidence shows that the government itself organized the worst attacks on those populations it should have been protecting. In view of this, the United Powers have decided to liberate those areas populated by a majority of non-Turkish races from the Turkish yoke."<sup>810</sup> The future of the Ottoman Empire also concerned the American Senate. Senator King made a proposal that the governing of Turkey should be assumed by the mandatory states of the League of Nations.<sup>811</sup>

In general, all the European states not belonging to the defeated Central Powers agreed to punish the Ottoman Empire. Their opinions differed only as to the punishment to be meted out. The Ottoman authorities were also aware of this and

attempted to reduce the reparations they had to pay to the Allies to the least painful amount by means of various political manoeuvres and insincere expressions of contrition. For this reason, the behaviour of the Young Turks was utterly different in the first period following their defeat and the Armistice, not because of remorse for the crimes they had committed, but out of fear for the consequences that might follow.

There was also an apparent change noticed in the political behaviour of the local authorities, mainly in the towns, where there was church and diplomatic protection. In contrast, in rural areas, the Christian populations continued to be victims of the arbitrary power of local tyrants who continued to falsely charge and condemn innocent Greeks to long-term imprisonment, denying them every legal right to challenge the judicial procedure.<sup>812</sup> Most state employees continued to work in the same high-handed manner. Judicial verdicts published after the Armistice clearly demonstrated that the eastern method of dispensing justice had not changed in the slightest, and that the majority of judges continued to work according to the Islamic code, handing out justice according to the religion of the litigants.<sup>813</sup>

Confirmation of the real conditions in Pontos is demonstrated by the fact that Greece, one of the victors of the war, was powerless to achieve either justice for the Greek population in the light of what it had suffered or to impose equality under the law, both of which were prerequisites for a viable future. The Allied Powers were largely responsible for the continuing suffering of the ethnic minorities. Despite their initially enthusiastic statements, once Istanbul, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles had been occupied and their interests thus secured, they distanced themselves from any further moves towards disarming the Ottoman Empire, thus violating the spirit of the Treaty of Mudros. Some Powers had already begun unilaterally flirting with the Sultan and his acting governments to achieve their ends. It was precisely these arguments and rivalries, the Allies weakest point, that would be exploited to the hilt by the alternating Sultanate governments in order to win time and prepare themselves to overturn the humiliating peace treaty. Pretending that Istanbul was completely subjugated, they managed to transport mostly military materials to Anatolia, as well as to distribute war supplies from the depots around the country to the Turkish people. This action, which the Allies were either ignorant of or considered it not in their immediate interests to make public, passed unremarked. This encouraged the Turks, who were busily manufacturing and organizing themselves in Anatolia. This new turn of events had an immediate impact on the barely-breathing Pontian Greeks, and began to show suspicious signs of hidden dangers of unknown dimensions. The first indication of the upsurge in Turkish confidence came with the boldness of the Turkish mob fomenting disturbances against the Greeks in the countryside, and with the refusal of the Government to permit the return of the Greek Pontian refugees from Russia, arguing, absurdly, that these people had been sent from Greece and did not originate from Pontos.<sup>814</sup>

It has recently been confirmed by the arrival in Greece of Greek political refugees from Russia, that 80% of the 750,000 Greeks in Russia in 1917 were of Pontian extraction, victims of the relentless persecution of the derebeys, the civil service, and fanatical Muslim mobs over the previous two centuries. In 1918 alone, 85,000 Pontian Greeks “temporarily” settled in Russia, despite the fact that the country was in the throes of a civil war. The allied victory was particularly welcomed by the persecuted Greeks, since on the basis of the peace treaty, they believed it to be self-evident that they would be returning to their native lands in Pontos.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate assigned the metropolitan bishops of Caesarea (Kayseri) and Proussa (Nikolaos and Dorotheos respectively) to head the committee for the return of the refugees. Their visit to the Ministry of Justice and in-depth discussion on the refugee question left no indication that there would be any problem in resolving it. The committee thanked the minister “for the decision taken on the return of Greeks to Pontos and Propontis apart from those regions under military control, and they asked that the material means be provided for the return of these people to their homes as well as support to enable them to recover. The minister listened with great interest to the proposals of the committee, stressing the government’s good intentions and concern to settle the question in a just way.”<sup>815</sup>

The positive stance of the Minister of Justice on the subject of the return of the refugees acted as a smoke-screen for the Allies who were supposedly supervising the problems which cropped up during the period of the restoration of the legal process from Istanbul.<sup>816</sup> The callous reception the refugees received in Kerasun revealed the true intentions of the local authorities and demonstrated that nothing had essentially changed in the Ottoman Empire following the victory of the Entente. The organized attempt by the Turkish authorities to exterminate the Pontians returning to their homes was denounced by G. Kalogeropoulos in *Epochi*: “The residents of our region’s villages, the survivors that is, are arriving in the towns in dribs and drabs and are then making for their villages, which are now in the department of Tsanik/Canik, mere vestiges of Hellenism. On foot for a month and more, hungry, literally famished, ragged, horribly emaciated, virtually on the point of death, they have been left to their fate.”<sup>817</sup>

### **Diplomatic Moves at the Peace Congress**

The forces of the Entente, following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, preceded, as they had pledged with resolving the differences between the countries embroiled in the Great War. The political and diplomatic backdrop to those days demonstrated once again that the interests of the Great Powers had no connection either to the rights of peoples and ethnic groups or to the restoring of peace to the war zones. Rather, it centred on the opportunities available to each to control the

strategically important Near East, its rich mineral resources and prime agricultural wealth, for its own profit.<sup>818</sup>

As far as Greece, the victor of the Balkan Wars, was concerned, after the Treaty of London, the Greek interest was to secure the islands of the eastern Aegean and the return of Greeks from Asia Minor. When, in August 1914, Venizelos proposed to the Entente that Greece participate in the operations, he did not consider it useful to put forward any Greek demands concerning future claims in Asia Minor, despite the fact that it was the only country which fulfilled the required national grounds for such claims, since 25% of the total population of Asia Minor was of Greek extraction.<sup>819</sup>

The first hint of concessions in Asia Minor from the Greek point of view came in January 1915 from the British Foreign Minister, Edward Grey. He noted in exchange for Greece's part in the allied effort coupled with the parallel ceding of Kavala to Bulgaria Greece needed an equivalent compensation. The proposal was accepted by Venizelos, as shown in his memo to the King which points out that "the sacrifice of Kavala saves the Greek population in Turkey, and guarantees the creation of a truly Great Greece, including virtually all the territories in which Hellenism took root over its long history."<sup>820</sup>

Venizelos, in contrast to the Deputy Chief of Staff, I Metaxas, saw the political configuration as a unique opportunity for Greece to achieve its national goals. A similar proposal was made in February 1915 to the Greek Ambassador, I Gennadios, by the British Chancellor, Lloyd George, relating to the ceding of Smyrna, as well as to K. Gounaris' government in April of the same year with the one precondition that the country took part in the war against the Sultan. National divisions did not allow Greece to take part in secret agreements to claim the territories in Asia Minor. In contrast, Italy made full use of the opportunity to claim the region of Antalya, as well as the neighbouring vilayets of Konya, Adana, and Aydin, in other words, the heart-beat of the Asia Minor economy. Italy's participation in the war gave Italy grounds for equal representation in the official negotiations and claims. It was in that spirit that Italy expressed irritation at its absence from the Sykes-Picot agreement, which referred to the regulation of the spheres of influence in the Near East. This result in Italy's successful negotiations at the meeting of the allies at St. Jean de Maurienne in Savoy, April 1917, at which Italian demands in Asia Minor were met.<sup>821</sup> The competing claims of Italy and Greece in the region of Aydin later proved to be the principal cause of the aggressive war unleashed by Italy against just Greek claims in Asia Minor.

When Greece entered the war in June 1917, the previous agreements had become null and void since the United States' entry into the war in April 1917 heralded the need for changes to all existing allied agreements. Woodrow Wilson, the American president had made it clear even before he declared war on Germany that any future peace should be based on national self-determination. K.

Svolopoulos argues that following the successful end of hostilities, all contractual obligations over territorial transfers had to give precedence to the statement of the allied governments in answer to Wilson concerning the goals of the Entente in the Near East, whereby the solution to the Eastern Question lay in: "the liberating of the peoples suffering under the bloody tyranny of the Turks and the removal of the Ottoman Empire from Europe on the grounds that it is entirely alien to Western civilization."<sup>822</sup>

The subject of the "unredeemed Greeks" of Pontos had been drawn to President Wilson's attention from early November 1918 in a telegram from the Asia Minor Association "Anatoli", offered as a "philanthropic appeal to the American people on behalf of the thousands of suffering, unredeemed Greeks."<sup>823</sup> Wilson responded to the gratitude and the greetings of the suffering Greeks who placed their hopes in him with encouraging letters, in which he singled out the virtues of the Greeks of Asia Minor: "I applaud with all my heart every worthy encouragement of the American people to relieve the awful calamities of the Greeks in Asia Minor. No one has suffered more or more unjustly with a connection to the free peoples, the champions of freedom for downtrodden nations languishing under the harsh régime of a despotic government. The Greeks of Asia Minor have demonstrated by their thriftiness and enterprise that they have the virtues required for the future economic development of that rich country. Their zealous devotion to their religion, despite so many temptations and threats, stands as a testament to the principle of religious freedom. Apart from that, their dedication to constitutional ideals renders them particularly close to the American people..."<sup>824</sup> This declaration was in partial contradiction to Article 12 of his Fourteen Points of January 8 1918, which rejected the notion of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire.

The promotion of the Asia Minor question began in late November with a memorandum from Venizelos to Lloyd George, in which the former complains of the indifference of the Great Powers to the crimes committed against the Greeks in Asia Minor. At the Paris Peace Conference<sup>825</sup>, Greece claimed only a part of western Asia Minor, with Smyrna at its centre, in line with Venizelos' memorandum of December 30, 1918. Venizelos was led to that decision based on statistics provided by the Ecumenical Patriarch in 1912 showing that Greeks were in the majority in that area.<sup>826</sup> The Greek Prime Minister had met the president of the USA a few days before (on December 3/16) in Paris. At that meeting, Wilson had advised Venizelos to draw up a detailed memorandum of Greece's national claims, which was probably the reason why Venizelos did not include Pontos in the Greek memorandum.<sup>827</sup>

Due to his incomplete information on the historic and national situation of Pontos, Venizelos was left with little room for manoeuvre, His ignorance was later admitted to the Metropolitan Bishop Chrysanthos in 1919, and to Penelope Delta in Chrysanthos' company at Delta's house in 1936. Venizelos blamed his ignorance on his inadequate advisers and the intentionally monopolizing policies of Britain,

France and America that aimed for a geopolitical redistribution based on their own interests. The tactic of political begging also diminished the importance of the Pontian holocaust. Today, we can say that the Greek representation in Paris bears a great deal of historical and political responsibility for the mishandling of Pontian issues.

The first signs of pressure applied to Venizelos was from the French President, Clemenceau, who warned that: "France would take up the initiative for the territorial extension of Greece as far as Thrace, and would gladly support Greece over the question of Smyrna if proposed by the British or French"<sup>828</sup>, providing that the Greek Prime Minister accepted Greek participation in the Ukraine. This clearly imperialistic argument served French economic interests and France's large investments in southern Russia. For Greece, however, such a plan was entirely against its national interests, since 750,000 Greeks lived there on their large properties. The presence of the Greek army in the area might lead the Bolsheviks to no longer consider these Greek populations loyal citizens. These Greeks would then, perhaps justifiably, suffer the consequences of the Prime Minister's wrong-headed policy.<sup>829</sup>

### **Pontian Reactions to Venizelos' Plan**

Venizelos believed that the most realistic solution to the Pontian Question was the incorporation of Pontos into the embryonic Armenian state, as this would save the Greeks from the Ottoman Empire's seemingly inauspicious future. For that reason, his memorandum of December 30, 1918, proposed that Pontos be ceded to the nascent Armenian state. This proposal was vehemently opposed by the Greeks in Pontos, who, feeling justifiably bitter, began to protest strongly.<sup>830</sup>

On January 13, 1919, the Board of Directors of the Thessaloniki Free Pontos Association addressed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and blamed the Greek government directly.<sup>831</sup> From Athens, the Pontian Committee sent a telegram to Venizelos in Paris, accusing him of having allowed political expediencies to dictate his statements: "Your Excellency's statements on ceding the prefecture of Trebizond to the planned Armenian state made a strong impression on us Pontians. We find it impossible to believe that our claims for this area of Asia Minor are anything but historically and ethnically just."<sup>832</sup> The Pontians of Istanbul had also expressed their total opposition in a memorandum to the Greek High Commissioner on January 26, 1919, as did Pontian associations around the world.

Greek protests in the historic Pontos, the Black Sea, America, Alexandria, Europe, and most of Greece, as well as the constructive discussions between Venizelos and both Chrysanthos and K. Konstantinidis altered the Venizelos government's policies. The conviction of the Metropolitan Bishop coupled with the powerfully diplomatic and national nature of the documents presented to the Prime

Minister won him over entirely. He would have *carte blanche* to deal with the Pontos issue in face-to-face talks in Paris with the leaders of the participating nations.<sup>834</sup> The Prime Minister justified his decision in two telegrams written on January 21 and February 7: "I am aware that the Pontians do not accept my memorandum to the Conference that Trebizond should be included in the Armenian state. I am willing to recognize that since I do not have the right to impose that solution, it must be rejected. But please explain my rationale in proposing it to the representatives. I do not believe there is any chance of a Pontian state being brought into being. However, the idea that the representatives at the talks believe it is an exaggeration to say that there are 2,000,000 Greek Pontians in Pontos is wrong. There are, therefore, two possible practical solutions: to remain part of the Turkish state, or to become part of an Armenian one. The first could be politically-beneficial in the long run, but holds dangers for the safety of the Pontian Greeks since the remains of the Turkish state is likely to pursue a policy of Turkification. For that reason, I would consider it more in the Greeks' interests to be included in an Armenian state, which despite the name, will not have a majority Armenian population, but will be a state of mixed population where the Hellenism of Pontos, the Hellenism of Cilicia, and possibly of Cappadocia will play an important role. Since the administrative divisions would be made based on the local ethnic divisions of each race, they would enjoy broad autonomy under the European administration that would be imposed on the new state for some time. Thus Hellenism would be given the chance to develop and progress. I repeat that despite all the above, I do not have the right to impose the views of the interested parties; I can only express them. For that reason, please allow yourselves the right to send a telegram of protest to those interested at the Conference...."<sup>835</sup>

The members of the Peace Conference<sup>836</sup> began to receive copious reports from Pontian associations referring to the history of Pontos and the persecution, plundering and torture of the Turks, while also stressing the immediate need for an independent Pontian state. On February 14, 1919, a common memorandum from the metropolitan bishops of Pontos was presented to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Jonnino, in which the situation in Pontos was described and including an appeal to the liberal authorities to help Hellenism to achieve its freedom there and to declare an autonomous Greek state under the guardianship of Greece: "We are certain that this time the criminal who has bloodied the pages of history shall be enclosed in a deep tomb. To this voice, we, the other representatives of the Pontian Greeks, join our voices and make an appeal in the name of civilization and of the real and historic rights of the Greeks in Pontos as presented above, of the innumerable heroes and martyrs who have died with the profound faith that above them, in the Pontian earth they dyed with their blood, there shall blossom the tree of freedom. Your Excellency, worthy representative of the noble Italian nation, convinced apostle and at the same time worker for the Peace Congress, we ask that Pontos be adjoined

to Greece with which it has been linked for centuries. For better or for worse, Pontos has sealed the unbroken agreement which ties it to Greece with its blood."<sup>837</sup>

On February 27, 1919, the Pontians of Istanbul addressed a memorandum to the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, N. Politis in Paris with the request that he inform the Conference of its decision that: "The Pontian Greeks want to determine their own future. Their exclusive desire is to be free and far from foreign domination. If union with Greece were to remain unfulfilled, at least a Greek Pontian Republic could be created."<sup>838</sup>

Venizelos was encountering great difficulties in Paris supporting Greece's rights, mostly due to the Italians and the French who were worried about British influence over Greek politicians. The Prime Minister was also under enormous pressure from Woodrow Wilson, who viewed the restoration of the Armenian people with greater sympathy. From the second day of his meeting with the Metropolitan Bishop, Venizelos had been informed in detail of the Pontian question and responded to the Pontian representation in a manner that demonstrated his frankness and political ethos: "I negotiated the subject wretchedly. I did not have the facts you have now provided me with. I didn't know those things you now tell me. Write me a memorandum and take it to them. Reopen the discussion with the interested parties, and wherever they use my words to dispute your views, refute what I have said."<sup>839</sup>

After receiving the approval of the Greek government, Chrysanthos and the President of the Perpetual Congress of Pontians in Marseille, K. Konstantinidis, embarked upon the marathon diplomatic battle with great enthusiasm. With his detailed memorandums, K. Konstantinidis kept the members of the Conference up to date with the situation in Pontos. In his memorandum of November 15, 1919, he denounced the "continuing policy of extermination carried out by both the Sultan and Kemalist groups against the Greeks."<sup>840</sup> Similar memorandums were delivered by other associations during the Conference concerning the unending barbarities of the Young Turks and the bandits."<sup>841</sup> The memorandum sent, together with detailed facts, by the Central Committee of Provincial Associations of Pontian Greeks in Istanbul confirmed the awful position of Greeks in Pontos and proposed to the Conference that specific and concrete measures be taken to restore justice, equality and peace:

The Central Committee of the Provincial Associations of Pontian Greeks in Istanbul expresses the gratitude of the remaining Pontian Greeks to the three Great Powers who have committed themselves to finding a solution to the Eastern Question and thereby save the remaining Christians in Turkey.

During the War in Europe, 233,000 Pontian Greeks (men, women and children) were killed by the Turks while 85,000 were expelled to Russia,

where another 500,000 Pontian Greeks were living in the wake of previous expulsions. The movable property of the Christians was confiscated, while their real estate was mostly destroyed or transferred to Muslims.

Following the Armistice, as those elements of Hellenism that had survived the slaughters and expulsions were taking courage from the Allied victory and returning to the ruins of their homes, a new wave of even more destructive and tragic expulsions was wreaked upon them. In Western Pontos, more than four hundred villages were razed to the ground and their residents butchered. In Eastern Pontos, whole Greek regions were emptied. In the last few days, the residents of 28 villages were butchered in the province of Kerasun.

The remaining men from 19 to 35 years old were abducted for working parties, which for the Christians were the parties of starvation, poor treatment and death. Those between 14 and 19 and 35 and 55 were exiled as prisoners to Diyarbakir, Kurdistan, and elsewhere, where they suffered from hunger and ill-treatment. Those women and children who escaped the slaughter in Western Pontos were chased into the mountains and slaughtered, while those who stayed in the towns were denied the basic means of survival and died of starvation. Schools were closed, churches desecrated. Priests were being drafted, crucified, and burned alive. Priests of high rank are dying in prison. Greeks property was written over to Muslims using various tricks.

If the Armistice between the various warring armies is to prevent more bloodshed, the terms of the ceasefire must be upheld under Allied supervision, so as to at least prevent the further slaughter and expulsion of Christians in the Turkish hinterland; it is a primary duty of the civilized world and the task of the Conference and of your Excellencies to carry out this supervision as swiftly and diligently as possible.

Neither the Greeks now any of the other Christians or Muslims can live under Turkish tyranny any longer. In the name of humanity and civilization, the Central Committee of Provincial Associations of Greeks of Istanbul and Pontos requests that the Eastern Question be settled, and that the peculiar local, ethnic and historical conditions of Pontos, whose Christian populations have been subject to Turkish ill-treatment since 1914, be taken into consideration. We ask that you put bring order so that the injustices taking place are rectified, ensuring that such wrongs are not repeated in the future. It is toward this end that we ask that the Conference decide:

1. to force the Turks to cease all further expulsions and slaughters of Christians;
2. to force the Turks to release all military and civilian prisoners, including those sent into internal exile, and allow them to return to their homes;

3. to release Christians currently confined in work battalions;
4. to officially establish and recognize the right under Turkish law for those Christians who originate from Pontos to return to Pontos, regardless of when and why they left;
5. to force all foreigners settled by the Turkish government in Pontos to dilute the Greek element in the ethnic map of the area to leave Pontos;
6. to force Turkey to rectify the damage wrought on Christians since 1914, and cancel every transaction at the expense of Christian properties and land made from that year on by public notaries and in the Land Registry, deeming them illegal because they were executed under duress, and thus returning all confiscated properties;
7. to demand the arrest and punishment of the principal perpetrators of the slaughters and destruction;
8. to proclaim Pontos an Autonomous State under the suzerainty of the Sultan and the active protection of one or all of the Allied Forces, and
9. to establish in the Autonomous Pontian State the rights of Christians and Muslims, ensuring their equality in the Administration and in Legislation, as well the security of the country, not taking into consideration the forced settlement which occurred following massacres and displacement for the establishment therein of an illegitimate and violent régime.<sup>842</sup>

A further protest was telegraphed to the French President, Clemenceau, on October 13, 1919, by the religious leaders of the Christians of Asia Minor: "Mr. President, we would be responsible for all the calamities we have every reason to fear if, in the name of humanity, we did not resort to making this supreme appeal to the Allied Forces to avoid such events. Aware of the duty assigned to us, we think that to avoid the worst the major part of the Ottoman Empire needs to be occupied by the Allied Forces immediately."<sup>843</sup>

On May 20, 1919, Archimandrite Panaretos and Dr. K.A. Fotiadis, following an order from the Central Pontian Union of Greeks of Ekaterinodar and a special recommendation from the Patriarch, visited the ecclesiastical regions of Pontos and recorded the picture of the colossal calamity in detail. The completion of their statistical record, with a detailed record of percentages, coincides with the arrival of Mustafa Kemal in Samsun. Politically and historically this document—which was conveyed to the Greek High Commissioner as well as to the chief of the Greek military mission in Istanbul, Colonel Katechakis—has enormous significance because it confirms the magnitude of the destruction suffered by Hellenism prior to the arrival of the perpetrator of genocide on Pontian soil:

We have been empowered by an order from the Central Union of Greek Pontians in Ekaterinodar and following a recommendation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (ledger no. 19888, March 11) to act as special envoys of the Metropolitan Region of Pontos, and we come to provide you with a brief picture of the savage and colossal destruction suffered by Hellenism throughout Pontos. In our report, we present you with the situation in the Metropolitan Region. Therefore:

The province of Amasya had a pre-war Greek population of 136,768, with 393 schools, 12,360 pupils, 493 teachers and 498 churches. Of the 72,375 who were relocated or exiled, 70% died in exile and only 30% returned. 178 Greeks were hanged in the town of Samsun, and 1630 throughout the region as a whole. 140 villages were utterly destroyed, and particularly the completely Greek neighbourhood of Kadikoy from which only 510 residents of 3,640 remain, and only 100 half-ruined from 450 houses. During the entire war, the independent Administration of Samsun under Rafet Bey unleashed untold misery on the Greeks. The Bey himself forced women from the best families, whose husbands had been exiled, to take part in depraved parties and his wife, after she had missed the hanging of 48 Greeks, had their bodies strung up again so she could enjoy the spectacle, satisfying her Turkish soul.

Before the war, the province of Neokesaria (Niksar), which includes ten administrative regions of the Prefecture of Trebizond, the independent administration of Samsun, the Prefecture of Sivas and the Prefecture of Kastamoni, had war 14 cities, 166 villages, one high school, 18 middle-schools, 173 schools and a total of 97,450 residents of Greek extraction. 25,000 were relocated or exiled—especially those along the coast—to the hinterland of Asia Minor. In August 1917 alone, 2,700 of the residents of Ordu were abducted by the Russian Army and taken to Russia. Of the 25,000 exiles, from the villages on the one hand, only 6% of those from villages were saved from the catastrophe dealt by the satanic Turkish savagery, along with only 35% from the towns. Twenty priests from the province were shot, hanged, burnt or buried alive. Ordu presented an image of unimagined destruction; 9/10 of Greek homes have been razed to the ground, while the plots are used by the Turks to plant cabbages.

The province of Kolonia has been completely destroyed, all the villages having been deserted, very few Greeks surviving in Nicopolis. We also found many ruins in the interior as well as in Samsun, Ordu, and elsewhere.

Prior to the war, the province of Chaldia-Kerasun, which includes eighteen administrative sections, boasted two cities, 14 towns, 266 villages, and a total Greek population of 167,450. Around 45,000 of these people, mostly from Argyroupolis, Kelkit and Cherianna were forced to seek refuge in Russia during the reoccupation, while more than 90,000 were relocated to the depths

of Asia Minor, particularly those living on the coast after 1915. More than 80% of those exiled died of hunger during the expulsions, sufferings and beatings. Of these 10 were hanged, 85 shot by governmental agencies, and over 600 murdered by Turkish refugees. From the 72 Greek villages of the Kerasun region none were saved; three quarters of the houses in the Greek villages around Argyroupolis, Kelkit and Cherianna are ruined.

The totally Greek and once-prosperous town of Poulantzaki, along with some of the few Greek villages in the region, had 3,600 residents before the war. Everyone was exiled in the space of an hour on January 1 1916, only 1,500 of whom survived to return after the ceasefire. Tripolis of Pontos and Elevi, in the same region, had 3,500 residents before the war, but only 300—widows, the elderly, and orphans—returned after the expulsions. Only the town of Kerasun was spared general exile. Some were exiled, sent to the military tribunals, imprisoned and eventually perished there, while the best Greeks refused to sign over their properties and starved to death in prison. Meanwhile, the wealthy Greeks survived only by selling off their belongings, furniture and clothes.

The region of Trebizond had 5 towns prior to the war, 73 Greek villages, and a total Greek population of 55,000. From these around 5,000 were exiled to the Asia Minor hinterland, 26,000 were forced into exile in Russia during the time of reoccupation. Only 400 returned from Asia Minor. Virtually all the villages of Trebizond, the towns of Platana, the surrounding villages of Yemoura, Sourmena and Rizous were either destroyed and razed to the ground or occupied by Turks who kept them. The Turkish occupiers in Trebizond and the surrounding region quickly began their program of imprisonment, commercial exclusion, confiscation, looting, and isolated but frequent murders following the general system of extermination begun with the relocations, which was prepared for the winter of 1918. However the Armistice thwarted these satanic plans.

Rodopolis province comprised 4 sections, having 54 Greek villages before the war and a Greek population of 24,820. Out of this population 4,080 were relocated toward Argyroupolis and beyond during the Russian advance of 1916, while 4,800 were forced to emigrate to Russia....

As a general conclusion, we must add that as we were passing through these centres, we became convinced that the continued co-existence and cooperation with Turks under their rule is now utterly impossible, that the undesirable possibility of maintaining Turkish rule will invariably lead to the deportation of all our people; that hope of improving the Turkish soul to the extent of their permitting non-Muslim administrative leaders, in whichever form, remains out of the question, and that, without discriminating between political groups, the Turkish soul is now bankrupt from a humanitarian and

social point of view. Despite all this, great efforts should be made to free Pontos, historic and Greek, from its centuries of miserable slavery.<sup>844</sup>

### **Defense of the Sultan's Delegation**

The participants at the Paris conference were there to decide, among other things the fate of the Ottoman Empire and Istanbul. They were divided in their opinions. The view of the Ottoman government and the Sultan himself was that the condemnation of the Christian groups was the result of the violence perpetrated by the Young Turks, who subscribed to the view that the foreign powers should withdraw from the country, leaving a strongly-nationalist pan-Turkism to dominate. The government preferred the British or American solution—whereby the Empire would become a British or American protectorate—to its partition, or the application of Wilson's Fourteen Points and its talk of respecting ethnic majorities.<sup>84</sup>

In order to gain favour with the participants at the talks, the Sultan's representation circulated a document announcing that those responsible for criminal or political infractions against the Christian populations, such as the deportations, would be punished. This was an attempt to mislead both the representatives and the people of Europe into believing that the Sultan recognized the guilt of those responsible, and that the government would restore the wounded status of the Empire. The circulated document states:

The Prefecture has sent us the following circular from the Ministry of the Interior concerning the process of punishing those guilty of removing the Christian populations.

Article 1. - Government employees, soldiers and officers, gendarmes, officers of the gendarmerie, who participated in all the crimes committed during the relocation of those people, whether assigned or not to the task, shall be interrogated and tried in the courts and other judicial bodies according to the penal process;

Article 2 – During the interrogation proceedings, leave shall not be granted and other decisions regarding the persons mentioned in Article 1 shall not be taken;

Article 3 – The present order is valid from the date of its publication;

Article 4 – The Ministerial Committee is ordered to execute this decision. The present temporary law comes into force on condition that it is ratified by parliament.

December 25 1334 (December 12 1918).<sup>846</sup>

On May 22, Sultan Mehmet's Prime Minister, Damat Ferid, had requested permission from the Peace Conference in Paris to have the participants deal with the Ottoman question. On May 30, the four powers decided to deny the Turks this privilege, which they had already denied to the Germans and the Austrians. Nonetheless, although they had already decided not to discuss anything with the Turks, they agreed to listen to their position<sup>847</sup>. At the beginning of June, Damat Ferid, Tevfik Pasha and three advisers left for Paris.

Prime Minister Damat Ferid, who had condemned the crimes of the Young Turks in a meeting of the Senate in November 1918 with the phrase "the crimes are unheard of not only in Ottoman history, but in the history of mankind,"<sup>848</sup> was forced to admit once again in Paris in 1919, before the representatives, the horrific crimes that had been committed in Asia Minor. In a sombre atmosphere, he held the Young Turks entirely responsible, thus in the usual Ottoman manner shaking off any blame that might have attached itself to the politicians or the Turkish people. In his memo, he stressed his personal opposition to the violent acts perpetrated by the leaders of the Young Turks: "I would not have the audacity to appear in front of the present High Commission if I believed that the Ottoman people were even partly responsible for the war which caused bloodshed in Europe and Asia."<sup>849</sup>

Rejecting the excuses of the Turkish representative to avoid holding his own countrymen responsible, Clemenceau answered on behalf of all those present that Turkey should recognize these crimes, on moral grounds but also on the grounds of political expediency:

The council does not wish to begin to discuss petty matters or to impose a symbolic punishment on your Excellency and those of his representatives. On the contrary, it is well-disposed towards the Turkish people, whose excellent talents it admires. But it cannot include in those talents the ability to govern foreign nationalities. This experience has been confirmed and repeated on so many occasions that there is no longer room for doubt. History provides us with numerous Turkish successes but also very many failures. Nations are ruled and nations are liberated. The same diplomatic war by proxy is implied by the shrinking of populations which occurred on the territories that were until recently ruled by the Ottoman Empire.

However, in all these changes we have not found one case in Europe, Asia or even Africa where the establishment of Turkish rule in a country was not followed by a reduction in material and cultural prosperity.

Whether it be between the Christians in Europe or the Muslims in Syria, Arabia or Africa, the Turk has provoked only catastrophe wherever he conquered. He never showed himself capable of developing during a time of peace that which he had won in war. Why can he not exercise his talent in that direction?<sup>850</sup>

After his withering attack, Clemenceau recommended that the Turkish representation leave the palace of Versailles, implying that similar sanctions should be imposed on the Ottoman Empire. Following Clemenceau's diatribe, Damat was convinced that the Ottoman Empire was to receive a humiliating punishment. This punishment proved long in coming because, as R. Puaux comments, it developed into an intellectual discussion about the fate of Turkey, in which the participating sociologists, economists and politicians let their imagination run riot as they talked more fervently of their own sphere of interests. The diplomats, however, discovered a field of competition for their professional rivalries, some forgetting that Turkey belonged to the enemy camp. Displaying continued courtesy toward the Ottoman government, they strove to exclude every possibility of the representative of the other 'tribal' power exploiting various advantages in the country. The change in climate, however, with its significant implications was immediately perceived by the Turks. Once again, Europe's ethics proved vulnerable to eastern machinations. The various interests of the Great Powers and their bitter economic and trade rivalries saw a lower priority placed on Turkish crimes. Thanks to the contracts, economic concessions and exchanges, the sufferings of the Christian populations of Turkey were pushed aside, and the Ottomans, relieved, could lift their heads up once again.<sup>851</sup>

The Christian populations of Asia Minor were anxiously awaiting the punishment of those responsible, and especially of those who:

carried out those expulsions in the middle of a harsh winter. They exiled, annihilated, slaughtered, raped, robbed, abducted, and mutilated. They burnt, buried people alive, gouged out eyes, and cut off noses and ears. They smashed hands and legs, deflowered, killed through starvation and torture, they abducted virgins and children to convert them to Islam....

Above all, we the Christian people of the East—or rather the harried and mistreated—await the severe punishment of the vile Young Turks, whom even the Kurd general, Mustafa Pasha verbally denounced for their crimes in his military tribunal. This incorruptible ex-military judge directing addressed the Committee, stating: "They organized the slaughters and expulsions, doused babies with petrol while they were still in their mother's arms, separated wives from husbands and daughters from parents, stole their property, movable or otherwise, exterminated or hounded them to the mountain crags as though they were sheep, thus destroying families who had known comfort and opulence. They forced innocent people into boats and cast them into the sea to drown, they made the non-Muslims, submissive to the state, abandon their religion, something forbidden by Islam. They placed young girls into brothels etc, and ended up being hateful to the most

wretched of people. Yet Turkey means to live and demand to rule over the Christian people of the East!<sup>852</sup>

The revelations of the Kurd general and judge of Istanbul, Mustafa Pasha, disturbed the political leadership of the Sultan's government, but mostly the Kemalists in Ankara<sup>853</sup>, who actually demanded that the relevant Ministry in Istanbul charge him for behaving improperly in the execution of his duties, but also for an interview he gave to an Armenian newspaper. At the military tribunal of January 10, he did not hesitate to repeat his accusations concerning the crimes against humanity, using strong arguments and providing powerful evidence. "Pashas, who satisfying their ambitions, went around the country, which is in the condition it is in today as a result of their unprecedented crimes. This, however, has not stopped them from continuing to provoke trouble. They have carried out barbarities, organized butchery and expulsions. New-born babies have been set alight, women and virgins raped, children separated from their mothers, thousands of unfortunates have had their properties taken from them and have been exiled."<sup>854</sup>

It is an indubitable fact that following the imposition of the Young Turks, every future Turkish government pursued the same line of distorting historical acts and denying the claim that Armenians and Greeks had suffered genocide at their hands. A typical example is the attempt to remove the contents of a telegram from Talaat Pasha to the Prefects of the Empire on September 13, 1915, concerning the total obliteration of the Armenians:

To the Prefecture of Aleppo:

In line with a previous announcement, I notify you that the government has decided on the total obliteration of those Armenians living in Turkey. Whoever does not wish to carry out this order cannot be a member of the administration. Having swallowed the voice of conscience, the lives of women, children, and the crippled alike must be put an end to, no matter how tragic the means of execution.

September 13 1915. Minister of the Interior Talaat.

The Turks now deny the existence of this confidential telegram. They direct their efforts to putting up a smoke-screen by paying large amounts of money to historians of dubious morality, to refute genocide<sup>856</sup>. They claim that the whole debate was dreamt up by an Armenian, Aram Andonien, who publicized this document in its entirety for the first time in Paris in 1920. The specific telegram, however, which the Turks describe as an immoral lie, was accepted as admissible evidence of guilt at the trial of Tehlirian, the assassin of Talaat Pasha, in Berlin.<sup>857</sup> The existence of the telegram is confirmed by the republication of extracts from the Turkish newspaper, *Sabah*, in the Trebizond *Epochi* on December 18, 1918. *Epochi* writes, "According to the Turkish newspaper, *Sabah*, the telegram in which Talaat

Pasha provided instructions concerning the carrying out of the slaughter of Armenians, reads as follows: 'Annihilate those under my moral and material responsibility, as well as those gathered under my administration.'<sup>858</sup>

While the peace talks were still underway and the future of the Ottoman Empire remained undecided, it was at least expected that the conduct of the authorities and of the bandits toward the Christians would be more subdued. The reality was quite the reverse. The presiding government and the newly-emerging Kemalists set about their task of annihilating the Greeks with vigour. Having completed their task, they could then refer to the Wilson's twelfth point regarding national self-determination.

### **The Great Powers' Policies in Asia Minor (1919)**

The solution for the Eastern Question proposed in 1917 by the Entente was the liberation of the population living under the bloody tyranny of the Turks, and the indictment of the Ottoman Empire by Europe as an alien culture.<sup>859</sup> Two decisions in May 1919 gave the Greeks the illusion that the victors would implement their resolutions, and that the Christian peoples of the Empire would finally be released from the bondage of tyranny.

The first was the act of Greece's allies to agree to have Greece to impose order in Smyrna, protecting the Christian populations from the Muslim bandits and groups of Young Turks. Taking encouragement from the fact that the terms of the Armistice of Mudros were not being applied, especially those referring to the disarming and punishing of guilty parties, the criminals had been continuing their activities undisturbed over the last few months.<sup>860</sup> The second decision, approved by Britain, was that made by the Sultan's government to send Mustafa Kemal to restore order in Pontos, especially in the provinces where the Chetes continued to commit crimes of genocide against unarmed and unprotected Christians.<sup>861</sup>

The allied diplomatic backdrop which led to final approval being given for the landings of the Greek army in Smyrna is of great historical interest, especially since it justifies the timeless message of the great historian, Thucydides in his dialogue between the citizens of Athens and those of the island of Melos: The principles of justice apply only among litigants of equal strength; it should not thus be considered a dishonour to relent before the strong, but consent on the part of the weak.<sup>862</sup>

The Entente consented to Venizelos' proposal for the immediate taking of measures to prevent calamities for the Hellenism of Asia Minor. This decision didn't reflect any particular sympathy towards Greece, but simply served the Entente's own economic and strategic interests. The approval given to land may have been unanimous, but this was after marathon discussions and clashes between the four Great Powers and frequent walk-outs.<sup>863</sup> Only Britain fully supported Venizelos'

plan. Lloyd George, a personal friend of Venizelos, was the principal mover behind the sending of Greek troops to Smyrna to restore order, though his primary reason for doing so was, of course, to promote his country's imperialistic interests.<sup>864</sup> This decision was supported legally by Article VII of the Mudros Armistice, according to which the Allied Powers had the right to occupy a strategic position of their choice wherever the security of the Alliance was threatened.<sup>865</sup>

France strove to secure Britain's support over her differences with Germany on the subject of the Rhineland and looked in the long term to exploit the oil of Mosul together with Britain. France also agreed with Britain because Greece had agreed to take part in the campaign in the Ukraine, an event which was mostly to France's benefit. France's acquiescence, however, was modified by the statement that the mission was temporary. France's ambiguous policy was clearly demonstrated by President Poincaré's assuring message in June 1919 to the successor to the Ottoman throne, in which he placed emphasis on the traditional French-Ottoman friendship, and promised that the victor would not forget the vital interests of the vanquished.<sup>886</sup>

The Americans, meanwhile, had ambitions to impose their economic hegemony over the Near East. They supported the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, insisting steadfastly on Wilson's Fourteen Points, and tending toward the imposition of a régime under the supervision of the League of Nations. With its entry into the war, the USA hoped to supplant the European Powers and assume the dominant role, simultaneously claiming the exclusive right to exploit its rich resources, particularly petrol. The World War I was, for the USA, the chance to gain sudden wealth and a first attempt at achieving global dominance.<sup>867</sup>

The Italians, on the other hand, with "childish stubbornness"<sup>868</sup> objected to every Greek proposal or action because the Greek positions rebuffed Italy's imperialistic ambitions in Asia Minor. In order for them to gain a legitimate foothold in south-western territories, and supported by the disused Treaty of St. Jean de Maurienne, the Italians dispatched military and naval forces to the shores of Antalya on March 29 without the approval of their allies, preparing a surprise landing in the Smyrna area. According to the historian, D. Dakin, Lloyd George was extremely disturbed by this action and brought up the subject with the Allied Powers committee, accusing the Italians of conducting an opportunistic and aggressive policy which would encourage the Turks to expel more Greeks. At that time the Italian representation had walked out of the Paris talks in protest at the disagreement over the Adriatic, where they had come up against considerable opposition from Wilson. By the time Lloyd George proposed that a Greek force be sent into Smyrna to protect the Christian population, Wilson was on his side, furious at the aggrandizing arrogance of the Italians. Clemenceau also agreed, and so on May 7 the three allies gave Venizelos the green light for the immediate deployment of troops in Smyrna. The Italians, who had returned to the negotiating table that day, were not informed of the decision until May 12. The Italians only accepted it after

much wrangling and favourable territorial gains in the south-west of Asia Minor.<sup>869</sup> The unanimously decided landing in Smyrna was accomplished with allied support on May 15.<sup>870</sup>

### **The Plight of the Pontian Greeks in 1919**

From the beginning of 1919, and especially in rural areas, known elements continued to roam Pontos running riot in Greek villages, and looting, burning and raping. In January, the Pontians of Thessaloniki informed the Greek representation in Paris of the deteriorating situation, the number of victims, and the terrible results of the on-going holocaust, while at the same time condemning the Allies' indifference: "*Neologos* newspaper estimates 250,000 Greeks killed in war in Black Sea area by Turks, some of whom may have taken refuge in Russia....stop.... crimes against Greeks continue today because the warships sent to protect us have not appeared nor has anyone landed to restore peace."<sup>880</sup>

From Paris, the President of the Committee of the National Association of Pontians in the Black Sea, K. Konstantinidis, denounced the lootings and murders in a telegram to Venizelos, pleading for the Allies to mediate and take "all steps necessary to save the remaining residents."<sup>881</sup>

A. Petmezas, head of the Patriotic Relief Institution and accompanying the Greek Red Cross to Pontos, denounced the violence in the towns and the countryside in his report, but above all the ineffectiveness of the Allies who remained mere observers.<sup>882</sup>

Equally informative was the report by Major G. Leontopoulos, who had also escorted the Greek Red Cross under the orders of Katechakis. In his report, Leontopoulos provides an objective picture of Pontos a week before Kemal set about his destructive work:

Report on the situation in Pontos.

The situation regarding public safety in the area of Pontos I have visited, as well as those areas I can be considered to know about, can be said, as regards the Christian populations, to be non-existent. In Sinope, residents found their houses burnt down following their return from exile and are now living in fear. The fact that no-one has been murdered can be attributed to the fact that the majority are in a state of abject penury.....

At present, there is little action on the ground, apart from in Samsun, where there are around 1,500 armed Greeks, deserters from the Turkish army. The poor quality of their weapons, three kinds in all, the dearth of experienced administrative staff, and supply problems make the situation worse and more expensive by the day, while the economic situation is such that these troops are unable to take part in any actions today as their maintenance, too, is

problematical. The acquisition of weapons to increase the number of fighting men has been very ineffectual. In Kerasun, too, there are no more than 100-150 weapons of different systems; within the next two months, such a number at the very most might be found in Batum or Suhumi.<sup>883</sup>

On May 14, 1919, a few days before Mustafa Kemal began his “renewal” programme, the assistant of the metropolitan of Amasya, bishop Efthymios, together with the elders of Bafra, informed the Prime Minister of the deteriorating situation in the area, stressing the vital role the guerrillas were playing in protecting the helpless population:

Your Excellency, the following elders of the community of Bafra and its surrounding villages, receiving the honour of informing your high office of the following:

The Greek communities of Bafra and its villages, including Alacam and environs had a post-war population of 38,706, which has dropped as a result of exile, slaughter, famine, disease and lynchings to 20,507, most of whom are women.

The arrival in Samsun of the British High Commissioner was the first solace for us as a guarantor of our liberation and the end of the slaughter and expulsions, but, unfortunately, the appointment has only led to the deepest disappointment for us.

In general, the Greek population would have been completely wiped out, had these men—survivors of the work brigades, Christians bereft of homes and their families, protectors of the unarmed—not taken up arms and, sheltering in the countryside, intercepted those unholy forces of destruction. These Greek 'hoplites', always noble and deliberate in their actions and avoiding provocation and reprisals, stood upright, awaiting the day of liberty when they would unfurl the flag of their fatherland....

Although it is said that Turkey has lost the war, the power of Islam stands strong. The purpose of the war was only half-achieved; Islam will be put aside and the victory will be perfect, certain and assured when the other half is achieved. There shall no longer be an ethnic question, we shall be alone in our homes, the strength of our allied army shall enforce the disarming of the Turks, and order and security shall come into the lives of our decimated people.

All delay means catastrophe and the total destruction of our national hopes.<sup>884</sup>

After a plea from Germanos, Metropolitan Bishop of Amasya, the High Commissioner, Kanellopoulos, raised the burning issue of the protection of the Greeks with his British counterpart, George Milne, from whom he also requested that a British military contingent be dispatched to Pontos to bring the situation under control. Milne refused to strengthen Pontos militarily, using the pretext that a

strong military force needed to be present in Istanbul to face the Turkish movement, which could rise up after the decisions made at the peace talks. He also refused to allow Greek troops to coordinate their activities with a small British contingent, reasoning that the presence of the Greek army in the country would be politically explosive and provoke the Turks, thus endangering the Christians.<sup>885</sup>

Abandoned by everyone, the Pontian Greeks continued to be slaughtered, despite the endless accusations and reports to the relevant bodies. The Pontian Committee of Istanbul made the following statement on May 18, 1919:

The Greek population is being murdered systematically around Samsun and Bafra by the Turkish guerrilla forces, backed by the government as well as by the Lazi, who have been moved into the area.

There are 12 gangs, composed of 1,900 men, armed with rifles and machine-guns. They all steal and rob and rape, having already killed 150 men, women and children. No Greek can escape, and only very few are managing to flee their homes or towns.

We beg for an intervention of understanding. The 200 Indians and 4 French present here are insufficient<sup>886</sup>

On the same day, Germanos, the Metropolitan Bishop of Amasya, presented a detailed list to Dorotheos, deputy to the Ecumenical Throne, enumerating the robberies, abductions, and murders committed by the:

Lazi under the protection of the government... the place is full of bad elements. The Turks in the towns, with the full knowledge of the government, are organizing and directing these gangs, their conspirators roam the towns freely, while at night they take refuge in the mountains, looting and destroying, before returning to the towns to receive fresh instructions and carry out new desperate deeds.

You must believe that we are facing an unheard-of persecution, and that our land is in such great danger that there may be the need for us to defend ourselves actively, regardless of the consequences.<sup>887</sup>

## Endnotes:

788. Agop Arslanian, *The British Military Involvement in Transcaucasia 1917-1919*, Los Angeles (1974).

789. Emm. Roukounas, *Εξωτερική πολιτική 1914-1923*, p. 254. E. Nicol, *Οι Σύμμαχοι και η κρίση στην Ανατολή*, Athens (1990), p. 14. E. Allamani – K. Panagiotopoulou, "Ο ελληνισμός της Μικράς Ασίας σε διωγμό," p. 103-104. G. Jäschke, "Geschichte der Türkei seit dem Waffenstillstand von Mudros (30.10.1918)", *Handbuch der Orientalistik, Erste Abt*, vol. 6, Leiden-Köln (1959), p. 71. H. Keskin, *Die Türkei*, Berlin (1979), p. 51. E. Heymann, *Balkan, Kriege, Bündnisse, Revolutionen*, Berlin (1938), p. 72. S. Loukatos. "Οι Μεγάλες Δυνάμεις και η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή," *Η μικρασιατική εκστρατεία και καταστροφή*, publ. K.M.E., Athens (1983), p. 59. E. Icen *Die Regierung der Grossen Nationalversammlung der Türkei und ihre völkerrechtliche Anerkennung*, (Diss.), Göttingen (1960), p. 5. Fr. Maurice, *The Armistices of 1918*, Oxford (1943), pp. 85-86. Al Alexandris Al, "Οι Έλληνες στην υπηρεσία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1850-1922," *D.I.E.E.E.*, vol. 23, Athens (1980), p. 398. P. Dumont, *Κεμάλ. Ο δημιουργός της νέας Τουρκίας*, p.19.

790. In the Trebizond newspaper *Epochi* a summary of the government circular on the amnesty of deserters was published. See: *Epochi*, Trebizond (30.10.1918).

791. A.Gavriilidis, *Σελίδες εκ της μαύρης εθνικής συμφοράς του Πόντου*, p. 37. Samouilidis Ch., "Η περιφέρεια Σαμψούντας από γεωγραφική, δημογραφική, οικονομική, κοινωνική και ιστορική άποψη," p. 104. Id., *Ιστορία του ποντιακού ελληνισμού*, p. 250. Th. Papatheodoridis, *Αξέχαστα από τον Πόντον*, p.49. Ioakeimidis S., *Συμβολή εις την γενικήν ιστορίαν του Πόντου*, pp. 61-62.

792. Selamet writes in the article entitled 'Expression of sentiments': "In the programme which aims at rights and interests under the law, which our newspaper supports along with stronger friendship between the Muslims and Christians as well as the redoubling of efforts for a common union of interests, the presentation in Greek and Turkish newspapers of the degree of sincerity and friendship between them—as demonstrated in articles published which contribute to security and increase this genuine friendship—is of key importance. In particular, it is important to be aware that the slightest insinuation could be damaging to good intentions and could provide a reason for a difference of opinion or sentiments. "From a distinguished friend", writes the editor, Kapetanidis, "we confess that we expect such language. For that reason, now more than ever, it is important to support the rights of such a suffering people as well as to appeal to the administration, which should put impartiality above everything else as well as having a wise government composed of both Greeks and Turks. *Selamet*, in a spirit of sincerity, wishes to work together for this great cause, and we are sure its journalism will break up the clouds of misunderstanding, justifying the complaints and tears of the people." N. Kapetanidis, *Epochi*, Trebizond (23.11.1918).

793. Anonymous, "Όχι, βέβαια," *Epochi*, Trebizond (1.12.1918).

794. N. Kapetanidis, "Διατί χαιρόμεθα," *Epochi*, Trebizond (20.11.1919). N. Kapetanidis, "Απ' τα κόκκαλα βγαλμένη", *Epochi*, Trebizond (16.11.1919).

795. EM. Emmanouilidis Em, *op.cit.*, p. 277-278.

796. Em. Emmanouilidis, *op.cit.*, p. 278.

797. K. Boura, "Οι βουλευτικές εκλογές στην Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία," *D.K.M.S.*, vol. 4., Athens (1983), p. 82.

798. Al Alexandris, "Οι Έλληνες στην υπηρεσία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1850-1922," p. 398.

799. Anonymous, "Τετραετής απολογισμός", *Ecclesiastiki Alitheia*, vol. 42, 38th year, Constantinople (3.10.1918) pp. 133-134.
800. P. Kynigoropoulos, *Εκθέσεις περί των καταστροφών και σφαγών της επαρχίας Κολωνίας της Νικοπόλεως του Πόντου*, p. 64.
801. P. Kynigoropoulos, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-75.
802. Athanasiadis S., *Ιστορία και λαογραφία της Σάντας*, vol. 1. Thessaloniki (1967), p. 87.
803. G. Kalogeropoulos, "Οι ομογενείς Καραχισάο και περιφερείας," *Epochi*, Trebizond (31.12.1918). Theofylaktos Th., *Γύρω από την άσβεστη φλόγα*, p.76.
804. P. Kynigoropoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
805. Anonymous, "Μία επίσκεψις εις το ορφανοτροφείον. Η ζωή ορφανών. Τραγωδία ολόκληρος. Εικόνες λύπης και χαράς," *Epochi*, Trebizond (7.11.1918).
806. The subject of the 1619 missing Cypriots from the Turkish invasion of 1974 is another wound about which the governments of Greece, Cyprus as well as all the other countries involved in this tragedy should not be proud.
807. Anonymous, "Βαρυσήμαντοι δηλώσεις περί της τύχης της Τουρκίας," newspaper *Alitrotos*, Athens (4.11.1918).
808. Anonymous, "Βαρυσήμαντοι δηλώσεις περί της τύχης της Τουρκίας," newspaper *Alitrotos*, Athens (4.11.1918).
809. Anonymous, "Βαρυσήμαντοι δηλώσεις περί της τύχης της Τουρκίας," newspaper *Alitrotos*, Athens (4.11.1918).
810. G. Clemenceau – A. Millerand , "Opinions sur les Turcs," *Revue des Balkans*, 4<sup>th</sup> year, issue #6, Paris (4.1922), p. 77.
811. Newspaper *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (17.7.1919).
812. N. Kapetanidis, "Πρώτοι οι Έλληνες," *Epochi*, Trebizond (2.11.1918).
813. F. Th., "Ένα έγγραφο δια την αθανασίαν," *Epochi*, Trebizond (23.11.1918). A similar court ruling was issued against the widow Maria Moumoulidou from Imera of Pontos. See: *Epochi*, Trebizond (24.12.1918).
814. Panaretos, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
815. Anonymous, "Η παλιννόστησις των προσφύγων," *Ecclesiastiki Alitheia*, vol. 42, 38<sup>th</sup> year, Constantinople (31.7.1918), p.124. The Organization of the Patriarchal Central Committee was created to take care of and settle those refugees returning to their homelands, and for the return of their possessions. "The (existing) Patriarchal Central Committee for the relocated Greek populations—consisting of a metropolitan, a member of the Holy Synod, as President, two members of the Municipal Committee (5 bankers, 2 lawyers, 5 businessmen) an architect and a doctor—aims at the care and settling of those returning refugees and the return of their possessions.", Athens, Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, hereafter cited as A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a (no place of origin).
816. G. Kalogeropoulos, "Οι ομογενείς Καρά Χισάο και περιφερείας," *Epochi*, Trebizond (31.12.1918).
817. G. Kalogeropoulos, "Οι πρόσφυγες της Κερασούντος," *Epochi*, Trebizond (18.12.1918).

818. On the role of the Great Powers in the Near East and the written and verbal secret agreements, territorial concessions and breaches, q. v. Allamani - Panagiotopoulou, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-111.
819. "In Asia Minor," wrote Venizelos to King Constantine, in September 1914, "our policy must be the return of the refugees and the effective protection of the Greek people in Turkey with the future support of the three Great Powers," Alamani - Panagiotopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
820. Allamani - Panagiotopoulou, *op.cit.*, p. 108.
821. Allamani - Panagiotopoulou, *op.cit.*, p. 110. I. Mazarakis-Aenian , "Ο Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος και οι εθνικές μας διεκδικήσεις στην Συνδιάσκεψη Ειρήνης. Α' εξάμηνο 1919," *Symposio gia ton E. Venizelo*, Minutes E.L.I.A., Benaki Museum, Athens (1988), p. 246.
822. K. Svolopoulos, *Η ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική (1900-1945)*, p. 141.
823. Anonymous, "Βαρυσήμαντοι δηλώσεις περί της τύχης της Τουρκίας," newspaper *Alitrotos*, Athens (4.11.1918).
824. Newspaper *Epochi*, Trebizond (25.4.1919).
825. "At the Peace Conference the representatives of the allied countries were: France: Clemenceau, Briand, Tartier und Bourjois; England: Lloyd George, Balfour; USA:Wilson, Root, Lansing and Hotte; Italy: Sonnino and Orlando; Belgium: Voodervlede; Japan: Tshuida, Matsui; Rumania:Take, Ioanescu; Greece:Venizelos; Serbia: Pasic; Czechoslovakia: Massaryk; and Southernslavs: Denit", *Epochi*, Trebizond (31.12.1918). D. Dakin, *Η ενοποίηση της Ελλάδας 1770-1923*, pp. 333-337. I. Dragoumis, "Υπόμνημα προς το εν Παρισίοις Συνέδριον της Ειρήνης," *Politiki Epitheorissis*, Athens (1920), pp. 425-429, 442-446, 457-460, 473-475 and 503-507. Anonymous, "Αι ελληνικά απαιτήσεις. Σοβαρά δηλώσεις του κ. Βενιζέλου," *Esperia*, no. 159, London (1919), pp. 33-35. Puaux R., *Ο εκπατρισμός και ο επαναπατρισμός των Ελλήνων στην Τουρκία*, Paris (1919), pp. 19-21. A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5/XII, reg. no. 7497, Constantinople (13/26.10.1919). "Η έκκλησις των χριστιανικών εθνοτήτων προς τον Κλεμανσώ δια την παλινόρθωσιν", *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (30.10.1919). Mazarakis-Aenian, I., *op. cit.*, pp. 245-263.
826. In the area claimed, there lived 818,221 Greeks, as well as 11,877 in Imbros and Tenedos; Svolopoulos, K., *op. cit.*, p. 141.
827. Th. Theofylaktos, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-116.
828. Allamani - Panagiotopoulou, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.
829. K. Fotiadis , "Ο ελληνισμός της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης τον 20ό αιώνα".
830. K.Fotiadis, "Η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου," *Eordaiki*, Ptolemaida (17.8.1986). Theofylaktos Th., *op. cit.*, pp. 112-119. Pavlidis E., *Πώς και διατί εματαιώθη η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου*, pp. 43-45. Alexandris Al., "Η ανάπτυξη του εθνικού πνεύματος των Ελλήνων του Πόντου 1918-1922: Ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική και τουρκική αντίδραση," pp. 439-442. P. Albin, "Η Συνδιάσκεψις θα αναγνωρίση την Δημοκρατίαν του Πόντου," *Epochi*, Trebizond (1.6.1919). I. Dragoumis, "Το ζήτημα του Πόντου," *Politiki Epitheorissis*, Athens (1920), pp.89-93.
- 831.K. Fotiadis, "Η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου," *Eordaiki*, Ptolemaida (17.8.1986).
832. K. Fotiadis , "Η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου," *Eordaiki*, Ptolemaida (17.8.1986).
833. "To his Excellency, Prime Minister of Greece, Venizelos: In response to the publicised announcement by the Peace Conference that Trebizond is to be ceded to the Armenian Kingdom, we, residents of Egypt originating from the Black Sea, have conferred in Alexandria and protest at any decision aimed to bestow such a fate on our unquestionably Greek homeland. Therefore, we ask your Excellency to become our

ultimate representative and to convey our protest to the Peace Conference, so that they may take it into consideration," A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5/XII, reg. no. 184 25, Alexandria (13.4.1919). See also: "From Kavala. To Prime Minister El. Venizelos, Paris office. Today, March 30 1919, we, Pontians from the regions of Trebizond, Argyroupolis/Gumushane, Kolonia/Koyulhisar, Neokesaria/Niksar and Amasya have convened and decided to unite our voices with those of our compatriots in order to free our fatherland. We protest at every foreign-inspired collusion and urge you, Mr. President, to put an end to the unbearable pain of our long and vile slavery. From our hearts, we desire the protection of the League of Nations with Greece as their trustee. Please respond to our appeal and grant us the joy and the privileges of the freedom you safeguard, for the sake of which we have shed so much blood in the course of this great struggle. Committee of Ports from the Black Sea to Kavala. Theodoros Paraskevas, Theodoros Tsoulas, Savvas Kazantzidis, Pavlos Kollesidis." See also: "From Kavala. To President El. Venizelos, Paris office", A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5/XII, reg. no. 070-169, Kavala (31.3.1919). See also: Anonymous, "Ελληνικά απαιτήσεις," *Esperia* journal, no.159, London (1919).

834. P. Delta, *Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος*, ed. P. Zannas, Athens (1978), pp. 49-52. Tasoudis G., *Βιογραφικαί αναμνήσεις του αρχιεπισκόπου Αθηνών Χρυσάνθου του από Τραπεζούντος 1881-1949*, pp. 184-209. I. Dragoumis, "Το ζήτημα του Πόντου," pp. 89-90. Pin Stathi, "Απόρρητα τουρκικά έγγραφα αναφερόμενα στη δράση του Χρυσάνθου Τραπεζούντας για την ανεξαρτησία του Πόντου," p. 166.

835. K. Fotiadi, "Η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου," *Eordaiki*, Ptolemaida (17.8.1986).

836. "Εκκλησις Επιτροπείας Ποντίων εν Ελλάδι Ἡ Φωνή του Πόντου," *Epochi*, Trebizond (13.4.1919).

837. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Trebizond (14.2.1919).

838. Fotiadis K., "Η Δημοκρατία του Πόντου," *Eordaiki*, Ptolemaida (17.8.1986).

839. Delta P., *op. cit.*, pp. 49-59. See also: Tassoudis, G., *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203.

840. *Appel adressé à la Conférence de la Paix à l' occasion des persecutions turques dans le Pont-Euxin*, Paris (15.11.1919), pp. 4-6.

841. Included in Panaretos's book, *Ο Πόντος ανά τους αιώνες*, there is a memorandum dating from February 1919, which was submitted to the representatives of the Peace Conference. See: Panaretos, *op. cit.*, pp. 266-270. *Appel adressé à la Conférence de la Paix à l' occasion des persecutions turques dans le Pont-Euxin*. "Υπόμνημα Κεντρικής Ενώσεως Ποντίων Ελλήνων Αικατερινοδάρ προς το Συνέδριον της Ειρήνης," *Leonidas Iasonidis*, Thessaloniki (1983), pp. 86-91.

842. Archives of E.P.M., Central Council of the Provincial Associations of Constantinople Pontian Greeks to the Conference of foreign ministers of England, France and Italy in Paris, Athens (1919).

843. "Η έκκλησις των χριστιανικών εθνοτήτων προς τον κ. Κλεμανσώ δια την παλιννόρθωσίν των," *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (30.10.1919). The same appeal was sent also to Greece's Foreign Minister, N. Politis. More information in A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5XII, Constantinople (13.10.1919).

844. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Ekaterinodar (20.5.1919) and A.Y.E., K.Y., 1917, B (35, 38, 45, 59), Ekaterinodar (20.5.1919).

845. E. Icen, *Die Regierung der Grossen Nationalversammlung der Türkei und ihre völkerrechtliche Anerkennung*, p. 6. *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, First Series*, vol. 4, London (1947-1954), p. 834 ff.

846. "Υπουργείον Εσωτερικών, η αυτοκρατορική εγκύκλιος. Η τιμωρία των ενόχων. Κυβερνητική διαταγή," *Epochi*, Trebizond (5.1.1919).

847. N.Diomidis Petsalis. *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, Thessaloniki (1978), p. 214.

848. K. Fotiadis, "Η γενοκτονία του ποντιακού ελληνισμού μέσα από τουρκικές πηγές," p. 90. Damat Ferid, while still a senator, addressing the Ottoman Parliament on October 22 1918, recognized that: "The annihilation of the Christian populations was an unforgivable crime which should be attributed to the Committee of Union and Progress; furthermore, this crime was committed for no apparent reason. These populations did not emigrate of their own free will, but were forced to leave under threat of violence, and were massacred pitilessly." On the next day, the Turkish newspaper *Aksam*, along with several other newspapers, wrote that: "The Ottoman government and not the Turkish people committed these unspeakable crimes, and, for that reason, the Government is entirely responsible and not the nation, and should apologise for these barbarous acts before the Great Court soon to be formed by humanity, at which the Turkish people will declare this truth". Halide Edip Hanim wrote in the newspaper *Vakit*: "We expelled our Greek subjects and did everything to uproot them, just as we did to the Armenians, and to that end we employed methods from the Middle Ages. Now we are seen in England and America as people who torture our subjects and murder innocent Christians together with their children. In the hands of robbers and murderers, the theory of enforced conversion to Islam became the pretext for the tragedy. Administrators, prefects, civil servants empowered with absolute authority by the Committee, have blamed these despicable acts on the innocent Turks;" *Οι ανθελληνικοί διωγμοί εν Τουρκία από του 1908 μέχρι του 1921 ενώπιον της Γεν Αθήναις Εθνοσυνελεύσεως*, pp.22-23. The senator Resi Akif admitted also that the expulsions were on the orders of the government, but the murders came from the Young Turk Committee. More in *Patris*, Athens (24.11.1918) and K. Lamerias, *Το μικρασιατικόν πρόβλημα*, p.71.

849. *Οι Τούρκοι παραδέχονται την γενοκτονία των Αρμενίων*, Armenian Popular Movement, ed. Sifis Kasesian, Athens (1985), pp.23-24. Commenting on the proposals of the Ottoman Prime Minister, Damat Ferid, the anonymous columnist of *Politiki Epitheorissis* wrote: "As a true supporter of Turkish diplomacy he did not omit to show the representatives of the Great Powers that the official Turkey always had the discipline and was willing to carry out their decisions...." Χ., "Τουρκία," *Politiki Epitheorissis* journal, Athens (1920), p. 143.

850. R. Puaux, *Ο εκπατρισμός και ο επαναπατρισμός των Ελλήνων στην Τουρκία*, pp.19-20. Anonymous, "Ολόκληρον το κείμενον της απαντήσεως των Συμμάχων εις την τουρκικήν αντιπροσωπείαν", *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (6.7.1919). K. Fotiadis, op. cit., p. 91. Sifis Kasesian writes: "48 hours later, the Allies told Damat Ferid politely to leave Paris," *Οι Τούρκοι παραδέχονται την γενοκτονία των Αρμενίων*, Armenian Popular Movement, p. 24.

851. R. Puaux, op. cit., p. 21.

852. Anonymous, "Οι μεγάλοι εγκληματίαι," *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (29.1.1920).

853. "Mustafa Pasha incurred the wrath of the Young Turks and Mustafa Kemal, and consequently that of the current government, because he chose to judge the slaughterers of the Armenians strictly. Already, in compliance with Kemal's desire, today's ministry wish to get even by indicting Mustafa Pasha," Anonymous, *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (5.10.1920).

854. Anonymous, "Φρικιαστικά αποκαλύψεις των τουρκικών κακουργιών," *Eleftheros Pontos*, Batum (5.2.1920). *Οι Τούρκοι παραδέχονται την γενοκτονία των Αρμενίων*, Armenian Popular Movement, p. 24. Fotiadis K., op. cit., p.91.

855. O. Agabadian, *Η Αρμενία και το Αρμενικό Ζήτημα*, Athens (1988), p. 105.

856. Sp. Vrionis, *Το τουρκικό κράτος και η Ιστορία. Η Κλειώ συναντά τον γκριζο λύκο*, Thessaloniki (1993), p. 132 ff. N. Herzberg, "Η ιστορικότητα μιας γενοκτονίας", *Το Vima*, Athens (28.5.1995).

857. T. Hoffmann, *Der Völkermond an den Armenien vor Gericht. Der Prozess Talaat Pascha*, Göttingen (1980).

858. Anonymous, "Τι γράφουν τα φύλλα," *Epochi*, Trebizond (18.12.1918).

871. P. Dumont, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

872. G. Jäschke, *op. cit.*, p. 72. D. Mikusch, *op. cit.*, p. 167. G/ Horton, *Η κατάρα της Ασίας*, p. 56 ff. P. W. Milogradow, "Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen 1917-1939", *Die Türkei*, Berlin (1963), p. 123. D. Lazaridis "Ο ρόλος του ιμπεριαλισμού στη μικρασιατική εκστρατεία," *Η Μικρασιατική Εκστρατεία και Καταστροφή*, publ. K.M.E., Athens (1983), pp. 23-24. Ch.Tsintzilonis, "Η μικρασιατική εκστρατεία και οι ευθύνες της ολιγαρχίας και των κομμάτων της," *Η Μικρασιατική Εκστρατεία και Καταστροφή*, Athens (1983), p. 41.

873. Ch. Tsintzilonis, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-45.

874. T. Vournas writes: "The campaign in Asia Minor, which began with the dispatch of the First Greek Division to Smyrna in May 1919, had the same imperialistic motives as the Ukrainian one, differing in that the former was covered by all the arguments of the 'Megali Idea', starting with the argument of 'unredeemed Greek ethnics' and ending with the vain dream of recreating the Byzantine Empire. That was the view on the street, which was used as Venizelian propaganda to stir up the masses; in reality, though, it was all about a hyperpontic, buccaneering operation which Greece took on, playing the role of gendarme for Western imperialists. These powers encouraged her in this operation, as on the one hand they wanted to install 1,000 sentry-posts on the oil-route to the Middle East, particularly in the area of Mosul; on the other hand, they wanted to hoodwink Greece, offering her an area which would be impossible to secure with the means her military possessed; furthermore, sooner or later, she would have to face the solid Turkish mass of the Asian-Minor hinterland, which had awoken from its ethnic and political hibernation under the leadership of their inspired leader, Mustafa Kemal." in T. Vournas , *Ιστορία της σύγχρονης Ελλάδας*, pp. 211-212. See also: N. Psyroukis, *Νεοελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική*, p. 192.

875. "Of the 125 doctors in Smyrna", writes K. Despotopoulos, "more than 100 were Greeks. 'Gavur Izmir' (Infidel Smyrna) was what the Turks called Smyrna, meaning foreign towards their faith; an unintentional confession of the Turks for Smyrna's Greek character," K. Despotopoulos, "Κλέη και πάθη του μικρασιατικού ελληνισμού," *Mikrasiatiki Ichō*, Thessaloniki (12.1992), p. 8. See also the section in A. Gavrilidis's book *Σελίδες εκ της μαύρης εθνικής συμφοράς του Πόντου*, pp. 195-218, where the trade, economic and spiritual situation of Samsun is recorded in detail. G.Michail, *Ελληνικός οδηγός, Σμύρνη*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Athens (1920). *Η Σμύρνη πριν από την Καταστροφή*, publ. by the newspaper *Pontiki*, Athens (1992).

876. K. Despotopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

877. K. Sakellaropoulos, *Η σκιά της Δύσεως*, p. 68 ff. K. Simopoulos, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-37. G. Yannopoulos, *Από τον Νέστο ως τον Σαγγάριο*, Athens (1987), pp. 106-114. H. Triantafyllidis, *Η μικρασιατική εκστρατεία και το ημερολόγιο ενός οπλίτου*, Athens (1984), p. 49 ff. D. Vakas, *Μεγάλη Ελλάς, Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος, πολεμικός ηγέτης*, pp. 513-540. L. Koumakis, *Το θαύμα*, Athens (1993), pp. 74-75. G. Chrimatopoulos, *Η πένθιμος ηχώ της δορυλλικής σάλπιγγος*, p. 57. I. Lavrentidis, "Τα πεπρωμένα της φυλής, νέα ιστορική αφετηρία," *Pontiaki Stoa*, Athens (1971), pp. 202-203. Icen E., *Die Regierung der Grossen Nationalversammlung der Türkei und ihre völkerrechtliche Anerkennung*, pp. 8-9.

878. Panaretos P., *Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της δεκαετίας 1912-1922*, vol. 2, Athens (1960), p. 388. See also: Giannopoulos G., *op. cit.*, p. 114.

879. Roukounas Emm., *op. cit.*, p. 313.

880. A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5/XII, reg. no. 930, Thessaloniki (25.1.1919).

881. A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, A/5/XII, reg. no. 1865, Paris (23.2.1919).
882. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Constantinople (5.5.1919).
883. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Constantinople (12.5.1919), and attached report, reg. no. 1362, Constantinople (15.5.1919).
884. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, reg.no. 300, Bafra (14.5.1919).
885. A.Y.E., K.Y., 1919, B/35 (15), reg. no. 3171, Constantinople (16.5.1919).
886. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Constantinople (18.5.1919).
887. A.Y.E., K.Y., Y.A.K., 1919, A/4a, Samsun (18.5.1919).

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