

THE RECENT HISTORY OF THE RHODES and KOS TURKS

“The Silent Cry Rising in the Aegean Sea”

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Karşıyaka-Izmir

2015

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Mustafa Kaymakçı was born in Rhodes. His family was forced to immigrate to Turkey for fear of losing their Turkish identity. He graduated from Ege University Faculty of Agriculture in 1969 and earned his professorship in 1989. He has authored 12 course books and over 200 scientific articles.

He has always tried to pass novelties and scientific knowledge on to farmers, who are his target audience. These activities earned him many scientific awards and plaques of appreciation. His achievements include •“*Gödençe* Village Agricultural Development Cooperative Achievement Award, 2003”; •“TMMOB Chamber of Agricultural Engineers Scientific Award, 2004”; and •“Turkish Sheep Breeders Scientific Award, 2009”. His name was given to a Street in *Acıpayam* (denizli) in 2003.

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Kaymakçı is the President of the Rhodes and Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association since 1996. Under his presidency, the association reflected the problems of the Turks living in Rhodes and Kos to organizations including Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Parliamentary Association of the European Council (PA CE), the United Nations and the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FEUN). The association became a permanent member of FEUN in 2014.

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In addition to co-authoring political, social and economic books on the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic and History of the Balkans, he edited several books, published many articles in national and

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He co-edited the book entitled “The Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos” with *Cihan Özgün*.

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PRESENTATION

There is a perception in the world public opinion that the Turkish presence in Greece is solely restricted to Western Thrace. However, there is a Turkish population of about 6,000 people who live in the Dodecanese Islands, mainly Rhodes and Kos. The Greek authorities refused to grant “minority” status to these Muslim Turks claiming that the Dodecanese Islands were under Italian rule and not part of Greece when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923.

On the other hand, a great majority of the Turkish citizens born in Anatolia have never been aware of the presence of Muslim Turks living in Rhodes and Kos. When they visit the islands as tourists, some of them are greatly surprised when they meet across Turkish shopkeepers. This feeling of surprise increases even more when they see the cultural works inherited from the Ottomans, most of which are neglected and uncared for although their number exceeds those in many cities in Turkey.

Current problems of Moslem Turks living in the Dodecanese include expressing their Turkish identity freely, having a voice in the administration of the foundations, reactivating the functions of the Muftiate, restarting Turkish language and religion courses in schools, reopening mosques to religious services and restoring the civil rights and citizenship status of the Dodecanese Turks who had been previously deprived of Greek citizenship.

Greece refuse to Grant the island Turks their Turkish identity but accept them as Greek Moslems. Turks living in the islands have been deprived of the right to education in their native language. As for the religious domain, the position of Muftiate has been vacant since 1972.

As is known, the Dodecanese Islands were under Italian and later German rule from 1912 to the end of the Second World War. During the Italian possession of the islands, Italian became the official language as well the language of education. Freedom of speech and press was restricted and inhabitants of the islands were compelled to become Italian citizens in 1925.

After the Dodecanese Islands were ceded to Greece with the Treaty of Paris, oppressive exercises on Turks started to increase.

After the 1950's the immigration of Turks from the islands to mainland Turkey for the reason that they were not allowed to start their own businesses and buy property. The Turks who had to leave the Dodecanese Islands were forced to sign an official document stating that they would not return to Rhodes ever again. Pressure on Turks living in Rhodes and Kos increased to a greater extent with the subsequent developments in Cyprus after the Military Junta seized power in Greece in 1967. Based on Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Law which was in effect from 1959 to 1998, many Turks were deprived of Greek citizenship. After the “Cyprus Peace Operation” carried out by Turkey in 1974, immigration from the islands reached its highest point. Consequently, the Turkish population in the islands, which were estimated to be 15,000 at the beginning of the 20th century, has decreased by more than 50%.

To sum up; the Dodecanese Turks are confronted with extinction at the beginning of the 21st century. The Dodecanese Turks, who are supposed to be the equal citizens of a European Union member country, are far from enjoying the blessings granted by a scheme considered as a civilization project. In fact, the Turks living in the islands cannot openly

express their Turkish identity to strangers and feel obliged to introduce themselves as Greek Muslims. Feeling of fear has become a dominant pattern.

Whereas, aren't universal concepts such as human rights, democracy and rule of law among the most commonly expressed values in the international arena?

Despite being very close to Turkey, Rhodes and Kos Turks seem to be quite neglected in recent years. The number of books, articles and documentary films related to the Dodecanese Turks written and made in Turkey is quite limited.

Within this context, "the International Symposium on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes an Kos, 2014" was organized in Izmir, Turkey at Ege University Research Institute for Turkish World Studies on October 1-2, 2014 so as to attract the attention of the national and international public opinion. The symposium has a historical significance as it is the very first organization of its kind in the national and international arena. The agenda of the international symposium addressed various matters such as Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos in the Context of Turkish-Greek Relations; Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos with Respect to Human Rights; and Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos: Social Life, Foundation Properties and Cultural Heritage.

The book entitled "The Recent History of The Rhodes and Kos Turks: The Silent Cry Rising in the Aegean Sea" was compiled from "The Oral History Project on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese" to make up for the inadequacies cited above to a certain extent. The study aims to investigate through a historical perspective the past and present social and economic status of the island Turks living in Rhodes, Kos and Turkey as well as recording and preserving legends, folk dances, elegies and life stories that are not recorded by documented historiography.

The book will also provide the means for communicating the problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks in recent history and at present to the Turkish and international public opinion, but especially to the Greek public opinion. In this respect, it also includes some suggestions for the establishment of a long-lasting friendship in Turkish-Greek relations. We firmly believe that these recommendations shall be perceived as a call for friendship.

We would like to thank Rhodes and Kos Turks who help expose the information in this book with their valuable answers as well as *Ahmet Kirevliyası*, who made important contributions to the book. Last but not least, we would like to extend our gratitude *Mengü Noyan Çengel*, who translated the book into English and brought it to light in world public opinion.

With regards

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kaymakçı, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cihan Özgün
March 30, 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the conquest of Rhodes and the Dodecanese¹ by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1522, the process of Turkishification and Islamification of these islands was carried out based on the institution of foundations. The settlers were granted certain tax exemptions. Although a policy of compulsory settlement was applied in some cases, such implementations aimed to support the settlement of people who had difficulty in owning land in their homeland in Anatolia. These people settled in the lands allocated to them and started farming. Villages set up in this manner were given the names of nomadic peoples such as Asgourou (*Uzгур*), *Kandilli*, *Mikse* and *Gani Ahmet*, who maintained their traditional lifestyles.

¹ The Aegean Islands are divided into several main groups called the Northern Aegean Islands, the Eastern Sporades and the 12 Islands (Southern Sporades). Rhodes and the Twelve Islands, also called the Dodecanese, belong to the Southern Sporades island group.

North-Eastern Aegean Islands are Thasos (*Taşoz*), Samothraki (*Semendirek*), Imbros (*Gökçeada*), Tenedos (*Bozcaada*), Lemnos (*Limni*), *Eastern Sporades (Saruhan) Islands*: Lesbos (Midilli), Chigos (*Sakız*), Psara (*Ipsara*), Samos (*Sisam*), Icaria (*İkarya*) and *Southern Sporades (Menteşe) Islands: Rhodes and the 12 Islands* mainly include Rhodes (*Rodos*), Patmos (*Batnaz*), Leros (*İleriye*), Kalymnos (*Kilimli*), Kos (*İstanköy*), Stampalia (*Astropalya*), Nisyros (*İncirli*), Tilos (*İlyaki*), Symi (*Sömbeki*), Kharki (*Herke*), Karpathos (*Kerpe*), Kassos (*Kaşot*).

The term “Twelve Islands” comes from the method of management the Ottoman State exercised in non-Muslim regions under its rule. According to this system, which is also called the duodenary (twelfefold) system, every ten households elected a representative and these representatives in turn elected a 12-member council of aldermen to manage the region. The term “Twelve Islands” first entered Greek language as *Dodekánisa* and then was directly translated into Turkish.

The Twelve Islands (the Dodecanese) do not comprises 12 islands as the term connotes. The island group consists of 14 larger and over 20 smaller islands and islets. The number 12 is reminiscent of “an island group administered by a 12-member council, rather than the number of islands.

The Ottomans first called the island group “the Aegean Islands” then “the Mediterranean Islands.” The Mediterranean Islands, which later became an Ottoman prefecture, used to encompass some islands outside the Dodecanese including Samos and Chigos.

(*op.cit.*) *General Staff ATESE (Military History and Strategic Studies) Directorate*, Turkish Greek Relations an Megalo Idea, 1985 Ankara. Supplement: 1; **Erinç, S., Yücel, T., 1988.** The Aegean Sea, the Aegean Islands Neighboring Turkey. Ankara. Pp. 9-10; Pazarcı, H., 1986. Demilitarized Status of the Eastern Aegean Islands. Ankara. pp 4-5. http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/on_%C4. Access November 10, 2014.

Aegean Islands such as Rhodes and Kos remained under Ottoman sovereignty until the 1820's. After the foundation of the Greek State, Western and South-Western Aegean Islands were ceded to Greece while the Eastern and Northern Aegean Islands remained under Ottoman rule. However, this status changed with the 1911-1912 Turkish-Italian War and then the 1912-1913 Balkan Wars. Italy followed by Greece started to set foot on the Aegean Islands under the Ottoman sovereignty. The Italians seized Rhodes and Kos from the Ottoman State in 1912 and Rhodes and the Dodecanese were ceded to Italy in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty of Ouchy.

As is known, the Aegean islands were shared between Italy and Greece under the terms of the Treaty of Sevres signed on August 10 1920 following the First World War. In accordance with Article 122 of the Treaty, the island of Rhodes and the Dodecanese as well as the island of Kastellorizzo, which were already under Italian occupation, were ceded to Italy, while Article 84 transferred the rights over all the other Aegean Islands including Imbros (*Gökçeada*) and Tenedos (*Bozcaada*) to Greece.

The issue of Rhodes and the Dodecanese was raised during the January 31 1924 session of the Treaty of Lausanne as part of the Article 15 of the draft submitted to Turkish delegation by the Allied Powers. In accordance to this article, the islands of Kastellorizzo, Rhodes and the Dodecanese, which were formerly left to Turkey, were ceded to Italy.

The islands, which passed from the Italians to Germans during the Second World War, were transferred to the British Administration following the surrender of the Germans on May 08 1945.

At the end of the war, on the other hand, the Council of Foreign Ministers was established by the foreign ministers of the victorious states of the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union and France. Following the decisions made during the preliminary sessions of the council, the Treaty of Paris was signed on February 10 1947 and the Dodecanese Islands were ceded to Greece on the explicit condition that they must remain demilitarized.

In brief, the Dodecanese Islands including Rhodes and Kos have come under Greek rule. Despite their demilitarized status, these islands, located right off the western Anatolian coast, continue to pose a threat to Turkey. Nevertheless, about 6,000 Turkish Muslims who have been trying to survive and preserve their entity live in the Dodecanese Islands, mainly Rhodes and Kos.

Rhodes and Kos Turks are currently confronted with numerous problems. These problems include Citizenship, Right to Education in Turkish, Religion and Religious Exercise, Preservation of Cultural Heritage Inherited from the Ottoman Turks, Foundations, and the Environment of Hate and Oppression.

The Dodecanese Turks were brought to the brink of extinction at the beginning of the 21st century. The Dodecanese Turks, who are supposed to be the equal citizens of a European Union member country, were deprived of the blessings granted by a scheme considered as a civilization project. In fact, the Turks living in the islands cannot openly express their Turkish identity to strangers and feel obliged to introduce themselves as Greek Muslims. Feeling of fear has become a dominant pattern.

Despite being very close to Turkey, Rhodes and Kos Turks seem to be quite neglected in recent years. The number of books, articles and documentary films related to the Dodecanese Turks written and made in Turkey is quite limited.

“The Oral History Project on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese” was drawn up so as to make up for the inadequacies cited above to a certain extent.

As is known, the Oral History Project, also referred to as “the History of Silent Crowds” is a method of historical research that enables human communities to make themselves heard. Strictly speaking, oral history studies record, preserve and disseminate

historical information on minorities, people without means, women and immigrants that cannot be readily found in written sources.

Through a series of oral interviews, this study covers a period of time starting from the Italian and German occupations and the incorporation of Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese to Greece and also aims to deal with the problems of the Turks living in these islands on a variety of domains including education, economic life, fundamental identity, foundations and the attitudes of the Greek governments and Greek people towards Turks.

The study, which aims to record and expose life experiences of Island Turks living in Turkey as well those residing in Rhodes and Kos, is of great significance in that it is the first and most extensive academic research in this field. Such a study will also provide the means for communicating the problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks in recent history and at present to world public opinion. Hence, the main objective of the present study is to suggest which means and methods should be employed to preserve and improve the cultural identity of Turkish people living in these islands.

Information summarized in the book comprises a series of interviews with Turks living in Rhodes and Kos as well as Turkish nationals who formerly immigrated to Turkey. Accordingly, a total of 137 people residing in Izmir, Istanbul, *Marmaris*, *Bodrum*, *Fethiye*, *Antalya*, Kos and Rhodes were interviewed.

Interview subjects were selected among people who had witnessed the Second World War as a child or a youth as well as those who were born at the end of the war. Therefore, the ages of the interview subjects ranged between 57 and 92 as of 2013.

In the Oral History Project on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese, the *“Face-to Face Questionnaire Administration Method”* was applied and the items were constructed according to an open-ended questionnaire form. The form was first tested with 10 people and then reconstructed according to the survey results obtained. At the start of the interview the subjects were first briefed on the objectives of the interview and then asked to answer the predetermined questions on the form.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with subjects contacted in Izmir, Istanbul, Marmaris, Bodrum, Fethiye, Antalya, Kos and Rhodes between August 2013 and October 2013. The duration of the interviews ranged between 15 minutes and 60-65 minutes depending on the condition of the subjects.

All of the interview subjects in Rhodes and Kos requested to remain anonymous and refused to be videotaped due to direct risks they might suffer afterwards. Similar demands were made by some islanders interviewed in Turkey as well. Even those living in Turkey stated that exposure of their names might harm themselves and their relatives residing in the islands or restrict their entry into Greek islands as tourists. The writers were obliged to accept such demands as reasonable concerns. Therefore, the names of all the subjects in Rhodes and Kos as well some of the subjects who approached us with such concerns were not mentioned while the survey findings were written out.

BELONGING, IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE IN RHODES AND KOS TURKS

It is not possible to make a distinction between the presence of Turkish identity and their social/cultural values and accumulations of the Island Turks. *“Identity”* is one of the most fascinating and interesting concepts in our present world. Identify is a sign of a specialty or a quality. Identities, which indicate a specialty or a quality, first of all express cultural differences. A process that can be attributed to identity is the process of classification and it implies diversities. Identity, in its broadest meaning, embodies all the characteristics of an individual; it refers to not only how an individual perceives himself but also how he is perceived by the society. Personality is the conformation of an individual with identities and

also within identities. This is because the individual conforms to social environment through identities. If one or some of the identities of a person living in a society continue in the form of existing or belonging, it means that one or some of the dimensions of the person's personality have been formed. As can be understood from the phrase "one or some", a person's personality is composed of many identities. At this point, we should state that identity and personality should never be mixed and used interchangeably. Mixing these two concepts with one another is just like mistaking a photograph for a real object. Identity refers to a subjective unity, consistency and permanency. In psychology, on the other hand, identity should be treated, analyzed and defined together with ego and personality.² Psychologists place ego and personality at the center of identity and try to analyze and define it within this context. Accordingly, it is possible to define identity as a set of consistent and constructed indicators which distinguish an individual from others. A concept used in determining social gender and class, social identity denotes the social status of the individual. In philosophy, identity is a set of realities constituted as the result of ontic, epistemic, ethic and aesthetic determination of the existence of the subject. Although the term "identity" has a long history, it is observed that it has started to be frequently used and discussed as a result of modernity starting from the 20th century. Language and possession of identity, which are the indispensable components of identity, are distinct elements of presentation unique to a person³. The structure of Rhodes and Kos Turks deserves more than a simple evaluation within the context of "*self-other discrimination*". The history of the islands has many life stories regarding the bitter reality of this discrimination. However, "*the effect of cultural heritages*" with respect to the feeling of "*self/selves*" as opposed to the other is quite stronger and more effective. In other words, an element of identity inherited from generation to generation through social inheritance reveals the dominant identity concept of the Turkish presence in the islands. This concept is composed of elements such as "*language, past, common life or common demands*". Close cultural relations with Turkey also keep the "identity" values of the island Turks. Turkish daily newspapers Turkish records, novels coming from towns close to Rhodes and Kos including Bodrum and Marmaris, as well as recent Turkish TV serials are some of the elements that help the islanders to be able to preserve their Turkish presence with respect to culture. The fact that an islander, whose father is from Crete and whose grandmother doesn't even speak Turkish, has made reference to the positive effect of speaking Turkish at home displays quite a valid approach in this sense⁴.

Reading between the lines of the documents in the archive records of those times, it can be perceived that the erosion in the identities of the islanders has started as of the first quarter of the 20th century. The statement which reads "...*Nevertheless, although the Dodecanese Turks were able to preserve their national unity for some time following the Italian occupation, they soon fell into decline and then the process accelerated*" reveals an important clue in this matter⁵.

An investigation of the names given to new born babies will lead us to quite important results concerning the feeling of cultural belonging in the islands. The fact that the name of most people whom we had a chance to interview during the Oral History Project on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese was Ahmed, one of the names attributed to Prophet Mohammed, gives a clue concerning the traditional and identity-related attitudes of the island society in naming their children. The name "*Ahmed*" is characteristic to the island Turks just as Hans to Germans, Ivan to Russians, Sam to Americans, John to Britons and

² Ergun, D. 2000. National Personality in the Grip of Identities, *İmge* Bookstore, Ankara, , pp. 9 – 43.

³ Marshall, G., 2000. Dictionary of Sociology, *Bilim Sanat Yayınları* Publication, Ankara, , pp. 10-12.

⁴ Oral interview with Özlem Bahriye Boztepe.

⁵ Prime Ministry Republican Archives (will be shown abbreviated as B.C.A. hereafter) B.C.A., Lot: 0300-10 Box: 239- Folder No: 613- Serial No: 25.

Mehmet [*Mehmetçik*] to Turks. It is not a coincidence that the name Mohammed, which was changed to Mehmet out of respect for the Prophet, is prevalent in Anatolia as well as Rhodes and Kos along with Ahmed. Therefore, preservation of the Turkish identity in the islands of Rhodes and Kos cannot be kept distinct from Islamic elements.

While sociologists assess life styles within material and moral patterns, they use similar subjects and symbols delivered from generation to generation without discriminating between social life and cultural life. In other words, fundamental institutions of a society such as cultural accumulation, traditions and customs, faith, value judgments, life styles, education, religion, language and politics are placed at the center of social life⁶. In this context, the present study also aims to reveal some truths related to the daily lives of Turks living in the islands of Rhodes and Kos.

Shaping of the elements of belonging and identity of the Turks living in Rhodes and surrounding islands has also been greatly affected by the political developments that have occurred in the Mediterranean geography throughout the historical process. Rhodes was conquered following a battle between a 10,000-strong Ottoman force and the Knights of Rhodes. This was followed by the conquest of Leros, Kos and Symi. The Ottoman sovereignty in these islands continued until 1911. The Dodecanese Islands were occupied by Italy following the War of Tripoli in 1911. In accordance with the Treaty of Ouchy signed between the Ottoman Empire and Italy on October 18 1912, Italy agreed to withdraw its forces from the islands but did not comply with the terms of the agreement. Thus, the Dodecanese Islands remained under Italian occupation during the First World War.

According to the Article 15 and 16 of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey permanently renounces in favor of Italy all rights and title over the Dodecanese islands. However, as shall be explained later, the status of the non –Muslim minorities was dealt with in Articles 37-44 of the Treaty. There are also approaches that provisions specified in the following Article 45, which read ***“The rights conferred by the provisions of the present Section on the non-Moslem minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Moslem minority in her territory.”***, do not contradict with the view that these provisions should also be applicable to the Muslim Turks living in Rhodes and Kos.

The Dodecanese Islands, which remained under Italian occupation from 1911 to 1943⁷, were occupied by the Germans for two years (1943-1945) during the Second World War and then transferred to the British Administration following the surrender of the Germans on May 08 1945. The British ruled the islands as a proxy on behalf of the Allied Powers in accordance with the Italian legislation until May 31 1947, when the islands were finally given to Greece. According to Article 14 of the Treaty of Paris signed on February 10 1947, the Dodecanese Islands were official ceded to the Kingdom of Greece. The date when the Dodecanese were formally united with Greece is May 31 1947. The military administration was abolished on February 11 1948 and The General Dodecanese Prefecture was established including the Island of Kastellorizo⁸. In the post-1947 period, the strife created among the Turks started to cause great harm to the Turkish presence in the islands. In his 1992 book on

⁶ For detailed information, see. *Turan, İ.,1977. Political System and Political Behaviour*, Istanbul University Faculty of Economics Pub.; *Huntington,S. P., Dominguez,J.I. 1995. Political Development*, Trans. by Ergun Özbudun, Association of Political Sciences Pub., Ankara; *Almond G., Verba, S.,1963. The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes And Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton Univ. Press; *Çam, E.,1987. Introduction to Political Science*, Istanbul.; *Şimşek,M. C., 1996. “Communication, Public Relations and Political Culture”*, *Yeni Türkiye* Magazine, Issue 11, Ankara; *Turan, İ., 1996. “Democracy Culture in Turkey”* Democracy Culture, Aybay Magazine, Istanbul.; *Ranney, A.,1990. Governing: An Introduction To Political Science*, 5th Edition, New Jersey; *Blumle, J., Gurevitch,M.,1995. The Crisis Of Public Communication*, London..

⁷See ..Document 1 and et seq.

⁸ B.C.A., Lot: 0301- Box: 40- Folder No: 240- Serial No: 19.

Rhodes, *Zeki Çelikkol* draws attention to the fact that the present situation of the Turks in the islands stems from the application of intimidation and fear on the Turks by the Greek He goes on to say that this has also led to broken communication among the Turks. He claims that such disconnections among the Turks still continue in Rhodes and Kos, that it poses serious threats for the Turkish presence in the islands, and that the Turks are still being intimidated to the extent that the Turkish families and their children are scared of their own shadows⁹.

When the islanders are defined regardless of their ethnic roots, they become the “*island community*”; however, when they are to be defined considering their ethnicity, they are referred to as either Turks and Greeks or whatever their identities or belonging is. In fact, population not only defines the number of people living within certain borders but it also refers to the qualitative presence of people within a certain historical period. In other words, the close relationship of population with history and identity is contained in the contextual borders of the term. Therefore, it can be stated that the most dominant element of historical and its derivative domains, including historical geography, economic history, social and cultural history, is the population living in a certain area. In this context, the mobility or the geographical distribution of population throughout history should also be considered in social and cultural research studies concerning a society. It should also be emphasized that the numerical values or the density of a population living in a certain area are shaped by not only geographical elements such as climate, soil and water but also cultural elements such as history, social relations, economy, language and religion. Historical records provide us with extremely important clues in this respect.

Reliable numerical data concerning the population of Rhodes prior to the 1830's are not available. According to *Evliya Çelebi*, who visited Rhodes in 1671, of the 24 districts in the city, 4 belonged to the Greeks, 2 to the Jews and 18 to the Turks. After giving information about the low immigration mobility to the island, Raymond Matton emphasized that the majority of the population was Greek. According to Matton, the population of Rhodes comprised 1,200 Turks and 200 Jews in 1621; 3,000 Turks and 500 Jews in 1631; and 6,000 Turks, 1,000 Jews and 20,000 Greeks in the middle of the 19th century. Matton wrote that about one third of the 10,515 population of Rhodes in 1831 was Muslim¹⁰. Right at the beginning of the 1880's when *Namık Kemal* was assigned in Rhodes, there were about 6,000 Muslims in the island and 1,000 of them were living in rural villages¹¹. In the years 1881-1882, a comparison of the 6,467 Muslim population of the Rhodes Sanjak (Province) with the total population of 30.609 revealed that the non-Muslim population was four times as big as the Muslim population¹². In the period after the second half of the 19th century, nowhere else in the Ottoman Empire did the Muslim population dwindle at such a great rate and this sharp decrease in population brought about the risk of giving up on the Island of Rhodes. Military service was the main problem hindering the measures taken to increase the population. Because the new recruits were assigned to distant military posts and castles they could not contribute to a possible increase in population. Muslim youths living in the islands even committed apostasy and fled to Greece or Samos to dodge military service.¹³ *Namık Kemal*

⁹ *Çelikkol, Z., 1992. Turkish Monuments and Brief History of Rhodes, Ankara, , pp. 34- 35.*

¹⁰ *Çelikkol,, Z.,, op.cit., p. 23.*

¹¹ *Tansel, F.A., 1959. “Namık Kemal’s Struggles and Warnings Based on his Private Letters to Keep the Mediterranean Islands”, Belleten, XXIII/ 89- 92, Ankara, , pp. 487 and 499.*

¹² *Karpat, K., 1985. Ottoman Population 1830- 1914- Demographic and Social Characteristics, The University of Wisconsin Pres, USA, s. 115 ve 130.*

¹³ *İrtidat (Apostasy), the act of abandoning a religion by a person and accepting another religion .See Aslan,H., 2012 for detailed information on the subject. “Acts of Conversion during Tanzimat: İhtida (being Muslim)-Secret Religion-Tanassur (being Christian) and Ottomans”, Journal of Social Sciences, July- December 2012. 6/ 12, pp. 55- 82; and see also Ortaylı,İ.,1989. “Acts of Tanassur and Conversion in Tanzimat Period”, The 150th Anniversary of Tanzimat International Symposium - 31 October – 3 November 1989, TTK Pub., pp. 481- 487.*

drew attention to the fact that the incidents of apostasy in the islands constituted a serious problem in preserving not only the Turkish-Muslim identity but also social and administrative structure. He realized the Turks who converted and became Christians posed a great danger in the wake of Greek claims for the assimilation of the islands and considered education as the most urgent measure to be taken¹⁴. The main reason for that was the scarcity of schools and mosques; thus, the ideas of the Muslim Turks were not heightened and they were not properly educated. At the beginning of the 1880's, two schools were opened in two villages of Rhodes but there were no mosques or schools in the other three villages. As the limited budget of Rhodes and the poverty of its people did not allow for construction of any mosques and schools, *Namık Kemal* was insistently demanding financial support from the government as the Governor of Rhodes. He always advocated the idea of exempting the Rhodes Turks and foreigners who came to the island to marry local girls from allotment (drawing lots) system in order to prevent apostasy due to military service and the decrease in population¹⁵.

The main objective of the population census conducted during the reign of Mahmud II in the first half of the 19th century was to determine the numerical data concerning the citizens who were paying high taxes and fit for military service rather than establishing the quantitative features of the individuals. Therefore, it seems unlikely that further information other than the said numerical values can be obtained. However, the census in question was quite significant in that it revealed numerical data concerning the young, aged, child distribution in the social structure of the total population of the island. Apart from these censuses, *Temettuat (Registry)* records are another fundamental source which provided indirect Access to components of population in the Ottoman era such as age, occupation, education, income and economic level. These records are an inventory sequence in the ***“Real Estate and Land and Animals Temettuat Books”*** found within ***Kamil Kepeci and Books Obtained from the Treasury*** classification in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives. The books in question were separately classified in 1988 and were opened to public research Access. Most of the books belong to the censuses conducted in 1884-1885. Along with the names of the taxpayers, the income of each household and the amount of tax they have to pay were recorded in these books. Moreover, the amount of *temettu* (income) tax as well as the tithe and duties paid by the head of the household in the previous year and the estimated *temettu* tax to be paid the following year were also written in these books. It is understood that 20 cm by 57 cm *temettuat* books were organized according to the enumeration system¹⁶. ***“Almanacs of the Mediterranean Islands Vilayet (Province)”*** is also an important source of various components of population such as society, economy and local administrations¹⁷. Such sources provide valuable information regarding the total population of the community. As of 1861-1864, the 30.000 population of Rhodes was composed of 7,000 Muslims, 2,000 Jews, 400 Europeans and 20,600 Greek subjects. In the 1890's, the population of Rhodes was seen to have greatly decreased. At that time the resident population of Rhodes was 27,096, of

¹⁴ For detailed information, see Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, “Namık Kemal’s Struggles and Warnings Based on his Private Letters to Keep the Mediterranean Islands”, op.cit., pp. 479- 511.

¹⁵ “Drawing lots”, a piece of paper (a lot) drawn by youths over twenty years of age for military service. If the paper was blank, the youth would be exempt from service that year. Those who drew the papers with the word “*Kaf*” would do their military service. *Baş, R. 2008*. Rhodes and Chios Governorship of Namık Kemal (1879-1888), Ege University Institute of Social Sciences Unprinted Master’s Thesis. Izmir, p. 71. Tansel, “Namık Kemal’s Struggles and Warnings Based on his Private Letters ...”, op. cit, pp. 497- 498.

¹⁶ *Özgün, C., 2012*. “Use of Agricultural Land and Fertility in Foça Township in Mid 19th Century”, The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies- Special History Issue, V. 5, I. 6, , pp. 371- 395.

¹⁷ *Özgün, C., Mehmetefendioğlu, A. 2010*. “Social and Economic Life of Bozdoğan Township in Aydın Provincial Almanacs”, *Bozdoğan I*, Ed. by Cihan Özgün, Izmir, , pp. 367- 385.

which 4903 were Muslims, 2,660 were Jews and the rest were Greeks¹⁸. Shortly before the occupation of Rhodes by the Italians [as of 1906/1907], there were 13,385 Turkish Muslims, 69,099 Greeks and 4,281 Jews¹⁹. According to the census conducted by the Italian Administration right after the Italian occupation, the recorded Muslim population in Rhodes was 6,490 in Turkish villages of Asgourou (*Uzğur*), Kandilli, Mikse, Gani Ahmet and other villages like Salakos, Kattavia, Lindos village and central Rhodes, which were largely populated by Turks. The number of the Orthodox Greeks was 17,246, and that of Jewish population was 4,290. As can be seen, the Rhodes Muslims constituted the second largest population of Rhodes at the very beginning of the 20th century. In order to strike a balance against the dominant Orthodox population, Italians started a large-scale propaganda to convince Muslims to stay in the island to use in favor of Italy their *right to choose nationality* granted by the Treaty of Lausanne. During the Conference of Lausanne, however, the Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos claimed that the Greek population was 37,777, while the population of Muslims was 4,854 and that of Jews was 2,445. During its rule in the islands, Italy continued to govern Rhodes according to the system of nation-state, which classified the subjects based on their religion and sect. It leads one to think that Italy might have undertaken such initiatives to inhibit political activities of the Greeks, who were known to have strong national consciousness and were trying to join mainland Greece²⁰.

Demographic composition of Kos is almost the same as Rhodes. The population was predominantly Greek and the Ottoman State was trying to achieve a demographic balance by means of Turkish immigration to the island. Right after the conquest of Kos in 1522, a total of 79 voluntary families were brought from Turkey in an effort to Turkishify the island. There were 3 Turkish districts at the center of the island according to the 1592 population census. The original 79 households had become 132, while the number of unmarried men had reached 216. The Greek population was 817 and the population of the town center had reached 4,000 when 547 guards were included. According to what *Evliya Çelebi* wrote upon when he came to the island 1690, the number of soldiers at the 5 castles in Bodrum and Kos was 600, including 300 non-Muslims. 380 of them were in Kos. There were 300 houses in the inner castle and 900 non-Muslim houses in the outskirts outside the castle with the exemption of only one Muslim household. There were 8 districts, 8 churches and a Jewish community as well as 110 shops and 400 streets in the outskirts, while there were 2,000 stone houses with gardens as well as 18 non-Muslim and 7 Muslim districts in a vulnerable area without a castle farther outside the castle. There were 800 houses in Pyli and 380 houses, 1 Muslim district and 3 non-Muslim districts in Antimachia. Kefalos had 70 houses and 35 soldiers in its castle. According to the census conducted by *Hacegandan Kemankeş Dervish Beg* in Kos in 1830, the population of the island was composed of 1,356 Turks and 1,838 Greeks. *Şemseddin Sami*, who provided us with information regarding the very beginning of the 20th century, reported the population of the island as 10,145, of which 2,366 were Turkish residents²¹.

After the conquest of Rhodes, settlement of the Turkish districts was concentrated on the route from the *Demirli* Mosque to the Great Mosque. One side of this route was allocated to the market place while the other side was opened to residential settlement. At the end of the market place were the *Suleymaniye* Mosque and its *imaret* (public kitchen), Hafız Ahmed

¹⁸ *Öreñç, A.F., 2006*. Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands in Our Recent History, İstanbul, 202-210. A report by British Trade Consulate in Izmir gave the population of Rhodes as 30,000 distributed as 20,000 Greeks, 7,000 Turks, 2,000 Jews and 500 Europeans. Accounts and Papers, Parliamentary Papers "Commercial Reports from Consular Offices in Turkey", *Annual Reports- Great Britain*, 1864-1912, London. [will be shown abbreviated as *Accounts and Papers hereafter*]. Accounts and Papers, Smyrna, 1890, s. 38.

¹⁹ *Hayta, N., 2006*. Dispute over the Aegean Islands- from 1911 to Present, Ankara, , p. 14.

²⁰ *Orakçı, M., 2012*. Rhodes Muslims Selam Newspaper 1926- 1936, İstanbul,, pp. 75- 76.

²¹ *Ahbab, Y., 2009*. The Island of Kos in Our Recent History, İstanbul University Institute of Social Sciences Department of History, Unprinted Master's Thesis, İstanbul, pp 98- 101.

Pasha Library and the Clock Tower. The most important street of the inner castle, the Street of Knights, preserved its historical vitality with constructions unprecedented even in Europe. Most houses in the town were one-story concrete buildings. Almost all of the buildings including the Government House were white-colored. Streets were quite wide within the city walls. Most of houses where Turks lived were buildings dating back to the period of the Knights of Rhodes. Some of these residents were renovated in time. For example, balconies and terraces were added to the façades of the buildings. The attics and sofas were divided and new attic flats were added by means of wooden partitions. This style of architecture, which was a part of this mosaic culture, was brought to perfection by social-purpose buildings such as mosques, mesjits (*small mosques*), baths as well as tombs and mausoleums²².

In brief, it can be said the harmony in the panoramic view of the 19th century Rhodes with its history and cultural heritage, figures dating from the period of knights, tall minarets, lustrous domes of its mosques, the Clock Tower built in 1851 and its houses of the same color and architecture that became visible as one approached the town offered great attraction

A similar urban typology was also true for the island of Kos. The settlement observed in Kos resembled the Anatolian architecture of nearby *Bodrum* with its narrow streets and style of architecture compatible with the environment. The earthquake that occurred in 1933 caused considerable damage to the architecture of the island. Although the Italian culture became more predominant in the island following the quake, Kos still preserved the traces of the civilian architecture inherited from the Ottoman Period. Houses located at the harbor area of Kos are two-storey, multi-windowed buildings. These buildings have the characteristics of the architecture of the coastal towns on the Aegean and the Mediterranean rather than typical Turkish houses. The harbor houses built for the Turkish subjects who emigrated from Crete and the Balkans between 1896 and 1908 during the reign of *Abdulhamid II* could not stand the test of time and only nine of the mosques from the Ottoman Period have survived but most of them are now in ruins²³.

While establishing a point of view related to the sense of belonging and identity of the island Turks considering all these details, one needs to take into account not only demographic changes, culture, language, common experiences but also many other factors including architecture, history etc. For example, when government officials assigned to establish the statistical data concerning villages visited a certain village the first question they asked would be if there the village had a public cemetery or not. Numerous data obtained within the scope of the Oral History Project being conducted yielded results shedding light on this matter. The main complaints of the island Turks in preserving their identities is the fact that Turkish has been losing its importance as a language of communication and a means of cultural exchange among Turks living in Rhodes and Kos. The following words by a source who was born in Rhodes in 1944 give a brief account of the whole situation: ***“Turkish language is finished. People no longer speak Turkish at home. We would always speak Turkish in our time. Now the grownups speak Turkish at home but the younger people prefer to speak Greek. In other word, they dropped Turkish completely...”***²⁴

The fact that Greek is the dominant language not only in every day communication but also as the medium of instruction at schools causes great harm to the bonds of belonging and identity of the Rhodes and Kos Turks. The same source stated that he had immigrated to Turkey in order to preserve his Turkish identity by making the following comments; ***“I was wise to come here. They all study in Greek. The children are obliged to. A child studies in***

²² Öreñç,A.F.,op.cit., p. 183- 184.

²³ *Atlgan,Z. 2014.* “Conceptions on the Traditional House Architecture in Kos and a Comparison with the Architecture of the Aegean Islands and the Coastal Regions”, Third International Conference on Bodrum with All Aspects October 30 -November 01 2013- Bodrum, Prep. by M. A. Erdoğan- A. Özgiray, Izmir, , pp 67- 74.

²⁴ . interview with Yılmaz Demirci.

*Greek if he attends a Greek school. I have a nephew who addresses me in Greek. Whole thing will be finished after five years. It is he parents' responsibility to stop this. If they answered their children in Turkish when they spoke Greek, this would straightened things out...*²⁵. It is understood that island Turks were exerting great efforts in the middle of the 20th century in order not to forget Turkish culture and language. Today, however, the situation has been reversed. The following comments by the same source are quite thought provoking and even alarming: *"I have a sister-in-law in Rhodes. They speak Greek among themselves even if they aren't Greek. She says they need to speak Greek in order not to forget Greek."* What is more alarming is what a female interviewee born in Rhodes in 1950 had to say: *"I have two daughters. They study in Greece. They don't speak Turkish"*²⁶. Information obtained from the subjects interviewed within the framework of the Oral History Project conducted on the island Turks indicate that this particular problem is common among the Turks living in Rhodes and Kos.

One of the reasons why Greek and Turkish togetherness has not escalated on smooth and sound foundations is the two culturally diverse communities who speak different languages, namely Greek and Turkish. Research conducted within the framework of the Oral History Project have hinted that different languages spoken by Greek and Turkish communities was hampering efforts for proximity between the two communities. What is more, this is also the very reason for the lack of social communication between the Crete Turks, who speak Greek although they are Turkish, and Rhodes Turks²⁷. Thus, this openly demonstrates how important a common language is for the togetherness of a community. To put it more clearly, it cannot not be ignored that problems sometimes experienced between the Greek and Turkish communities living in the islands every now and then are rooted not only in annals and negative experiences but also in two different languages spoken by the two communities.

It is a common belief among the Island Turks that not only language but also the factor of religion is an important means of preserving the Turkish identity. What a source disclosed in this regard seems to summarize the current situation: *"...When you stop going to a place of worship, a mosque, customs and habits are forgotten. If the Turks in the islands went to the mosque every Friday, just as the Greeks went to the church every Sunday, the religion would not be lost..."*²⁸

Passing on the memoirs or stories related to Rhodes and Kos from generation to generation can help strengthen the ties of belonging in the islands. Recollections shared in this regard by another source born in Rhodes in 1931 are quite important: *"I spent my years listening to the memoirs, news and living the traditions, habits and the culture of Rhodes. Yearning of my family members for those lands inherited from their ancestors never subsided. As for myself, my emotional ties and devotion have never ceased to exist..."*²⁹ Yearning for Turkey has kept the feelings of belonging alive for the island Turks. A source born in Rhodes in 1945 told of the following memories in this regard: *"We use to go to the Consulate on the anniversaries of the death of Atatürk. Then Inonu passed away and we went again. We went to the Consulate with Mehmet Bastiyali, we signed the book of condolence when Inonu died. We would go there on the 10th of November to observe a*

²⁵ Oral interview with Yılmaz Demirci.

²⁶ Anonymous

²⁷ Oral interview with Gülper Seyitzade.

²⁸ Oral interview with Yılmaz Demirci.

²⁹ Oral interview with Emine Pervan Yücel .

moment of silence; we would go every year. We would also go there on the Republic Day with friends. ³⁰”

³⁰ Oral interview with Kimya. Civelek.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE IN RHODES AND KOS TURKS

Education

Education is a system required for an individual where he can become a member of the family in which he was brought up, then the society in which he lives and thus is integrated with the social structure mentioned above. Therefore, family is the first stage of the educational system. These two interwoven details determine the child's value judgments, language, culture and habits within the system of family and social environments. In this respect, the system of education does not only consist of family and social environment. However, it should be emphasized that school assumes the transmission of the sovereign power or the dominant culture. ***“Borders between cultures are synonymous with language borders, physical borders or borders between peoples. (...) With respect to the function of school, there is no definite answer to the question ‘Which components of culture will be conveyed to future generations?’ cannot be replied³¹”.***

Despite the fact that Rhodes and Kos Turks are a fundamental element of the Turkish culture, they are officially citizens of the Greek State. Therefore, the problem of education for the island Turks is squeezed between being a member of a family of Turkish origin and being a Greek citizen. As the Treaty of Lausanne did not grant minority rights to the Dodecanese Turks, unlike the Turks of the Western Thrace, assigning Turkish teachers to the schools in the islands was out of the question³².

The Turks living in Rhodes started going to Turkey to study during the Italian rule, which greatly worried the Italian State. The meeting the Rhodes Governor Mr. Mari Lage had with a delegation from the Muslim Community of Rhodes in the Governor's Office is quite interesting. The Italian Governor made a long introduction saying that he was aware of the fact that the Turkish children were going to Turkey for their education instead of studying in Italian schools. The Governor also stated that he found it quite unbecoming and asked the delegation to warn the parents on this matter. The Governor went on to say, ***“I have observed that many Muslim families are sending their children to Turkey to study. I am also aware that many children are preparing to go to Turkey this year as well. We have excellent schools in Rhodes. I am also ready to undertake whatever it takes to send those willing to study further to Italy for higher education. I cannot tolerate Turkish children's preferring Turkish schools over our Italian schools. You should advise people on this matter and stop this rush.(...) There are Italian citizens to be deported from Turkey. I do not allow them to come and settle in Rhodes to avoid the risk of any trouble they may cause for the island people. (...) You are free to make any changes you like in your schools. For instance, there is nothing to prevent usage of Latin script letters as is the case in Turkey. Tell me whatever you want to improve in your schools. Tell me your needs to be improved and I will take care of it. I am ready to provide any conveniences and assistance. In return, you try to prevent such movements that cannot be tolerated by our government. I heard that some Italian youths have been involved in some rowdy behaviour. I gave strict order to put an end to this. I also advise that Muslim youths refrain from causing any undesirable events...”³³***

³¹ [Ültanır, G., 2003.](#) “Relationship between Education and Culture- “The Concern over Which components of culture will be conveyed to future generations in Education”, G.U. Gazi Faculty of Education Periodical, Volume 23, Issue 3, , pp. 297 and 298.

³² Supplement to the report dated September 26 1943 on the official letters exchanged between *Şükriü Saraçoğlu- and İsmet İnönü* related to the Dodecanese Islands. B.C.A., Lot: 03001 - Box: 40 - Folder No: 240- Serial No: 19.

³³ See Document 2 and supplement. B.C.A., Lot: 03010 - Box: 237 - Folder No: 604- Serial No: 23 (official letter dated August 11 1934 numbered 2872/ 40)

It is understood that the social and cultural life of the Turkish/Muslim population of the islands of Rhodes and Kos entered an arduous phase both at the end of the Italian rule and in the last period starting right after the Second World War. Details of an official letter *Hasan Saka* received from the Turkish Consulate of Rhodes provide clues about these painful times. The document made reference to concerns stemming from the deterioration in the cultural level of the Dodecanese Turks. Especially the metaphor stating that the academic level of the Rhodes High School had receded to that of a primary school was quite striking. It was also reported that the Community schools in the Dodecanese Islands were completely closed down during the end of the Fascist Italian Administration and that the ten schools in Rhodes and Kos were later reopened when the new British Administration granted certain right to the community. Another piece of striking information was that none of the teachers at the Turkish schools had graduated from high school and studied at a regular teacher training college and that only five or six female students among the Dodecanese Turks had completed their secondary education in Italian schools. It was also reported that the national feelings among some of the Dodecanese Turkish women, most of whom had not even attended primary school, had also been quite deteriorated. The most remarkable lines of the official letter drawn up by the Turkish Consulate of Rhodes contained the following; ***“Assimilation with the Italians, who invaded our country as enemies of Turkey, has reached such an extent that many Turkish women and girls did not refrain from having affairs with Italians and this was not even considered unbecoming among Turks. While the Greek Metropolitan Bishop declared that any Greek girl who married an Italian would be excommunicated, Turkish girls continued to marry Italians freely. (...) The only recreation of the Turkish men, who were uneducated, economically underdeveloped, lacking Turkish identity and good manners, and left without leaders and ideals, was alcohol; and for most of them alcohol seemed the only occupation. Some of the Turks wanted to go to Italy, some others tried to go anywhere outside the island, but most of them had their eyes and mind on Anatolia. All of these people believed that it would not be possible to survive in the islands for the Dodecanese Turks and the only way of salvation was to immigrate to Turkey. We have been exerting great efforts to change this atmosphere of panic and steady these people. If keeping the Dodecanese Turks in their native lands is a national essentiality according to the policies of the Republic of Turkey, it is imperative that necessary assistance be extended for the protection and development of our fellowmen. It is demanded that 3-4 experienced teachers be sent from the motherland [Turkey] to instruct and train promising children as of net year; that books and teaching materials required in schools be provided; that several people [Turkish nationals] with decent education and strong national feelings come here [the Dodecanese Islands], mingle with Turks and gradually take over the community leadership; and that children who study in Turkey be obliged to spend some time in their native lands and practice their professions in their respective areas of education...”***. Moreover, it is also demanded in the said official letter that immigration to the Republic of Turkey and change of nationality among the Dodecanese Turks be prevented, and also more frequent trips to and from the islands for the purpose of visiting Anatolia, getting treatment and doing business be encouraged. It was requested that commercial relations and transactions between Anatolia and the Dodecanese Islands be quietly and confidentially supported by Turkish tradesmen and businessmen. In case food supplies dwindled and a possible famine broke out in the islands, necessary assistance was expected [from Turkey] to come to the rescue of the island Turks. The most interesting demand from the Republic of Turkey was probably the one related to ***“...those who are no longer useful in the islands due to old age or ailment and become a burden for the communities should be allowed to come to the motherland [Anatolia].”*** Meeting all these demands would prevent great material and moral

losses to be suffered by the Turkish identity in the islands including Rhodes and Kos. However, if these demands were not met, the only way of averting the loss of Turkish cultural identity in the islands predominantly populated by Turks would be to allow them to immigrate to Anatolia as much as possible. The original copy of this letter, dated 20 May 1947 and numbered 172/194, on the situation of Turkish schools in the Dodecanese islands that was received from the Turkish Consulate of Rhodes was submitted to the Office of Prime Ministry by *Hasan Saka*. The most remarkable detail in this letter was “...**that the new Greek administration did not allocate any funds for the teachers at Turkish schools**”. In addition, it was requested that the Republic of Turkey make necessary allocations to these schools to avert the damage likely to be experienced. It was also conveyed that the Greek Government would not be able to give much help to Turkish schools owing to some financial problems. The following lines of the letter stated that the help given by Anatolia would only be for a limited period of time and went on with the following comments: “**In fact, the teachers [in the islands] will have to quit their jobs due to financial concerns if they are not paid their salaries regularly on a monthly basis. This may eventually lead to the closure of eight Turkish schools in Rhodes. Such a difficult situation that may lead to a bitter end can only be prevented by urgent assistance from the Republic of Turkey. A monthly allowance of 250 dollars can possibly solve this problem. (...)The assistance sent by Anatolia can be minimized or completely stopped only after the funds to be allocated by the Greek administration are released**”³⁴.

In this respect, it was observed that majority of Turks started to immigrate to Turkey after the islands were ceded to Greece in 1947 for reasons such as denial of the cultural identity of the island Turks, creation of an environment of violence and hate, and dismissal of rights to start their own businesses and buy property³⁵.

In the period when Greece gained sovereignty over the islands, it should be noted that courses including history and geography in particular were given in Greek at schools in Rhodes and Kos. However, teaching other courses such as physics, chemistry and math in Turkish is also thought provoking³⁶.

Another remarkable detail concerning the educational system in the islands is the fact that Turkish and Greek children were being educated in different classes in the same schools in the middle of the 20th century. Such a system of educational can be perceived as a policy of “**othering**” at first sight. However, it can be said that this system of collecting Turks in a class was quite useful as it united Turkish children around a feeling of “**Turkish identicalness**”. Thus, the Turkish students were not in minority among a Greek majority. Nevertheless, this system cannot be generalized to all of the islands. For example, there was a certain incident concerning a Turkish child who studied in a class where rest of the students were Greek. An event experienced by a source shows that there could be some exceptional incidences related to the behaviour of Greek teachers towards Turkish students: “...**One day we were in the Christianity Instruction class. A Greek classmate of mine told the teacher there was Turkish Muslim in the class. The Greek teacher told that him that he shouldn't have talked in this manner whatever one's religion might be. This did not stop students from humiliating me...**”³⁷.

³⁴ See Document 3 and etc.. Supplement to letters dated June 10 1947 numbered 87491/ 236 and supplement to letters numbered 87491/ 237. B.C.A. Lot: 03010 - Box: 239 - Folder No: 613- Serial No: 25. B.C.A., Lot: 03010 - Box: 256 - Folder No: 724- Serial No: 22.

³⁵ B.C.A, Lot: 03010 - Box: 238 - Folder No: 605- Serial No: 12.

³⁶ Anonymous

³⁷ Anonymous

It should also be emphasized that there is a close relationship between the religion and education in order for the Dodecanese Turks to protect and maintain their Muslim identity as well as national pride. A recollection by a 1943 born informant related to her education in Rhodes will provide clarification to this matter. The informant, *Sıdıka Şuskits*, shared the following memories with us: ***“When we were at school, we studied religious instruction course in Turkish. Our teacher was Huseyin Hodja. He would put his cane like this... He had a fountain built on the platform in the classroom. He would have us perform ablution. He would teach us how to make ablution. The following week, he would ask us one by one to show the performance of ablution. He would check if we had forgotten or not. However, everything would stick in our minds. This was what we learned in childhood; what we did in the 3rd grade and the 4th grade. Then, he would take us to Friday Prayers, one week the boys and the following week the girls. They taught us how to perform a 2-rakah (unit) prayer. What would he tell us? You cover your head when you enter the mosque and perform your prayer. Fold your scarf and put it in your pocket after you leave the mosque. Time doesn't keep up with you. You keep up with time; but this love in you; love for Islam, love for family, love for Turkish identity will never fade. Never let it fade.”***³⁸

Many other informants have also shared similar memories: ***“...We would go to the Suleymaniye Mosque .Our teacher Ahmet Şinasi taught us how to perform ablution, we would wash for the prayer and go to the Friday Prayers. We would pray at the Suleymaniye Mosque every Friday. We would go to Mawlıds (Birthday of the Prophet) attend Qu’ran recitals and never miss the Eid (religious feast) prayers.”***³⁹

“...Religiously, the mosque was nearby; when we were students, our teachers would take us to the mosque and teach us how we should perform ablution and pray. We learned when we were still children how many rakahs each of the 5 daily prayers was and how many rakahs of each prayers are fard (obligatory) and how many are sunnat (optional)...”⁴⁰

It is understood from the oral information conveyed by the island Turks that the Turks were subjected to negative practices and conduct at Greek schools in the middle of the 20th century. Another recollection of the above informant born in Rhodes in 1945 is also quite notable: ***“...We had a baby girl, Beyza. She grew up and up and when she was 6-7 years old she had to go to school. The bad news was the teacher of that class was Greek. His name was Marko and they said he was beating the children. He would send the students to his house to hang out the laundry and send them to the grocery store; he would mistreat them. He would even tell his friends at the Officers’ Club that he delighted in beating all the children in the school. At that moment, I gave serious thought to what I had heard...”***⁴¹

The name of the *Suleymaniye* Madrasah, one of the last schools to offer education in Turkish language in Rhodes, was changed to the 13th City Primary School of Rhodes and education in Turkish was strictly banned from then on. This is also true for the island of Kos. Today, children living in Rhodes and Kos study in public schools but are exempted from general religious courses but are not allowed to exercise their own religious rights. Students studying at public schools speak very little Turkish. There is also great deal of ambiguity for those who graduate from these schools in putting their vocation into practice. Turks have not been allowed to work at any public institution in Rhodes and Kos so far. Turks can benefit to a limited extent from secondary and high schools and are rated quite below the average academic level in Greece. Closure of Turkish schools has placed the island Turks in a difficult

³⁸ Oral interview with *Sıdıka Şuskits*.

³⁹ Oral interview with *Kimya Civelek*.

⁴⁰ Anonymous

⁴¹ Oral interview with *Kimya Civelek*.

situation. Well-to-do island Turks send their children to Turkey during school time and thus have them receive good education in Turkish and religious courses⁴². Considering all these developments, it can be concluded that the Greek culture have gained the advantage over the cultural foundation the island Turks have been trying to preserve. It is also evident that the **“Turkish language”**, an important means of expressing Turkish culture, as well as other tools of transference such as education and religion are faced with great risks stemming from the cultural purification policy applied by Greece.

The fact that the medium of instruction is Greek has forced some island Turks to immigrate to Turkey from Rhodes and Kos in an effort to protect their identity and culture against a natural process of assimilation. Many island Turks are known to have immigrated to Turkey for this reason. An informant born in Rhodes in 1945 shared the following memories related to this matter: **“...We were supposed to go to secondary school after completing primary school in Rhodes. We had studied primary school partly in Greek partly in Turkish, but we had to study all subjects in Greek in the secondary school. I didn’t want to do that so my mother brought us, me and my siblings, to Izmir. So I studied high school in Izmir...”**

It is understood that history is the most exquisite subject among the courses studied by Turkish students within the Greek educational system. It is figured that especially subjects such as Turkish History, Ottoman History and courses related to the new Turkish Republic founded by *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk* are not taught at these schools.

Another informant born in Rhodes in 1945 stated that information or news from Turkey, books and other printed materials about Atatürk and the Turkish Republic were smuggled to Rhodes from Turkey, which was a few hours away by boat, and said they could fulfill their longing and satisfy their curiosity this way. **“...We had a member of parliament called İhsan Ada, he was a relative of ours He is dead now. He visited Rhodes when I was in 5th grade. Then he asked me some questions. I loved reading those days; my father had some books. I answered his questions, he was very pleased. He asked me what I wanted from him and I told him to send me books. He sent me 5th grade books but books on History, Atatürk or Turkey were prohibited then. We would study courses in Greek and Turkish, we studied History and Geography in Greek language only; anyway we had very few Turkish courses. I read those books. So my history was a little weak but I was very good in other subjects. I would fail in history because I did not have the fundamentals. How ward we tried our grades would be 3 or 4. We would pass in the make-up exams...”**⁴³

Another informant born in 1953 provided similar information. **“We learned surahs (chapters) from the Qur’an in the religion course. We also learned how to write and speak Greek and we learned history printed by the Greek as they saw fit... My children also went to school in Rhodes but none of them studied in Turkish. All the subjects were in Greek. That’s why I would send them to Mustafa Teacher for private Turkish lessons. There was another teacher called Bastiyalı (Bastian). I sent them to him one summer to get private tutoring in Turkish. They learned the Turkish alphabet and then were able to read Turkish”**⁴⁴

Another striking consequence other than the exclusion of Turkish language from the medium of instruction and education in Rhodes and Kos was the deterioration in the educational level of Turks. As mentioned above, Turks benefit to a limited extent from the secondary and high schools and are rated quite below the average academic level in Greece.

⁴² Bahadır Selim Dilek, op.cit. p. 2006.

⁴³ Anonymous

⁴⁴ Anonymous

Rıfat Maşazade⁴⁵ expressed the reflection of the educational level on professions by saying, **“Turks in Rhodes were not educated to become (medical) doctors or engineers”**.

In this respect, it was found that the average number of years of formal schooling was 5 for the Turks in Rhodes and Kos who were interviewed within the scope of the Oral History Project. However, the average years of schooling for the island Turks in Turkey is 6.6 years. The reason why this figure is not at a desirable level is that the first generation who immigrated to Turkey finished primary school when they were living in the islands.

The average number of years of formal schooling for the islanders in Istanbul and Izmir has been found to be 9.6 and 8.1, respectively. These averages for Antalya, *Marmaris*, *Bodrum* and *Fethiye* are 6.11 years, 5 years, 3.92 years and 3.16 years, respectively. The reason why the averages in these four towns are quite low is that they belong to the first generation Muslim Turks who had to immigrate to Turkey.

It was determined that the number of island Turks who completed secondary school, high school and university among the interviewees aged between 57 and 92 was not high. These rates for secondary school, high school and university were 1.4 %, 5 % and 8.0 %, respectively. However, all of the islanders except one who had the chance of receiving over 5 years of formal schooling were second generation immigrants who were educated in Turkey.

The highest rate of higher education among the Turks of Rhodes and Kos was 40 % in Istanbul. This is explicable in terms of wealth of the immigrants who settled in Istanbul. Istanbul is followed by Izmir with 19.4 %.

On the other hand, it can be assumed that especially the younger generation who were not interviewed in this study has a much higher period of schooling both in the islands and in Turkey. Nevertheless, the increase in the period of schooling for the Turks living in the islands as they are deprived of their mother tongue Turkish comes forth as a factor accelerating their assimilation.

Religion

Turkish, Greek and other ethnic elements living under the same sky in Rhodes and Kos have moved away from one another on earth and started to strive for protecting their identity through a theory of **“cultural identification.”** This is an effort that has existed among different communities of people in every geography throughout history. Particularly, religion is the most powerful set of beliefs that identify societies in terms of faith. Religion is also instrumental in the formation of a social model. Formation of a specific world of faith and the feeling of belonging to this world inevitably contribute to a process of identity formation within that society. The faith or religion that keeps the Turkish elements living in Rhodes and nearby islands has a dominant priority in social life. According to Ş. Mardin, this mentality provides people with a conceptual insight that enables them to see the world around them with special glasses.⁴⁶ In this respect, religion is one of the first order of institutions throughout history affecting social life and cultural values conveyed from generation to generation. The following words attributed to ancient Greek historian *Mstrius Plutarchus* point to this point of fact., **“Go all around the world, you can find communities without a civilization, without literature, without walls, but you can never see a community without temples and deities.”**⁴⁷

As is known, Rhodes and Kos Turks were represented by the Muslim Community Council. After the Italian occupation in 1912, a local decree passed by the Italian

⁴⁵ Oral interview with Rıfat Maşazade.

⁴⁶ *Mardin,Ş., 1995*.Religion and Ideology, İnsan Pub., 7th Edition, İstanbul, p..65.

⁴⁷ *Kahraman,A., 1984*.History of Religions, İstanbul., p.14.

administration abolished the Office of *Qadı* (*Qadiyat*) and recognized *Muftiate* instead. The Muslim Community Council of Rhodes had an administrative office where they executed affairs concerning the Muslim Turks. These people would apply to this office if they had a problem. The spot where the Community Council member and the Muslim resident met on special occasions such as *Eids* was *Hafız Ahmed Agha* Library. The Holy Beard of Muhammad was kept at the library and would be open to Muslim visitors in a glass reliquarium on the 26th day of the Holy Month of Ramadan. Due to its historical importance, the Community Council would hold celebration ceremonies on *Eid al-Fitr* (Feast of Breaking the Fast) and *Eid al-Adha* (Feast of the Sacrifice) and accept the Governor and other local dignitaries at this place.⁴⁸

Also in our day, Rhodes and Kos Turks are known to attach great importance to observe religious days and holidays, and to perform religious exercises required by Islam. The consciousness demonstrated by the youths in recent years in performing collective acts of worship such as the Friday Prayers is seen as an alternative behaviour stemming from the concern from protecting their Muslim identity and preserving Turkish culture. In brief, religion not only shapes the norms related to social life but also reinforces the fallings of identity and belonging and even identifies members of the Turkish community with one another. It should be noted here that hereditary and cultural relations between the island Turks and the Republic of Turkey based on history, language, religion have a great share in their efforts to preserve the feelings of identity/belonging, This relationship between the homeland and the islands had reached to an extent that was a source of great concern for the Italian State⁴⁹. However, the atmosphere of friendship created between Turkey and Italy as of 1920's and especially the efforts exerted to maintain the trade relations between the two countries should never be ignored⁵⁰.

An editorial entitled "*Punti fermi, Italia e Turchia*" was printed in the newspaper "*Il Messaggero di Rodi*" on August 11, 1932. The editorial mentioned a news article printed in "*Echo de Paris*" which made reference to the intentions of Italy towards Turkey and the future role of Rhodes as the center of Italian operations; then the editorial printed in daily "*Giornale d'Italia*" was cross-referred and additional information was provided. The article in "*Il Messaggero di Rodi*" read, "***...We agree with the feelings of the Rome News about the new Turkey and we wish the friendly relations between the two nations are maintained as desired by the two parties. Italy took a sincere attitude toward the new Republican Government erected on top of the remains of former Sultans from the very first days of the Kemalist administration. There were years when a feeling of distrust was created in Turkey against Italy owing to provocations of the Great Powers. Those years fascism was being viewed as a dangerous aggressor and an adventurous warmonger. Turkish-Italian friendship only started to enter a sincere phase in 1926 during the assignment of Orsini Duce as the Italian Ambassador in Ankara and these close relations paved the way for the official talks between Mussolini and Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Beg in Milan in 1928. The Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality was signed during these talks and endorsed in Rome later in May. Then a series of visits were exchanged between Dino Grandi and Tevfik Rüştü Beg, which started a second phase of sincere relationship between the two countries. (...) The volume of trade goods exported to Turkey from Italy is 3, 300,000 tones. This figure indicates the top importance of the Italian flag in the eastern waters. The value of exports and imports is close to half a million lireta (Italian liras). The amount of capital in***

⁴⁸ Orakçı, M., op.cit., p. 76.

⁴⁹ B.C.A., Lot: 3010- Box:237- Folder No: 600- Serial No: 7.

⁵⁰ B.C.A., Lot: 3010- Box:237- Folder No: 600- Serial No: 7.

both Italian institutions and related companies is 150 million Italian liras. There are about 20,000 Italians in various institutions such as schools, hospitals and companies. The understanding of friendship and mutual assistance that exists between the two countries is a motive in the political arena of the Balkan and the Dodecanese Islands. At present there are no problems likely to violate the relationship between Turkey and Italy. Duce is referred to in Turkey with admiration and respect. Similar feelings are expected for Kemalizm and the Ghazi and Turkey will resume her political relations, which have proved successful so far (...)".

The significance of such a strong feeling of belonging for the Turkish-Muslim community of the Dodecanese can be seen in the efforts exerted by the people of Kos to repair the mosques wrecked in the 1933 quake. The islanders got in contact with Turkey for the repair of the *Defterdar* Mosque damaged during the April 20, 1933 quake in Kos and demanded assistance from the motherland. The Republic of Turkey asked the Turkish Consulate in Rhodes to supervise the repair work at the mosque but also chose to follow a clever political path. They wanted to avoid setting an example to Italian and other consulates for the repair of churches and similar buildings in Turkey in future. Therefore, it was decided that it would be better to appoint a dependable person recommended by the Turkish Consul in Rhodes to serve as a trustee and to contact the Turkish Consul unofficially for the expenses and any demands related to this matter.

The social and cultural importance of the mosque in question for the islanders is evident in the letter dated June 26 1934 written by then Foreign Minister of the Turkish Republic *Şükrü Kaya* to the Prime Minister. The letter said that the *Defterdar* Mosque in Kos was damaged during the quake and it faced the danger of collapse if it wasn't repaired at once. The following statements made further in the letter were interesting, *"The local government had the intention of finding a pretext to pull down as witnessed in many other instances according to the policy it implemented on the Turkish elements in the island. This is also confirmed by the letter the Consul of Rhodes wrote to the trustee, who later sent into me. I am sharing a copy of the letter with you. All the foundation properties of the island have been damaged in the quake. As things stand, a handful of Turks living so close to the motherland plead to the Republican Government to save at least this mosque and their foundation revenues and thus enable the community to rebuild damaged Turkish schools..."* It is understood from another letter dated July 7 1934 written out by Director General of Foundations *Rüstü Beg* that an amount of 5,500 Turkish Lira was needed for the repair of the *Defterdar* Mosque, a charity property of the *Defterdar* Foundation in Kos. *"The amount of cash the foundation has in its account in the Istanbul Directorate General of Foundations is only 108 Lira. As it is not possible to do anything with this money and this mosque should continue to exist due to its extreme importance to the Turkish residents of the island, it will be advisable that a sum of 5,500 Lira be lent to the Hacı İbrahim Effendi Foundation and the board of trustees have necessary reparations completed."* As the accounts of the foundation were handled by the Istanbul Directorate General of Foundations, the Republic of Turkey applied the legislation accordingly even though this mosque was located outside the borders of the Turkish State. *"The court therefore rules as follows: ... that the necessary reparations be carried out under the supervision of the Consulate of Rhodes and through the medium of the Foundation Committee in accordance with Article 18 Clause Z of the Law of Auctions and Disputes."*⁵¹

⁵¹ The said report was simplified and rewritten in modern Turkish. B.C.A., Lot: 301000- Box:191- Folder No: 308- Serial No: 7.

The most interesting and striking correspondence within the scope of the official communication between the Turkish Muslim community of Kos and the motherland related to the repair of the mosque in question is the letter dated March 1 1934 written out on behalf of the Turkish Muslim community of Kos by *N. Şekipzade Faruk*. Reading the letter between the lines, the importance of the “**religion**” factor for the unity and integrity of the island people can be clearly understood. In this semi-official letter sent by *Faruk Beg* to Istanbul *Defterdar Mosque Trustee Necati Beg*, it was stated that the island Turks were feeling extremely contended with Turkey’s contributions for the repair of the *Defterdar Mosque*, which was damaged by the quake. What was more important in the letter was the fact that islanders did not have the financial means for the repair of the shops and other buildings located around the mosque belonging to the Turkish-Muslim residents and the letter went on to say, “**...As the island people are the victims of a disaster, it is not possible for them to raise such an important amount of money in the actual state of affairs. Our current situation is very delicate and serious. It is thought that the government under the pretext of our unfavorable financial circumstances has the intention of destroying this mosque, the only temple of the Foundation and Muslim people, and compels them to forsake their country and immigrate to Turkey with this final blow to Muslim. If the Republican Government politically approves of our residing in the islands, we, as the Turkish residents of our city, request Turkey to have this mosque repaired and thus help revitalize this source of revenues to improve the condition of restored schools. (...) [The Italian Administration] first demolished our schools in a large-scale restoration project taking advantage of the quake. Then the sources of Foundation and Expenditure revenues governing these schools were destroyed. Moreover, we were totally deprived of our legal rights with the application of a new urban planning program. The Foundation institution is left destitute today and income to be collected from this mosque seems to be the only hope. [The Foundation] has annual revenue of 15,000 Lira even during the current financial crisis. In the past, on the other hand, the revenues are known to have reached amounts as high as 30-35,000 Liras per year. Consequently, the life of Muslims and their friends wholly depends on the repair of the Defterdar Mosque and the improvement of the Foundation; so we are expecting your urgent assistance.**⁵²”

Correspondence between the Turkish-Muslim community of Kos and the Republic of Turkey revealed that Italy intended to clean the other ethnic elements off or at least assimilate them from the island. In fact, some of the official letters exchanged between the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the Prime Ministry in the month of August in 1935 provided clues in this matter. Although the oppressive attitude of Italy was criticized in these letters, it is understood that the Greek population in the islands acted in diplomatic liaison with Turkey against Italy. The official letter numbered 17982- 505 dated August 26 1935 written by the Directorate General of the 5th Department of the Foreign Ministry contained protests against negative procedures and applications carried out by Italy against the Dodecanese Greeks and was in a way the translation of a letter written out to the Turkish Embassy in Washington by the Greek Orthodox Community of Washington. The said letter contained requests by the Greek people in the islands, “**for restituting right to education and freedom of religion; stopping construction of 250 villages for the settlement of Italian immigrants; releasing all political prisoners, and holding a plebiscite in the Dodecanese Islands.**” It is understood that the said Greek Community also sent copies of this letter to the American President, American Parliament, and members of the Supreme Court.

Details of the said letter contained information that would shed light on the general condition of the Greek islanders living under Italian sovereignty. “**Despite the liberal**

⁵² The said report was simplified and rewritten in modern Turkish. B.C.A., Lot: 301000- Box:191- Folder No: 308- Serial No: 7.

principles of the great Italian nation, the Italian Government has been implementing an extremely oppressive regime by depriving the islanders of education in Greek language, closing down schools and imprisoning metropolitan bishops and teachers because of their feelings of patriotism. Instead of fulfilling the official commitment they made to Greece during the seizure of the islands from Turkey in 1912, promising that the said islands would soon be returned to Greece, the Italian Government became the most oppressive government of the past 20 years by compelling the island Greeks to become Italian citizens or accept forced emigration and even separate from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul and change their sect. The Italian Government even went too far and forced the islanders to separate from their own holy community and thus violated the religious law recognized by civilization as the most sublime right. Violating the principles of democracy and liberty as well as moral conventions jointly defended by America and Italy during the Great War, the Italian Government jailed, mistreated and prosecuted island Greeks in a totally fascist manner. This naturally caused the islanders to escape from Italian rule and eventually facilitated fulfilling their plans to make the region an Italian property by deploying all kinds of military equipment in the islands to be used against the unarmed civilians. Forgetting the efforts it has exerted in the past to liberate their people in captivity, the Italian Government declared war on Greece, one of the most exalted civilizations of all times. By means of a systematic policy based on intense greed has been implementing plans to annihilate the Greek people, whose number dwindled to 60,000 from 148,832 in 1912, using oppression, imprisonment, forced emigration and unbearable taxes. The Mussolini Government intends to Italianize the islands by encouraging settlement of a great number of immigrants they bring from Italy. The Italian Government are planning to eradicate a civilization that was the homeland of famous poets, historians, philosophers and physicians including Saint John the Apostle, Hippocrates, Dion, Andronicus and Peisander.⁵³”

An inter-ministerial letter sent to the T.R. Prime Ministry on March 3 1036 shows that the Greeks living in the Dodecanese were involved in some sensational press activities in the world public to express their dissatisfaction with the Italian sovereignty. A newspaper article on a claim from the Athens Government that the Turkish Army would occupy the islands if the Italians were defeated in Africa has aroused great interest in the world public opinion. Details of the said claim made by George Weller were explained as follows: “*A prospective defeat of the Italian Armed Forces in Africa (...) will afford Turkey an opportunity to attempt at reclaiming the Dodecanese it had lost to Italy during the war in 1912. The large Turkish, known to be equipped with cavalry, artillery and aircraft units, has been deployed to the forbidden zones on the Anatolian coastline. Just a few weeks ago, various military positions were inspected by a deputy commander from Ankara assigned by the Turkish General Staff. As the Italians fear that the Turks coming to islands might be involved in espionage, export/import talks between the Italian islands and the Turkish mainland have come to a standstill (...) The developments have also clouded the horizon in Greek-Turkish relations (...) Greece thought the islands would be returned to them as Turkey did not make any claims on the islands, the population and culture were predominantly Greek and Turkish-Greek relations were better. Shortly before King George ascended to the Greek throne, a second proposal was made by Britain. Accordingly, if a joint military operation to be carried out by Britain, Greece and Turkey against Italy was successful, Turkey would be given the nearest six islands to the Turkish coast while the rest of the islands would be ceded to Greece. The proposal was accepted by Turkey and Greece. However the question which country would have a greater right on the Dodecanese Islands aroused a great controversy between the Turkish daily Zaman and Estia, the most conservative and serious*

⁵³ The said report was simplified and rewritten in modern Turkish. B.C.A., Lot: 3010- Box:238- Folder No: 606- Serial No: 6.

daily in Greece. In an article of an official document published later, the Daily Zaman claimed that 300-year long Turkish sovereignty in the islands should give superiority to Turkey over Greece. The daily Estia, on the other hand, claimed that these islands should be ceded to Greece owing to existing Greek culture, Greek language and Greek sympathy in the islands. It was disclosed that young Kemalist army officers from the Turkish side longed for erasing the traces of the 1912 defeat of the Sultan and thus eliminating the Italian threat once and for all. In their contacts with Turks, Italian diplomats repeatedly stated that [the military precautions] Italy were taking in the seas were only intended to thwart possible British operations in Egypt and Greek territorial waters. However, the Italian military administration in the islands considers Turkey, rather than Britain, as the real threat in the area. Although Turkish diplomats claim that troops positioned and fortifications made around Mykali (in Samos), Ephesus and Torbali were a matter of precaution, publication of any news related to the details of this operation is strictly prohibited. The official stand of the Turkish side is that no armed conflict is expected unless Italian combat troops land on this area⁵⁴.”

Religion and places of worship helped not only Muslim Turks but also Christian Greeks in preserving their feelings of nationality during the Italian rule. In fact, it is known that feelings of Greek nationality are nourished by unity of language and culture in the islands and a strong attitude of **“national tenacity”** was demonstrated against Italians in Greece and the Dodecanese especially during the Second World War. It is evident that the 1940 victory of the Greek Army, who said **“Oxi”** (no) to the Italian forces trying to occupy Greece, was a breaking point in the said attitude of national tenacity. The Greek people who commemorate this day on October 28 each year, continue to say **“no entrance”** to all kinds of foreign oppression⁵⁵. An official letter dated June 27 1947 sent by T.R. Foreign Ministry from the Prime Ministry was quite interesting in that it elucidated the national consciousness of the Greeks living in the islands. A report prepared by the Rhodes Consulate General on how the island Greeks preserved their national unity placed emphasis on basic components such as religion, education and economy, which was important as it showed the idea-cultural problems of the Greek culture. The said report said, **“(…) It should be noted that Greeks did not back off, on the contrary, prospered in culture and wealth despite all the pressure and fascistic violence of the Italians. The reasons for that included the role of religion and Church in strengthening the feelings of unity and nationality among Greeks; existence of many intellectual leaders; efforts exerted by clergymen for this purpose; and substantial and regular contributions of the Greeks who became rich in Egypt, America and North Africa. Other important factors that kept alive the national consciousness of the Greeks in the islands also included uninterrupted contacts and relations between the Greek world and the Dodecanese Greeks through the Church and the clergymen and finally efforts, initiatives and mutual support of the Greeks in the field of economy.**⁵⁶”

As mentioned previously, Turks living in the islands of Rhodes and Kos were represented by the Muslim Community Administration. After the occupation of the islands in 1912, Italy recognized the office of *Muftiate* based on a local decree passed by the Italian administration. After 1947 when the Dodecanese Islands were transferred to Greece, the local Greek administrators allowed the “The Muftiate of Rhodes” to unofficially pursue its mission for a little while. In this respect, there were 11 imams in Rhodes and 4 in Kos according to official records in 1947. As stated previously, the Muftiate were involved in many social

⁵⁴ The said report was simplified and rewritten in modern Turkish. B.C.A., Lot: 301000- Box: 238 - Folder No: 607- Serial No: 16.p

⁵⁵ Oral interview with Osman Bastiyali.

⁵⁶ The said report was simplified and rewritten in modern Turkish. Supplement to official letters dated June 1947 dated 87491/236 and 87492/237. B.C.A., Lot: 3010 - Box: 239 - Folder No: 613- Serial No: 25.

duties led by marriage; in fact, it was officially recognized by the authorities and the documents issued by the Muftiate were valid until 1968. They were even authorized to issue destitution certificates⁵⁷. For instance, the Greek Government cut the salary of Mufti of Rhodes *Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu* was regularly getting from the occupation governments and totally abolished the office of Muftiate in 1990 after the decease of *İhsan Kayserili* who was acting as the regent of *Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu*, who had died earlier.

Elçin Macar⁵⁸ reported that the question of Muftiate was brought into discussion once again and said, *“When İsmail Çakıroğlu⁵⁹, the religious official in Rhodes, received an invitation addressed to the “Mufti”, the local press reopened the question of Muftiate to discussion, upon which Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs issued an official letter, stating that there wasn’t an Office of Muftiate in Rhodes and its re-establishment was out of the question. According to the said announcement, Çakıroğlu was just an imam and his salary was paid by the Foundation Administration of Rhodes. As the debate continued, Martha Simantoni, Secretary General of Southern Aegean Region, sent a letter to various departments and institutions stating that there weren’t any Muftiates, consequently Muftis, in the Dodecanese Islands and that religious duties concerning Muslims were fulfilled by imams appointed by the foundation administrations in Rhodes and Kos under the supervision of the General Secretariat of Southern Aegean Region.”*

Consequently, the Turkish minority is not religiously represented in the islands⁶⁰. This is also true for Kos. It should be strongly emphasized that Turks living in these islands are inferior to citizens of Greek origin with respect to equality of opportunity. Their lives have always been off the pace, repressed and shadowed. Lack of a leader who can defend their rights and deal with religious affairs constitutes a great risk for the existence of Turkish identity in the islands. The fact that the leader of the community and the head of the Foundation Administration is the same person reveals that the Turkish community lacks think tanks and is vulnerable to becoming disintegrated with ongoing immigrations. The Muftiate, which was still in operation in Kos until 1938, was abolished by the Italian Governor of the Dodecanese *Cesare Maria De Vecchi*. After the island was ceded to Greece, this issue was left unattended and a new Mufti was not appointed⁶¹.

In fact few island Turks^{62 63 64} state that the institution of Muftiate in Rhodes and Kos should be valid according to the treaties that involves Greece as a party – *although most the islanders interviewed are not aware of this fact*. Turgay Cin⁶⁵ also confirms this point of

⁵⁷ See. Picture 1.

⁵⁸ *Macar E., 2006*. “Problems of the Dodecanese Turks since Lausanne” Istanbul University, Faculty of Political Sciences Magazine No: 34 (March 2006)

⁵⁹ İsmail Çakıroğlu, was appointed as the Imam of Rhodes on May 19 1990 and held the same post in Rhodes until early 2000’s.

⁶⁰ For detailed information see Bahadır Selim Dilek, op.cit., p.131 etc.

⁶¹ *Çelikkol,Z., 1990*. Turkish Monuments in Kos and a Brief History, TTK Pub., Ankara, p. 23.

⁶² . Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyası.

⁶³ Oral interview with Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı .

⁶⁴ Oral interview with Saadet Sarı .

⁶⁵ <http://www.abchukuk.com/arsiv/lausanne.html>.Access December 20 2014

Articles 37-44 of the Section III, Part I of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, entitled “Political Clauses” related to “Protection of Minorities”:

Article 37

Turkey undertakes that the stipulations contained in Articles 38 to 44 shall be recognized as fundamental laws, and that no law, no regulation, nor official action shall conflict or interfere with these stipulations, nor shall any law, regulation, nor official action prevail over them.

Article 38

The Turkish Government undertakes to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants of Turkey without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion.

All inhabitants of Turkey shall be entitled to free exercise, whether in public or private, of any creed, religion or belief, the observance of which shall not be incompatible with public order and good morals.

Non-Moslem minorities will enjoy full freedom of movement and of emigration, subject to the measures applied, on the whole or on part of the territory, to all Turkish nationals, and which may be taken by the Turkish Government for national defense, or for the maintenance of public order.

Article 39

Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities will enjoy the same civil and political rights as Moslems. All the inhabitants of Turkey, without distinction of religion, shall be equal before the law.

Differences of religion, creed or confession shall not prejudice any Turkish national in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil or political rights, as, for instance, admission to public employments, functions and honors, or the exercise of professions and industries.

No restrictions shall be imposed on the free use by any Turkish national of any language in private intercourse, in commerce, religion, in the press, or in publications of any kind or at public meetings.

Notwithstanding the existence of the official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Turkish nationals of non-Turkish speech for the oral use of their own language before the Courts.

Article 40

Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as other Turkish nationals. In particular, they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein.

Article 41

As regards public instruction, the Turkish Government will grant in those towns and districts, where a considerable proportion of non-Moslem nationals are resident, adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Turkish nationals through the medium of their own language. This provision will not prevent the Turkish Government from making the teaching of the Turkish language obligatory in the said schools.

In towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds under the State, municipal or other budgets for educational, religious, or charitable purposes.

The sums in question shall be paid to the qualified representatives of the establishments and institutions concerned.

Article 42

The Turkish Government undertakes to take, as regards non-Moslem minorities, in so far as concerns their family law or personal status, measures permitting the settlement of these questions in accordance with the customs of those minorities.

These measures will be elaborated by special Commissions composed of representatives of the Turkish Government and of representatives of each of the minorities concerned in equal number. In case of divergence, the Turkish Government and the Council of the League of Nations will appoint in agreement an umpire chosen

view in several publications he has made on these issues. The author stated “ *that the legal status of the Muslim Turkish minorities living in various parts of Greece including Rhodes, Kos, Athens, Thebes (Thiva), Ptolemaida and Western Thrace was established by 1881 Treaty of Istanbul , 1913 Treaty of Athens, 1920 Treaty of Sevres on the rights of the minorities in Greece and 1923 Treaty of Lausanne; and that the Turks living in Greece should have legal, administrative and educational autonomy in accordance with these treats that are still in effect; and that institutions such as Grand Muftiate and Muftiates should continue to perform their duties.*”

As is known, Articles 37-44 of the Section III, Part I of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, entitled “Political Clauses” related to “Protection of Minorities” also cover provisions determining the status of the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey⁶⁶. Article 45 that follows the said articles clearly states that “*The rights conferred by the provisions of the present Section on the non-Moslem minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Moslem minority in her territory.*”

from amongst European lawyers.

The Turkish Government undertakes to grant full protection to the churches, synagogues, cemeteries, and other religious establishments of the above-mentioned minorities. All facilities and authorization will be granted to the pious foundations, and to the religious and charitable institutions of the said minorities at present existing in Turkey, and the Turkish Government will not refuse, for the formation of new religious and charitable institutions, any of the necessary facilities which are guaranteed to other private institutions of that nature.

Article 43

Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities shall not be compelled to perform any act which constitutes a violation of their faith or religious observances, and shall not be placed under any disability by reason of their refusal to attend Courts of Law or to perform any legal business on their weekly day of rest. This provision, however, shall not exempt such Turkish nationals from such obligations as shall be imposed upon all other Turkish nationals for the preservation of public order.

Article 44

Turkey agrees that, in so far as the preceding Articles of this Section affect non-Moslem nationals of Turkey, these provisions constitute obligations of international concern and shall be placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations. They shall not be modified without the assent of the majority of the Council of the League of Nations. The British Empire, France, Italy and Japan hereby agree not to withhold their assent to any modification in these Articles which is in due form assented to by a majority of the Council of the League of Nations.

Turkey agrees that any Member of the Council of the League of Nations shall have the right to bring to the attention of the Council any infraction or danger of infraction of any of these obligations, and that the Council may thereupon take such action and give such directions as it may deem proper and effective in the circumstances.

Turkey further agrees that any difference of opinion as to questions of law or of fact arising out of these Articles between the Turkish Government and any one of the other Signatory Powers or any other Power, a member of the Council of the League of Nations, shall be held to be a dispute of an international character under Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Turkish Government hereby consents that any such dispute shall, if the other party thereto demands, be referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The decision of the Permanent Court shall be final and shall have the same force and effect as an award under Article 13 of the Covenant.

Article 45

The rights conferred by the provisions of the present Section on the non-Moslem minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Moslem minority in her territory.

⁶⁶ *Cin.,T.,2003* op.cit.

Setting out from Article 45, Cin⁶⁷ makes the following comments on Articles 37-44 as regards the obligations of Greece:

“Greece should recognize these stipulations as fundamental laws and should not allow any law, regulation or text to conflict or interfere with these stipulations (interpretation of Article 37);

Greece should assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all nationals without distinction and exercise of free religious practice, circulation and immigration (interpretation of Article 38);

Differences of religion should not prejudice any national in matters relating to enjoyment of the same civil and political rights, equality before the law and especially admission to public employments and promotion; furthermore, adequate facilities should be given to Muslim nationals of for the oral use of their own language before the Courts as the last two clauses of the article stated that no restrictions should be imposed on the free use by any kind of public affair (interpretation of Article 39);

Muslims should have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein (interpretation of Article 40);

As regards public instruction, the Greek Government will grant in those districts, where a considerable proportion of Muslim nationals are resident, adequate facilities for ensuring that the instruction should be given to Turkish children through the medium of their own language and minorities should be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment of the sums which may be provided out of public funds for educational, religious, or charitable purposes (interpretation of Article 41);

The Greek Government undertakes to take, as regards Muslim minorities, in so far as concerns their family law or personal status, measures permitting the settlement of these questions in accordance with the customs of those minorities; to grant full protection to their religious establishments; besides, all facilities should be granted to the existing pious foundations and religious institutions, and the Greek Government should not refuse the formation of new institutions of that nature (interpretation of Article 42);

Turkish nationals belonging to Muslim minorities should not be compelled to perform any act which constitutes a violation of their faith or religious observances, and should not be placed under any disability by reason of their refusal to perform such legal acts (interpretation of Article 43);

Setting out from the obligations placed on Turkey by the Treaty of Lausanne, Cin finally stated that Article 44 of should be interpreted as follows: *““Greece agrees that these provisions constitute obligations of international concern , shall be under the guarantee of the League of Nations and shall not be modified without the assent of the majority of the Council of the League of Nations ; furthermore, any member of the Council of the League of Nations shall have the right to bring to the attention of the Council any danger of infraction of any of these obligations and that the Council may give any directions as it may deem proper any dispute an international character shall be referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice and the decision of the Permanent Court shall be final.”*

Cin expressed that education and training should also be handled within the same scope.

⁶⁷ Cin.,T.,2003 op.cit.

In brief, there are no offices of Muftiate in Rhodes and Kos and it is evident that a powerful authority should fill in this vacancy to bind Turkish people together. Nevertheless, it is observed that the island Turks continue to demonstrate their religious sensitivity including celebrating their religious holidays and regularly visiting the graves of their loved ones. In this respect, replies given to questions directed within the scope of the Oral History Project have indicated that **“religion”** is still a significant element that strengthens the feeling of belonging among the Turks living in the islands. For instance, an informant born in Rhodes in 1945 mentioned the special emphasis placed on observance of holidays and visits to graveyards in this way, **“We would regularly go to the graveyard, visit our deceased loved ones and pray for them. We would sacrifice a sheep during every Eid al-Adha Holiday (Feast of Sacrifice)...”**⁶⁸

Game, Entertainment and Food Culture

“Culture is a set of feelings perceived, thoughts expressed, behaviours performed, abilities demonstrated, information generated, aesthetic values monumentalized, social structures shaped, religious, ethical, legal, economic and technological elements exercised by a nation and the historical consciousness it reaches within its own entity and finally the realities it has lived through time”⁶⁹. As regards children’s games, circumcision celebrations, wedding celebrations and food culture, Turkish culture of Rhodes and Kos resembles that of Turkey; in other words, they exhibit parallelism from a cultural point of view.

Universality of the children’s games in Rhodes and Kos and the archaic elements they contain are also quite striking. While the names, contents and materials of the games as well as nursery rhymes and counting songs exhibit a resemblance over the continents, archeological findings show that games such as *spinning tops*, *nine stones*, *hopscotch* etc. have been played for over one thousand years. This is how they count to choose sides at the beginning of a game. **“Ena mena donsi, donsi donsi strambonsi, strambos strambos dingili badem tos”** is the Greek version (*ena*: one, *mena*: teo, *strambos*: top) of the counting song and **“ön dö turva, sağım solum sobe”** is the Turkish version mixed with French. The game called Blind Man’s Buff is known as **“Blind-Buk (blind goat)”**, **“Blinder Bock (blind goat)”** or **“Blinde Kuh (blind cow)”** in Germany,” and as **“Kör Çebiş (blind billy)”** “in rural parts of Ankara, where the young of a goat is locally called *çebiş*”⁷⁰. Rhodes and Kos Turks spent their childhood playing together with their Greek peers. While playing football, children did not make two different teams according to their nationalities but formed the teams based on their ages and skills⁷¹. Even this small detail was quite significant in that it demonstrated the sensitivity of children towards the delicate line between nationality and ethnicity. Even the football clubs the island Turks supported displayed the feeling of belonging to Turkey. The statement made by an informant born in Kos in 1933 provided an important clue on this matter: **“Turks and Greeks would form different teams; there were also supporters of Beşiktaş and Fenerbahçe clubs. I was a Beşiktaş fan...”**⁷².

The importance of weddings, circumcision celebrations, feasts and other special days in social and cultural lives of the Dodecanese Turks stems from their efforts to preserve their identity. For example, the fact that the tradition of dowry, which has a great importance in the Anatolian culture and organized by the bride’s household, displays similar traits in the islands

⁶⁸ Oral interview with Kimya Civelek.

⁶⁹ *Talas, M., 2005*. “Turkish Food Culture through History and Turkish Dishes According to Mehmet Eröz”, *Turkish Research*, Issue 18, Fall/, p. 274.

⁷⁰ *Emiroğlu, K., 2014*. “An History of Our Daily Life”, *Türkiye İş Bankası Pub.*, 7. Edition, Istanbul, , pp. 6 and 563 etc.

⁷¹ Interview with Halil Kayalar and oral interview with İbrahim Denizaşan.

⁷² Oral interview with Ahmet Payzanoğlu.

of Rhodes and Kos, is a characteristic quality of the Turkish identity. The first formality prior to a wedding in the islands was the dowry ceremony. However, the tradition of dowry, which is almost reduced to the level of preparing fancy handiwork, required much greater obligations in Rhodes in the past. The dowry included not only furniture such as sofas, armchairs, tables, chairs, curtains, beds and quilts for 4-5 rooms but also many other things from the bride's jewelry to the ashtrays in the house. Displaying all these during the transportation of the dowry to the bride's house was also a tradition. Tuesday was the day when the "Bridal Bath" and "Henna Night" ceremonies were held. On the morning of that day Maidens and young women cover the head of the would-be bride with a veil and take her to the bath in a procession. After washing and chanting at the bath until late afternoon, the procession would take the bride back to her house. Thursday was the day of the "marriage ceremony"⁷³. Then the wedding ceremony would be held. Traditionally, food served to guests at weddings included rice and *zerde* (sweet pudding with rice and saffron) as well as chicken or lamb meat⁷⁴. Wedding feasts were usually held on the day following the wedding ceremony and celebrations would sometimes last three days in some families⁷⁵. Popular Turkish dances like *Çiftetelli* (Tsifteteli) and *Kasap Havası* (Butcher's Dance) were performed and the islands Turks did not hold back from dancing to the Greek tunes, either⁷⁶. Similar celebrations would also be held at circumcision feasts. Similar to the tradition in Anatolia, children on horseback would ride through streets in procession⁷⁷ and animals would be sacrificed, rice and *zerde* would be cooked in those feasts that were usually held in the fields or in a club⁷⁸. Publication of the *Selam* Newspaper in Rhodes enabled Muslim Turks of Rhodes to announce their special days and events in the paper. Marrying couples and the families of the boys to be circumcised would have short announcements published in the paper giving information about the occasion⁷⁹.

Data we obtained from the Oral History Project reveals the importance of circumcision ceremonies for the Turkish identity in the islands. The fact that these ceremonies are a part of Turkish culture and that they are the reflection of the circumcision ceremonies in Turkey is one of the most factual indicators that points out cultural models have been preserved in the islands without any change. An informant born in Rhodes in 1945 shared his memories regarding how circumcision ceremonies were held in Rhodes in his childhood: "***... we were two brothers; we had a horse ride in the streets at our circumcision. It was an ostentatious ride. Bands would come from Turkey, from Marmaris to the weddings and circumcision ceremonies in Rhodes. There were drum, there were trumpets. Island Turks would also sing along. Our relatives would come from Turkey and stay with us 3-4 weeks. Then they would leave and they would sing a song about being taken away from loved ones by the wind of fate when they left. We would meet them on their arrival and see them off on their departure. One day their ship arrived at the port, it had a worn-out Turkish flag, we were feeling proud, and passengers threw cigarettes from the deck. The famous Turkish ship "Ankara", but that was not in 1965, probably early 1960's. "Ankara" arrived, docked, all the Turkish people in Rhodes ran to the port to see ship. We were all yearning for the Turkish flag...⁸⁰***".

Feast of Ramadan (*Eid al-Fitr*) and Feast of Sacrifice (*Eid al-Hada*) holidays in Rhodes and Kos refer to very special days that bring island Turks together in terms of identity

⁷³ Orakçı, M., op.cit., p. 145.

⁷⁴ Oral interview with Şahser Karakaya.

⁷⁵ Oral interview with Cihan Esen.

⁷⁶ Oral interview with Şahser Karakaya.

⁷⁷ Oral interview with Vediye İnamlı.

⁷⁸ Oral interview with Sunay Ispartalı.

⁷⁹ Orakçı, M., op.cit., p. 147.

⁸⁰ Oral interview with Kimya Civelek.

and culture. Muslim Turks living in the islands would celebrate these holidays at the Fethi Pasha (*Hafiz Ahmed Agha*) Library where they met after the *Eid* Prayers. After that, Rhodes Turks would meet at *Çimenlik* (Grass Pod) to celebrate the feast and enjoy themselves by taking rides in the whirl and the carousel. On the last day of the feast they would go to *Çamlık* (Pine Woods) to have a large picnic and socialize⁸¹. The fact that Turks living in the islands added an extra day to the feasts, celebrating the Feast of Ramadan for four days and the Feast of Sacrifice for five days⁸², come together in picnic areas such as *Sünbüllü*, *Mikse*, *Mercan*, and *Küfe* contributed to the “social face-to-faceness” and the cultural togetherness of the island Turks. Islamic holy nights, *Nowruz* (New Day) and the Spring Festival days celebrated by the island Turks for the purpose of preserving their cultural values should be viewed from this perspective.

One of the historical buildings of Rhodes, Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library has a symbolic importance that has convened Rhodes Turk on these special days. The foundation charter of Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library, which was founded by Ahmed Fethi Pasha, included the following statement: “...on the 15th day of the Hijri month of Muharram every year 30 qurush shall be allocated for the preparation of ashura (Noah’s Pudding) at the courtyard of the library and the cooks who prepared the ashura would be paid 7.5 qurush each.” As can be seen from the record cited above *ashura* has been prepared and distributed to the island Turks at the courtyard of Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library since its foundation in 1793⁸³. In this respect, -based on the instance of *ashura*-food is an instrumentalized form of social integrity and solidarity as it is considered the main component of feasts, religious ceremonies, weddings, celebrations, funerals, festivals and many social occasions⁸⁴.

“Food is not only a biological substance that provides nutritional support for the body and helps the organism maintain its activity and growth. Different social synergies and rituals generated during production, transportation, storage and consumption of food are quite notable as they demonstrate the importance of culture in nutrition. Processes from the provision to consumption of food have rendered it into forms of social behaviour and consequently culture. Human communities are formations shaped by institutionalized behavioral patterns. These formations encompass both religious and profane rituals. Among all these rituals, food-related ceremonies hold a significant place in the organization of the daily routines and in the effect of religious behaviours on the daily life a society. These ceremonies and rituals are patterns that distinguish a society from the others. In this respect, meals organized on religious, national and special days should be in accordance with the social status of individuals. This specifiedness is important in not only the selection of the ingredients of food but also the style of cooking, serving and even seating of the guests. Many behaviours ranging from our food styles to eating habits have been shaped during the socialization process. Such acquisitions are important indicators of the cultural identifies of societies. Croissant identifies with French people, kebab with Arabic people, dough desserts with Turks, fast-food with the American society and pizza with Italians. Samsa (meat pastry) for the Uzbeks and Turkmen pilaf (rice) for Turkmen people are symbols of their ethnic identities. This is not only limited to food varieties. The order these foods are consumed should also be considered within this context. While Turks

⁸¹ İzmirli, Y. op.cit., p. 11.

⁸² Anonymous.

⁸³ Çelikkol,Z., op.cit., pp. 87 and 119.

⁸⁴ Sağır, A., 2012. “Tokat Cuisine as an Example to an Experiment on the Sociology of Food”, Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic, Volume 7/4, Fall, pp.. 2675- 2695.

*consume soup as the first course at meals, burek (filled pastry) is eaten as a starter in the European cuisine; these should not be considered as a trivial cultural element*⁸⁵.

Social and economic situation of the islands is directly associated with their geographical location. In other words, a self-sufficient economy chiefly based on agriculture and fishing seems to be the destiny of these islands. As famous historiographer *Ibn-i Khaldun* put it, “**Geography is Destiny.**” Geography has influenced the social and cultural situation of the Turkish identity in the islands⁸⁶.

In this respect, it is seen that the food culture of the Dodecanese is predominantly based on vegetables and fresh herb dishes are dominant in the food culture of the islands. Use of olive oil in cooking most of the time, essential place of milk desserts on dining tables⁸⁷ and frequent consumption of bird meat are all rooted in various geographical elements of the islands such as location, soil and climate. On the other hand, pastures suitable of raising small cattle is the main reason why lamb, mutton and kid goat meat are commonly preferred in the food culture of the islands. Nevertheless, seafood culture has also an important place in the islands.

Many informants interviewed within the scope of the Oral History Project talked about various varieties of food prepared by their mothers during their childhood in Rhodes and Kos and voiced concern over the fact that certain dishes special to the islands were about to be “*forgotten*”. It is understood that the food tradition in the islands could not be preserved. It is evident that this is closely associated with the superiority of the food culture in Turkey and acceptance of the food culture of the islands as a memorable tradition of the past. “*Dürme makarna (curled macaroni)*⁸⁸”, a dish cooked by the mother of an informant born in Kos in 1951 during her childhood until they immigrated to *Bodrum* and “*Pasticcio*⁸⁹” (*lasagna*) mentioned by *Çetin Saidakis* are just a few of the memories recalled by the island Turks who share a common taste.

Press & Publication Activities

It is reported that the first press activity in Rhodes was initiated in the Ottoman Period by Abidin Pasha, who served as the Governor of Rhodes between 1893 and 1914⁹⁰. One side of the newspaper published during the governorship of *Abidin Pasha*, *Bahri Sefid* (the Mediterranean), was in Turkish and the reverse side was in Greek, *Aigion* (the Aegean). However, the date of publication and the publication frequency of the paper are not known. *İsmail Teyfik* explained the press and publication activities in Greece as follows⁹¹, *The first publications included books entitled Saadet-i Dünya “Happiness of the World” (Rodos, 1312), Rodos Tarihi “History of Rhodes” (1312) and Cezair-i Bahr-i Sefid Salnameleri “Mediterranean Islands Chronicles”. The first private Turkish-language newspaper to be published the Second Constitutional Era was Afıtab (the Sun), owned and directed by Fuad Beq and supported by articles written by Şevket Müderriszade. This newspaper printed in old Turkish script continued to be published weekly from 1908 to 1928. The Rhodes Greeks, on the other hand, started publishing a newspaper entitled Nea Rodos in 1907.”*

⁸⁵ *Beşirli, H., 2010. Food, Culture and Identity, National Folklore, Year: 22, No.: 87, pp. 159- 169.*

⁸⁶ See Document. Belge 4 and etc.

⁸⁷ *Çirim, B., 2014. Dishes That Immigrated to Izmir, Ege University Faculty of Letters Department of History Graduation, Izmir, , p. 77.*

⁸⁸ Oral interview with Sabriye Cengiz.

⁸⁹ Oral interview with Çetin Saidakis.

⁹⁰ *Nasuhoğu, S., 2008. Rodos: Anılar ve Tarihe “Rhodes: Memoirs and Brief History”) Muğla p..44*

⁹¹ *Tevfik, İ., 1932. Adana Ve 12 Ada Matbuatı (Adana and the Dodecanese Press), Foreign Ministry Press. p. 7*

Meryem Orakçı⁹² has reported that a second Greek newspaper called *Rodiaki* started publication during the Italian Period while *Afitab* and *Nea Rodos* papers were still in publication; that the Italians started publishing in 1915 a newspaper called *Messaggero di Rodi*, which was involved in consistent fascism propaganda; and that the Jews also entered the press world in 1928 with a monthly magazine called *Ruzname* and a weekly newspaper called *El Bolletin*.

It can be said that the most important medium for the Muslim Turks of Rhodes during the Italian Period was the *Selam* Newspaper. Orakçı⁹³, who published a book entitled *"Muslim of Rhodes-Selam Newspaper 1926-1936"* on the *Selam* Newspaper, said, *"The paper that met the needs of the Muslims of Rhodes in their social life during the Italian Period was Selam Newspaper. The first issue of the paper was published on May 24, 1926; the owner and the director was Mehmet Kadri and the editor-in-chief was Hizkia Franko. In addition to informing the Muslims in the islands about the decisions of the Italian Administration and the attitudes of the governments of Turkey and Italy, Mehmet Kadri asserted that the paper would also meet the needs of the Muslims concerning social solidarity and inter-society communication. He also stated that they also aimed at familiarizing Muslims with the press culture. Mehmet Kadri intended to reach not only Muslims but also Jewish readers in Rhodes.*

Hizkia Franko Mehmet Kadri, Merkado Hasson, Vitalis Strumza, Atufet Nuşin, Benzion Menşe, Tevfik Nevzat, Mehmet Recep, M.Rüştü, Doktor Cevdet Rasim, Mükerrerem Emin, Hekimbaşızade Doctor Muhittin, Doctor İzmirli H.Mizrahi and Doctor Avni can be named among the regular writers of the paper. Main headings of the paper included Local News (about the Community, Municipality, Republic of Turkey, Consulate of Rhodes, births, deaths, marriages, official openings, reassignments, newspaper and magazine advertisements, Letters to the Editor etc.) and columns (entitled The Schooler, Entertainment etc.)

Article series were also published in Selam. They included Rodoslu Nuri Efendi (Nuri Effendi of Rhodes), Terbiye Bahsi (A Matter of Good Manners), Asri Muaşerette Aile (Family in Modern Etiquette), Rodos'ta İslam Adatı (Muslim Customs in Rhodes), Büyük adamlardan Dante Alligieri (Dante Alligieri, a Great Man), İtalya Seyahatı Hatıraları (Memoirs on Journey to Italy), İstanköy'de bir Hafta (A Week in Kos), 10 Saatte Büyükdere'den Birindizi'ye (From Buyukdere to Brindisi in 10 Hours), Şark'ta Nükte Perdazlık (Humor Organization in the East), Osmanlı Tarihinden Birkaç Yaprak (A Few Pages from the Ottoman History), Şapçıpaşı (Chief of Sherbet), Acıklı Hatıralardan Derviş İsak (Pathetic Memoirs of Dervish Isak)."

Thus, *Selam* Newspaper enabled us to access information about Muslim organizations such as Muslim Community of Rhodes and Community Committee, Professional Societies, Social Societies (Benevolent Society for the Poor, Muslim Graves Commission, Muslim Sports Club, Foundation Committee of Rhodes) as well as the educational situation of the Muslim Turks, their relations with the Italian Government, their attitudes towards Turkey, their relations with other communities and social and cultural life of Muslim Turks in Rhodes..

The press life starting from the occupation of Rhodes by the British in 1945 was conveyed by Sadi Nasuhoğlu as follows, *"A new breeze of democracy was blowing in the island with the British occupation. Taking this opportunity, the Rhodes Turks first changed*

⁹² Orakçı, M.,2012. *Rodos Müslümanları.Selam Gazetesi* (Muslims of Rhodes and Selam Newspaper) 1926-1936 Kitap Pub, Istanbul

⁹³ Orakçı, M., 2012.op.cit.

*the Muslim Community of Rhodes Then they founded the Rhodes Peoples' Club. In the meantime, Fuat Sulaki, who came from a long-standing family of Crete, started to publish a Turkish language newspaper called Rodos (Rhodes) in the public print house where *Messagero di Rodi* used to be printed during the Italian Period. At first, the paper was published twice weekly. Then the Greeks removed him from the print house; however, Fuat Sulaki typed the paper in his house and ran off copies using a Polygraph. Later on He would ride his bicycle and distribute the copies of the paper to the Turkish shopkeepers. He would not even charge anything most of the time. Rodos was published for about two years in 1945 and 1946. It was also seen that the island Turks, who failed to appreciate the cultural value of the paper, did not provide enough support by buying its copies. The publication of the paper came to an end with the immigration of Fuat Sulaki to Turkey.*

TURKS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN RHODES AND KOS

It is known that Turks living in the Dodecanese experienced great difficulties during the Second World War as was the case for the other elements in the islands. In fact, it is seen that problems started when the sovereignty of the islands was transferred to Italy with the Treaty of Ouchy. The Dodecanese Islands remained under Italian occupation during the First World War and the Italian rule continued until 1943. However, according to a news article published in Greece, there were reports about a prospective invasion of the Dodecanese Islands by Turkey⁹⁴. The islands were under German occupation for two years from 1943 to 1945 during the Second World War and then they were transferred to the British Administration on May 09 1945. The British ruled these islands as a proxy on behalf of the Allied Powers in accordance with the Italian legislation until May 31 1947 and the Dodecanese Islands were finally ceded to Greece according to Article 14 of the Treaty of Paris signed on February 10 1947.

Occupation of the islands by Italy was the beginning of a series of problems for various ethnicities including Turks. As stated by an island Turk⁹⁵, ***“Following the occupation, Italians deported Turkish intellectuals to certain places in Italy like Lukka in the Province of Toscana.”***

It was also conveyed that the Italian Administration treated the Turkish people quite well during the reign of King Victoria Emmanuel. by an island Turk⁹⁶ made the comments on this issue, ***“According to what my mother told me, Italian soldiers did not mistreat the island people during the imperial period.”***

Another islander⁹⁷, ***“My parents witnessed the Italian period. They said Italians acted in their own manner. Some of them married in Rhodes and became a matrilocal resident in their wife’s household. Some had extramarital children. Some others moved to Italy after they married. There was a woman here who had married an Italian general.”***

⁹⁴ See Document 5 and etc.

⁹⁵ Anonymous

⁹⁶ Anonymous

⁹⁷ Anonymous

With the onset of the Italian fascist period, Italian-medium instruction became compulsory in island schools. Turkish teachers who did not speak Greek were appointed to Greek schools; conversely, Greek teachers who did not speak Turkish were assigned to Turkish schools. Only one-hour religious classes a day were allowed in Turkish schools. Commenting on this issue, an island Turk⁹⁸ said, ***“During the Italian period Turks and Greeks in Kos had to go to Italian schools. It is known that there were Turkish and Greek courses in schools. There were also religious classes.”***

Italian also became the official language in the islands in this period. Freedom of press and expression was restricted. Conditions became more unbearable in 1925. Here is what Halit Aydınli⁹⁹ stated as regards Italian efforts to Italianize Greeks and Turks, ***“During the fascist period , it could the year 1936, they gave me the uniform of the Italian Navy at school. My father refused. When the school director said it was compulsory, I had to leave school.”***

Suna Hamid¹⁰⁰, ***“I went to an Italian schools in Rhodes in the Italian period. There were teachers called signore (Mr/Sir). I studied Italian for five years. There weren’t many Turks going to school in Rhodes. Children would often come to Turkey to study.”***

Ahmet Bayzanoğlu¹⁰¹; ***“During the Second World War in 1940-1941, I was in second grade. They were calling us ‘Mussolini Kids’ We would sing Giovinezza¹⁰² every morning before starting our classes. The anthem would end with the words ‘Benito Mussolini’.”***

Rıfat Maşazade¹⁰³, ***“As I was born during the Second World War, I learned the hardships of the war from my elders. They forced a relative of mine to join the Youth Branch of the Fascist Party during the Italian period and the family hurried the child away to Fethiye to avoid this. That kid later became a lawyer in Turkey.”***

Another island Turk¹⁰⁴, ***“My mother went the School of Nursing and learned Italian there. People had a positive impression of Italians in the beginning. However, they started to apply more pressure on Turks during the fascist rule of Mussolini. They treated Christians differently, tough. Those who refused to send their children to Italian schools could face imprisonment or banishment. There were also some Turks who displayed fascist inclinations. There were also Turkish teachers who had become fascists.”***

Pressure was increasing on those living in the Dodecanese to accept Italian citizenship. Sadi Nasuhoğlu¹⁰⁵ maintained that Italians passed a nationality law in 1925 granting Turks

⁹⁸ Anonymous

⁹⁹ Oral interview with Halit Aydınli.

¹⁰⁰ Oral interview with Suna Hamid .

¹⁰¹ Oral interview with Ahmet Payzanoğlu .

¹⁰² *Giovinezza* (Italian for youth), is the official anthem of the National Fascist Party. It was sung during the [March on Rome](#) (*La Marcia su Roma*) organized by the Fascist Party in October 1922. [Salvator Gotta](#) was commissioned to write the new lyrics and it became the official anthem of the party in 1926.

¹⁰³ Oral interview with Rıfat Maşazade.

¹⁰⁴ Anonymous

¹⁰⁵ Oral interview with Sadi Nasuhoğlu.

three different types of citizenship, namely *Cittadini Turchia* (Turkish citizen), *Cittadini Egeo* (Aegean citizen) and *Cittadini Italiani* (Italian citizen) and he went on to say,

“Turkish citizens did not have a right to own property, start a business or acquire a career in Rhodes. They really suffered great hardships and could not own property and real estate. They toiled as workers, fishermen or repairmen but could never get rich. 800 people accepted to become Turkish citizens in Rhodes. Of which 100 were originally from Rhodes and 700 were immigrants from Crete. Aegean citizens were permitted to own property. Start their own businesses and work as public servants. There were also some Turks who accepted Italian citizenship. Their number was about 10 and they served as policemen in the Italian Arm, worked as security officers or teacher but were blacklisted by Turkey. Nevertheless, some of those who chose Italian citizenship tried to enter Turkey illicitly but they were apprehended and imprisoned.”

All these pressures brought about a rush of immigration from the Dodecanese Islands and the population of the islands dwindled by 15 percent in this period.

In an official letter he sent to the Prime Ministry on June 10 1947, then Foreign Minister of the Turkish Republic *Hasan Saka*, who was a Kos Turk himself, made reference to concerns resulting from the deterioration in the cultural level of the Dodecanese Turks stating that the academic level of the Rhodes High School had receded to that of a primary school.. The minister added that Turks were experiencing a serious cultural identity problem and a rush of immigration had already started.

The fascist administration in the Dodecanese brought in intensive masses of Italian settlers. The original plan was to bring 300,000 settlers, mostly farmers, to the islands annually. However, 20-30 families who had settled in the islands returned to Italy before the end of first year.

The fortifications and preparations undertaken in the Dodecanese by the Italians during the Second World War worked to the advantage of their allies Germany as military bases for the navy and the army. After Mussolini was ousted from power and Italy withdrew from the war, Germans occupied the Dodecanese Islands in 1943. Then the British forced laid siege to Rhodes and the island came under intense bombardment.

It is known that the people in these islands suffered not only from bombardments but also from famine and tragic events that followed.

*Rafet Faralyali*¹⁰⁶, ***“In the Second World War, Germans seized Rhodes from the Italians in 1943. In an effort to prevent the German occupation, Britain cut off its communication with the outer world using all her military forces including ships and planes. While trying to bombard the Germans, they blasted the city without any distinction of target. During these air raids, a great number of houses were demolished and many civilians were killed or injured. People started to find a way out. Some fled to rural areas. My family did not leave our house as they had a bomb shelter built under the garden. Rhodes was dependent on Turkey as far as food supplies are concerned. Famine broke out in the garden with the start of the British siege. Germans issued orders at that time. Manufacture, distribution and sale of food items would be subject to official permission. Many people who violated this order were imprisoned. Food prices soared. People would consent to trade a sewing machine for a kilo of olive oil. Hunger had reached such an unbearable extent. They mostly ate snails. There was an incident of theft at the public prison.***

¹⁰⁶ Oral interview with Rafet Faralyali .

The warden said ‘I give you three days. If the thief does not admit his crime, I will have all three of you executed by a firing squad.’ When nobody accepted blame at the end of the third day, three inmates including my cousin were shot to death. German soldiers were very discipline while Italian soldiers were unconventional. There were incidents of verbal and physical molestation when they saw a female.”

Vedia İnamlı¹⁰⁷, *“I was a child during the Second World War. When there was an air raid we would run to the shelters. You could not image the fear we went through while running to the bomb shelter under the castle, nobody would help those who fell down, people would step on one another. When sirens signaled the end of the air raid, we would leave the shelter. City dwellers were less fortunate dealing with the difficulties compared to those living in rural villages. We had nothing in the city. Many people starved to death. I remember Germans’ raiding the houses and seizing the flour, sugar or whatever they found.”*

Zehra Topaloğlu¹⁰⁸ stated, *“We did not face any problems in the Italian period. When Italians and Germans broke ranks, Germans occupied Rhodes. Germans seized our house. They drove us out and moved in our house. They laid in ammunition and weapons all around the house. They also seized our grain and animals. They wrote down what they took but never paid back. They only let us milk our animals so we scraped for our living by selling milk. The punishment for theft during the German occupation was the death row. They told us they would make people dig their own graves before shooting them to death.”*

Another island Turk¹⁰⁹ said, *“I was eight years old when the war broke out. There was great starvation, many died. Germans were seizing all our animals. They butchered all our bulls, chickens and turkeys. We were left with only two cows at the end of the war. We suffered a lot from the air raids. My father would dig a hole in the ground and we would hide in it.”*

Gazi Şellavcı¹¹⁰, *“People suffered a lot of difficulties during the Second World War. The main problem was starvation. My mother would tell me, ‘Germans would make rough estimations in the wheat fields’. ‘You need this much’ they would say and seize the rest of the wheat. At night, we would steal from the stock of grain we produced.”*

Sunay İspartalı¹¹¹, *“People living in Rhodes and other islands suffered greatly from starvation. They even ate cats and dogs. German soldiers would collect wheat and animals from houses.”*

A Turk from Kos¹¹² stated, *“A great famine broke out in Kos. Soldiers started seeing civilians as enemies when the war broke out and they seized whatever the army needed. Then they loaded everything into planes and left. They took many animals and did not pay anything in return. The Allies staged many air and naval offensives to take the island. We had built a bomb shelter. We would run into the shelter as soon as we heard the sound of the cannon fire. They would go back after the bombarding the city for a few hours. Many Turks abandoned the island during the war and eventually the Turkish population dwindled,”* and another Turk from Kos¹¹³ said, *“The Second World War started in 1939. British planes were raiding the island. During the first years Germans and Italians were allies. I spoke fluent Italian. They said there were 70,000 Italian troops in the island. The islands went under German rule in 1943. The islands were struck by starvation. People*

¹⁰⁷ Oral interview with Vedia İnamlı.

¹⁰⁸ Oral interview with Zehra Topaloğlu.

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous

¹¹⁰ Oral interview with Gazi Şellavcı.

¹¹¹ Oral interview with Sunay İspartalı .

¹¹² Anonymous

¹¹³ Anonymous

started to starve to death; I saw some swollen dead bodies. We were farmers. Although we had some means, we too had a hard time. We would hide our crops. Germans would seize our harvest and animals according to a law they passed.”

One of the dramatic events experienced following Germany’s seizure of the island from Italy was the mistreatment of the Jewish community by the Germans. When the Germans took over the administration of Rhodes from the Italians in September 1943, it is known that some 1,700 Jews were rounded up to be sent to concentration camps.

*Gülper Seyitzade*¹¹⁴ disclosed in an interview held on this issue, **“Germans rounded up all the Jews in 1944-45. They put them in huge buildings across from Çimenlik. Those who were Turkish or Italian nationals were later set free.”**

*Rafet Faralyalı*¹¹⁵, **“The Germans implemented a policy of annihilation against the Jewish people. Some of them escaped prosecution. Some others married Turkish girls and converted to Islam. They reconverted to their original faith when the situation got back to normal”**

*Ahmet Şamoğlu*¹¹⁶, **“They also rounded up the Jews in Kos. Germans confiscated the properties of the Jewish people. When Greeks took over the islands, they assumed possession of the properties Germans had seized from the island people. A Jewish woman was said to be freed thanks to her Turkish nationality.”**

In this context, the Turkish Consul General in Rhodes during the Second World War, *Selahattin Ülkümen*, has a special place in the hearts of the Jewish Community of Rhodes¹¹⁷. As is known, *Ülkümen* interceded on behalf of those Jews who were Turkish nationals. By his efforts, 42 Jewish families, totaling more than 200 Jews, were set free from the deportation to death camps. Only about 150 Jews survived this death voyage. More than 1,500 Rhodes Jews lost their lives in concentration camps. *Ülkümen* was deported from Rhodes by the Nazi Administration in August 1944 and spent the rest of the war in a prison in Piraeus. After the surrender of the Germans in 1945, he returned to Turkey¹¹⁸. When asked about the motives of his attitude after years, *Ülkümen* replied, **“There was no specific reason; I just did what my conscience told me to do”** and he received the **“Righteous among the Nations Award”** on June 26 1990 from the State of Israel.

Following the surrender of Germany in 1945, the Dodecanese were occupied by the Allied Powers¹¹⁹. The following year, the islands were awarded to Greece at the Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers convened under the British Administration on June 27 1946¹²⁰. Italy endorsed it on February 10 1947 and the Greek Military Government officially took over the administration of the Dodecanese Islands in April 1 1947.

However, the island Turks had a different anticipation. They expected that the islands would be given to Turkey. In this context, an official letter written to President *İsmet İnönü* by Secretary General of the Turkish Presidency and *İsmet İnönü*’s reply to this letter in which he mentioned the possibility of taking the islands unconditionally can be said to nurture such hopes¹²¹.

¹¹⁴ Oral interview with Gülper Seyitzade.

¹¹⁵ Oral interview with Rafet Faralyalı.

¹¹⁶ Oral interview with Ahmet Şamoğlu .

¹¹⁷ <http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/selahattin> Access December 03 2014

¹¹⁸ <http://www.biyografi.net>. Access December 03 2014

¹¹⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 493

¹²⁰ Hayta,N., 2014. op.cit.

¹²¹ See Document 6 and etc.

Zehra Topaloğlu¹²² stated, *“They said there were rumors among Turks; Turkey had deployed troops to Marmaris Kadirga and would capture Rhodes. All the Turks decorated the city with flags. My late father prepared a huge flag and hung it on top of the chimney. Turkish flags streamed for days. Then the Greek Army arrived instead of the Turkish troops. When the Greeks came Turkish flags were hauled down. Not many problems were experienced with Greek in the beginning but troubles started with the Cyprus Conflict”.*

Ahmet Şamoğlu¹²³ said, *“We thought the Turkish Army would come to the islands at the end of the war. We took our flags and went to the port to meet them. When we went near the ships, we saw that all of them were Greek ships. The Greeks were hugging and kissing one another and we just looked at them despondently. I later immigrated to Turkey for fear that the Greeks would seize our crops and I didn’t want to serve in the Greek Army.”*

Ali Hüsamoğlu from Kos expressed this expectation in this way¹²⁴, *“My father was not interested in politics but always said ‘Turks will come.’ That is, he was an extreme nationalist. During the days towards the end of the war, my father saw warships approaching the island while he was plowing in his field. Feeling great joy, he went to the barn, dragged the calf all the way to the port. He intended to butcher his calf for the Turkish troops. When he arrived at the port, the Turks were in the front lines and the Greeks were standing at the back. As the flags of the ships became visible, it was understood that they were Greek ships and the greeters changed positions, Greeks moving into the front lines. A Greek greeter said to my father, ‘Greek troops are here; now we will chop off your heads.’ So my father went back in disappointment to finish plowing his field. From then on my father always said, ‘Turks will come. Turks will come.’ He lived and died there.”*

Nevertheless, immigration of island Turks to Turkey had already started during the Second World War.

Vedia İnamlı¹²⁵, *“There were families who emigrated from Rhodes during the war. They escaped to Marmaris by motor boats.*

A Turk from Kos¹²⁶, *“Towards the end of the war, Turks and Greeks left the island with the arrival of the German in 1943. They went to Turkey. My grandfather and uncles were among them.”*

Another informant¹²⁷, *“There were people who escaped the famine in Kos and settled in Bodrum. There were also others who immigrated to Istanbul, Izmir and Nazilli.”*

A Turk from Rhodes¹²⁸ made similar comments, *“There was a rush of immigration to Anatolia. This situation continued with the ceding of the island to Greece. My two brothers fled illegally to Turkey not to serve in the Greek Army.”*

However, one of the serious traumas experienced by the Turks at the end of the war is said to be as follows¹²⁹, *“We came to Marmaris by ships towards the end of the war., we stayed there for about 4-5 months and returned home when the war ended. However, I heard that we were made to return by İsmet İnönü’s orders not to cause the population in the islands to decrease. Many people went back to the islands crying.”*

¹²² Oral interview with Zehra Topaloğlu.

¹²³ Oral interview with Ahmet Şamoğlu.

¹²⁴ Oral interview with Ali Hüsamoğlu.

¹²⁵ Oral interview with Vedia İnamlı

¹²⁶ Anonymous

¹²⁷ Anonymous

¹²⁸ Anonymous

¹²⁹ Anonymous

All these statements mentioned above will be remembered as important factors determining the political preferences of those who immigrated to Turkey in later years.

It is seen that the problems brought about by the Second World War continued well into the post-war era. It is known that the land mines laid on the coasts of the islands of Rhodes and Kos caused many dramatic events. Despite intensive efforts to clear these mines, some of them went unnoticed and caused many people to be blown to pieces. *Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı*¹³⁰ conveyed how his grandfather was blown to pieces while plowing a mined field: ***“My grandfather Ahmet Pamuk, my mother’s father, stepped on a mine while plowing his field and was blown to pieces. We heard a big explosion from the house. When we reached the accident scene, we found the broken body of my grandfather.”*** Another dramatic event was the consequent impact of the Greek Civil War¹³¹, 1945-1948, on the islands. The Civil

¹³⁰ Oral interview with Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı.

¹³¹The Greek Civil War was a right-left conflict which pushed Greece into a political instability and its impacts continued to prevail until 1955. As is known, Greece was occupied first by Italy then by Germany during the Second World War and Greek patriots formed various resistance groups against the German occupation. Among them, dominant organizations were left-wing Greek National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS) and right-wing Greek Democratic National Army (EDES). They staged an effective struggle against the German Occupation Army in Greece.

Following the defeat of Greece, it was decided that Greece would take place within the British sphere of influence. Following this reconciliation known as the Percentages Agreement, Britain sent troops to Greece and the British Army allied with ELAS and EDES to remove Germans from Greece.

The first stage of the civil war started on December 04 1944 when Greek Prime Minister asked ELAS to lay down arms and leave Athens. ELAS refused to comply with this ultimatum on the grounds that they were concerned that Britain would bring the King back to power along with a rightist dictator. Armed clashes, which started in and around Athens, lasted for about three weeks. Then the National Liberation Front (EAM), the political branch of ELAS, agreed to a ceasefire. EAM and EDAS reached an agreement on February 12 1945, ending the first stage of the Greek Civil War.

The second stage of the Greek Civil War started with formation of the government and return of the King to Greece. This stage is somewhat different in nature from the first one due to the fact the Greek Civil War had become an international issue when it was brought to the attention of the United Nations (UN) and left-wing groups in three neighbors of Greece (Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania) provided support to leftist groups in Greece.

Guerilla warfare started in northern Greece in 1946. At first people are known to be sympathetic towards guerilla fighters. Weakness of the central government, poor economic conditions and incidents of social injustice enabled guerillas to gain support of villagers. The central government forces were having a hard time coping with the guerillas, who were using the advantage of the rugged mountains in the area and getting help from three communist states. Despite the success of ELAS fighters in the beginning, the civil war resulted in the victory of the rightists when the assistance provided by outside forces was cut off.

Although the civil war ended early 1948, small-scale clashes continued intermittently. Greece entered a period of political instability after the war and a total of thirteen governments were formed led by Liberals and Social Democrats within the course of four years (1948-1952).

As has been the case in all civil wars, both sides staged unprecedented violence during the Greek Civil War and suffered the greatest losses in this period. American and British planes dropped more bombs on Greek civilians than resistance fighters. Sources state that in addition to over half a million Greek deaths some 700,000 people became refugees. Of a total of 158,000 deaths reported between 1946 and 1949, 11,000 were loyalist government soldiers and 38,000 were resistance fighters.

war, fought in mainland Greece, had some repercussions in Rhodes and Kos, as well. Although the islands were not directly involved in fighting, many crippled and sick people came to the islands after the Civil War. *Abdurrahman Kaymakçı*¹³² wrote the following in his memoirs; ***“I witnessed arrival of many crippled and sick people in Rhodes. I was shocked by what I heard from these people. They were saying that fathers had killed their sons and vice versa. Fighters even used sharp tin plates when they couldn’t find anything else to chop off heads. These people also said that the Athens Government displayed severed heads of rebels in village squares. I was also told that exhibiting severed heads on display was an old Greek tradition.”***

ECONOMY AND TURKS IN RHODES AND KOS

Social and economic situation in Rhodes and Kos have always been shaped in association with the sea owing to their geographical locations. An economic structure based primarily on agricultural economy (plant production, animal production, fishing and sponge diving) and trade was dominant in the islands until recently. However, the economic structure of the islands of Rhodes and Kos has focused on service sectors such as tourism. The other sectors continue to exist depending on tourism. As is known, tourism is a sector which has gained greater economic prominence as of the second half of the 20th century.

It can be stated that Turks living in Rhodes and Kos were mainly dealing with agricultural activities, but also were also involved in industry, trade and craftsmanship in this respect. More preferred crafts among the islanders included blacksmithing, waitering, masonry, shoe repairing, yoghurt making, baking, milk dealing and street vending.

*Ahmet Kirevliyasi*¹³³ expressed his opinions on the general role of Turks in the economy of the islands as follows, ***“Most of the Turks ere small-scale farmers. They were involved in family farming. There were some big farms during the Ottoman rule but the size of land per family ranges from 10 to 30 acres in the Greek period.***

There were fewer craftsmen. Saddle making was important among those crafts because people were using horses and donkeys for manual labor and transportation. Every farmer had a horse or a donkey. This was true until the year 1965. Saddle making still continued in those years for the sake of tourism. They continue to be made as giftware. Naturally, horse shoe blacksmithing was also common among Turks. It can be said that Turks dominated the economy during the Ottoman and Italian periods. As for the industry, Turks owned some small dairies for processing milk and dairy products. There were also Turks who owned oil plants until the 1960’s.

There are people who have expanded their dairy establishments and are still in business today. Turks also have a say in sectors including pastry making, sweet makingy and ice cream making as well as baking.”

Abstracts related to the Greek War are as foolows, respectively:

“The Struggle for Greece 1941–1949, C.M.Woodhouse, Hurst & Company, London 2002 (first published 1976),

<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/yunan-ic-savasi>;<http://www.serenti.org/yunanistan-ic-savasi>,

Belli, M., 1999. I have Known People-Memoirs of Mihri Belli. Compiled by Doğan Bookstore

¹³² *Kaymakçı, A., 1974.* Memoirs of Rhodes (Unprinted)

¹³³ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

Then again *Rıfat Maşazade*¹³⁴ stated, ***“Turks in Rhodes were not educated to become doctors or engineers. They couldn’t serve as public servants, either. I know only two Turks who worked for the government during the Italian administration. One of them was a driver at the municipality and the other was a garbage collector. In addition to farming, Turks would earn their living as craftsmen, grocers, harness makers, tanners or shoemakers.*”**

On the other hand, Kos was rather more dependent on agriculture. Besides small land owners, they would work in vegetable and fruit picking jobs in the fields.

An anonymous Turk¹³⁵ from Kos commented, ***“The Turks in Kos were involved in jobs in agriculture, related crafts, military service and public offices. For example, jobs including plow making, saddle making, blacksmithing and shoemaking were primarily performed by Turks. They later learned other crafts such as woodworking, furniture making, goldsmithing, chest making, dressmaking and shoemaking.”*”**

At the end of the Second World War, on the other hand, onset of large-scale unemployment among the island Turks, the young population in particular, triggered a rush of immigration to not only Turkey but also countries such as Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, Some of them came back; some of them didn’t. *Ceyhun Derviş*¹³⁶ reminisced, “

***“Unemployment started in the islands after the war. Most of the Turks went to Germany as guest workers. Greeks, however, spread all over the world. They even went to Australia, Africa and the U.S.A. The population of Rhodes dwindled. Some of the Greek immigrants returned home after Greece became a member the European Union.”*”**

Some Turks like *Cengiz Kovacıoğlu* conveyed that he had gone to Germany as a tourist, found a job and settled there¹³⁷.

***“In fact, I wanted to come to Turkey. When they didn’t let me go, I went to Germany in 1969. At first; I worked as a porter in a factory for three years. Then I got a job in a service station as a technician.”*”**

Unemployment was even more widespread among girls whose only choice was dressmaking.

It is observed that Turks were a dominant force in the economy during the transfer of the islands to Greece. An island Turk explains this as follows¹³⁸.

***“As was the case in Rhodes, Turks were also dominant in Kos, particularly in economy and farming, until 1947 when the island was ceded to Greece. All the farmlands were owned by Turks. Greeks were working for Turks. After 1947, however, a large-scale immigration started. Farmlands and the economy in general passed into the hands of Greeks. Turkish islanders sold out their properties.”*”**

*Another islander confirmed this opinion with similar words*¹³⁹.

***“The Turks in Rhodes would deal with all sorts of occupations. We had our farmers, tradesmen, craftsmen and even doctors. Even today, there are about 110-120 Turkish shops in the inner castle grounds. There is also a dairy plant that belongs to some Turks. There are some others who are involved in construction work and trade.”*”**

It can be stated that the number of island Turks working in the agricultural sector in our day has gradually decreased and that they are predominantly employed in tourism-related jobs or in handicraft making. Following the tourism boom of the 1970’s, on the other hand, the value of land has soared and landowners have gained a privileged status. However, this

¹³⁴ Oral interview with Rıfat Maşazade.

¹³⁵ Oral interview with Mehmet İzmirlioğlu

¹³⁶ Oral interview with Ceyhun Derviş.

¹³⁷ Oral interview with Cengiz Kovacıoğlu.

¹³⁸ Anonymous

¹³⁹ Anonymous

has caused the Turkish landowners in Rhodes and Kos to sell out their lands to the Greeks islanders.

Class differences were observed among the Turks living in Rhodes and Kos, too¹⁴⁰. *Sadi Nasuhoğlu*¹⁴¹ made the following additional comments on this issue.

“There were certain differences among the Rhodes Turks as regards not only earnings but also educational levels. We had different categories of people; wealthy culture category, middle class people, farmers and also the Cretan Turks.”

Changes that have taken place in the islands in industry, agriculture and service sectors can be briefly conveyed as follows:

Industry

The Dodecanese Islands have always been dependent on the outside world as far as industrial products are concerned. Industry was limited to small-scale industrial products and handicrafts. Production was primarily related to handicrafts such as earthenware making, tile making, ceramics, leather (tanning), plastics, logging, small-scale chemical production and small machine repairs. On the other hand, small and medium-scale agricultural industry was engaged in meeting the needs of the tourists and the islanders. These included agricultural industrial branches producing olive oil, jams, wine and dairy products. Wine production and storage facilities are primarily located in *Kelebekler Vadisi* (Valley of Butterflies).

There were also some Turks among the owners of small-scale milk processing plants and workshops making jams, e.g. tomato jam, For instance, an islanders who used to work in jam making said,¹⁴² ***“About 15-16 predominantly Turkish female workers would work in the workshop during the jam making season. To make tomato jam, first the tomatoes were placed in lime for 3 hours. The hardened tomatoes were then washed and sweetened using the right amount of sugar. Next day lemon salt and almonds are added and the mixture was poured into cauldrons and cooked until thickened. Cooking would first start at high temperatures and then the mixture would be left to simmer. Cooked tomatoes were kept in cauldrons until next morning. Then the jam was properly jarred and labeled.”***

Another islander mentioned that his family had a dairy establishment¹⁴³.

“My father had a small dairy. He would make yoghurt and sell in our neighborhood. Later, he increased his production with the help of my brothers and started producing cheese and ice cream in addition yoghurt. He would collect large amounts of milk from the cow breeders by providing assurance that he would buy their milk on a regular basis. After my father had gone, one of my brothers immigrated to Turkey and started his own business. My other brother took over the dairy plant and expanded the business even more. Now he is in a position to be able to give credits to Greek farmers.”

Another anonymous island Turk had the following to say on the same issue¹⁴⁴, ***“There were people among Turks who owned dairies. They would produce yoghurt and cheese. Then, Greeks started to discredit the Turkish products. They alleged that there***

¹⁴⁰ *Macar E., 2006. “Problems of the Dodecanese Turks since Lausanne” Istanbul University, Faculty of Political Sciences Magazine No: 34 (March 2006)*

¹⁴¹ Oral interview with Sadi Nasuhoğlu.

¹⁴² Anonymous

¹⁴³ Anonymous

¹⁴⁴ Anonymous

some poisonous additives in the products and there were rumors about the Turkish intentions to poison Greeks gradually."¹⁴⁵

Yaşar Halepli¹⁴⁶, on the other hand, reminisced about the Italian period and the beginning of the Greek period, *"We had an old-fashioned oil plant. We would produce hand-squeezed olive oil in our plant."*

Agriculture

Right at the beginning of the 20th century agricultural products meeting the necessities included wheat, barley, cotton, olives, olive oil, wine, fruit and vegetables. Nevertheless, wheat had to be imported as the wheat production of Rhodes was never sufficient to meet the local needs. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman Government undertook efforts to promote growing new agricultural products in the farmlands of Rhodes. The government implanted tax exemptions in an effort to increase production of olives, olive oil, grapes, onions and potatoes. Orange (citrus) production and silk manufacturing were also encouraged in the islands. It should be kept in mind that immigrations from the islands were among the factors affecting agricultural production and performance in the islands. It is reported that about 2000-3000 seasonal farm workers were arriving in Turkey every year.

In Rhodes today, agricultural production includes grains, vegetables, tobacco, citrus fruits and olives. Olive trees of Rhodes continue to be the characteristic plants of the island's flora. Grapes, figs, carobs and citrus are among the main fruit trees that grow in the island.

Kos is the most productive island among the Dodecanese with respect to agricultural efficiency. Particularly, the northern and eastern parts of Kos have very fertile lands. Fruit trees are scattered almost all around the island and grains, vegetables, tobacco, olives, silk and wine are the main agricultural products. It is known that 72% of the farmlands of Kos belonged to Turks at the end of the 19th century and the remaining 28% to non-Muslims and that they were primarily engaged in growing vines¹⁴⁷.

Rhodes and Kos had larger pasture grounds than the other Dodecanese islands and animal breeding was the second most important source of income after agricultural production. As mentioned before, while the production of animal products declined, small cattle breeding maintained its importance. Vast shrub lands called the maquis helped goat and sheep breeding become an important part of the economy of the islands. For example, it is seen that more than 90% of the animals raised in Kos at the end of the 19th century were small cattle, mostly goats¹⁴⁸. This is the reason why mutton and goat meat have been predominantly preferred in the food culture of the islands. In recent years, however, raising dairy cattle has replaced small cattle breeding in importance.

¹⁴⁵ According to the writers of this report expansion of this dairy plant was undermined using various strategies. At one time, products of the plant were discredited. One of the brothers operating the plant is said to have died in a suspicious car accident. Today, children of this brother can hardly maintain the plant.

¹⁴⁶ Oral interview with Yaşar Halepli.

¹⁴⁷ Ahabap, Y., 2008. op.cit.

¹⁴⁸ Ahabap, Y., 2008. op.cit.

After the Ottoman rule had come to an end, majority of Turks in Rhodes and Kos were still engaged in farming during the Italian period and the first years of the Greek period. Therefore, it is possible to assume that most of the farm lands belonged to island Turks.

Two Turkish informants from Rhodes and Kos both shared the following^{149, 150}; “*Turks in Rhodes were mostly farmers during the Second World War and early Greek period. Majority of farmlands were by Turks.*”

Until recently, 90% of farming activities in Kos belonged to Turks. This had dwindled now. I think the present rate is about 70%.”

Bahattin Kaçuna¹⁵¹, Zehra Bastiyalı¹⁵² and Zehra Topaloğlu¹⁵³ also stated that majority of Turks were involved in farming.

.Kaçuna; “*The livelihood model of Turks was primarily based on farming. It was Turks who met food provisions of the island. I can say that Turks took up craftsmanship later on.*”

Bastiyalı; “*Most of the Turks in rural areas were involved in farming. Those in cities were mainly craftsmen. We hardly had any educated people among us. After finishing primary school, it was impossible for Turks study further unless they went to Turkey. We were unprivileged as far as education is concerned,*” and Topaloğlu stated; “*Most of the Turks in Rhodes were farmers. There were also differences among farmers with respect to the area of farmlands they cultivated.*”

Turks involved in farming in Rhodes and Kos have preferred to describe themselves as farm laborers¹⁵⁴.

It is known that ‘Family Farming’ was quite common among Turks involved in farming in the islands. Although there were some large land owners among Turks, the majority were small-scale farmers.

Leyla Pamuk said¹⁵⁵; “*We were breeding dairy cattle in the Greek period. My whole family, including myself, worked on our farm; we would do anything, including milking cows. We had about 20 heads of cattle.*”

Muhammed Ali¹⁵⁶; “*Our whole family would work in the fields. We grew tomatoes. We would cultivate tomatoes over an area of 30-40 acres. We would take our tomato harvest to one of the 3-4 paste processing plants. My father would wait in line at the factory to take cases.*”

Ahmet Payzanoğlu¹⁵⁷; “*My father and I were farmers. We grew fruit and vegetables. I was 14 years old then. It was my job to take our fruit and vegetable harvest to the market hall in a horse cart.*”

Ali Hüsamoğlu¹⁵⁸; “*My family were farmers. The whole family worked together because the land we were cultivating was very large. We were involved in growing all sorts of fruit and vegetables, grape vines and olives. We were also breeding sheep and cattle. We would even breed rabbits.*”

¹⁴⁹ Anonymous

¹⁵⁰ Anonymous

¹⁵¹ Oral interview with Bahattin Kaçuna.

¹⁵² Oral interview with Zehra Bastiyalı.

¹⁵³ Oral interview with Zehra Topaloğlu.

¹⁵⁴ Turkish word for farm laboring “*Rençberlik*” is a term borrowed from Persian. It means to toil and suffer and also means a laborer. The term denotes a person who makes a living from farming, whether or not he is a land owner. The Turkish term is “*çiftçi*” (farmer).

¹⁵⁵ Oral interview with Leyla Pamuk.

¹⁵⁶ Oral interview with Muhammed Ali Paşa.

¹⁵⁷ Oral interview with Ahmet Payzanoğlu.

¹⁵⁸ Oral interview with Ali Payzanoğlu.

It is also stated that there was strong solidarity among farmers during the first years of the Greek and Italian periods. Here is what *Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar* said on this issue¹⁵⁹,

“My father cultivated a land of 300-400 acres. Almost 30 laborers worked in the gardens in those years. No daily wages would be paid but work would be done collectively with mutual collaboration. One day everybody would work in our field, tomorrow they would work in another. All sorts of fruit and vegetables including figs and any other fresh fruit varieties would be grown in our gardens. The previous owner of the garden, an Englishman, had built a collector’s garden. Fruit and vegetables would be taken to the central market in Rhodes. We would carry our harvest in horse carts. We also had rabbits, peacocks, chickens and lambs.”

However, there were also those who would use seasonal laborers. *Fahriye Tabak*¹⁶⁰ conveyed. ***“We would hire laborers from abroad. People would come from Kos and help us as wage workers.”***

In this context, some of the Kos Turks are known to have worked as seasonal farm laborers although some of them had their own lands.

An anonymous Turk¹⁶¹ reminisced; ***“I suffered a lot in my childhood. My mother was a farm worker. She would pick tobacco and collect tomatoes. I would look after my younger siblings .I also worked as a farm laborer after I got married. My husband was a construction worker. Then we bought this small hotel with our saving,”*** and

*Halil Cinoğlu*¹⁶² said; ***“Most of the Turks were engaged in small-scale farming and farm labor.”***

It is seen that farm labor in Rhodes and Kos then, unlike recent times, was rather based on handicrafts as regards cultivation techniques.

*Fahriye Tabak*¹⁶³ said; ***“We would plow our fields with a mule-drawn plow those years.***

Those growing vegetables would work the soil with a spade¹⁶⁴.

A windmill is a mill commonly used in the islands to pump water from wells and to grind wheat¹⁶⁵. *Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı*¹⁶⁶ reminisced that the blades of the windmill in their

¹⁵⁹ Oral interview with Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar.

¹⁶⁰ Oral interview with Fahriye Tabak.

¹⁶¹ Anonymous

¹⁶² Oral interview with Halil Cinoğlu.

¹⁶³ Oral interview with Fahriye Tabak.

¹⁶⁴ A spade is a garden tool designed primarily for the purpose of digging or removing earth. It has a long handle, a wooden foot rest and a sharp metal or forked tip.

¹⁶⁵ Use of windmills in the islands was common for the purpose of making use of the energy of the wind to pump water from wells and also to grind wheat or other grains. It can be said it had two different types, namely: large bladed (sailed) windmills and European windmills.

The base of the large-bladed windmill is a cylindrical stone wall. There is a metal pole at the center of this base. Four large blades or sails mounted at the tip of the pole rotate with the energy of the wind. They can be as large as two meters. When the blades rotate with the wind, they turn the shaft at the center.

The base of the other type of windmill known as the European windmill among the farmers in Rhodes and Kos is a metal construction (three-pillared tower). It is 8-10 meters high. There is a gear box fixed close to the blades. The length of the blades made of tin plates is 1-1.5 meters. Even if the wind is not strong, the blades can rotate thanks to the gear box. There is a lock mechanism at the bottom controlled by a chain system to be used in windy weather. The reason why it is called the European windmill is the gear system as well as the European origin of this type of windmills.

garden would reach the ground and that passing under them could cause serious personal injuries; ***“My little brother Mustafa suffered a head injury while passing under the windmill and the accident left a permanent scar on his head,”*** he added.

Another device used to pump water in the islands was a spool called *seren*. It was a mechanism resembling a leverage.

Farmers would take their fruit and vegetable harvest to the fruit market at the center of the city. *Demir Kıbrıslı*¹⁶⁷; ***“We would bring our produce to the middlemen’s market in central Rhodes the night before. There were also some Turkish middlemen at the market.”***

*Ahmet Payzanoğlu*¹⁶⁸; ***“I was fourteen. I would take our harvest to the central market in a horse cart.”*** and

*Dürdane Kovacıoğlu*¹⁶⁹ said; ***“My father was a farmer. He would grow vegetables. He would take them to Mandraki.”***

Sponge diving and fishing have also gained prominence as sub-branches of agricultural production in the islands. Although they lost their importance in our day, it is understood that sponge diving was a significant source of livelihood for people in the islands of Symi, Kalymnos and Halki in the 19th century. There were also sponge divers among island Turks.

Here is what an islander told about sponge harvesting¹⁷⁰; ***“One of the occupations in Kos was sponge diving. There were divers who went overboard to collect the sponges and also some people in the boat on the surface who helped the diver. Divers would wear special diving suits, scaphanders, and heavy metal helmets called “caldrons”. Air would be pumped to the helmet through a hose connected to a ship-board air pump. There was also a tether line (a guide line) connecting the diver to the boat. The diver would give a signal by pulling the line after he cut the sponges. There were different qualities of sponges called the first, second, third and the scrap. Moreover, there was the wild type and the mild type. Sponges would be marketed by Greek traders. At present, sponge diving has come to a standstill due to a disease related to most species. However, it was reported by trawlers that a few sponges were spotted under the sea this year.”***

Ali Savaşan stated the following¹⁷¹; ***“Sponge diving is not a profession passing from father to son. Healthy people would be sponge divers. In sponge diving, half of the harvest would be given to the owner of the boat. Agreements would be made in winter and a down payment would be made. A bonus was also given depending on the amount of sponges collected. There were also skin divers but most divers used scaphanders called “machines. “They would communicate through the tether line in case of danger. Our main concern was the danger posed by sea turtles. They could tear off our hoses. Some of the divers became crippled for this reason.”***

Although windmills continue to be important sources of energy in developing countries, their role has become quite limited in industrialized countries. The model and performance of a windmill largely depend on the speed direction and strength of the wind. Locations where the wind speed is 29-40 km per hour are suitable for windmills. Winds weaker than 8 km cannot rotate the windmill, whereas very strong winds may cause major damage.

¹⁶⁶ Oral interview with Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı.

¹⁶⁷ Oral interview with Demir Kıbrıslı.

¹⁶⁸ Oral interview with Ahmet Payzanoğlu.

¹⁶⁹ Oral interview with Dürdane Kovacıoğlu.

¹⁷⁰ Oral interview with Ali Savaşan.

¹⁷¹ Oral interview with Ali Savaşan.

Rafet Faralyalı¹⁷²; *“There were Turks who were engaged in sponge diving in Rhodes. the Kaya family, for example, were both sponge divers and fishermen. In fact, one of them was a friend of mine. He got the bends while diving.”*

Fishing is also a widespread activity in the islands. Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar¹⁷³ said; *“Fish were caught with fishnets called trawls (trata)¹⁷⁴. Ten people on each side of the boat would drag the net through the water towards the coast.”*

Trade and Service Sectors

Some of the Turks living in the islands were engaged in trade until the Italian occupation. Asude Keleş¹⁷⁵ revealed; *“My father and grandfather carried out trade between Turkish cities like Fethiye and Kaş during the Ottoman period.”*

Günay Çümbüş¹⁷⁶, on the other hand, said; *“My father was a tradesman He was a gentleman who spoke 3-4 languages. We owned two stores. We were living in beautiful large house in the city.”*

Another informant, Sevim Civelek¹⁷⁷, stated; *“My husband was an animal trader. He also had a tannery. He would collect and process raw leather.”*

It is known that trade was mainly carried out with Anatolian coastal towns close to Rhodes including Marmaris, Fethiye, Bodrum, Datça and Antalya. Commercial potential of the island of Rhodes was greater than that of other islands. Rhodes was the center of east-west transit trade in the Ottoman period¹⁷⁸. The relations of Rhodes with Greece, Egypt and European countries started to increase as of the end of the 19th century. Hamidiye Company was operating between Izmir and Rhodes; Egypt Company and Lloyd Company, between Rhodes and Alexandria; and Hajji Davoud Boats between Rhodes and southern coastal sea ports in Anatolia. Companies such as Mesajri, Greek Eastern, Jolly Victoria and, Pandaliyun were operating on sea routes including Izmir, Chios, Fethiye, Rhodes, Mersin¹⁷⁹.

Today port cities like Mandraki, Merchantile and Acandia continue to play an important role in the commercial life of Rhodes.

In addition to farming, Turks were also active in indifferent service sectors as grocers, sweet makers, butchers, shoemakers, felt makers, restaurant keepers, repairmen, barbers, tannery operators, coffee-shop keepers and furniture makers. Turkish women, on the other hand, were primarily engaged in dressmaking but played an active role in all aspects of daily life.

It is known that Turks were dominant craftsmen in the inner castle grounds in Rhodes until recently. An island Turk¹⁸⁰ said; *“Most of the shops in the inner castle belonged to Turks until the 1970’s.”*

Here is what Mehmet Nazmi Kocayığit¹⁸¹ reminisced related to this issue; *“Although most of the Turks in Rhodes were farmers, there were also some Turks dealing with crafts in the downtown market .Even between 1955 and 1965, 95% of the craftsmen on the road*

¹⁷²Oral interview with Rafet Faralyalı.

¹⁷³ Oral interview with Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar.

¹⁷⁴ The first meaning of *trata* (trawl) is a circular fishing net dragged through the water behind a boat. The second meaning is a trawling boat with a fish weir on the deck. The origin of the word *trata* is Greek.

¹⁷⁵ Oral interview with Asude Keleş.

¹⁷⁶ Oral interview with Günay Çümbüş.

¹⁷⁷ Oral interview with Sevim Civelek.

¹⁷⁸ Örenç, A.F., 2006. op.cit.

¹⁷⁹ Özgün, C., 2014. Social, Economic and Cultural Life of Rhodes and Kos Turks. (op.cit.) The Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos (Ed.) Kaymakçı, M. ve Özgün, C. Meta Print, Bornova, İzmir

¹⁸⁰ Anonymous

¹⁸¹ Oral interview with Mehmet Nazmi Kocayığit.

down the Suleymaniye Mosque were Turkish. Turks were dominant in other streets as well. For example there was a place called the Grand Coffee House. There was a man who made shish kebab there. Next to him there was shop called “the Pan with Holes.” This was a nickname of course. Someone had sent the owner a pan with holes so the nickname stayed with him from then on. Farmers would come to town usually on Fridays. After the Friday Prayers, they would often visit a horseshoe smith called Muhsin, the Saddle Maker.”

Another anonymous¹⁸² said; *“Both my father and grandfather were boat captains. They had a boat. They would captain their boat to islands like Kalymnos, Leros, Nisyros and Rhodes and also carry out trade in those places. As of 1940’s they started a dairy business. They not only sold raw milk but also made yoghurt and cheese Turks were engaged in crafts such as carpentry, jewelry, dressmaking. There were also some tradesmen among Turks.”*

As mentioned before, it is observed that tourism has become considerably significant as a service sector in the economy of Rhodes and Kos. The active population involved in agricultural activities in Rhodes has been shifting to tourism, which seems more profitable and has a brighter future. This is also true for Kos. It has been reported that about 2 million tourists spend their holidays in Rhodes during the peak season from April to November and that 60% of the working population works in jobs related to tourism¹⁸³. There are over 200 3to5-star hotels in the island. The beaches have been granted many European Union Blue Flag Certificates and other environmental awards for water quality and safety.

It is also known that agricultural production of Kos is far from being sufficient during the tourist season. An island Turk stated¹⁸⁴; *“Fruit and vegetables come from Athens and Thessaloniki. It is said that vegetables coming from Turkey are not purchased unless they have chemical analysis certificates.”*

Turks have a considerable role in the tourism activities in Rhodes and Kos. There are many Turkish shops in the inner castle grounds in Rhodes selling giftware and souvenirs. Some of them are employed in hotels. Some others serve the tourism sectors as small hotel operators and restaurant keepers^{185 186 187}.

CURRENT PROBLEMS OF RHODES AND KOS TURKS

Turks living in Rhodes and Kos today are faced with many problems. Among them, the problems of belonging, Turkish identity, education, language and religion have been dealt with in previous chapters entitled *“Belonging, Identity and Language in Rhodes and Kos Turks”* and *“Social and Cultural Life in Rhodes and Kos Turks”*. In this chapter problems of Foundations, Preservation of the Cultural Heritage Inherited from the Ottomans, Minority and Assimilation, Hate and Oppression and Military Service shall be considered at length based on relevant negotiations.

Problem of Foundations

¹⁸² Anonymous

¹⁸³ <http://www.birinciblog.com/onili-adalarin-en-bu> Access December 30 2014

¹⁸⁴ Anonymous

¹⁸⁵ Anonymous

¹⁸⁶ Anonymous

¹⁸⁷ Anonymous

The basic obligation of the state during the Ottoman period was to keep the public order by protecting the lives, properties of its subjects and the borders of the country. Unlike the contemporary perception of state, services like education, health, religion and public works were not considered among the duties of the state but were carried out through foundations. In the Ottoman period, the Sultans as well as other prominent personalities of the country such as the members of the royal family and high ranking state officials established various foundations. The state took certain precautions to protect those foundations and provided sufficient sources of income. Thus, many services related to social, cultural and religious life were provided without putting any financial burden on the state.

Foundations enabled settlement of Turkish subjects to lands conquered during the rise of the Ottomans, paving the way for the Turkishification of these places¹⁸⁸.

During the Ottoman period, all the foundations were assigned to the Ottoman Ministry of Foundations by Sultan Mahmud II.

As is known, the Turkish foundations in Greece were established according as the Legal System of the Ottoman State prior to the 1923 Peace Treaty of Lausanne; therefore, they should be administered in accordance with the Ottoman Law, Islamic Law and current bilateral agreements today. Within this context, a fact, commonly known but not openly expressed, is that the Foundation Regulations clearly state that “the foundation properties cannot be bought, sold, owned and inherited.¹⁸⁹” According to the Foundation Regulations, all kinds of sale transactions and donations that have been made so far are legally invalid.

Similar foundations are known to have been established in Rhodes and Kos, as well. If Ottoman archive documents are examined, it will be seen that almost the whole old Rhodes (inner castle grounds) belongs to Turkish foundations¹⁹⁰. Following the conquest of Rhodes in 1522, Sultan Suleiman ordered the establishment of a foundation called “*Sultan Suleiman Khan Evqaf*” to build up the town. The real purpose of this foundation was to transform Rhodes into a livable place for not only new Turkish residents but also non-Muslims subjects of the town.

Sultan Suleiman had local authorities build several mosques, *madrasahs* and *imarets* (public soup kitchens) in the inner castle grounds and granted certain tax exemptions to the island people. These included exemptions from serving as seamen on Ottoman navy ships such as frigates, galleons and galleys; from Ottoman civil taxes; and from certain taxed related to captivity and death¹⁹¹.

Almost all of the shops in the market districts of old Rhodes belonged to Sultan Suleiman the Lawmaker Foundation. All magnificent Islamic building in Rhodes carried his

¹⁸⁸ [Akgündüz, A., 2012. “Problem of Ownership of Foundation Properties According to Islamic Law” \(op.cit.\). Paper presented at *The International Conference on Ottoman Foundations and Monuments in the Balkans*. T.R. Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations Pub.-107 Ankara](#)

¹⁸⁹ [İnalçık, H., 2012. “Foundation and Foundation Charter in the Ottomans” \(op.cit.\). Paper presented at “*The International Conference on Ottoman Foundations and Monuments in the Balkans*””. T.R. Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations Pub.-107 Ankara](#)

¹⁹⁰ [Erdoğan, M.A., 2000. “Ottoman Foundation Charters in the Island of Rhodes”, *Historical Research Magazine*, XV, İzmir](#)

¹⁹¹ [Erdoğan, M.A., 2014. “Status of Turkish-Muslim Foundations in Rhodes” \(op.cit.\). “*Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos*” \(Lit.\) Kaymakçı, M. and Özgün, C. *Meta Press*, Bornova, İzmir](#)

name according to official documents. These included the *Ibrahim Pasha Mosque*, *Bimarhane Mosque*, *Şebihun Mosque* and *Imaret Mosque* among others.

Turkish military personnel and civilians who had taken part in the conquest of Rhodes are also known to have established foundations either in the own names or on behalf of Sultan Suleiman. According to the records in a foundation registry book dated 1567, these include foundations established by the Commander of the *Azap* (Reserve) Force *Ali Beg* and *Abdulcelil Beg* from the *Isfendiyaroglu* Family. Later on, *Recep Pasha*, *Kara Mustafa Pasha* and several Crimean Tartars dignitaries also established similar foundations..

It can be observed that the process of establishing foundations also continues during the 18th and the 19th centuries. Among them are the *Fethi Pasha Foundation* and the *Melek Pasha Foundation*, which still exist today.

After the Ottoman foundations in Rhodes had been assigned to the Ottoman Ministry of Foundations in 1836, a new directorate of foundations was set up to deal with affairs related to foundations in Rhodes. According to a document belonging to the Directorate of Foundations, it is understood that 44 mosques, 4 dervish lodges, 3 *madrasahs*, 1 library, 1 junior high school school, 1 primary school, 50 fountains and 20 Muslim cemeteries, directly or indirectly associated with the foundations, were registered under the directorate.

Süleymaniye Mosque, *İbrahim Pasha Mosque*, *Receb Pasha Mosque*, *Murad Reis Mosque* and *Sultan Mustafa Mosque* are among the most remarkable mosques registered under the foundation administration in Rhodes. The most significant *kulliye* (social complex), on the other hand, is the *Murat Reis Kulliye* composed of the *Murat Reis Mosque*, the tomb of *Murat Reis*, a *shadervan* (fountain for ablution), a fountain, a *Kadiri Sect* dervish lodge and a *hazire* (fenced burial ground) containing the tombs of Iranian princes and Crimean Khans.

Other constructions that symbolize the cultural heritage of Rhodes, the Clock Tower and the Library of the *Fethi Pasha Foundation*, were built in 1852¹⁹². Besides these magnificent monuments, other buildings that have survived as samples of the Ottoman Turkish architecture through the years include Islamic constructions such as *Agha Mosque*, *Bab-ı Mesdud Mosque*, *Borazanî Baba Mosque*, *Cretean District Mosque*, *Hamza Beg Mosque*, *Muradiye Mosque*, *Salakos Village Mosque*, *Shadervan Mosque* and *Hurmali Mesjit* (small mosque) and other monuments such as *Borazanî Baba Tomb*, *Gani Ahmed Cemetery*, *İnatçı* (Stubborn) *Ahmed Pasha Tomb*, *Lindos Cemetery*, *Receb Pasha Tomb*, *Şair* (Poet) *Haşmet Grave*, *Rhodes Sharia Court House*, *Fethi Pasha Junior High School*, *Kandilli* (Kalithea) *Primary School*, *Katavia Village School*, *Rhodes High School*, *Suleymaniye Madrasah* as well nay fountains and mansions¹⁹³..

While in Kos, foundations functioning under the Ottoman Ministry of Foundations included *Bokrat Fountain*, *Defterdar Mosque*, *Atik Mosque*, *Tekke Mosque* *Mütevaffai Sheikh Mehmed Baba Tomb*, *Bab-ı Cedid Kuyusu* (well), His Highness *Suleiman Pasha* of *Karabagh*, *Baş Cemetery*, *Debbağhane Mosque*, *Eskibeki Mosque*, *Germe* (*Platani*) *Village Deveci Mosque*, *Germe Village Vaki Başmakçı Mosque*, *Moruk Mosque*, *Kasabbaşızade Müteveffi Ali Beg School*, *Cram School*, *Kefalos Village Mosque*, *Germe Village Mosque*, *Bozok Mesci Mosque*, *Kabapeyker Mesci Mosque*¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹² [Konuk, H., 2014. "Examples of Rhodes Ottoman Architecture: the Library, the Clock Tower and the Junior High School" \(op.cit.\); "Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos" \(Ed.\) Kaymakçı, M. ve Özgün, C. Meta Press, Bornova, Izmir](#)

¹⁹³ [Çelikkol, Z., 1992. "Turkish Monuments in Rhodes and a Brief History" \(extended comparative 2nd edition\), Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History. Turkish Historical Society Pub. Series VI - Issue.25](#)

¹⁹⁴ [Ahabab, Y., 2008 op.cit.](#)

Among the notable mosques in the center of Kos associated with the foundation administration were the *Ghazi Hasan Pasha* of Algeria Mosque (*Lonca* Mosque), the *Defardar* Mosque, the *Atik* Mosque, the *Yörük* Mosque, the *Yeni Kapı* Mosque.. Citable fountains include the *Ghazi Hasan Pasha* of Algeria Fountain, and *Bab-ı Cedid* water reservoir (*Kasimiri* Fountain). The courtyard of the *Ghazi Hasan Pasha* of Algeria Mosque contains a cemetery and the *Hajji Pasha* Tomb. In the village of *Germe*, which still preserves its Turkish characteristics, there are the *Germe* Mosque, the *Germe* Cemetery and *Germe* Village School that is now closed¹⁹⁵.

As in Rhodes, a new directorate of foundations was set up to deal with affairs related to foundations after the Ottoman foundations had been assigned to the Ottoman Ministry of Foundations in 1836,

It is seen that changes affecting the foundations started with the 1912 Italian occupation of the islands. Italy decided to delegate the administration of the foundations (*evkaf*) to a commission. When the islands were assigned to Greece in 1947, an act was passed for this purpose. According to the act numbered 517/1947, “*the present Italian acts and regulations in force at that time would remain valid until they were replaced by new acts provided that they did not contradict the Greek legislation.*” However, a policy of oppression and destruction was launched, which started with the appointment of a government representative to supervise the community and the foundation administrations.

After the death of the President of the Turkish Community, *Sadettin Nasuhoğlu*, in 1965, some valuable monuments and real estate owned by the Turkish Community and the Foundation were seized from the Muslim minority.

A clause in the act dated 1970, which is known as the Regulation of *Katalipsis*, stated that “*real estate and properties, not recorded in the Register of Deeds Office within a period of ten years are transferred to the Treasury Office.*” Using this act as a legal pretext, the properties belonging to the Turks were plundered and the problem of foundations has remained unsolved to this date.

The Muslim Community Administration (*Cemaat-i İslamiye*), which represents the Turks in Rhodes, had the authority over the Foundation Administration. The Community Administration was abolished with the appointment of its president *Ziyaettin Pekmezci* as the President of the Foundation¹⁹⁶.

As of 1967, the Greek authorities started appointing a government representative to supervise the community and the foundation administrations. Furthermore, many foundation properties were either donated or undersold by the foundation administrators appointed by the Greek authorities although sale of foundation premises was prohibited by law. In this respect, our Turkish fellowmen were prohibited from attending competitive biddings for the sale of foundation properties.

According to a decision made by the Country Court of Rhodes in 1973, three types of foundations were approved. Those foundations were classified as follows:

A) ***Mazbuta*** (registered) ***Foundations***: These foundations are entirely administered by the

¹⁹⁵ *Çelikkol, Z., 1990. “Turkish Monuments in Kos and a Brief History”* (extended comparative 2nd edition), Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History. Turkish Historical Society Pub.

¹⁹⁶ See Document 7 and etc.

Greek Ministry of Foundations.

B) *Mülhaka* (affiliated) *Foundations*: They are administered by a single representative or a committee of representatives. The Ministry of Foundations also has all the rights to supervise these foundations.

C) *Müstesna* (excepted) *or Private Foundations*: They are administered entirely by their own representatives: They cannot be supervised by the Ministry of Foundations¹⁹⁷.

The Foundation Administration or the Executive Committee of Rhodes Foundation Properties, as it is called today, is under the unconditional supervision of the Greek State. In parallel with the abolishment of the Muslim Community Administration, the Greek State started to intervene with the operation of the foundations established by our fellowmen in Rhodes and Kos.

Today the rate of property taxes the Turkish Foundations in Rhodes and Kos have to pay is 0.6 %. In other words, this rate is exactly the same as the tax rate business establishments have to pay. This is another example of how discriminative these implementations can get. Furthermore, the Greek Governments make the administration of the Turkish foundations increase their expenditure to compel the foundations to sell their lands and properties. Thus, the Turkish foundations are financially weakened. Unfortunately, the Greek Governments often achieve this by appointing some Turks involved in treacherous acts to the administration of the Turkish foundations¹⁹⁸.

Turks who immigrated to Turkey and those who remained in the islands are very concerned about dissolving foundation properties.

*Mehmet Nazmi Kocayığit*¹⁹⁹; “*I can tell you about the years between 1955 and 1975. People who would do exactly what was dictated to them by the Greek Government were appointed as administrators of the foundations. We were losing the foundation properties. Each administrator embezzled something. They were sold or misappropriately donated to Greeks.*”

Here are the reactions of two informants: *Gazi Şellavcı*²⁰⁰; “*The foundation in the island was transferred to Greece during the Italian period. It was selling out its properties. This foundation had nothing to do with us. It was administered by the Greek. The administrators would do as the Greek officials told them to do.*” and

*Şanser Karakaya*²⁰¹; “*Foundation have never been administered by people elected by Turks; therefore, they have never worked to the advantage of Turks. There are a great number of Turks in Rhodes. At least the shops within the market area could be rented to Turks. For instance, the shop where my father worked belonged to the foundation but was run by Greeks. Such examples can be increased.*”

A Turkish informant from Rhodes who wished to remain anonymous²⁰²; “*Italians came in 1912 and recognized the Foundation Administration in 1927. According to the deed of foundations that was accepted, the foundation would be administered by a*

¹⁹⁷ Çelikkol, Z., 1992.op.cit.

¹⁹⁸ Kaymakçı, M.,2014. “Current Problem of Rhodes and Kos Turks” (op.cit.). “Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos” (Lit.) Kaymakçı, M. and Özgün,C. Meta Press, Bornova, Izmir

¹⁹⁹ Oral interview with Mehmet Nazmi Kocayığit.

²⁰⁰ Oral interview with Gazi Şellavcı.

²⁰¹ Oral interview with Şanser Karakaya.

²⁰² Anonymous

committee composed of Muslims. Furthermore, Italians registered the Turkish monuments. To our knowledge, the first President of the Foundation Committee was Mahmut Kemal Kumanyacı Hodja. Sale of foundation properties started during his term of office. For example, a building which had served as the Headquarters of the Committee of Union and Progress any many places in Mandraki were handed over to Italians. However, foundation properties started to be sold out when the island was assigned to Greece. Unfortunately the foundation does not have any property left outside the city center. Properties located in Salakos, Limnos, Asgourou, Gani Ahmet and Kızıltepe have been sold out. Many shops have also been sold in the inner castle ground; they say only 50-60 foundation shops are left.”

Another Turk from Rhodes²⁰³ disclosed; *“In Rhodes, there is a public foundation that remained from the Ottoman Administration as well as several private foundations. Private foundations exist self sufficiently. However, the public foundation called “evkaf” is administered by a president and a committee appointed by the Greek government A Greek secretary is always assigned to the present. The foundation gradually becomes unable to make ends meet. High taxes are imposed and they administrators are forced to sell foundation properties or often donate them to Greek citizens.”*

This is also true for protecting the Kos Foundation Properties. This is how a Turk from Kos²⁰⁴ explained the situation in the island; *“The president and committee members are appointed by the Greek Government. For this reason, the foundation is gradually selling its properties. At this rate the foundation will soon lose everything in its possession.”*

In brief, elections held to determine the members of the foundation’s executive committee are far from representing the communities in Rhodes and Kos. The five-member administration of the foundation in Rhodes and Kos has been appointed by the Greek authorities. Some of them serve for a designated term some of them stay in office until they pass away. These people, who are disapproved by the islanders, work as a liquidation committee carrying out the sale of foundation properties. This progressively makes the existence of these foundations almost impossible.

The Executive Committee of the Rhodes Foundation Properties was sent a letter²⁰⁵ on April 28 2014 by the Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity

²⁰³ Anonymous

²⁰⁴ Anonymous

²⁰⁵ The content of the letter tendered to Rhodes Foundation Properties Executive Committee by Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Culture and Solidarity Association is briefly as follows; *“...Our association believes that achieving a lasting friendship between the two countries primarily relies on finding solutions to problems being experienced in the bilateral relations.*

One of them is “the problem of foundations. When the issue was examined with respect to Rhodes and Kos, Italy decided to delegate the administration of the foundations (evkaf) to a commission after they had taken over the islands. When the islands were assigned to Greece in 1947, an act was passed for this purpose.

According to the act numbered 517/1947, “the present Italian acts and regulations in force at that time would remain valid until they were replaced by new acts provided that they did not contradict the Greek legislation.” However, the first implementation of Greece was the appointment of a government representative to supervise the community and the foundation administrations.

On the other hand, the present rate of property taxes the Turkish Foundations in Rhodes and Kos have to pay is 0.6 %. In other words, this rate is exactly the same as the tax rate business establishments have to pay. However, Orthodox Christian Institutions and the Church are exempt from all sorts of real estate taxes. This clearly shows how discriminative these implementations can get. This unjust implementation has in a way turned into a mechanism for the sale of foundations properties.

As is known, the Turkish foundations in Greece were established according as the Legal System of the Ottoman State prior to the 1923 Peace Treaty of Lausanne; therefore, they should be administered in accordance with the Ottoman Law, Islamic Law and current bilateral agreements today. Within this context, a fact, commonly known but not openly expressed, is that the Foundation Regulations clearly state that “the foundation properties cannot be bought, sold, owned and inherited.

Association, the representative of the island Turks who disapprove of the liquidation of foundation properties.

The Problem of Preserving the Cultural Heritage Inherited from the Ottomans

It is common knowledge that the Greek authorities deny permission for the maintenance and repair of the cultural heritage inherited from the Ottomans; repair work is often carried out to keep appearances and these monuments are deliberately left to the destruction of time^{206, 207, 208}.

Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı²⁰⁹, who came back to his birthplace in Rhodes after many years in 2012, commented on this issue briefly. “After 60 years, I had a chance to come to Rhodes, the town where I was born. I felt great sorrow when I saw the condition of the mosques. What was left from the Suleymaniye Madrasah, where I went to school, was just the façade of the building and its foundation was being excavated. I wish I hadn’t witnessed any of this.”

As is known, a demolition order was issued for the famous *Suleymaniye Madrasah*. The historic building was constructed in 1876 to give primary, secondary and high school education to Turkish children. With the pretext of uncovering the old St. John Church under

According to the Foundation Regulations, all kinds of sale transactions and donations that have been made so far are legally invalid.

There are no deed documents for property intended for religious and public use, such as mosques, schools, madrasahs, cemeteries and fountains, in the records of the Foundation Administration. Legal professionals who prepared the Foundation Regulations did not issue deeds for these original monuments in order to prevent the sale of foundation property. For this reason, the rule “a piece of property which does not have a deed cannot be sold” should be effective in law.

On the other hand, preservation of foundation property is a problem closely related with the religious freedom of the Turkish community in Rhodes and Kos. Preservation of the properties in question is imperative for the exercise of freedom of religion and religious practice by the community. So, it is a fact that the clarification process implemented by the Executive Committees assigned by the Greek administrations has had a restraining effect on the religious freedom of the community.

To put it briefly, in accordance with the criteria established by The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the European Union all the sales transacted so far are irregular and invalid. We would like to draw your attention two issues that have emerged in recent months related to disposition of foundation properties. One of them is the, transfer of the Suleymaniye Madrasah to the Aegean University founded in Lesbos. The ownership of the Suleymaniye Madrasah belongs to Rhodes Foundation Administration The second issue is the sale by tender of a shop located in the Old Market on April 30 2014”

In the final part of the letter, we stated that Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Culture and Solidarity Association has been showing concern to the issue on the basis of register certificates in Rhodes and Kos and according to the regulations of our association and reminded that the protection of the foundation properties inherited from our ancestors through the foundations is the responsibility of not only the association but also administrators of the foundation.

²⁰⁶ Çelikkol,Z., 1992.op.cit.

²⁰⁷ Çelikkol, Z., 1990 op.cit.

²⁰⁸See Pictures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

²⁰⁹ Ahmet Necat Kaymakçı.op.cit.

the *Suleymaniye* Madrasah, the Greek Government started to dig its foundations and closed down the Madrasah. In fact, the Madrasah belonged to the Turkish Muslim Foundation (*Evkaf*) established by the Turks in Rhodes and it was seized by the Greek Ministry of Culture under a legal pretext. As the result of efforts exerted by the Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association on a national and international level, the demolition of the Madrasah has been suspended²¹⁰.

The transfer of the *Suleymaniye* Madrasah to the Aegean University in Greece reached the final phase at the beginning of 2014²¹¹.

The mosques in Rhodes were closed down on the pretext of renovation. Today only *İbrahim Pasha* Mosque is open for prayers. An application for the reopening of the *Suleymaniye* Mosque was rejected on the grounds that it was listed as an historic monument by UNESCO. The restoration work which started later went on for decades and the Ottoman relics were replaced. The restoration work in the mosque was completed in 2012 and it was reopened for prayers in the Feast of Sacrifice (*Eid al-Adha*). It was stated that the mosque would be converted into a museum.

Another monument left to the destruction of time was the *Recep Pasha* Mosque.

*Ahmet Kirevliyasi*²¹² said the following on the issue; ***“The Recep Pasha Mosque was one of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottomans in Rhodes. It was proposed that a museum of Islamic Arts be established in the Recep Pasha Mosque, which had an interior covered with Iranian tiles, but restoration work was never started. The mosque held in place by an iron scaffold was in fact left to its own fate. Destruction of the Recep Pasha Mosque is a source of great sorrow. Not a single nail was hammered into the mosque which was intended to be restored and converted into a museum. The mosque which left to its own fate, finally collapsed. Another cultural heritage had perished.”*** According to official records, the *Recep Pasha* Mosque collapsed on December 19 2011²¹³.

Another informant from Rhodes, *Ali Yücesoy*²¹⁴ established; ***“To the best of my knowledge there were about twenty mosques in Rhodes; now only two of them are open to***

²¹⁰ A press statement issued by Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association on December 08 2000 entitled *“Stop Demolition at the Suleymaniye Madrasah”*. The said statement was also translated into English and sent to foreign embassies in Turkey, including the European Union, U.S.A. and Canada.

²¹¹ A press statement issued by Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association on February 17 2014 entitled *“The Suleymaniye Madrasah Owned by the Turkish Minority Is Being Illegally Seized by the Greek Government”*.

²¹² Ahmet Kirevliyasi op.cit.

²¹³ A press statement issued by Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association on December 28 2011 entitled *“We Would Like to Remind the Greek Government to Consider Monuments Inherited from the Ottoman Turks as Cultural Heritage of Humanity.”*

²¹⁴ Ali Yücesoy op.cit.

prayers. One of them is solely used for religious marriage ceremonies and the other is for observing Mawlıds and performing daily prayers. The remaining mosques were either heavily damaged or completely ruined. When the Greek authorities are approached with a demand for repair of a mosque, they say they will attend to it, erect a scaffold and close down the mosque. They put up a “Repair in Progress” sign and wait until the mosque collapses. There was the Murat Reis Tomb, for instance. It was beautiful before I immigrated to Turkey. When I saw it last time I was there, it was in ruins. It was really heartbreaking.”

The *Ali Hilmi Pasha Mosque* has been restored and used as the “Cyprus House”. *Şehitlik* (War Cemetery) Mosque is used as a health center and the the *Kattavia (Katavya) Village Mosque* as a cafeteria. The School-mosque in the district of *Gani Ahmet* was converted into a block of apartments. Also, the *Salakos Village Mosque* was demolished.

Other important cultural heritages inherited from the Ottomans in Rhodes are the *Murat Reis Tomb* and the *Kulliye* (social complex). The *Kulliye* buildings including the mosque are in ruins. Better half of the *Kulliye’s* cemetery was destroyed. They also want to change the “*Muftiate Office*” within the *Kulliye* into a conservatory building. The list can be further extended.

The *Muradiye Mosque* as another mosque whose minaret collapsed and windows were shattered during the restoration process. The mosque belonged to the Turkish Community until 1970. After this date, it was left to the Head Metropolitan Office by the Community administrators. The mosque was open for prayers until 1990. It was completely closed down following the death of the *imam* (worship leader) and the *muezzin* (reciter of the prayer call) appointed at the mosque. After remaining closed up to the present time, it is reported that restoration work has been launched to turn the mosque into a church through a restoration project funded by the European Union.

The truth behind a policy that leaves cultural monuments to the destruction of time is in fact an assimilation process that will detach island Turks from their past.

*Dilek*²¹⁵ commented on the issue of the *Murat Reis Tomb* and *Kulliye*; “*Though not explicitly expressed, the main intention of closure of the Murat Reis Mosque and abandonment of his tomb and the surrounding Kulliye is to nullify the function of place where the Turkish community come together, represent its culture and preserve its ties with the past. The Greek Deep State maintains this policy through a meticulous operation.*”

Dilek has based her allegation on a news article entitled “*Epitaphs in the Murat Reis Cemetery Being Investigated by an American Researcher*”, printed in *Prodos Newspaper* on January 30 2005. The said article²¹⁶ had claimed that *Murat Reis* was in fact not an Ottoman Pasha but an Arab sailor.

In brief, architectural monuments inherited from the Ottoman Turks in the islands have been plundered and the authorities launch repairs to ostensibly protect the remaining ones.

The Problem of Minorities and Assimilation

The definition of minorities accepted under international law is based on the criteria mentioned in the report prepared by *Francesco Capotorti*, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Accordingly, the minority concept is defined as “*A group numerically inferior to the rest of the*

²¹⁵ *Dilek. B.S. 2008. op.cit.*

²¹⁶ *Prodos Newspaper* dated January 30 2005.

*population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members - being nationals of the State - possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show an implicit sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language”*²¹⁷. In this respect, objective criteria assessing the existence of a minority group include the existence of a distinct difference between the minority and majority with respect to ethnicity, religion and language; existence of a numerical inferior to the rest of the population reflecting distinct characteristics of a minority group; being in a non-dominant position; being nationals of the state in question; being loyal to the state; existence of a minority group consciousness; being recognized and treated as a minority group by the majority of the country where they live as nationals²¹⁸.

However, it is observed that there is no internationally agreed definition in international legal texts as to which groups constitute minorities. For instance, the term minority could not be clearly defined in “1992 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities”²¹⁹ and “1995 Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.”

A minority group requires legal arrangements in order to be considered in the status of a minority group. Irrespective of these legal arrangements, the minority concept is defined in related sources as “*A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members - being nationals of the State - possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show an implicit sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language*”²²⁰.

A majority of the Greek population is ethnic Greek Orthodox Christians. Although they are not ethnically Greek but now considered Greek, Orthodox *Karamanlides* and a section of the Christian *Gagauz* Turks also live in Greece .Largest minority groups in Greece include Turks, Macedonians, (*Albanian*) *Torks*, Vlachs, Pontic Greeks, (*Albanian*) *Aromanians* as well as some smaller Muslim groups like *Saibi* Arabs, *Farsis* and Africans.

Greece does not accept the existence of other minorities such as Macedonians, Albanians, Bulgarians, Vlahs, Gypsies, Jews and Cretans, either. It has been forcing these minorities to either accept becoming Hellenized by oppression or emigrate from the country.

In fact there are people who stated that assimilation in the islands had started during the Italian period but not in the Greek period²²¹. *Ahmet Payzanoğlu*, born in Kos in 1933, said; “*Assimilation started during the Italian period. We would sing the Fascist March at the Italian schools we went to. They would call us the Children Mussolini.*”

In an effort to assimilate the Turkish minority in the country, Greece arbitrarily expelled many Turks going abroad for travel purposes from citizenship based on false pretexts. The legal basis of this implementation was Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Law that was in effect until 1998. It read as follows: “*A person of non-Greek ethnic origin*

²¹⁷ *Capotorti, F., 1979. Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.* New York: UN Publications.

²¹⁸ *Hatipoğlu, M., 1999. Ethnic Groups and Minorities in Greece,* Ankara: SAEMK Press.

²¹⁹ Anon., http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insan_haklari/pdf01/209-213.pdf, 03.08.2011.

²²⁰ *Yaldız, F., 2014. Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos within the Context of EU Individual Rights (op.cit.) Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos (Ed.)Kaymakçı,M. and Özgün,C. Meta Press,Bornova,İzmir*

²²¹ Oral interview with Ahmet Payzanoğlu.

leaving Greece without the intention of returning may be declared as having lost Greek nationality. This is also valid for persons of non-Greek ethnic origin who were born and reside in a foreign country. National Council has the full authority to make decisions on such issues with the approval of the Greek Interior Ministry ". Although the exact number is kept secret by the Greek Authorities, about 60,000 Turks are thought to have lost their citizenship. Most of the Turkish minority members were expelled from citizenships while studying in Turkey, U.S.A. and Germany.

A Turk who had to emigrate from Rhodes²²² stated on the subject; *"Even if they are university graduates, the Turks in Rhodes denied employment in high-ranking public positions. They cannot be reserve officers. There can only be a "muleteer", taking care of mules in the army. According to Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Law, which is not in force any longer, a person of non-Greek origin who left Greece and went to Turkey of another country would lose his Greek nationality if he does not return to Greece within a year. I was one of the victims who got his share from this implementation. Problems intensified after the Cyprus Intervention. It was one the reason why I immigrated to Turkey."*

Another problem Rhodes and Kos Turks are faced with is the perception in the world public opinion that the Turkish presence in Greece is restricted to Western Thrace. This perception needs to be changed. Even if Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks are not legally granted a minority status, they should be considered a minority group in regard to their social position. When their cultural, religious, language and social structures are taken into account, it is evident that island Turks have certain ethnic problems, as well.

As stated before, Greek authorities refused to grant "minority" status to the Turks living in the islands of Rhodes and Kos claiming that these islands were under Italian rule and not part of Greece when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923. Within this context, they considered Rhodes and Kos Turks as "Muslims" and refused to register associations bearing the terms "Turks" or "Minority". For instance, the activities of the "Turkish Society of Rhodes", established in 1912, were banned in 1967 and closed down in 1987.

On the other hand, denial of a right related to language emerges as the greatest impediment to the preservation of the Turkish existence in the Dodecanese. Education in Turkish language was cancelled and discontinued in 1972.. One of the implementations related to the assimilation policy was the closure of schools that enabled minorities to learn their native language.

A Turk from Rhodes said the following²²³; *"Because the Turkish schools have been closed down, children start to forget the Turkish language. Another reason for that is the fact that some Turkish families speak Greek at home so that their children can be more successful in Greek courses at school and can establish better relationships with Greek people. However, there are also families who try to teach their children their native language by speaking Turkish at home. In fact, this problem can be solved if the parents spoke Turkish at home and took their children to Turkey from time to time. There are also some families who arrange gatherings for commemorating Mawlid and reciting Quran during the holy month of Ramadan although they do not speak Turkish themselves."*

Another informant gave his opinion on this²²⁴; *"Turkish language is finished. People no longer speak Turkish at home. We would always speak Turkish in our time. Now the grownups speak Turkish at home but the younger people prefer to speak Greek. In other word, they dropped 90% of Turkish. Closure of Turkish schools had a negative impact on*

²²² Oral interview with Macit Külür.

²²³ Anonymous

²²⁴ Oral interview with Bekir Demirci.

this. I was wise to come here. They all study in Greek. The children are obliged to. A child studies in Greek if he attends a Greek school. I have a nephew who addresses me in Greek. Whole thing will be finished after five years. It is he parents' responsibility to stop this. If they answered their children in Turkish when they spoke Greek, this would solve this problem”

A Turk who wished to remain anonymous said²²⁵; *“Our children cannot speak Turkish because the schools in Kos were closed down. If the family is keen on preserving their Turkish –Muslim identity, they speak Turkish at home. However, this is not good enough. Turkish language is gradually disappearing.”*

After Turkey prevented atrocities against Turkish Cypriot community by undertaking a military intervention in 1974, Rhodes and Kos Turks are subjected to intense oppression as is the case in Northern Thrace. Restrictions previously applied to minority rights through a number of bureaucratic methods have been transformed into a governmental policy. A Turk from Rhodes said the following on this issue²²⁶:

“1974 Cyprus Operation did a great harm to island Turks. Great adversity aroused with the incorporation of Northern Cyprus. Islanders started to experience problems. Rhodes Turks living in Turkey could no longer go to Rhodes. Turks started sealing Greek in Rhodes and some of them assumed new Greek names. Our culture also changed. They even changed our food culture. A new strange food culture emerged. Turkish ‘cacik’ (thinned yogurt mixed with cucumbers and garlic) became Greek ‘tzatziki’. No trace of our cuisine anymore.”

To put it briefly, the Dodecanese Turks have been struggling to survive since the middle of the 20th century starting with the Italian occupation and particularly after the islands were assigned to Greece.

According to a Turk from Rhodes, the process of alienation had accelerated with the settlement of Greeks in the island²²⁷: *“After Greeks came to the island, they made us feel like aliens in the lands where were born. We began to think we were in minority. We always wanted to come to Turkey. The desire were feeling got more intense after the Cyprus Operation. We were subjected to physical and oral aggression, which eventually forced us to immigrate to Turkey.”*

The island Turks cannot even benefit from basic rights such as human rights and rule of law implemented by the European Union and Council of Europe, organizations declared as civilization projects.

It is almost impossible to see children and young people who speak Turkish. What you hear from a few people who can is a broken form of Turkish.

An important factor of assimilation is a set of implementations aimed at prevention of religious rights of minority groups. This is achieved by Greece by means of a policy of destroying the mosques in Rhodes and Kos, where Muslims observe their religion.

A Turk from Rhodes said on this subject; ²²⁸ *“It is hard to preserve the Turkish identity in the islands. They cannot learn Turkish. They cannot observe their religion properly. To the best of my knowledge there were about twenty mosques in Rhodes; now only two of them are open to prayers. One of them is solely used for religious marriage ceremonies and the other is for observing Mawlid and performing daily prayers. The remaining mosques were either heavily damaged or completely ruined. When the Greek authorities are approached with a demand for repair of a mosque, they say they will attend to it, erect a scaffold and close down the mosque. They put up a “Repair in Progress” sign*

²²⁵ Anonymous

²²⁶ Oral interview with Sunay Ispartalı.

²²⁷ Oral interview with Neriman Topaloğlu.

²²⁸ Oral interview with Ali Yücesoy.

and wait until the mosque collapses. There was the Murat Reis Tomb, for instance. It was beautiful before I immigrated to Turkey. When I saw it last time I was there, it was in ruins. It was really heartbreaking.”

Another implementation related to prevention of religious rights is the issue of religion education. Although the Athens Government recognizes the Dodecanese Turks as “**Muslim Greek Citizens**”, religion education is not included in the curriculum of the schools. Orthodox Christianity is taught in Greek schools and the lessons are given by Greek priests. The Turkish students were obliged to attend these classes until recently.

Another issue addressed in the assimilation policies towards Turks is the increase in the number of interfaith (*inter-religion*) marriages. Turks are not pleased with such marriages, either^{229, 230, 231}:

“Interfaith marriages have started. Greek men marry Turkish girls and Turkish men marry Greek girls. This is something I don’t like at all. They are going to lose their Turkish and Muslim identities and become Greeks after their parents are gone. It is hard to stop this Greekization process and put things back to normal but we’d better cut our losses as soon as possible.”

“There is a tremendous amount of assimilation at the point where we have reached. Muslims in Rhodes and Kos are gradually forgetting about and losing their identities due to interfaith marriages and education of their children. There is a saying in Greek; ‘Time is never late!’ Unfortunately, it is too late for us. We are the remnants of our people; ‘bottom of the vine leaves’, as we say here. Neither beginning nor end is known for us. We hear every day a Turkish girl marries a Greek man. Turks cannot speak proper Turkish. Two Turks speak in Greek between themselves.

“...Now marriages with Greeks have increased. When a Turkish girl marries a Greek man, the child is legally born as a Christian. Turks are gradually assimilated. I am not saying that there will no Turks left but the Turkish identity will come to an end. We will be just like Cretans. This is the present situation here.”

The Dodecanese youths have two alternatives after they finish their secondary education. When they have to make choice to continue their higher education in Athens or Ankara, it is know that a considerable majority of them prefer to go to Athens. This clearly manifests that the Dodecanese Turks will be assimilated very soon unless effective initiatives are undertaken at international level.

A feeling of despondency has started to prevail among not only Turks living in the islands but also those who previously immigrated to Turkey.^{232, 233, 234, 235}: *“Greeks would be pleased if all the Turks emigrated from Greece. They wish Turk entity ceased to exist. The remaining Turks are gradually Greekized. They are becoming foreigners. My brother has grandchildren. They can only speak Greek.”*

“I went to Rhodes just to see around and visit my friends some 30 years after O had immigrated to Turkey. As far as I could see, Turks had become Greekized. There was no trace of love, respect and solidarity that existed among Turks during my childhood.”

²²⁹ Anonymous

²³⁰ Anonymous

²³¹ Anonymous

²³² Anonymous

²³³ Oral interview with Bekir Mercimek.

²³⁴ Oral interview with Muhammet Ali Paşa.

²³⁵ Oral interview with Mehmet Nazmi Kocayığit.

“Muslims in Rhodes and Kos have no future in front of them. They will all be Greekized at this rate. We learned Turkish when we were children because we studied 3 hours of Turkish and 3 hours of Greek at the Turkish school in Kos. Moreover, we had our culture. Now a child can learn Turkish only if his mother speaks Turkish at home. Families of Cretan origin cannot even do that. Anyway, they spoke Cretan Greek at home during our childhood.”

“There were about 8,000 Turks in Rhodes between years 1955 and 1975. The number of Turks greatly dwindled. They made Turks go away step by step. Assimilation increased after 1974.”

Turkey and Greece have never been able to handle the problems of Turks living in Rhodes and Kos within the frame work of minorities. In late years, nevertheless, these ethnic problems were raised at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) through a series of decisions taken by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2012 and 2013. In this context, two reports were authored by Andreas Gross, a member of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The second report entitled ***“The situation of the Greek Citizens of Turkish Descent in Rhodes and Kos”*** was ratified by PACE on 9th March 2012.

The report addresses expectations of Greek citizens of Turkish descent, such as expressing their Turkish identity freely; having a voice in the management of the foundations; restoring the functions of the Muftiate; starting Turkish language and religion courses in schools; reopening the closed mosques to religious service; and granting Greek citizenship and civil rights to the Turkish residents of the Dodecanese Islands. However, this report was described as unsatisfactory in a letter sent to Andreas Gross by Rhodes Kos and Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association on the basis of two arguments²³⁶. The first was that

²³⁶ Kaymakçı, M., 2012. A letter written to Andreas Gross on November 09 2012

***“Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks
Culture and Solidarity Association
President***

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kaymakçı

9 November 2012

***Mr. Andreas Gross,
Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal and Human Rights
Council of Europe
Avenue d l'Europe
F – 67075
Strasbourg Cedex***

Dear Mr. Andreas Gross,

I am the President of the “Association of Turks of Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese” which was established in 1996 in İzmir/Turkey and represents approximately 70.000 people mostly those who were forced to immigrate from Dodecanese to Turkey and their descendants. In writing this letter, I intend to bring to your attention the problems of Turks of Dodecanese as a follow up to our Association’s Vice President, Mr. Ahmet Kirevliyasi’s and your e-mails of last week. Had we believed that it would be safe for us and our family members that are still living in the islands, I would rather prefer to come to Rhodes to talk to you in person and explain our problems. Let me thank you for giving me the opportunity to express myself in writing, as a reply to your e-mail addressed to Mr Kirevliyasi.

Let me elaborate shortly our problems.

First and foremost, the Turkish population in Rhodes and Kos has been deprived of minority rights as well as the rights emanating from international human rights conventions signed under the aegis of the UN and CoE. Turkish schools in Rhodes and Kos ceased to operate in 1972 as a result of a decision by the Greek Government and remain closed, despite the fact that there is a need and an adequate number of students. There are approximately 600 students who are deprived of the right to education in their mother tongue in the

the description of Turks living in Rhodes and Kos as *“residents of Rhodes and Kos of*

islands. Another issue related to education is the lack of religious classes for these 600 Muslim students in the schools.

As for the religious rights, only one of the still existing 14 mosques in Rhodes is open for religious services. This mosque, namely the İbrahim Pasha Mosque, is insufficient due to its small size. The Süleymaniye Mosque is closed since 1978 was recently opened exceptionally for religious service. Needless to say, as I am sure you observed the state of Recep Pasha Mosque and the Murat Reis Complex; the Greek authorities are reluctant to care about the protection of the examples of Ottoman cultural heritage.

Moreover, the number of imams in Rhodes and Kos is also insufficient. The Greek authorities do not permit the Turkish population in Rhodes and Kos to meet the demand of new imams.

In addition, Greece has been interfering with the administration of the Muslim charitable foundations (the Waqfs) which were used to support cultural life and social welfare of the Turkish Muslim community. Turkish/Muslim charitable foundations in Rhodes and Kos are also subjected to the discriminatory law introduced in 1980 which further weakened them financially and diluted the community’s right to control them. But most notably, the practice by consecutive Greek governments of appointing Vakf administrators, which is in place since 1967, as opposed to allowing them to be elected by the Turkish Muslim Minority has led to mismanagement.

Problems of the Turkish population who had to migrate from Rhodes and Kos to Turkey are also worrisome. Turkish minority members who lost their citizenship mainly because of the notorious Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Law in addition to many hardships they face, could not return to Greece even as tourists. Let me emphasize the property issue which seems to explain the negative attitude of the local Greek authorities. We are a people who faced an unbearable pressure from the Greek authorities and thus had to leave their homeland. Our number rose following the closure of our schools. Our properties are confiscated or sold by using fake authorization documents. Those who lost their citizenship and denied the necessary visa or the entry to Greece were consequently deprived from their rights to claim their properties. The heirs of those who passed away are deprived from the right to access any official document to certify their relationship or the very fact that their late relatives survived on those islands. All of this, Mr. Gross, leads me to say that thousands of properties have been plundered.

And the same happened to waqf (foundation) properties as well.

Mr. Gross,

Most of the problems listed above are due to the collapse of a system which was functional during Italian rule and even later according to the Greek laws and regulations. This system comprised of three important elements, namely the community (cemaat) administration, the office of Mufti and the waqf administration. Despite the fact that actually in Rhodes there exist a Jewish Community, activities of the “Rhodes Turkish Community” founded in 1912 were banned in 1967 and it was closed down in 1987. The seat of the Mufti which was created in 1925 still remains vacant. As for the waqfs, the executive board members of the waqfs are run since 1967 by persons appointed by the Greek Government. Today, all three elements of this system legally exist. But in practice, two of them are nonexistent and the last one is not functioning properly. Our plea from you, Mr. Gross, is to make a call to the Greek authorities to revitalize these three elements. This is the only way to overcome the problems of Turks living in Dodecanese.

We, as the members of the Association of Turks of Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese, wish to see further improved relations between Turkey and Greece, because we have close relatives living in these islands. We want to be able to travel in tranquility to these islands where we were born. But the prerequisite for this is to establish a relationship observing and respecting the human rights.

In light of your personal experience during your visits to Rhodes and Kos on 21-22 April 2010 and 19-21 February 2012, we are kindly asking you to make our problems heard by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the CoE.

Please accept my highest regards.

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kaymakçı

President of the Association of Turks of Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese

Turkish cultural origin” was not accurate from a social and historical point of view and that the Turks living in these islands were absolutely Turkish and Muslim. The second was that the manner of the recommendations made to Greece in the text of the report and the decisions taken were somewhat attractive rather than persistent and it would not be realistic to expect the Greek side to implement them without generating a persistent and obligatory decision on these issues.

Problems of the Turks living In Rhodes and Kos were addressed for the first time on a non-governmental organization (NGO) level when these problems were raised by the Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association at the 6th Annual United Nations Forum on Minority Issues, held in Geneva on November 26-27 2013. Speeches delivered at the forum emphasized that the island Turks were forced to describe themselves as “Greek Muslims”; rather than Turks; that Turks living in these islands were deprived of their right to education in their mother tongue; and that the seat of the Mufti had been vacant since 1972.²³⁷

The Association’s President later participated in a congress held by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FEUN) in *Flensburg* Germany on 7th-11th May 2014. Its membership to FEUN was ratified during this congress²³⁸.

Thus, the problems faced by Rhodes and Kos Turks were brought to the attention of the international arena and registered in the records of many international organizations.

4.5.4. Problem of Hate and Oppression

Hate crimes can be described as ***“usually violent, bias-motivated criminal acts against a person or a group on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender identity and sexual orientation.”*** However, if these crimes are committed continuously by a group as a movement then the group is called a ***“hate group”***. Legislation designed to curb such offenses and punish offenders is called ***“Hate Crime Law”***²³⁹.

Hate crimes may involve verbal abuse, intimidating behaviour, hate speech, name-calling, offensive letters or hate mail, offensive calls, messages, graffiti, bullying, mobbing, physical assault, robbery, theft, seizure, harassment, rape, molestation, intimidation, violence, domestic abuse, arson or damage to property.

Hate crime laws or bias laws that encompass crimes that are motivated by race, religion and ethnicity were first passed by legislatures in the U.S.A. in 1980 and then adopted by European countries.

Expanding the scope and content of hate crime laws led to discussions related to restrictions caused by freedoms of thought and speech.

An important reason for the increase in hate speech and hate crimes is globalization, a movement that gathered more attention recently. As is known, globalization movement brings about many adverse consequences. One of them is the negative environment of threat it creates for local values and identities in the world.

²³⁷ *Kaymakçı, M., 2013.* The Religious Problems of the Turks Living In Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese. November 26-27 2013 The United Nations' Minority Affairs Forum, Geneva..

²³⁸ *Kaymakçı, M. 2014.* The Main Problems of the Turks Living in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese. Speech made on the occasion of acceptance to FEUN (The Federal Union of European Nationalities) Membership. May 08 2014. Flensburg, Germany.

²³⁹ http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nefret_su Access December 03 2014

Discrimination refers to thoughts and behaviour that are described as crime in international law.

Hate speech is regarded as a strong form of discrimination. When committed repeatedly, it provokes and stimulates feelings of enmity and adversity in people and these feelings turn into actions in the form of assault, injury, homicide and bombing when they cannot take it anymore^{240 241}.

The environment of hate and oppression against Turks has been felt in Rhodes and Kos until today.

As will be addressed at the **“Conclusion”** part of the Report in more detail, basic reasons for the feelings of hate against Turks include the negative Turkish image created in the perception of Greek people by the West; 500 years of Ottoman-Turkish rule in Greece and the defeat Greeks experienced in Izmir on September 1922, which is called “Asia Minor Catastrophe” by the Greek themselves. It can be said that the environment of hate and oppression has started with the Greek period in the Dodecanese.

Ahmet Kantarcı said²⁴²; **“I was a very good car mechanic. I also bought repaired and resold cars. They started to apply pressure on people who were doing business with me. They would point to the direction of Turkey saying that my homeland was across the sea. That is why I immigrated.”**

Nigar Barışçı explained her reason for immigration²⁴³; **“I emigrated from Rhodes at the age of 24. My reason was: My husband and father-in-law were running a coffee-shop. Those days, coffee-shops in Rhodes would serve not only tea and coffee but also snacks and raki. The name of the place was Ankara Coffee-shop. Greeks couldn’t tolerate this and after years they told them to change the name and give a Greek name to the shop. My father-in-law took this as a matter of pride and refused to change the name. They got official warning from the Greek government officials. In the second official paper they got, they were told to go to Turkey. So, my in-laws were forced to immigrate to Turkey taking a single suitcase with them.”**

*Ali Yücesoy*²⁴⁴ and *Hasan Hacımemni*²⁴⁵ stated they were treated contemptuously based on their religious identity; **“Some Greeks would treat Turks nicely while some other would mistreat them. They would tease us by saying ‘You are cut,’ meaning that we were circumcised. They would say ‘You are a Turk so we will cut your throat if a war breaks out.”**

*Rafet Faralyalı*²⁴⁶ also talked about similar incidents; **“They would make fun of us because were circumcised. They would make intimidating gestures and curse at us. They would ridicule our religious symbols. In fact, we were not innocent ourselves. We would make the sign of a cross using our fingers..”**

A Turk from Rhodes who asked to remain anonymous²⁴⁷ said; **“I was exposed to unpleasant jokes in the evening school because I was a Turk. A teacher at school would tell me ‘The six-toed Constantine lost Istanbul (Constantinople); another Constantine with six toes will take it back’ every morning.”**

*Demir Kıbrıslı*²⁴⁸ stated that the environment of hate visibly started in Rhodes with the outbreak of incidents of September 6-7 in Turkey and went on to say; **“I know that the**

²⁴⁰ Weber, A., 2009. Handbook of Hate Speech (Trans. by: Çulhaoğlu, M.), European Council Publications

²⁴¹ İnceoğlu, Y., 2012. Hate Speech - Hate Crimes. *Ayrıntı* Publications. Istanbul

²⁴² Oral interview with Ahmet Kantarcı.

²⁴³ Oral interview with Nigar Barışçı.

²⁴⁴ Oral interview with Ali Yücesoy.

²⁴⁵ Oral interview with Hasan Hacımemni.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Rafet Faralyalı.

²⁴⁷ Anonymous

²⁴⁸ Oral interview with Demir Kıbrıslı.

Turkish neighbourhood was being protected by the Greek police to prevent any harm to Turks. Later, during the election race between Yorgo Papandreou and Karamanlis Papandreou made the following promise to his Greek supporters: 'I will take back Istanbul (Constantinople) and Cyprus if you vote for me.' Later in 1964, we had the incidents of Cengiz Topel. I was doing my military service in the island of Syros at the time. They sent all the troops to the front except for Turks, muleteers, and communists. (Turks recruited in the Greek Army at that time would serve as muleteers.)"

Rıfat Maşazade²⁴⁹ also made similar statement; *"We had a hard time when September 6-7 incidents broke out in Istanbul. One of those day, a group of Palikarias (fierce Greek youths) armed with clubs came to our house. A Greek neighbour sent them away saying the house belonged to him and saved us."*

On the other hand, some island Turks disclosed that they weren't subject to many hostile acts from the Greek people they were living together and that this hostility was fueled by the Greeks who had come from Mainland Greece.

Kimya Civelek²⁵⁰: *"I think those who came from Athens, from Greece harboured more hostile intentions regarding Turks. Based on their interests, they demonstrated extreme vociferousness and tried to vindicate themselves. In 1974, however, relationships deteriorated even more. I had a Greek friend. I used to drive him to his shop After the Operation; however, he didn't want to ride in my car."*

An anonymous Turk from Rhodes²⁵¹ made similar explanations on this issue; *"I can say that we weren't subject to much hostility from the Greek people whom we were living together; whereas, we had problems with people who had come from elsewhere in Greece because they hadn't lived together with Turks before."*

"Let me tell you a story about myself. I went to Athens with my wife a few years ago. A Greek family we met during a visit to a friend treated us as aliens. When I opened the door, a Greek woman was staring at me. I asked her 'Why are you staring at me? What's wrong?' and said 'I am just a human like you.' She responded, 'Hey, you are a Turk. So, I was expecting you would have a single eye.' I was baffled. I asked her, 'How can a human being be like that?' She said to my astonishment, 'I don't know. This is what I read about Turks.' It was like a joke. We often remember and laugh about this."

Suna Hamid believed that the feeling of hate against Turks was stronger in Mainland Greece and conveyed the following treatment a friend of hers was subject to²⁵²; *"Turks and Greeks cannot be friends as things stand. Recently, a friend of mine went to Athens as a tourist. Their group went into a restaurant. The owner asked them where they were from while waiting on the table. When he was told they were Turks, he turned the service plates over and refused to serve them. I don't know but I think Greeks bear a grudge against us. They rather look down on Turks. That's why there could be no friendship."*

It can be said that the strong feeling of hate demonstrated against Turks by Greeks resulted from the Cyprus Peace Operation undertaken by the Republic of Turkey in 1974. Muhammet Ali Paşa²⁵³ reminisced, *"After the Cyprus Operation in 1974, some Greek people were afraid that Turkish troops would land on Rhodes."*

A Turk from Rhodes²⁵⁴ who asked to be anonymous gave the following account, *"Many people were persecuted in 1974. I can say that about 200 people were tortured. Two of them died instantly and five died after a while. They burned my shop and car. Moreover,*

²⁴⁹ Interview with Rıfat Maşazade.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Kimya Civelek.

²⁵¹ Anonymous

²⁵² Interview with Suna Hamit.

²⁵³ Interview with Muhammet Ali Paşa.

²⁵⁴ Anonymous

they took me to court claiming that it was an electrical fire and I had failed to fix the electric installation. In fact, I knew for sure that it was arson. I had a witness, Greek-Italian electrician called Perika. He said there was nothing wrong with the installation and some people had set fire to the shop. When the judges heard his testimony, they said they were sorry and made fun of us by laughing loudly. They didn't ask me to appear in court after that. When the fire happened, I had called the police, the fire department and the electrician. All of them said, 'They have burned the shop. It is arson!'. However, they left without preparing an official report and giving me any documents."

Demir Kıbrıslı²⁵⁵ asserted that the breaking point in the adversity against Turks came with the Cyprus Peace Operation undertaken by Turkey in 1974. *"We were summoned to the Recruiting Office on the day of the landing. They registered us. Our Greek neighbours yelled at us and hurled stones at our house. Our teacher, Şinasi, was imprisoned for 23 months on charges of espionage. He was beaten and his teeth were extracted. An American citizen of ethnic Turkish origin had his share from the incidents of torture as well. Many people were beaten. I was a craftsman. The local Treasury rejected the receipts I wrote because of my Turkish name. That is when I started to feel discriminated. I said there is no more subsistence here for us and immigrated."*

A Turk from Rhodes talked about how he lost his job and how an American citizen of Turkish origin was tortured following the Cyprus Operation²⁵⁶; *"I was fired from my job in 1974 because of the Cyprus incidents. Naturally, we lived through many unpleasant experiences; many of our Turkish fellowmen were beaten. My wife had a relative who was a taxi driver. He was battered a lot. They hung him by his feet. This was how the incident happened: Customers riding his taxi later filed baseless complaints about him. The police pulled his taxi to the side of a road as if it had a crash. They hung him by his feet and battered him. Then they left him at the doorsteps of his house at midnight. His face and eyes had been badly bruised when we saw him."*

Some of the Turks did not want to stay in the island any longer following 1974. In fact, the rush of immigration had started with the closure of the Turkish school in 1972. Those who had relatives in Turkey or had school-age children immigrated to Turkey. Immigration increased substantially in 1974. Asgourou (Uzguur) village had a 100% Turkish population. Better half of the residents immigrated. Many families also immigrated to Turkey from Kızıltepe village, whose population was also totally composed of Turks. There were also people immigrating from Gani Ahmet and Kandilli. All those places were entirely Turkish at that time."

A Turk from Kos²⁵⁷ said; *"They started to discriminate against us following the incident of Cyprus. Trade relations continued but relationships with neighbours deteriorated. I was working at a village at the time. Greeks would gather in the city and shout at us. I told my children not to close the door of the house for fear that they would break it down if they saw the door closed. We never showed them how scared we were. If we did, they might have forced their way into our houses. Finally, we saved our necks."*

A Turkish lady from Rhodes who asked to be anonymous talked about such pressures²⁵⁸; *"In 1974, they were applying great pressure on hotel owners to fire their Turkish employees. They threatened to burn down their hotel if they didn't fire Turks. My husband was working at a hotel then. However, the boss liked him a lot and sent him away on vacation for 3-4 months until the threats subsided."*

²⁵⁵ Interview with Demir Kıbrıslı

²⁵⁶ Anonymous

²⁵⁷ Anonymous

²⁵⁸ Anonymous

So the environment of hate and oppression emerged with the incidents of Cyprus had evidently increased the rush of immigration to Turkey.

Here is what *Dürdane Kovacıoğlu* expressed on the issue²⁵⁹, ***“There weren’t any significant conflicts between Greeks and Turks until the incidents of Cyprus. However after landing of the Turkish troops on Cyprus, old adversity awakened. Signs of hostilities emerged. We were even afraid to speak Turkish. His Greek friends told my husband not see one another for a while. After the second operation in Cyprus, we thought it was time to immigrate to Turkey.”***

A Turkish lady from Rhodes, who didn’t want to reveal her name even if she had immigrated to Turkey in the past, reminisced²⁶⁰; ***“I was shocked when my best Greek friend said, ‘We’ll cut your throats!’ in 1974. I fled to Turkey at once.”***

Another Turk from Rhodes²⁶¹ shared the same point of view; ***“Immigration of Turks increased after 1974. They undersold their properties their lands. As I heard, priests preached to those who bought the properties of Turks who had to sell out and said ‘Don’t you pay in cash. Pay in installments because they seized all our properties in Anatolia.’”***

*Sevim Halepli*²⁶² also made a similar comment; ***“Everyone was afraid during the war in Cyprus. Many Turks had to undersell their properties and immigrated to Turkey. Few people remained in the island.”***

Another Turk from Rhodes²⁶³ stated that he was prosecuted for something he had said as a joke and then he had to lie to the authorities to save himself; ***“We had good relations with Greeks but everything went downhill after the Cyprus Operation. While we were joking with some Greek friends those days and I told them Turkish ships would come to Rhodes and bombard the city. They took it seriously. They took me to the police station and I had to make a deposition. One of the police officers asked me, ‘Whom are you going to shoot at when the Turkish troops arrive.’ And I had to say ‘Turks, of course!’”***

*Ahmet Kirevliyası*²⁶⁴ stated that hate and oppression against Turks had increased during stressful days; Turks could hardly deal with their affairs at public offices; his father had had a hard time obtaining a license for his milk delivery business; Greek kid would use intimidating words like ***“Turko-Kommeno”*** (a cut Turk) while addressing Turkish kids; and Greeks indirectly exhibiting a hostile and scornful approach towards Turks in their history books. Furthermore, he went on to say ***“I was about five or six. I think, it was during the days of the incidents of September 6-7. When my father came home that evening, he locked the door in a hurry. He grabbed his shotgun. He hung the cartridge belt on his shoulder. He didn’t sleep all night. As I didn’t know and was unable to comprehend the nature of the incident, I asked what was happening. My father replied, ‘Son, unpleasant things happened in Istanbul, Turkey. We heard Greeks might retaliate. I am armed to protect us if they come to cut our throats. We can at least defend ourselves. We won’t surrender without a fight’.”***

For the time being, the atmosphere of hate and oppression seems to have been eased. However, the Greek authorities still continue to implement the same policy by using the local media in Rhodes and Kos

²⁵⁹ Interview with *Dürdane Kovacıoğlu*.

²⁶⁰ Anonymous

²⁶¹ Anonymous

²⁶² Interview with *Sevim Halepli* .

²⁶³ Anonymous

²⁶⁴ Oral interview with *Ahmet Kirevliyası*.

For example, local newspapers accused the Muslim Cultural Association of Rhodes (Brotherhood), which was founded in 2000, of being in conspiracy with the Turkish Government and called it “*the Agent of Ankara*”.²⁶⁵

Aggression based on hate is not uncommon in Rhodes and Kos. The Municipality of Kos demolished *Kabapınar Women’s Cem Evi* (Holy House of Gathering) and built a park in its place.

Also, the walls of *Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Pasha Mosque* and *Lonca Mosque* in Kos were spray-painted with anti-Muslim slogans.

On 23rd December, 2010, unidentified militants staged an assault against the building which houses the Muslim Cultural Association of Rhodes^{266, 267}. Newspapers reported that the militants threw pieces of clothing soaked in oil onto the doormat at the entrance and started a fire. Some of the windows were shattered under the intense heat caused by the fire.

Another incident took place on February 24, 2014. It was reported that torn pages of the Holy Qur’an and brochures of the ultra-nationalist Golden Dawn (*Hrisi Avgi*) Party were left at the Turkish Cemetery in Rhodes^{268, 269}.

Problem of Military Recruitment

The Ottoman Period

According to a new Conscription Law (Regulation of Drawing Lots) enacted in 1846, island youths aged 19-20 were recruited under the supervision of prominent administrators in towns where a census was previously held . The law included certain exceptions. Youths who did not want to be drafted would find a substitute according to a system of buying exemption (*bedel-i şahsî*. Those who couldn’t find a substitute would have to pay a sum called cash exemption (*bedel-i nakdî*)²⁷⁰ .

It is known that many island Turks who did not want to be exempted through the system of substitution or cash payment were recruited by the Ottoman State and some of them fought in the Balkan War before the Italian occupation of the islands. *Abdurrahman Kaymakçı* wrote in his memoirs about two brothers named *Mustafa* and *Hüseyin*. One of them died a martyr in the war and the other vanished into thin air²⁷¹. Rumor has it the lost brother came out against his father, who had refused buy him an exemption, and did not return to Rhodes. He is said to have married a Turkish girl in *Çeşme* and immigrated to the U.S.A. afterwards.

The Italian Period and the Second World War

After the Italian occupation of the islands in 1912, the Italian Government exempted the islanders from military service. Then a rumor was spread about Italy’s plans to draft people living in the islands. The *Selam* Newspaper in Rhodes published articles assuring that the island people could not be drafted according to the Treaty of Lausanne and that such

²⁶⁵ *Dilek, B.S., 2008.*Forgotten Turks of the Aegean. *Cumhuriyet Publications*

²⁶⁶ <http://www.abttf.org/html/?link> Access December 03 2014

²⁶⁷ <http://www.dha.com/rodos-muslumanlari> Access December 03 2014

²⁶⁸ <http://www.iha.com.tr/haber.rodostaki-musluman> Access December 03 2014

²⁶⁹ <http://trakyainnesi/haber/3144/azinlige> Access December 03 2014

²⁷⁰ Afyoncu,E.,www.bugun.com.tr/ilk-modern-ordumuz Access November 15 2014

²⁷¹ *Kaymakçı, A.,1974.*Memoirs of Rhodes (Unprinted)

statements were false rumors²⁷². It is said that some people joined Fascist associations outside military units. Some Turks are known to have served as police officers in Rhodes²⁷³. Halil Kayalar disclosed; *“My father Mehmet Kayalar was an Italian police officer.”*

The Greek Period

The Greek Armed Forces (*Elinikes Enoples Dinamis*), is a military formation whose mission is to protect Greece against any potential internal and external threats²⁷⁴.

It is composed of Greek Ministry of National Defense General Staff, Hellenic Land Forces, Hellenic Naval Forces and Hellenic Air Forces.

Greek Coast Guard Command is a paramilitary formation under the authority of the Ministry of Merchant Marine, Aegean and Island Policy and assists Hellenic Naval Forces in times of war.

Implementation of mandatory military service (conscription) in Greece still continues at present. The length of military service in the Hellenic Lands Forces was reduced to 9 months in 2014²⁷⁵. Authorities stated that the reduction was due to the increase in the number of professional soldiers in the Armed Forces. There has been no change in the length of mandatory military service in the Naval and Air Forces.

Greek citizens of ethnic Turkish origin perform their military service in different part of Greece. However, four main issues of discrimination related to Turks including those in Western Thrace should be noted.

Firstly, almost none of the Turks are permitted to serve in combat arms of the Hellenic Armed Forces. They are assigned to various service branches as muleteers, carpenters, storehouse workers, diggers and drivers.

*Cengiz Kovacioğlu; “I was a muleteer in the military. I would load mortar shells on the mules and carry them to the training grounds. I did not experience problems during those 24 months because I was a Turk. Communist and leftists also served as muleteers. Officers would keep their distance to those people.”*²⁷⁶

*Demir Kıbrıslı*²⁷⁷ conveyed his memories as follows; *“Following the basic training, I was a muleteer. I worked as a mule driver in Drama for six months. Then my commanders assigned me to the repair yard. I worked as a repairman. I did not experience any mistreatment because of my ethnic Turkish origin. They didn’t cast me out. I had a very comfortable military service.”* And a Turk from Rhodes who wished to remain anonymous said; *“After the basic training, they sent me to a course for mechanics as I had studied at a technical school before. Some Turkish bodies who had come from Komotini (Gümülcine) always spoke Turkish. When officers asked them why they never spoke Greek, they said they couldn’t. In fact, they could speak Greek. Commanders let them alone, anyway.”*²⁷⁸

²⁷² Orakçı, M., 2012 “Muslim of Rhodes”, *Selam Newspaper 1926-1936*. Kitap Press.

²⁷³ Interview with Halil Kayalar.

²⁷⁴ tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Armed_Forces Access. November 27 2014

²⁷⁵ tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory_Military_Service Access. November 27 2014

²⁷⁶ Interview with Cengiz Kovacioğlu.

²⁷⁷ Oral interview with Demir Kıbrıslı.

²⁷⁸ Anonymous

Secondly, they were never entrusted with firearms. *Mehmet Ali Paşa* stated²⁷⁹;

“I spent the first two months of my basic training in Tripoli as a novice recruit and then they sent me to Crete. I had difficulty corresponding with my family. Greek boys would regularly receive letters but we could not get any news from home. I still feel the same desperation today. They would always make us dig holes and I was scared. We kept on digging holes until evening hours. They didn’t even use those holes for anything. I think they were trying to make us think we would be buried in those holes.

Then we went to the shooting practice grounds. Good shooters had their names registered on a roster. We also gave our names. When they heard my name, Ahmet, they said they didn’t need any more shooters. They didn’t give us weapons even when we were on guard duty.”

Then again, there were those of us who were given weapons during guard duty. Some island Turks who didn’t wish to reveal their names said they carried weapons during their military service^{280, 281}.

Thirdly, no Greek citizen of Turkish origin with a university degree has ever become an officer in the Greek army. This is based on two considerations. One of them is the fact that Turks living in Rhodes and Kos do not have any chance of studying in Greek universities. The other reason is that those who finish university in Turkey cannot get their diplomas accredited by Greece.

Fourthly, citizens of ethnic Greek origin perform their military service in their hometown after basic training as a general rule. However, this rule does not apply to the sons of Rhodes and Kos Turks²⁸².

Nevertheless, informants interviewed disclosed that the Greek Government did not treat the island Turks contemptuously during their military service except for a few instances.

On the other hand, it was also stated that some unfavorable rumors were spread according to the emotional state at a certain period of time. *Macit Külür*²⁸³ commented;

“I did not do my military service but my twin brother died while serving in the Greek army. They said he had become ill and died.

Those years, rumor had it that Greece had taken preventive measures on the Maritsa (River) against a possible attack to be launched by Turkey in Thrace. As part of these measures, Greek troops of Turkish origin were positioned at the forefront so that Turks would suffer the greatest casualties in case of an armed confrontation.”

ORGANIZATION in RHODES and KOS TURKS

Organization of Rhodes and Kos Turks in the Islands

Ottoman and Italian Period

Evidently, Rhodes and Kos Turks had many organizations first in the Ottoman period, then during the period following the Italian occupation of the islands. They include Rhodes Muslim Community Council, Kos Muslim Community Council, Rhodes Organization of National Interests, Benevolent Society for the Poor, Muslim Sports Club and Muslim Graves Commission²⁸⁴.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Muhammet Ali Paşa.

²⁸⁰ Anonymous

²⁸¹ Anonymous

²⁸² *Dodekanisos*, November 26 2001

²⁸³ Interview with Macit Külür

²⁸⁴ *Orakçı, M., 2012. Rhodes Muslims Selam Newspaper 1926-1936 Kitap Press*

“Rodos İslam Cemaati Heyeti” (Rhodes Muslim Community Council)

It is the council that is responsible for executing the affairs of the Turkish Muslim community in Rhodes. The prominent members of the community gathered and elected a 21-member candidate list. After the list was tendered to the Governor’s Office, seven members were elected from the list to form the executive committee. Then the executive committee elected a president and a vice president among themselves. The Rhodes Muslim Community Council had an Office where it attended to community affairs. The meeting place of the community was the *Hafız Ahmed Pasha* Library. The Community Council would hold celebration ceremonies on *Eid al-Fitr* (Feast of Breaking the Fast) and *Eid al-Adha* (Feast of the Sacrifice) at the library. The Governor and other local dignitaries would also be accepted and hosted here.

According to a decree issued by the Italian Government in 1930, the scope of duties of the Rhodes Muslim Community Council was restricted. They were no longer allowed to deal with the administration and accounts of the foundations and community schools. In this respect its scope of duties was limited to dealing with affairs related to marriage, divorce, inheritance and religion. As for the position of Muftiate, the council would determine a candidate but the appointment would be made by the governor’s office.

The council that carried on its functions for some time during the Greek period was later made dysfunctional and finally closed down.

“İstanköy İslam Cemaati Heyeti” (Kos Muslim Community Council)

The scope of duties of the Kos Muslim Community Council, just the like the RHodes Council, went through substantial changes in time. The council was also closed down.

“Rodos Menfaat-ı Milliye Örgütü” (Rhodes Organization of National Interests)

It is a secret organization founded during the National Campaign in Turkey. It is known that the organization was involved in the shipment of arms bought from Italians to Anatolia. Moreover, it also had schools and bridges built in Turkey.

“Fukaraperver Cemiyeti” (Benevolent Society for the Poor)

It was a benevolent society established with the purpose helping the poor. It would organize various social activities such as concerts, entertainment events, film shows, lotteries to raise funds. Founded in the Ottoman period, the society was even more active during the Italian period. It was closed down in the Greek period.

“İslam Spor Kulübü” (Muslim Sports Club)

Muslim Sports Club was established in the Italian period with the objective of bringing Muslim Turkish youths together for physical development and effective use of their free time in the best possible manner. The club organized practice programs and competitions in branches like football and cycling. Its activities ceased in the Greek period.

“Makabir-i İslamiye Komisyonu” (Muslim Graves Commission)

It is a commission formed in 1916 so as to maintain and protect graves in Muslim cemeteries. It is reported that the commission was later dismantled.

British Period

“Rodos Türk Halk Kulübü” Rhodes Turkish People’s Club

It is known that Rhodes Turkish People's Club²⁸⁵ was founded in the British period. What should be noted here is that the British Administration had given permission for the use of the term "Turk" within the title of the club. This was significant from two points of view. Firstly, it was the recognition of the Turkish presence in the island. Secondly, it demonstrated the invalidity of claims made by the Greek State after they took over the islands from the British that there were no Turks, but Greek Muslims, in the islands²⁸⁶. The fact that the report card issued to a Rhodes Turk at the end of the Academic Year 1945-1946 was prepared and registered by "the Directorate of Turkish Schools in Rhodes" constituted serious proof of the Turkish presence in the island²⁸⁷.

Greek Period

The Executive Committee of Foundation Properties or the Foundation Administrations, as they were originally called those days, was established during the Greek period.

On a non-governmental organization (NGO) level, on the other hand, Rhodes Muslim Culture and Fraternity Association and Kos Muslim Culture and Fraternity Association were the first organization to be established in these islands.

"Rodos Evkaf İdaresi" Rhodes Foundation Administration / "Vakıf Malları Yönetim Kurumu" Foundation Properties Executive Council

Evkaf-ı Mazbuta (Foundation of Mosques), established for the maintenance and repair of mosques, and **Evkaf-ı Mektebiye** (Foundation of Schools), established to raise funds for the Turkish schools, were combined under the name of "Rhodes Foundations Administration" by Italians in 1929 and administered according to the Foundation Law. When the island was assigned to Greece in 1947, the Foundation Law was translated to Greek and took the name of Foundation Regulations. Accordingly, executive committees of the foundations were elected by the governor's office among the names recommended by the Muslim Turkish community of the island. However, this procedure that remained only on paper paved the way for the plundering of foundations.

The present rate of property taxes the Turkish Foundations in Rhodes and Kos have to pay is 0.6 %. In other words, this rate is exactly the same as the tax rate business establishments have to pay. However, Orthodox Christian Institutions and the Church are exempt from all sorts of real estate taxes. This clearly shows how discriminative these implementations can get. This unjust implementation has in a way turned into a mechanism for the sale of foundations properties. (*See; Foundations in Rhodes and Kos*)

"İstanköy Evkaf İdaresi" Kos Foundation Administration / "Vakıf Malları Yönetim Kurumu" Foundation Properties Executive Council

Kos Foundation Administration was also established to perform functions similar to those of Rhodes Foundation Administration.

"Rodos Müslüman Kültür ve Kardeşlik Derneği"

²⁸⁵ Nasuhoğlu, S., 2014. Private Notes (Unprinted).

²⁸⁶ See Picture. 13.

²⁸⁷ See Picture. 14.

Rhodes Muslim Culture and Fraternity Association,

“Rhodes Turkish Community” association was founded as a non-governmental organization in 1912. The association was banned in 1967 and closed down in 1987.

Left without an organization for many years, Rhodes Turks managed to establish Rhodes Muslim Culture and Fraternity Association in 2000 following a long legal struggle.

Among the objectives of the association were issues such as preserving the foundation’s properties and organizing activities related to the language and the religion of the Muslim Turkish community in Rhodes.

“İstanköy Müslüman Kültür ve Kardeşlik Derneği”

Kos Culture and Fraternity Association

As was the case in Rhodes, the objectives of the Kos Culture and Fraternity Association also included issues such as preserving the foundation’s properties and organizing activities related to the language and the religion of the Muslim Turkish community in Kos..

Organisation of Rhodes and Kos Turks in Turkey

“Rodoslular Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği”

Rhodes Turks Culture an Solidarity Association

Rhodes Turks Culture an Solidarity Association was founded in Ankara in 1959²⁸⁸. It is reported that the association was moved to Izmir where majority of Rhodes and Kos Turks were living. However, the association was closed without leaving a trace as it did not organize any activities.

“Rodos, İstanköy ve Onikiada Türkleri Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği”

Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Culture an Solidarity Association

The sole representative of the Turks who settled in Turkey is Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association. It was founded in Izmir in 1996. The Istanbul Branch of the association was opened in 2014. Objectives mentioned in the Regulations of Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Turks Culture and Solidarity Association include promoting solidarity among the Turks who immigrated to Turkey from Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands; preserving our culture and customs and transferring them to the next generation; contributing to all institutions working to preserve, protect and restore our cultural heritage inherited from the Ottoman Turks in these island; exerting efforts to protect all kinds of social rights including inheritance rights of our Turkish fellowmen; and working for the maintenance and repair of the Turkish cemeteries in these islands²⁸⁹.

In addition to various social activities, the association are also involved in scientific research studies in Turkey and abroad aimed at preserving the cultural identity of Rhodes and Kos Turks in particular.

Emergence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is quite a recent development among Rhodes and Kos Turks. Delay in organization may be attributed to many factors. The most important reason was the reflection of the fear of losing their identity on the immigrants from the islands after a long occupation by the Italians and the Germans and finally the Greek rule in these islands. This fear has constantly been fueled. For instance, when associations were founded in Rhodes and Kos, their founders were accused of being Turkish agents²⁹⁰.

²⁸⁸ [Rodoslu,N.,2014](#) .Private Notes.Ankara

²⁸⁹ [Kaymakçı,M.,2014](#). A Movement Dedicated to the Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos..Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands Culture and Solidarity Association. (op.cit.) Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos (Ed.) Kaymakçı,M. and Özgün,C. Meta Press,Bornova,Izmir

²⁹⁰ [Dilek,B.S. 2008](#).Forgotten Turks of the Aegean .Cumhuriyet Press.

The said feeling of fear especially affected the first generation of immigrants. Non-governmental organizations have been perceived as defying the state. On the other hand, the immigrants, who are in constant contact with the islands, believed that organizations in Turkey would harm their relatives in Greece. Therefore, the first generation of immigrants have always abstained and stood aloof from civil organizations. Consciousness of organization gradually emerged with the second generation of people who immigrated to Turkey, studied and built their lives in the Mother Land.

MIGRATION IN RHODES AND KOS TURKS

Migration is the movement by groups of people “*from their original land to another destination*”²⁹¹. Nevertheless, this definition might be considered an incomplete or insufficient perception as it is because migration involves grief, material and emotional accumulations, memories and experiences that are left behind. Therefore, no concept or phrase can sufficiently define migration. So, there will always be something missing in the definition of the concept of migration. Migration from an original homeland to geography might be motivated by political, social and economic reasons while “psychological reasons” should never be disregarded. At least, this is certainly one of the evident reasons for immigration to Anatolia from Rhodes and Kos.

It should be pointed out that migration from Rhodes and Kos to other countries, led by Turkey, was partly “*voluntary migration*”, whereas the majority was “*forced, mandatory migration*”²⁹². Island Turks immigrated to Turkey for as variety of reasons, including efforts to protect their Turkish identities, a desire to learn Turkish and hopes for finding better employment.

International Conference on Immigration and Emigration convened in Rome, Italy in 1924 was an important event that partially brought new international dimensions to the concepts of migration and migrants.

At the congress, an emigrant was defined “*as a person who leaves his country in search of employment or to company his relatives*”. The congress convened in Geneva in 1932, on the other hand, classified emigrants into two groups as “*temporary and permanent*” and the United Nations Population Commission recognized the distinction among four major types of migrants, namely temporary migrants, permanent migrants, refugees and commuters.

Those who came to settle down in Turkey were accepted as refugees and divided into two categories as refugees housed by the government and by their own means²⁹³. The most important impact of migration related to social change is certainly “*the creation of multi-*

²⁹¹ [Karpaz, K., 2003. Ottoman Population \(1830- 1914\), History Foundation Yurt Press, Istanbul, , p. 3.](#)

²⁹² [There are four categories in the classification of reasons for the phenomenon of migration. These include primitive, mandatory, forced and voluntary migrations. See Koçak, Y., Terzi, E. 2012. “The Phenomenon of Migration in Turkey, the Influence of Immigrants on Cities and Suggested Solutions”, Kafkas University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Journal, KAÜ-İİBF Journal, Volume: 3, Issue: 3, Year: 2012, pp. 167 and 171.](#)

²⁹³ [Şenesen, R.O., 2011. “Stories related to Crete Told by Cretan Immigrants in the Çukurova Region Documented a Source for Social History”, Çukurova University Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Turkology Symposium \(October 20-22\) Papers, Adana, 2012, p. 530.](#)

ethnic societies when people intermingle and integrate, mainly through marriages. Thus, different communities in different ethnic groups have a chance to merge with one another on cultural and biological bases.”

People who migrate or are forced to migrate often go to a geography inhabited by a religiously, culturally and socially similar social group, which is a factor accelerating social integration. This brings about **“a process of cultural integration”**. Sometimes, however, just the opposite may happen. In societies affected by political, religious and social disintegration, the emigrants cannot adapt to the new environment or start experiencing identity erosion. In this case “cultural assimilation” becomes inevitable²⁹⁴.

It is known that factors such as territorial losses, natural disasters, economic crises and governmental pressures play an important role in the process of immigration²⁹⁵. Political oppression, sanctions, violence and etc. can also lead to migration. Such types of migration based on **“disturbances”** are described as **“political migration”**²⁹⁶.

In fact, it should be kept in mind that the main reason for political immigration to various countries, led by Turkey, from Rhodes and Kos was the **“war”**. It has been established that Greek policies aimed at renouncing the Ottoman sovereignty at the beginning of the 19th century; Italian occupation of the islands at the beginning of the 20th century; re-determination of the borders in the Mediterranean after the Balkan Wars; developments during and after the Second World War; and the 1974 Cyprus Operation were all important processes that triggered different waves of immigration to Anatolia from the islands. Therefore, the phenomenon of migration in Rhodes and Kos has evidently occurred based on “a great number of and a variety of disturbances” Factors such as cultural and social pressures; assimilation efforts; a reflex of protecting belonging and identifies; and mostly psychological/partly physical violence constituted the basic reasons for Rhodes and Kos Turks to immigrate to Anatolia. Turkish identities in the islands and Turkey that belong to the same culture eventually interacted due to these immigrations and this interaction brought about a “material and emotional integration” in many spheres, led by food culture.

Greece was established over a large area of land composed of the Morea peninsula, the Island of Euboea (*Eğriboz*), the Northern Sporades and the Cyclad Archipelago at the beginning of the 19th century. The population of this area was 938,765 in 1821. About 10% of the population was of Turkish origin. Between 1821 and 1833, some of the Turks were murdered while some of the survivors had to leave their homelands and immigrate to other countries because of the oppression they were experiencing in Greece²⁹⁷. The Morea Rebellion had sealed the fate of the Turks living in Greece. Raids staged by Greek rebels on the Turkish settlements and murder of many Turks by Greek insurgents made emigration from Greece imperative. Turkish immigrants arrived in *Aydın* and *Saruhan* Sanjaks (provinces)

²⁹⁴ For detailed info on the subject, see. *Atabay,M, 2005*. “Immigration to Çanakkale between the Years 1877-1950”, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Atatürk and Dardanelles Campaign Research Center, Issue: 3, Çanakkale, p. 92.

²⁹⁵ Şenesen,R.O., op.cit., p. 529.

²⁹⁶ Atabay,Mop.cit. p.92.

²⁹⁷ İpek,N., op.cit. p.109.

particularly in places such as Izmir, *Çeşme*, Euboea, and *Kuşadası*. Due to increased pressures in Greece, the most intensive wave of Turkish immigration occurred between 1827 and 1837; a number of Muslims living in Morea and Euboea had immigrated to Macedonia and Thessaly and some of them to *Çeşme* and *Seferihisar* regions²⁹⁸. Following disposition of Thessaly in 1881, thousands of Muslims immigrated to Anatolia mainly from regional capital of Karditsa (*Yenişehir*). Some of them stayed in towns on the Western Anatolian coastline while some of them settled in Antalya and surrounding towns²⁹⁹. The Morea Rebellion set an example to the island of Crete. It was an Ottoman territory but was legally incorporated to Greece with support from the European powers and consequently many Turks, fearing that a rebellion similar to the one in Morea might occur in Crete, had to immigrate to places such as Rhodes, Kos and Anatolia.

Following the Greek rebellions in Crete, Turks entered a state of flurry and started to emigrate from the island in waves fearing for their lives and properties. The total population of Crete was approximately 300,000 in 1897. About 70,000 were ethnic Turks. In the year 1900, however, it dwindled to 33,000³⁰⁰.

With the occupation of Crete by Greece in 1897, most of the Greek-speaking Muslim Turks immigrated to Turkey. At the end of the 19th century, intensive waves of immigrants left Crete for Thessalonica, Rhodes or the other Aegean islands, Aegean coasts, Konya, Ankara, Tarsus as well as various Anatolian provinces like Adana, Aleppo, Beirut and Syria³⁰¹. Turkish presence in Crete dropped to a level as low as 9% at the peak of the Balkan Wars in 1912³⁰². Greece's appearance on the stage of history as an independent state in the 19th century caused Turks to experience a painful process, which was in fact a struggle of life and death.

The Ottoman Government exerted great efforts in the 19th century to incorporate Turkish emigrants who arrived in Anatolia from mainland Greece and surrounding Greek islands by settling and assigning them meadows, highland pastures, farms, hayfields and vacant farmlands. Needed studs and seeds were provided for the Turks who immigrated to Turkey. Places with favorable climatic conditions were selected as settlements and it was made sure that the new houses be located near riverbeds, train stations and ports. Care was taken not to select arid places and forest lands as construction sites³⁰³.

It is a fact that a great number of Turkish families emigrated from Crete to Kos and Rhodes. It is reported that there was a total 19,000 acres of state-owned land suitable for cultivation and it was thought fit that some of the immigrants should be settled in *Cezayir-i*

²⁹⁸ *Yılmaz, M., 200.* "Greek Immigration to Greece from Turkey after the Balkan War", *Selçuk University Journal of Türkiyat Researches*, Issue: 10, Konya, p. 15.

²⁹⁹ *Yılmaz, M., op.cit. p.16.*

³⁰⁰ *Emgili, F., 2006.* "Cretan Immigrants in Tarsus (1897-1912)", Ankara University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of History, Volume: 25, Issue: 19, Ankara, , p. 190.

³⁰¹ *Emgili, F., op.cit. p. 190; Melike Kara-Mehtap Çelik, op.cit. p. 4.; Ahabap, Y., 2009.* "The Island of Kos in Our Recent History", Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Division of History, M.A. thesis, İstanbul, , p. 102.

³⁰² *İpek, N., , op.cit. p. 110.*

³⁰³ *Ahabap, Y., op.cit. p. 102.*

Bahr-i Sefid Vilayet (Province of the Islands of the Mediterranean). In 1893 68 people from 68 households from *Ah Yolu Anhialo*, Burgaz (Bulgaria) waiting for settlement in Izmir were sent to Kos by the Administration of Aydin Province. In 1898, 200,000 qurush was allocated to cover the expenses of needy and elderly immigrants. Also, the District Treasurer was instructed to pay from the local revenue office a sum of 65,000 qurush for the sustenance of Cretan immigrants³⁰⁴.

A total of 103 Single-Story Attached Houses were constructed for immigrants settled in Rhodes during the reign of *Abdulhamid II*³⁰⁵. Similarly, 10 houses were built for 35 immigrants in Kos in 1898 and a sum of 20,850 qurush was paid for expenses. When that did not suffice, an extra amount of 12,090 qurush was requested from *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid Vilayet* (Province of the Islands of the Mediterranean)³⁰⁶.

It is understood that the most intensive wave of Turkish emigration from Rhodes and Kos came about especially after the Second World War. The Second World War ended with the victory of Allied Countries over the Axis Powers and the lack of political authority that emerged after the war was created by the Allies themselves. Axis Powers such as Germany, Italy and Japan were subject to heavy conditions. Although the Second World War was fought between the Allies and the Axis Powers, all the countries that actively took part or stayed out of the war suffered the hardships caused by the war. The civilian population was naturally the most affected party. In an environment of war, people's psychology becomes distorted and their daily lives deteriorate. Conflicts of interests that emerge all over the world may seem to be for the advantage of civilians at first sight; however, they are nothing but a bunch of political hoaxes. Although Turkey did not take part in the Second World War, it was a country that suffered the greatest losses. People living in the region of Aegean Islands, which took its name from a Greek King and literally meant *the sea of islands* in mythology, were forced to succumb to obligations dictated by the war.

With the spread of the war across the Mediterranean, the islanders suffered great hardships stemming from various activities of both the Allies and the Axis Powers, who were well aware of the strategic importance of the islands in the Mediterranean. Following the occupation of the islands by Italy, Germany and Britain respectively, ethnic groups in the islands, led by those who were of ethnic Turkish origin, fled to Anatolia and stayed there until the war subsided. People with businesses and strong ties in the islands returned back and carried on with their lives in lands where they were born. Some others preferred to stay as they thought Anatolia would be a better place for them.

Famine was certainly a leading problem faced by people during the Second World War. The most scarce food item missed by Rhodes and Kos Turks during the war was bread. An informant, born in Rhodes in 1938, revealed the problems experienced during the Second World War as follows:

³⁰⁴ Engili,F., op.cit. p. 191.

³⁰⁵ Houses in the Cretan District of Rhodes stretch from the *Bursali* Curve towards the *Mikse* Village. In addition to the houses, a mosque (the Hamidiye Mosque), a school building, a fountain and a cemetery were also constructed to meet the needs of the residents. Some of these houses are inhabited by Cretan Turks in our modern day. Some of the houses are used by Greeks. It is said that the houses inhabited by Turks were denied permission for any repair work in the past. The Hamidiye Mosque is closed and is not open to prayers even for funeral ceremonies.

³⁰⁶ Ahabap,Y., op.cit. p.103.

”My father would be mad at us when didn’t eat. He would show us a loaf of bread and say, ‘We couldn’t even find this during the war. So, you shall eat it!’ When I refused to eat, he would say ‘You will eat it alright!’ and talk about the hardships they suffered in the years of war. He would say, ‘You haven’t seen anything yet.’ For instance, he would advise us to save some money.”³⁰⁷

Hardships experienced during the years of war led island Turks into searching for alternative feeding possibilities. As understood from the oral interviews, islanders were eating all kinds of grass and even snails to survive during the famine. An informant, born in Zümbüllü district of Rhodes in 1954, gave the following account of the problems related to eating and drinking during those years:

“You know there was a famine during the Second World War. Natutally, people had to find something to eat. They would collect the snails that came to the surface when the rain fell and eat them. They were really delicious. I ate them a lot. That is, my mother would cook delicious snail dishes.”³⁰⁸

It is seen that psychological effects of the war in Rhodes and Kos were much more serious than its material effects. During Italian and German occupations of the islands, people would hide in bomb shelters to protect their lives. The informant, who was born in 1938, summed up the situation during the occupation process as follows:

“We passed through difficult times in Rhodes during the Second World War. When Germans came to take over the island from Italians, we took shelter in lodges. One morning, we saw all Italian troops had been stripped off their uniforms. They were standing there in their underwear. Those days, German killed many Italians. We would rush to lodges when we heard the sirens. Not a single grass was left in our garden during the war. People ate everything because of hunger; they even ate pine tassels. Many people died of hunger. We never slept in our houses at night. We would sleep in lodges. They almost executed my father by shooting. a streak of light was leaking out of our window. They thought my father was an informer and detained him. My uncles had a hard time saving my father. In other words, that was one of the reasons why we came to Turkey. We lived in fear all the time.”³⁰⁹

“My mother and grandmother would talk about the famine in the Second World War. We had a field, called ‘black neck’, in Kanamat where my grandmother lived. They said there was a barn-like building with two small rooms there. Germans were using it as a storehouse. There were Italians on one hilltop and Germans on the other. They were trapped between two fires. As the eldest daughter, my mother naturally remembered the incidents more than her sisters did. They said they would run to the bomb shelter at the sound of the alarms. There was a huge bomb shelter behind our house built in the middle of a hill. They would pick up their blankets and run there.”³¹⁰

“I came to Turkey in 1945. The islands were not yet given to Greece by the British at that time. However the influence of Greece was being felt everywhere. Naturally, we, the Turks, started to flee to Turkey. Where to? Marmaris! The distance between Marmaris and Rhodes was 29 miles. If you had set out for Turkey in the morning, you could have arrived there in the evening; but Greek patrol boats were guarding the area. They would torture us if we got caught. What did I do? I headed for Fethiye with eight of my friends using a remote route off the cemetery. I was not married at the time, of course. We got to the other coast in a dingy rowing for four days and nights. I was 17-18 then. My parents stayed

³⁰⁷ Oral interview with Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar .

³⁰⁸ Oral interview with Macit Külür.

³⁰⁹ Oral interview with Nazik Kaymakçı Konuklar .

³¹⁰ Oral interview with Şahser Karakaya.

behind. I came with my elder brother and friends. The reason was that none of us wanted to be a Greek soldier. That is, we wanted to come to Turkey and become soldiers here."³¹¹

Oral interviews held with informants revealed how Italians and Germans treated the ethnic groups living in the islands during the occupations. An informant born in 1941 shared the following on the issue; *"Italians were together with Germans in the beginning. They had differences later on. All of sudden, aircraft flew over the house. They dropped a bomb on the olive grove. Thank God it did not fall on the house. Or else the house would have been blown into air. As we were on top of a hill, they were flying low. They looked like black-colored pears So many places were blown up. In fact, they were mistakenly bombing the Jews while trying to hit a ship loaded with commodities. So the real target of Germans was the port not the Jews. You should have seen how Jews were running for their lives.*"³¹²

When asked about how Jews were treated, here is what some of the informants stated; *"They rounded up all Jewish people. The poorest Jew was as wealthy as the richest Turk. They were very clever men. The place called Shalaka was also inhabited by Jews. When Germans left, they took all the Jews with them.*"³¹³

"Greeks were reading their own history: how they had slaughtered Turks in the First World War and how they were planning to do the same to us one day. In fact, there was a Greek village close to our Turkish village. We were arch enemies. Fearing that they might slaughter us one night as they said they would, we fled to Turkey one night.

I don't know the exact day but Germans arrived one day. They raided villages. Jews fled to Turkish villages. Those days, if we had two apples, we would give one to Jews. Germans would raid our villages in the morning. They rounded up all Jewish men and keep at the basement of a n apartment building. Then a German ship would come and take all the Jews to Germany.. None of them came back; they were probably murdered. Properties of those Jews were all destroyed during the air raids. Relief commodities would arrive by ship and aircraft from Cyprus would bombard the port to prevent us from unloading the commodities sent to us. All the district of Jews and Turks were demolished. As I said before, we fled for fear that Greeks would draft us and because we knew what they done in Izmir in the First World War. We came to Turkey in 46 (1946) and stayed in Marmaris. We fled our hometowns for fear of Greeks and came here. Turkey warmly welcomed us. We found jobs."³¹⁴

Oral interviews also revealed that occupation forces of different countries had used different implementations. The general consideration was that the Germans were strict and rigid, the Italians more moderate and the British more shrewd.

An informer born in Rhodes in 1941 provided the following Information was as follow; *"My father was well informed about certain issues while my mother wasn't. Germans were said to be strict but my parents wouldn't say anything against both Italians and Germans. In fact, Germans were very strict even someone stole a loaf braed.*"³¹⁵

On the British and Greek occupation, the informant stated, *"Then the British arrived. All worthless, good-for-nothing men were made policemen. Incidents of theft came to an end instantly. The British were such devilish people. The British stayed for two years and left. Then Greeks came to the island uttering loud cries.*"³¹⁶

It is known that Italians turned their eyes to the Aegean Islands in the Second World War when Italian offensives in Greece and the Balkans failed. Therefore, Germans invaded

³¹¹ Oral interview with İbrahim Denizaşan.

³¹² Oral interview with Güler Ayhan.

³¹³ Güler Ayhan op.cit.

³¹⁴ Oral interview with Ahmet Topal.

³¹⁵ Anonymous

³¹⁶ Anonymous

Greece in order to secure their southern flank in their large Soviet Campaign and then headed towards the Aegean Islands. According to this plan, Germany occupied Thasos, Samothrace and Limnos on April 25 1941. Then they invaded Crete in May 1941. In this period, from May 1 1941 to March 1 1943, a total of 22,909 people came to Western Anatolia from the Aegean Islands. In 1943, however, Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini was dismissed when the war took a downturn for Italy and replaced by General Pietro Badoglio. General Badoglio signed the 13-paragraph Armistice of Cassibile with the Allies on September 3 1943. Paragraph 6 of the Armistice terms reads as follows: ***“All Italian territories including the island of Corsica will be surrendered to Allied Forces to be used as military bases or for any other purpose as required”***. After Italians lost their influence in the islands with the signing of the armistice, the British made their move and first seized the islands of Kos, Leros and Samos. Military bases to be established in the said islands would pave the way for the occupation of Rhodes and Crete. Meanwhile, the administration of Rhodes passed to Germans. 40,000 Italian soldiers on the island could not resist a force of 9,000 German troops. The British attempted to occupy the island on September 9 1943 but were repelled by Germans. The other islands occupied by the British were not of any importance to them because Rhodes was located at a pivotal point for their strategic plans. Intending to make use of this strategy, Adolph Hitler moved one step further and occupied the islands of Kos, Samos and Leros. Scared by a series of occupations taking place in the Aegean, the islanders started a wave of migration. The total number of refugees that came to Western Anatolia from the Aegean Islands between September 10 1943 and February 20 1945 was 31,076, of which 16,159 were Italian; 1,080 were British; four were Germans; 11,669 were Greeks 17 were American and 2,169 were Turkish. The Turkish Government set up a number of refuge camps in various places for Greek, Italian, British, German and American refugees who fled the islands during the Second World War to take shelter in Anatolia They included *Izmir-Çeşme-Ilica* Refugee Camp, *Aydın-Nazilli* Refugee Camp, *Manisa* Refugee Camp, *Denizli* Refugee Camp, *Burdur-Tefenni* Refugee Camp, *Isparta* Refugee Camp and *Afyon* Refugee Camp. Refugees living in those camps faced a variety of problems. 6,000 people were settled in *Izmir-Çeşme -Ilica* Refugee Camp in 1942. Accommodation and sustenance expenses of the refugees were met by ***“Sıhhat ve İctimai Muavenet Vekaleti”*** (*Ministry of Health and Social Services*). Crowded, cramped living condition at the refugee camps brought about the risk of communicable diseases among refugees. The Ministry of Health staged an on-the-spot fight against such diseases. About 20-30 barracks were built for the refugees at *Nazilli* Refugee Camp and refugees were employed as workers at the *Nazilli* Textile Factory. Refugees had other things to worry about. For instance, 235 Greek refugees who had taken shelter in *Izmir-Çeşme* set out into the Aegean on April 4 1942 according to a decision taken by the Turkish Government. The boat, named *“Ender”*, carrying the refugees sank after hitting rocks off the coast of *Seferihisar*. 209 refugees died in the accident. The surviving Greek refugees were brought to *Seferihisar* and their accommodation and sustenance expenses were met by the Turkish Government. A similar incident occurred when the boat *“Vangelista”* sailing under Greek flag ran aground near *Izmir-Alaçati*. Fortunately, the boat had a narrow escape with minor damages. Refugees settled in camps set up in different parts of Anatolia by the Turkish Government during the Second World War were sent to foreign countries when conditions were favorable again. Between May 1 1941 and May 1 1943, 10,128 people living in various refugee camps were sent back to their countries of origin. Furthermore, 1,925 people from *Manisa*, *Afyon*, *Denizli* and *Aydın* camps were sent to various foreign countries and 10,472 people from *Izmir* and *Çesme* to Cyprus while 362 recruits were sent to military camps. When the number of deaths and deserters are added, this figure reached 22,909. Some of the Italian soldiers who escaped to Western Anatolian coast while being held prisoner by Germans in the Aegean Islands were sent to detention camps in *Burdur-Tefenni* and *Isparta*. After conditions

became favorable, they were settled in various places between February 20 and March 22 1944. Some of those refugees were sent to Syria on two different dates; 829 on March 8 1944 and 774 on March 21 1944. 120 people were also sent to Italy on March 1944. The total number of the said military refugees was 3,051.³¹⁷

During the Second World War, particularly in the year 1943, a great number of island Turks holding Turkish or Italian citizenship immigrated to Anatolia due to famine and ill treatment.³¹⁸ In this respect, *Qadi Mustafa Effendi* in Rhodes informed *Muğla* Governorship through local governor's office in *Fethiye* that some of the Turks in the islands were underselling their properties under pressure.³¹⁹

During the Greek period, on the other hand, Turks who had to leave the Dodecanese Islands after the 1950's were forced to sign an official document stating that they would not return to Rhodes ever again. Those who stayed behind could not leave the island lest they would be deprived of Greek citizenship. When they wanted to leave the island they had to apply to the Foreigners' Department and obtain a return visa to Greece. These people were allowed to leave the island for a period of 30 days only. Described as "Dodecanese Citizens", the Turks were allowed to leave the island with passports valid for a period of five years; however, in the case that they did not return to their islands at the end of this period, they were declared as having obtained a citizenship in another country. So they were deprived of their Greek citizenship. Passports of those who applied for an extension were confiscated and those people were informed that they had lost their citizenship. Thousands of people are thought to have lost their citizenship in this way. Moreover, even the Turks bearing Greek identity cards are refused new identity cards on the grounds that their records at the Municipality of Rhodes had been deleted. It is true that the Turkish Government's policy on the islands was based on preserving the quality and quantity of the Turkish population in the islands and on renouncing immigration to Anatolia as the only solution to existing problems. The said policy can be considered a "state policy" that has never changed since the time Turkish sovereignty in the islands came to an end. There a great number of official documents related to this approach taken by the Turkish Republic. An official letter dated 1934 stated that "*there was a general tendency among our Turkish fellowmen holding Turkish or Italian citizenship in Rhodes towards immigrating to Turkey.*" Statements made public by the Turkish Government in past always advised Turkish people to stay where they were. In fact, the officials were trying to stop the wave of immigration by making visa procedure difficult for the Turks holding Italian citizenship.³²⁰

Another aspect of the phenomenon of migration is the impact created by immigrants in their new lands. It is observed that the Westernized views, household routines, cuisines, dressing styles, traditions, habits in other words the cultural accumulations of Rhodes and Kos Turks who settled down in *Bodrum*, *Fethiye* and *Marmaris* had a positive effect on the social, political, cultural and economic structures of these places.

³¹⁷ Akça, B., "The Problem of Refugees Who Fled the Aegean Islands and came to Western Anatolian Coast during the Second World War", *Muğla University Institute of Social Sciences Journal*, Issue 24, Spring/ 2010, pp. 2- 9.

³¹⁸ B.C.A, Lot: 03001 - Box: 40 - Folder No: 240- Serial No: 19

³¹⁹ The telegram dated August 13 1934 Numbered 734/ 12479, sent to the Ministry of Interior by the Governor of *Muğla Ömer Cevat Beg* B.C.A, Lot: 03010 - Box: 237 - Folder No: 604- Serial No: 20

³²⁰ See Document 9. The official letter of the Turkish Consulate in Rhodes dated November 28 1934, issued to the Foreign Ministry. B.C.A, Lot: 03010 - Box: 238 - Folder No: 605- Serial No: 12.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services tendered an official letter dated May 2 1945, specially numbered 102738 to the Prime Ministry, which evidently supported this consideration. *“It is understood that there were many electricians, drivers and motor technicians among the Turkish refugees holding Italian citizenship who took shelter in the motherland due to famine and poverty; who were exclusively settled in towns within the province of Muğla in accordance with government orders; and whose expenses, including accommodation and sustenance, are met from the public settlement budget. These craftsmen lied idle and depended on government assistance as they were unable to find a suitable environment to perform their crafts in the towns they were settled. The situation of these Turkish refugees, some of whom were really gifted craftsmen, not only created a problem of idleness for them but also increased public spending. The Minister of Health of the time stated that it would be more feasible to send such craftsmen to places like Aydın, İzmir, Nazilli, where they could perform their crafts feely.”* The reason why immigrants preferred Nazilli is the fact that the manpower needed at newly opened factories there was met by the immigrants who came to Turkey from the islands. During the first years of the Republic when there was almost no internal migration in the country, the deficit of manpower reduced by means of Turks who migrated from Kos and other islands³²¹.

Accounts provided by informants interviewed within the scope of the Oral History Project told us regarding their immigration to Anatolia from Rhodes and Kos after the 1974 Cyprus Operation are as follows:

*“We were five brothers. We, four brothers, came to İzmir in 1974. One of my brothers stayed behind. I was doing well there. I didn’t intend to come at first. However, my brother had a store there. The winnows of his store were stoned during the incidents of Cyprus. Then he said, ‘Let’s go to Turkey!’ We came but he stayed in Rhodes. I am glad we did, but my brother stayed and died there. He cried a lot before he died saying that he wished he had come with us. My father-in-law died there; I couldn’t go. My brother-in-law died; I couldn’t go. My brother died; I couldn’t go. Greeks didn’t let me.”*³²²

*“There was the Cyprus Incident. All of us stayed where we were. The Cyprus Incident hit Rhodes as well. We came here after that. I have three daughters and a son. My son came here. My children had studied there. Then we thought about old age and illnesses. What could we do their alone with my wife? So, we sold whatever we had and came here. We came here in 1974.”*³²³

*“During the 1974 incidents, some people slipped letters under our doors telling us to go back to our countries. So, we came to Turkey so that our children can go to school. We had a hard time as we didn’t have a house to live in. Because my father had a house, we were not eligible for rent allowance. We rented a house and my children went to school. After 20 months we went back to Rhodes so that Cengiz (her husband) can sell the houses. Then we came back to Turkey again. My passport had expired: I took it to the consulate for extension thought I would need it when I wanted to go to Rhodes. The consul gave my husband a piece of paper in which it stated that it was deleted on my own request. I cried a lot. Then I went to the Foreigners’ Department. They told me not to worry. There was lady called Nazan Hanım. She tried to comfort me. I said ‘Look what they did; they wrote it was deleted.’ I was really sorry. I couldn’t go back to Rhodes. Visa procedures went back to normal after 26 years. Now, we are Turkish citizens.”*³²⁴

³²¹ Oral interview with Emine Pervan Yücel. See. Document 10. B.C.A, Lot: 03010 - Box: 124 - Folder No: 882-Serial No: 12. Mehmet Bastiyalı, History of Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands, İzmir, 1999, p. 162.

³²² Oral interview with Çetin Saidakis.

³²³ Oral interview with Havva Bastiyalı.

³²⁴ Oral interview with Dürdane Koyuncuoğlu.

*Ahmet Kirevliyasi*³²⁵, on the other hand, considered exclusion, contempt, assimilation and hate as the main reasons for migration. He stated; ***“The most critical times of migration after the Second World War were the 1964 Cyprus Incidents and the 1974 Cyprus Operation.”***

ATTITUDES OF RHODES and KOS TURKS TOWARDS the REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

It is reported that Rhodes and Kos Turks sent arms and ammunition to the National Campaign (The Turkish War of Independence), staged by Turks under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha against the Western-backed Greek armies, through a secret organization called Organization of National Interests and that the organization was led by a Turkish nationalist named *Suleiman Aga. Sadi Nasuhoğlu*³²⁶ wrote that *Suleyman Aga* financed construction of schools, bridges and an office building in *Köyceğiz* and that he was rewarded by Atatürk by naming a street in *Köyceğiz* after him.

A Turk from Rhodes³²⁷ gave a similar account based on what he had been told by his elders. He said the money raised for the cause was collected in their shop and the arms bought from the Italians were sent to İsmet Pasha’s headquarters in Anatolia through shipments to ports of Antalya and *Fethiye* with boats. This person also informed that two airplanes bought from the Italians were sent to Anatolia as presents and images of Turkish flag were painted on the aircraft’s tails.

The news of the Turkish victory in the War of Independence was received with great joy in Rhodes and Kos. It was celebrated as a victory because it not only liberated the motherland but also ended hostilities like to be committed against Turks especially by Greeks.

It is hardly possible to forget the account given by an island Turk³²⁸. *Abdurrahman Kaymakçı* shared one of his childhood memories. The place is Rhodes and the year is 1921. While two boys were trading practical jokes, the Greek boy *Dimitri* pulls his Turkish friend *Abdurrahman*’s ear and says, ***“Hey, Turco! The Greek Army is now in front of Polatlı. Ankara will soon fall. We will grab Kemal (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk) by the ear and finish him. Then your turn will come. Hear it from me.”***

Rhodes and Kos Turks started to closely observe and just to modernization movements in Turkey following the establishment of the Turkish Republic. One example to this was the decision of the Foundation Committee for the delivery of *khutbah* (Islamic sermon) in Turkish language. On grounds that Arabic *khutbas* delivered at Friday prayers and Eid services (Muslim holidays) were not understood by the community, practice of delivering *khutbas* in Turkish was decided by the Foundation Committee and approved by the Muftiate³²⁹.

Although the Turks in the islands refrain from openly expressing their political tendencies, Atatürk has a very special place in their hearts as an undisputed leader. *Mehmet Nazmi Kocayiğit*³³⁰ stated that his father was not interested in politics but had strong Kemalist thoughts. Evidently, the Turkish teachers working at the Turkish schools have had a great share in this. *Kocayiğit* added, ***“They raised us as devote Kemalists.”***

³²⁵ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

³²⁶ Sadi Nasuhoğlu op. cit

³²⁷ Anonymous

³²⁸ *Kaymakçı, A., 1974* .Rhodes Memoirs (Unprinted)

³²⁹ Orakçı, M. op. cit

³³⁰ Mehmet Nazmi Kocayiğit op. cit

*Necdet Feyzullah*³³¹ stated that every house that belonged to island Turks had a Turkish flag and went on to say, **“My grandmother had a very large Turkish flag. She would unfold it and spread naphthalene. Then we would fold it together. My grandmother was a true nationalist. She would often wash her flag and keep it under her pillow. She was such a special person.”**

An anonymous island Turk³³², **“Every year on the 10th of November, we would go the Turkish Consulate in Rhodes and observe a moment a silence in memory of Atatürk.”**

It can be said that exaltation of Atatürk as well as the Turkish identity lied at the root of such considerations. Emine Perver Yücel³³³ stated, **“There would be no Turkish identity but for Atatürk. Kemalizm meant protecting your country, your neighbour and your children to the last drop of blood. That was what they had taught us.”**

On the other hand, the majority of the island Turks interviewed had a different perception of *Ismet İnönü*. We cannot state that this perception is a positive one. There is a widespread rumor among the island Turks that the islands were first proposed to Turkey at the end of the war and Rhodes and Kos were assigned to Greece upon *Inönü*' refusal of this proposal.

*Necdet Feyzullah*³³⁴ gave the following account, **“There was an expectation that Turks would come and there would be prosperity, ending hunger and poverty in the islands. Greeks would also celebrate this as a feast. Greece was too far away. In case of emergency, help would arrive from Turkey within an hour. There was prosperity in Turkey. The entire world was involved in war; only Turkey had stayed out. As I heard from my elders, the islands were first proposed to Ismet Pasha but he refused stating that he would neither accept an inch of land nor give away an inch. I don't know how true that is.”**

It is understood that *Ahmet Peçeli*³³⁵ had similar considerations; **“Inönü also did wrong to Turkey. At that time, Germans came to İnönü and said he was welcome to take the islands. He turned down the German proposal saying that they would neither accept an inch of land nor give away an inch.”**

The island Turks were really expecting Turkey to take over Rhodes and Kos after the war ended. As mentioned in the Chapter entitled “The Second World War and Turks in Rhodes and Kos”, *Zehra Topaloğlu*³³⁶ and *Ahmet Şamoğlu*³³⁷ made the following comments on the Turks' expectations; **“Expecting that the Turkish Army would come, we took our flags and went to the port to meet them; however, all of them were Greek ships, not ours.”**

To put it briefly, the island Turks believe that the Turkish Republic means preserving their Turkish identity, no longer being a second-class citizen under the Greek Administration and having good living conditions. Preservation of the Turkish identity is the prime issue here. *Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı*³³⁸ made the following statement related to the issue, **“I was 16-**

³³¹ *Necdet Feyzullah op. cit*

³³² *Anonymous*

³³³ *Emine Perver Yücel op. cit*

³³⁴ *Necdet Feyzullah op. cit*

³³⁵ *Ahmet Peçeli op.cit.*

³³⁶ *Zeynep Topaloğlu op.cit.*

³³⁷ *Ahmet Şamoğlu op.cit.*

³³⁸ *Ahmet Necat Kaymakçı op.cit.*

17 when we came to Izmir. He had a farm and lands in Rhodes. We had a good run of business. My father couldn't immediately find a. We had a hard time when we first came here. My father had studied at the Junior High School of the Suleymaniye Madrasah. Turkish identity was extremely important for him. After some years when my little brother Mustafa asked him why we had immigrated to Turkey, my father said: 'If we had stayed, we would have lost our Turkish values and identity; we would have perished.' Although he was in poor health, my father attended my brother's oath-taking ceremony at the officer cadet school and cried with happiness. Serving the Turkish Army as a soldier was his greatest ambition. It would have given him a great feeling of pride."

DEMANDS OF RHODES and KOS TURKS

Hence, the main objective of the present study is to put forward which means and methods should be employed to

It is understood that solution of all the problems from the preservation and improvement of the cultural identity of Rhodes and Kos Turks to the problem of foundations lies in the principle of equality in Turkish-Greek relations.

For the establishment of a lasting peace between the two countries, it is imperative that problems be determined and freely discussed by both public opinions.

Exploratory negotiations have been going on with Greece for year. Main topics include the Cyprus Problem, the Aegean Air Space, Territorial Waters and the Continental Shelves. It is also known that the two sides have not reached common ground for a solution so far. Therefore, relations suddenly become strained from time to time. For example, a Turkish and a Greek war plane collided in a dogfight while flying in the International Air Space over the Aegean Sea., The Turkish Government informed the world public opinion that these flights were under the cognizance of NATO. Yet, the Greek Government accused Turkey of causing the collision. Aksu³³⁹ stated, *"The whirl of conflicts, clashes and crises between Turkey and Greece dates back to 1830s when Greece declared her independence from the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the long-term conflict between Turks and Greeks (Hellenics) could be backdated to the conquest of Istanbul (1453) by those who identified the roots of Greece with Byzantine."*

Nevertheless, while negotiations continue for the purpose of solving the above-cited problems, it is essential that demands and expectations expressed by the islanders during the interviews be taken into consideration. It is possible to classify these demands and expectations into two groups as those from Greece and those from Turkey.

Demands and expectations of island Turks from the Greek State include:

- Inaccurate and inconsistent information existing in Greek public opinion about Turks should be relinquished. Therefore, Greek history and history textbooks should be rewritten objectively

³³⁹ Aksu, F., 2014. Turkish-Greek Relations from a Whirl of Conflicts and Crises to a Change in Perception (op.cit.) Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos (Editor) Kaymakçı, M. and Özgün ,C. Meta Press ,Bornova, Izmir

Greek intellectuals, in particular, should adopt a positive attitude for this purpose. According to Macit Külür³⁴⁰; ***“Starting from the family environment and even kindergartens, the minds of the Greek children are filled with hatred and enmity against Turks. The Greek Orthodox Church also tries to alleviate this enmity. The Greek history and the history textbooks at schools are full of examples of enmity and hatred, too. The Greek citizens brought up in this environment are exploited by the dominant powers in Greece. What lies at the emotional roots of the policies of all the political parties in Greece this enmity against Turks.”***

Similar considerations were made by Ahmet Kirevliyasi³⁴¹, as well; ***“As the Greek independence movement was organized by Orthodox priests, the Church had a strong influence on Greek people. Moreover, Greece is not a secular country. So the Church has been using enmity against Turks as a basis for sustaining its existence. On the other hand, Greek politicians also alleviate this enmity. In fact, politicians have been exploiting the enmity that already exists in Greece. Greeks are systematically brainwashed starting from early childhood by means of hostile information in their textbooks.”***

- Greece should waive all restrictions concerning visas.

Şanser Karakaya³⁴² said; ***“We were denied visas for long years because we were born in Rhodes. They started issuing visas those born in the islands only recently”***

If the visa problems are solved, two-way trips may increase. Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı³⁴³ gave the following considerations; ***“Thus Greeks may get to know Turks better and realize no harm or hostility will come from them. Moreover, don’t we have a right to see the land where we were born and grew up?”***

One of Rhodes and Kos Turks who completed secondary and higher education in Turkey under a Turkish Government scholarship, Ahmet Kirevliyasi³⁴⁴, said he could not see his parent for years due visa restrictions.

- Greece should give up their claims that Turkish dishes, Turkish dances and even Turkish coffee belong to Greeks.

The most interesting example at this point is the Turkish coffee. As is known, Turkish coffee is a method of preparing coffee invented by Ottoman Turks. It is part of an original tradition with its distinct taste, foam and odor. It is the only type of coffee served with its sediment. However, Greeks renamed Turkish coffee as Greek coffee after 1974 entirely due to political reasons. What’s worse, the real reasons behind those incidents are forgotten and the new generation of Greeks misconceives it as Greek coffee without looking into the roots of the matter.

This is something frequently encountered by the Turks living in the islands and those visiting Greece as tourists. For instance, island Turks such as Yılmaz Demirci³⁴⁵, Şanser

³⁴⁰ Oral interview with Macit Külür.

³⁴¹ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

³⁴² Oral interview with Şanser Karakaya.

³⁴³ Oral interview with Ahmet Nejat Kaymakçı.

³⁴⁴ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

³⁴⁵ Oral interview with Yılmaz Demirci.

Karakay³⁴⁶, Sunay Ispartalı³⁴⁷ and Vedia İnamlı³⁴⁸ stated that they often had similar experiences. They said whenever they asked for Turkish coffee they met the question, “**You mean, you want Greek coffee?**” and they sometimes found themselves in an argument.

However, there are also some Greeks who write the truth. The following sentence in the opening page of a book written by *Elias Petropoulos* and translated into Turkish by *Herkül Milas* is virtually an act of defiance against all these³⁴⁹: “**Coffee, the famous Turkish coffee, is among scores of good and bad things we inherited from Turks, who should be recognized as the ancestors of modern Greeks. It should also be noted that Greek words like kafes/kahve (coffee), kafeci/kahveci (coffee maker), briki/ibrik (coffee pot), flicani/fincan (coffee cup) are originally Turkish.**”

In brief, establishment of a permanent and lasting friendship between Turkey and Greece relies on the Greek State. It would be misleading to believe in ambiguous expressions of friendship. A lasting friendship can be achieved if only the Greek governments accept this basic reality. This depends on establishment of peace on mutual interests of both countries.

According to *Kaymakçı*³⁵⁰, obligations of Greek governments to help establish peace on the above-cited facts with respect to Rhodes and Kos Turks included;

“Firstly, the Greek governments should show more concern for the protection, maintenance and repair of cultural monuments in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands.

Secondly, Turkish identity of our fellowmen in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands should be recognized and oppressive practices preventing them from getting organized with their cultural identity should be waived. At present, Turks living in these islands are only recognized with their Muslim identity.

Thirdly, Turkish children living in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands should be given the right to education in Turkish at least at the elementary level. In other words, right to education in native tongue should be granted.”

Demands and expectations of island Turks from the Greek State are as follows:

- Efforts to create awareness projects for Rhodes and Kos Turks should be intensified.. Therefore, a research institute should be set up and coordination should be provided on research being performed or to be performed. Institutions dealing with Turkic studies should also give more weight to the problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks. The perception in Turkish public opinion that the Turks in Greece are only composed of Turks in Western Thrace should be changed³⁵¹.

- Necessary action should be undertaken to distinguish Rhodes and Kos Turks from Cretan Turks.

³⁴⁶ Oral interview with Şanser Karakaya.

³⁴⁷ Oral interview with Sunay Ispartalı.

³⁴⁸ Oral interview with Vedia İnamlı.

³⁴⁹ <http://komsudapiser.blogspot.com.tr>.Access December 03 2014

³⁵⁰ *Kaymakçı, M., 2014. Current Problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks and Solutions (op.cit.) Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos (Ed.) Kaymakçı, M. and Özgün, C. Meta Press, Bornova, İzmir*

³⁵¹ *Kaymakçı, M., 2014. The International Symposium on Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos Opening Speech October 01 2014*

As is known, there no Turkish Muslims left in Crete. However, there are many Turks in Rhodes and Kos living under the threat of assimilation.

- Problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks should be addressed at a higher level during the bilateral negotiations held with the Greek State³⁵².
- Initiatives should be undertaken to be under the reassurance of international law concerning the ownership of real estate and protection of foundations.

Here is what a Rhodes Turk, *Gazi Şellavcı*³⁵³, demanded from the Turkish Republic on this issue; ***“What I want from Turkey is to protect all our monuments. All our monuments, mosques in Rhodes are in ruins. I want them to be repaired and opened. We were left alone here for years. They are extending some help lately but they didn’t in the past. Don’t ask for anything from the foundation; it hardly exists. Maybe there is one in name but there is no foundation for the Turks in Rhodes.”***

Until recently, islands Turks were having problems in owning real estate, starting their own businesses, getting scholarships and working as public servants.

Here is what *Ahmet Kirevliyasi*³⁵⁴ stated on this matter, ***“It can be said that Turkish governments were not active from the 1960’s to the 2000’s. For instance, children of island Turks were given scholarships to study in Turkey until 1965. They were discontinued after a while. Some of them came to Turkey by their own means. Scholarship programs were resumed in the 2000’s.”***

- Problems regarding the accreditation of Turkish university diplomas of Turks holding Greek citizenship should be solved.

General appeals of Turks living in the islands and Turkey as immigrants with respect to enhancement of Turkish-Greek friendship can be briefly stated as;

- Student exchange programs should be initiated between Greece and Turkey.

This program could be started from the border towns and cities. For the success of a possible student exchange program, it would be beneficial for Turkish and Greek students to learn the language of their counterparts.

- Communication between the local administrations should be established.

Communication between local administrations should be established and existing relations should also be strengthened. However, at this stage the Greek authorities, who do not refrain from instigating enmity even during the declaration of “sister cities”, have a great responsibility in promoting these relations. For instance, while the Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir was planning to announce Thessalonica as a ‘Sister City’, the Municipality of Thessalonica erected the so-called “Pontus Genocide Monument”. Newspapers and radio news programs reported in May 2006; *“Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a bronze statue erected in the Saint Sophia Square, depicting a weeping woman, Sotiris Kapetanopoulos, President of Thessalonica Municipal Committee, stated that the Municipality*

³⁵² Kaymakçı, M., 2014.op.cit.

³⁵³ Oral interview with Gazi Şellavcı.

³⁵⁴ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

of Thessalonica officially recognized 'Genocide'." ^{355 356} Acting by right, the Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir had to suspend the declaration of "Sister City".

- Tourism should be developed between the two countries.

Turkish and Greek peoples do not know one another well enough. So, enhancement of tourism activities would be quite beneficial. However, restrictions are imposed by Greece. There are problems in visa procedures. Especially, issuance of visas to Greek-born Turks who later immigrated to Turkey was not possible until recently.

- **Volume of trade between the two countries should be expanded.**

However, the expression "trade should be based on mutual interests" should be the dominant approach. *Ahmet Kirevliyasi* gave the following example; ³⁵⁷ "As is known, a bank in Turkey was recently bought by Greek capital. However, when Turks intended to buy a hotel in Rhodes, great bureaucratic problems were created and there were reactions. In the end, the sale of the hotel could not take place."

- **Prospects of scientific cooperation between the two countries should be created.-**

Turkey and Greece are two prominent countries in the Mediterranean Region. So there is a great prospect of cooperation between the two countries in many fields ranging from agriculture to industry. Common research studies could be carried out in the Aegean Sea. *Azize Bastiyali* ³⁵⁸, who is an academician, stated the following in this respect; "*Academic cooperation with Greece should be development. We are at very good terms with the Greek academician that we know.*"

CONCLUSION

It is understood that provision of demands of Rhodes and Kos Turks primarily relies on finding solutions to problems being experienced in the bilateral relations between Turkey and Greece. In this respect, it is evidently imperative that origins of the Turkish image created in the perception of Greek people should be considered at length. *Çağ and Ural*, ³⁵⁹ wrote that the said image was created by Westerners themselves and the perception that "*Turks are unjust and tyrannical masters and they have brought poverty, ignorance, exhaustion, pain, trouble, whip, bastinado and death to Greeks.*" was fabricated to shape the search for a national identity by the Greek. The writers went on say; "*With the emergence of Philhellenic (love of Greek culture) currents starting from the 19th century, recognition of Greece as the cradle of civilization was one of the reasons estranging Greeks from Turks.*"

³⁵⁵ <http://www.batitrakya.org/kose-yazilar> Access December 03 2014

³⁵⁶ <http://www.sabah.com.tr/2006> Access December 03 2014

³⁵⁷ Oral interview with Ahmet Kirevliyasi.

³⁵⁸ Oral interview with Azize Bastiyali.

³⁵⁹ *Çağ, G., Ural, S., 2014. The Unchangable Factors in Turkish-Greek Relations: A Historical Approach to the Turkish Image in the Greek Perception. History Studies International Journal of History. ISSN 1309-4688 Volume 6 Issue 2 February 2014*

In fact Philhellenism is an outcome of orientalism³⁶⁰, which created a legitimate environment for the West to influence and supervise the East. Thus, not only a legitimizing concept to dominate imperialism and the East was emphasized but also steps were made to pave the way for describing or considering the East as a passive contrast to the West and establishing progressive development as a phenomenon unique to the West.³⁶¹

According to Orientalists³⁶²; *“The West is dynamic while the East is permanent/static. The West is innovative, resourceful and active. It’s rationalistic and scientific. It’s disciplined and organized. It’s reasonable and sensitive. It’s intelligence-focused. It’s authoritarian, independent and functional. It’s original, democratic, considerate and honest. It is civilized. It’s ethical and economically progressive.*

Conversely, the unchanging East is imitative, ignorant and passive. It’s not rationalistic, superstitious and traditionalist. It’s lethargic, unbalanced and natural. It’s irrational and emotional. It’s body-oriented, exotic and attractive. It’s childish, dependent and function-focused. It’s submissive, undisciplined, inconsiderate and unethical. It’s not civilized but barbarian. It’s ethically backward and economically static.

In this respect, from the 19th century onwards, Western social scientists have asserted that the starting point of everything in the world history was the Ancient Greece. Accordingly; *“Europe rediscovered the Greek thinking with the Renaissance.”*

³⁶⁰ Said, E. W., 2010. Orientalism. Western Concepts of the Orient. 5th Edition (Trans. by: Ülner, B.) Metis/Kültür Press.

It is seen that the Concept of Orientalism emerged as an academic discipline with the name “Oriental Studies.” in the West. Nevertheless, the most competent scientific basis of the progressive story of the world history was described in sa 1978 book written by E. Said (Said 2010). In his book entitled Orientalism, Said (2010) questions the perspective of the West towards the East. According to him, Orientalism has many interrelated meanings. Firstly, Orientalism is an academic field of study or even a discipline that has different schools of thought just like “Oriental Studies. Secondly, “Orient” is a way of thinking expressing the difference between the West and the East with respect to philosophy of existence and the philosophy of knowledge (ontology and epistemology). Thirdly and probably the most importantly, Orientalism is an expression developed by the West “to dominate the East; to reshape it according to its own interests and gain authority; what’s more, to seize the people and lands of the East.” In this respect, Said describes Orientalism as a thought characterized by prejudice, ignorance, philistinism, clichés, standardized views and fabrications. In brief, Said thinks the orientalist approach of the West first estranges a part of the World and then constructs an unchanging judgment concerning the East; what’s more, it fails to realize that it is human experience. Said (2020) also states; “the East is not as static natural phenomenon and it doesn’t stay at place just like the West.” Hobson (2008), on the other hand, uses Orientalism and the Concept of European Centralism.

³⁶¹ Hobson, J. M., 2008. The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation.,2nd Edition. (Trans by: Ermet, E.) Yapı Kredi Publications, Istanbul.

³⁶² Hobson, J.M., 2008 .op.cit.

Philhellenism along with Orientalism was among the themes emphasized even in films screened in late years³⁶³. For instance, a film released in 2006 film, *“The 300 Spartans”*, depicts the story of 300 Spartan warriors who resist an outnumbering army of savage and stupid Persians. Moreover, the Persian King *Xerxes* appears as an exotic, pompous and feminine person. As far as they are stupid, Persians are also vicious. In the end, Ancient Greeks win an ethical victory against the East. It is known that the showing of the film was received with applause at the Berlin Film Festival. Wasn't the 2004 film *“Alexander the Great”* the reflection of the same viewpoint?

Dido Sotiriyu³⁶⁴ describes Anatolia as *bloody earth* in *Farewell Anatolia* (Original title: *Bloody Earth*), a book based on the true life story of a Greek villager. While reflecting the emotions of his own public opinion, the writer expresses that this perception is the result of imperial policies of the West. He finishes his novel as follows; *“Say Hello to my homeland for me, Blind Mehmet's son-in-law. Say Hello for me to Anatolia... Tell her not to hold grudge against us for soaking her soil with blood....And May God Curse those who made brother slaughter brother!..”*

In fact, landing of Greek armies on Western Anatolia on May 19 1919 guided and supported by the Great Powers was the greatest manifestation of these words³⁶⁵.

An incident that we have experienced recently is another clear indication of the negative Turkish Image in the Greek Perception. A letter entitled *“We've Had Enough of Bullying!”*, published by nationalist *Kontra News* during a visit to Athens by Turkey's Prime Minister *Ahmet Davutoglu* on the occasion of *“Third Meeting of the Turkey-Greece High-Level Cooperation Council”*, was by no means coincidental³⁶⁶. Although the letter ended with

³⁶³ *Kaymakçı, M., 2014*. On the Origins of Orientalism / 1,2,3 .<http://www.dagarcikturkiye.yazar>. Access December 10 2014

³⁶⁴ *Sotiriyo, D., 2000*. *Bloody Earth* (Greek: *Matomena Xomata*; Turkish: *Benden Selam Söyle Anadolu'ya*) *Can Press*

³⁶⁵ *Özakman, T., 2005*. *Those Crazy Turks* (Turkish: *Şu Çılgın Türkler*) (5th Edition). *Bilgi Pub*.

³⁶⁶ On December 6, *Daily Hürriyet* published an open letter that appeared in *Daily Kontra News* on the occasion of a visit to Athens by Turkey's Prime Minister *Ahmet Davutoglu*. The letter reads,

“Dear Mr. Prime Minister, you ruled us for 400 years. One day we revolted and drove you out. We slaughtered you and chased you down as far as Ankara. Then you slaughtered us and threw us into the sea. Before that you set fire to our houses in Izmir. Then you expelled the Greeks who had remained in Istanbul. You seized half of Cyprus from us.

Dear Mr. Prime Minister, we are tired of seeing two societies who have been fighting for 100 years and trying to cut each others' throats. Enough! Let's come to terms now. Whenever our country faces a problem, instead of asking us 'Is there anything we can do to help you, neighbors?' you start patrolling the Aegean with your warships, fishing boats and aircraft. Do you want to scare us? We know that you have a bigger army than we do. We also know that Turks are very good fighters. However, remember, Mr. Prime Minister, wars are not necessarily won by larger armies. Some say that you might capture some of the 3,000 deserted islands in the Aegean just to blackmail us. Even if this happens, do you think that you can hold on to them more than a few hours? No, of course! Are Europeans stupid enough to let you break into Europe through the window? After

words “*Let’s turn our countries into Paradise*”, the content was full of expressions of accusation and otherization.

Nevertheless, there are responsible personalities in Greece. In his book, “*As I Hang My Uniform*”, Retired Admiral *Antonis Antoniadis*, who served as the Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff from 2002 to 2005, shattered the taboo related to “*the Turkish Threat*”

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capturing part of Europe by force of arms, don't they know that you will Islamize whole Europe in 40-50 years? Recently, you have brought forth a scrap ship, which you keep in the Exclusive Economic Zone in Cyprus. There are rich reserves of oil and natural gas in our region. Let's make an agreement. We would be happy to share a considerable part of these reserves with our neighbours rather than watch Britain and the U.S.A. have them. Let's turn our countries into Paradise.”

³⁶⁷ In an article published in Daily *Hürriyet* on October 01 2008, *Yorgo Kirbaki* reported that Retired Admiral *Antonis Antoniadis*, who served as the Chief of the [Hellenic Navy General Staff](#) from 2002 to 2005, demonstrate a great example of courage by shattering the taboo related to “the Turkish Threat” in his book “**As I Hang My Uniform**”. Here is brief summary of the book: “*Turkey and the world acknowledge the 6 mile. - Greece currently uses sovereignty rights over a national airspace (10 miles) in access of its territorial waters (6 miles). We have a right to expand our territorial waters to 12 miles according to international law. However, as we don't use this right, there is no sense in being the laughing stock of the world by claiming that we have different width of national airspace and territorial waters. Greece's unilateral proclamation of her territorial waters as 10 miles at the beginning of the 20th century (1931) does not mean a thing for the international public. The world and naturally Turkey acknowledge our airspace as 6 miles.*

*The situation is different from what 95 percent of the Greek people and 70 percent of the Greek parliament think. FIR regions have nothing to do with the use of a country's sovereignty rights. These are flight information regions. FIR regions may overlap with the borders of national airspace in countries that have many islands. This is not valid in Greece, though. 35 percent of the airspace called FIR is actually international airspace, over which does Greece does not have any sovereignty rights. The **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** clearly states that its provisions cover civilian aircraft only. Consequently, all military aircraft, including Turkish warplanes, do not have to provide us with flight plans when flying outside the Greek national airspace within Athens FIR zone. Greece may demand flight plans for the safety of their own aircraft but the other side is not required to provide one according to international regulations. Only fools die to justify law. Turkish war planes virtually show they don't need to provide flight plans by flying within the international parts of the Athens FIR zone almost on daily basis. Greece claims this is violation of air traffic regulations. Greek warplanes fly to the area to “detect” Turkish warplanes. Aircraft from both countries frequently engage in dog-fights. Turkish aircraft virtually show Turkey does not acknowledge 10-mile air space claimed by Greece by flying through the 6-10 mile zone. Then Greek planes take off to intercept Turkish aircraft claiming they have violated national airspace. So the planes engage in another dogfight.*

You don't have to be a soldier to realize that blood is shed for the sake of certain procedures related to justification of international law. Only fools die to justify law.

If we demand Sakarya, Turkey becomes a threat. I have never agreed to the Greek view regarding the size and nature of the Turkish threat prevailing in Greece. As I started dealing with Turkish-Greek issues, I realized that disputes were based on political foolishness rather than genuine arguments. If a person who has been dealing with Turkish-Greek issues for long years cannot detect a serious threat that means either he is a fool or there are loopholes in the description of this threat. I have made many mistakes but I have never been a fool. Turkey may become a serious threat if and only if Greece wants, so to speak, to expand her borders up to Sakarya; annex Cyprus; or provide military contribution to efforts for the establishment of autonomy Kurdish state. Or else,

On the other hand, it can be said that the term “Globalization” displays parallelism with the term “Orientalism” as the West has a decisive role in globalization and uses it to its own advantage.

Using the term in this sense, Dilek³⁶⁸ made the following comments on the cultural assimilation of Rhodes and Kos Turks; “**Globalization**³⁶⁹ **fueled localization, micro**

issues such as Kardak, trespassing of FIR zones, violation of 10-mile airspace or disarmament of Greek islands are nothing but political-military tricks and do not constitute any serious threats at all.

Our money goes to those who fuel conflicts. Turkish-Greek disputes cause great amounts of funds that can be spent to meet many social needs to go to arms. Both countries spend these funds on armament programs, which can be described as over greedy monsters. This money is pocketed by those who feed on our disputes and wish to keep up the tension.

I came back from Istanbul with a lump in my throat. I wanted to see this “Turkish threat” closely before my term ended as the Chief of the Navy General Staff largely to satisfy my own conscience. However, whenever I wanted to get approval for a return visit by the Commander-in-Chief the Turkish Naval Forces (Vice Admiral Özden Örnek at that time), our politicians’ approach was always negative. They would say, “How could we host a commander of country that regularly violates our national airspace? What if a violation occurs during the visit?” Arguments were senseless but you know the belief of the people. I finally got the approval thank to 2004 Olympic Games. We kept the visit at such a low profile that the Greek media were hardly aware of the presence of the Commander-in-Chief the Turkish Naval Forces in Athens. The Turkish commander was a peaceful and pleasant person. We agreed upon establishment of an open telephone line between us in order to prevent undesirable incidents in Eastern Mediterranean.

Comparison with Turks could be discouraging. A month before I left office in late January 2005, I was very happy to be invited to visit Turkey. The reflexes our statesmen displayed on the occasion of a visit to Turkey by a Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff were similar to those a clinically dead person. After my meeting with the Turkish of Chief of General Staff, I had realized that the Turkish Armed Forces were under the command of people who refrained from cheap patriotism for the sake of daily consumptions, disregarded political costs and had serious and strategic objectives. Although the situation was different compared to the Greek side, it was discouraging for us. When we were preparing to return home after a very successful visit to Turkey, the atmosphere at the airport in Istanbul was very touching. I saw tears in the eyes of the Turkish Commander’s wife. She had become good friends with my wife. When I took a last look before boarding the plane, I felt something I had never experiences in my previous visits. I felt I had a lump in my throat. When I waved for the last time, my hands were under the command of the depths of my heart.

³⁶⁸ Dilek,B.S., 2008.op.cit.

³⁶⁹ Globalization is a process that emerged with productive methods and relations as well as technological progress in economically peripheral (wealthy) countries. As a result, products, services and capital are freely bought and sold in the Third World Countries in accordance with the interests of rich countries

Globalization has technological and socio-cultural aspects along with economic aspects. Technological progress is currently controlled by peripheral countries and their monopolistic enterprises. Consequently, globalization has assumed a role working for the advantage of those who produce and market information technologies. Innovations and inventions are monopolized by the producers or disseminated to the extent that they see suitable. This increases the dependence of the Third World Countries. For instance, genetically modified seeds, computer systems produced for arms and various industries and high-value-added products are used to the extent that monopolistic companies permit.

Socio-cultural globalization has many aspects, too. First of these is that socio-cultural structures of the peripheral countries are also true for the Third World Countries, which means elimination of the differences among societies. Through socio-cultural globalization, local characteristics and cultures of some countries that

nationalism, ethnic and regional discrimination to promote its interests. It supported minority groups living in places where global capital had interests. Minorities in places where global capital did not have any interests were completely ignored, forgotten and made forgotten. While universal concepts such as democracy, rule of law and human rights maintained their validity in regions where global capital had interests and were cited as a pretext to justify any military intervention in these regions, these universal concepts (!) did not exist for the other regions.”

Dilek went on to say; “Today, a handful of Turks trying to survive in the Dodecanese Islands of Greece are among minorities who are seen as a factor of instability; silenced and stripped of their rights; forgotten and made forgotten. Even though they are citizens of a EU member country, they are nothing more than black-headed Turks in the eyes of the West. They literally do not exist.”

In brief, it is observed that Turks living in the islands have come to the point of extinction. Unless the assimilation policy of Greece is “*stopped*”, it will soon be impossible to talk about island Turks.

Despite all the drawbacks, Rhodes and Kos Turks expect Turkish-Greek relations to improve. Interviews held reflect statements related to such hopes because the only way of preservation and improvement of the ethnic identity in the islands seems to be the establishment of bilateral friendship between the two peoples.

Consequently, they are a handful of minorities trying to survive in the islands not a sore point like the population exchange in the past. Their assimilation means destruction of humanity and an original culture. Not only World public but also Turkish public should hear this outcry³⁷⁰.

SUMMARY

The present study will hopefully pave the way for informing Turkish world public opinions about the recent and current problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks. Thus, suggesting which

are planned to be divided up are fueled. Disintegration Yugoslavia occurred in this manner. In brief, it is seen that peripheral countries make use of globalization policies to control products, services and natural resources produced in the Third World Countries. These policies are used to make the Third World Countries accept the fact they have no other way. This involves sanctions (enforcements) as far as Third World Countries and poor regions are concerned. That’s why the correct term should be globalization.

Mankind is currently living through a period of time that witnesses the polarization of great wealth and unprecedented poverty by means of neoliberal policies imposed on people under the name of globalization .Striking scenes of hunger and misery are seen in not only “underdeveloped” countries where poverty has become widespread and massive but also developed countries. However, the issue of poverty was received indifferently for a long time under the pressure of the neoliberal globalization concept. Nevertheless, it is currently included in the agendas of international finance institutions, even the capital and G8 summit meetings.

For Globalization, see; *Şenses,F.,2003*. The Other Face of Globalization: Poverty (Concepts, Causes, Policies and Basic Tendencies) *İletişim* Press; *Tomidson,J.,2004*.Globalization and Culture.*Ayrıntı* Press; *Kaymakçı,M.,2009*. Notes on Turkey’s Agriculture. *Yeniden Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafası-i Hukuk* Press; *Leba,R.,2014*.<http://www.mevzuardergisi.com/> Access December 10 2014; http://www.felsefe.gen.tr/siyaset_felsefesi/kureselleşme.Access December 10 2014.

³⁷⁰ Kaymakçı,M., 2014. op.cit.

means and methods should be employed to preserve and improve the cultural identity of Turkish people living in these islands has been the main objective of the present study.

Interviews held with a total of 137 Turkish people living in Rhodes and Kos as well immigrant Turks residing in *Marmaris, Bodrum, Fethiye* and *Antalya*., respectively constituted the material of the study. Interview subjects were selected among people who had witnessed the Second World War as a child or a youth as well as those who were born at the end of the war. Accordingly, the ages of the interview subjects ranged between 57 and 92 as of 2013.

Another important factor nourishing the negative Turkish image created in the perception of Greek people is the Greek Church. Enmity against Turks has been the strongest trump card of the Church. The Church and the priests have always been a focal point in politics. Priests were the first to take up arms against the Ottomans. In this respect, there doesn't seem to be a period during the past 180 years when the Church ever stayed out of politics. For instance, they actively took part in the Second War of the Nations against the German occupation. Then they sided with the Monarchists and fought against the Communists in the Greek Civil War. During the military junta period in Greece they consorted with the dictators. Priests were particularly influential in small cities, towns and villages. That is the reason why political parties and local administrators refrain from conflicting with the Church unless they have to³⁷¹.

In the Oral History Project, the *“Face-to Face Questionnaire Administration Method”* was applied and the items were constructed according to an open-ended questionnaire form. The form was first tested with 10 people and then reconstructed according to the survey results obtained. At the start of the interview the subjects were first briefed on the objectives of the interview and then asked to answer the predetermined questions on the form.

Findings obtained in the study can be briefly summarized as follows:

1. It should be noted that not only historical backgrounds and life experiences but also different languages spoken and different religions exercised had a role in the problems experienced between Greek and Turkish communities in Rhodes and Kos. Therefore, considering language and religion together to preserve the Turkish identity is a common approach among island Turks.
2. Turkish schools operating in Rhodes and Kos was closed down in 1972. Students studying at public schools speak very little Turkish. Closure of Turkish schools has placed the island Turks in a difficult situation. It is also evident that the *“Turkish language”*, an important means of expressing Turkish culture, as well as other tools of transference such as education and religion are faced with great risks stemming from the cultural purification policy applied by Greece.
3. Today, children of our Turkish fellowmen who can study in Greek public schools are exempted from general religious courses but are not allowed to exercise their own religious rights. Greek governments accept Rhodes and Kos Turks as Muslims rather than Turks. The paradox here is that Rhodes and Kos Turks, recognized as Muslims, are not allowed to learn the religion of Islam..

³⁷¹ http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/yunanistan_humeynisi.Access . February 15 2015

4. Dishes special to the islands are about to be *“forgotten”* in Rhodes and Kos. It is understood that the food tradition in the islands could not be preserved.

5. The significance of weddings, circumcision celebrations, feasts and other special occasions in social and cultural lives of the Dodecanese Turks stems from their efforts to preserve the Turkish identity. For instance, the tradition of dowry, which has a great importance in the Anatolian culture and organized by the bride’s household, displays similar traits in the islands of Rhodes and Kos and is a characteristic quality of the Turkish identity.

6. It is reported that Turks and Greeks were forced to study in Italian schools in the islands during Italy’s Fascist period in the Second World War; that a famine broke when the British laid siege to the islands; that people suffered from bombardments as much they did from famine; and tragic events were experienced; that Turks who were predominantly farmers were less affected by famine; that Germans issued orders, according to which manufacture, distribution and sale of food items would be subject to official permission; and that those violating these orders were severely punished. It is known that the Dodecanese were occupied by the Allied Powers following the surrender of Germany in 1945 and the islands were given to Greece in 1947. Nevertheless, it is also reported that the island Turks had a different anticipation and expected that the islands would be given to Turkey

7. It is observed that Turks were a dominant force in the economy of the islands in the Ottoman and Italian periods. It is seen that the majority of Turks living in Rhodes and Kos were involved in farming activities until recent times and they also had certain dominance in industry, in trade and particularly in crafts. Basic crafts performed by the islanders included blacksmithing, painting, waitering, masonry, shoe repairing, yoghurt making, baking, milk dealing and street vending.

8. It can be stated that the number of island Turks working in the agricultural sector in our day has gradually decreased and that they are predominantly employed in tourism-related jobs or in handicraft making. Following the tourism boom of the 1970’s, on the other hand, the value of land has soared and landowners have gained a privileged status. Unfortunately, this has caused the Turkish landowners in Rhodes and Kos to sell out their lands to the Greek islanders.

9. As of 1967, the Greek authorities started appointing a government representative to supervise the community and the foundation administrations. Moreover, many foundation properties were either donated or undersold by the foundation administrators appointed by the Greek authorities although sale of foundation premises was prohibited by law. In this respect, our Turkish fellowmen were prohibited from attending competitive biddings for the sale of foundation properties.

10. The Greek Governments currently make the administration of the Turkish foundations increase their expenditure to compel the foundations to sell their lands and properties. Thus, the Turkish foundations are financially weakened. Unfortunately, the Greek Governments often achieve this by appointing some Turks involved in treacherous acts to the administration of the Turkish foundations

11. Assimilation of the islands started in the Italian period but intensified after the islands were awarded to Greece. As is the case in the Western Thrace, Greek authorities describe Rhodes and Kos Turks as “Muslims” and refuse to register associations bearing the terms “Turks” or “Minority”. Restrictions previously applied to minority rights through a number of bureaucratic methods have been transformed into a governmental policy especially after 1974.
12. One of the important factors related to assimilation policies was the closure of schools that enabled minorities to learn their native language. Due to the closure of Turkish schools, children started to forget the Turkish language. Another factor was the implementations aim at preventing the religious rights of the minorities.
13. Another issue mentioned by the island Turks related to the assimilation policies towards Turks is the increase in the number of interfaith (*inter-religion*) marriages. Turks also state that they are not pleased with such marriages, either. Then it can be stated as a negative prediction that Turks will be assimilated very soon unless effective initiatives are undertaken at international level. A feeling of despondency has started to prevail among not only Turks living in the islands but also those who previously immigrated to Turkey.
14. Hate and oppression against Turks increase during stressful days. Although the environment of hate and oppression seems to subside for the time being, fanatic acts are still being displayed by certain groups. Such examples can be increased.
15. Almost of the Greeks of ethnic Turkish origin are assigned to various service branches as muleteers, storehouse workers, carpenters, diggers and drivers while performing their military service. They are not entrusted with firearms and none of the Turks with Greek citizenship can become a reserve officer even if they are university graduates.
16. Emergence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is quite a recent development among Rhodes and Kos Turks. Delay in organization may be attributed to many factors. The most important reason was the reflection of the fear of losing their identity on the immigrants from the islands after a long occupation by the Italians and the Germans and finally the Greek rule in these islands. This fear has constantly been fueled.
17. Some of the island Turks interviewed -although most of them were not aware- stated that rights of the Muslim Turks in Rhodes and Kos should also be granted in accordance with international agreements cosigned by Greece. These people expressed the view that Articles 37-44 in Section I Chapter III of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne on the “Protection of Minorities” dealt with the status of the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey and the provisions specified in the following Article 45, which read ***“The rights conferred by the provisions of the present Section on the non-Moslem minorities of Turkey will be similarly conferred by Greece on the Moslem minority in her territory.”***, should also be applicable to the Muslim Turks living in the Dodecanese Islands.
18. Island Turks demand that Greek governments show more concern for the protection, maintenance and repair of cultural monuments in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Islands; recognize the Turkish identity; ease the pressures and prevent organization of Turks with their

cultural identity; and grant Turkish children the right to learn Turkish, in other words their native tongue, at least at elementary level.

SUPPLEMENT:

**DOCUMENTS AND PICTURES BELONGING TO
THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT ON THE RECENT
HISTORY OF THE TURKISH IDENTITY IN
RHODES, KOS AND THE DODECANESE ISLANDS**

ΜΟΥΦΤΕΙΑ ΡΟΔΟΥ
RODOS MÜFTÜLÜĞÜ

Ἀρ. Πρωτ. } 47
Prot. No }

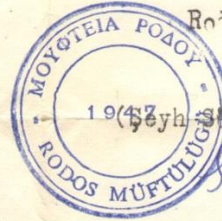
Ἀρ. Φακέλ. } 47/25
Dosya No }

Ρόδος ἡ } 22 Ekim 1968
Rodos }

İ L M Ü H A B E R
=====

Rodos 1949 doğumlu, Makbule'den doğma Mehmet oğlu Ahmet KIREVLYASI'nin gerek bebasi ve gerekse anasının fukara ol'uklarını bildirir, işbu ilmühaber ihgâlinin isteği üzerine tarafımızdan tanzim ve itâ kılın'ı.-

Rodos Müftüsü



1947 (Şeyh Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu)

Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu

Picture 1- An official document issued by the Rhodes Muftiate



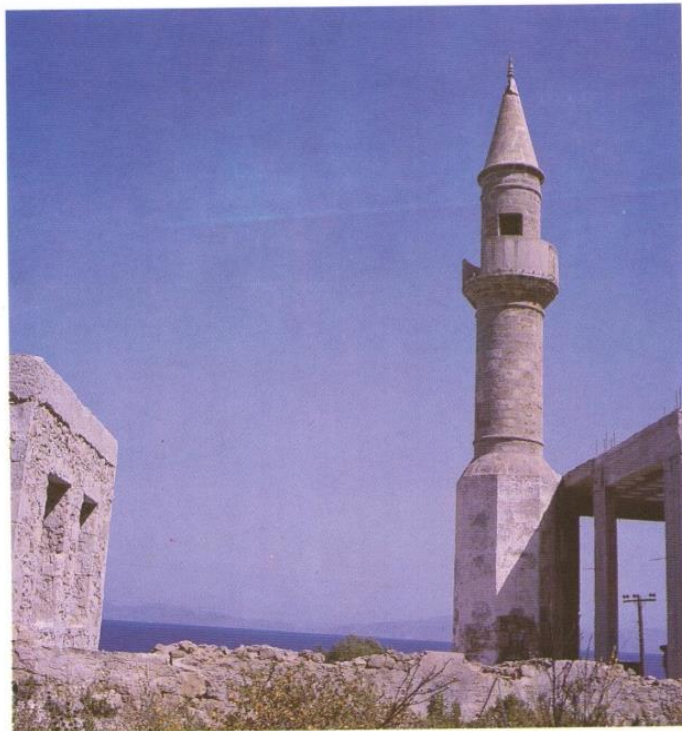
Picture 2- Suleymaniye Madrasah Exterior View



Ground Work Excavation at Suleymaniye Madrasah (2014)



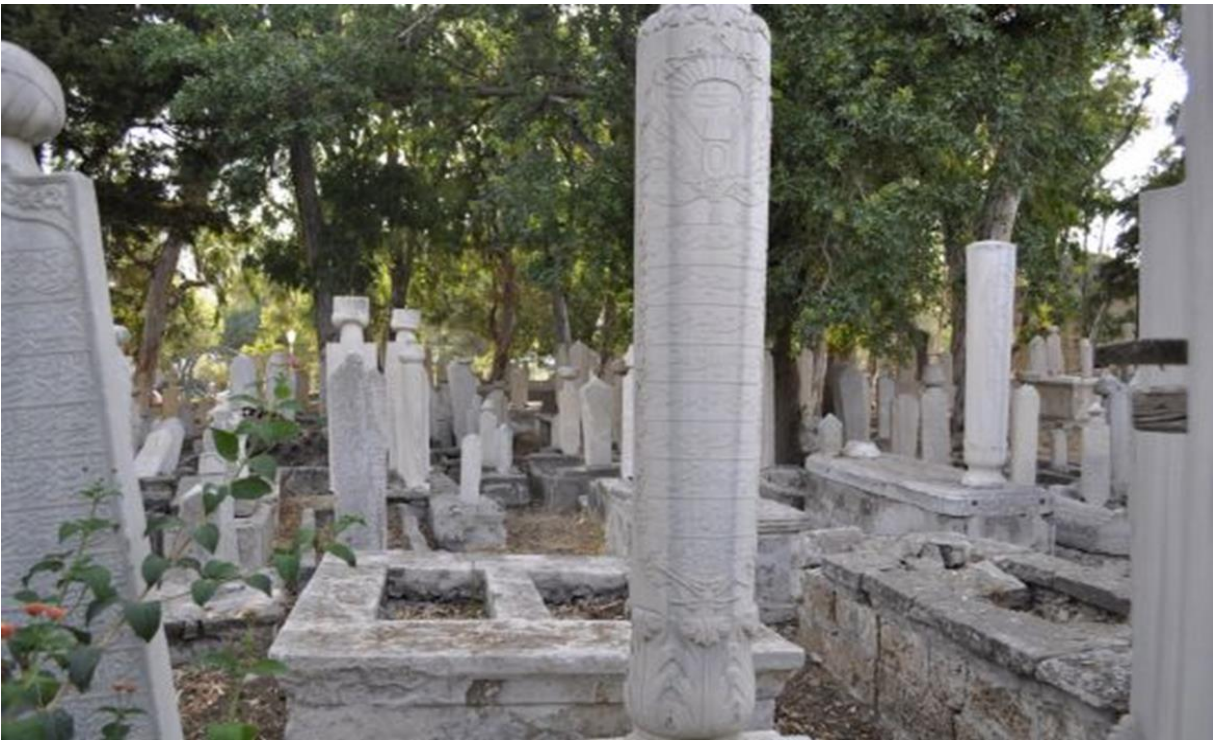
Picture 3- Crete District Mosque (Hamidiye Mosque Interior) 1977



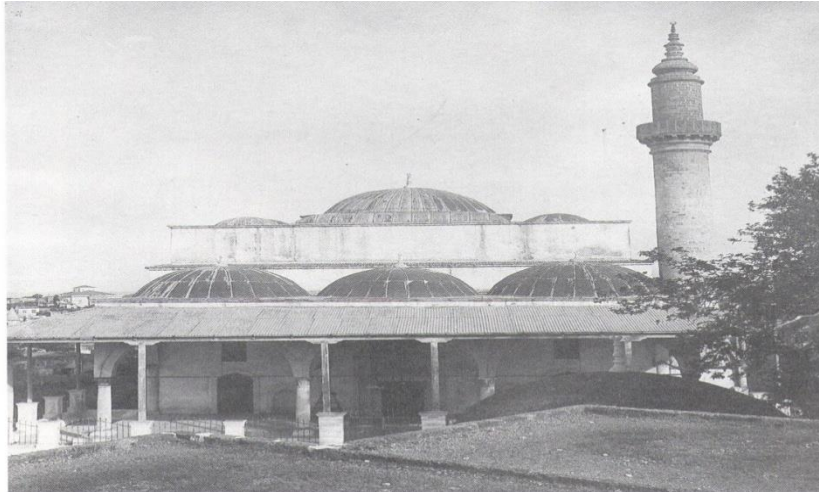
Crete District Mosque (Hamidiye Mosque) 1990



Picture 4- Murat Reis Mosque Complex



Picture 5- Uncared for Tombs at Murat Reis Mosque Complex



Picture 6-View of Sultan Mustapha Mosque (1925- 1930)



Present-day View of Sultan Mustapha Mosque - 1



Present-day View of Sultan Mustapha Mosque - 2



Picture 7- View of Recep Pasha Mosque in the 1990's



Present-day View of Recep Pasha Mosque



Picture 8- Rhodes- Agha Fountain

Picture 9-Symi Fountain



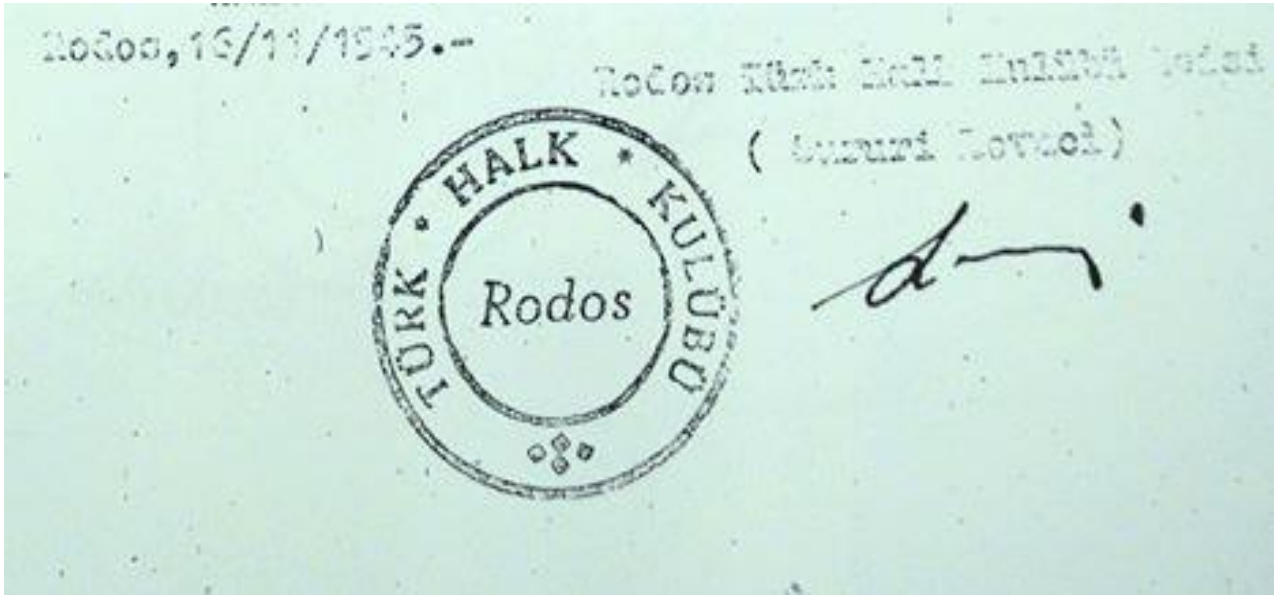
Picture 10- Rhodes *Enderun* Fountain- 2014



Picture 11- Present-day View of Rhodes Muftiate Office Building - 2014



Picture 12- Fethi Pasha Clock Tower
(The name of the tower was changed to Byzantine Clock Tower by the present Greek Administration!)



Picture 13. Rhodes Turkish People's Club

A report card (İLKOKUL NOT KARNESİ) issued to a Rhodes Turk in the Academic Year 1945-1946, featuring a red Turkish flag emblem and the text 'Rodos Türk İlkokulları Müdürlüğü'. The card is titled 'Rodos Türk İlkokulları Müdürlüğü' and 'Medresesi Süleymaniye İLKOKULU'. It specifies the academic year '1945 - 1946 Ders Senesi' and the type of document 'İLKOKUL NOT KARNESİ'. The student's name is 'Sırtı Y.' and the birth date is '25-12-1933'. The card is signed by the teacher 'M. İbrahimoglu' and the director 'M. H. H. H.'. The card is framed by a decorative border.

Picture 14. A report card issued to a Rhodes Turk in the Academic Year 1945-1946

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- B.C.A, Fon: 03010 - Kutu: 238 - Dosya No: 605- Sıra No: 12.
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There is a perception in the world public opinion that the Turkish presence in Greece is restricted to Western Thrace. However, there is a Turkish population of about 6,000 people who live in the Dodecanese Islands, mainly in Rhodes and Kos. Greek authorities refused to grant “minority” status to the Turkish descendants claiming that these islands were under Italian rule and not part of Greece when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923

Despite being very close to Turkey, Rhodes and Kos Turks seem to be quite neglected in recent years.

Within this context, “the International Symposium on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes an Kos, 2014” was organized in Izmir, Turkey at Ege University Research Institute for Turkish World Studies on October 1-2, 2014 so as to attract the attention of the national and international public opinion. The symposium has a historical significance as it is the very first organization of its kind in the national and international arena. The agenda of the international symposium addressed various matters such as Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos in the Context of Turkish-Greek Relations; Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos with Respect to Human Rights; and Turkish Identity in Rhodes and Kos: Social Life, Foundation Properties and Cultural Heritage.

The book entitled “Rhodes and Kos Turks: The Silent Cry Rising in the Aegean Sea” was compiled from the final report of “The Oral History Project on the Turkish Identity in Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese”. The book aims to investigate through a historical perspective the past and present social and economic status of the island Turks living in Rhodes, Kos and Turkey as well as recording and preserving legends, folk dances, elegies and life stories that are not recorded by documented historiography.

The book will provide the means for communicating the problems of Rhodes and Kos Turks in recent history and at present to the Turkish and international public opinion, but especially to the Greek public opinion. In this respect, it also includes some suggestions for the establishment of a long-lasting friendship in Turkish-Greek relations. We firmly believe that these recommendations shall be perceived as a call for friendship.

