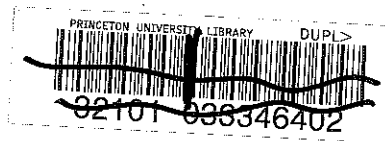


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The Liberation of the Greek People in Turkey

AN APPEAL ISSUED BY
THE LONDON COMMITTEE
OF UNREDEEMED GREEKS.

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The Liberation of the Greek People in Turkey.

1. The appended summary of statistics, compiled by the Greek Bureau of Foreign Information, shows that in the year 1912 the unredeemed Greeks in Thrace, Constantinople, and Asia Minor numbered a little more than 2½ millions.

2. It will be seen that in the vilayet of Constantinople, which comprises Constantinople itself, Tchataldja, and Scutari, the Greek population was about equal in numbers to that of the Turks, and only slightly inferior to that of all other nationalities taken together, thus forming about one-third of the total population.

3. In Adrianople Greeks and Turks were again about equal in numbers, the Greeks being, however, nearly four times as numerous as the Bulgarians and two and a half times as numerous as the total of Bulgarians and all other nationalities added together.

4. In the vilayet of Adrianople, excluding only the sandjak of Gumuldjina (where the Turks undoubtedly preponderate), the Greeks were more numerous than the Turks, and nearly three times as numerous as the Bulgarians and all the other nationalities added together.

5. In the Dodecanese and the islands of Imbros, Tenedos and Kastelorizo the population was practically entirely Greek.

6. In Smyrna the Greeks were more than twice as numerous as the Turks and considerably more numerous than all the other nationalities taken together; while in the whole vilayet of Aidin, which includes Smyrna, although inferior in number to the Turks, the Greeks were five and a half times as numerous as the rest of the population.

7. The vilayet of Adana was populated entirely by Greeks.

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8. It is only in the vilayets of Brussa, Konia, Angora, Sivas, Kastamuni and Trebizond that we find a Turkish population largely exceeding that of the Greeks. Yet even there the latter number nearly one million souls and are more than twice as numerous as the Armenians; in the vilayet of Trebizond we find a compact Greek population of 350,000; while the vilayet of Brussa, sometimes regarded as containing the flower of the Turkish race, includes the two towns of Artaki and Aivali, inhabited by 54,700 Greeks as against 5,400 Turks and 46,000 Greeks as against 100 Turks respectively!

9. In a comparison of the various nationalities to be found in Thrace, Constantinople and Asia Minor it would, of course, be a great fallacy to consider numbers only. Regard must also be had to the indisputable fact that the Greeks are far superior, especially to the Turks, in point of education, industry, and wealth.

10. It is no doubt owing to the fact just stated that the Greeks have been subjected to persecutions even more systematic than those practised against the Armenians; and that Germany, in pursuance of her well-known political and commercial aims in the East, seems not only to have connived at, but actually to have encouraged the Turkish attempts to exterminate the whole Greek race.

11. A report issued by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs gives a detailed and documentary exposition of the "Persecutions of the Greek population in Turkey since the beginning of the European War,"* but, as pointed out in the introduction to that report, the persecutions during that period were only the continuation of those practised in previous years.

12. A new era of persecutions, directed especially against the Greeks, was inaugurated by the so-called "Young Turkish" regime, established in Constantinople in the year 1908. But as a matter of fact it was, as Sir Valentine Chirol says in a letter to the *Times* of the 7th December, 1918, "the Sultan Abdul Hamid, who initiated the Enver-Talaat policy long before those worthies were ever heard of, by selling himself and Turkey to William II., and by

* Constable & Co. Ltd., 1918. 1/- net.

making corruption and delation, and the organised massacre of the subject races his favourite instruments of government."

13. After a brave show of Liberalism, designed to throw dust in the eyes of the Liberal powers of Europe, the Young Turks speedily reverted to the usual Turkish methods of violence and destruction. These were directed especially against the Greeks as being at once the most numerous and the most advanced socially and economically, but they affected all Christians in European Turkey; and things came to such a pass that the Balkan League was eventually formed, and the Balkan War of 1912 followed, which ended in the utter defeat of Turkey in Europe.

14. It was hoped that the victory of the Balkan States would enable them to protect more effectively the Christians still remaining under the Turkish yoke. This hope was, however, frustrated. Bulgaria, at the instigation of Germany and Austria, betrayed her former allies, and the Balkan League was dissolved. The Young Turks thus felt themselves strong enough to start a new campaign of persecution, in which they were now assisted in Thrace by Bulgaria, and everywhere by Germany, who saw in the Greek element an obstacle to her commercial and political predominance in the East.

15. It was during the period between the end of the Balkan War and the beginning of the great European War that took place that terrible persecution of the Greeks inhabiting the Asiatic coast, which ended in about 400,000 of them being driven from their homes and compelled, in abject poverty, to seek an asylum in Greece.

16. The pamphlet issued by the Greek Foreign Office, and mentioned on a preceding page, contains official and other evidence which places beyond doubt the responsibility of Germany for the persecutions endured by the Greeks during the years 1913-1914.

17. The complicity of Germany is also confirmed by Mr. Morgenthau, American Ambassador at Constantinople (1913-1916), who, in describing the diplomatic situation before the war, emphasises the fact that the relations between Greece and Turkey were extremely strained owing to the question of the Ægean islands, Chios and Lesbos.

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"The population of these islands," says Mr. Morgenthau, "was Greek, and had been Greek since the days of Homer; the coast of Asia Minor itself was also Greek; more than half the population of Smyrna, Turkey's greatest Mediterranean seaport, was Greek; in its industries, its commerce, and its culture, the city was so predominantly Greek that the Turks usually referred to it as *giaour Ismir*—'infidel Smyrna.' Though this Greek population was nominally Ottoman in nationality it did not conceal its affection for the Greek fatherland, these Asiatic Greeks even making contributions to the Greek Government. The Ægean islands and the mainland, in fact, constituted *Græcia Irredenta*, and that Greece was determined to redeem them, precisely as she had recently redeemed Crete, was no diplomatic secret. Should the Greeks ever land an army on this Asia Minor coast there was little question that the native Greek population would welcome it enthusiastically and co-operate with it.

"Since Germany, however, had her own plans for Asia Minor, naturally the Greeks in this region formed a barrier to Pan-German aspirations. As long as this region remained Greek it formed a natural obstacle to Germany's road to the Persian Gulf, precisely as did Serbia. Anyone who has read even cursorily the literature of Pan-Germania is familiar with the peculiar German method which German publicists have advocated for dealing with populations that stand in Germany's way—that is, by deportation. The violent shifting of whole peoples from one part of Europe to another, as though they were so many herds of cattle, has for years been part of the Kaiser's plans for German expansion. This is the treatment which, since the war began, Germany has applied to Belgium, to Poland, to Serbia, and its most hideous manifestation, as I shall show, has been to Armenia. Acting under Germany's prompting, Turkey now began to apply this principle of deportation to her Greek subjects in Asia Minor."*

"These outrages," says Mr. Morgenthau again,† "aroused little interest in Europe or the United States, yet in the space of three or four months about 400,000 Greeks were taken from their age-long

* "Secrets of the Bosphorus," by Henry Morgenthau, American Ambassador at Constantinople, 1913-1916. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1918.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 212.

homes in the Mediterranean littoral and removed to the Greek islands in the Ægean Sea. For the larger part these were *bona fide* deportations; that is, the Greek inhabitants were actually removed to new places and were not subjected to wholesale massacre. It was probably for the reason that the civilised world did not protest against these deportations that the Turks afterwards decided to apply the same methods on a larger scale, not only to the Greeks, but to the Armenians, Syrians, Nestorians, and others of its subject peoples. In fact, Bedri Bey, the Prefect of Police at Constantinople, himself told one of my secretaries that the Turks had expelled the Greeks so successfully that they had decided to adopt the same method to all the other races in the empire."

18. When soon after the outbreak of the European War Turkey joined the Central Powers the persecution of the Greeks became even more fierce and more thorough than it had ever been before, its real aim during this period being nothing less than the total elimination of the Greek element. It was the Central Powers who "ceaselessly inspired, advised, and executed" the horrible crimes committed against the Greeks. In the period preceding the European War Germany had acted behind the scenes; during the war she became an active accomplice.

19. It is not the object of this memorandum to give more than a very brief summary of the various methods adopted by Germans and Turks during the period of the European War in pursuance of their policy of extermination, a detailed account of which will be found in the report issued by the Greek Foreign Office. This account is fully corroborated by the Ambassador of the United States, who was in Constantinople at the time.

"The martyrdom of the Greeks," says Mr. Morgenthau in the volume already referred to, "comprised two periods, that antedating the war and that which began in the early part of 1915. The first affected the Greeks living on the sea-coast of Asia Minor. The second affected those living in Thrace and in the territories surrounding the Sea of Marmora, the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, and the coast of the Black Sea. These latter, to the extent of several hundred thousand, were sent to the interior of Asia Minor. The Turks adopted almost identically the same procedure against the Greeks as that which they

had adopted against the Armenians. They began by incorporating the Greeks into the Ottoman army and then transforming them into labour battalions, using them to build roads in the Caucasus and other scenes of action. These Greek soldiers, just like the Armenians, died by thousands from cold, hunger, and other privations. The same house-to-house searches for hidden weapons took place in the Greek villages, and Greek men and women were beaten and tortured just as were their fellow Armenians. The Greeks had to submit to the same forced requisitions, which amounted in their case, as in the case of the Armenians, merely to plundering on a wholesale scale. The Turks attempted to force the Greek subjects to become Mohammedans; Greek girls, just like Armenian girls, were stolen and taken to Turkish harems, and Greek boys were kidnapped and placed in Moslem households. The Greeks, just like the Armenians, were accused of disloyalty to the Ottoman Government; the Turks accused them of furnishing supplies to the English submarines in the Marmora and also of acting as spies. The Turks also declared that the Greeks were not loyal to the Ottoman Government, but that they also looked forward to the day when the Greeks outside of Turkey would become part of Greece. These latter charges were unquestionably true; that the Greeks, after suffering for five centuries the most unspeakable outrages at the hands of the Turks, should look longingly to the day when their territory should be part of the fatherland was to be expected. The Turks, as in the case of the Armenians, seized upon this as an excuse for a violent onslaught on the whole race. Everywhere the Greeks were gathered in groups and, under the so-called protection of Turkish gendarmes, they were transported, the larger part on foot, into the interior. Just how many were scattered in this fashion is not definitely known, the estimates varying anywhere from 200,000 up to 1,000,000.*

The deportations, which continued in 1916 and 1917, were of the most inhuman character. Finally the deserted villages were set on fire, in order that all traces of Hellenism should disappear.

20. It is unfortunate that while the world has heard with just indignation of the massacre of the Armenians it knows little or nothing of the crimes committed during the same period of the

* *Op. cit.*, p. 213.

European War against the Greeks, and of the attempts made by Germany and Turkey to exterminate them; and that, while other subject nationalities and their claims to freedom are frequently mentioned in the press, very little is heard about unredeemed Hellenism. Let it be noted that not even the signing of the Armistice has arrested the hand of the Turk. A telegram published in the *Times* of the 10th December, 1918, regards "the situation in Asia Minor as precarious for the peaceful Greek element. The Turks, grown bold again after their defeat, are persecuting and maltreating the Greeks."

21. Let us in conclusion quote the closing words of the *Morning Post's* special correspondent at Constantinople, whose long telegram was published on December 11th, 1918:—

"To sum up, four hundred and fifty thousand Greeks are known to have been deported and are dead; one hundred and fifty thousand were placed in 'labour battalions' and are dead; two hundred and fifty thousand fled from Asia Minor and Thrace to Greece; and three hundred and fifty thousand were deported after the Balkan War and before the Great War. And these tragic events, in spite of the Armistice, are still happening."

22. Wonderful indeed is the vitality of this race which has survived the persecutions of centuries of Turkish rule, and which is even now the most advanced in civilisation of all the other races in European or Asiatic Turkey. But for these persecutions it is permissible to think that the numerical superiority of the Greeks over the Turks and all the other races in those regions would be to-day far greater than it is, and that the resulting gain to the cause of humanity and civilisation would have been very considerable.

It is on behalf of that part of the Greek race which is still under the Turkish yoke; it is on behalf of unredeemed Greeks in Constantinople, Thrace and Asia Minor that we venture to make an earnest appeal to Liberal public opinion in Europe, and more especially to the British public, the lover of freedom, and the champion of oppressed nationality and of the cause of civilisation throughout the world.

It is inconceivable that the end of a great war, which was fought and won for the cause of freedom and the principle of nationalities,

should leave such a very large number of intelligent, industrious, cultured, and freedom-loving Christians under the brutal power of the Turk. We may also say that the deliverance of the unredeemed Greeks would be in accordance with one of Mr. Wilson's fourteen points, and that a lasting peace cannot be expected to reign in the East until that happy consummation has been attained.

The London Committee of Unredeemed Greeks:—

G. MARCHETTI,
Chairman, 57, Palmerston House, E.C. 2.
 N. EUMORFOPOULOS, *Vice-Chairman.*
 B. PANDELIS, *Hon. Treasurer.*
 HELENA SCHILIZZI.
 P. CARIDIA.
 T. CHRISTOFORIDES.
 A. C. IONIDES.
 J. MAVROGORDATO.
 Z. MICHALINOS.
 C. SPANOUDIS.
 D. STATHATOS.

NOTE.

The following statistics refer to Thrace and the part of Asiatic Turkey called Anatolia or Asia Minor. The number, therefore, of Greeks comprised in these statistics does not represent the whole of the Greek population in Turkey. A great number of Greeks are scattered in Armenia, Kurdistan and Mesopotamia, while in Syria and Palestine, especially in large centres like Alexandretta, Aleppo, Beyrout, Jerusalem, etc., are to be found compact Greek populations. The Greek population of Thrace and Asia Minor was considerably reduced in the years immediately preceding the preparation of these statistics in 1912, as a very large number of Greeks had abandoned their homes after the proclamation of the Turkish constitution in 1908, which revoked many of their ancient privileges.

It should be noted that under the heading Turks there are comprised the Kurds, the Circassians, the Arabs and the Albanians.

Greek Population in Thrace and Asia Minor in 1912

	Greeks.	Turks.	Armenians.	Bulgarians.	Other Races.	TOTALS.
Sandjak of—						
Constantinople ...	235,215	308,733	122,730	4,331	170,099	
Tchataldja ...	54,787	16,100	903	—	2,285	
Scutari ...	74,457	124,281	35,560	—	24,192	
TOTALS ...	364,459	449,114	159,193	4,331	196,576	1,173,673
Sandjak of—						
Adrianople ...	113,284	127,386	3,650	31,850	11,010	
Kirkilisse ...	76,502	53,187	50	28,655	1,110	
Rodosto ...	55,550	63,725	17,800	2,980	3,800	
Gallipoli ...	70,431	32,613	1,280	2,000	1,850	
Dedeagach ...	28,851	46,400	380	16,738	250	
Gamulgina ...	21,745	185,000	900	25,620	1,280	
TOTALS ...	366,363	508,311	24,060	107,843	19,300	1,025,877
The Dodecanese...	102,727	11,960	—	—	4,150	
Island of Imbros ...	8,125	—	—	—	—	
„ Tenedos ...	3,752	1,500	—	—	—	
„ Kastelorizo ...	10,000	50	—	—	—	
TOTALS ...	124,604	13,510	—	—	4,150	142,264
Sandjak of—						
Dardanelles ...	32,830	138,902	2,336	—	3,421	
Ismid ...	73,134	116,949	48,635	—	3,615	
TOTALS ...	105,964	255,851	50,971	—	7,036	419,822
Sandjak of Smyrna ...	449,044	219,494	11,395	415	73,698	
Vilayet of Aidin, exclusive of Smyrna	173,766	721,349	5,042	—	5,344	
TOTALS ...	622,810	940,843	16,419	415	79,042	1,659,529
Vilayets of Brussa ...	278,421	1,192,749	89,966	1,635	7,353	
„ Konia ...	87,021	988,723	9,729	—	16,076	
„ Angora ...	45,873	668,400	98,798	—	9,227	
„ Sivas ...	99,376	839,514	170,635	—	—	
„ Kastamuni ...	24,919	938,435	3,205	—	2,087	
„ Trebizond ...	355,533	957,866	50,624	—	—	
„ Adana ...	70,000	—	—	—	—	
TOTALS ...	959,143	5,585,687	422,957	1,635	34,743	7,004,165
GRAND TOTALS ...	2,543,343	7,753,316	673,600	114,224	340,847	11,425,330