

## The Tripolitsa Massacre in the Morea in Its 200<sup>th</sup> Year (5 October 1821)

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### Abstract

Greece, enthusiastic celebrations were held this year on the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence from the Ottoman Empire. European states, Russia and America also participated in these celebrations with praising messages. As it is known, an independent Greek state was possible thanks to the Ottoman Greeks' revolt in 1821 and the de facto support of the Europeans. In the revolt that lasted for about ten years, the Turks, also the Jews, who made the Peloponnese their homeland for centuries, were subjected to systematic massacres. The 1821 revolt soon turned into a ruthless war of religion and race. Especially, in the city of Tripolitsa, the administrative center of the Peloponnese, one of the rare massacres in history took place. Forty thousand Turks who took refuge in the city were destroyed by the rebels and the European volunteers who came to support them.

The Turks, who were destroyed and erased from history in the Peloponnese, unfortunately did not have enough place in our social memory. But Greece did not make this mistake. A Greek epic which included praises of the massacre of Tripolitsa was set as the Greek National Anthem. This situation itself shows that it is not possible for us to understand the debates in Turkish-Greek relations only from today's legal, political, economic and military perspectives. Because images, perceptions, thoughts and feelings about traumas and pains and victories of previous hundreds of years, and the spiritual effects related to them, are transferred from generation to generation and affect relationships deeply. In our paper, what happened in the Tripolitsa massacre, which has taken place two centuries ago, will be revealed in the light of archival documents and scientific sources reflecting the period.

**Keywords:** Morea, Tripolitsa, Rebellion, Massacre, Greece.

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## 200. Yılında Mora'da Tripoliçe Katliamı (5 Ekim 1821)

### Öz

Komşumuz Yunanistan'da bu yıl Osmanlı'dan bağımsızlığın 200. yılı vesilesi ile coşkulu kutlamalar yapılmıştır. Bu kutlamalara Avrupa devletleri, Rusya ve Amerika da övücü mesajlarla katılmışlardır. Bilindiği gibi bağımsız bir Yunanistan Devleti, Osmanlı Rumlarının 1821'de isyan edişleri ve bu isyana Avrupalıların fiili desteği sayesinde mümkün olmuştu. Yaklaşık on yıl süren isyanda, asırlar boyunca Mora'yı vatan edinen Türkler ile birlikte Yahudiler de sistematik katliamlara uğramışlardı. 1821 İsyanı kısa sürede acımasız bir din ve ırk savaşı haline dönüşmüştür. Bilhassa Mora'nın idari merkezi olan Tripoliçe şehrinde, tarihin ender gördüğü katliamlarından biri yaşanmıştır. Şehre sığınan kırk bin kadar Türk, isyancılar ve onlara desteğe gelen gönüllü Avrupalılar tarafından yok edilmiştir.

Mora Yarımadası'nda yok edilen ve tarihten silinen Türkler ne yazık ki toplumsal belleğimizde yeterince yer edinmemiştir. Fakat Yunanistan bu hatayı yapmamıştır. Nitekim Tripoliçe katliamına övgü içeren bir Yunan destanı, Yunan Milli Marşı yapılmıştır. Sadece bu son tavır bile Türk-Yunan ilişkilerindeki tartışmaları yalnızca günümüzün hukuki, politik, ekonomik ve askeri bakış açısıyla anlamayabilmemizin mümkün olmayacağını göstermektedir. Zira bazen üzerinden yüzlerce yıl geçmiş travmalar ve acılar ile zaferlere dair imgeler, algılar, düşünceler ve duygular, bunlarla ilgili ruhsal etkiler, kuşaktan kuşağa aktarılmaktadır ve ilişkileri derinden etkilemektedir. Tebliğimizde üzerinden iki asır geçen Tripoliçe katliamında yaşananlar, arşiv belgeleri ve dönemi yansıtan bilimsel kaynaklar ışığında ortaya konulacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Mora, Tripoliçe, İsyan, Katliam, Yunanistan.

## Introduction

In Greece, the celebrations for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence were held throughout 2021. In the celebrations, which were made in an enthusiastic manner despite the pandemic conditions, there were participants from Europe and the U.S. The year of 1821, which is regarded as important by our Greek neighbors for independence and which has been characterized as a revolution in the recent years, is the year of the Greek Rebellion against the Ottoman State in the Morean Peninsula<sup>1</sup>. There is no doubt that *the Morean Rebellion of 1821* turned into a brutal war of religion and race in a short amount of time. When this bloody process, which lasted for about ten years, finally ended, an independent *Greek State* was established with the condition that it would be under the protection of the Great Powers of Europe (1830). The borders and the administrative style of the new state were shaped in the consequence of negotiations conducted by *the British, French and Russian* diplomats along with *the Ottoman* government representatives. It should first be noted that one of the matters that was persistently prioritized in the negotiations and agreements made regarding the independent Greek State was that *it was impossible for the Turks and the Greeks to live together* and thusly the request from *the Turks to leave the Morea permanently*<sup>2</sup>. The purpose to permanently erase the Turks out of the Morea was not only limited to the contents of the international agreements which were made. The Turks who made the Morea their homeland for centuries were subjected to systematic massacres and eliminated during the Rebellion of 1821. In this process, *Tripolitsa*<sup>3</sup>, which was the administrative center of the *Province of Morea*, witnessed one of the rarest atrocities that history has ever seen<sup>4</sup>.

- 1 Anna Vakali, "1821 Devrimi Hakkında Yunan Tarih yazımında Arayışlar", *1821 Yunan Devrimi, Yunan Tarih yazımında Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, trans. Aslı Damar - Çakmak, ed. Konstantina Andrianopoulou - Anna Vakali, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yay., İstanbul 2002, pp. 1-18.
- 2 Those first boundaries of the Greek State determined in 1830 were later expanded in Rumelia in 1832 with the intervention of three European States. See: Ali Fuat Örenç, *Balkanlarda İlk Dram: Unuttuğumuz Mora Türkleri ve Eyaletten Bağımsızlığa Yunanistan*, Babiali Kültür Yay., İstanbul 2009, pp. 119-209.
- 3 Today, the city of Tripolitsa which is within the borders of Greece, entered under the Ottoman rule in 1460. Starting from the 16th century, Turkish population increased in the city. Tripolitsa was affected from the rebellions that took place in the Morea in 1770 and the city was surrounded by walls and became more secure. Later, Tripolitsa became the administrative center of the Morea: Machiel Kiel, "Tripoliçe", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, Vol. 41, 2012, pp. 314-315.
- 4 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA) (Ottoman Archive of the Directorate of State Archives of the Office of the Presidency), Cevdet Hariciye (C. HR),

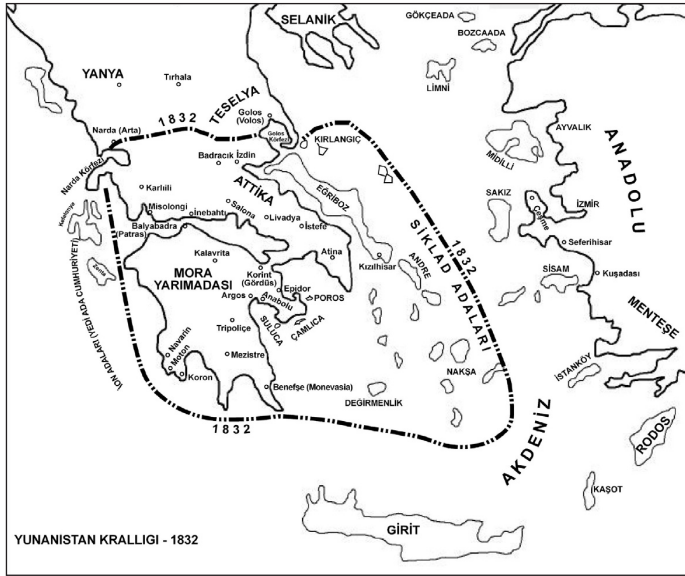
Unfortunately, the Turks who were massacred and erased from history in the Morean Peninsula and Tripolitsa do not have the place that they deserve in our collective consciousness. This great drama that the Morean Turks experienced was forgotten. However, Greece keeps the process of 1821 alive as the most important element of its independence and national consciousness. In fact, a poem which includes praises for the atrocity by which forty thousand innocent individuals were massacred in Tripolitsa was accepted as the national anthem of the Greek State and the Greeks of Southern Cyprus<sup>5</sup>. In fact, this situation shows us that while evaluating the dilemmas in the Turco-Greek relations,

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19/926, Gurre-i Cemaziyelâhir 1237/23 Şubat 1822; BOA, Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Arzuhal ve Jurnaller (Y. PRK. AZJ) (Yıldız Separate Documents, Petitions and Journals), 12/3, 28 Zilhicce 1304/17 September 1887; Thomas Gordon, *History of the Greek Revolution and the Wars and Campaigns Arising from the Struggle of the Greek Patriots in Emancipating their Country from the Turkish Yoke*, Vol. 1, William Bleckwood, Edinburgh 1844, pp. 143-322; Maurice Persat, *Memories du Commandant Persat, 1806 à 1844*, ed. Gustave Schlumberger, Librairie Plon, Paris 1910, pp. 50-122; Sture Linner, *W. H. Humphreys' First Journal of the Greek war of Independence (July 1821-February 1822)*, Almqvist and Wiksel, Stocholm 1967, pp. 8-73; William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free The Philhellens in the War of Independence*, Oxford University Press, London 1972, pp. 43-50; Salâhi R. Sonyel, "Yunan Ayaklanması Günlerinde Mora'daki Türkler Nasıl Yok Edildiler?", *Bellekten*, Vol. LXII/No. 233, 1998, pp. 107-121; Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi, (1774-1912)*, Vol. 5, trans. Nilüfer Epeçeli-Kemal Beydilli, Yeditepe Yay., İstanbul 2005, pp. 215-260; Musa Gürbüz-Mustafa Turan, "Yunan Bağımsızlık Düşüncesinin Tarihi ve Tripoliçe Katliamı", *Uluslararası Suç ve Tarih Dergisi*, No. 1, 2006, pp. 9-42; Gary J. Bass, *Freedom's Battle the Origins of Humanitarian Intervention*, Alfred A. Knopf Yay., New York 2008, pp. 64-66, 86, 134, 371; Ali Fuat Örenç, *ibid.* pp. 27-285; Ali Fuat Örenç, "Yunanistan'ın Bağımsızlığı Sürecinde Yok Edilen Mora Türkleri", *Uluslararası Suçlar ve Tarih Dergisi*, No. 11/1, 2011, pp. 5-32; Gürkan Peker, *Yunan Tarih Yazıcılığında Mora İşyanı ve Yunanistan'ın Bağımsızlığı (1821-1829)*, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Çanakkale 2018, pp. 145-202; Metin Menekşe, "Mora Müslümanlarının Hazin Hikâyesi: İsyân, Zorunlu Göç ve İskân (1821-1832) Sürecine Genel Bir Bakış", *Tarih Okulu Dergisi*, Vol. XLV, April 2020, pp.793-832; Zekeriya Kurşun, *Nasubzâde Ali Paşa ve Rum İşyanı*, Vakıfbank Kültür Yay., İstanbul 2021, pp. 45-128.

- 5 The Greek poet Dionisios Solomos wrote his poem from which the lines of the national anthem were taken two years after the massacre of the Turks in Tripolitsa in 1823. The poem was composed for the first time in 1829. It was accepted as the national anthem of Greece in 1865 and of Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus in 1966. In the poem, which is composed of 158 quadrants atrocities and massacre against Turks in Tripolitsa, are praised. For the process of penning down, contents and acceptance of the Greek national anthem see: Meryem Batan-Levent Kayapınar, "Dionisios Solomos ve Yunan Ulusal Marşı", *Doğu Batı Dergisi, Balkanlar II*, No. 90, December 2019, pp. 155-183.

it would not be sufficient to focus only on the contemporary legal, political, economic and military perspectives. Sometimes, centuries old traumas, unending pains and images, perceptions, thoughts, feelings about victories and the spiritual influences based on those are conveyed from one generation to the next and have a deep impact on the relationships. In this study, efforts will be made to bring to light what happened in the Tripolitsa Massacre which happened two centuries ago.



**Map 1:** The borders of the independent Greek State in 1832  
(Source: Örenç, *ibid.*, p. 225)

### 1. Beginning of the 1821 Rebellion and the First Massacres in the Morea

We need to emphasize a few important matters before elaborating what happened during the Rebellion of 1821 in the Morea. First of all, it became possible for the rebellion to succeed and be able to result in an independent Greece thanks to the material and nonmaterial support of the European powers. The foundations of the idea of Ottoman Greeks' gaining independence were laid down in Europe. The admiration for the ancient Greek period and the spread of Philhellenist perspective increased the support for the Morean Rebellion. In fact, since the beginning of the Rebellion, officers of all ranks, volunteers and some intellectuals such as Lord Byron who had some social impact came to the Morea to support the

Rebellion.<sup>6</sup> The European volunteers took place in the siege of Tripolitsa where the Turkish massacre had taken place.<sup>7</sup>

Russia provided the biggest support for the rebelling Greeks who had the same religious belief with the Russians. Almost the whole organization of the Rebellion was carried out by the members of the secret organization of *Philiki Eteria*, which was established in the city of Odessa (Hocabey) of Russia in 1814.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Alexander Ypsilantis, who was the leader of the Rebellion and belonged to one of the prominent Greek families of Fener of İstanbul, was the aide of the Russian Tsar. When support for the Morean Rebellion increased among the public opinion of Europe, a rivalry between Great Britain and Russia started. After some time, France also took part in this rivalry.<sup>9</sup>

Another matter that we need to mention before elaborating the atrocities experienced in the Morea would be about the attitude of the Ottoman administrators. The civilian and military administrators at the time made various strategic mistakes during the Rebellion of 1821. Especially insisting on an untimely expedition against *Tepedelenli Ali Pasha, the Governor of*

6 The British poet Lord Byron (George Gordon) voluntarily attended the Morean Rebellion of 1821. The arrival of Byron to the Morea made the Rebellion in Europe more popular: Phillips Alison, *The War of Greek Independence, 1821 to 1833*, Smith Elder & Co., London 1897, pp. 88-113; Musa Gürbüz, Mustafa Turan, *ibid*, pp. 19-20.

7 For the assistance organizations conducted in Europe and the US to support the Greek rebels and for those who attended the rebellion voluntarily, see: Mehmed Mansur, *Rum Fetretine Dair Tarihi*, İstanbul 1288, pp. 15-16; Edward Mead Earle, "American Interest in the Greek Cause, 1821-1827", *The American History Review*, No. 33/1, 1927, pp. 44-63; Douglas Dakin, *British and American Philhellenes during the War of Greek Independence, 1821-1833*, Londra University Press, Thessaloniki 1955, pp. 5-290; C. M. Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence, Its Historical Setting*, Hutchinson's University Press, London 1958, pp. 42-155; Clair, *ibid*, pp. 1-366; C. M. Woodhouse, *Capodistria, the Founder of Greek Independence*, Oxford University Press, New York 1973, pp. 218-283; David Howarth, *Greek Adventure, Lord Byron and Other Eccentrics in the War of Independence*, Atheneum, New York 1976, pp. 64-169; *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lütüfi Efendi Tarihi*, ed. A. Hezarfen, Vol. I, Yapı Kredi Yay., İstanbul 1999, pp. 16-22; *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lütüfi Efendi Tarihi*, ed. Y. Demirel-T. Erdoğan, Vol. II-III, Yapı Kredi Yay., İstanbul 1999, pp. 543-544.

8 Necla Günay, "Filik-i Eteryâ Cemiyeti", *Gazi Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, No. 6/1, 2005, pp. 263-287.

9 *Yunan Meselesine Dair Düvel-i Mütehabbeye Verilen Beyanname*, Fatih Millet Kütüphanesi, Ali Emiri, TY, nr. 666, pp. 1-6; Musa Gürbüz-Mustafa Turan, *ibid*, pp. 16-24.

*Ioannina* and diverting the troops in the region for this operation relieved the Greek rebels. The chain of mistakes caused the rebellion to spread such as frequently changing commanders during the process of quelling the rebellion, necessity to use Albanian mercenaries in the Ottoman Army, inability to establish full control in the Sea of Islands, logistical problems encountered in the Aegean Sea, and dismissal and later execution of *the Greek Patriarch Gregorious V*. The mistakes and failure to quell the Rebellion on time prepared the ground for the increase of the European intervention.<sup>10</sup>

As it is known, the Morean Peninsula was conquered (1460) during the period of (1451-1481).<sup>11</sup> When the Rebellion of 1821 started, there were no conflicts among the Turks, Greeks and Jews who lived in the Morea for centuries.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the Muslims who were attacked or remained under siege caught unprepared.<sup>13</sup> When the rebellion started, the Ottoman State diverted its attention to the Tepedelenli operation. In fact, the authority of Tepedelenli Ali Pasha in the Morea was very important. The Ottomans took every negative incident under control through Ali Pasha. The rebellion of Ali Pasha on March 23, 1820 changed the balance of power in the Morea. When *Hurşid Ahmed Pasha*, who was sent over Tepedelenli, took the military units under his control, a security vulnerability took place in the region.<sup>14</sup> The Ottoman State's focusing on Tepedelenli encouraged the Greeks who were waiting for the right moment for the rebellion. However, the Greeks chose Moldavia and Wallachia (Romania) instead of the Morea for the first attempt. The first Greek Rebellion that started under the leadership of Alexander Ypsilantis on February 22, 1821 became unsuccessful. The Ottoman Army quelled the rebels. The Greeks who were crushed in Romania, decided to carry the rebellion to the Morean Peninsula.<sup>15</sup>

10 Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 27-97.

11 Machiel Kiel-John Alexander, "Mora", *DİA*, Vol. 30, 2005, pp. 280-285.

12 Christos Loukos, "Some Suggestion for a Bolder Incorporation of Studies of the Greek Revolution of 1821 into their Ottoman Context", *Ottoman Rule and The Balkans, 1760-1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation*, Girit Üniversitesi Yay., Rethymno 2007, pp. 197-198.

13 Ahmed Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Vol. XII, Matbaa-i Amire, İstanbul 1309, p. 239; Howarth, *ibid*, pp. 55-62.

14 Ahmedpaşazâde Mir Yusuf, *Mora Vak'asına Dair Ba'zı Malumât*, Fatih Millet Kütüphanesi, Ali Emiri, TY, nr. 564, vr. 6b-7b; *Yunan Fesadına Dair Bazı Fıkârat-ı Tarihiye*, pp. 1-2.

15 Ahmed Cevdet (Paşa), *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Vol. XI, Matbaa-i Amire, İstanbul 1309, p. 51, 109-146, 248-250; Yücel Özkaya, "1821 Yunan (Eflak-Buğdan) İşyanları ve Avrupalıların İşyan Karşısındaki Tutumları", *Üçüncü Askeri Tarih Semineri*, Genelkurmay Yay., Ankara 1986, pp.

The Orthodox clergy had an impact on the growth of the rebellion as much as the Philiki Eteria organization. For this reason, the rebellion turned into a vicious religious war and massacre in a short amount of time.<sup>16</sup> American author McCarthy emphasized that the Greeks in the Morean Peninsula had a general policy of terminating Muslims in his book *Death and Exile*, and the Greeks determined the nationalist slogan of the rebellion as “*Peace for Christians! Respect for the Consuls! Death to the Turks!*”<sup>17</sup>

Dimitris Ypsilantis, brother of Alexander Ypsilantis was chosen as the leader in the Morea. We may count names like *Theodoros Kolokotronis, Aleksander Mavrakordatos, Yannīs Gouras, Marka Botsaris, Petros Mavromihalis, Ionnis Kopodistriasis, Petrobeis Mavromihalis (Petrobey), Ionnis Kolettis* and *Germanos the Patriarch of Patras (Balyabadra)*, among the prominent leaders of the rebellion. The *Kleft* groups living at the mountainous regions of the Morea named Pindus and Olympus having little relationship with the central authority had an important influence in the rebellion. The armed *Armatoli* units supported by the Ottoman rulers for effectively combatting the *Klefts* left the mountainous areas and joined the rebellion. Besides those groups, many European volunteers including officers supported the rebels. The citizens of *Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, Sweden, Poland (Lehistan), the Netherlands, Belgium, United States, Hungary, Spain* and *Denmark* constituted the majority of those who came and joined the rebellion. There was also participation for the rebellion from *the Orthodox Slavic* nations in the Balkans.<sup>18</sup> It would not be wrong for us to state that the Morean Rebellion had the perception of a *Crusade* when we have a look at those who participated and the variety of support for the rebellion.

An unexpected incident took place in the Morea before the beginning of the rebellion. Vice Governor *Salih Agha*, who got suspicious of the actions of some Greeks, invited the clergy, metropolitan and bishops of all cities to see him. *Salih Agha* wanted to make clarifications regarding the rumors for the rebellion. Some of those who were invited came to the meeting.

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114-130; Lütüf, *ibid*, Vol. I, pp. 10-14; Howarth, *ibid*, pp. 21-26; Woodhouse, *ibid*, pp. 48-59; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 29-48; Peker, *ibid*, p. 191.

16 Sonyel, *ibid*, pp. 107-120; Justin McCarthy, *Ölüm ve Sürgün*, trans. Bilge Umar, İnkılap Kitabevi, İstanbul 1998, pp. 9-10.

17 Howarth, *ibid*, p. 28; McCarthy, *ibid*, pp. 9-10.

18 Dakin, *ibid*, pp. 8-50; Phillips, *ibid*, pp. 30-34; Clair, *ibid*, pp. 8-9, 36-37; Panagiotis Stathis, “From Klephts and Armatoloi to Revolutionaries”, *Ottoman Rule and The Balkans, 1760-1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation*, Rethymno 2007, p. 167-179.



In this critical meeting, some Greek representatives stated that there were approximately 40 thousand Greek men who knew how to use a gun; however, there were only 12 thousand Muslim men who could do that. The Greek administrators suggested sending five or six thousand Ottoman troops to prevent the security vulnerability in the region. In the meeting, Salih Agha learned that the road to Tripolitsa was captured by the rebels and sent all that information to İstanbul (April 3, 1821).<sup>19</sup>

Just one day before Salih Agha's meeting, news spread about the beginning of the rebellion in the city of Kalavrita (April 2, 1821/according to the older Greek calendar, March 21, 1821). The rebels first massacred more than 200 Muslims in the city. Later, news spread about the attacks on Muslims in the town of *Argos* of *Anabolu*. Muslims on the Euboea Island were attacked too. When more news came about those first massacres, the people of the cities of *Mezistre*, *Landor*, *Fenar*, and *Badrine* sought refuge in Tripolitsa, which was the administrative center of the Morea; and the Muslims of *Arkadia* and *Andurusa* sought refuge in *Koron*, *Moton* and *Navarino*; those who lived in *Gastunlu* sought refuge in the *Fortress of Lala*. Thousands of Muslims in and around the town of Lala moved to the town of Badra quickly.<sup>20</sup>

When the Ottoman administrators failed to take measures against the initial rebellion in the Morea in a timely manner, Badra was sieged by Greek rebels where many Muslims sought refuge. Very few Ottoman soldiers responsible for the protection of the city were unable to resist against the Greek rebels. The soldiers receded to another region by taking some of the people with them. In the meantime, *the Ottoman Navy* which people pin their hopes on came to the shores of Badra; however, it was not effective because the soldiers left the fortress. Under those conditions, the people who remained in Badra were unable to resist any longer and the rebels easily captured the city. The rebels massacred thousands of Turks in the city. Shortly after this massacre, the rebels sieged *Athens* (May 7, 1821).<sup>21</sup>

19 BOA, Hattı Hümayun (HAT), 862/38445, 29 Cemaziyelâhîr 1236/ 3 Nisan 1821; Ahmed-paşazâde Mir Yusuf, *ibid.*, vr. 4a-b, 9a-b, 11a-15b; Clair, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

20 BOA, HAT, 925/40192, 15 Ramazan 1236/ 16 June 1821; BOA, HAT, 1316/ 51287, 29 Zilhicce 1236/27 September 1821; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid.*, Vol. XI, s. 50-55; Gordon, *ibid.* Vol. 1, pp. 219-235; Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Vak'anüvis Mehmed Es'ad Efendi Tarîh (Bâhir Efendi Zeyl ve İlâveleriyle) 1237-1241/1821-1826*, ed. Ziya Yılmaz, OSAV Yay., İstanbul 2000, pp. 144-159; Rufus Anderson, *Observations Upon the Peloponnesus and Greek Islands*, Crocker and Brewster, Boston 1830, pp. 74-80; Sonyel, *ibid.*, pp. 107-120.

21 Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid.*, Vol. XII, pp. 102-155; Mehmed Esad Efendi, *ibid.*, pp. 153-154; Örenç,

Since the early days of the rebellion, the rebels under the command of Dimitris Ypsilantis sieged the Fortress of *Benefşe* (*Monemvasia*). An unbearable hunger started in the city, which was unable to receive assistance from elsewhere. The people inside the fortress who were unable to bear the difficult conditions surrendered by making an agreement with the Greeks (August 5, 1821). According to the terms of the surrender agreement, 600 Turks in the city would be transported to the Anatolian shores. However, the Greek leaders did not honor the terms of the agreement. Most of the Turks of *Benefşe* who got on three boats that belong to the *Suluca* (*Spetses*) *Island* were killed. The rebels confiscated all assets of the Turks whom they left alive against ransom and left them on *the Kaşot Island* near *Crete*. Additionally, the rebels also sieged the city of *Navarino* where many Turks sought refuge. The people of *Navarino* surrendered by making an agreement with the Greeks like the Turks of *Benefşe* when they did not receive any help (August 19, 1821). According to the agreement made with the Greek leaders, the Turks of *Navarino* would be taken to the Anatolian shores. However, the Greek rebels did not honor the agreement again and the rebels massacred all Turks including women and children.<sup>22</sup>

The Muslims of *Vostice* in the Morea were deceived by their Greek neighbors with the promise of being transported to the town of *Salona*. The rebels massacred about 400 Turks who came to the dock of the city by believing in the promise. Additionally, the Muslims of *Kornina* were attacked on the road while they were attempting to reach to *Tripolitsa*. This attack made to the Turks of *Kornina* became public information in *Tripolitsa* and about two thousand volunteers came to help. Thusly, some of the Turks of *Kornina* were able to save their lives. At this point, the situation in *Tripolitsa* became worse day by day due to the increasing number of the refugees.<sup>23</sup>

When the Ottoman administrators were unable to take effective measures since April when the rebellion started, almost all of the fortresses where the Turks lived fell under siege till the end of summer. The rebels even started to become influential up to *Tırhala* and *Salonika* in the Rumelia. In the meantime, the Greeks of the Mediterranean Islands also joined the rebellion

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*ibid*, pp. 32-49.

22 Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XI, pp. 154-155; Dakin, *ibid*, pp. 26-29; Clair, *ibid*, pp. 104-110; Musa Gürbüz-Mustafa Turan, *ibid*, pp. 24-28.

23 Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XI, p. 54, 153; Mehmed Esad Efendi, *ibid*, pp. 153-154; Anderson, *ibid*, p. 80; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 37-58.

in accordance to the plan of the organization named Philiki Eteria. The rebels did not just attacked and looted the Aegean Islands with their ships, but also started to attack and loot the coastal cities in western Anatolia.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. The Siege and Capture of Tripolitsa by the Greek Rebels

The Ottoman administrators tried to increase the military measures because of the spread of the rebellion, siege of the fortresses and the news of the massacres in Morea. Especially when the news of the massacre that took place in Kalavrita reached the Muslims of Tripolitsa demanded immediate help from the army. After that when the news of the massacre that took place in the city of *Argos* reached to the Ottoman Army, which sieged Ali Pasha in Ioannina, a unit composed of 3500 soldiers was sent to *Anadolu*. This Army made some of the rebels ineffective on its course. The Ottoman soldiers who reached Anadolu ended the siege. The next target of this Army was determined as helping Tripolitsa. Because Tripolitsa was the administrative center it was surrounded by walls before by *Sallabaş Ahmed Pasha*.<sup>25</sup> Many Muslims sought refuge in this city considering it would be safe.

According to the initial plan made before the siege of Tripolitsa, the Army which would reach the city would take the Muslims from there and transport them to Anadolu or Badra on the shore. However, this plan was given up at the last moment. According to the new plan, the Army of 3500 soldiers would reach Tripolitsa and later on, more soldiers would be sent from the Ottoman Army to reinforce the city's defense. In the meantime, the influx of thousands of Muslims from the neighboring towns and villages to Tripolitsa was going on. The families of some high rank officers were also brought to the city. In a short amount of time, the population of Tripolitsa reached up to fifty-thousand people.<sup>26</sup>

Tripolitsa was located in central Morea and there was no possibility to provide logistical support through the sea directly.<sup>27</sup> Historian Ahmed Cevdet Pasha heavily criticized the decision of defending the city instead of evacuating the Muslims of Tripolitsa from the beginning. Cevdet Pasha

24 Mehmed Mansur, *ibid*, pp. 2-45; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XI, pp. 150-151; 156-161; 177, 242-244; 242-244; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XII, pp. 102-155; Howarth, *ibid*, pp. 21-29; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 62-71.

25 Örenç, *ibid*, p. 36.

26 Kurşun, *ibid*, p. 107.

27 BOA, HAT, 888/39242, 29 Zilhicce 1237/ 16 September 1822.

emphasized that this wrong strategy caused the massacring of thousands of innocent Muslims.<sup>28</sup>

In the meantime, the Greek rebel leaders and the European volunteers supporting them were planning to capture Tripolitsa which was the administrative center of the Morea and to gain a strategic advantage and benefit from the high amount of spoils to be taken. The rebels had been preparing since April of 1821 to siege the city. Finally, the preparations were complete and the rebels sieged Tripolitsa as of August of 1821. In the meantime, there were 3500 Ottoman soldiers and 2000 Albanian mercenaries in the city.<sup>29</sup> Although some people among the residents of the city knew how to use a gun; it was not possible to defend the city with such a small number of people. In fact, when the news about the Kalavrita massacre spread, the Muslims of Tripolitsa requested immediate assistance from the Ottoman Army. However, it was not possible to send assistance. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha believed that the Commander in Chief Hurşid Ahmed Pasha was wrong and blamed him for underestimating the enemy. Cevdet Pasha stated that Hurşid Pasha had believed that the Greeks rebel of the Morea had been former subjects who would have been brought into line by fists and slaps; however, they received support from Europe and made big preparations.<sup>30</sup>

The Turks and Jews in Tripolitsa who had no contact with the outside world were on the brink of one of the biggest massacres in history. The city was sieged by tens of thousands of Greek rebels. Along with the Greeks, European volunteer soldiers who served in the European armies in the rank of general and had abundant amount of ammunition were supporting the siege. The rebels also had cannons and mortars with effective ranges.<sup>31</sup> However, 12 thousand people in the fortress were able to use a gun.<sup>32</sup> In the meantime, the Turkish administrators in Tripolitsa allowed the Greek residents to leave the city after the siege started.<sup>33</sup>

28 Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XI, p. 148.

29 For the Albanian mercenaries employed in the Ottoman Army, see: Muhammed Emin Çalar, *Osmanlı Ordusu'nda Arnavutların Muvazzaf Birliklere Alınmaları: Yaşanan Sorunların Sosyo-kültürel, İktisadi ve Dini Altyapıları (1826-1839)*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Unpublished Master's Thesis, İstanbul 2019, pp. 71-104.

30 Gordon, *ibid*, Vol. 1, pp. 232-237; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XI, p. 52; Kurşun, *ibid*, pp. 105-113.

31 Dakin, *ibid*, pp. 28-30; Linner, *ibid*, pp. 22-28.

32 Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 9-10.

33 Linner, *ibid*, pp. 64-66.



**Picture 1:** The engraving showing the positions of the Greek rebels and European volunteers during the siege of Tripolitsa  
(Source: Linner, *ibid*, Appendix 12)

People in Tripolitsa seriously experienced lack of food because no support was provided for the city for three months. As a last resort, a military operation was planned for breaking the siege. To do that, the Ottoman Army prepared additional troops under the command of *Bayram Pasha* and they set off for Tripolitsa. However, the numerous Greek rebels defeated the troops under the command of Bayram Pasha and they had to withdraw (September 7, 1821). In the meantime, the Greeks attempted certain acts to break the resistance in the city. For instance, the Greeks secretly communicated with some Muslims from Badra who sought refuge in Tripolitsa. Even some of the Muslims of Badra were deceived with the promise of going back to their homeland. Some Muslims believing in this promise left the fortress; however, the rebels massacred all of them.<sup>34</sup>

When this last attempt of assistance failed, the situation in the city became desperate. The administrators of the State of Morea and especially *Hurşid Pasha* attempted to send food to the city and sent letters to *İstanbul* about the desperation in the city. The Ottoman administrators attempted to rent

34 Musa Gürbüz-Mustafa Turan, *ibid*, pp. 28-29.

ships and bring food from Egypt. However, those attempts failed. At the end of September, the people of Tripolitsa collapsed due to hunger, thirst and sicknesses. Everyday hundreds of people were losing their lives due to starvation. The houses and streets of the city were full of bodies whose burials were delayed. On top of those difficulties, the rebels increased their bombardment on the city. Muslims, who did not have any hope for receiving assistance from elsewhere, decided to negotiate conditions of surrender with the rebels.<sup>35</sup> At the end, the negotiations were successful and the people of Tripolitsa made an evacuation agreement with the Greeks. All of the Greek gang leaders signed the agreement. Accordingly, the Turks would pay 40 million qurush (1.5 million British Pounds) for transportation of the Turks to İzmir. The Turks would first be transported to the *Guston* Dock, later to the *Albanian* shores and then to *İzmir*.<sup>36</sup>

An unexpected development took place while the Turkish administrators in the city were making this evacuation agreement with the Greek rebels. While the Greek rebels and the Turkish administrators were making negotiations for evacuation, *Elmas Bey*, the leader of the Albanian soldiers in the city secretly met Kolokotronis's men. Those meetings ended up positively and the Greek rebels and Albanian soldiers made an agreement with a different content. Accordingly, the Greeks accepted to take Elmas Bey and his men to Ioannina. While the Albanian soldiers were opening the gates of the fortress to go out thanks to this agreement, the Greek rebels entered into the city with a sudden attack on October 5, 1821. The Greek rebels easily captured Tripolitsa despite the brave defense displayed by some Muslims.<sup>37</sup>

35 BOA, HAT, 863/38485, 7 Zilkade 1236/6 August 1821; Gordon, *ibid*, Vol. 1, pp. 238-241; Linner, *ibid*, pp. 28-30; Peker, *ibid*, p. 196.

36 Gordon, *ibid*, p. 242; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 103-104; Kurşun, *ibid*, pp. 107-108.

37 BOA, C.HR, 19/926, Gurre-i Cemaziyelâhir 1237/23 February 1822; BOA, HAT, 841/37873, Gurre-i Receb 1237/24 March 1822; BOA, HAT, 871/38718-A, 23 Şaban 1238/5 May 1823; BOA, HAT, 877/38829, 23 Safer 1237/19 November 1821; BOA, HAT, 877/38833, 23 Safer 1237/19 November 1821; Gordon, *ibid*, Vol. 1, pp. 243-244; Mehmed Esad Efendi, *ibid*, pp. 680-682; Bass, *ibid*, pp. 64-66; Linner, *ibid*, pp. 61-63; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 97-116; Menekşe, *ibid*, pp. 798-800; Kurşun, *ibid*, pp. 105-113.

### 3. The Massacre of the Turks and Jews in Tripolitsa by the Greeks (October 5, 1821)

The Greeks who entered Tripolitsa on *Friday*, which is a holy day for Muslims, carried out one of the biggest massacres that took place for the duration of the Morean Rebellion. In this blood-curdling massacre for those who witnessed it, about 40 thousand Turks and Jews were brutally killed in the city. The rebels who entered the city first captured *Halim Efendi, the Muslim judge of the city* who provided moral support for the people during the siege, tortured him, spread oil on him and set him on fire. The despiteful Greek gangs committed massacres in the city for three days without sparing any women, children and babies. The Greeks took their anger to the extreme so that they dug Turkish cemetery, took out the bones and burned them. The Greeks looted everything in the city and many Turkish women and children were enslaved and shared among the gang members as booty. In the meantime, the families of the high rank administrators in the city were taken hostage for ransom.<sup>38</sup> For reflecting the magnitude of the great atrocities that took place in the city, it would be sufficient to hear the words of Theodoros Kolokontoris, who was among the rebel leaders, that he recorded in his memoirs: “*After I entered into the city, my horse’s feet never touched the ground as my horse was walking on the bodies up to the Governor’s office.*”<sup>39</sup>

The barbarian Greek gang members looted Tripolitsa for days and they took away everything including window and door locks. For understanding the extent of looting, it would be explanatory to state that Petros Movromihalis of Manya was barely able to carry his share of the booty with 20 mules and 2 camels.<sup>40</sup> Kolokotronis was the biggest winner of the looting of Tripolitsa. He even got the nickname of *booty hunter*.<sup>41</sup> The looting of the Turkish assets in Tripolitsa, conflicts regarding sharing the booty, debates regarding the Turkish women who were enslaved continued to become an agenda item in the following periods in Greek politics.<sup>42</sup>

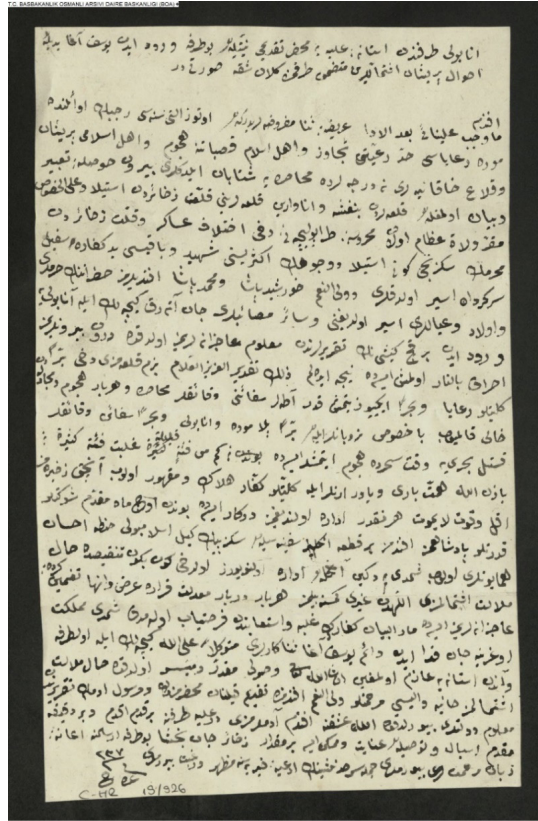
38 BOA, HAT, 842/37873, 1 Receb 1237/24 March 1822; Ahmedpaşazâde Mir Yusuf, *ibid*, vr. 3b-24b; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XII, pp. 24-26; Howarth, *ibid*, pp. 34-36; Linner, *ibid*, pp. 62-63; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 12-32; Peker, *ibid*, pp. 193-205.

39 Peker, *ibid*, p. 198.

40 BOA, HAT, 862 38442, 29 Cemâziyelevvel 1237/21 February 1822; Mehmed Esad Efendi, *ibid*, p. 155; Ahmed Cevdet, *ibid*, Vol. XII, pp. 24-26.

41 Peker, *ibid*, pp. 196-197.

42 For the sad stories of the Turkish women who were taken as concubines or wives and some



**Document 1:** The letter coming from Anabolu and submitted by Yusuf Agha regarding the fall of Tripolitsa and the massacre that took place in the city in October 5, 1821 (Source: BOA, C. HR, 19/926).

We are going to provide information obtained from the writings of those who witnessed the massacre and atrocities in Tripolitsa. However, initially we need to look for the answer for the question of why we do not have plenty of information in the Ottoman documents and sources of the time regarding the massacres in the Morean Peninsula where the Turkish existence in the

of whom had to convert besides those who were especially enslaved in Tripolitsa and in the Morea generally by the Greek rebels, see: Christos Loukos, "1821 Devrimi Sirasındaki Erotik İlişkiler ve Cinsel Pratikler", trans. Aslı Damar-Çakmak, *1821 Yunan Devrimi, Yunan Tarihyazımında Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, ed. Konstantina Andrianopoulou - Anna Vakali, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yay., İstanbul 2002, pp. 229-238.



region was completely erased in Tripolitsa for the duration of the rebellion where huge atrocities were experienced. The Ottoman historian of the time *Ahmed Lütfi Efendi* provided the answer for this question clearly. While discussing the incidents regarding the Morean Rebellion, Lütfi Efendi, who became the state chronicler in 1866 and studied the developments between 1825 and 1879, stated that *Sultan Mahmud II* (1808-1839) and the statesmen of the period hid the news regarding the Muslims massacred in the Morea for defusing the reactions that would come from the public and preventing the acts of violence against the Greeks living with the Turks in many regions of the empire, primarily in İstanbul. Lütfi Efendi wrote that the state had known that at least 35 thousand Turks had been massacred in the Morea in the early days of the rebellion. Lütfi Efendi, who considered those matters, predicted that while recording the incidents regarding the rebellion, mentioning the losses of the Greeks but never mentioning the losses of the Muslims would harm the country and the state in the future and the Greeks would be considered rightful, and thusly emphasized the wrongness of this overlooking policy. Ahmed Lütfi Efendi emphasized the significance of not being one sided but revealing all of the aspects of the events, and stated that everybody knew that even if it was overlooked while the incidents were taking place, for the duration of the rebellion in the Morea, the Greeks terminated the Muslims, executed and burned people until the fetuses in the wombs of the women, the rebels terminated many women and children in this manner, they expunged those who survived, and thusly in a short amount of time all of the Turks were devastated in the Morea. Lütfi Efendi also stated that the massacres of Muslims in the Morea by the Greeks without sparing women and children and subjection of thousands of innocent Turks to various unimaginable tortures were behind the violence that the Ottoman State displayed against the rebellious Greeks in the following periods.<sup>43</sup>

Years after the Tripolitsa Massacre, *Sultan Abdülhamid II* (1876-1909) requested writing down the history of the atrocities performed by the Greeks in the Morea against the Muslims and the Philiki Eteria organization (1887). A person among the immigrants of the Morea, whose opinion was asked for this purpose, prepared a report. The person who submitted his report to the Ottoman State stated that it would not be sufficient to understand

43 *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vol. I, pp. 38-39, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vol. II-III, p. 543.

this matter by writing down what had happened, it was also necessary to investigate the reasons that prompted the Greeks to have this level of enmity against the Ottoman State and the Muslim people and to commit atrocities. Additionally, he also emphasized that the archive of the Philiki Eteria organization in Greek needed to be examined to reveal the facts.<sup>44</sup>

Different numbers are mentioned in the sources regarding the number of Turks massacred in the Morea and Tripolitsa. In some of the Greek and European sources, the number of casualties were indicated very low and the dimensions of the atrocities are trivialized. In fact, it is not possible to have a final number regarding how many Turks had been massacred for the duration of the rebellion in the archive documents regarding the Morean Rebellion and the sources that discuss the matter. The reason is that the Ottoman State did not have regular census information during the dates when the rebellion had started. For the duration of the classical period, in the censuses performed for the purpose of taxation and military service, the Ottoman State only kept the records of men over a certain age. For this reason, there is no possibility for making a comparison before and after the Rebellion of 1821 in a final and correct manner. Despite this, there are some trustworthy numbers regarding the number of the Turkish population in the region. For instance, the Greek writer Emile Y. Kolondy stated that the number of Turks in the Morea was 90.800 in the Morea when the Rebellion of 1821 started. According to the author, there were 7.163 Turks on the Euboea Island.<sup>45</sup> An Ottoman manuscript from the period provided population information in the Morea through the number of households of the towns. Accordingly, ten years before the rebellion, there were about 2.000 Turkish households in Tripolitsa.<sup>46</sup> In the book written by N. J. Svoronos, which indicated the change of population of Greece between 1821 and 1838, the author determined that the population, which was 938.765 as of 1821, dropped to 752.077 as of 1838.<sup>47</sup> Undoubtedly, the largest share for about the 200 thousand drop in the population of Greece must belong to the Morean Turks.

44 BOA, Y. PRK. AZJ, 12/3, 28 Zilhicce 1304/17 September 1887.

45 Emile Y. Kolondy, *La population des îles de la grèce*, Vol. I, Aix-en-Provence 1974, p. 191; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 97-99.

46 Mehmed Örfî, *Coğrafya-yı Örfî*, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi, TY, nr. 2045, vr. 17a-26b.

47 N. J. Svoronos, *Yunanistan Nüfusu ve Yunanistan Nüfus Sayımları*, trans. M. Galip, Aydınlık Basımevi, İstanbul 1936, p. 14.

Priest *Rufus Anderson* who visited the Morea in 1829 shortly before the independence of Greece, and performed some missionary activities there and wrote down his observations, provided important information regarding the population and what had happened in the region. According to the information that the author claims that he had taken from trustworthy Greek authorities, there were more than 80 thousand Turks in the Morea before the rebellion and as of 1829, there were almost no Turks because they were destroyed by the massacres and exiles. Priest Anderson mentioned many piles of bones that belonged to the Turks that he encountered personally in the region.<sup>48</sup>

While the massacres in the Morea and Tripolitsa were ignored in the Ottoman lands, we also encounter the same situation in the Greek sources. Although some Greek researchers characterize what happened in Tripolitsa as a massacre, in general terms the atrocities are ignored. As the Tripolitsa Massacre constitute the lyrics of the Greek national anthem, it is difficult to understand this apathy. Indeed, the schoolbooks in Greece include very short information about what happened in Tripolitsa. The Greek historians widely believe that the number of Turks and Jews massacred in Tripolitsa was exaggerated. However, there are also some Greek historians who regard the incidents in the city as an atrocity. For instance, *Yannis Kolatos* indicated that the Greeks committed a massacre following the siege of Tripolitsa. Additionally, historian *K. Yannis* stated that the events that took place in Tripolitsa were recorded as the darkest incident of the Morean Rebellion. Historian *Apostolos E. Vakalopoulos* recorded the atrocities in Tripolitsa by the following words: “*The rebels used all kinds of weapons including guns and machetes on the elderly, women and even the tiny children without showing no mercy. By using the same methods the slaves were subjecting their tyrants to the same evil that they had been performing.*” Despite accepting the atrocities, Vakalopoulos claimed that the massacres that the Turks committed for centuries to intimidate the Greeks caused the feelings of hatred and revenge and the hatred and revenge within the Greeks allowed them to perform such atrocities, and thusly in a way, he placed the blame on the Turks.<sup>49</sup>

Historian *Dimitris Stathakopoulos* who regarded the number of the massacred people in Tripolitsa as 10 thousand produced a justification for the atrocities. In his opinion, people left humanitarian feelings against a national threat

48 Anderson, *ibid*, pp. 51-200.

49 Peker, *ibid*, p. 198.

and the war had no rules. Additionally, looting and booty, which were the only source of income for the Greek soldiers, were not perceived as immoral in the 19th century. Stathakopulos indicated that during many sieges in the Morea, the Greeks asked the Turks to leave their weapons and surrender, and far from surrendering, the Turks made the same call for the Greeks and in the consequence all Turks were killed. The author stated that the rebels were very cruel towards the Turks and collaborating Christians, and the reason for that was the experiences that the Greeks had been encountering for the last 400 years. According to Stathakopulos the reason for the violence that the Greeks used against the Turkish women and children was that it was the response given to the Turks for what they had done to their own women and children. Stathakopulos indicated the reason for the massacre of all of the Jews in the city during the siege of Tripolitsa as the attitudes of the Jews in İstanbul against the Greeks and the Jews' desecration of the body of the executed Greek Patriarch of İstanbul. Spiridon Trikupis, one of the prominent historians of Greece, narrated the incidents in the city as follows:

“The day of the conquest of the Morean capital was the day of calamity, fire, looting and blood. All of the men, women and kids died. Some of them were killed, some of them were thrown into the flames engulfing the city, and some of them was stuck under the ruins and roofs of burning houses. Revenge seeking dominated the sound of nature. On the roads and squares, one could hear the sounds of stabbings, firings, roaring of the collapsing houses due to fire, screams of anger and wailing. Everywhere was full of bodies and foot soldiers and cavalry who were wandering around were walking over those who died or who were about to die. It was as if the Greeks were trying to get the revenge of the four hundred-years of injustice in one day.”

Historian *Dimitris Lithoksu* made the most striking observation about the atrocities experienced in Tripolitsa. While writing about the incidents of the period, Lithoksu openly stated that the word of Tripolitsa may be used synonymously with *genocide*.<sup>50</sup>

The quadrants written by Greek poet *Dionisios Solomos* where he included the incidents that took place in Tripolitsa and that later became the national anthem of Greece help us understand the atrocities and massacre that took place in the city accompanied by the powerful words of literature. In the

50 Paker, *ibid*, pp. 198-199.

poem, the poet immortalized the incidents that took place in Tripolitsa massacre by the following quadrants:<sup>51</sup>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>The walls of Tripolitsa<br/>Stand ahead of you<br/>Now it is the time to throw<br/>The thunder of fear on it</p> <p>We descend and<br/>The glow of the war ignites<br/>Weapons fire and shine<br/>They shine and the sword cuts</p> <p>Why did the combat slow down suddenly?<br/>Why is the blood less?<br/>I see the enemy escape<br/>And climb to the fortress</p> <p>I hear the weak sound of the weapons<br/>I hear the clank of the swords<br/>I hear the sound of the wood and axes<br/>I hear the gnashes</p> | <p>Oh, what a night it was!<br/>Even the mind is horrified<br/>But it was not sleep<br/>It was just painful death</p> <p>Look, how the desperate hands<br/>Reap the lives<br/>The cut hands, feet and heads<br/>Fall down</p> <p>Nobody pays attention<br/>No, they are at the front in the massacre<br/>Every time, oh enough<br/>How much will the killings continue?</p> <p>The blood runs like a stream<br/>And it flows towards the valley<br/>And the innocent grass drinks blood<br/>Instead of the dew</p> |
|--|--|

We are able to learn all facts about the Tripolitsa Massacre which was not sufficiently covered in the Turkish and Greek sources from the memoirs of the persons who personally experienced the incidents and some scientific Western studies addressing the period of rebellion. One of the most important sources from which we may learn firsthand about the atrocities that took place in Tripolitsa is the memoirs of *Maurice Persat*, French Cavalry

51 Batan - Kayapınar, *ibid*, pp. 174-183.

Colonel who voluntarily went to the Morea, which was published in 1910. The most important information provided by Persat who narrated the siege of the city and the incidents that took place after the capture of the city by the Greeks is that the number of the Turks and Jews massacred in Tripolitsa was 40.000.<sup>52</sup>

In his memoirs, Persat wrote that he was in Tripolitsa during the siege however, he left the city briefly and he came back 8 days after the fall of the city and obtained information from the witnesses regarding the massacre. Persat also verified that the Greeks committed massacres in Corinth, Anabolu, Patras, Modorn, Koron and Navarino before Tripolitsa and the people who wanted to save their lives sought refuge in Tripolitsa. Persat, who provided information about the walls and defenses of the city, stated that the people who resisted for months under very difficult conditions accepted to surrender due to hunger and they experienced a great calamity by trusting the tyrant Greek leaders. Persat, who provided information about Kolokotronis whom he described as the leader of the Greek rampant gangs, indicated that he was the one who decided on who died and who survived.

Persat, who narrated his observations after the fall of Tripolitsa, stated that the city was partially destroyed and the streets were full of bodies of persons of different ages and genders. Persat stated that he was unable to stay in such a horrendous environment and thusly he took a tent given by Colonel Gordon and camped far away. Persat listened the whole atrocities experienced in the city from a loyal soldier of Gordon named *John*, who was originally an Armenian. Persat, who narrated the spoils taken by the Greek gang leaders who even massacred the children and women entering the city, wrote that he saw about 200 or 300 cut heads of Turks from both genders in the front yard of a house where the violent *Laskarina Bouboulina*, who was among the female leaders of the rebels, settled, and he believed that most likely she cut those heads. Persat also stated that the Greeks who became rich by looting the city, started to return to their villages with all kinds of spoils that they loaded on the horses and mules.<sup>53</sup>

The memoirs of Theodoros Kolokotronis, who was among the important figures of the Greek Rebellion and later the Greek politics includes important details. The memoirs of Kolokotronis, who organized the Tripolitsa siege,

52 Persat, *ibid*, p. 82.

53 Persat, *ibid*, pp. 83-93.

were published in Greek in 1846. The memoirs were translated into English in 1892 and published along with his biography. Kolokotronis, who was the leader of the Klephts who committed many massacres during the rebellion, stated his views regarding the situation before the beginning of the Morean Rebellion, his military activities after the beginning of the rebellion, the wars that he made with the Turks and the Turks that they massacred, internal struggles among the rebellious gangs, the impact of the Europeans in the region, the Greeks and the Greek warriors. Kolokotronis came to Tripolitsa three days after the fall of the city. Kolokotronis, who entered the city on his horse, narrated the incidents day by day that took place before the siege, the escape of the Turks to Tripolitsa running away from the massacres in the Morea, and the attacks made on the Turks on their way to Tripolitsa. Kolokotronis stated that Tripolitsa was completely sieged as of the date of August 15, 1821 and the city had no possibility to obtain assistance from elsewhere.

After providing information regarding the condition of the soldiers that they have around Tripolitsa and the weapons that they had, Kolokotronis provided striking details regarding the massacre in the city. Kolokotronis clearly wrote that it was reported that 32 thousand people had been killed including women and children in the massacre that had taken place from *Friday until Sunday* after the fall of the city on October 5, 1821. Kolokotronis, who stated that a Greek who took part in the massacre was boasting about killing 100 Turks, verified that some people in the city were taken as slaves. While he was talking about his entry into Tripolitsa on the third day of the massacre, Kolokotronis used the following phrases: "*I rode my horse up to the Governor's office so that the feet of my horse never touched the ground as my horse was walking on the bodies.*" Kolokotronis who stated that he had seen many people hanged on a plane tree stated that he had learned that those people were Turks.<sup>54</sup>

Another book that provides important information regarding the Tripolitsa massacre is the book of *Scottish Colonel Thamos Gordon* who was the aide of Dimitris Ypsilantis, the leader of the rebellion, and organized the European volunteers in the Morea. In his two-volume book, published in 1832, where he recorded his observations regarding the Greek Rebellion where he was

54 *Kolokotrones The Klepht and The Warrior: Sixty Years of Peril and Daring an Autobiography*, ed. Mrs. Edmonds, London 1892, pp. 135-156, 157-161.

personally present and witnessed many atrocities provided information regarding the atrocities experienced in Tripolitsa. Gordon verified the process of sieging the city, the encountered conflicts, the attitude of Elmas Bey, who was the commander of the Albanian troops, the massacring of Turks and Jews after capturing the city and the lootings. Gordon narrated that the Greek gangs who were acting like crazy out of hatred and anger massacred everyone in the city regardless of their gender or age, the houses and streets were full of blood, and the streets were blocked due to the piles of bodies. Gordon also mentioned that the notables at the Governor's office were taken as hostages, and Kolokotronis and other leaders came to the city on their horses after the massacre started and attempted to provide order to no avail. Gordon, who stated that the Greek barbarians who had no limits for their viciousness and displaying a superhuman effort to commit vices were acting with the feeling of taking revenge from the Muslims, stated that the flames arising from the burnt mansions and houses brightened the skies during the night, the gangs sought new victims in all corners of the city and looted each house. Gordon also stated that the Greek rebels had an unimaginable fanatic hate against the Jews which could not be expressed by words and killed all Jews by torturing them more than they had tortured the Turks. Gordon especially emphasized that for the duration of three days, horrendous incidents took place in Tripolitsa. The author also expressed that Kolokotronis and Bey of Manya shared the spoils and the rebels took many Turkish women as slaves and concubines.<sup>55</sup>

Another European volunteer was *William Henry Humphreys* who was in the region and recorded his observations when the Morean Rebellion of 1821 started. *Sture Linner* published the letters that Humphreys sent from the region in 1967. Humphreys, who was a Philhellene activist and under the protection of Colonel Thomas Gordon, provided important information in his letters regarding the massacre that took place after the siege of Tripolitsa. Humphreys stated that he was unable to attend the siege of Tripolitsa although he was in the Morea at the date, however he penned down the testimonies of those who entered the city and witnessed the incidents. Humphreys wrote that after the siege of Tripolitsa which was surrounded by high walls, no support came to the city for months and during this time period the city was bombarded by the rebels. Humphreys stated that he had learned that the population of the city was 20 thousand people, 10

55 Gordon, *ibid*, Vol. 1, pp. 242-247.



thousand of whom were women and children. However, Thomas Gordon indicated the population of the city as 34 thousand. Humphreys also stated that during the siege, 5 thousand people died and most of them died due to starvation. Humphreys, who wrote down the skirmishes on the walls in a detailed manner, explained the surrender agreement and the attitude of the Albanian soldiers. He also stated that after the siege started, the Turks allowed the Greeks of the city to leave.

Humphreys described the incidents that took place after the fall of the city on October 5, 1821 as a massacre and he provided the following information: Including women and children, 10 thousand Turks were killed; the barbarians who entered the city raided all houses until late hours and massacred everyone without discriminating age or gender; horrendous moments including fires, bullets, sad screams and terror took place in the city; screams arose in Tripolitsa until the morning; the rebellious gangs burned down houses and innocent victims alive; the Greek rebels looted the city so that even no lock remained on the windows and doors; Kolokotronis took the highest amount of spoils.<sup>56</sup>

Humphreys wrote that about 2 thousand women and children sought refuge at a camp outside of the city, and the barbarian Greek rebels who thought that they were unable to commit sufficient amount of massacres in the city, went to this camp and viciously shed blood. The rebels first thought about undressing the victims and shooting them in a ditch however because they were bloodthirsty, they did not want to lose time, encircled the victims, and massacred the women, children and even the babies in their mothers' bosom. Humphreys also wrote that during the massacre the Turkish children maintained their composure until the time they died, were not afraid of the killers and they were indignant.

Humphreys stated that some Europeans who witnessed the incidents in the city and the local Greeks in the region reacted against the atrocities, however the Greek gangs provided excuses by stating that it was the time for the Turks to receive their punishment, and they were the best punishers for the Turks, and they did not do anything further than that the Turks had done to the Greeks. Humphreys who stated that the Greeks showed no remorse while performing the atrocities and perceived the Turks as oppressors, expressed that the Greeks demonized the Turks and created a justification for their

<sup>56</sup> Linner, *ibid*, pp. 26-60.

anger, atrocity and cruelty. Humphreys, who experienced frustration against what he saw, stated that Greeks had shown that they could be as barbarous as Turks when they had the power, and the joy and happiness that they had gotten from the horrendous tortures that they had applied to their victims had proven that they could have been so wild and cruel when they had had the chance. Humphreys wrote that the Greeks hated the Jews in the city as much as they hated the Turks, the Jews shared the same cruel fate as the Turks, the arms and legs of the Jews who were killed by torture were cut and fires were lit below them so that they died slowly and painfully, they cut the heads of Jewish women and placed dogs' heads on the bodies and they looted the assets of the Jews.

Humphreys wrote that after the end of the massacre, there were many bodies on the streets and under the demolished buildings; the Greek leaders decided to clean up the city to eliminate the spreading stench and the risk of illness; Ypsilantis assigned captured 300 Turks to clean up the city. Humphreys also stated that those 300 Turkish captives held by Ypsilantis were about to die due to lack of food. Lastly, Humphreys expressed that the rebel Greeks who carried this barbarity and individual immorality to the highest level did not deserve to be free and they dishonored the modern Greeks.<sup>57</sup>

As mentioned above, Priest Rufus Anderson who came to the Morea in 1829 provided information regarding the Tripolitsa massacre. The author wrote that the Tripolitsa massacre smeared the Morean Rebellion, which he based on rightful reasons. Anderson verified that about half of the 4.500 houses in Tripolitsa belonged to the Turks before the massacre; when the news about the rebellion spread, the Turks and Jews around the Morea who did not feel safe rushed into Tripolitsa, and thusly the city overflowed with people. Anderson who often emphasized that the Greeks lived as slaves under the oppression of the Turks for four hundred years criticized the Europeans for covering up the massacres that the angry Greek rebels acting with the slave psychology had committed after capturing Tripolitsa.<sup>58</sup>

*Gary J. Bass*, one of the professors of Princeton University in the US included the Tripolitsa massacre in his book that he wrote regarding the Greek Rebellion and reflected different perspectives. One of the most important matters that Bass emphasized is the matter that the Europeans did not

<sup>57</sup> Linner, *ibid*, pp. 60-66.

<sup>58</sup> Anderson, *ibid*, pp. 51-74, 80, 91, 101-137, 200.

learn the massacre that took place in Tripolitsa from healthy sources at the time. The author determined that the reason for this situation was that some of the European volunteers who became partners in those great atrocities and whose reputation would be ruined forever covered up the atrocities by providing wrong information. The author pointed out Scottish Thomas Gordon in this matter. According to Bass, Gordon remained silent for a long time to protect the Philhellene Europeans from the shame of this massacre. Prof. Bass also included the observations of the Philhellene British who went to the Morea to support the rebellion. The British volunteers witnessed that the Greeks surpassed the Turks in barbarity and cruelty, and they faced with the fact that the Greeks were able to commit heavier atrocities while they had to prove that they were moral and religious to support the Greek cause. The European volunteers advised the Greeks to act in a humanitarian manner towards the Turkish captives; however, the Greeks massacred the Turks that they captured in Benefşe, Navarino and Arcadia and sold them as slaves.

Prof. Bass stated that the Philhellenes easily manipulated the events and covered the facts because there was no trustworthy source about the atrocities that the Greeks had committed. Bass pointed out that one of the biggest Greek atrocities for the duration of the rebellion took place in Tripolitsa in October of 1821. The author expressed that Gordon knew what had happened in Tripolitsa, however Gordon did not write everything regarding Tripolitsa in the report that he submitted to the British Government and the reason for that was to protect the European Philhellenes. Bass also stated that Gordon, who abhorred the Greek gangs and left the Morea, wrote a book years later to compensate his silence and revealed some of the facts. Bass also included the excuses regarding that the Greeks committed those atrocities due to the Turkish oppression in his book. While conveying his opinion about the Tripolitsa Massacre, the author indicated that no oppression would justify such kind of atrocity. Lastly, Prof. Bass stated that although the revolutions looked bright and wonderful when observed from outside, the revolutions had dark sides when observed closely.<sup>59</sup>

*Salâhi N. Sonyel*, Turkish historian from Cyprus, who called attention to the massacres in the Morea, conducted research regarding the Tripolitsa massacre. The author especially emphasized Kolokotronis' activities. Sonyel

59 Bass, *ibid*, pp. 64-66.

benefitted from the memoirs of those who were in the city during the Tripolitsa massacre and of Colonel Thomas Gordon. Sonyel stated that the European officers witnessed bone-chilling incidents and wrote down all incidents with all of their cruelty. According to what Sonyel determined, Thomas Gordon did not hide his frustration in his reports that he wrote to the British Government. A young German doctor named *Wilhelm Boldemann*, who could not endure the atrocities, committed suicide by drinking poison.<sup>60</sup>

*Nicolae Jorga*, Romanian Historian specialized on the Ottoman history, narrated the capture of Tripolitsa by the Greeks on October 5, 1821, the atrocities committed by them and their looting up to the rusty nails as follows:

“The runaway Greeks killed everyone and burned every house for three days much crueller than the wildest Anatolians. They spared the lives of women and children only in cases where they could get some ransom. One of their leaders estimated the number of deaths in and around Tripolitsa around 32 thousand. This unbelievable number was far beyond the number of Christians that Turks killed in the entire Ottoman Empire. Only the Prince (Bey) of Manya loaded his share of the spoils on 20 mules and 2 camels. The Greeks looted the city up to the rusty nails and what was left was a smoking ruin.”<sup>61</sup>

In his book that he examined the massacres committed against the Turks, American historian *Justin McCarthy* wrote that two months after the beginning of the Rebellion of 1821, the Greeks massacred most of the Turks in the Morea and even killed women and children without any mercy and remorse. The author, pointed out that the Greeks were proud of what they were doing, and stated that the old Greeks after the independence pointed out the ruins to the tourists visiting the region and said “*Here was the tower of Ali Agha, killed him, his wives and servants here*” and they continued to go plowing their fields which they took from Ali Agha. McCarthy stated that when the rebellion started, the Greek gangs started a general attack on the Turks and in those attacks, the Greek gangs and villagers killed every Turk that they found. Additionally, some of the Muslims surrendered by believing in the promises of the rebels and the rebels did not keep their promises and brutally killed those Turks. McCarthy indicated that termination of

60 Sonyel, *ibid*, pp. 107-120; Peker, *ibid*, pp. 202-203.

61 Jorga, *ibid*, p. 230.

the Turks in Greece in the lootings and massacres in the Morea was not an ordinary casualty of the war, and the Greek gangs took away the Turks, including women and children, and massacred them, and the only exception was enslavement of some women and children. The author stated that the rebels sometimes immediately killed the Turks by the enthusiasm of the rebellion and by the happiness of eliminating their former masters, however most of the time the murders were premeditated and performed in cold blood, and they gathered the Turkish people in the towns, forced them to walk to another place and killed them there. In his book, McCarthy provided the following striking information about the Tripolitsa Massacre:

“The poor Turkish townspeople were subjected to the lust and brutality of the group of wilds for three days. No one was spared regardless of his or her gender or age. The Greeks even tortured women and children before killing them. The atrocities were so great, the commander of the gangs, Kolokotronis, stated that the feet of his horse never touched the ground when he entered the city starting from the gate of the upper walls. The road where Kolokotronis was proceeding and the victory was celebrated was covered with bodies.”<sup>62</sup>

*David Howarth*, who wrote a book about the history of Greece, included important information regarding the Morean Rebellion of 1821 and the massacre that took place in Tripolitsa in his book. The author recorded the bloodcurdling atrocities, massacres and looting as follows:

“In two days, no living creature was left in the city where tens of thousands of Turks lived. Many of the Turks were killed by decapitation and mutilation. Thousands of Greeks after this massacre returned to their villages to hide the spoils that they obtained from looting and became wealthy in their way. The value of the slaves dropped so much so that nobody wanted to keep slaves anymore. An unbearable stench covered everywhere because nobody buried the dead in Tripolitsa, the drinking water was gone bad and a cholera outbreak started. A Greek may reject the things that everyone knew, saw and believed and claim that nothing actually happened. However, all of them know by experience that the gangsters and pirates that are introduced as national heroes were actually scabby, dirty and rapacious thieves. As Lord Byron said “The Greeks do not have the ability to grasp reality. Every Greek has exaggerated thoughts

62 McCarthy, *ibid*, pp. 9-10.

about the Greeks.”Not every traveler, who is open-minded like me, may be able to desist from having a sense of admiration for the Greeks. Perhaps, this is the result of sensitivity. I felt indebted against the Greeks due to their amiability, and I thought about the reason, which suddenly made their ancestors monsters 150 years ago. The general explanation is the hate towards the Turks created by living under the oppression of Turks for hundreds of years. They took revenge because of that. During the period of the Revolution of 1821, the number of foreigners living in Greece was very few. Thus, the European countries did not know what was going on in Greece. The reports sent by the romantic intellectuals living in Athens to other countries were prepared by those intellectuals who never took part in the war and they were written down in accordance to the Greek ideals.”<sup>63</sup>

Another author who narrated the atrocities that took place in Tripolitsa with all details and in an objective manner is British historian *William St. Clair*. Clair benefitted from the documentation, which Thomas Gordon had among his papers but did not use in his book while writing his book, published in 1972, regarding the independence of Greece. Clair narrated in details the development of the rebellion, the European support for the rebels, the military potentials of both parties, prominent figures and more importantly the massacres committed against the Turks in the Morea and Tripolitsa. According to Clair, the Greeks, who were the neighbors of the Turks, massacred more than 20 thousand Turks including women and children during the first few weeks of the rebellion in the Morea. The author stated that those who committed the massacres did not hesitate, showed no remorse, never regretted, and willfully killed innocent people. Clair also stated that the rebels killed or burned Turkish families alive who were not prepared for the rebellion and living in dispersed farms and small communities without any defense in their homes. Clair expressed that when the massacres became widespread the Turks left their homes and started migrating to safe regions, and Greek gangs attacked those defenseless migrants on the roads. Clair also made a striking determination for the incidents that took place in the region: “*The massacres in the Morea only ended when there were no Turks to kill*”.<sup>64</sup>

63 Howarth, *ibid*, pp. 27-32, 52-56.

64 Clair, *ibid*, pp. 1-2, 43-50. In his book, Clair stated the reality of the “genocide” in the Morea as follows: “The orgy of genocide exhausted itself in the Peloponnese only when there were no more Turks”: Clair, *ibid*, p. 12.

Clair conveyed all aspects of the massacre that took place in Tripolitsa. The author provided the information that when the rebellion started in Tripolitsa, which was located in the middle of the Morean Peninsula and was the largest city of southern Greece, there were about 35 thousand Turks and Albanians in Tripolitsa. According to Clair, part of that population consisted of those who sought refuge in the city later. Clair indicated that Tripolitsa had material resources and weapons because it was the administrative center of the Morea; the Greeks knew that some wealthy Turkish and Jewish families lived in the city; and the most important purpose of the rebel leaders for capturing Tripolitsa was to loot the wealth in the city. Especially, Ypsilanti, the leader of the provisional Greek government, desperately needed the wealth to be obtained from Tripolitsa, and the rebel leaders, primarily Kolokotronis, hoped to share the spoils. Clair also provided information regarding the Europeans taking part in the Tripolitsa siege. Clair conveyed that especially the artillerymen were called to Tripolitsa among the Europeans who came to the Morea to support the rebellion. Clair stated the atrocities experienced by the capturing of the city after a long siege by the rebels on October 5, 1821:

“The Greeks entered the city on October 5. The city was given to the gangs for two days. The gangs executed more than ten thousand Turks. The European officers witnessing the events talked about the atrocities. The gangs tortured those among the captives in the city whom they thought hid their money. The gangs mutilated them and slowly tortured them on fire. They cut open the bellies of pregnant Turkish women, beheaded them and placed dogs’ heads in between their legs. Until Kolokotronis entered into the city and intervened into the incidents sounds of screams and laughter were mixed into each other from Friday until Sunday. A Greek was bragging about killing 90 persons by himself. The gangs also systematically tortured members of the Jewish community in the city. About 2.000 captives, mostly women and children, were undressed and taken to a valley outside of the city and they were killed there. The piles of bones were still visible around even after some years. Even weeks after the massacres, enthusiastic Greeks were shooting or cutting hunger stricken Turkish children who were running helplessly between the ruins. The bodies were left where they were killed. Soon after, an unbearable stench spread in the city and scavenger birds swarmed into the city. Wild dogs were wandering around the burning ruins and feeding on the rotting

bodies. The water wells were poisoned due to the bodies thrown in them. Soon after cholera outbreak started in the city. Thousands of Greeks became rich due to looting. Some of them returned to their villages with some Turkish women whom they took as slaves and retired there. Everything in Tripolitsa was up for sale including bloody piles of clothes, weapons, furniture and anything with value. The value of the slaves dropped so much so that except the very young women, all captives were killed. The rebel leaders (captains) shared the spoils among themselves. However, Kolokotronis took the biggest share from the spoils. Kolokotronis carried the spoils that he carefully spared for himself, the jewelry, money and weapons in the residence of the Turkish Governor by 52 horses. Kolokotronis became very rich and sent his money to a bank in the Seven Islands”.<sup>65</sup>

Clair also included the reaction of the European volunteers witnessing the atrocities against the rebels in his book. The author also stated that some of the volunteers realized that the Greek rebels were not freedom fighters, but looters; they found it hard to stomach the atrocities that they witnessed despite the fact that they had taken part in many bloody battles in Europe; and they had to sell their weapons, uniforms and medals to be able to return to their countries. Clair also indicated that the only military experience of some of those Europeans was to engage in a struggle with the Greeks for the sake of humanitarian values to work for saving a few innocent Turks from the general massacres and to try to protect hungry Turkish women and children. Clair stated that the European volunteers were unable to assort with the Greek rebels who were boasting about the atrocities and banditry that they committed, and they understood that they would not be with those gang members who did not bathe at all, bragged about the number of louses on their bodies, and made randomly looting and killing their lifestyles.<sup>66</sup>

In the resources that we have covered so far, there is consensus regarding that a great massacre and atrocities took place in Tripolitsa; the Greeks killed tens of thousands of innocent people cruelly and looted the city completely; sold the captives as slaves or kept them for ransom, and kept Turkish women as concubines. The most controversial issue in the sources is the number of casualties. In this matter, the most trustworthy sources are the testimonies of

<sup>65</sup> Clair, *ibid*, pp. 44-45; Kurşun, *ibid*, pp. 109-111.

<sup>66</sup> Clair, *ibid*, pp. 46-48.



those who personally witnessed the massacre. When the matter is considered from this perspective, and as Maurice Persat, who witnessed the events, and the Turkish researchers determined, there is no doubt that in Tripolitsa, the Greeks brutally killed 40 thousand Turks and Jews.<sup>67</sup>



**Painting 1:** By Peter von Hess. Panagiotis Kefalas Raises the Flag of Freedom on the Walls of Tripolitsa (In the background of the painting, the ruins of the mosque and the bodies of the brutally killed Turks on the ground are visible.) (Source: Peker, *ibid*, p. 197)

<sup>67</sup> Persat, *ibid*, p. 82; Örenç, *ibid*, pp. 40-99; Kurşun, *ibid*, pp. 105-113.

## Conclusion

The establishment of the independent Greek State was painful for the Ottomans in many aspects. In the empire, a non-Muslim entity was rebelling and gaining independence for the first time. Thusly, a new phase started in disintegration of the Ottoman State by the intervention of the European states. The Ottoman political leaders hid from the public the massacres performed against the Turks in the Morea and Tripolitsa for the duration of the rebellion. The reason was that there were many Greek citizens living in the empire. It may be said that the idea of maintaining the internal harmony of the empire caused them to remain silent against those great atrocities. Therefore, this first great massacre committed against Turks in the Balkans is lost in history and forgotten.

Our Greek neighbors enthusiastically celebrated the 200th anniversary of their independence from the Ottomans in 2021. It is clear that we have encountered many problems with Greece in many areas since the date of its establishment. However, the magnitude of those problems started to change by Greece's ascension to the European Union. It is seen that the Greek State adopted an understanding through the phenomenon of Turkish hostility that the Europeans have been keeping alive in their sub consciousness. Greece has been maintaining the strategy of not resolving the crises that it has been experiencing with Türkiye, but making those crises a problem of Europe and benefit from this situation. We may also say that the Greeks have been successful in doing that.

Another development that has recently become striking is characterizing the process of the Morean Rebellion of 1821 as a revolution in a manner that would also include the European values. This matter may be debated for sure depending upon from which side the issue is evaluated. However, the only matter that may not be debated is the fact that the Turks and Jews in the Morea and Tripolitsa were completely terminated. The marks of the four-hundred-year Turkish civilization were violently erased. In fact, all of those events took place right next to and before the eyes of the civilized Europe. The date of 1821 may be remembered as a Greek revolution. However, it needs to be known that this revolution emerged over the blood of the innocent Turks. Besides, the Greek national anthem that was inspired by a poem glorifying atrocities committed against the Turks accepts this fact in a way.

How would it be possible to explain the massacres committed by Greek gangs

full of anger and hatred in Tripolitsa in October 5, 1821, and killing of 40 thousand innocent people through unimaginable torture, burning innocent people alive, selling people as slaves, making Turkish women concubines, looting the city up to bloody clothes and rusty nails by the concepts such as *disproportional violence*, *extremity*, *atrocitiy* and *massacre*? Undoubtedly, the only concept that would reflect and define what actually happened in the Morea and Tripolitsa is *genocide*.

Lastly, knowing that it would be pointless to expect a self-criticism from civilized Europe and Greece which is regarded as the source of this civilization regarding the massacres committed in the Morea, we believe that it would be useful for our country to take a step to remind the events to the upcoming generations and eliminate the shame of forgetting. Primarily, the incidents that took place in the Morea have to be included into the secondary school curriculum so that they remain in the memory of the upcoming generations. Additionally, for social awareness, building a *Monument of Morean Turks* in one of the western Anatolian cities such as İzmir where the generations of Morean immigrants live today or in İstanbul, and preparing special sections of Morea and Tripolitsa in the cities having immigration museums would help us pay our debt and fulfill our responsibility towards history.

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