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# Turkish MP points to desecration of abandoned Orthodox Church Pontos region

A member of the Turkish national assembly, Garo Paylan, who is one of the few lawmakers in Turkey of an Armenian origin, this week brought to light the continuing desecration of a Greek Orthodox Church in the village of Hasera, known today as Yesildere, in what for centuries was the Argyroupolis district of Pontos, the ancient region along the southeast coasts of the Black Sea.

Argyroupolis is today known as Gumushene in Turkish.

Paylan stated that “…the church has managed to stand the test of time, but in recent years the frescoes that adorn the walls of the church have been literally destroyed. The tombs around the church have been looted by treasure hunters. The catastrophe – to which even the residents are reacting to – is obvious and does not honor either the historical or the cultural heritage of the country,” the HDP party deputy noted.

He added that this type of behavior is encouraged by the Turkish government’s rhetoric against non-Muslims.