

ECUMENICAL FEDERATION OF CONSTANTINOPOLITANS (E.F.C.)

Newsletter
June-July 2015

E.F.C. is the international federative union of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul which was forced to expatriation after the consequent anti-minority measures implemented by the Government of Republic of Turkey during the period 1923-2003.

The Social Solidarity Program of the E.F.C. to support the victims of the Economic Crisis in Greece

A wide spectrum social solidarity programme is being implemented the last 18 months by E.F.C., primarily focused on the expatriated Constantinopolitans in Greece. A significant part of the Community (20%) which was expelled from their homeland after the 1960s, because of the loss all of their properties in Turkey, didn't have the chance to recover socially and economically and presently its members being older than 70 years old are facing severe difficulties. Furthermore the austerity measures and the complete cut of pensions led to many families of Constantinopolitans to absolute deprivation (forced to live without electricity and water supply, homeless, not sufficient food etc.). Following the mobilization of volunteers, cooperation with the member association of E.F.C., thanks to the support of the Stavros Niarchos, Constantinopolitans of motherland and Switzerland and other Foundations relief support is given to 200 families. One should mention that the problem is much more serious to new-refugee communities such as of the Greeks from ex-USSR majority of them of Pontian origin and Greeks of Northern Epirus. The support given includes and not restricted to, actions such as: financial support, healthcare, hospitalization, provision of foods and basic means, provision of housing and solution of administrative problems faced by the State (i.e stay permit, tax issues, healthcare support documents etc.). The actions are taken place in Athens, Thessaloniki and even in other places of Greece. Kosmeteio Foundation established by the late Constantinopolitan family of Kimon and Maria Kosmetos in 1970 is proved to be very valuable by providing house free of charge to 32 homeless Constantinopolitan families in an apartment build by the donors in 1970 in the district of Hrakleion of Attica. Detailed information is available for those interested to support the humanitarian assistance program of E.F.C.

The Tragic 60th Anniversary of the Pogrom of 6-7 September 1955- Initiatives of E.F.C. in various Countries and Venues

E.F.C. has planned various events to remind the public in Greece, Turkey and elsewhere of the 60th Anniversary of the Crystal Night for the Hellenism of Constantinople. On this date the vibrant Greek Community of Constantinople was victim of an extensive highly violent Pogrom, which is comparable to Crystal Night organized by the Nazi regime in Germany in 8-9 November 1938.

On the evening of 6 September 1955, 100.000 storming troops, acting in groups of 50 persons and coordinated by a center organized by the Gladio of Turkey (NATO Stay Behind Staff), attacked and destroyed the Greek-Orthodox Churches, Schools, Monasteries, Cemeteries, Shops and Houses. Armenian and Jewish Communities were occasionally also were also attacked. The attacks in Istanbul were triggered by the explosion of a small bomb at the house of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk house in Thessaloniki by agents of Turkey as this was proved after their on site arrest by the Greek police. The organizers of this provocative act

were later tried by Greek Courts but were freed after the political pressure of Government of Turkey towards the K.Karamanlis government in Greece. Despite the fact that the given orders were not to kill, as it is proved by the slogan "TODAY YOUR PROPERTY-TOMORROW YOUR SOULS" the number of dead were 37. The security forces remained inactive and not protected the victims. The international Community faced the events with apathy and the worse was the USA State Secretary John Foster Dulles asking Greece and Turkey to cover the issues in view of Soviet threat. Despite the 60 years there has never been an independent and impartial investigation of the Pogrom and details as to how it was organized and executed remain unclear. The extent of the destruction and devastation could be understood by the few photographs attached below.

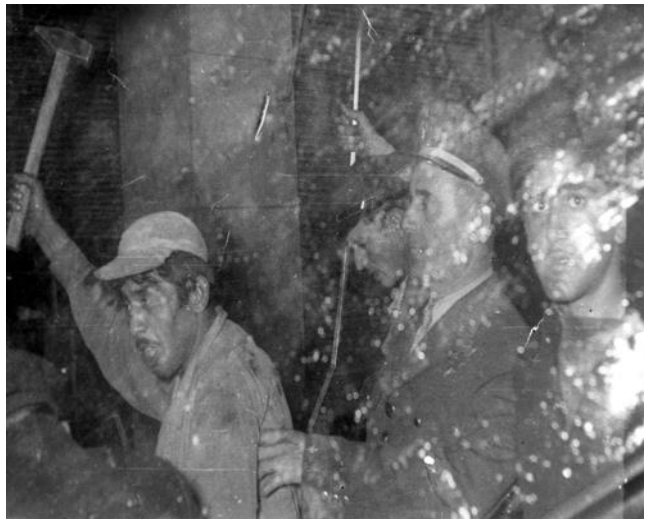
Only recently the Parliamentarian Commission of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, in a report published in November 2012, stated clearly that the Pogrom of 6-7 September 1955, has been the first step in a long line of undemocratic interventions which led to several direct or indirect military take over in the country. Furthermore the Army General Sabri Yirmibesoglu who has been the dominant figure of the Unorthodox Warfare in Turkey for more than 30 years, admitted in 1992 that: "The Events of 6-7 September has been a Magnificent Organization of Irregular Warfare and had full success".

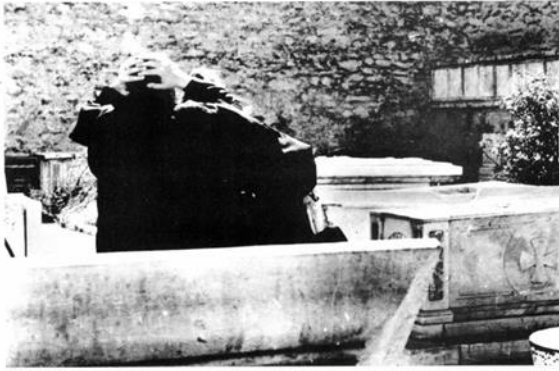
The initiatives taken by E.F.C. In the 60'th Anniversary of Septembriana includes:

- Exhibitions in Athens (2-8 September 2015), Istanbul (5-10 September 2015).
- Conference in European Parliament, October 12, 2015 (Brussels).
- United Nations- Minority Conference, November 24, 2015 (Geneva).
- Exhibition at Geneva University followed by panel discussion, November 24, 2015 (Geneva).
- British Parliament , early next year.
- Also events will take place in Thessaloniki, other cities of Greece and Europe.

The principal aim of the initiatives is to raise awareness primarily towards the present Government of Republic of Turkey the imperative necessity of Remedy and Reparations towards the Greek-orthodox Community of Istanbul as well of the islands Imbros and Tenedos.







Ο πατριάρχης Αθηνάγορας Α' τραβάει τα μαλλιά του μπροστά στο οικτρό θέαμα της τυμβωρυχίας των πατριαρχικών τάφων.
Patriarch Athenagoras plucking his hair before the lamentable sight of the grave-robbing of the Patriarchal tombs.

Ο πατριάρχης εξέρχεται από τα ερείπια, αφού προσευχήθηκε μέσα στο ιερό βήμα της Παναγίας του Βελιγραδίου.
The Patriarch emerging from the ruins, having prayed in the once sanctuary of the church of Virgin Mary at Belgrade Gate.



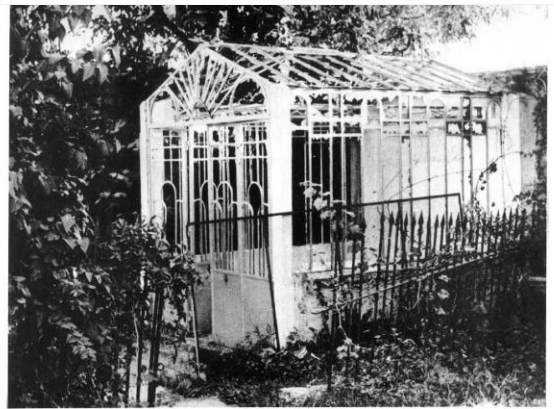
Μια άλλη όψη της αψίδας όπου διακρίνονται και οι καταστραμμένοι πολυκέφαλοι.
Another view of the nave with the shattered chandeliers seen.

Το κέντρο του ναού με τις καταστραμμένες εικόνες, τα ιερά αντικείμενα και τους πολυκέφαλους.
The center of the church with the destroyed icons, holy items, and chandeliers.



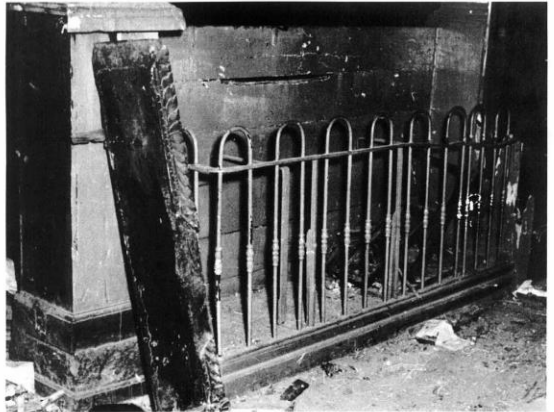
Η νοτιοδυτική πλευρά της εκκλησίας των Βλάχερνών με καταστραμμένα τα έπιπλα και τα ιερά αντικείμενα.
The southwestern side of the church at Vlacherna defaced by the monsters who destroyed the furniture and the holy items.

Το ιερό αγίασμα των Βλάχερνών όπως ήταν πριν από τα τραγικά γεγονότα του 1955.
The holy oil at Vlacherna before the tragic incidents of 1955.



Ο τάφος της Αγίας Αργυρίας στον κήπο της Αγίας Παρασκευής Πικροδίου.
The grave of St. Argryri in the churchyard of St. Paraskevi at Hasköy.

Η θέση όπου ήταν το ιερό λείψανο της Αγίας Αργυρίας στον κήπο της Αγίας Παρασκευής Πικροδίου.
The place where the holy relics of St. Argryri used to be located, at the same church.



Germany 1938-Istanbul 1955



How Refugee Greeks in 1920s paid back the whole credit received and realized the largest Humanitarian Program under the leadership of Ambassador Henry Morgenthau

The extended Economic Crisis of Greece of the last 5 years, which although superficially appears to be due to the very high accumulated debt but essentially is because of the policies applied by the political leaderships the last 20 years, makes one to remember how the Asia Minor Catastrophe Refugees returned in full the loans received from abroad under the coordination of the Refugee Relief Committee lead by Henry Morgenthau a champion of human rights.

The Greek Community of Anatolia having lost 30% of its population during the nightmare decade 1913-23 took refugee to Greece after the September 1922. A population of 1.5 million Greeks of Anatolia and Eastern Thrace and 100.000 Armenians (treating them equally) having lost everything were in the edge of total annihilation during the winter of 1922-23. The Greek government of time was unable to receive loan to face the humanitarian crisis. In this critical situation Henry Morgenthau took the personal initiative and based on his reputation as ex banker was able to guarantee the loan from Bank of England and other sources. The loan was received by the Refugee Relief Committee (RRC) with the guarantee of the Greek State. This allowed the realization of the most successful humanitarian support program in the history of mankind. Each refugee family was receiving a loan to build their houses and workshops to start economic activity. The success of the program is proved by the fact that Greece prior of 1920 being the most backward country of Balkans in 1930 became a European Country. This exhibited looking to the following table.

Industrial Production Values for the Years
1922 and 1928 of Greece

| Industrial Branch | 1922 | 1928 | Percentage increase(%) |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Metallurgy | 15.025 | 69.171 | 360 |
| Engineering | 69.400 | 263.670 | 280 |
| Processing of Minerals/Construction Materials | 130.501 | 383.886 | 194 |
| Textile | 407.690 | 1.778.016 | 336 |
| Food Industry | 399.355 | 1.423.060 | 256 |
| Chemical Industry | 293.162 | 986.652 | 237 |
| Leather Industry | 389.440 | 975.000 | 150 |
| Paper Industry | 13.080 | 171.250 | 1.209 |
| Cloth Industry | 10.488 | 98.120 | 836 |
| Wood Industry | 55.000 | 335.500 | 510 |
| Tobacco Industry | 175.275 | 207.922 | 19 |
| TOTAL | 1.958.416 | 6.694.247 | 242 |

Source: National Bank of Greece, Annual Review of the year 1929 and 1931.



Henry Morgenthau was a Jew born in Germany and immigrated to USA in 1866 at child age. He had a successful career as banker and businessman while in 1913 he was appointed as Ambassador of USA to Constantinople by President W. Wilson. During WWI he did whatever he can to save the Greeks, Armenians and Assyrians being driven to mass killings by the dictatorial Government of Committee of Union and Progress supported by their German allies. During 1923-29, he led the most successful humanitarian assistance in Greece for the Asia Minor Catastrophe. His book "My Mission of Athens" is a monument of humanism.

NEWS

- Ruling of European Court on Human Rights (ECtHR) on a Greek real estate property in the island of Imbros

A very important ruling came out ECtHR (residing in Strasbourg) on May 26, 2015 related to the confiscated private property of Ms. Euthalia Psefteli at the island of Imbros. A real estate land owned by her was expropriated in 1995 without any compensation on falsified terms claiming as reason the protection of cultural heritage of a neighboring mosque built in 1985. The Court found that a recursive law used and the expropriation was not based on legal grounds. The Court will decide either the return of the property to the owner or a significant compensation will be given to the legal owner.

This development is important since starting of 1964 the time Government of Turkey after closing the Greek schools of the island implemented a preplanned "Dissolution Programme" of the 10,000 members Greek-Orthodox Communities of the islands Imbros and Tenedos. This Ethnic Cleansing program implemented through the period 1964-1990 included expropriation of all the arable fields of the island Imbros by ridiculous compensations, establishing open prisons of criminals created an unbearable insecurity to Greeks and moving populations from other parts of Turkey such as Black Sea, Kurdish provinces and even Bulgarian refugees.

These two Aegean islands returned to sovereignty of Republic of Turkey in 1923 after the French initiative during Lausanne peace negotiations (1922-23), while a wide autonomy was recognized through article 14 of the Lausanne Treaty. This clause was never honored by Governments of Turkey.

However it should be mentioned that recently there are important developments such as the opening of the Primary and Secondary Greek Schools after 50 years while many problems mentioned above have been alleviated to some extent although there is still a much needed to talk about real remedy and reparations.

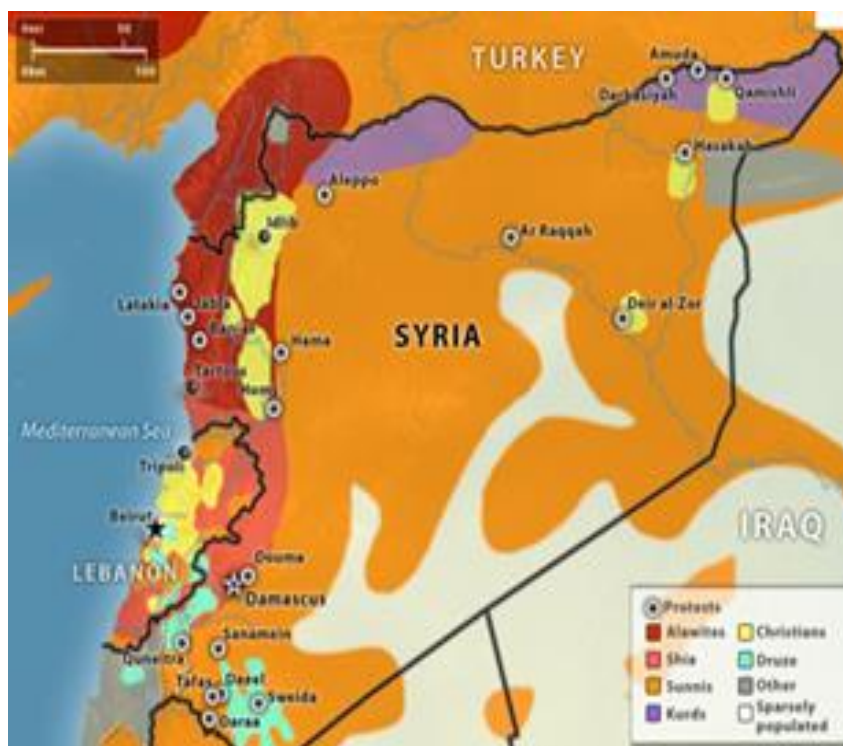
E.F.C. is always on the side and supports the right cause of the Imbrian and Tenedian Associations.

Summer course to support the repatriation of Constantinopolitan youth

E.F.C. continuing its efforts requesting from the Government of Turkey the remedy and reparations towards the Greek-Orthodox Community to alleviate the results of the mass human right violations has placed as priority issue the repatriation of the Constantinopolitans that want to return to their homeland of ancestors. In the framework of this policy emphasis is given to young generation. To this end a proposal was submitted by E.F.C. last May to Prime-minister Office was approved and presently 20 members of the 2nd and 3rd generation expatriated Community of Constantinopolitans are visiting Polis and around regions while they are following intensive courses on Turkish language and Business initiatives supported by the Ministry of Industry of Republic of Turkey. E.F.C. wishes to include to the program expatriated Constantinopolitans outside of Greece as well and we invite them to contact E.F.C.

The Tragedy of the Greek-orthodox population in Syria.

The heirs of the Byzantine Greek-Orthodox Communities living in Syria are more than 1.5 are facing very serious problems reaching to the level of survival. As shown in the attached map Greek-Orthodox (Romioi) are living along the west bank of the Orontes river and part of their community is living within Turkey after the annexation by France of the Antioch province in 1938. The civil war taking place inside Syria, with much responsibility of Western States, has created an enormous refugee crisis in the periphery countries including Greece. E.F.C. is investigating the possibility to support the Romioi refugees of Syria.



Delivery of the Full Architecture Registration by of the Zappeion School.

Among many projects realized by E.F.C. based on the mobilization of young generations of expatriates is the missioning of young experts to provide voluntary work to institutions of the Greek-Orthodox Community such as the Schools, Communities, Churches, Cemeteries etc. In the framework of these efforts the last year an architectural registration project was carried out and accomplished concerning the magnificent building of the Zappeion School near Taxim square. The project was implemented under the coordination of Assoc. Prof. C. Caradimas of the National Technical University of Athens by 6 final year architect students and care of Ms.Niki Tsilingiorglou graduate of Zappeion School.

