

# Pontic Greek genocide

## Pontic Greek Genocide

Genocide of the Pontic Greeks

**Location** Pontus Region - North of Anatolia

**Date** 1914-1923

**Target** Pontic Greeks

**Attack type** Genocide, death marches

**Victims** 350,000 Pontic Greeks

The **Pontic Greek genocide** was the [killing](#) of [Greek people](#) who lived in the [Pontus region](#) of [Ottoman Empire](#) in what is the northeast of modern [Turkey](#). The [genocide](#) took place between 1914 and 1923. The [Young Turks](#) and [Kemalists](#) killed or [deported](#) Pontians through the [Syrian desert](#). The estimates of the number of people that were killed vary. Most [historians](#) say between 350,000 and 353,000 were killed.<sup>[1]</sup>

The genocide ended with the deportation of survivors to [Greece](#) during the [population exchange between Greece and Turkey](#) in 1923. The agreement to allow this exchange of people was signed after the Second Greco-Turkish War.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Pontic genocide is part of the [Greek genocide](#). It is often seen as separate because of the [geographic](#) separation of [Pontus](#) and the [political](#) and [historical](#) features.

Pontus, a region in present day Turkey along the Southern Black Sea coastline.

## Background

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Since 700 BC, Pontic Greeks lived near the southern [coast](#) of the [Black Sea](#) in the Pontus region. They had a strong [culture](#) with many important Greek [philosophers](#) and [writers](#). In the 11th century, the [Turks](#) started moving to central [Anatolia](#) in an area that is now Turkey. They moved into the Pontus region.<sup>[3]</sup> Under the [Byzantine Empire](#) (395 CE-1453), the two groups got along well with each other.<sup>[4]</sup>

However, from the start of the [Ottoman Empire](#) (1299-1922), the Pontic Greeks were not equal to the rest of the population because they were a [Christian](#) minority in a [Muslim](#) empire. Many Christian Greeks had better education and a higher economic position in the empire, which made many Muslims angry. Religion was a sign of loyalty in the Ottoman Empire, but

most Pontics did not want to change their religion to [Islam](#), which made them be seen as a danger to the empire.<sup>[2]</sup>

The [Young Turk Revolution](#) was the main event that changed the lives of Pontic Greeks in Anatolia. The political idea of the [Young Turks](#) was to "Turkify" the Ottoman Empire. The movement wanted to bring together everyone who shared the same language, history, and culture. That also meant that everyone who was not part of the group would have to leave. The people in the Ottoman Empire were scared that Christian groups like the Pontic Greeks would try to separate the Muslim empire, which would mean that they would lose control and power over those areas.<sup>[5]</sup> That started the genocide to remove everyone who was not Turkish from Anatolia.

From 1914 to 1923, about 353,000 Pontic Greeks were killed, and 1.5 million were sent into [exile](#) and so were forced to leave their homes.<sup>[6]</sup> The genocide came in different forms and had two main phases: Young Turk and Kemalist.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Young Turk phase (1914-1918)

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The Pontic Greek men between 20 and 50 were sent to do slave work in working groups and camps of the military (*Amele Tabourou*). They were supposed to free the ways and open roads for Ottoman armies all over the empire. Many Pontic men died because they had to work a lot, and there was not enough water and food for everyone. From 1914 to 1918, 88 Pontic Greek villages were burnt down, women and girls were raped, and houses were robbed. There were 100,000 Pontic Greeks killed, and 255,000 were forced to leave.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

## Interwar period (1918-1919)

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After World War I, the Ottoman Empire and the [British](#) signed the Armistice of Mudros. The agreement allowed Greek survivors of the war to go back to their homes in Anatolia. However, most of their homes were destroyed, and it was not safe for them to stay there. The armistice also allowed the Greek government to invade Turkey to protect the Greeks in Anatolia. That is why Greece came to the city of [Smyrna](#) on May 15, 1919 and started the Second Greco-Turkish War.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Kemalist phase (1919-1923)

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The second phase of the Pontic Greek genocide took place during the [Second Greco-Turkish War](#).<sup>[7]</sup> It was larger in scale than the first war<sup>[8]</sup> and resulted in complete disappearance of Greeks in the area.<sup>[9]</sup>

The Turks feared the permanent occupation and Hellenization of parts of Anatolia, with [Ionia](#) falling under direct Athenian governance and separatism and revolt by Ottoman Greeks resulting in the establishment of Pontic state on the Black Sea. The Turks' concerns increased drastically after Greek landing in Smyrna on 15th of May and became one of main reasons (and justifications) for final stage of the genocide.

In late May 1919, [Mustafa Kemal](#), just after he had arrived in [Samsun](#), informed Constantinople that since the armistice, "forty guerilla" bands "in an organized program" were killing Turks in order to "establish a Pontus state". However, the reality was different. All of those separatist acts had resulted in almost no acts of organized rebellion and very few anti-Turk actions. Most Ottoman Greeks in the Pontus, as elsewhere in Anatolia, had remained unmoved by ethnic-nationalist appeals.

An [American](#) diplomat who toured the major Pontic cities in summer 1919 reported that "many of the most influential and rational Greeks... In [Trebizond](#) view this policy [of separatism] with disfavor." The local Greek Archbishop, Chrysantonos of Athens, was also opposed. The reason for Ottoman Greeks by and large distancing themselves from the pan-Hellenic national message and certainly failing to act on it is unclear. Perhaps, it was the matter of poorly developed political consciousness or the centuries-long tradition of submissiveness to Islamic hegemony. Also, they feared a massacre, as had just befallen Armenians. Demographic realities assuredly contributed since the Turks predominated in Pontus, as in Anatolia in general, and the Pontic Greeks knew it whatever their spokesmen sometimes said.<sup>[10]</sup>

A few days after the war had started, Kemal on May 19 was ordered to go to Samsun, a city in the Pontus region, to create order there. Instead, he brought more Turkish [nationalists](#) together and strengthened his tactics against the Pontic Greeks. Even more Greeks were kidnapped, killed, and tortured. Three hundred villages were destroyed, and people were burnt alive in their homes.<sup>[7]</sup>

Ordered by Kemal, the Pontic Greeks were forced to leave their homes and had to go onto death marches through the Syrian desert. The Greeks walked for weeks or even months, and many lost their lives because there were not enough food, water, or protection.<sup>[6]</sup> They were joined by two violent groups: The *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* (Special Organization), a secret police of the Ministry of War under the Ottoman Empire, and the *çetes* (armed bands), who were organized criminals. Both groups created even worse conditions for the Pontic Greeks.<sup>[4]</sup>

By early 1920, the Kemalist policy of intimidating Greeks into flight had become in full swing. Nationalist army officers near Samsun toured the villages and saying that "the Christians [were] the cause of the [Allied]

occupation of Constantinople and advocated their extermination." At Unye and Fatsa, the Turks posted placards blaming the Christians "for all their troubles". Kemalists arrested and exiled to Ankara Polycacpos, the Greek bishop of the mixed town Ordu. Turks walked about the town and were fully armed except when Allied ships were in port. "They are on their good behavior until the ships leave.... Christians feared to venture out of town." In Samsun, nationalists, stressing "the religious side of the question", inflamed the Turkish population "by preaching a Holy War... The Greeks are accused of violenting Turkish women, and of destroying the Holy Tombs of Sheikhs at Broussa and other captured towns." Nationalist members of Kemal's parliament in [Ankara](#) proposed a law calling for the deportation of all Christians from the [Black Sea](#) area, but no such law was passed because Kemal preferred less publicized methods at that time. Here and there were fatalities. In Domuz-Dere seven Greek charcoal-sellers and two children were murdered. At Gelebek station (Hackiri) in April, some 500 Christians were reportedly murdered by irregulars. [\[11\]](#)

Organized atrocities began in March 1920 in Izmit and in September 1920 in Cappadocia but not yet in Pontus. They eliminated illusions about Nationalists' policy towards the minority of Greeks (and Christians in general) and the future of Pontians. [\[12\]](#)[\[13\]](#)

The full-scale campaign in Pontus began in March 1921. It may have been precipitated by the launch of the large Greek spring offensive, which began on the 23th. The leader of the Turkish campaign was General Nuredin Pasha, a killer so ruthless that in January 1922, he was brought up by his own government on charges for "the mal-execution of his orders." Kemalists claimed that they were "eradicating rebellion" since Greeks were massacring Turks, the Greek Black Sea fleet was periodically bombarding coastal towns, and Pontic Greeks had joined the Greek Army. Western observers uniformly asserted that there was no Pontic "rebellion" either underway or in preparation. Turks and their defenders have also sought cover by pointing to the arrival in the Black Sea in summer 1921 of a Greek naval squadron, which stopped Turkish ships, took passengers prisoner, and later lightly shelled Inebolu. That may indeed have hastened the deportation process, but it was not the cause of the campaign since it had been launched weeks earlier. As Count Schmeccia of the firm Lloyd Triestino in Samsun and previously a representative of the Italian High Commission, said, the Inebolu bombardment, which produced no casualties, was merely a Turkish "excuse for the massacres". [\[14\]](#)

In any event, much other evidence points to Ankara's planning for that summer's destruction of the Greek communities. An American report refers to a July 2 order from Ankara requiring deportation of all "adult male" Christians "throughout the interior of Anatolia," not merely in the Pontus. Another report indicates that two weeks later Ankara ordered the "immediate deportation of all Ottoman Greeks," which included women, children, and the elderly. In early August, the mutessarif of Bafra told a visiting American naval officer that the deportation "of all remaining Greeks, including women and children, had been ordered by Angora." That order was apparently reinforced by another, from Nuredin Pasha, who instructed

a local governor "to proceed with all dispatch to carry out the orders which had been given him or that he would shortly cease to be mutassarif." The American officer concluded that this was "part of an official plan which contemplates extermination of the Greeks". There may not have been an "open and avowed policy of extermination," but there was evidence of a "popular policy" aiming at "Turkey for the Turk," as one missionary put it. [\[15\]](#)

Be that as it may, the large-scale massacres and deportations began already in the spring with the rural Greek communities. In the villages of Black Sea's Duzce (Kurtsuyu) kaza, "many old men and women [were] burnt alive.@ Turks also attacked swaths of villages around Alacam, Bafra, and Carsamba and in the interior as far as Havza and Visirkopru. They took pains to make sure that there were no American witnesses. Missionaries were not allowed out of Samsun, the regional missionary center, but survivors reached the town and told their stories. American naval officers reported that the campaign was "under strict control of the military;" was "directed by high authority - probably Angora [Ankara];" and carried out, at least in part, by soldiers. A purported eyewitness stated that villagers around Bafra were subjected to "incendiarism, shooting, slaying, hanging and outranging" and that the villages were "turned to heaps of ruins." The American officers quoted an American missionary to the effect that about a hundred Greek villages south of Bafra had been destroyed. Villagers were being killed and "the priests... crucified". [\[16\]](#)

By summer, the campaign reached towns. In Bafra, it kicked off with an ancient ploy, according to the Greek Patriarchate, with Greek notables being invited to a dinner party at the house of Efrem Aga, arrested, and murdered. Turks then rounded up and massacred young Greek men. On June 5, Bafra was surrounded by gendarmes, brigands, and Turkish troops, and "a special corps...formed for the purpose of exterminating the Greek element," who demanded that the men give themselves up. Some hid. Turks then searched the houses, pillaging and violating "the prettiest and best bred" women. Men were marched off, escorted by convoys. The first headed for nearby village of Blezli. Seven Bafra priests were axed to death and the rest of men were killed thereafter. One, Nicholas Jordanoglon, gave Turks 300 Turkish lira for the privilege of being shot rather than batchered with an axe or bayonet. Another 500 men, from the second convoy, were reportedly burnt alive in the church in Selamelik. Another 680 were murdered in the church at Kavdje-son.

Five convoys left Bafra. At least two, according to the Greek representative to the League of Nations, were shot up by their escorts near Kavak Gorge, killing at least 900. Survivors were sent naked, "like wandering spirits", to Malaya, Charnout, Mamuret, and Alpistan. Western report claimed 1300 Greeks were murdered in the gorge on August 15 or 16. Ankara's government claimed those dead at Kavak had been killed justifiably in battle, after "Greek bands" allegedly attacked Turks. On August 8 Turks collected Bafran women and girls, "stripped and violated them and by torture compelled many to adopt Mohammedanism." Those who refused conversation were led off "to different unknown places, where many died on the way... and children were slaughtered." Some 6000 Greek women and



children were deported from Bafra around August 31 and further 2500 on September 19. The only Greeks allowed to stay were the sick people who paid bribes.<sup>[17]</sup>

On May 25, 1922, the military base in Constantinople reached out to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Greece. It informed them about what was happening in the Pontus region. By then, there were almost no Pontic Greeks left in that area.<sup>[7]</sup>

The genocide ended with the the [Treaty of Lausanne](#) in 1923. It was signed by Greece and Turkey and led to a trade of people between the two countries. Almost 190,000 Greeks were sent from the Ottoman Empire to Greece and about 350,000 Muslims were brought from Greece to the Ottoman Empire. With that, no more Christian Greeks were left in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Recognition

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On December 16th, 2007, the Pontic Greek Genocide was officially recognized by the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS).<sup>[18]</sup> Not many people know and talk about the genocide because of the [Armenian Genocide](#), which happened around the same time. On February 24, 1994 the Greek Parliament officially recognized the genocide and declared the May 19 as the national day of remembrance.<sup>[19]</sup> Turkey has not recognized the genocide or make a statement about what happened 100 years ago in Anatolia. Many pro-Turkish scholars even say that there is not enough proof that the Young Turks had wanted to start a genocide in the first place.<sup>[2]</sup>

The genocide was recognized by [Sweden](#) in 2010 and by the [Netherlands](#) and [Armenia](#) in 2015.<sup>[20]</sup>

## References

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

1. <sup>↑</sup> Bartrop, Paul (2017). "Considering Genocide Testimony - Three Case Studies from the Armenian, Pontic, and Assyrian genocides". In Shirinian, George (ed.). *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire : Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, 1913-1923* (First ed.). New York. pp. 135-158. [ISBN 978-1-78533-433-7](#). [OCLC 964661324](#).
2. <sup>↑</sup> [2.0](#) [2.1](#) [2.2](#) [2.3](#) [2.4](#) Shirinian, George (2017). "The Background to the Late Ottoman Genocides". In Shirinian, George (ed.). *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Berghahn Books. pp. 19-81. [ISBN 978-1-78533-432-0](#).
3. <sup>↑</sup> Wood, Michael (2005). *In search of myths & heroes : exploring four epic legends of the world*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. [109](#). [ISBN 0520247248](#).

4. ↑ [4.0 4.1](#) Basso, Andrew (June 3, 2016). ["Towards a Theory of Displacement Atrocities: The Cherokee Trail of Tears, The Herero Genocide, and The Pontic Greek Genocide"](#). *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal*. **10**: 5-29. doi:[10.5038/1911-9933.10.1.1297](#).
5. ↑ Team, G. C. T. (2021-05-19). ["10 Facts: Greek Genocide In Pontus"](#). Retrieved 2023-04-29.
6. ↑ [6.0 6.1 6.2](#) Halo, Thea (2000). *Not Even My Name*. New York: Picador. pp. [77-127](#).
7. ↑ [7.0 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4](#) Vardanyan, Gevorg (2017). "The Greek Genocide in The Ottoman Empire - Parallels With the Armenian Genocide". In Shirinian, George (ed.). *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire - Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks 1913-1923*. New York: Berghahn Books. pp. 274-299. ISBN [978-1-78533-432-0](#).
8. ↑ Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). *The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. [381](#). ISBN [978-0-674-91645-6](#). " "The deportation and murder of the Greeks during 1919-1923 was a direct continuation of the effort to expel them that began in late 1913-1914 and continued periodically through World War 1. But in 1919-1923 there was a radical shifting of gears. As a representative of the Greek Patriarchate in Constantinople put it in 1922, what was happening was "on a scale greater than any experienced during the [Great] War. Thousands of Greeks had been, and were being hanged, burned, and massacred, thousands were being deported and exterminated". "
9. ↑ Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). *The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. [22](#). ISBN [978-0-674-91645-6](#). "By 1924 they [Turks] had cleansed Asia Minor of its four million-odd Christians"
10. ↑ Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). *The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. [381](#), [383](#), [384](#). ISBN [978-0-674-91645-6](#). " "In the weeks after Ottoman surrender ended the world was in the east, the Turks were in a state of shock and largely quiescent. But, as we have seen, circumstances changed dramatically by May 1919, when the Greeks landed in Smyrna. The Turks were jolted into frenetic political and military activism. They feared the permanent occupation and Hellenization of parts of Anatolia, with Ionia falling under direct Athenian governance, and separatism and revolt by Ottoman Greeks resulting in the establishment of Pontic state on the Black Sea<...>But, in fact, all this separatist hubbub resulted in "almost no acts of overt rebellion" and little anti-Turk terrorism. In reality, most Ottoman Greeks, in the Pontus as elsewhere in Anatolia, remained unmoved by ethnic-nationalist appeals. An American diplomat who toured the major Pontic cities in summer 1919 reported, "many of the most influential and rational Greeks... In Trebizond view this policy [of separatism] with disfavor.". The local Greek Archbishop, Chrysantonos, was also opposed. Why Ottoman Greeks by and large distanced themselves from the pan-Hellenic national message, and certainly failed to act on it, is

unclear. Perhaps it was matter of poorly developed political consciousness; perhaps it was due to the centuries-long tradition of submissiveness to Islamic hegemony. In the immediate postwar years many Ottoman Greeks also feared massacre - as had just befallen Armenians - or economic harm, should they choose path of rebellion. And demographic realities assuredly contributed: Turks predominate in Pontus, as in Anatolia in general - and Pontic Greeks knew it, whatever their spokesmen sometimes said<...>In late May 1919, Kemal, having just arrived in Samsun, informed Constantinople that since the Armistice "forty guerilla" bands, "in an organized program", were killing Turks in order to "establish a Pontus state".

11. [1](#) Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 399. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "By early 1920 the Kemalist policy of intimidating Greeks into flight was in full swing. Nationalist army officers near Samsun toured the villages saying that "the Christians [were] the cause of the [Allied] occupation of Constantinople and advocated their extermination". At Unye and Fatsa, Turks posted placards, blaming the Christians "for all their troubles". Kemalists arrested and exiled to Ankara Polycacpos, the Greek bishop of mixed town Ordu. Turks walked about the town fully armed, except when Allied ship was in port. "They are on their good behavior until the ships leave... Christians feared to venture out of town". In Samsun Nationalists, stressing "the religious side of the question", inflamed Turkish population "by preaching a Holy War... The Greeks are accused of violenting Turkish women, and of destroying the Holy Tombs of Sheikhs at Broussa and other captured towns". The mutessarrif of Samsun, Nafiz Bey, spoke more or less openly of massacring the local Greeks should the Greek Navy try to land troops, and Nationalist members of Kemal's parliament in Ankara proposed a law calling for the deportation of all Christians from the Black Sea area. But no such law was passed, because Kemal preferred less publicized methods at that time. Here and there, there were fatalities. In Domuz-Dere seven Greek charcoal-sellers and two children were murdered. In spring began full-scale massacres. At Gelebek station (Hackiri), in April, some 500 Christians were reportedly murdered by irregulars"
12. [1](#) Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 400, 403. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "Systematic ethnic cleansing of Greek villages appears to have begun in March 1920 near the Greek-Turkish front lines in Izmit sanjak<...>As Nationalist strength grew, so did "Nationalist persecutions and excesses"<...>In response to the Greek army's summer 1920 advance eastward, the Nationalists engaged in "serious...excesses against the Christians in the districts bordering on the newly occupied territory"<...>By the time Kemal's forces reached Konya and Cappadocia in September, no one doubted what would come next. Greek community leaders appealed to the British. "Our populations", they wrote, "find themselves totally at the mercy of...Kemal. It is impossible to describe the terror, tortures, ordeals and exactions perpetrated in that 'hunt for Christians'".



13. [1](#) Kapsīs, Giánnīs P. (1992). [\*1922, ī maúri vīvlos: oi martyrikés katathéseis tōn thymátōn, pou den dīmosieúthikan poté istorikó ntokouménto\*](#). Istoría. Athína: Ekd. Néa sýnora. pp. 169-170. ISBN 978-960-236-302-7.
14. [1](#) Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [\*The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924\*](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 406, 407. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "The campaign began in March. It may have been precipitated by the launch of the large Greek spring offensive, which began on the 23th. The leader of the Turkish campaign was General Nurredin Pasha, a killer so ruthless that in January 1922 he was brought up by his own government on charges for "the mal-execution of his orders" - or so American diplomats were informed. The Turks claimed that they were "eradicating rebellion", Greeks were massacring Turks, the Greek Black Sea fleet was periodically bombarding coastal towns, and Pontic Greeks had joined the Greek army. Western observers uniformly asserted that there was no Pontic "rebellion", either underway or in preparation<...>Turks and their defenders have also sought cover by pointing to the arrival in the Black Sea in summer 1921 of a Greek naval squadron, which stopped Turkish ships, took passengers prisoner, and later lightly shelled Inebolu. This may indeed have hastened the deportation process, but it wasn't the cause of the campaign, which was launched weeks before. As Count Schmeccia of the firm Lloyd Triestino in Samsun, and previously a representative of the Italian High Commission, said, the Inebolu bombardment, which produced no casualties, was merely a Turkish "excuse for the massacres"."
15. [1](#) Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [\*The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924\*](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 407. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "In any event, much other evidence points to Ankara's planning for that summer's destruction of the Greek communities. An American report refers to a July 2 order from Ankara requiring deportation of all "adult male" Christians "throughout the interior of Anatolia" , not merely in the Pontus. Another report indicates that two weeks later Ankara ordered the "immediate deportation of all Ottoman Greeks", meaning women, children, and the elderly as well. At the beginning of August, the mutessarif of Bafra told a visiting American naval officer that the deportation "of all remaining Greeks, including women and children, had been ordered by Angora". That order was apparently reinforced by another, from Nurredin Pasha, who instructed a local governor "to proceed with all dispatch to carry out the orders which had been given him or that he would shortly cease to be mutassarif". The American officer concluded that this was "part of an official plan which contemplates extermination of the Greeks". There may not have been an "open and avowed policy of extermination", but there was evidence of a "popular policy" aiming at "Turkey for the Turks", as one missionary put it"
16. [1](#) Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [\*The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924\*](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 407-408. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "Be that as it may, the largescale massacres and deportations began already in the spring, with the rural Greek communities. In the villages

of the Black Sea's Duzce (Kurtsuyu) kaza, "many old men and women [were] burnt alive". The Turks also attacked swaths of villages around Alacam, Bafra, and Carsamba and in the interior as far as Havza and Visirkopru. The Turks took pains to make sure that there were no American witnesses. Missionaries were not allowed out of Samsun, the regional missionary center. But survivors reached the town and told their stories. American naval officers reported that the campaign was "under strict control of the military", "directed by high authority - probably Angora [Ankara]", and carried out, at least in part, by soldiers. A purported eyewitness stated that villagers around Bafra were subjected to "incendiarism, shooting, slaying, hanging and outranging" and that the villages were "turned to heaps of ruins". The American officers quoted an American missionary to the effect that about a hundred Greek villages south of Bafra had been destroyed. Villagers were being killed and "the priests...crucified".

17. <sup>1</sup> Morris, Benny; Ze'evi, Dror (2019). [\*The thirty-year genocide: Turkey's destruction of its Christian minorities, 1894-1924\*](#). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. pp. 408. ISBN 978-0-674-91645-6. "By summer, the campaign reached the towns. In Bafra, it kicked off with an ancient ploy, according to the Greek Patriarchate. Greek notables were invited to a dinner party at the house of one Efrem Aga, arrested, and murdered. The Turks then rounded up and massacred young Greek men. On June 5 Bafra was surrounded by gendarmes, brigands, and Turkish troops - "a special corps...formed for the purpose of exterminating the Greek element" - who demanded that the men give themselves up. Some hid. The Turks then searched the houses, pillaging and violating "the prettiest and best bred" women. The men were marched off in a succession of convoys. The first headed for the nearby village of Blezli. Seven Bafra priests were axed to death and the rest of the men were killed thereafter. One, Nicholas Jordanoglon, gave Turks 300 Turkish lira for the privilege of being shot rather than batchered with an axe or bayonet. Another 500 men, from a second convoy, were reportedly burnt alive in the church in Selamelik. And another 680 were murdered in a church at Kavdje-son. Five convoys left Bafra that summer. At least two, according to the Greek representative to the League of Nations, were shot up by their escorts near Kavak Gorge, outside Samsun, killing at least 900. The survivors were sent naked, "like wandering spirits", to Malaya, Charnout, Mamuret, and Alpistan. A western report claimed 1300 Greeks were murdered in the gorge on August 15 or 16. The government claimed those dead at Kavak had been killed justifiably in battle, after Greek bands allegedly attacked Turks. On August 8 the Turks collected Bafran women and girls, "stripped and violated them and by torture compelled many to adopt Mohammedanism". Those who refused conversation were led off "to different unknown places, where many died on the way...and children were slaughtered". The only Greeks allowed to stay were the sick people who paid bribes". Some 6000 Greek women and children were deported from Bafra around August 31 and further 2500 on September 19."
18. <sup>1</sup> [\*"IAGS Resolution on Assyrian and Greek Genocide, 2007"\*](#) (PDF). *International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS)*. 2007.

19. <sup>↑</sup> Sjöberg, Erik (2017). *The Making of the Greek Genocide - Contested Memories of the Ottoman Greek Catastrophe*. Berghahn Books. p. 73. [ISBN 978-1-78533-325-5](#).
20. <sup>↑</sup> Markis (April 11, 2015). ["Dutch Parliament Recognizes Greek, Assyrian and Armenian Genocide"](#).

## Other websites

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- [Greek Genocide Resource Center](#)

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