Roman Empire in A.D. 306. Thus, he built his city between A.D. 324 and 330 naming it Constantinople. With the acceptance of Christianity by Constantine I, Constantinople became the center of Christianity. Certain historians even naming it "the Second Rome". This event caused a decline in the influence of Athens.

The Byzantine Empire, which occupied a large part of Asia Minor, took a turn toward Hellenization when Heraklios decreed that the official language would become Greek during his governance AD 610-641. Prior to that however, a series of Ecumenical Councils beginning in A.D. 325 in Nicaea and ending up in the same city in A.D. 787 solidified Christianity as the religion of the Greeks in Asia Minor.

Because of jealousy and political intrigues the Western Roman and Eastern Roman Empires (aka known as the Byzantine Empire) came to loggerheads on many occasions. One of these was the sacking of Constantinople by the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade. Can you imagine Christians killing Christians. This was to be an introduction to much larger and even more heinous acts of humanity when the Seljuk Turks started their trek across Asia Minor.

The Seljuk Turks had been harassing the Byzantine Empire for many years at its furthest reaches in the East just on the Western side of the Euphrates river. The Turks being excellent horsemen used a "hit and run" tactic disabling the Byzantine outposts. Then in A.D. 1071 a major battle was taking place at Manzikert a city near Lake Van. At first the Byzantine army held the advantage but soon the Seljuk Turks defeated their opponents. They then pressed on across Asia Minor until they reached Nicaea, which they conquered in A.D. 1081.

Relative calm prevailed for several centuries. Then a Greek by the name of John Cantacuzenus (a Christian) while trying to dislodge the power of the Paleologi family in Constantinople made a deal with Orkhan the Moslem Sultan. It must be noted here that John Cantacuzenus gave his young daughter in marriage to the 61 year old Orkhan and subsequently made a "deal with the devil" as it were. John VI promised to give Orkhan whatever he wanted if he succeeded in removing the Paleologi from power. Needless to say Orkhan helped John VI and later Orkhan came asking for his promised reward. What was his reward you ask? It was to take over the fortress of Tzynpe, a Greek stronghold on the European side of the Dardanelles. Before this event, Asia Minor was considered European and a Christian territory occupied by Greeks. After this it became Turkish Moslem John VI learned that, as one author stated it "...it was easier to invite the devil into your home than to remove him later." One piece of territory after another fell before the Turks.

Finally after many Byzantine defeats Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror decided he would conduct a "holy war" against the infidels (the Christians) and attacked Constantinople. The Ottomans were overwhelming in both manpower and sea power. With his large cannon Mehmed, with the aid of the Greek traitor who revealed the weak link which was a set of doors on the western side of the walled city destroyed Constantinople after 53 days on May 25, 1453.

Although Greece was totally conquered, they did manage to regain their freedom in 1821-1829 after nearly 400 years of subjugation by the Moslem Turks. But the Asia Minor Greeks lived under Turkish Moslem rule until 1922. For four and a half centuries, the Greeks were: (1) told to speak Turkish or have their tongues cut out and to attend Turkish schools, (2) at one time or another were forced to convert to Islam (3) their sons were forced into the Turkish army, the practice known as yeni seri or Jannissaries and (4) forced to endure other unspeakable and inhuman acts perpetrated upon them by regular as well as rogue soldiers.

In 1908 the "Young Turks" political party managed to