

The Greeks of Constantinoupolis - Part One

by

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Ethnic Greeks have been residing in what is now "Istanbul" since ancient times. According to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Saint Andrew the Apostle became the first bishop of the Church in what was then "Byzantium". Throughout the next millennium, the Byzantine empire came to be established and flourished throughout Asia minor and the near east with brilliant Churches and Christian artwork. Great fathers of the Church, honored in the west as well as the east such as Saints John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Athanasius, and Gregory the Theologian emerged from Constantinople and its surrounding territory to settle the questions over Christian doctrine and truth.

By 1453 Constantinople had been conquered by the Ottoman Turks. The Turks subsequently, conquered all Hellenic territory ushering in centuries of brutal occupation and oppression. In 1821, a revolution was declared by the Greeks that set the stage for the establishment of the first independent Greek state in four centuries. Independent Greece steadily set about expanding and liberating Greeks left behind under Ottoman Turkish rule. The ultimate goal of Greece was to liberate the old capital of Constantinople, the city of the Patriarchate and the Great Christian counterpart of the Acropolis, Aghia Sophia. Greece was successful in its mission until 1922 when its attempt to liberate the enslaved Greeks of Asia Minor ended in military defeat and the extermination and successive deportations of over one million Greeks from Asia minor.

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