



## Summary :

The attacks against the Constantinopolitan Greeks in September 1955 took place in the context formed by the tension in the Greek-Turkish relations in the middle of '50s. The nationalistic outburst in Turkey because of the Cypriot question had already formed an explosive situation in Constantinople, which deteriorated after the news about the attack on the consulate of Turkey in Thessaloniki. Nowadays, almost all the researchers agree that the following extensive assaults begun on government's initiative and they were organized in collaboration with the secret police.

## Date

September 1955

## Geographical Location

Constantinople / Istanbul

## 1. Introduction

After the Second World War, the Greek-Turkish relations improved substantially. The two parts had developed political and military cooperation in the framework marked by the Cold War. Being allies against the "danger from the north", the two countries embraced the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and the Marshall plan, and they integrated in the European Council in 1947. The Greek-Turkish rapprochement had a positive influence on the treatment of the [Greek Orthodox minority](#).<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, the new socio-political climate in Turkey after the end of the war, but also after the Democratic Party had come to power, secured favourable conditions for the minority. The liberal climate led the [minority](#)<sup>2</sup> to a new flourish with tangible results in the education, the community and cultural organisation of the Greeks.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. The Cyprus Question and the beginning of a history of being held hostage

However, in the middle of '50, there was a change in these favourable conditions, which had allowed a relative recovery for the minority. The attempt of Greece to bring the Cyprus question forward at the UNO led Turkey to involve in this issue, though it had showed little interest for Cyprus until then. The encouragement of Britain constituted an important factor for this sudden shift in the Turkish politics, since Britain estimated that a possible involvement of Turkey in the Cyprus question would favour Britain's interests. Britain tried to raise a tripartite question out of the Greek-British controversy, thus inducing the involvement of Turkey.<sup>4</sup>

When the Cypriot crisis broke out, Ankara brought the minority question to the fore. In essence, Turkey used the community and the Ecumenical [Patriarchate](#) as a bargaining chip or, more specifically, as a means of pressure towards Greece in an effort to take advantage of the public sentiments in Greece concerning the issues of the Greek Orthodox community of [Constantinople](#) (Istanbul). According to Ankara's estimations, the pressure towards the minority and the Patriarchate would render Greece susceptible and yielding. Hence, there was inaugurated a long period during which the minority would remain a hostage of the dispute over Cyprus.

Simultaneously, from 1954 onwards, there was a recession in the economic boom of Turkey in 1950-1953. The rate of growth fell from 13% to 4% and the-balance-of-trade deficit in 1955 was eight times higher than that of 1950. Thus, despite the triumph of the Democratic Party in the elections of 1954, it henceforth was losing his adherents because of the deteriorating standard of living. As a result, the government adopted an all the more authoritative policy, which produced reactions outside, but also within the Democratic Party<sup>5</sup>. The government of Menderes, being trapped in the economic and political crisis, tried to direct the attention of the Turkish public opinion to the "national issues", that is the Cyprus dispute.

On 30<sup>th</sup> June 1955, the British government under prime minister Anthony Eden invited Greece and Turkey to participate in a conference for the "security issues in the Eastern Mediterranean". The Turkish government must persuade the international public opinion that its belated participation in the Cypriot question did not denote indifference. It had to show that the Turkish public opinion



kept up with the developments and worried about the Turkish-Cypriots. The government of Menderes was making every effort to introduce the Cyprus question as a “national issue”.

### 3. The nationalistic campaign

When the Cyprus dispute caught the public attention, especially from 1955 onwards, a nationalistic campaign was launched, which was targeted at the Patriarchate and the Greek-Orthodox minority.<sup>6</sup> The Turkish Press played a central role in creating a climate in which the minority was identified with the “internal enemy”.<sup>7</sup> Through the Press, the Patriarchate was demanded to set a limit to the political activities of Makarios and punish the prelates who had been involved in the Cyprus dispute, while there were denunciations of the Patriarchate that allegedly financed EOKA, as well as demands for its removal from Turkey. The association ‘Cyprus is Turkish’, the Press and the students’ associations demanded that the Patriarchate, the minority press and generally the minority reaffirm that they sided with Turkey as far as the Cyprus dispute was concerned. During that period, articles were appearing which compared the conditions of the respective minorities in Western Thrace and Istanbul concluding that, although the Muslims in Western Thrace were systematically oppressed, the Orthodox of Istanbul thrived. In the summer of 1955, as the tripartite conference was getting closer, the Turkish press and the students’ and other political associations escalated the attack against the minority. The rumours that the Greek-Cypriots were planning to massacre the Turkish-Cypriots on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1955 played a decisive role in the propaganda.<sup>8</sup>

From the end of August onwards, nationalistic and anti-minority incidents were taking place every day. Greek-Orthodox who spoke Greek in public transports were lambasted and personal contentions were invested with national overtones ending up to the police stations on charge of “offence against Turkishness” on behalf of the Greek-Orthodox.<sup>9</sup> On 29<sup>th</sup> August the tripartite conference began in London and the ambient anxiety was getting more and more intense.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, despite the presentation of the events ex post facto as “unforeseeable” on behalf of the authorities, in the beginning of September there had already been an explosive situation.<sup>11</sup>

The association ‘Cyprus is Turkish’ (Kıbrıs Türktür Cemiyeti-KTC) had played a decisive role in preparing and executing the ‘Events of September’. The KTC was established in August 1954 with the encouragement of the students’ associations for the purpose of defending the Turkish community of Cyprus and mobilising the Turkish people for the Cyprus question.<sup>12</sup> The association had enjoyed the government’s support since its establishment. Hikmet Bil, the association’s president and reporter in the newspaper *Hürriyet*,<sup>13</sup> was closely linked to Menderes’ circle. In a great extent, the association was financed by the government.<sup>14</sup> Many local organisations of KTC had been established and staffed by the members of the Democratic Party (DP). Due to the DP’s organisation net, the KTC spread quickly in Istanbul, but also all over the country. The association cooperated closely with students’ associations and trade unions. These trade unions were under the strict control and guidance of the state, while their leaderships had a nationalistic orientation.<sup>15</sup>

### 4. The Events

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 1955, the newspaper *İstanbul Ekspres*<sup>16</sup> reported on the attacks against Atatürk’s birth house in Thessaloniki during the evening.<sup>17</sup> Late in the evening, a demonstration was held from Taksim Square, which culminated in looting the shops of the non-Muslims in Istiklal Avenue of Beyoğlu ([Pera](#)). After a while, masses of demonstrators attacked the shops, houses, churches, schools and cemeteries in almost all the Constantinopolitan districts with Greek communities.<sup>18</sup> It is estimated that approximately 100,000 people participated in the riots.

The assaults broke out almost simultaneously and “uniformly”, which shows that there had been a fixed plan. There are indications that the execution of the plan was directed by individual leaders who were provided with “target lists”. Also, there are many testimonies proving that demonstrators had been transferred from Istanbul districts, but also from the countryside. Many evidences attest that there were representatives of the Democratic Party organisations among the instigators. The local organisations of Democratic Party, but also the trade unions played a decisive role in executing the assaults and in transferring and supplying the rioters with crowbars, cudgels, petrol etc. Many researchers attribute the small number of injured and dead –compared with the magnitude of the events- to the fact that the perpetrators had been instructed to avoid inflicting bodily harm.<sup>19</sup> The security forces, but also the majority of the



firemen did not respond to the victims' pleas for protection. There are many testimonies that the security forces gave assistance to the rioters and they participated in the riots.<sup>20</sup>

In the aftermath of the riots, Constantinople, [Smyrna](#) and [Ankara](#) got under martial law. Three courts martial were established in Istanbul.<sup>21</sup> In the trials, the participation of members of the DK, the government and the security police was ignored. Despite accusations against KTC, finally its members were cleared.<sup>22</sup>

The riots had definite social features. Many observers have underlined that the perpetrators came from the lower social strata, "a mob of the lowest social classes".<sup>23</sup> "shady, dirty, dowdy, barefooted guys predominated, many faces alien to the normal population of Pera, the modern district of Istanbul. Tramps, [Laz](#), peasants, [Kurds](#) with turbans etc, they all had been added to the ordinary crowd of demonstrators, students, children, petit bourgeois and workers."<sup>24</sup> The governmental circles took advantage of the "social" features of the riots in order to dispel any suspicion that they had any responsibility for all that. However, the social dimension of the riots, especially in areas such as Pera, constituted a factual account of the events, at least in a degree.<sup>25</sup>

Of course, things are not so simple. Despite the stereotype cultivated systematically by the Turkish nationalism and the Greek literature on the "lost fatherlands", the Greeks were not exclusively bourgeois of Beyoğlu.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, the events of September do not constitute simply a "class struggle" between the "infidel" Pera and the Muslim/Turkish countryside.<sup>27</sup> Many journalists of the time ignored in a great extent the events that occurred in the districts where the poorest Greek-Orthodox lived.<sup>28</sup>

The government of Menderes ascribed the events to communist conspiracy. On 7<sup>th</sup> September the police arrested 48 persons as communists.<sup>29</sup> However, the theory of communist conspiracy – a common place during the Cold War period- could hardly be convincing, even to the foreign observers. The events had clearly nationalistic character and the involvement of the anticommunist national-minded circles was obvious.<sup>30</sup> Thus, in the end of December, the "communists" were released without any explanation.<sup>31</sup>

## 5. The results

The government used the riots as a pretext for intensifying the restrictions on the opposition and the Press. In that way, the evidences that would implicate the government were concealed, while it imposed martial law and suppressed freedom of speech in an effort to disclaim its own responsibility for the riots and shift blame onto others.

After the coup d'état on 27<sup>th</sup> Mai 1960, the riots came to be the subject of a particular trial, part of the trials that the government of Mederes was brought to in the Plati island (Yassıada). At last, Menderes and the Foreign Minister Zorlu were convicted of the events of September.<sup>32</sup>

Regarding the Orthodox- Greeks' demography, the correlation between the events of September and the demographic shrinkage of the community was not as important as it have been said to be. Demographic evidence shows that after the events of September, the Greeks did not abandon Constantinople in massive terms,<sup>33</sup> which means that there was not yet a mass exodus such as that happened after the expulsions of 1964. However, what we can observe is the internal transfer of population from the distanced districts<sup>34</sup> towards the centre for security reasons, which resulted in the desolation of many communities. The position of the Patriarchate, the Greek Press and the consulate played an essential role in restraining the migration, as they tried to prevent the Greek-Orthodox from emigrating.<sup>35</sup>

For the majority of the Greek-Orthodox, these events were the definite proof that they would not be accepted as equal Turkish citizens and they would always be exposed to discriminations no matter which government would be.

## 6. Interpretations



There is a general consensus that the events broke out on government's initiative and they were organised in collaboration with the secret police, while the party organization of DP, the trade unions, the students' associations and the KTC played an active role.

Frequently, in the effort to interpret the events essentialist approaches predominate ascribing a decisive role to factors, such as the "soul" or the "idiosyncrasy" of the Turkish people. The essentialist and orientalist approaches adopted by contemporary testimonies, but also by a part of the modern historiography, correlate the events of September with fanaticism, which is assumed to appertain to Islam.<sup>36</sup> On the pretext of the events of September much of the older stereotypes about Turkey have reappeared. Immediately after the events, the diplomatic circles of the West expressed their fear that despite its modernization and participation in the Western Alliance, in fact there was no difference between Turkey and the other countries classified in the "East". As a result they started to raise doubts about whether Turkey had really been really secularised and modernized or not. The assaults turned against the non-Muslim minorities, but also against the foreigners, mostly against the international trade; consequently, they were construed as "anti-western" manifestations. Thus, according to many observers, the events of September reflected the barbarism and fanaticism, which was considered as features appertaining to Islam and the "Orient". The comments of western observers are clear: The events of September illustrated all these features appertaining to the "East" and not to the "West".<sup>37</sup>

Recently, there has been an effort to dissociate the events of September from the Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus question underlining the internal factors that led to the assaults. According to Güven, the most important representative of this position, there is a clear continuity in the politics of Turkification from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the events of September, but also afterwards: "the attempts of the secondary bibliography to interpret the organization of the 'incidents of September' mainly on the basis of the Cyprus question must be evaluated as insufficient, since the political concurrence of the Cyprus question was a chance to continue the persecution against the non-Muslim minorities, which had been initiated in the '20s."<sup>38</sup> Although definitively it does not present the deficiencies of the essentialist interpretation and it helps us to contextualize these violent incidents within the "tradition" of the Turkish nationalism<sup>39</sup>, this position involves the danger of ignoring the historicity of the events. An approach of the Young Turks and the DP in terms of linear continuity and the reductionism to a political strategy or an agenda set at least 50 years ago in fact obscure the particular historical circumstances, which encompass multiple contrasts.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, we have to underline that there was a correlation between the Cyprus question, the intensification in the Greek-Turkish relations and the anti-minority measures in Turkey during the period 1954-1974. For example, there was a close connection between the Cyprus question and the expulsions in 1964. This led the Turkish government to use the Greek minority as negotiating asset.<sup>41</sup> The anti-minority attitudes were manifested in the frame of the "tradition" of the Turkish nationalism and they regenerated old strategies, but after 1954 they were used mainly as a means of extortion against Greece in the controversy over the Cyprus question.

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1. The beginning of the Cold War had direct effects on the minority. Even the election of the active Patriarch Athinagoras was realised with the direct involvement of US, which tried to secure a key role for the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the Patriarchate of Moscow. Athinagoras himself in an interview on the New York *Herald Tribune* in 1965 would admit that his election was the religious facet of the Truman Doctrine. See: Macar, E., *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi* (Istanbul 2003), pp. 183-192.

2. These developments were determined by the abolition of the system of tek mütevellî (single trustee) in 1949, which infringed the self-administration of communities. The tek mütevellî system was imposed in 1938. According to it, special trustees, who were appointed by the General Department of Religious Foundations (Evkaf Genel Müdürlüğü), undertook the administration of the Religious Foundations of the minority.

3. The statistic evidence that referred to the minority education constitute a tangible example of that flourish. Although only 3,172 students were going to minority schools in 1945-1946, they doubled in 1954-1955 reaching the number of 6,495 students. For this flourish see: Σταματόπουλος, Κ., *Η τελευταία αναλαμπή. Η κωνσταντινουπολίτικη ρωμηροσύνη στα χρόνια 1948-1955* (Athens 1966).

4. Βρυώνης, Σ., *Ο μηχανισμός της Καταστροφής. Το τουρκικό πογκρόμ της 6<sup>ης</sup>-7<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1955* (Athens 2007), pp. 85-91. For the Turkish position



on the Cypriot question during that period, see: Armaoğlu, F. H., *Kıbrıs Meselesi 1954-1959 Türk Hükümeti ve Kamuoyunun Davranışları* (Ankara 1963). Also: Torun, Ş., *Türkiye İngiltere ve Yunanistan Arasında Kıbrıs'ın Politik Durumu* (Istanbul 1956).

5. Zürcher, E. J., *Σύγχρονη ιστορία της Τουρκίας* (Athens 2004), pp. 301-304. Also see: Bozarslan, H., *Ιστορία της σύγχρονης Τουρκίας* (Athens 2004), pp. 73-76.

6. For this campaign, see: Belisoy, F., "Eylül Olayları Öncesinde Basında Rumlar", *Toplumsal Tarih* 81 (2000), pp. 28-38.

7. Especially after the war, the Turkish Press was technologically modernized and advanced, which resulted in taking a massive character; it was the first time that the sales of popular newspapers touched 70-80.000. See: Gevgilili, A., "Türkiye Basını", *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul 1983), pp. 220-222.

8. On 20<sup>th</sup> August, in a reporter's question about what must be done in case of attack against the Turkish-Cypriots, Hikmet Bil, member of the association "Cyprus is Turkish" answered: "Our answer must be brief. This answer will be: There are many Greek-Orthodox in Istanbul". See: Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), pp. 221-222.

9. Benlisoy, F., "6-7 Eylül Olayları Öncesinde Basında Rumlar" *Toplumsal Tarih* 81 (2000), pp. 34-37.

10. As it is known, the conference closed on 7<sup>th</sup> September without any essential result. However, Turkey got the better of this process, since it achieved to be recognized in the international level as one of the interested parties in the Cypriot question. Armaoğlu, F. H., *Kıbrıs Meselesi 1954-1959 Türk Hükümeti ve Kamuoyunun Davranışları* (Ankara 1963), pp. 141-155. Also see: Firat, M. M., "Türkiye'nin Kıbrıs Politikaları (1945-1960)", *Toplumsal Tarih* 81 (2000), pp. 22-27.

11. In this context, Χρηστίδης imputes "lack of foresight" to the heads of the community, because there were many indications showing that the situation was getting beyond control: "It is difficult to accept that the persons who were responsible to keep guard over the fortunes of Hellenism in Istanbul showed the requisite sensibility and prompt acuteness. The signs of plotting the riots had been manifested in a way that imposed being in alert as well as making acute complaints not only to the Turkish government, but also to all the allied governments. However, that did not happen. In their effort to show sangfroid, the competent ones showed just improvidence and they let the fatal befall". Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), p. 244. Also, Akgönül underlines the Patriarchate's passivity. See: Akgönül, S., *Türkiye Rumları Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (Istanbul 2007), pp. 193-194.

12. Notable journalists participated in the association's national board, such as Hikmet Bil, Ahmet Emin Gialman and Ohran Birgit.

13. During the '50s, the newspaper *Hürriyet*, which was first published in 1948 by Sedat Simavi, played central role in exalting the Cyprus question to a "national question" for the Turkish public opinion. Its nationalist-populist articles would contribute to the creation of an anti-Greek climate which would prevail just before the "Events of September".

14. Βουώνης, Σ., *Ο μηχανισμός της Καταστροφής. Το τουρκικό πογκρόμ της 6<sup>ης</sup>-7<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1955* (Athens 2007), pp. 92-95, 105-108; Dosdoğru, H., *Eylül Olayları* (Istanbul 1993), pp. 21-22.

15. Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 110-118.

16. The publisher of the newspaper Mithat Perin was closely connected with the Democratic Party and he collaborated with the secret police. Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 140-141.

17. On the night of 5 September, a bomb exploded in the garden of the Turkish consulate in Thessaloniki, which was considered to be the house where Mustafa Kemal was born. The bomb attack, which was considered as the motive for the riots, seemed to have been planned by the Turkish security police. Oktay Engin, member of the Muslim minority of Thrace and student in the faculty of Law in Thessaloniki was the leading protagonist of the attack. Although many evidences proved Engin's role and the involvement of Turkish secret agency and consular authorities, in June 1956, the trial was adjourned under the pressure of the Turkish government. In September 1956, Engin escaped to Turkey with the aid of the consular authorities. After having held various posts in the Turkish secret police, he became prefect in Nevşehir. See: Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 137-140.



18. Also, attacks were launched in Smyrna, the Greek consulate and the Greek stand in the international exhibition, which was taking place those days, and in the residences of six Greek army officers of NATO. See: Kılıçdere, A., "İzmir'de 6/7 Eylül Olayları", *Toplumsal Tarih* 8 (1998), pp. 34-41. Also see: Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 49-53.
19. The number of dead is disputable. According to Helsinki Watch report, they were 15. See: Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 72-76. However, according to many researchers, they were not more than 2. See: Akgönül, S., *Türkiye Rumları Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (Istanbul 2007), p. 209; Alexandris, A., *The Greek Minority in Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974* (Athens 1983), p. 257; Macar, E., *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi* (Istanbul 2003), p. 197.
20. For a series of testimonies by the victims of the riots, see: Αγγελετόπουλος, Γ., «Ο ελληνικός τύπος και τα γεγονότα της 6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955» in: Δρίνης, Γ., *Σεπτεμβριανά 1955. Η «νύχτα των κρυστάλλων» του ελληνισμού της Πόλης* (Athens 1989), especially pp. 55-189. In 2005 the archive of the vice-admiral Fahri Çoker was published. Immediately after the events, he became judge in the court martial in Pera. The archive contains a series of documents and many photos illustrating the course of the events. See: Karaca, Z. (ed.), *6-7 Eylül Olayları Fotoğraflar-Belgeler Fahri Çoker Arşivi* (Constantinople 2005).
21. Courts martial took place in Smyrna and Ankara too. The chair was held by colonels, while the judges and the prosecuting attorneys came from the lower military grades. See: Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 97-104.
22. For the emergency measures taken after the riots, see: Topuz, H., "6/7 Eylül Olayları ve Aknoz Paşa'nın Yasakları", *Toplumsal Tarih* 81 (2000), pp. 39-41.
23. Comment made by the USA consul in the newspaper *İstanbul Ekspres*. Quoted in: Βρυώνης, Σ., *Ο μηχανισμός της Καταστροφής. Το τουρκικό πογκρόμ της 6<sup>ης</sup>-7<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1955* (Athens 2007), pp. 159-160.
24. Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), pp. 83-84. "A great part of them comprises 'porters', whose lifelong craft is to carry on their back a burden so heavy as half of a freight car. Also, dockers, boatmen, peasants have been transferred to the centre of the city". *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15.9.1955. Quoted in: Χρηστίδης, Χ., op. cit., p. 90.
25. Workers from various sectors participated massively in the riots. From the 609 out of 977 prisoners in Selimiye camp were workers (approximately 2/3 of the prisoners). If we take into consideration the number of workers organized in trade unions, it is not by chance that 34 trade unions were proscribed after the riots. Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), p. 123.
26. This specific stereotype about the Greek-Orthodox minority is reproduced even in very important recent scientific researches. Thus, in his effort to explain why the Greeks continued to support the Democratic Party, Akgönül underlines that the liberal economic policy of the Democratic Party met with the approval of Greeks, the "overwhelming majority" of whom, according to the author, was occupied in "commerce". Akgönül, S., *Türkiye Rumları Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (Istanbul 2007), p. 212.
27. For a current approach of the imagery of conflict between the 'cosmopolitanism' of minorities and the 'countryside' nationalism in completely different circumstances and also for a different interpretation of it, see: Ανδριανοπούλου, Κ., - Μπενλίσοϊ, Φ., «Οι μεταμορφώσεις μιας πόλης ή τα ευπώλητα της Πόλης», *Ενθέματα* 397 (2006), pp. 28-29.
28. In the areas relatively distant from Istanbul centre, the attacks took the form of invasions of dwellings, injuries, but also rapes. Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), pp. 117-120. According to Greek sources, during the incidents, 200 women were raped. See: Alexandris, A., *The Greek Minority in Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974* (Athens 1983), pp.257-258.
29. Aziz Nesin, Kemal Tahir, Ratip Tahir, Hulusi Dosdoğru, Müeyyet Boratav, Nihat Sargin, Asim Bezirci, Hasan İzzettin Dinamo and İlhan Berktaş got arrested among others. For this issue, see: Nesin, A., *Salkım Salkım Asılacak Adamlar* (Istanbul 1996), and Dosdoğru, H., *Eylül Olayları* (Istanbul 1993), pp. 21-22
30. In his effort to reject the communist conspiracy scenario, Christridis put up the cold-war 'argument' that, if indeed the events had been the result of communist initiative, they would have been much bloodier! "Supposing that there had been a communist organization in Turkey capable not only to



plan, but also to organize and execute an operation on such a large scale, self-evidently it would not have spared at all the Greek-Orthodox' lives. On the contrary! If a communist organisation had aimed at slandering the Turkish state's prestige, it would have been in its own interest to cause bloodshed. That did not happen. The organizers of the riots took care of not giving anyone the chance to accuse the Turkish government of conniving in the slaughter of its citizens. Their attention to avoid any bloodshed betokens its concern to display 'bourgeois' loyalism, which is something completely alien to potential communist pursuits". Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), pp. 164.

31. It seems that a part of the Greek Press in Constantinople for some time adopted the communist conspiracy theory. The commitment of the minority Press to the Greek-Turkish friendship, which had been accomplished within the cold-war framework, played a determining role. Thus, it was quite reasonable that the minority Press highlighted the "danger from the north" and it "invested" in the "communist threat", which could be the only way to bring the two countries together again. For this issue, see: Andrianopoulou, K., "İstanbul Rum Basınıının Tepkisi ve 6-7 Eylül Olayları", *Tarih ve Toplum* 237 (2003), pp. 24-32.

32. The trials in Plati pursued the legitimization of the coup d'etat of 1960. The trial for the September events was exclusively focused on the responsibility of high rank government officials, while the involvement of the secret police, trade unions, KTC, student associations etc. was ignored. See: Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 149-152.

33. Akgönül, S., *Türkiye Rumları Ulus-Devlet Çağından Küreselleşme Çağına Bir Azınlığın Yok Oluş Süreci* (Istanbul 2007), pp. 221-223.

34. Such as Balat, Cimbali, Edirnekapi, Ayvansaray, Vlanga, Samatya, Hasköy, Üsküdar, Aynalıçeşme.

35. Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), pp. 272-274. Also see: Andrianopoulou, K., "İstanbul Rum Basınıının Tepkisi ve 6-7 Eylül Olayları", *Tarih ve Toplum* 237 (2003), pp. 24-32; Türker, O., "6-7 Eylül Olaylarının İstanbul Rum Basınıındaki Yankıları", *Tarih ve Toplum* 177 (1998), pp. 13-15. According to Güven, 5000 Greek-Orthodox abandoned the city a year after the riots. They were mainly individuals from the upper social strata, who possessed Greek passports. See: Güven, op. cit., p. 278. According to official evidences of the Turkish state, in 1955, 80,000 Greek-speaking people lived in Turkey. In 1960, this number had been reduced to 63,000. See: Alexandris, A., *The Greek Minority in Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974* (Athens 1983), p. 291.

36. See Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), p. 249; Βρυώνης, Σ., *Ο μηχανισμός της Καταστροφής. Το τουρκικό πογκρόμ της 6<sup>ης</sup>-7<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1955* (Athens 2007), pp. 471-472; Σαρής, Ν., «Η νύχτα του Αγίου Βαρθολομαίου», in: *Πενήντα Χρόνια από τα Σεπτεμβριανά*, ΕΛΙΑ (Athens 2005), p. 148.

37. See: Moroni, I., "Soğuk Savaş ve sömürgecilik karşıtı hareket ışığında 6-7 Eylül olayları", *Tarih Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 4 (2006), pp. 237-251. The point of agreement among the western Press, especially the Greek one, is that they differentiate Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish state, from the attitude of his successors. Indeed, Mustafa Kemal is reputed to be the man who tried to communicate the 'western civilization' to the Turks. The conclusion drawn from the riots is that he had rather failed. So, we read in the *Ακρόπολις* of September 10<sup>th</sup> 1955: "[Mustafa Kemal] dreamt of transforming his barbarian compatriots into civilised men. [...] And he proclaimed through the whole world that the Turks were not the barbarian and brutish subjects of Sultans any more; that from now on they can embrace the family of the civilised humanity. Alas! How much mistaken had we all been, but most of all, the great reformer! Because it was evident that under the European skin the Asiatic heart was beating and the modern Turks were genuine descendants of the Asiatic hordes that centuries ago, had surged from the wild depth of Asia". On 13<sup>th</sup> September, The newspaper *Καθημερινή* published a cartoon that depicted Atatürk making an insulting gesture with the hand spread open towards the rioters, shouting: "Damn you fools! I have been leaning over backward for so long to take the fez off your head [...]". See: Αγγελετόπουλος, Γ., «Ο ελληνικός τύπος και τα γεγονότα της 6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955», in: Δρίνης, Γ., *Σεπτεμβριανά 1955. Η «νύχτα των κρυστάλλων» του ελληνισμού της Πόλης* (Athens 1989), pp. 24-25. "It can be said that the liberation of Turks from the extremely strict cultural discipline enforced by Kemalism was in accordance with the democratic principals. Undoubtedly, despite Atatürk's aphorisms and his hard efforts, the great majority of the Turkish people remained religious in the most fanatic, reactionary and bigoted way. Mr Menderes relaxed visibly the restrictions of Atatürk's anti-religious policy [...]. However paradoxical it may seem to the foreigners, the liberal democratization leads Turkey to backwardness and reaction". Χρηστίδης, Χ., *Τα Σεπτεμβριανά* (Athens 2000), p. 248.

38. Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), p. 267. Βρυώνης, Σ., *Ο μηχανισμός της Καταστροφής. Το τουρκικό πογκρόμ της 6<sup>ης</sup>-7<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1955* (Athens 2007), p. 634.

39. The anti-cosmopolitanism and the identification of the non-Muslim minorities with the 'fifth column' and with a menace that would adulterate the national character constitute a classic 'value' of the Turkish nationalism. From the '50s onwards, a kind of populist-conservative nationalism, which, in the context of the Cold War, identifies the minorities with the left, the intellectuals and the elite and it considers them to be enemies of the national soul seemed to strengthen and differentiate itself from official nationalism. See: Bora, T., "Ekalliyet Yılanları... Türk Milliyetçiliği ve Azınlıklar", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce* 4 (Istanbul 2002), pp. 911-918.



40. That is the interpretation proposed by some researchers, who perceive the events of September as the continuation in the policy of creating a Turkish/Muslim bourgeoisie. "As in the case of capital tax, it was necessary to enfeeble further the role of Armenians, Greeks and Jews in the economic life of Turkey and accelerate the transfer of the non-Muslim property to the hands of the Muslim population". See Güven, D., *Εθνικισμός, κοινωνικές μεταβολές και μειονότητες. Τα επεισόδια εναντίον των μη μουσουλμάνων της Τουρκίας (6/7 Σεπτεμβρίου 1955)*, (Athens 2006), p. 276. However, this interpretation involves the danger of identifying the economic and social power of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie in the beginning of '20s with that of the '50s. Nevertheless, from the '30s onwards, the non-Muslim bourgeois were marginalized. Especially after the imposition of the capital tax and the end of the Second World War, the non-Muslim bourgeois did not have a privileged position in the key sectors of Turkish economy any more and they could not exert any influence on the emergence of the Turkish bourgeoisie. For this issue see: Keyder, Ç., "Mısır Deneyiminin Işığında Türk Burjuvazisinin Kökeni" in: Keyder, Ç., (ed.) *Memalik-i Osmaniye'den Avrupa Birgili'ne* (Istanbul 2003), pp. 141-179. From this point of view, the existence of a 'secret agenda' for the Turkification of the economy after the Events of September seems rather exaggerated.

41. See: Ντεμίρ, Χ., Ακάρ, Ρ., *Οι τελευταίοι εξόριστοι της Κωνσταντινούπολης* (Athens 2004).

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