

Pontian Genocide Remembrance Day today, May 19



Today, May 19, is Pontian Genocide Remembrance Day in Greece.

The day marks the landing of Kemal Ataturk in the Black Sea port city of Samsun in 1919, for the commencement of what is known in Turkey as the war of independence.

For Greek Pontians, however, this event marked the beginning of the second phase of a much harsher persecution, by Turkish irregulars, the Turkish army and even their Muslim neighbors.

Up to 365,000 people perished in the Pontian Genocide, while a millennia-long home of Hellenism on the northern coasts of Asia Minor was eradicated, or “ethnically cleansed”, to use the late 20th century term.

Events to mark this horrific event are planned throughout Greece by Pontian groups, although the events will be affected by social distancing protocol and public health guidelines in place due to the coronavirus pandemic. The main memorial service will be held at the St. Sophia square in the northern city of Thessaloniki.

A feature is posted today on the pages of the Orthodoxia news agency on the tragic Pontian Genocide.